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OF
LUSAKA**

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON
SCHOOL DROPOUT AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN CHONGWE DISTRICT.**

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF
ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AT UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA**

BY

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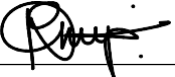
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DECLARATION

I, **Raewyn Goveya Menahil**, declare that this research report entitled “An Investigation of the Effects of Gender-Based Violence on School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Chongwe District, Zambia” is my original work and has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of a degree or any other qualification.

All sources of information used in this study have been duly acknowledged through appropriate referencing.

Signed:  _____

Date: _____

Supervisor: 

Date: 26.03.2026

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to all adolescent girls who face violence and adversity yet continue to aspire for education, as well as to families, educators, and communities committed to protecting the right of every girl to learn in a safe and supportive environment.

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ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a critical social challenge that undermines the educational participation and retention of adolescent girls, particularly in developing contexts such as Zambia. Despite policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and universal education, many girls continue to experience various forms of violence that disrupt their schooling. This study investigated the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, Zambia.

The general objective of the study was to examine how GBV influences school dropout, with specific focus on forms of violence experienced, their effects on school participation, and their relationship with dropout risk. A quantitative research approach was employed using a structured questionnaire administered to 95 adolescent girls. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages.

The findings revealed that adolescent girls experience multiple forms of GBV, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse occurring across home, school, and community settings. The results show that 69 respondents reported difficulties in concentration due to violence, while 52 indicated missing school because of fear. Additionally, 68 respondents reported feeling unsafe at school, and 70 indicated that violence negatively affected their academic performance.

The study further established a strong relationship between GBV and school dropout. All 95 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that sexual violence increases the likelihood of school dropout, while 95 respondents also indicated that experiencing multiple forms of violence significantly raises dropout risk. Furthermore, gaps in support systems were identified, as 37 respondents reported not knowing where to seek help despite the presence of reporting mechanisms.

The study concludes that GBV is a major barrier to girls' retention in school, with its effects intensified by weak institutional support and limited awareness of protection systems. The study recommends strengthening school-based counselling services, improving reporting

mechanisms, enhancing community awareness, and promoting supportive family environments. Future research should focus on evaluating intervention strategies and examining the long-term effects of GBV on educational outcomes.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) has increasingly become recognised as one of the most significant threats to girls' education, safety and well-being globally. International development literature identifies GBV as both a violation of human rights and a critical barrier to social and economic development (UNICEF, 2023; UN Women, 2022). While many African countries, including Zambia, have made commendable progress towards improving school enrolment among girls, GBV remains a persistent driver of school dropout, especially among adolescent girls who are at their most vulnerable stage of development.

In Zambia, the introduction of the Free Education Policy (2022), the Anti-GBV Act (2011), and the Re-entry Policy have helped improve access to education. However, adolescent girls continue to face sexual harassment, defilement, emotional abuse, coercion, and early marriage—forms of violence that fundamentally undermine their ability to stay in school (MOE, 2023). For girls in peri-urban districts such as Chongwe, the intersection of economic hardships, cultural norms, limited protection systems and weak reporting mechanisms compounds the risks of GBV and increases their likelihood of school dropout.

This study therefore investigates the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, focusing on how sexual, physical, emotional and psychological violence disrupt girls' educational trajectories and contribute to premature termination of schooling.

1.1 Background of the Study

Across the world, GBV is deeply rooted in patriarchal norms, gender inequality and long-standing socio-cultural practices that continue to shape the experiences of girls and women (Stromquist, 2015). Historically, violence against girls has been normalised in many societies through customs such as early marriage, forced marriage, cultural silence surrounding abuse, and the subordination of women in family structures (UNESCO, 2022). These practices limit girls' autonomy, restrict access to education and create environments where violence is often unchallenged.

Globally, research shows that GBV is strongly associated with increased school absenteeism, low participation, poor performance and eventual dropout among adolescent girls (UNICEF, 2023; Parkes et al., 2016). For example, a study in East Africa highlighted that sexual violence perpetrated by teachers or male peers is a principal reason why many girls leave school prematurely (FAWE, 2020). Similar patterns have been observed in Southern Africa, where early marriage and teen intimate partner violence contribute to declining educational outcomes (SADC Gender Barometer, 2021).

In Zambia, national surveys reveal that nearly one in three girls experiences some form of gender-based violence before the age of 18 (GRZ, 2022). Historically, the marginalisation of the girl child has been influenced by gender norms that prioritise domestic roles over education. Early marriage, economic pressures, initiation ceremonies and household responsibilities continue to shape the educational experiences of girls. The Ministry of Education (2023) notes that many girls face harassment on their way to and from school, while cases of defilement, emotional abuse and forced marriage continue to drive dropout rates.

Chongwe District, situated within Lusaka Province, represents a rapidly growing peri-urban area where girls face unique vulnerabilities. As documented by Banda and Mwansa (2020), peri-urban communities near Lusaka—including Chongwe—exhibit high levels of teen intimate partner violence, coerced sexual relationships, and domestic abuse. These forms of violence significantly disrupt girls' educational participation and often lead to silent withdrawal from school. Although government and community initiatives exist, evidence suggests that GBV remains a chronic challenge.

It is within this national and regional context that the current study seeks to investigate how GBV contributes to school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, providing empirical insights into the specific forms of GBV experienced and how they directly influence the discontinuation of schooling.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The core problem is the persistent and rising school dropout rates among adolescent girls in Zambia, driven significantly by gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual violence, coercion, emotional abuse, physical violence, defilement, intimate partner violence, and forced early marriages. Despite national and global commitments to gender equality and girls' education—such as the Anti-GBV Act of 2011, the Re-entry Policy (introduced in 1997 and ongoing), and the Free Education Policy—GBV continues to undermine these efforts.

This issue has been evident for decades but has persisted and, in some aspects, worsened in recent years. National education statistics show ongoing gender disparities in retention, particularly at secondary levels, with girls facing higher risks of dropout due to intertwined factors like teenage pregnancy (often linked to GBV), early marriage, and trauma from violence. For instance, recent reports indicate that over 16,000 girls leave school annually due to early marriages and teenage pregnancies (FAWEZA, 2023), while broader data from 2020–2024 highlight that dropout rates, though low overall in primary (around 1.7–1.8% for girls) and improving in secondary (down to about 1.0–1.3% nationally by 2024), mask persistent vulnerabilities for adolescent girls, especially in peri-urban and rural areas where GBV intersects with economic pressures.

Adolescent girls, particularly those aged 12–19 in secondary or upper primary school, are the primary group affected. In Chongwe District—a peri-urban area near Lusaka experiencing rapid population growth (annual rate around 2.5%), economic disparities, poverty, and weak protective structures—the problem is acutely localized. Anecdotal reports, NGO assessments, and sensitization efforts by organizations like the Zambia Police Child Protection Unit reveal increasing cases of defilement, intimate partner violence among adolescents, forced early marriages, and emotional abuse, all contributing to quiet withdrawal from school.

GBV affects these girls profoundly: victims often drop out due to trauma, fear of stigma, threats from perpetrators, shame, lack of support systems, or community blame, leading to truncated education. This perpetuates cycles of poverty, dependency, early childbearing, further violence, limited economic opportunities, and intergenerational disadvantage. Without targeted, evidence-based interventions addressing GBV as a direct driver of dropout—particularly in under-researched areas like Chongwe—policymakers risk implementing programs that fail to tackle root causes, hindering progress toward universal education and gender equality.

This study addresses this gap by empirically investigating the specific pathways through which GBV contributes to school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, providing localized evidence to inform more effective policies and interventions.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, Zambia.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The Specific Objectives of the Study were;

1. Identify the forms of gender-based violence experienced by adolescent girls in Chongwe District.
2. Examine the extent to which gender-based violence contribute to school dropout among adolescent girls.
3. Analyse the relationship between specific forms of GBV (sexual, physical, emotional and psychological) and the likelihood of school dropout.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the Research Objectives, the following were the Research Questions:

1. What forms of gender-based violence are commonly experienced by adolescent girls in Chongwe District?
2. How does gender-based violence contribute to school dropout among adolescent girls?
3. How do specific forms of GBV (sexual, physical, emotional and psychological) influence the likelihood of school dropout?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for multiple reasons. Firstly, it contributes to academic knowledge by strengthening the evidence base on how gender-based violence influences school dropout among adolescent girls in a Zambian context. Existing literature acknowledges GBV as a major barrier to girls' education, but there is limited empirical research linking GBV directly to dropout in peri-urban districts such as Chongwe (UNICEF, 2023; Banda & Mwansa, 2020). The study thus fills an important gap.

Secondly, the findings will provide policymakers with context-specific information necessary for designing targeted interventions. The Ministry of Education, child-protection agencies, civil society organisations and school authorities will benefit from insights into the specific

forms of violence that most strongly contribute to dropout, enabling the development of effective prevention and response programmes.

Thirdly, the study supports Zambia’s developmental agenda by contributing to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 and 5, which focus on quality education and gender equality. By understanding why girls leave school due to GBV, stakeholders can design mechanisms that promote retention, reduce school-related harms, and enhance girls’ long-term economic and social participation.

Finally, the study gives voice to adolescent girls—an often unheard demographic—in documenting their experiences and highlighting the urgent need for safe educational environments.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study will be conducted in Chongwe District.



Figure 1: Map of Chongwe District

In addition, the study will focus on adolescent girls aged 12–19 years enrolled in selected government secondary schools, as well as those who have recently dropped out. The study will examine **only gender-based violence** as the independent variable and **school dropout** as the dependent variable. Forms of GBV under consideration include sexual violence, emotional abuse, physical violence and psychological coercion, which have been consistently identified in Zambia as major contributors to dropout (MOE, 2023; YWCA, 2021). The study will not examine other potential causes of dropout unless they directly intersect with GBV.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Gender-based violence (GBV) has become one of the most persistent barriers to the realisation of educational equity for adolescent girls globally. It not only undermines girls' physical and psychological wellbeing but also significantly distorts their educational trajectories, often culminating in absenteeism, reduced participation, poor performance, and eventual school dropout. In recent decades, the nexus between GBV and educational outcomes has gained scholarly attention, as researchers, international bodies, and governments increasingly acknowledge that safe learning environments are foundational to achieving universal education and gender equality.

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the study's objective of examining the effects of GBV on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, Zambia. The review is organised around the four major objectives of the study, drawing on global, regional, and local evidence to illuminate the forms of GBV, its impact on education, mechanisms through which violence leads to dropout, and the role of interventions in mitigating its effects.

The chapter also synthesises the literature to highlight knowledge gaps—particularly the need for district-specific evidence linking GBV experiences to school dropout pathways among adolescent girls in peri-urban areas such as Chongwe. The chapter concludes with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study.

2.1 Identifying the common forms of gender-based violence experienced by adolescent girls

2.1.1 Global Perspective

Globally, GBV manifests in diverse forms that significantly affect adolescent girls' educational experiences. UNICEF (2023) reports that an estimated one in three adolescent girls worldwide experiences some form of sexual harassment within school settings, with perpetrators ranging from peers and intimate partners to teachers. Sexual violence—including coercion, assault, unwanted touching, and verbal sexual harassment—is the most documented school-related form of GBV (SRGBV). The psychological consequences of sexual violence such as fear, trauma, reduced concentration, and shame are known to contribute to declining academic performance and school withdrawal (Ellsberg et al., 2015).

Emotional and psychological abuse, while less visible, is equally harmful. This form includes verbal insults, intimidation, humiliation, cyberbullying, and threats. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) argues that emotional abuse has pervasive long-term effects on girls' self-esteem, mental health, and ability to participate meaningfully in the classroom. Studies in South Asia and Latin America found that prolonged emotional abuse was associated with school avoidance, disrupted attendance, and diminished motivation (UNESCO, 2019).

Physical violence—comprising corporal punishment, domestic assault, peer aggression, and teacher-inflicted beating—remains alarmingly common. Devries et al. (2014) demonstrated that physical violence severely increases the likelihood of absenteeism and school disengagement. For adolescent girls, physical violence often intersects with other forms of GBV, especially sexual exploitation and emotional harassment.

Globally, intimate partner violence (IPV) among adolescents is a rising concern. Shamu et al. (2018) show that adolescent girls in relationships face high rates of coercion, jealousy-driven restrictions on movement, and manipulation, which negatively impact school participation. The combination of school-based, household, and peer-based violence creates a multi-layered risk environment that heightens dropout.

Finally, global evidence acknowledges that multiple forms of GBV often co-occur. Beyene et al. (2019) found that girls exposed to more than one type of GBV experience amplified negative educational outcomes and a higher likelihood of school withdrawal. This global perspective underscores the need to examine GBV in its multifaceted nature.

2.1.2 Regional Perspective

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, the prevalence and complexity of GBV affecting adolescent girls remains high. Studies across southern, eastern, and western Africa consistently show that sexual harassment, exploitation, early marriage, and emotional abuse are widespread within households, communities, and schools.

In South Africa, Cluver et al. (2018) established strong links between sexual exploitation and reduced likelihood of completing secondary education, especially among girls in low-income peri-urban areas. Transactional sex, often fuelled by poverty, affects adolescent girls' safety and attendance in several African countries. In Zimbabwe, Mlambo and Kwaramba (2019) found that economic pressures drive girls into coercive sexual relationships, exposing them to exploitation, sexually transmitted infections, and pregnancy, which in turn contribute to school dropout.

Violence perpetrated by teachers and peers is another persistent issue in the region. Haffejee (2020) documented that institutional cultures in many African schools normalise teacher harassment and corporal punishment. Girls experiencing such violence often resort to truancy, disengagement, or complete school withdrawal as a coping mechanism. Similarly, studies from Malawi reveal that physical violence and emotional abuse in homes exacerbate girls' vulnerability to violence at school (Mapanje et al., 2018).

Cultural norms play an important role in shaping GBV patterns in the region. Early marriage, initiation rites, and patriarchal gender expectations frequently result in adolescent girls being viewed as property or economic assets (Munthali et al., 2020). Girls subjected to early marriage inevitably drop out of school to fulfil marital or domestic roles, while others disengage due to stigma associated with sexual victimisation or pregnancy.

Regional evidence therefore demonstrates that GBV is systemic and culturally embedded, affecting education through interlinked pathways of exploitation, violence, early marriage, and emotional distress.

