"Access to Tertiary Education"

Exploring the Experiences of Women with Physical Disabilities in Kamwala, Zambia.

A Mini-Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Arts, Women's and Gender Studies Department,

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA Degree in Women and Gender Studies.

UNIVERSITY *of the*

WESTERN CAPE

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DECLARATION

I, Luyeye Hope Matambo, hereby declare that this Master Mini-Thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other University and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Luyeye Hope Matambo

OCTOBER 2017

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Signed

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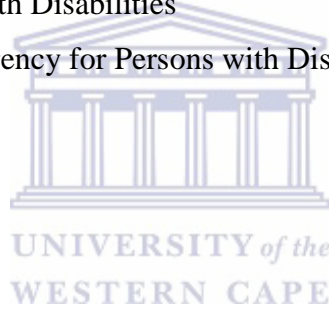Finally, I want to thank GOD for his abundant favour and mercy.

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ABSTRACT

Women with disabilities are marginalised in many aspects of societal participation. The majority of women with disabilities in Zambia do not have access to education and this has placed them amongst the poorest of people in the country. The study focuses on the experiences of women with physical disabilities and investigates the challenges they encounter in accessing education at tertiary level. The study comes at a time when the fight for gender equality has gained momentum and aims at promoting economic participation for all members of society without discrimination on the basis of sex or disability. The study engaged ten participants from a tertiary institution in Kamwala, Lusaka. I conducted a feminist qualitative research, which focused on the experiences of 19-30 year old female students with physical disabilities. I used semi-structured interviews in order to collect the data and drew on a qualitative thematic analysis to analyse the data. All standard ethical procedures were adhered to, including anonymity and confidentiality with respect to participants. The results of the study revealed that women with disabilities were often 'othered' due to myths and misconceptions that surrounded disability especially in the African- traditional context. The study also revealed that families played a very important role in ensuring that women and young girls with disabilities had a strong self-image, strong self-esteem and a strong sense of self and ensuring that they felt included within the homes and especially when accessing education. The study further revealed that where family support was lacking, participants faced challenges in accessing education compared to participants who received such support. More so, that educational opportunities in Zambia are generally gendered with more males than females in the education system, across the multiple levels. Access to the tertiary level for this group of women is compromised because challenges in accessing education start at the lower levels and have spill over effects in to the higher levels of education. Financial challenges experienced by women with disabilities and their families also led to fewer women with disabilities being able to participate in schooling. This is because where there were limited resources within the family, women, and girls with disabilities getting an education was not an option.

Key Words: *Women, physical disabilities, access, tertiary education, gender, Lusaka, Zambia, lived experiences, subjective knowledge, feminist qualitative research*

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFA	Education for All
G12	Grade 12
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
ICF	International Classification of Functioning
IGCSE	International General Certificate of School Education
MWD	Men with Disabilities
PWD	People with Disabilities
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities
UNZA	University of Zambia
WHO	World Health Organisation
WWD	Women with Disabilities
ZAPD	Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities

CHAPTER 1

1.   INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Disability is recognised as one of the most potent factors creating educational marginalisation for women and children with disabilities around the world (UNESCO, 2010). The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that 80% of people living with disabilities (PWD) globally live in low income countries (WHO, 2005) where societal and cultural beliefs' views of disability are rife with notions of lack and an inability to perform and function in economic activities. PWD are often portrayed as "different", "tragic" or in need of help (ILO, 2006 p.10) and women in particular are often the most vulnerable with regards to these perceptions. As a result, disability has in many countries, been counted as a category of 'non-participation' in economic activity (Brown, 2003) which makes PWD a particularly marginalised group and amongst the poorest in society. Furthermore, economic activity rates tend to be lower for women than for men. The report further indicated that the rates tend to be even lower for women with disabilities (WWD) as compared to men with disabilities (MWD) (Brown, 2003). Thus WWD are no exception to beliefs about them being regarded as weaker and especially more vulnerable when compared to MWD and able bodied people. Consequently, WWD have been greatly marginalised especially due to the gendered roles assigned to the way women and men interact within the social environment (Butler, 1990). Cultural attitudes in patriarchal societies often dictate that women are inferior and should take up subordinate roles to men (de Beauvoir, 1949). Thus the position of inferiority placed on women and that especially placed on WWD has resulted in them being excluded from many aspects of societal life, including in the education system.

1.1   Defining Disability

The growing body of knowledge in the field of disability studies has brought about on-going debates about the social, political, cultural as well as economic factors that affect and define disability. The way in which society relates to people living with a disability is largely influenced by past experiences and the way in which disability is understood (Barton, 1996). Disability can be defined in many different ways depending on where, how and in what context it is understood. I recently came across an interesting article by Suzannah Weiss titled "The surprising reason the WHO wants to call being single a disability". I was not only

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intrigued by this title but was curious to find out in what context the WHO was looking at this. In her article, Weiss pointed out that officials of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in October 2016 announced that being single is now considered a disability by justifying that single men and women who aspire to have their own families and offspring but are unable to find partners are considered disabled (Weiss, 2016). As unorthodox as this may be, it illustrates how definitions of disability change across time and space (JICA, 2015; Mohamed & Shefer, 2015; FOTIM, 2011), making it difficult to define.

The World Health Organisation uses the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) to define disability as a generic term that includes impairments in body functions and structures, activity limitation and participation restrictions (WHO, 1980). In an earlier report, the WHO used disability as an umbrella term for three distinct forms of bodily dysfunctions; namely impairment, disability and handicap. "An impairment is defined as any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function (p.47); a disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being (p.143); and a handicap is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or a disability, that prevents the fulfilment of a role that is considered normal" (p.183).