2.1.3 Local Perspective — Zambia

In Zambia, national reports and empirical studies show that adolescent girls face multiple, overlapping forms of GBV. The 2023 Zambia Gender-Based Violence Assessment Report identifies sexual abuse, defilement, intimate partner violence, emotional abuse, and early

marriage as dominant forms of GBV affecting girls aged 10–19, especially in peri-urban districts such as Chongwe (GRZ, 2023).

The Zambia Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS, 2018) highlights that adolescent girls experience disproportionately high rates of sexual harassment, coerced sexual relations, and physical assault. School-based misconduct—including teacher–student harassment, extortion, and physical punishment—is also frequently documented (MOE, 2023).

Local researchers have extensively analysed the socio-cultural context of GBV in Zambia. Phiri (2015; 2020) notes that patriarchal norms, conservative gender expectations, and community silence around sexual matters contribute to the normalisation of violence against girls. Banda & Mwansa (2020) similarly observe that economic constraints and gender power imbalances increase girls’ vulnerability to sexual exploitation and transactional relationships.

Studies in Chongwe and peri-urban Lusaka (Simwinga & Nkhata, 2021) indicate that adolescent girls often face simultaneous forms of violence—sexual, physical, and emotional—which collectively heighten their risk of educational disruption. This multidimensional nature of GBV in Zambia underscores the need for targeted research and interventions.

2.2 How Experiences of GBV contribute to school dropout among adolescent girls

2.2.1 Global Perspective

Globally, GBV is recognised as a major factor contributing to school dropout. Evidence from UNESCO (2019) and Save the Children (2020) highlights that girls who experience school-related GBV exhibit higher rates of absenteeism, disengagement, declining academic performance, and eventual withdrawal from formal education systems.

Sexual violence has been shown to be particularly detrimental. Ellsberg et al. (2015) found that girls exposed to sexual harassment or assault often avoid school due to trauma, fear of further victimisation, or shame. These psychological impacts severely reduce attendance and participation, pushing girls towards dropout.

Transactional sex and adolescent intimate partner violence also play significant roles. Adolescents coerced into sexual relationships face social stigma, pressure from partners, and unintended pregnancies—factors identified by Cluver et al. (2018) as key drivers of dropout. The World Bank (2025) notes that unsafe school environments deter girls from continuing their education, especially in contexts where reporting mechanisms are weak and punishment for perpetrators is rare.

Emotional abuse, including bullying and threats, has similarly been linked to academic withdrawal. WHO (2021) reports that sustained emotional violence results in anxiety, depression, and low confidence, conditions that impede participation and increase the risk of dropout.

2.2.2 Regional Perspective

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, GBV is a well-documented cause of school dropout among adolescent girls. Chigona (2019) found that girls in Zimbabwe involved in transactional sex or coerced relationships often withdraw from school due to pregnancy, humiliation, or community stigma. Similar patterns were observed in Malawi by Mapanje et al. (2018), who reported that early marriage, physical abuse, and domestic violence disrupt girls' educational continuity.

School-level factors also compound GBV's effects. Many African schools lack functioning counselling services or proper reporting mechanisms (Marcus & Page, 2016). Harassment from teachers—which often goes unreported—makes school environments unsafe, leading girls to stop attending (Haffejee, 2020).

Community tolerance of violence, combined with structural poverty, further increases girls' educational vulnerability. Girls are often pressured by families to enter marriages or relationships perceived as financially beneficial, resulting in premature school exit. Overall, regional evidence confirms that GBV is both a direct and indirect contributor to dropout.

2.2.3 Local Perspective — Zambia

Zambian evidence similarly establishes a strong link between GBV and school dropout. Studies by Simwinda & Nkhata (2021) in Chongwe show that girls exposed to sexual coercion, transactional sex, and teacher misconduct experience high absenteeism and are more likely to leave school permanently.

Phiri (2020) identifies teenage pregnancy—often stemming from sexual violence or coercion—as a leading cause of dropout among Zambian adolescent girls. Although the Re-entry Policy exists, its inconsistent implementation means many girls do not return to school.

The YWCA (2021) reports that cultural silence around abuse, fear of stigma, and limited access to counselling or legal redress discourage survivors from remaining in school. The Population Council (Parkes, 2017) found that only a small proportion of GBV victims in Zambia receive support services, making dropout a likely outcome.

Local findings therefore reinforce that GBV undermines school attendance, retention, and performance, ultimately precipitating dropout.

2.3 Relationship between forms of GBV and the likelihood of school dropout

2.3.1 Global Perspective

Globally, a considerable body of research has examined the relationship between specific forms of gender-based violence and school dropout among adolescent girls. Sexual violence consistently emerges as the strongest predictor of educational discontinuation. In a seminal multi-country analysis, **Devries et al. (2014)** found that exposure to sexual violence more than doubled the likelihood of school dropout, primarily due to trauma, fear of recurrence, pregnancy, and school-related stigma. Sexual harassment within schools, whether perpetrated by peers or teachers, contributes to increased absenteeism and avoidance of school spaces (UNESCO, 2019). The fear of re-victimisation has been shown to significantly undermine girls' sense of safety, prompting early withdrawal.

Emotional and psychological abuse—manifested in insults, belittlement, humiliation, threats, and intimidation—also plays a significant role in shaping dropout trajectories. According to the **World Health Organization (2021)**, emotional violence has a sustained impact on mental health, eroding self-esteem and fostering anxiety, depression, and disengagement from learning. Girls subjected to persistent emotional abuse often develop internalised distress, leading to chronic absenteeism and eventual dropout.

Physical violence, including corporal punishment, domestic beatings, and peer assault, compounds the risk of discontinuation. Research indicates that injuries, fear, and behavioural avoidance are key mechanisms through which physical violence interrupts schooling (Save the Children, 2020). Girls exposed to physical violence at home or school frequently experience concentration problems, low academic confidence, and disruptions in learning routines.

A particularly important global insight relates to the **cumulative effect of multiple forms of GBV**. **Beyene et al. (2019)** argue that girls exposed to more than one form of violence concurrently face the highest dropout risk. Their analysis shows that cumulative exposure—not isolated incidents—best predicts school disengagement. The intersection of sexual, emotional, and physical violence creates a persistent environment of fear, trauma, and emotional exhaustion, heightening the likelihood of school exit.

2.3.2 Regional Perspective: Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional evidence mirrors global findings but is shaped by unique socio-cultural and economic contexts. In South Africa, **Shamu et al. (2018)** established that adolescent girls exposed to sexual and emotional violence were significantly more likely to leave school prematurely. These two forms of violence often occur simultaneously, with emotional abuse amplifying the psychological impact of sexual victimisation.

In Malawi, **Mapanje et al. (2018)** found that girls who experienced physical violence at home and sexual harassment in school suffered layered vulnerabilities that increased the likelihood of disengagement from education. The combination of household aggression and school-based victimisation reinforces unsafe environments in both primary social spaces.

Cultural practices such as early marriage further complicate the relationship between GBV and dropout. **Munthali et al. (2020)** showed that in many African communities, sexual violence, coercion into marriage, and early unions are interconnected. Girls who become pregnant as a result of sexual exploitation are often pressured into early marriage, thereby exiting school permanently.

Overall, regional evidence shows that the relationship between specific GBV forms and dropout is **multifaceted and cumulative**, shaped by social norms, patriarchal structures, and weak institutional protections.

2.3.3 Local Perspective — Zambia

Zambian literature similarly demonstrates strong links between specific forms of GBV and dropout among adolescent girls. Sexual violence—particularly **defilement, coerced sexual relationships, and teacher-perpetrated abuse**—is strongly associated with absenteeism, unplanned pregnancy, and permanent school withdrawal (Phiri, 2020; YWCA, 2021). For many affected girls, fear of stigma and limited recourse to justice systems further solidify their disengagement from education.

Emotional and psychological abuse, including verbal degradation, controlling behaviour, and intimidation, significantly affect girls' classroom participation. **Mulenga (2021)** highlights that persistent emotional abuse leads to loss of motivation, poor academic performance, and heightened dropout tendencies.

Physical violence, whether inflicted at home or school, also contributes meaningfully to dropout patterns. Evidence from **Simwinda and Nkhata (2021)** shows that corporal

punishment, domestic assault, and peer violence create hostile learning conditions that drive girls away from formal schooling.

Local research increasingly emphasises the cumulative nature of GBV in Zambia. **Banda & Mwansa (2020)** found that when girls experience multiple forms of violence—such as sexual coercion combined with emotional abuse—the likelihood of dropout rises exponentially. This underscores the need for interventions that recognise how different forms of violence intersect to affect educational trajectories.

2.4 Synthesis and Knowledge Gaps

Synthesis

The reviewed literature demonstrates that GBV—whether sexual, physical, emotional, or psychological—has a profound and multidimensional impact on the educational experiences of adolescent girls. Across global, regional, and local contexts, GBV is associated with:

- poor attendance,
- reduced participation,
- diminished academic performance,
- psychosocial distress, and
- increased likelihood of school dropout.

The literature also underscores that cumulative exposure to multiple forms of violence amplifies dropout risk (Beyene et al., 2019; Banda & Mwansa, 2020). Furthermore, while various interventions exist at global and regional levels, their implementation in Zambia—especially in peri-urban contexts—remains uneven.

Identified Knowledge Gaps

1. Lack of context-specific evidence for peri-urban Zambia, especially Chongwe

While national and regional studies provide general prevalence and impact patterns (e.g., ZDHS 2018; GRZ 2023; Phiri 2020), **no study specifically examines how different forms of GBV influence dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District.** This gap is evident because:

- Regional studies (e.g., Munthali et al., 2020; Shamu et al., 2018) focus on Malawi, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.
- Zambian studies (e.g., Mwansa & Banda 2020; Simwinga & Nkhata 2021) provide broad insights but do not disaggregate data by specific peri-urban districts.

Gap Addressed by Current Study: This research will provide **district-specific empirical evidence** on how GBV manifests and contributes to dropout in Chongwe.

2. Limited examination of cumulative and overlapping GBV effects in Zambian literature

Global and regional scholarship (e.g., Beyene et al., 2019) strongly emphasises cumulative exposure, but **Zambian studies tend to examine forms of violence in isolation**—sexual violence, early marriage, emotional abuse—without capturing how these overlap to produce compounded dropout risk.

For example:

- Phiri (2020) focuses on teen pregnancy and sexual coercion.
- Mulenga (2021) discusses emotional abuse and its educational impact.
- YWCA (2021) highlights discrete forms of SRGBV.

Gap Addressed by Current Study: This study analyses **both individual and overlapping effects of GBV**, offering more nuanced insight into dropout pathways among adolescent girls.

3. Weak documentation of mediating factors at household, school, and community levels

The literature recognises various mediators—poverty, cultural norms, school climate, teacher behaviour, parental attitudes—but these are **underexplored in the Zambian context**.

For example:

- Marcus & Page (2016) and Cluver et al. (2018) discuss these mechanisms regionally.
- Zambian studies mention mediators but do not systematically examine them (Simwinga & Nkhata, 2021).

Gap Addressed by Current Study: This research will investigate **contextual and institutional mediators** that shape the GBV–dropout relationship in Chongwe.

4. Insufficient assessment of the effectiveness of GBV interventions in peri-urban Zambia

Global and regional literature evaluates intervention effectiveness (UNESCO 2019; Cluver et al. 2018), but Zambian studies largely describe interventions without assessing their outcomes. Evidence shows:

- CAMFED, YWCA, UNICEF, and World Bank initiatives exist,
- yet peer-reviewed studies analysing their impact in **peri-urban districts like Chongwe** are scarce.

Gap Addressed by Current Study: This study explores **existing coping mechanisms and support systems** and identifies which are effective or insufficient, providing insights to improve policy and programming.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

1. Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1979)

This study is guided primarily by **Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory**, first advanced by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979. The theory posits that a child’s development is shaped by multiple, layered environmental systems that interact to influence behaviour, well-being, and educational outcomes. These systems include the **microsystem**, which encompasses immediate environments such as the family, peers, and school; the **mesosystem**, which captures linkages between microsystems, such as the relationship between home and school; the **exosystem**, which refers to external structures that indirectly affect the child, such as community institutions, social services, and local policies; and the **macrosystem**, which includes cultural norms, gender ideologies, belief systems, and wider societal structures that either reinforce or discourage gender-based violence. Bronfenbrenner later added the **chronosystem**, representing the influence of socio-historical changes and transitions over time. This theoretical lens is important for the present study because GBV is rarely an isolated event; rather, it emerges from interactions across the household, school, community, and societal structures. By applying this theory, the study situates girls’ experiences of GBV within a broader ecological context, allowing an understanding of how violence in one sphere—such as the home—can ripple across other systems, ultimately influencing school attendance, participation, and the decision to drop out.

2. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977)

The study is further anchored in **Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (1977)**, which asserts that human behaviour is learned through observation, imitation, modelling, and

reinforcement within social environments. According to Bandura, individuals—particularly children and adolescents—acquire behavioural patterns by watching the actions and consequences experienced by others. In the context of GBV, this means that violent behaviours observed at home, in school, or within the community can be normalised and reproduced, especially in environments where perpetrators are not punished or where gender norms tolerate male dominance and female subordination. Bandura’s framework helps explain why GBV persists across generations and why certain school and community environments develop a culture of silence or acceptance around violence. For this study, Social Learning Theory provides insight into how adolescent girls’ coping strategies, perceptions of risk, fear, and decisions to withdraw from school may be shaped by ongoing exposure to violent behaviours and by communities that implicitly reinforce those behaviours through silence or stigma. Together, the two theories offer a comprehensive lens for understanding the structural, social, cultural, and behavioural factors linking GBV to school dropout in Chongwe District.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Below is the **full conceptual framework**, incorporating:

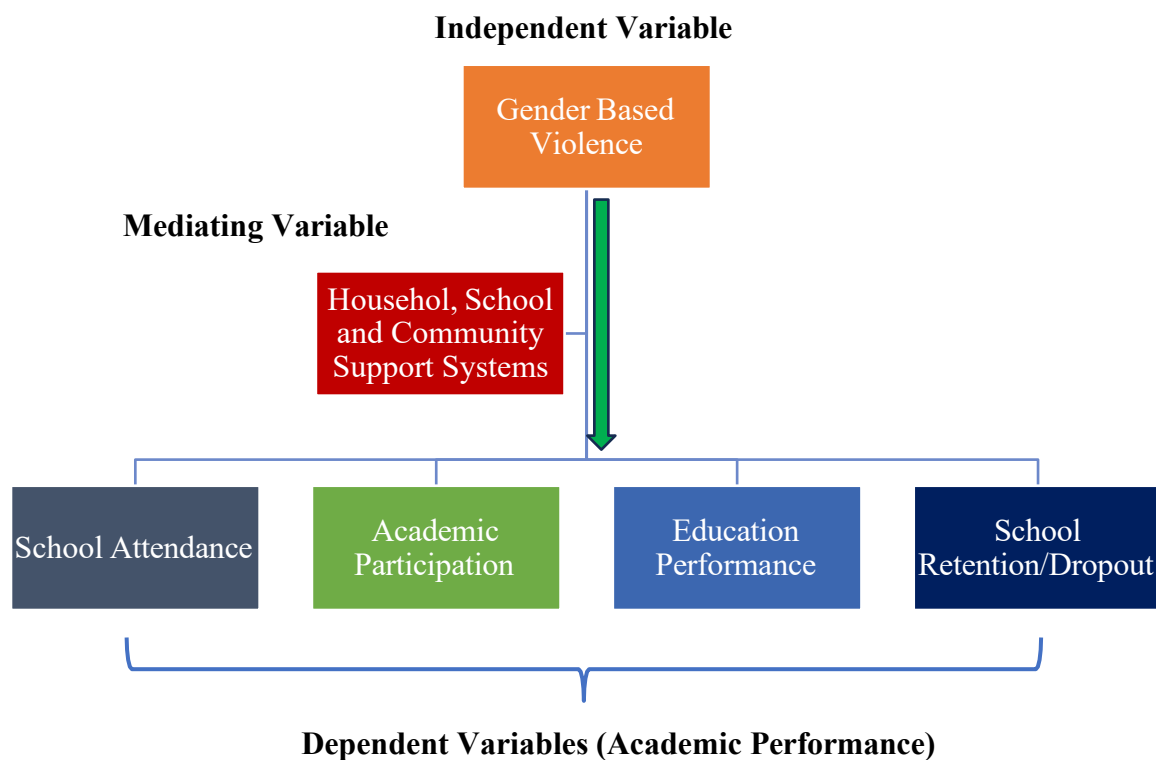


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable (IV)

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at adolescent girls based on their gender and experienced within the home, school, or community. In this study, GBV is conceptualised as comprising:

- Sexual violence (sexual coercion, inappropriate touching, forced sexual acts, and threats),
- Physical violence (beating, physical punishment at home or school, and physical harm by peers),
- Emotional and psychological violence (verbal abuse, intimidation, blame, humiliation, and feelings of worthlessness).

These forms of violence are measured through girls' self-reported experiences and frequency of exposure.

Mediating Variables

Psychosocial

The mediating variable in this study is **psychosocial**, as it captures the emotional, psychological, and institutional responses that shape how adolescent girls experience, interpret, and cope with gender-based violence. Psychosocial factors such as fear, stigma, shame, family reactions, school responses, availability of counselling, and perceived support determine whether the effects of gender-based violence are absorbed, managed, or intensified, thereby influencing school attendance, academic participation, performance, and the decision to remain in or drop out of school

Dependent Variables (DVs)

The dependent variables represent educational outcomes affected by gender-based violence:

1. **School Attendance:** Regularity of school attendance, absenteeism due to fear or trauma, and punctuality.
2. **Academic Participation:** Ability to concentrate, participate in class discussions, group work, and engagement in school activities.

3. **Academic Performance:** Self-reported effects of violence on learning outcomes and academic achievement.
4. **School Retention and Dropout:** Whether adolescent girls remain enrolled, consider dropping out, or discontinue schooling entirely as a result of violence.

Explanation of the Relationships Among Variables

The conceptual framework proposes that gender-based violence is a primary determinant of adverse educational outcomes among adolescent girls. Exposure to sexual violence may result in trauma, fear, stigma, and loss of motivation, which disrupt school attendance and participation. Physical violence can lead to injuries, fear of school environments, and repeated absenteeism, while emotional and psychological abuse undermines self-esteem, concentration, and academic confidence. Collectively, these experiences directly affect school attendance, academic participation, performance, and ultimately school retention or dropout.

However, the relationship between gender-based violence and school dropout is not linear. Psychosocial and institutional response factors mediate this relationship by either intensifying or mitigating the effects of violence. For example, girls who experience supportive family reactions, effective school responses, and access to counselling services may be more likely to remain in school despite exposure to violence. Conversely, fear of stigma, unsupportive households, weak school responses, and lack of reporting mechanisms may compound the effects of GBV, accelerating disengagement from education and increasing the likelihood of dropout.

This framework therefore recognises school dropout not merely as a consequence of violence itself, but as an outcome shaped by how families, schools, and communities respond to girls' experiences of gender-based violence.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature on GBV and its effects on school dropout among adolescent girls. Evidence demonstrates that sexual, physical, emotional, and psychological violence substantially compromise educational outcomes. Global, regional, and Zambian perspectives were highlighted, with peri-urban districts such as Chongwe identified as high-risk areas. Protective interventions exist but are limited in reach and effectiveness. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory provides a framework to examine how GBV interacts with household, community, and school factors. The conceptual framework

articulates the hypothesized relationships, laying the foundation for the empirical investigation in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach that the study will employ to investigate the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District. It outlines the research design, study population, sampling procedures, data collection strategies, validity and reliability measures, data analysis plan, anticipated limitations, and ethical considerations. Since this is a proposal, all methodological procedures are expressed in the future tense, indicating activities the researcher intends to undertake. The methodology is tailored to generate both the statistical evidence and the in-depth narratives required to understand how various forms of GBV contribute to school dropout in the district.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the effects of GBV on the schooling trajectories of adolescent girls. Mixed methods are particularly suitable for examining complex social phenomena such as GBV, as they allow the researcher to quantify patterns while also exploring the lived realities and contextual dynamics that quantitative data alone cannot capture. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) argue that the integration of qualitative and quantitative techniques enhances methodological rigour and enriches the interpretation of findings.

The quantitative component generated measurable data regarding the prevalence of different forms of GBV and their statistical association with school dropout. This helped to identify the most significant forms of GBV influencing educational discontinuation. Meanwhile, the qualitative component provided deeper insights into the pathways through which GBV leads

to dropout, including the emotional, psychological, social, and institutional factors shaping girls' experiences. Similar mixed-methods approaches have been successfully employed in studies examining the intersection of violence, gender, and education outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa (Jewkes et al., 2020). Thus, this research design was suited for capturing the multifaceted ways in which GBV affects the education of adolescent girls in Chongwe District.

3.3 Study Population

The study population included adolescent girls aged 10–19 years who were either currently enrolled in school or have dropped out due to circumstances potentially linked to GBV. This population was relevant because adolescent girls represent the age group most vulnerable to sexual, physical, emotional, and psychological forms of violence, as highlighted by UNICEF (2021). Additional participants included teachers, school administrators, parents or guardians, community leaders, child protection officers, and representatives from government and non-governmental organisations involved in addressing GBV and promoting girls' education.

According to the 2022 Zambia Census, Chongwe District has an estimated population of 148,000 residents, of which approximately 22 percent are adolescent girls aged 10–19. This translates to an estimated 32,560 girls in this age category. The Chongwe District Education Office (2023) further reports that the district hosts approximately 63 primary and secondary schools, with an estimated 14,800 enrolled girls. Because the study seeks to investigate the effects of GBV on dropout, both in-school and out-of-school girls will be relevant. This population composition was appropriate since the study focused on understanding how various forms of GBV shape educational disengagement and subsequent dropout among girls who are at a critical developmental stage.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

This study employed a multi-stage sampling strategy incorporating purposive sampling, stratified sampling, and simple random sampling in order to ensure diversity, representation, and relevance of the participants selected for both quantitative and qualitative components.

In the first stage, schools were purposively selected based on documented cases of absenteeism, dropout among girls, and vulnerability to GBV as highlighted by the Chongwe District Social Welfare Office (2023). Purposive sampling was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to focus on schools with characteristics that align with the objectives of the study and are therefore likely to generate rich, relevant data. Once selected, the schools were stratified into

primary and secondary categories to ensure that the research captures GBV experiences across different educational levels.

Within each school, adolescent girls were selected through simple random sampling using school registers to ensure every eligible girl had an equal chance of participation. Out-of-school girls, who are more difficult to access, were identified through snowball sampling, a method commonly used when dealing with hidden or hard-to-reach populations (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Teachers, school administrators, community leaders, and parents or guardians were selected using purposive sampling based on their roles in child protection, school management, or community leadership.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data was gathered through both primary and secondary sources. Primary data collection involved questionnaires administered to adolescent girls to capture quantitative information on experiences of GBV, absenteeism patterns, and school participation. The questionnaires were structured to enable statistical analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, parents, school administrators, and community leaders. These interviews provided flexibility for probing and exploring deeper insights into the mechanisms linking GBV to dropout, community norms that perpetuate violence, and institutional responses to reported cases. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were carried out with both in-school and out-of-school girls, as well as community women's groups. FGDs enabled the exploration of shared experiences, social norms, and community attitudes surrounding GBV and school dropout.

Observations were also conducted in selected schools to examine the physical environment, safety measures, infrastructure adequacy, and overall school climate. Secondary data can be collected from Ministry of Education reports, district education statistics, and publications by organisations such as UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNESCO. Academic research articles and policy documents were also reviewed to contextualise the findings and support interpretation.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity was enhanced through expert review of instruments by supervisors and specialists in child protection, ensuring content relevance and clarity. Instruments were pilot-tested in Rufunsa District to identify and correct any ambiguities. Triangulation of multiple data

collection methods—questionnaires, interviews, FGDs, and observations—further enhanced construct validity by allowing convergent verification of key findings.

Reliability was addressed by using standardised instruments, training research assistants to ensure consistency in data collection. Consistent administration procedures were followed throughout data collection to minimise measurement errors.

3.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS (Version 26)/Microsoft Excel). Descriptive statistics summarised the prevalence, frequency, and forms of GBV reported by participants.

Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs was analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework. The analysis involved coding, identifying patterns, generating themes, and interpreting meanings derived from participants' narratives. NVivo software was used to organise transcripts and facilitate systematic analysis.

3.7 Limitations

The study faced different limitations such as underreporting of GBV due to stigma, fear of retaliation, or cultural silence. Locating out-of-school girls was equally challenging due to mobility or concealment. Self-reported data might have been affected by recall bias or social desirability bias. Additionally, time and financial constraints limited the number of schools included. These limitations were mitigated through rapport-building, confidentiality assurances, and triangulation of data sources.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical standards guiding research involving minors and sensitive topics. Ethical clearance was sought from the University of Lusaka, and permission was obtained from the Chongwe District Secondary School. Informed consent was obtained from adult participants, while assent was obtained from minors in addition to parental or guardian consent. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured throughout the study, especially for GBV survivors. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw without consequence. Referral information for counselling and support services, including YWCA, Victim Support Unit (VSU), and Lifeline/Childline Zambia, will be provided to participants who may require assistance.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has detailed the methodology that was employed to investigate the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District. It outlined the mixed-methods approach, study population, sampling strategies, data collection instruments, and analysis procedures. Measures to ensure validity, reliability, and ethical compliance were also discussed. The subsequent chapter go on to present the findings after the study was conducted.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the study titled “*An Investigation of the Effects of Gender-Based Violence on School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Chongwe District, Zambia.*” The analysis is based on data collected using structured questionnaires administered to adolescent girls within the study area. The chapter is organised in line with the **study objectives**, ensuring that each objective is systematically addressed using the relevant questionnaire items.

The analysis begins with a presentation of respondents’ background characteristics, followed by detailed sections corresponding to each objective of the study. Frequencies and patterns are interpreted to show how different forms of gender-based violence (GBV) affect school participation, dropout risk, and schooling decisions among adolescent girls.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

The age distribution of respondents shows that the majority were aged 16–18 years (49 respondents), followed by those aged 13–15 years (37 respondents). A smaller proportion fell within the 10–12 years age group (9 respondents).

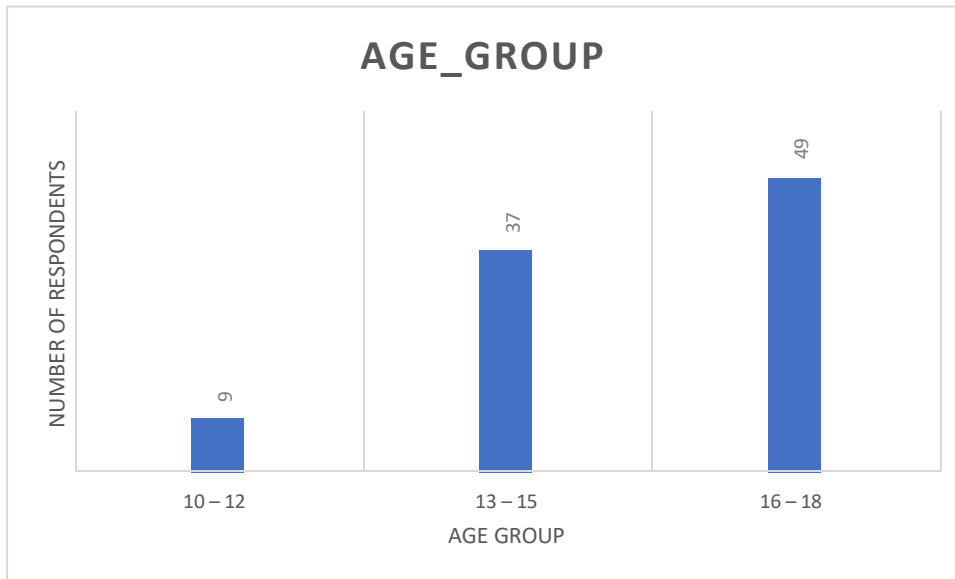


Figure 3: Age Group

This distribution shows that most participants were in **mid-to-late adolescence**, a developmental stage associated with heightened exposure to social risks, including gender-based violence, as well as critical educational transitions. Girls in this age group are more likely to experience increased mobility, peer interaction, and gendered expectations, which may elevate their vulnerability to violence.