For the most part, feminism had side lined issues dealing with disability thereby resulting in the experiences of PWD being largely un-researched (Beleza, 2003). Nevertheless, feminist scholars such as Garland-Thomas, 2001; Asch, 2001; Linton, 1998; Butler, 1990; Burr, 1995, have brought to light the intricate relationship of PWD and their social environment giving rise to feminist disability studies. These scholars all agree that feminist disability studies raise issues that indicate that the personal is political and that disability should be viewed from the context of the social political arena. The social political arena directs feminists understanding of disability to the social model which redefines disability as being a result of the social conditions surrounding PWD and not of the medical model that views them as the sick to be cared for. The social model illustrates that bodies are constrained by societies and not the physical, mental or intellectual constraints as dictated by the medical model. I will look at both the social and medical models in depth in the second chapter. Feminist disability studies interpret disability as a cultural rather than an individual or medical issue and insist on examining power relations rather than assigning deviance (Garland-Thomas, 2001, p.5). These power relations connote the existing relationship between how social institutions are

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structured and how power relations exclude the effective and inclusive participation of people living with disabilities. Power relations also examine how those viewed as inferior such as WWD are positioned against those who are deemed superior.

In this study, I will look at disability through a dual lens. I will look at WWD through the scope of the social model which emphasises that people are disabled not because of their bodily deficiencies, but because of the way society through its interactions, conversations and understandings of things around them disables them (Wendell, 2006; Garland-Thomas, 2002; Garland-Thomas, 2001; Shakespeare, 1996). The social model of disability is the foundation on which my research is modelled and is equally the standpoint from which my arguments are based. I will also look at the physical disabilities experienced by the target group of 10 WWD, which includes women with physical hindrances in their upper limb(s); lower limb(s), visual or hearing disability as well as speech impediments (Disabled World towards tomorrow, 2017). I focus on the women with physical disabilities because they have a higher representation among women living with disabilities in Zambia (CSO, 2010). An argument for this could be attributed to the absence of data collection mechanisms on women with mental and psychological disabilities leaving these disabilities unaccounted for in the national records. My thesis thus looks at how being a woman with a disability negatively affects education opportunities and outcomes consequently limiting employment chances.

1.2   A Global Overview of Women Living With Disabilities

Globally, it is evident that women are more likely to become disabled during their lifetime compared to men. This is due to the gender bias towards women in the allocation of resources such as health care services, education opportunities and employment that exclude women from access (Clarke, 2014; Emment & Allant, 2006). The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that there are around 600,000,000 people globally that have some form of disability (WHO, 2011). In the global north, the total number of people living with disabilities tends to differ across the various geographical spaces. In Europe, available data from 33 countries revealed that of a total population of 16.2 million women, 3.8% are living with a disability. In Australia, 20.1% of the country's female population have a disability while in America approximately 50% of women aged 60 and above had a disability (Leonardi et al., 2014). These statistics reveal that there is a fairly large population in the global north that live with a disability and their rights and freedoms cannot be overlooked nor ignored. However, what is

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interesting to note though is that these are not a true reflection of the total number of all persons with disabilities. Leornardi et al., (2014) further argue that disability population surveys only include a small number of items related to functioning and as such inquire about impairments such as physical and mental disabilities excluding all others. A large population of disabled people globally has thus gone unnoticed and unrecorded, calling for a broader spectrum of inquiry in the disability population surveys. The highest numbers of people living with disabilities globally live in low income countries, (WHO, 2005; WHO, 2011). The majority of these low income countries are located in the global south where the prevalence of poverty is high. Interestingly, most developed countries statistics reveal that there are more women living with disabilities compared to men living with disabilities due to a larger aging female population (Leornardi et al., 2014; World Report on Disability, 2011); On the other hand, in developing countries the picture is slightly different with MWD reportedly being more than WWD. The reason for this is that WWD are invisible in the sense that they are more confined to the home with reports about them being left out of national records (Munyi, 2012; Birn, 2011; Kiani, 2009).

Despite the various statistics globally, PWD often lag behind in various areas such as education and employment which are vital for their economic social transformation. For instance children and girls with disabilities are among the most marginalised when it comes to educational opportunity at all levels (Rousso, 2003). Typically the global situation indicates that children with disabilities compared to non-disabled children have limited access to education while in developing countries the situation is more significant (Clark & Sawyer, 2014; WHO, 2011). There is more importance placed on boys with disabilities than is placed on girls with disabilities and as such girls with disabilities are the most marginalised and less likely to enrol in and complete their basic education because their rights are often denied (Clarke & Sawyer, 2014, p. 7), creating gender gaps in the access to education between men and women with disabilities. Children and girls with disabilities encounter numerous challenges in their access to basic or primary education which offers a foundation in maths, science as well as basic knowledge (Clarke & Sawyer, 2014; World Bank Report, 2011; Fiduccia & Wolfe, 1999) on how to understand life around them. These gender gaps tend to widen the higher the educational hierarchy, leaving more women out of the education system compared to their fellow male counterparts.

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In light of this, the advancement towards the fight for gender parity through the feminist movement globally has made tremendous efforts in narrowing these gender gaps. Unfortunately, women living with disabilities have seemingly been left out of the feminist and disability struggle because issues to do with women and those to do with disability have ignored specific experiences that deal with women living with disabilities (Traustadottir, 1990; Asch & Fine, 1988; Morris, 1998). The feminist movement did not take into consideration much of the varying intersecting identities of women prior the 1960's. WWD compared to able bodied women did not share in the same struggles when it came to dealing with life situations that confronted them. For instance, prior to this period, able bodied women had no power over their own birth control methods and abortion was illegal, while at the same time WWD were in some instances, forcibly sterilised and coerced into abortion as they were seen as asexual beings with fear of them bearing children with disabilities (Saxton, 1998; Aronowsky, 2010).