One respondent from this age group explained that:

“As you grow older, people start seeing you differently, and some think they can take advantage of you.”

This suggests that age-related perceptions and social dynamics may play a role in increasing exposure to GBV, thereby reinforcing the relevance of focusing on older adolescents when examining school dropout.

4.2.2 Schooling Status

Figure 4 below shows the schooling status of the respondents who participated in the study. The findings indicate that 60 respondents were currently enrolled in school, while 35 respondents reported that they had dropped out of school.

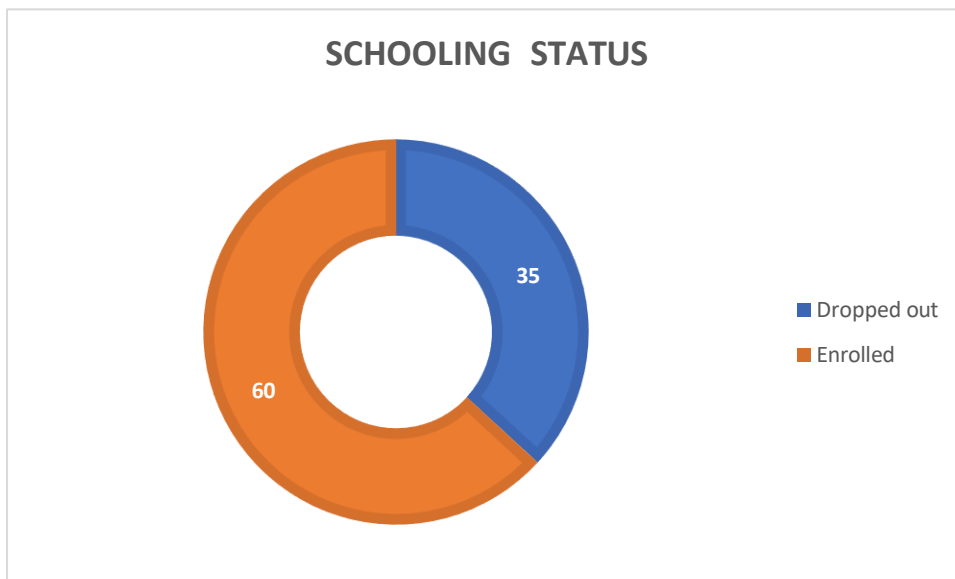


Figure 4: Schooling Status

The results indicate that although the majority of respondents were still attending school, a considerable proportion had already withdrawn from the education system. The presence of 35 respondents who had dropped out of school highlights that school dropout among adolescent girls remains a significant concern in Chongwe District. This pattern suggests that various social, economic, and environmental factors may be influencing girls’ ability to remain in school.

Qualitative responses from participants further provided insight into the circumstances surrounding school withdrawal. Several respondents indicated that experiences of violence, fear, and emotional distress contributed to irregular attendance and eventual dropout. One respondent explained that:

“Some girls stop going to school because they feel ashamed after what happened to them, and they fear people will talk about them.”

Another respondent added:

“When you are going through problems at home or in the community, it becomes difficult to concentrate on school, and some girls just decide to stop going.”

These responses suggest that school dropout is not merely an academic issue but is often linked to broader social challenges, including exposure to gender-based violence and limited support systems. The findings therefore underscore the importance of examining the relationship

between gender-based violence and educational outcomes among adolescent girls in Chongwe District.

4.2.3 School Level and Highest Grade Completed

Figure 5 below presents the school level of respondents who were currently enrolled in school. The findings show that 59 respondents were in junior secondary school, 23 were in senior secondary school, and 13 were in upper primary school.

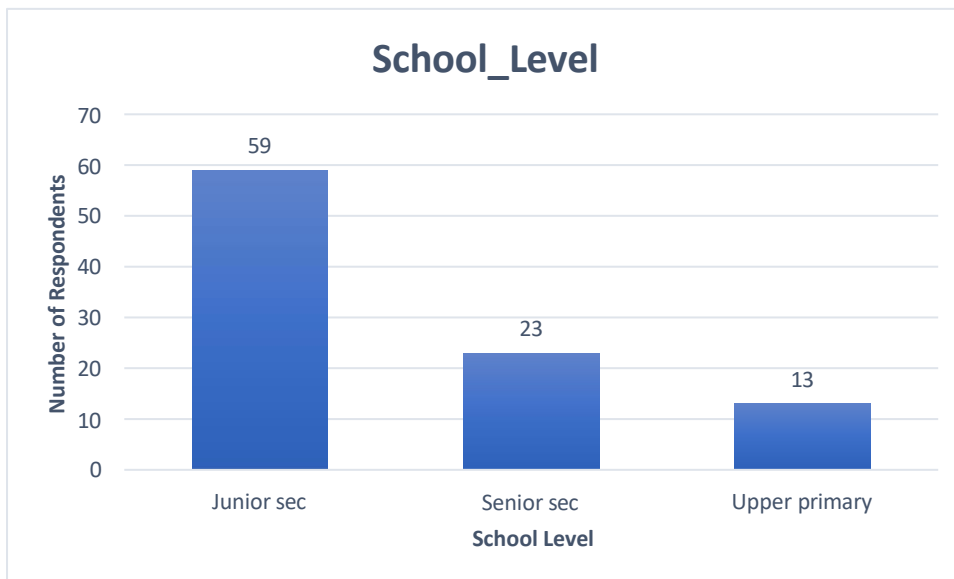


Figure 5: School Level

The results indicate that a large proportion of respondents were in junior secondary school, suggesting that many participants were at a critical stage of their educational journey where the risk of disengagement or dropout may begin to increase. The transition from upper primary to junior secondary school often coincides with adolescence, a period characterised by heightened social pressures and vulnerability to gender-based violence.

Figure 6 below presents the highest grade completed by respondents who had dropped out of school. The findings indicate that 52 respondents had completed Grades 8–9, while 43 respondents had reached Grades 10–12 before leaving school.

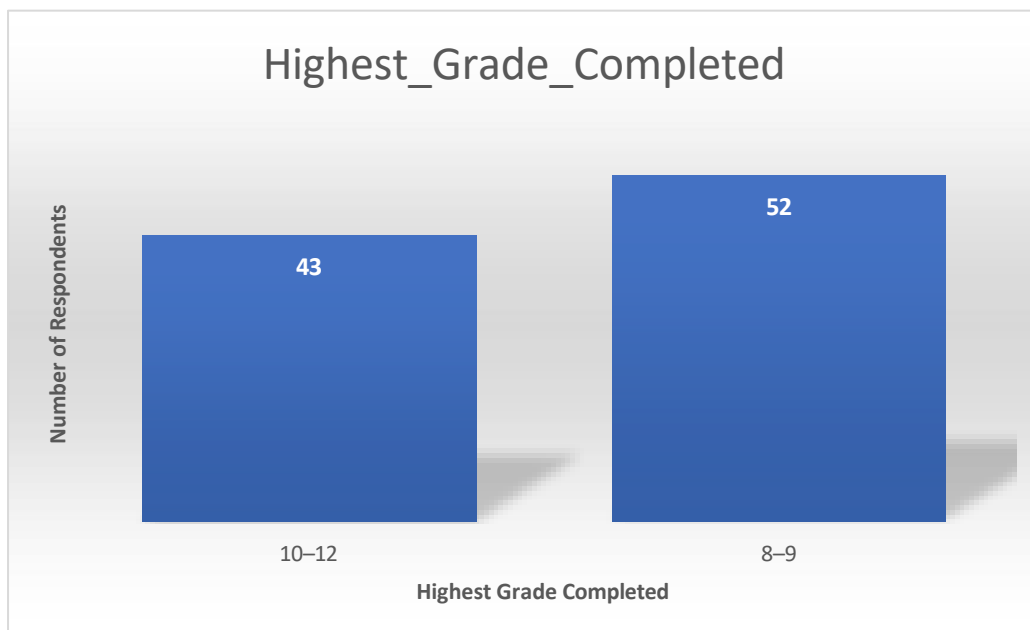


Figure 6: Highest Grade Completed

These results suggest that **slightly more than half of the respondents who dropped out did so during the junior secondary stage (Grades 8–9)**, while a substantial proportion remained in school until the senior secondary level before eventually withdrawing. This pattern indicates that school dropout does not occur only at early stages of education but can also affect girls who have progressed further in their schooling.

Qualitative responses from participants further highlighted the role of social and emotional challenges in influencing schooling decisions. One respondent who had dropped out stated:

“After what happened, I stopped going to school because I could not face people anymore.”

This response suggests that school dropout among adolescent girls may not necessarily be driven by academic difficulties alone. Instead, experiences of **stigma, emotional distress, and fear associated with gender-based violence** can undermine girls’ confidence and willingness to continue attending school. Such findings reinforce the need to examine the broader social and psychological factors that influence girls’ educational retention in Chongwe District.

4.2.4 Living Arrangements

Figure 7 below presents the living arrangements of the respondents. The findings show that 44 respondents (46.3%) lived with guardians or relatives, 31 respondents (32.6%) lived with both parents, and 20 respondents (21.1%) lived with one parent.

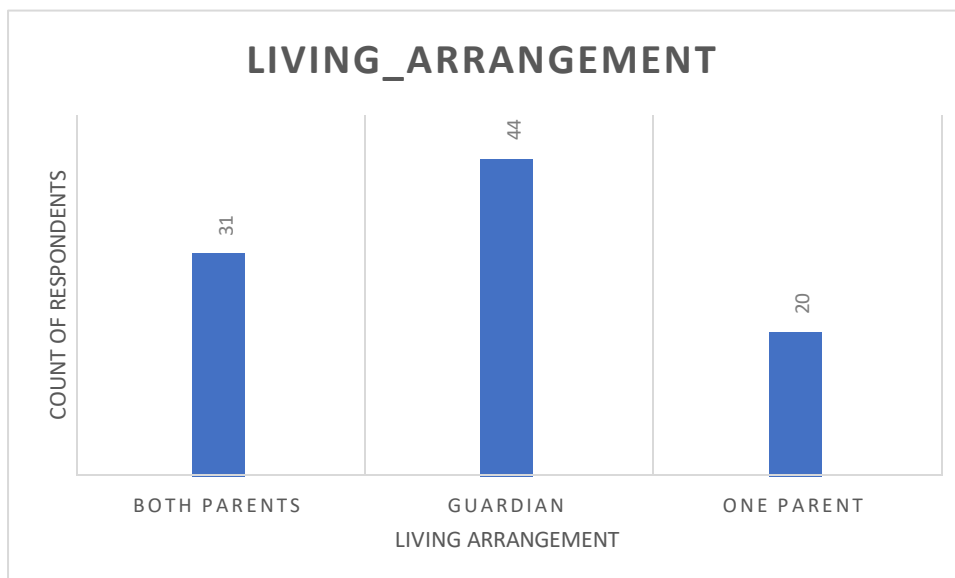


Figure 7: Living Arrangements

The results indicate that **nearly half of the respondents (46.3%) were living with guardians or relatives**, while a smaller proportion lived with their biological parents. This distribution suggests that a considerable number of adolescent girls in the study were growing up outside of a traditional two-parent household setting.

Living arrangements can play an important role in shaping the level of emotional, social, and financial support available to adolescents. In some cases, girls living with extended family members or guardians may experience limited parental supervision, reduced emotional support, or economic constraints, which can increase their vulnerability to gender-based violence and educational disruption.

Qualitative responses from participants also reflected the influence of household environments on their schooling experiences. One respondent noted:

“Sometimes when you stay with relatives, they do not understand what you are going through, and it becomes difficult to talk about problems.”

This response suggests that limited communication and support within certain household arrangements may contribute to the challenges faced by adolescent girls. Such circumstances may affect their ability to seek help when experiencing gender-based violence, thereby influencing their school participation and overall educational outcomes.

4.3 Forms of Gender-Based Violence Experienced by Adolescent Girls

This section addresses Objective One of the study, which sought to identify the forms of gender-based violence experienced by adolescent girls in Chongwe District. Questions 6 to 16 of the questionnaire examined respondents' experiences of sexual, physical, and emotional/psychological violence.

4.3.1 Sexual Violence

Figure 8 below presents respondents' experiences of **being pressured into sexual activities**.

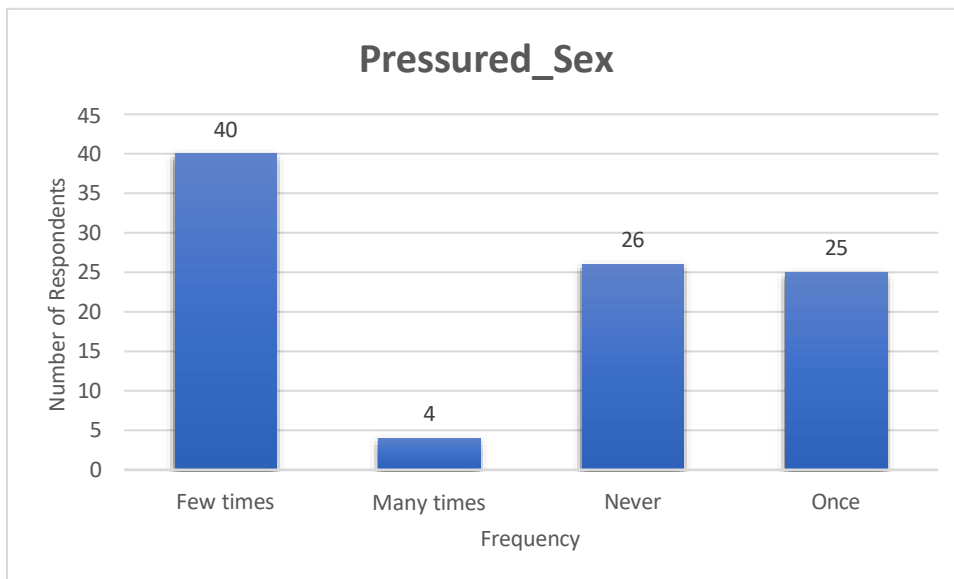


Figure 8: Pressured into Sex

The findings show that 29% of the respondents (n = 29 out of 100) reported that they had been pressured into sexual activities once or many times, while 40% (n = 40) indicated that they had experienced such pressure a few times. In contrast, 26% of respondents (n = 26) reported that they had never experienced pressure to engage in sexual activities.