Women, both able bodied and disabled, in many places were denied access to education, for they were raised to aspire to marriage, become housewives and look after affairs of the home. They were also deemed subordinate to men and therefore made to do menial jobs which confined them to the household. However, by the 1970's with the growing momentum of the feminist movement by activist such as Betty Friedman, women were now able to access education on an equal footing with men (Noltemeyer et al., 2012). Regrettably, WWD's progress and inclusion in the education system developed at a much slower rate leaving them lagging behind in the numerous opportunities. Hence, the experiences and struggles of women received varying degrees of attention. Notably the feminist movement skewed its attention to improving the position, needs and wants of the able bodied women neglecting those of WWD. It could be argued that there was and still is a high incidence to homogenise women's experiences because WWD are considered as a deviant to the norm with their issues not considered as important. Either way, the realisation that the feminist movement ignored the struggles of women living with disabilities gave rise to feminist disability studies which were pioneered by scholars such as Judith Butler, Garland-Thomas, Kim Hall, Vivienne Burr & Lorber.

Disability studies on the global front have largely emerged from the global north particularly in contexts such as America, Australia and Britain where experiences of people and especially women with disabilities have emerged. However, in the global south especially in

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African countries like Zambia, the picture of WWD is different. Much of the work on feminist disability studies done in the global north informs upcoming studies that are slowly emerging in the global south. I shall unpack these studies and debates more in chapter two.

Despite the advancement towards the access to education for women in general, there are still pervasive gender inequalities in the access to education between able bodied women and WWD who are seen to be further discriminated (Stromquist, 1990; Ruosso, 2003). Over the past several decades with the coming of the second-wave of feminism, education opportunities for women have steadily improved (Stromquist, 1989; 1990). Nonetheless, women still continue to reveal lower levels of education than men. Serious gender disparities still exist in West Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East regions in which the proportion of women with no education is greater than that of men (Sivard, 1985; UNESCO, 1988). Furthermore, most countries, developing as well as developed, show considerable gender disparities at the university level with enrolment rates of women significantly lower than those of men (Stromquist, 1990, p.4).

Education opportunities for girls and WWD have suggested that there are fewer opportunities for those entering the education system compared to their able bodied counterparts (Clark & Sawyer, 2014; World Bank Report, 2011). On the other hand, education opportunities for WWD in developed countries suggest that compared to those in less developed countries the percentage of WWD in developed countries is higher at postsecondary level. As highlighted earlier, I would like to bring the discussion closer to home and look at a broad overview of the access to education in the Zambian context.

1.3   Overview of the Education of WWD in Zambia

Education is a fundamental human right that is enshrined in many international human rights instruments aimed at eliminating the gender inequalities in education (Chishimba et al., 2013). It is a basic human right that should be made available to all regardless of status, race, religion, gender and disability (Mumba, 2009). The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is one such international instrument that obliges states "*to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure equal rights with men in the field of education, and in particular to ensure on the basis of equality of men and women…*"(CEDAW, 1979).

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The Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) has made considerable strides towards the improvement of educational opportunities for girls and women in Zambia through various legislative enactments. A number of policies have been implemented that ensure that girls and women have equal access to education as men do thus narrowing the gender disparities in schools. One such adopted policy, Education for All (EFA) which provides free basic education for children in primary school has seen an increase in the entry into the school system especially for girls. However, I must point out that despite the strides made towards improving access to education especially for girls in Zambia, they still experience barriers and bottlenecks that exclude them form participation into school resulting from lack of finances and family support from parents, early childhood marriages and teenage pregnancies (UNESCO, 2006; Kainuwa & Yusuf, 2013).

With the increased fight for gender equality, the number of females entering the education system has been observed to be steadily increasing over the years resulting in the reduction in gender disparities especially at the primary level (Simwaba, 2008; Mumba, 2009). However, considering completion rates for both male and females, there are disparities in completion at the various stages. According to a report on gender specific data from a national census conducted in Zambia, the Ministry of Education through the Central Statistics Office recorded that at junior secondary school 51.85% of male pupils completed Grade 9 (G9) while 54.61% of female pupils completed school at the same level (Gender Statistics Report-Zambia, 2010). It is interesting to note though that the percentage of girls compared to boys at junior secondary was much higher than that of boys. The higher numbers of girls at junior secondary could be attributed to the implementation of EFA, which introduced free education for children and especially girls at primary level. This contributed to the higher rates of entry and retention for girls and women into the school system.

Another policy that GRZ through the Ministry of Education has implemented is the Re-Entry Policy which mandates schools to allow girls who previously left due to pregnancy back into the school system (Gender Statistics Report-Zambia, 2010, p.9). Efforts towards implementation of policies such as the EFA and the School Re-Entry Policy have also been established in order to safeguard the future of girls and women through education with the aim to break the cycle of poverty that females are usually trapped in. There is no doubt that

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once education opportunities for women are improved, they are better placed to make informative decisions about their lives.

Although women and girls have improved access to education opportunities, they still face pervasive barriers arising from household obligations to early marriages and pregnancies that exclude girls from participation in school. The gender statistics report also revealed that at senior secondary school level the percentage of males and females drastically dropped. The report indicated that completion rates for males at Grade 12 (G12) were 35.66% compared to 27.83% for their female counterparts. I would like to point out here that although completion rates from junior to senior secondary for both male and female pupils dropped drastically, there is a more significant drop for females which drives the point that there is need to determine the factors that see more women drop out of school and how access at tertiary level is further limited. The intention of my thesis is, therefore, to analyse and examine these factors that affect a woman's, particularly, a woman with a disability's participation and completion of education especially at the tertiary level. It can be argued that the drastic drop from 54.61% at G9 to 27.83% at G12 is as a result of the compounding issues that force females out of the school system, some of which have been mentioned previously. Other reasons could be that between G9 and G12, typically, these girls are much older and are able to handle more demanding chores around the house giving more reason as to why they are forced to stay away from school. Ultimately, this results in lower numbers of the females completing. The same gender statistics report states that at tertiary level, the picture in terms of completion rate is the same. The number of females receiving tertiary or vocational education is less than that of their male counterparts. In the same report however, statistics reveal that though the number of enrolled females has always been lower than that of males, universities reported that there were improved female student enrolments year after year. The increase in female student enrolments especially at tertiary level is a positive move towards ensuring that women can be contributors in the economic space and also be drivers of social change.

Unfortunately, there are not many documented reports on similar evidence for women with disabilities and their access to education. Many reasons could be offered for the lack of evidence for WWD's opportunities especially at the tertiary level such as the under-reporting of WWD both at community as well as national level, thereby leaving them out of national records. This is mostly because women as well as men with disabilities are virtually invisible
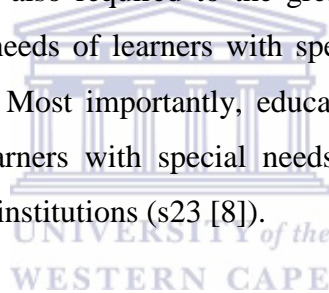
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and hardly brought into the public arena by both families and communities. Other reasons could be due to the fact that experiences of PWD are homogenised and therefore, their specific challenges and experiences are subsumed into that of their fellow able bodied counterparts. In actual fact, experiences of discrimination against WWD can no longer be generalised under those of able bodied or those that PWD are confronted with. Specific attention needs to be given to the factors that result in less access to education such as lack of finances and support at the family level, risk of sexual abuse and harassment towards girls increasing their chances of contracting HIV/AIDS, and the general marginalisation they experience as a result of their disability. How these factors inform choices and opportunities presented to WWD is also largely determined by how society views disability.

Therefore, because the social world around us dictates that disability is 'not a desirable condition' and that women are 'inferior', our understanding and interaction with people and women living with disabilities is influenced by these beliefs. Thus for a family that lacks finances for instance, the decision whether to pay for education for a woman with a disability or not, brings into question two things. Firstly, what their understanding of disability is especially from the social context and secondly, what their beliefs and relationships with women are and the importance placed on educating a woman. If indeed disability is understood from the context of not being able to function properly and that the role of a WWD is only as good as that of looking after the home then the decision to educate such a woman would not present itself as an option to such families. This brings into question what legislation and policy frameworks protecting the rights of PWD in Zambia are and how these are implemented at the grassroots level.

1.4   Legislative and Policy Framework on Disability in Zambia

The GRZ has made great strides in its efforts to improve the access to EFA, especially for women and girls who have always lagged behind in the development process (Mumba, 2009). Aside from CEDAW, GRZ is also a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which was established to safeguard the wellbeing of all PWD and ensure their access to good housing, health and education among other things (ILO, 2006). In particular, the Zambian Education Act No 23 of 2011 refers to the right to education and stipulates that this right is applicable regardless of gender. However, it does not contain express provisions that specifically ensure that PWD and

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particularly WWD are able to access education freely. As a way to mitigate the shortcomings of the Education Act No. 23 of 2011, the Act was repealed, and has since been passed in parliament. The preamble to the Act, which states the purpose thereof, provides that the Act shall seek to promote equity in access to education, participation in and successful completion of education at all levels, irrespective of gender, social class or disability. In particular, the Act provides that for purposes of ensuring equality of access to, participation and the benefit of educational institutions for learners with special education needs, the Minister responsible for education shall promote interventions at all levels of the educational institutions (Education Act s23 [1]). Further, the Act provides that the Minister for education, in collaboration with the Minister for health, is to establish a decentralised system for the identification, diagnosis and assessment for the placement of learners with special education needs in educational institutions (s23 [2][i]). Educational institutions are mandated under the Act to adopt affirmative action admission policies in favour of special needs learners (s23 [4]). Educational institutions are also required to the greatest extent possible, to take into account the specific rights and needs of learners with special needs and where applicable, those of their parents (s23 [3]). Most importantly, educational institutions are required to provide quality education to learners with special needs in appropriately designed, well resourced and adequately staffed institutions (s23 [8]).

Although the Education Act refers to learners with special needs in general, the preamble thereto is express in providing that the Act applies to all persons irrespective of gender. Thus, the Act does offer a positive framework within which women with disabilities can access education without discrimination.

In addition to the progressive provisions addressing the specific needs of PWD learners under the Education Act, the Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 6 of 2012 of the Laws of Zambia also clearly stipulates issues regarding access to education for PWD. The Act is responsible for the establishment of the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disability (ZAPD) which is responsible for the overall matters concerning disabled people in Zambia. The Act expressly prohibits the discrimination against disabled persons in institutions of learning.