These findings indicate that a large proportion of respondents reported experiences of sexual pressure, suggesting that coercive sexual interactions are a common experience among adolescent girls in the study area.

Figure 9 below presents experiences of inappropriate touching.

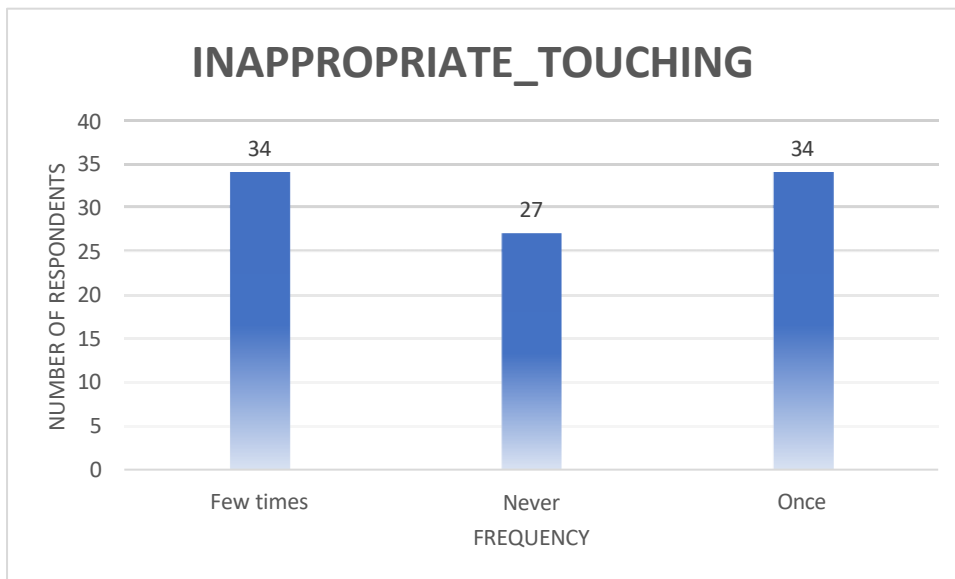


Figure 9: Inappropriate Touching

The results show that 68% of respondents (n = 68) reported that they had experienced inappropriate touching either once or a few times, while a smaller proportion reported that they had never experienced such behaviour. This finding indicates that unwanted physical contact is a form of sexual violence experienced by many adolescent girls in Chongwe District.

Figure 10 below presents respondents' experiences of being threatened in relation to sexual acts, such as being threatened with harm, punishment, or social consequences if they refused sexual advances.

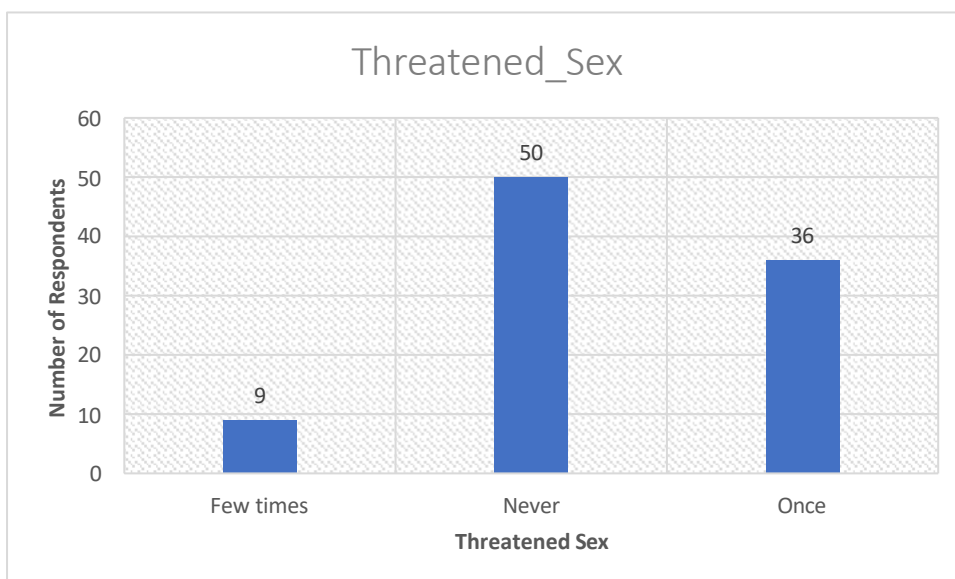


Figure 10: Threatened Sex

The findings show that **45% of respondents (n = 45)** reported that they had experienced **threats related to sexual acts**, while the remaining respondents indicated that they had never encountered such threats.

One respondent explained:

“Sometimes they threaten you and say bad things will happen if you refuse.”

This response illustrates the use of intimidation and coercion in situations involving sexual violence.

4.3.2 Physical Violence

Physical violence also emerged as a notable experience among respondents.

Figure 11 below presents respondents’ experiences of being beaten or physically harmed at home.

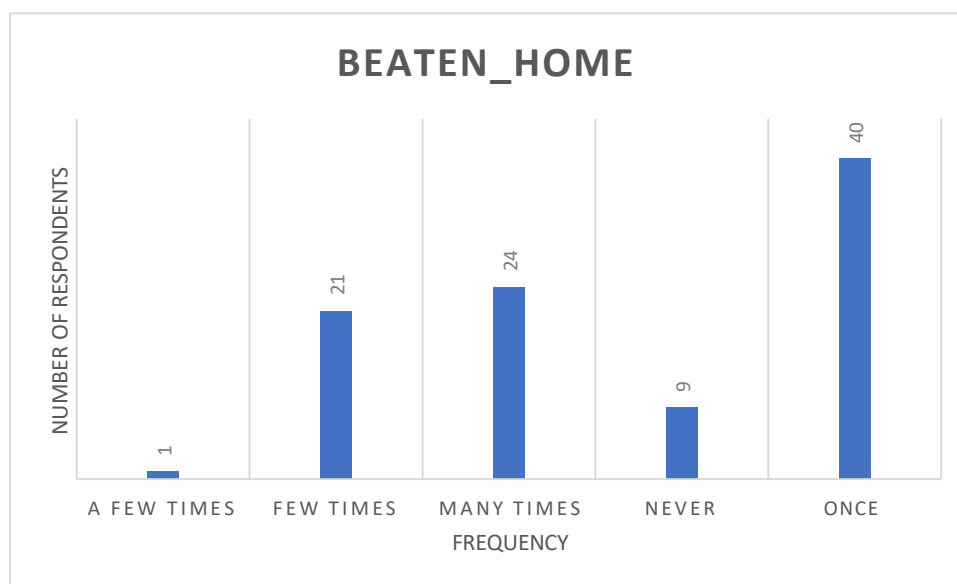


Figure 11: Beaten Home

The results show that 64% of respondents (n = 64) reported experiencing physical harm at home either once or many times, with 40 respondents indicating that it occurred once and 24 respondents reporting repeated incidents. In contrast, 9% of respondents (n = 9) indicated that they had never experienced physical harm at home. These findings indicate that the home environment was reported by many respondents as a setting where physical violence occurs.

Figure 12 below presents respondents’ experiences of physical punishment at school that caused fear or injury.

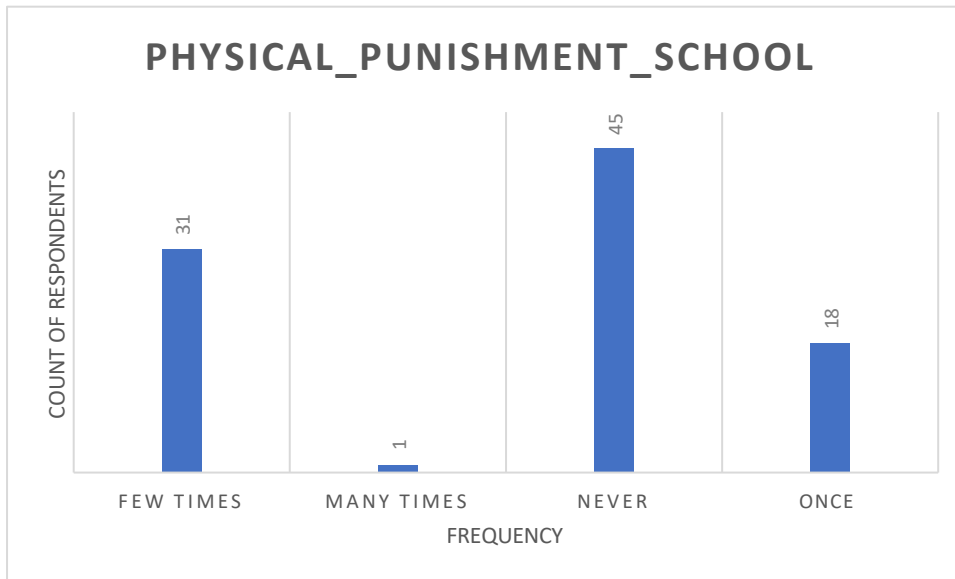


Figure 12: Physical Punishment at School

The findings show that 50% of respondents (n = 50 out of 95) reported that they had experienced physical punishment at school at least once, while 45% (n = 95) reported that they had never experienced such punishment.

Figure 13 below presents respondents' experiences of **physical harm inflicted by peers or intimate partners**.

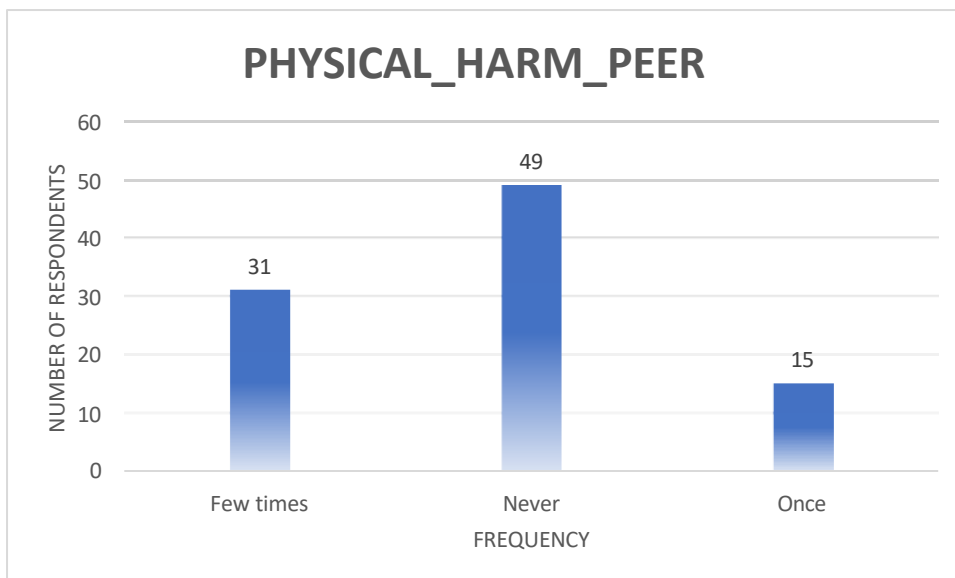


Figure 13: Physical Harm by Peers

The results indicate that 46% of respondents (n = 46) reported experiencing physical harm from peers or partners, while the remaining respondents reported that they had not experienced such incidents.

These findings demonstrate that physical violence experienced by adolescent girls occurs across different environments, including the home, school, and peer relationships.

4.3.3 Emotional and Psychological Violence

Emotional and psychological violence was also widely reported among respondents.

Figure 14 below presents respondents' experiences of **verbal abuse**, such as being insulted, shouted at, or humiliated.

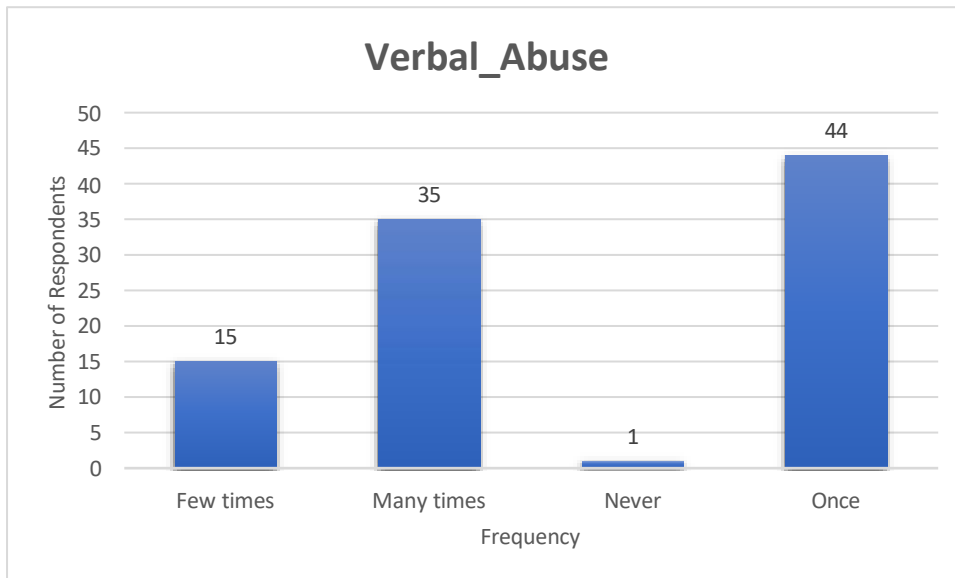


Figure 14: Verbal Abuse

The results show that 79% of respondents (n = 79 out of 100) reported experiencing verbal abuse either once, a few times, or many times, while only a small proportion indicated that they had never experienced such behaviour.

Figure 15 below presents experiences of threats and intimidation.

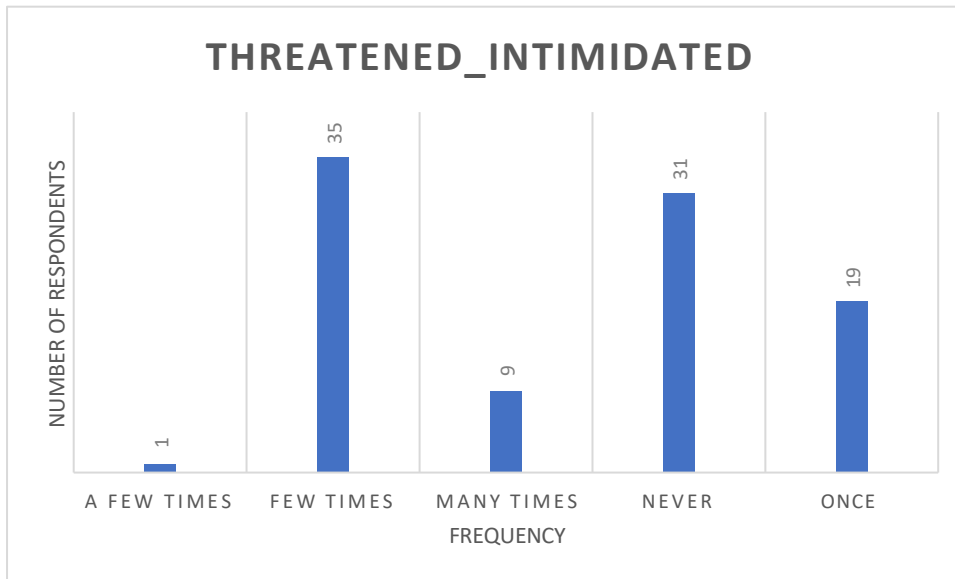


Figure 15: Threatened Intimidated

The findings indicate that **63% of respondents (n = 63)** reported being **threatened or intimidated**, while the remaining respondents indicated that they had not experienced such behaviour.

Figure 16 below presents experiences of **being blamed or shamed**, particularly in situations involving violence or social conflict.

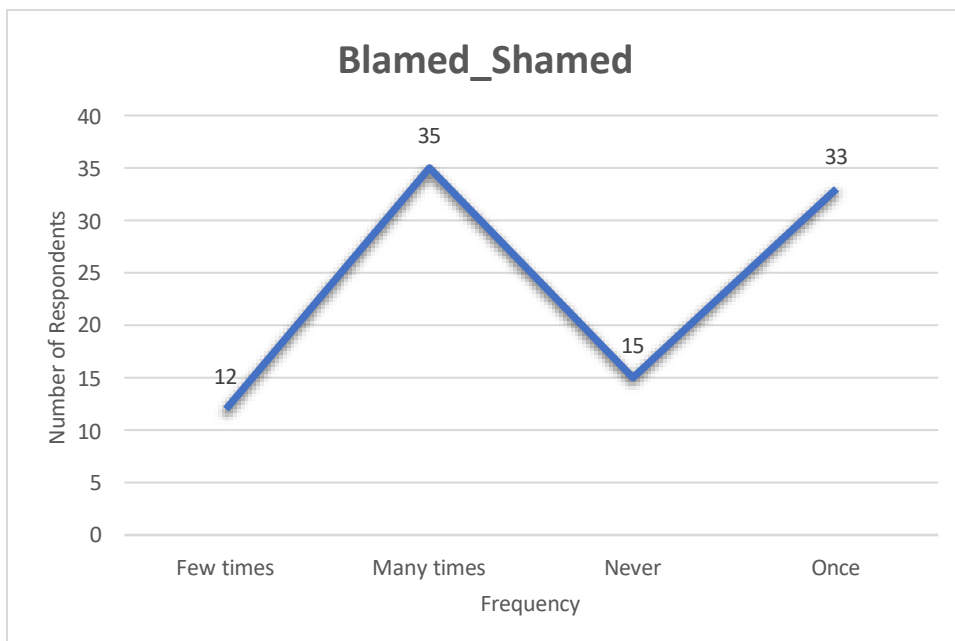


Figure 16: Blamed Shamed

The results show that 80% of respondents (n = 80) reported that they had experienced blame or shaming either once or multiple times.

These results show that a large proportion of respondents reported experiencing emotional and psychological forms of violence, including verbal abuse, intimidation, and social shaming.

4.4 Influence of Gender-Based Violence on School Participation

This section addresses Objective Two, which examined the extent to which gender-based violence contributes to school participation challenges among adolescent girls. The analysis focuses on concentration, attendance, participation, perceived safety, and academic performance.

Figure 17 below presents respondents' views on whether experiences of violence affected their concentration in class.

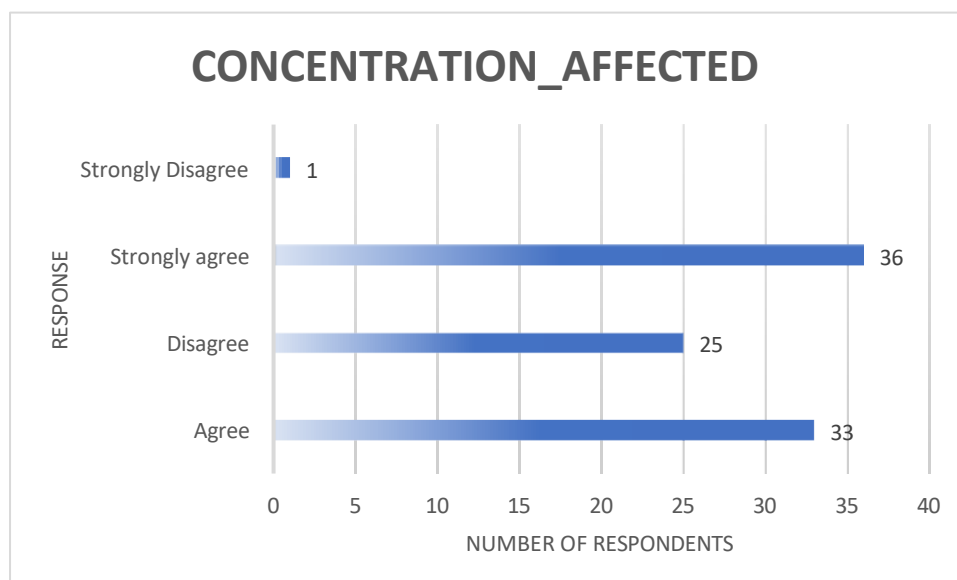


Figure 17: Affected Concentration

The findings show that 67% of respondents (n = 69 out of 95) either agreed or strongly agreed that experiences of violence made it difficult for them to concentrate during lessons.

Figure 18 below presents respondents' views on missing school due to fear of violence.

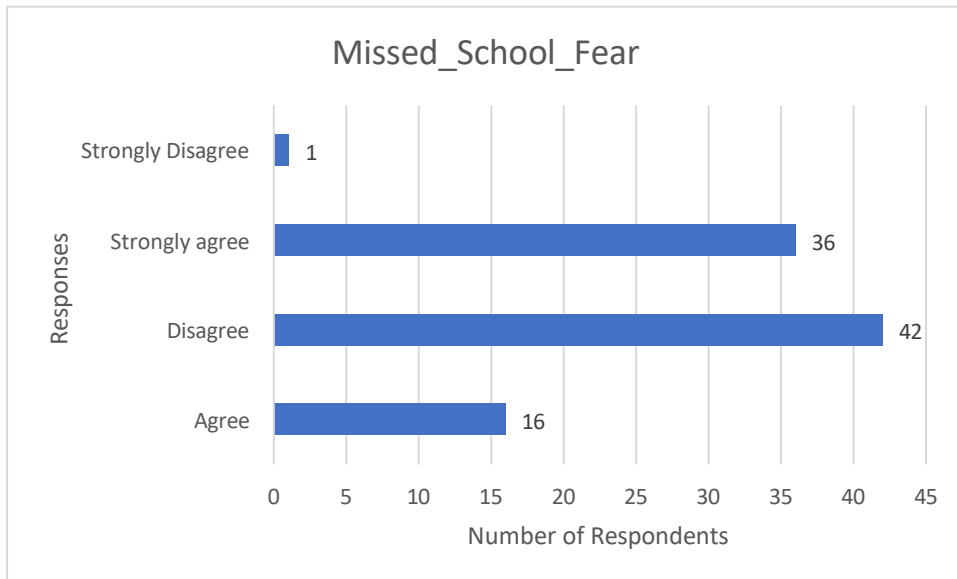


Figure 18: Missed school due to Fear of Violence

The results indicate that 54.7% of respondents (n = 52 out of 95) reported that fear of violence had caused them to miss school at least once, while 45.3% of respondents (n = 43 out of 95) indicated that fear did not influence their school attendance.

Figure 19 below presents respondents' views on participation in classroom activities.

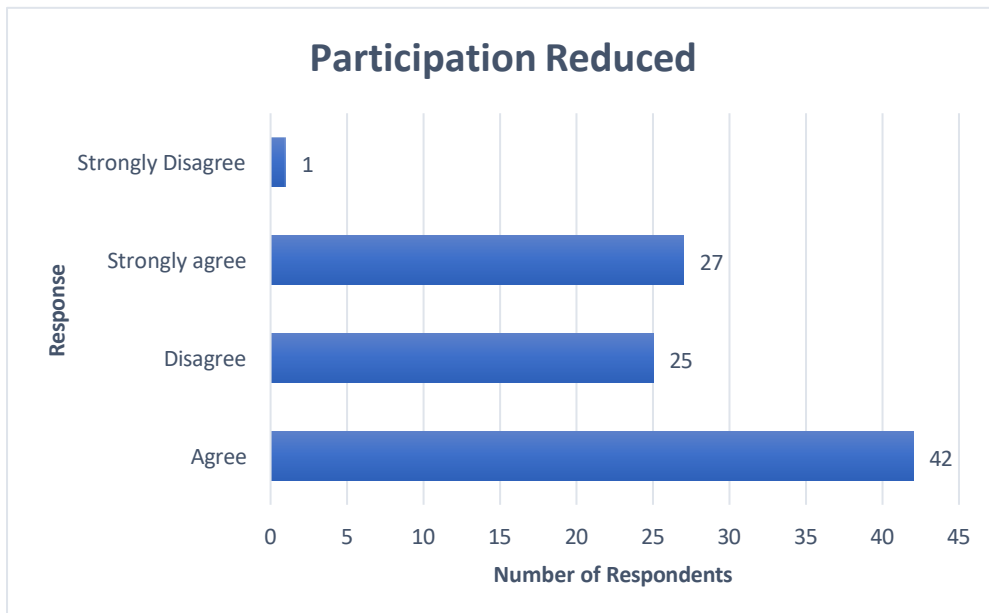


Figure 19: Reduced Participation

The findings show that **72.6% of respondents (n = 69 out of 95)** agreed or strongly agreed that experiences of violence reduced their willingness to participate in classroom activities, while **27.4% (n = 26 out of 95)** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

A respondent explained how such experiences affected her participation:

“When something bad happens to you, it becomes difficult to speak in class or even ask questions because you feel scared and uncomfortable.”

Figure 20 below presents respondents’ perceptions of safety within the school environment.

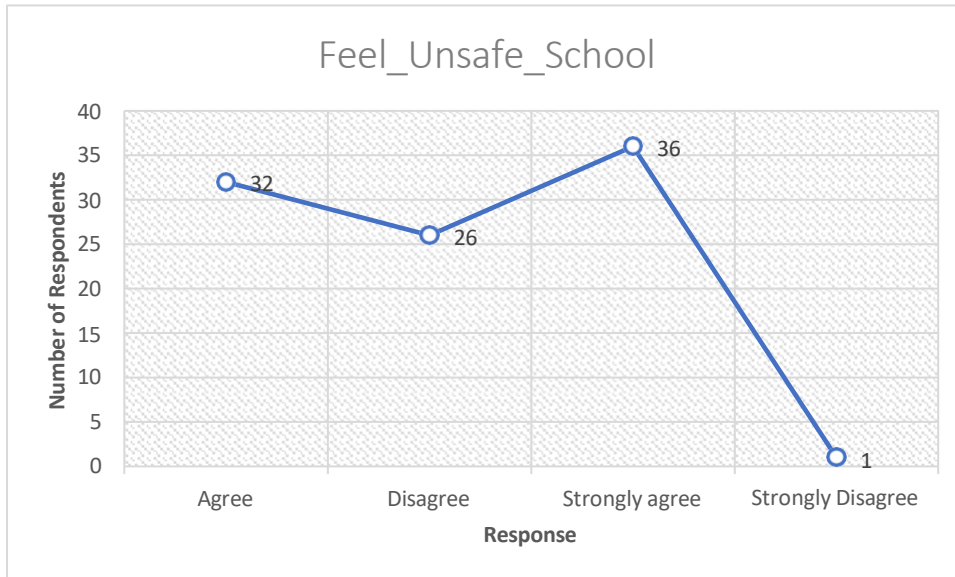


Figure 20: Feel Unsafe at School

The results show that **71.6% of respondents (n = 68 out of 95)** reported that they felt unsafe at school due to harassment or abuse, while **28.4% (n = 27 out of 95)** indicated that they did not feel unsafe.

One respondent noted:

“Sometimes you fear going to certain places at school because some boys disturb girls.”

Figure 21 below presents respondents’ views regarding the impact of violence on academic performance.

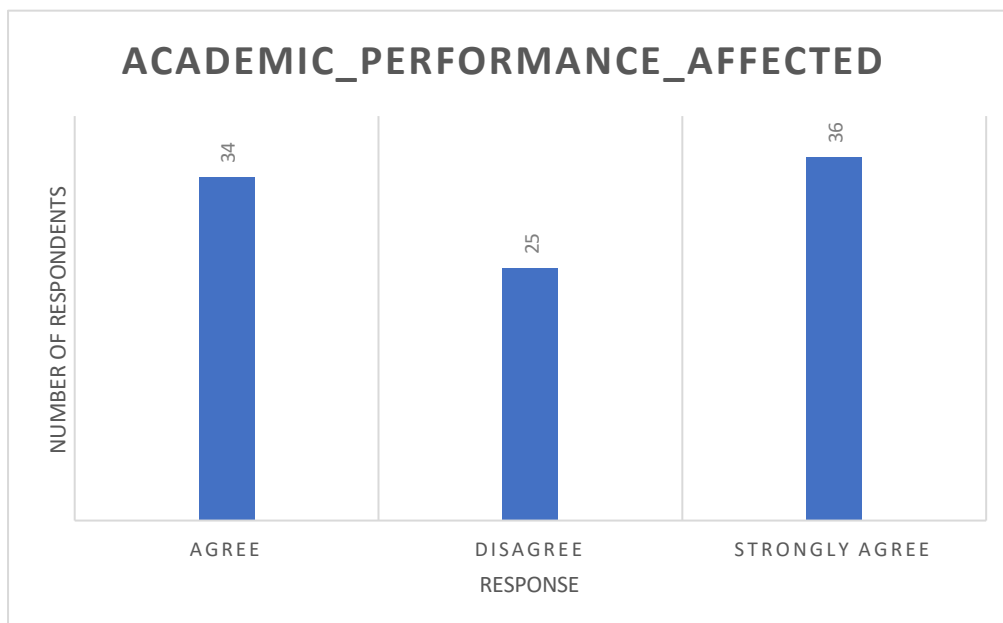


Figure 21: Academic Performance Affected

The findings indicate that 73.7% of respondents (n = 70 out of 95) agreed or strongly agreed that experiences of gender-based violence negatively affected their academic performance, while 26.3% (n = 25 out of 95) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

A respondent stated:

“When you are worried about violence or harassment, it becomes difficult to focus on schoolwork.”