While it is noteworthy that there is legislation that seeks to address the shortfalls in the provision of and access to quality education for PWD, there remain gaps in the practical implementation of the various provisions of the Acts, particularly at the grassroots level in

institutions that provide learning to PWD and in particular, WWD. There continues to be discriminatory practices against PWD in such institutions. Such practises are predominantly advanced towards WWD who are the most vulnerable in institutions of learning.

This means that government policies exist that accord people with disabilities rights to education as much as able bodied people, but they are not bound by law and thereby making such directives only exist on paper with no execution framework. Without successful implementation of such laws discriminatory practices will continue to persist. It is important for me to highlight here that at the backbone of discriminatory practices towards individuals living with disabilities is the family unit.

Many times discrimination towards PWD starts within the home and these practices extend to the wider community and into schools. Teachers and students form part of the family and community unit and as such their attitudes towards and understandings of disability as influenced by these units extend to the school environment perpetuating discrimination within the education system. Due to the prevalent cultural beliefs, WWD are more at risk of these discriminatory practices and as such are likely to be excluded from the education system. School entry for girls and WWD in Zambia has revealed that over time higher educational hierarchies have fewer numbers of WWD accessing education (Simwaba, 2008). Reasons that exclude WWD from access range from gendered, cultural and societal connotations which limit their participation in the development process. Education opportunities for WWD have continued to decline especially at the higher levels because entry at primary level plus retention and completion gaps to secondary and tertiary education is compromised. In Sub-Saharan Africa WWD continue to experience constraints in participating in post-secondary education because access at primary level and secondary level is greatly hampered. These constraints to educational achievement have subsequent implications on the individual development of WWD and the continent's overall development (Amutabi, 2003; Sifuna, 2006). Of importance to the continents overall development is the inclusion of persons' with disabilities into every aspect of economic activity.

Throughout my thesis I make the assertion that PWD are disabled only by the social environment around them and not by their capabilities and that there is need for a move towards the adaptation of our social world in order to accommodate PWD. The thesis also asserts that barriers that hinder the effective participation in schools for WWD should be

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addressed in order to improve opportunities and outcomes for these women. The study illustrates through the participants and semi-structured interviews conducted that WWD can get an education, want to get an education and can successfully complete their programs enabling them to become more productive members of society. It explores the access to tertiary education for a group of women living with physical disabilities in a mainstream institution. Perhaps I need to clarify that this study particularly focuses on mainstream institutions as opposed to special education schools because inclusive education practices are intended to change attitudes towards the discrimination of PWD (Ebersold, 2008). I focussed on the access to tertiary education for WWD in mainstream institutions with the view that inclusive communities put into place measures to support persons with disabilities both at home and within the school. Where barriers exist, inclusive communities transform the way they are organised to meet the needs of all persons both disabled and non-disabled. Hence, the access to inclusive education offers a key means to put persons with disabilities on an equal footing with non-disabled persons, to promote diversity within schools and to create social bonds between persons with and without disabilities (Ebersold, 2008). It is also a means of promoting education systems with an emphasis on achieving a common learning environment guaranteeing the presence, participation and achievement of equal outcomes for all learners, including those with disabilities (Ebersold, 2008). As a result, improved education opportunities for WWD not only improve a woman's earning capacity but also society's general health and well-being while enabling them to become productive members of society (ILO, 2009; WHO, 2011).

My study explores the lived experiences of WWD in the access to tertiary education in Zambia. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with WWD in an institution because these women are able to give good insight into the obstacles faced by women within as well as outside the institutions. They are better placed to highlight what barriers to education WWD experience while being able to articulate their own experiences in a manner that is insightful and informative. It is hoped that the study will contribute towards ways to improve access for WWD in higher institutions of learning in Zambia. To see that obstacles that impede access to education are reduced thereby increasing the enrolment and continuation into higher learning institutions. As a result, once these impeding obstacles are reduced, completion levels for WWD can be achieved. Improving access to education for these women would not only empower but would also see them contribute positively to the development of the country as a whole.

1.5   Organisation of the Study

Chapter one: Introduction to the study.

In this chapter, I have introduced the reader to the key issues framing my thesis. I have introduced the key debates on the experiences of women, introduced the theoretical lens this study will adopt in exploring the lived experiences of women living with physical disabilities and their access to education. The chapter also gives the reader a brief background to the various international instruments and legislative enactments that support the improved access to education among other things as well as my motivation for conducting this study.

Chapter two: unpacks key feminist debates on WWD. In this chapter I review the literature pertaining to debates about women with disabilities. I look at the two distinct models of disability with particular focus on the social construction model of disability which underpins my study. The chapter further gives the theoretical perspective in which the study looks at the experiences of women from the context that discrimination of WWD is embedded in the cultural attitudes that exclude them from effective economic participation. The final part of the chapter explores empirical studies on the experiences of WWD focusing on the education and employment opportunities for WWD.

Chapter three: looks at the key qualitative and feminist methodological processes informing this study as well as the ethical considerations employed to uphold the ethics of researching WWD. In this chapter, I also give an insight into my reflexive journey, looking at how my interaction with disability studies has taken a different shape from when I started this project to when I completed it. The chapter also looks at the research question with a focus on what my thesis is enquiring about in order to understand why there are fewer women with disabilities accessing education. It also looks at the aims and objectives of the study in order to achieve its desired outcomes.

Chapter four: Gives the results and discussion of the findings. The chapter analyses the responses as given by the participants. These present the different themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews. These themes then give a broad array of various discussions

that raises numerous issues and factors that affect WWD by looking at them in context. These discussions are closely linked to the literature thereby showing the connections between the literature and the emergent themes, how these tie in together to answer my research question but also to reveal what gaps exist within the literature.

Chapter five: conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter I will give the conclusion to the study based on the findings of the study. I will also give recommendations on how access to tertiary education for WWD can be improved and achieved and on further research possibilities.

CHAPTER TWO

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I will review literature pertaining to debates and empirical studies around the various issues concerning women with disabilities (WWD) and in particular their access to education. The chapter will discuss various concepts and ideas that analyse how access to tertiary education affects the participation and socialisation of WWD within their communities as well as the broader economic platform. I begin by giving an overview of, the need for feminist disability studies, and how inclusion of WWD to this discourse is important. I also highlight feminist debates and scholarship in the global south. Further, I highlight studies that look at WWD and in particular those that address educational opportunities for this group in the global context. Furthermore, I also give a brief overview of the situation of WWD in Africa and finally look at the accessibility of educational opportunities in the local Zambian context.

Throughout my study, I make the assertion that people with disabilities (PWD) are constrained not by their bodies, but because of the limits imposed on them by the social, economic and physical world around them. I therefore begin by presenting the two contesting models, the medical and social, before locating my study within the social model. The social theoretical framework is therefore used to inform my study and guides the discussion. My study aims to investigate what some of the experiences WWD encounter within their communities, but more importantly, it explores the subjective experiences of women with physical disabilities with regards to access to tertiary levels. The analysis explores factors such as gender, culture and disability and how these factors have shaped women's lives. I also look at how these factors influence the educational and economic participation of WWD.

2.2   A Global Overview of Women Living With Disabilities

Women with disabilities (WWD) globally have been viewed as objects of pity, or solely as people who need to be "fixed" and have been side-lined from participation on the economic front (Oliver, 1996; Morris, 1998; Frocshel *et al.*, 1999; Kachaka, 2011). Further evidence

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has shown that compared to men women are more likely to become disabled during their lifetime compared to men due to gender bias often experienced by WWD (Clark & Smith, 2014; Emment & Allant, 2006). Nevertheless, the feminist disability movement, which gained momentum during the second wave of women's studies in the 1960s – 70s period, seemed to neglect issues that addressed WWD struggles and need for inclusion. It has been argued that WWD have seemingly been left out of the feminist and disability struggle because issues to do with women and those to do with disability have ignored specific experiences that deal with women living with disabilities (Traustadottir, 1990; Asch & Fine, 1988; Morris, 1998; Women Watch, 2005).

A number of feminist scholars, some of whom living with disabilities, (Burr, 1995; Wendell, 1996; Morris, 1998; Rocco, 2002; Garland-Thomas, 2002; Garland-Thomas, 2005; Hall, 2011) addressed these lacunae within the feminist struggle for women's studies within the academic realm. These studies have emerged into feminist disability studies, a new third wave of women's studies which addressed issues specific to WWD struggles. Serra (2015) a feminist scholar, undertook scholarly work in which she aimed at showing how the absence of a feminist analysis on women with disabilities within the feminist discourse led to consequences that saw WWD marginalised from both the academic discourse and participation within the economy. In her work, Serra (2015) states that feminist thinking, which has been critical in factors that have side-lined women from representation within various social structures, has taken for granted the invisibility of WWD further discriminating and limiting their chances.

Feminist scholars have often referred to the double disadvantage of WWD which leads to social exclusion on the basis of their gender and their disability (Butler, 1990; Fine, 1992; Lorber, 2004) which ultimately places them in a vulnerable position. To this effect, Sheldon (2004) echoes what other feminist scholars have said stating that WWD are portrayed within society as needy, dependent and passive, and that they are also incapable of taking on feminine roles of mothers, wives and caregivers, etc. Furthermore, she argues that able-bodied feminists are wrong when they are oblivious to the fact that WWD can greatly contribute to feminist thinking, and goes as far as considering that this movement supports points of view which are prejudicial to WWD (Serra, 2015).

Studies on the global front have also revealed that WWD are especially excluded from education opportunities. Therefore, education opportunities for girls and WWD have suggested that there are fewer opportunities in entering the education system compared to their able-bodied counterparts (Clark & Sawyer, 2014; World Bank Report, 2011). What is limiting though is that, studies on the global front have largely emerged from America, Australia, Canada and Britain where experiences of people with disabilities, and especially WWD, have revealed that there is a higher level of education opportunities for WWD.
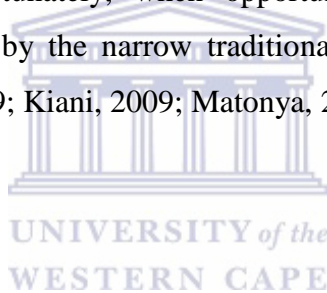
For instance a study conducted by an American scholar Adrianne Johnson (2006), indicated that there is an increase in the enrolment of students with disabilities at the postsecondary level. However, Johnson indicated that postsecondary personnel need to become familiar with the emerging educational experiences of students with disabilities. She argued that by understanding the interplay of dynamics that exist between students with disabilities and attitudinal barriers from personnel within school environment, an understanding of the specific needs of these students with disabilities learning needs and requirements was necessary for a positive outcome for these students to be achieved. However, she indicates that despite the increased level of access at tertiary level for WWD, students were still faced with barriers to their access reducing the outcomes of tertiary education (Johnson, 2006). Studies in less developed countries globally have also revealed challenges faced by WWD in their access to education. For example, studies conducted in the East Asia Pacific region, Palestine as well as Nepal (UNESCAP, 1995; Clarke & Sawyer, 2014) show that WWD had less chances of being educated due to challenges connected to cultural norms that reinforced beliefs that women belong to the home and should be married (Women Watch, 2005; Kiani, 2009; Birn, 2011).