Collectively, these findings indicate that gender-based violence significantly interferes with girls’ ability to engage meaningfully in school. The learning environment becomes a source of anxiety rather than growth, increasing the risk of disengagement and eventual dropout.

4.5 Objective 3: Relationship Between Gender-Based Violence and School Dropout Risk

Objective three examined the perceived relationship between different forms of GBV and the likelihood of school dropout. Figure 22 below presents respondents’ views on whether sexual violence increases the likelihood of school dropout.

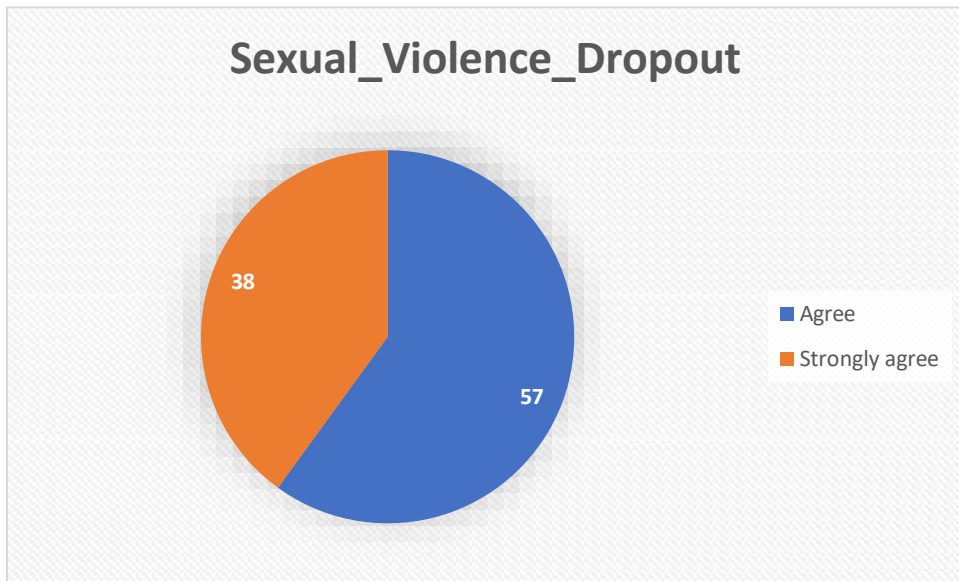


Figure 22: Likelihood of Dropout due to Sexual Violence

The findings show that **90.5% of respondents (n = 86 out of 95)** agreed or strongly agreed that experiences of sexual violence increase the likelihood that girls will drop out of school, while **9.5% (n = 9 out of 95)** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

A participant explained:

“Some girls stop going to school after such experiences because they feel ashamed or afraid.”

Figure 23 below presents respondents’ views on emotional abuse and school dropout.

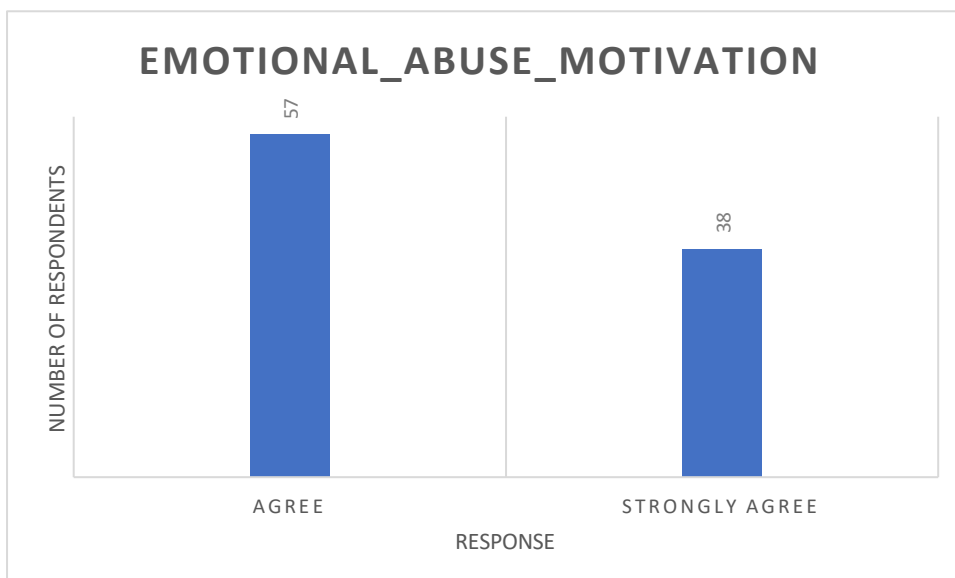


Figure 23: Likelihood of Dropout due to Emotional Abuse

The findings show that 90.5% of respondents (n = 86 out of 95) agreed or strongly agreed that experiences of Emotional abuse increases the likelihood that girls will drop out of school.

The results indicate that a majority of respondents reported that emotional abuse contributes to an increased risk of school dropout.

One respondent noted:

“When people insult you or make you feel worthless, you lose interest in school.”

Figure 24 below presents respondents’ views regarding physical violence and absenteeism.

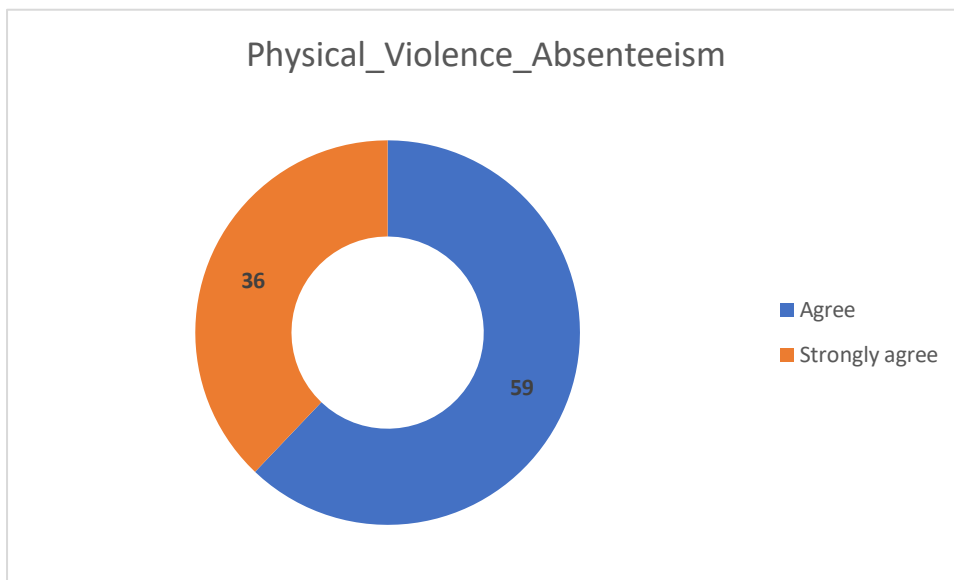


Figure 24: Likelihood of Absenteeism due to Physical Violence

The findings show that **95 respondents reported that physical violence contributes to school absenteeism**, which may increase the risk of eventual school dropout.

A respondent stated:

“If you are beaten or hurt, sometimes you stay home because you are afraid or in pain.”

Figure 25 below presents respondents’ views on experiencing multiple forms of violence.

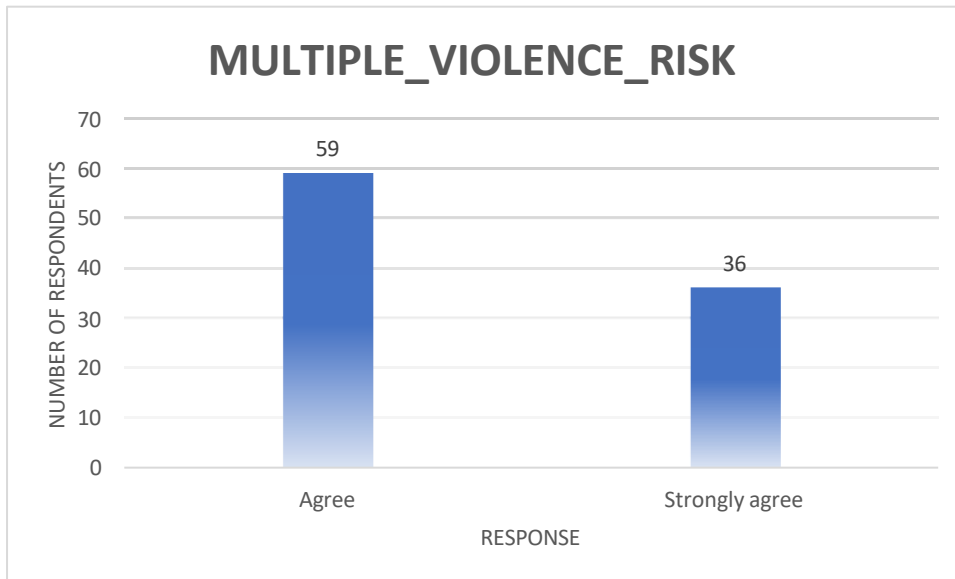


Figure 25: Multiple form of Violence risking Dropout

The results show that **90.5% of respondents (n = 86 out of 95)** agreed or strongly agreed that experiencing multiple forms of violence increases the likelihood of school dropout, while **9.5% (n = 9 out of 95)** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

One participant explained:

“When someone faces many problems like abuse at home and at school, it becomes hard to continue with education.”

4.7 Support Systems and Protection Mechanisms

Questions 32 to 35 assessed awareness and effectiveness of support systems. While 58 respondents reported knowing where to report cases of violence, a significant number (37) did not. Similarly, although many respondents acknowledged the presence of school support systems and teacher responsiveness, a substantial proportion expressed disagreement.

Community protection was also viewed as inadequate by many respondents. These findings suggest that while some support mechanisms exist, gaps remain in accessibility, trust, and effectiveness.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research objectives and the existing literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The discussion interprets the results presented in Chapter Four and examines how the findings relate to previous research on gender-based violence and girls' educational outcomes. The discussion is organised according to the specific objectives of the study. The first section discusses the forms of gender-based violence experienced by adolescent girls in Chongwe District. The second section examines the extent to which gender-based violence affects school participation. The third section analyses the relationship between gender-based violence and the likelihood of school dropout.

5.2 Forms of Gender-Based Violence Experienced by Adolescent Girls

The first objective of the study sought to identify the forms of gender-based violence experienced by adolescent girls in Chongwe District. The findings revealed that respondents experienced multiple forms of violence, including sexual violence, physical violence, and emotional or psychological violence.

The results presented in Chapter Four showed that 69 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing pressure to engage in sexual activities, while 68 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing inappropriate touching at least once. In addition, 45 out of 95 respondents indicated that they had experienced threats related to sexual acts. These findings demonstrate that sexual violence in the form of coercion, harassment, and intimidation is present among adolescent girls in the study area.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that have identified sexual harassment and coercion as common experiences among adolescent girls. For example, UNESCO (2019) found that sexual violence within schools and communities continues to affect girls' safety and educational participation in many developing countries. Similarly, Jewkes et al. (2017) reported that gender power imbalances often contribute to coercive sexual behaviours targeting adolescent girls.

The findings also showed that 64 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing physical violence at home, while 50 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing physical punishment at school

at least once. In addition, 46 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing physical harm from peers or partners. These findings indicate that physical violence occurs across multiple environments, including the home, school, and peer relationships.

These results support the findings of Heise and Kotsadam (2015) who noted that physical violence against girls often occurs in domestic settings where harsh disciplinary practices are normalised. Similarly, UNICEF (2020) reported that violence experienced at home and within schools can significantly affect children's wellbeing and development.

The study further revealed that emotional and psychological violence was also prevalent. Specifically, 79 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing verbal abuse, 63 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing threats or intimidation, and 80 out of 95 respondents reported experiencing blame or shaming. Emotional abuse can have serious psychological effects that influence self-esteem and emotional wellbeing.

These findings are consistent with WHO (2018) which highlights emotional and psychological abuse as one of the most common forms of violence experienced by adolescents, although it often receives less attention than physical or sexual violence.

5.3 Influence of Gender-Based Violence on School Participation

The second objective of the study examined the extent to which gender-based violence influences school participation among adolescent girls. The findings presented in Chapter Four indicate that experiences of violence affect several aspects of school participation, including concentration, attendance, participation in class activities, feelings of safety, and academic performance.

The results showed that 69 out of 95 respondents reported that experiences of violence affected their concentration during lessons. Difficulty concentrating in class may limit students' ability to understand lessons and participate effectively in academic activities.

The findings also revealed that 52 out of 95 respondents reported missing school due to fear of violence. Fear of harassment or abuse can discourage students from attending school regularly, which may eventually lead to academic difficulties and school withdrawal.

In addition, 69 out of 95 respondents reported that experiences of violence reduced their participation in classroom activities, while 68 out of 95 respondents reported feeling unsafe at school due to harassment or abuse. Feelings of insecurity within the school environment may affect students' willingness to engage actively in the learning process.

The findings further showed that 70 out of 95 respondents reported that experiences of gender-based violence negatively affected their academic performance. Psychological distress associated with violence may affect students' ability to concentrate on schoolwork and perform well academically.

These findings are consistent with studies by Leach, Dunne and Salvi (2014) who found that school-related gender-based violence negatively affects girls' attendance, classroom engagement, and learning outcomes. Similarly, Parkes and Heslop (2013) reported that fear and anxiety associated with violence often discourage girls from participating fully in school activities.