2.3   The African Perspective

Disability in Africa is not devoid of experiences of discrimination and stigma. This is mostly because there are persistent social and cultural myths that reinforce the marginalisation of people with disabilities (PWD). As a result there are a number of varying beliefs that offer explanations as to how disability comes about. A study conducted by Munyi (2012), revealed that in East Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and Benin, some cultures see physically handicap as pacifiers of evil spirits, some believe that physically handicapped bodies bring good luck and as such care was taken not to harm them while other cultures see them as outcasts and not

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worthy (Kiani, 2009). However, in countries such as Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia, PWD are seen to be a symbol of a curse befalling the family and as such are rejected. These contested myths translate to less attention, education and medical treatment afforded PWD compared to able bodied people (Kiani, 2009; Munyi, 2012).The discrimination of WWD directly deprives them of education and vocational training skills that erode their employment opportunities further depriving them of an income which would enable them to sustain their lives (Kirk & Gallagher, 1989; Kachaka, 2011).

In Zambia, the evidence of discrimination of WWD is no different from the global picture. In fact, Barnes (1995) & Riddell & Watson (2014), conclude that, from written evidence, in Zambia, like any other developing country, PWD at all levels of society receive attitudes of ignorance and prejudice when it comes to being included (Kachaka, 2011). Kachaka further claims that WWD in Zambia, have less access to the educational system compared to their able-bodied counterparts. Unfortunately, when opportunities are made available, such opportunities are overshadowed by the narrow traditional roles and perceptions in which women are viewed (Mumba, 2009; Kiani, 2009; Matonya, 2016).

2.4   Models of Disability

There has been a great deal of expansive contestation around the notion of disability and what being disabled means (Rule & Modipa, 2012). The two most contested models are the medical and the social models of disability.

2.4.1   The Medical Model

The medical model defines people with disabilities by their illness or medical condition and views them as victims, in need of 'attention and care' and dependent on others (Barnes *et al*, 2010; Langtree, 2010). The medical model argues that the problem is with the individual who has a condition that is unwanted portraying him or her as a sick person (Parsons, 1975) and this reasoning implies in a way that people with disabilities (PWD) are in some way 'abnormal' (Harris & Enfield, 2003). The medicalization of disability therefore, casts human variation as deviance from the norm, as a pathological condition, as deficit, and significantly, as an individual burden or a personal tragedy (Bogle, 2007). As (Pfeiffer, 2001) explains, "if a person has a permanent impairment which results in using a wheelchair to move around, that person will never get 'well'" (p.31). This assertion is problematic in that it embeds the

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ideas of lost hope in the mind of a person with a disability, maintaining one as powerless over the destiny of their own lives. In fact as Oliver (1996, p.32) calls it, 'the personal tragedy theory of disability'. This perspective regards disability as a problem for the person who carries the disability and it is based on the assumption that persons with impairment have something inherently wrong with them.

The above statement raises subtle issues that bring about feelings of self-pity, rejections and beliefs that they deserve to be excluded from participation. Furthermore, the statement underpins that they cannot be part of society, promotes fear and dependency, which encourages discrimination based on the fact that they are different from the norm. The statement above also embeds beliefs within the minds of PWD that they cannot actively become members of society because they need to be 'fixed' first in order for them to 'fit' in. Oliver (1996) further states that the medical model of disability views PWD either as objects of discrimination, of pity, or solely as people who needed to be "fixed". It associates the difficulties experienced by PWD as a result of the way their bodies are shaped or caused directly/indirectly by trauma, disease or a health condition and calls for the medical interventions that can correct that condition of the individual (Matonya, 2016; Oliver, 2009). As the medical model locates disability within the individual, Mohamed and Shefer, interestingly state that "individualising discourses of disability reduces people with disabilities' agency…attempts to fix PWD rather than disabling contexts…and reinforces the discourses of normalcy" (2015, p.3).

The problem with individualising disability not only isolates and makes a person with a disability imagine their problems as their own; it further excludes PWD from participation and socialisation with their peers within the community. In light of this (Carson, 2009) argues that the medical model makes PWD think about and internalise their life problems as being a personal problem caused by their own disabilities.

This leads to PWD being less likely to challenge their exclusion from mainstream society and more likely to perceive it as a normal way of living further isolating themselves from the outside world. It is no doubt that the medicalization of disability plays an important role in the treatment and cure of individuals that may benefit from it. However, another problem lies in the emphasis on 'cure' in this model, to enable one to 'fit' into society which entrenches markers of difference between PWD and able bodied individuals thereby emphasising that

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PWD cannot function as well as able bodied individuals. The medical model reinforces stereotyping and marginalisation of disabled bodies, which is seen in this context as the 'other' or as a deviant to the norm. This is what feminist scholars challenge; in fact their aim is to dismantle these barriers and boundaries surrounding disability, which would enable an environment of tolerance and acceptance first within the self and also within communities. In maintaining the model of 'care' that medical discourse undertakes that the medical profession emphasise that people with disabilities need to be cared for and that without this 'medical care' PWD cannot function on their own. To this effect, Swain *et al.*, (2003) cited in (Bogle, 2007) apply Davis' notion that

> *"the medical establishments have a vested interest in positioning the disabled in this manner…professionals are dependent on disabled people for their careers, their status and their livelihoods and that many vested interests operate to maintain disabled people in their present situation".*

However, in no way is my aim to vilify the medical model as the reason why PWD are often marginalised because society too is to blame in that it has its own agenda in contending with the medical model. Linton argues that "society, in agreeing to assign medical meaning to disability, colludes to keep the issue within the purview of the medical establishment" (1998, p.11). My study therefore, turns away from using the medical model and hinges its discussion on the social model.