5.4 Relationship Between Gender-Based Violence and School Dropout

The third objective of the study analysed the relationship between gender-based violence and the likelihood of school dropout among adolescent girls.

The results showed that 86 out of 95 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that sexual violence increases the likelihood that girls will drop out of school. Sexual violence may lead to emotional trauma, stigma, and fear of further harassment, which can discourage girls from continuing their education.

Similarly, respondents indicated that emotional abuse and physical violence also contribute to school dropout. Emotional abuse can undermine self-confidence and motivation to continue schooling, while physical violence can result in absenteeism or reduced academic engagement.

The findings also revealed that 86 out of 95 respondents agreed that experiencing multiple forms of violence increases the likelihood of school dropout. Exposure to multiple forms of violence may intensify emotional distress and reduce the support systems needed for girls to remain in school.

These findings are consistent with Unterhalter and North (2011) who reported that gender-based violence is a significant barrier to girls' educational retention in many developing countries. Similarly, UNICEF (2021) found that girls exposed to multiple forms of violence are at greater risk of school dropout compared to those who experience fewer forms of violence.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study on the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District.

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study examined the effects of gender-based violence on school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District. The findings revealed that adolescent girls experience multiple forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, physical violence, and emotional or psychological violence.

The study found that 69 respondents reported experiencing pressure to engage in sexual activities, while 68 respondents reported experiencing inappropriate touching. In addition, 45 respondents reported experiencing threats related to sexual acts.

The findings also showed that 64 respondents reported experiencing physical violence at home, 50 respondents reported experiencing physical punishment at school, and 46 respondents reported experiencing physical harm from peers or partners.

Furthermore, emotional and psychological violence was widely reported, with 79 respondents reporting verbal abuse, 63 respondents reporting threats or intimidation, and 80 respondents reporting blame or shaming.

The study also revealed that gender-based violence negatively affects school participation. Specifically, 69 respondents reported difficulty concentrating in class, 52 respondents reported missing school due to fear of violence, 69 respondents reported reduced participation in class activities, 68 respondents reported feeling unsafe at school, and 70 respondents reported that violence affected their academic performance.

Finally, the study found that 86 respondents agreed that sexual violence increases the likelihood of school dropout, while 86 respondents also agreed that experiencing multiple forms of violence increases the risk of school dropout.

6.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that gender-based violence is a major challenge affecting the educational experiences of adolescent girls in Chongwe District. The presence of sexual, physical, and emotional violence in the lives of adolescent girls negatively affects their ability to attend school regularly, participate in classroom activities, and perform well academically.

The study also concludes that gender-based violence contributes to school dropout among adolescent girls through its effects on attendance, academic engagement, and emotional wellbeing. Girls who experience multiple forms of violence are particularly vulnerable to disengaging from education.

6.4 Recommendations

To curb the direct link between gender-based violence (GBV) and school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District, the following multi-stakeholder, evidence-informed recommendations build on existing frameworks like the Anti-GBV Act (2011), Re-entry Policy, Free Education Policy, and recent interventions:

1. Strengthen School-Level Support and Response Mechanisms According to evaluations of school-based programs, trauma-informed counseling is essential for retention; thus, schools should integrate dedicated, full-time trained counselors (at least one per secondary school) offering ongoing psychosocial support and clear referral pathways to One-Stop Centres and health services, as successfully piloted in Chongwe under the GRZ-UN Joint Programme on GBV Phase II (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] Zambia, 2023–2024). A study on teacher preparedness underscores the value of mandatory annual training for educators and administrators on SRGBV identification, response protocols, gender-equitable attitudes, and bystander intervention, incorporating adapted curricula such as UNESCO's *Connect with Respect* program for Eastern and Southern Africa, which promotes respectful relationships and norm change (UNESCO, 2021).

2. Bolster Policy Enforcement and Survivor-Centered Systems As highlighted in national GBV trend analyses, swift enforcement is critical; the government should establish district-level GBV focal points within the Ministry of Education and Zambia Police in Chongwe to monitor Anti-GBV Act compliance and prioritize school-related cases, particularly defilement (Zambia Police Service, 2024). Schools must implement confidential reporting mechanisms—such as anonymous boxes,

hotlines linked to Victim Support Units, and child protection committees—co-designed with girls to minimize stigma and retaliation, drawing from survivor-centered models in the GRZ-UN GBV II programme (UNDP Zambia, 2023–2024).

3. Foster Community and Parental Involvement
Community sensitization remains key to norm change; sustained campaigns via radio, dialogues with traditional leaders, and faith-based platforms should emphasize GBV prevention, girls' education value, and harmful practices like early marriage, similar to the Peace Hut Model's success in shifting attitudes (as referenced in GBV prevention literature). Engaging men and boys as allies through peer groups or sports programs, akin to those in STOP GBV initiatives, can challenge patriarchal norms and encourage support for girls' retention.

4. Implement Comprehensive Whole-School and Multi-Sectoral Strategies
The Keeping Girls in School Empowerment Pilot (2023) demonstrated that club-based models alone yield limited impact; a whole-school approach—combining teacher training, separate and joint safe spaces for girls/boys, parental engagement, and anti-violence policies—is recommended for broader reach and accountability via school leadership and parent-teacher committees (World Bank and partners, 2023–2024 evaluation insights). Multi-sectoral partnerships (Ministry of Education, Gender Division, NGOs like YWCA, UN agencies) should pilot economic empowerment initiatives, such as ICT hubs for skills and income (as established in Chongwe under GRZ-UN GBV II), to tackle poverty-driven vulnerabilities exacerbating GBV and dropout (UNDP Zambia, 2023–2024).

These should feature timelines, assigned responsibilities (MoE for school implementation, MCDSS for community aspects), and indicators (e.g., reduced GBV incidents, higher re-enrollment) for monitoring and scalability.

6.5 Suggestions for Future Research

To build on Chongwe's localised evidence gap, prioritize rigorous studies that inform scalable interventions:

- Longitudinal cohort studies should track long-term psychological (trauma, mental health), educational (completion, performance), and socioeconomic outcomes (employment, violence cycles) for GBV-exposed adolescent girls, comparing intervention recipients to non-recipients.
- Rigorous evaluations (randomised or quasi-experimental) of multi-component interventions—such as whole-school SRGBV programs, safe spaces with economic

empowerment, or teacher training—are needed to assess impacts on dropout, reporting, and norm shifts in peri-urban contexts like Chongwe.

- Intersectional analyses should explore how poverty, disability, and migration influence GBV-driven dropout and Re-entry Policy barriers, using participatory methods to center girls' voices.
- Investigations into digital tools (e.g., ICT hubs for awareness/reporting) and community models (e.g., traditional leader engagement) could evaluate their role in prevention and retention amid post-2024 trends of modest dropout improvements but enduring risks.

These suggestions align with calls for evidence to strengthen policies amid persistent challenges (Ministry of Education, Zambia, 2024; Zambia Police Service, 2024).

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Study Title: *An Investigation of the Effects of Gender-Based Violence on School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Chongwe District, Zambia*

Instructions:

This questionnaire seeks to understand experiences related to safety and schooling. Your responses are confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. Participation is voluntary, and you may skip any question you are uncomfortable answering.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**1. What is your age group?**

- 10–12 years
- 13–15 years
- 16–18 years
- 19 years

2. What is your current schooling status?

- Currently enrolled in school
- Dropped out of school

3. If currently in school, what level are you in?

- Upper primary
- Junior secondary
- Senior secondary

4. If you are no longer in school, what was the highest grade you completed?

- Grade 5 or below
- Grades 6–7
- Grades 8–9
- Grades 10–12

5. Who do you live with most of the time?

- Both parents
- One parent
- Guardian/relative
- Alone

SECTION B: EXPERIENCES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

(Objective 1: To identify common forms of GBV experienced by adolescent girls)

Sexual Violence

6. Have you ever been pressured to engage in sexual activities against your will?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

7. Have you ever been touched inappropriately by an adult or peer?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

8. Have you ever been forced into sexual activity?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

9. Have you ever been threatened to engage in sexual acts?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

Physical Violence

10. Have you ever been beaten or physically harmed at home?

- Never

- Once
- A few times
- Many times

11. Have you experienced physical punishment at school that caused fear or injury?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

12. Have you ever been physically harmed by a partner or peer?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

Emotional and Psychological Violence

13. Have you been repeatedly insulted, humiliated, or verbally abused?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

14. Have you been threatened or intimidated?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

15. Have you been blamed or shamed for things beyond your control?

- Never

- Once
- A few times
- Many times

16. Have you been made to feel unsafe or worthless?

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Many times

SECTION C: GBV AND SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

(Objective 2: To examine how GBV contributes to school dropout)

17. Experiences of violence have made it difficult for me to concentrate in class.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

18. Fear of violence has caused me to miss school.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

19. Experiences of violence have reduced my participation in class activities.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

20. I feel unsafe at school because of harassment or abuse.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

21. Experiences of violence have negatively affected my academic performance.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

SECTION D: GBV AND SCHOOL DROPOUT RISK

(Objective 3: Relationship between GBV forms and dropout likelihood)

22. I have considered dropping out of school because of violence.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

23. Sexual violence increases the likelihood that girls will drop out of school.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

24. Emotional abuse reduces girls' motivation to remain in school.

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

25. Physical violence contributes to absenteeism and school dropout.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

26. Experiencing more than one form of violence increases the risk of school dropout.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

SECTION E: DECISIONS TO DISCONTINUE SCHOOLING

(Objective 4: Influence of GBV on schooling decisions)

27. Experiences of violence have influenced my thoughts about stopping school.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

28. Fear of stigma or shame affects my decision to continue schooling.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

29. Lack of support makes it difficult for girls affected by violence to stay in school.

- Strongly agree

- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

30. Family reactions influence whether girls continue schooling after experiencing violence.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

31. School responses to reported violence affect girls' willingness to remain in school.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

SECTION F: SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND PROTECTION

32. I know where to report cases of violence.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

33. My school has support systems for girls affected by violence.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

34. Teachers take reports of gender-based violence seriously.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

35. Community members help protect girls from violence.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

36. Access to counselling and psychosocial support would help girls remain in school.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

SECTION G: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

37. In your view, how does gender-based violence affect girls' education in your community?

.....

38. What support or interventions would help girls affected by violence to continue their education?

.....

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE (KII)



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Study Title: *An Investigation of the Effects of Gender-Based Violence on School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Chongwe District, Zambia*

Respondent Category:

Teacher

School Administrator

Parent/Guardian

Community Leader

NGO/Government Officer

Interview Date: _____

Interview Location: _____

Interview Code: _____

Introductory Statement

The purpose of this interview is to collect information on how gender-based violence affects school dropout among adolescent girls in Chongwe District. Your participation is voluntary, and all responses will be kept confidential.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Please describe your role in relation to adolescent girls' education in Chongwe District.

2. How long have you served in this role?

SECTION B: FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

(Objective 1)

3. What forms of gender-based violence are commonly experienced by adolescent girls in this community?

4. Where do these forms of violence mostly occur (home, school, community, relationships)?

5. Which group of girls appears most vulnerable, and why?

SECTION C: GBV AND SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

(Objective 2)

6. In what ways does gender-based violence affect girls' school attendance and participation?

7. Have you encountered cases where GBV led to absenteeism or poor academic performance? Please explain.

SECTION D: SPECIFIC FORMS OF GBV AND SCHOOL DROPOUT

(Objective 3)

8. Which forms of GBV do you think contribute most to school dropout among girls?

9. How do sexual violence and early pregnancy influence girls' continuation in school?

10. How does emotional or psychological abuse affect girls' motivation to stay in school?

SECTION E: DECISION-MAKING AND MEDIATING FACTORS

(Objective 4)

11. What factors influence girls' decisions to discontinue schooling after experiencing GBV?

12. How do family and school responses shape these decisions?

SECTION F: SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND INTERVENTIONS

13. What support mechanisms exist for GBV-affected girls in Chongwe District?

14. What challenges limit the effectiveness of these support systems?

SECTION G: RECOMMENDATIONS

15. What strategies would you recommend to reduce GBV-related school dropout?

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) GUIDE – ADOLESCENT GIRLS



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Study Title: *An Investigation of the Effects of Gender-Based Violence on School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Chongwe District, Zambia*

Group Type:

In-School Girls Out-of-School Girls

Date: _____

Location: _____

Number of Participants: _____

Introductory Statement

This discussion aims to understand girls' experiences related to safety, violence, and schooling. Please share freely. All discussions are confidential.

SECTION A: GENERAL EXPERIENCES

1. How safe do girls feel in school and in the community?

2. What challenges make it difficult for girls to remain in school?

SECTION B: EXPERIENCES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

(Objective 1)

3. What types of violence or harassment do girls commonly experience?

4. Where do these experiences mostly occur?

SECTION C: GBV AND SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

(Objective 2)

5. How do these experiences affect school attendance and participation?

6. Have you seen girls stop attending school because of violence or fear? Please explain.

SECTION D: GBV AND SCHOOL DROPOUT DECISIONS

(Objectives 3 & 4)

7. What makes girls decide to drop out of school after experiencing violence?

8. How do pregnancy, stigma, or family pressure influence these decisions?

SECTION E: SUPPORT AND COPING MECHANISMS

9. Where do girls seek help after experiencing violence?

10. How supportive are schools when girls report GBV cases?

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS

11. What support would help girls remain in school despite GBV experiences?

12. What changes should be made to make schools safer for girls?

**APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) GUIDE – COMMUNITY
WOMEN / MOTHERS’ GROUPS**



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Study Title: *An Investigation of the Effects of Gender-Based Violence on School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Chongwe District, Zambia*

Date: _____

Location: _____

Number of Participants: _____

SECTION A: COMMUNITY NORMS AND GBV

1. How is gender-based violence viewed in this community?

2. What cultural or social practices expose girls to violence?

SECTION B: GBV AND EDUCATION

3. How does GBV affect girls' schooling in this community?

4. How do families respond when a girl experiences GBV?

SECTION C: SUPPORT SYSTEMS

5. What community support systems exist for GBV-affected girls?

6. What barriers prevent girls from accessing support?

SECTION D: RECOMMENDATIONS

7. What role can families and women’s groups play in preventing school dropout?

8. What interventions would be most effective in Chongwe District?