2.4.2   The Social Model

The social model of disability came about as a counter narrative to the medical model discourse. The model argues that disability comes about as a result of the way in which society is organised instead of looking at people living with disability as persons with a tragedy (Shakespeare &Watson, 2002; Rocco, 2002; WHO, 2011). Mike Oliver, an academic living with a disability, wrote that:

"...Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society…people living with a disability are therefore an oppressed group in society…" (Oliver, 1996, p. 22).

Feminist scholars argue that disability is a socially constructed problem see also; (Wendell, 1996; Goodley, 2001; Shakespeare & Watson, 2002; Livingstone, 2005; Langtree, 2010;

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Goodley, 2011; Mohamed & Shefer, 2015) and emphasise that people with disabilities are marginalised not because of their disability but as a result of the restrictions imposed by social/cultural attitudes, economic/institutional and environmental barriers (see also Oliver, 2009; Matonya, 2016). Social cultural attitudes can be associated with factors ranging from discrimination, stereotyping and poverty, to traditional cultures and religions especially in Sub Saharan Africa where disability is believed to be connected to superstitions and taboos (Munyi, 2012; Matonya, 2016). Economic and institutional restriction involves inadequate access to education and also health care, while environmental barriers consider the actual physical landscapes of our communities in terms of transport, buildings and markets (Wendell, 1996; Hamraei, 2013).

In light of this, the social models aim at dismantling these barriers so that PWD can freely and equally access and participate in all spheres of the economy without prejudice. In support of this (Brechin *et al.*, 1981) call for the removal of attitudinal, physical as well as other forms of barriers that would improve the livelihood of PWD. Attitudinal barriers coupled with institutional barriers have been seen to play a major role in the marginalisation of people in particular women with disabilities form accessing education. Nonetheless, it is argued that the social model is successful in its role of identifying disabling barriers that promote the appropriate inclusion for students with disabilities in learning institutions not only at tertiary level but at lower levels too; that the model is effective in social change and the total transformation of society; that it is successful in transforming the self-esteem of an individual and, lastly, sharing the knowledge that these individuals are disabled by society rather than their own bodies (Miles, 2000; Shakespeare & Watson, 2002; WHO, 2011). I find this argument important to my study as it gives the background to which I use the social model as a way to understand and contextualise the relationship between, gender, education and disability in which the challenges to access to tertiary education for WWD in Zambia lie.

However, despite the empowering backdrop that the social model provides as described above, it is also contested. Some scholars argue that the ideology of the social model is out dated (Shakespeare & Watson, 2002). Shakespeare and Watson argue that the medical model was the traditional paradigm of disability in the earlier centuries. PWD begun to realise that the medical model was an inadequate way to view disabled bodies and therefore, shifted towards more liberating social models of disability such as the British, American and even Australian models. However, they argue that the social model needs a paradigm shift towards

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a model that will "…account for disabled people's experiences more effectively" (Shakespeare & Watson, 2002, p. 24). Shakespeare and Watson claim that "the strong social model has become a problem and cannot be reformed and that the model has outlived its usefulness". The scholars further argue that the very success of the social model is now its main weakness in that it cannot be reinvented to include new ideas that develop around this model.

Whilst I understand their argument, I strongly believe that the social model effectively accounts for disabled people's experiences while emphasising that they are disabled by the world around them thereby rendering the model useful. This is because limitations to participation that come about as a result to attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers will continue to segregate PWD and limit their participation on a larger global scale. Nevertheless, I do agree though that the social model does little to account for the individual's experience of pain and limitation, which are often aspects of disability (Garland-Thomas, 2005). I will also agree that the social model fails to take into account that disability is not homogenous, in the sense that some disabilities are static while others are episodic or degenerative; some affect appearance while others restrict functioning (Albert, 2004; Matonya, 2016) and that these categories have varying experiences that go beyond the social model and how they are excluded from participation. It must be argued therefore, that people are disabled by both social barriers as well as their own bodies but the social barriers provide greater challenges than the disability itself (Garland-Thomas, 2004).

2.5   Social Constructionism as a Theoretical Perspective

In conducting any feminist research it is important to ground the work in a theory that will allow the researcher to understand phenomena that is being researched and to be able to analyse why such phenomena occurs. Initially when I started to read up on this theory, I had great trouble in framing it in a manner that would be easy to digest for readers outside the realm of feminist or sociology studies or indeed those new to this field of inquiry such as myself. I therefore, found it prudent to give a brief history of how the theory came about. The study of humans as social being has brought on a number of approaches such as discourse analysis (Foucault, 1991), deconstruction (Derrida, 1978) as well as (Hall, 1985) & (Alcoff, 1988), postructuralism, that analyse how social beings behave, what they see as truth and how that informs their socialisation (Gregen, 1985; Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Andrews,

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1995 & Burr, 1995). To this effect, Burr argues that social constructionism came about as a theoretical orientation which underpins all the newer approaches that offer a radical or critical alternative to the study of sociology. Nevertheless, a number of theorists have contesting views about what social constructionism is and what it means. For instance, Burr suggests that social constructionism draws its influence from a number of disciplines which makes it multidisciplinary in nature, arguing that there is no single description that would be adequate for all the different kind of social constructionists to use (1995, p.2).

Berger and Luckmann on the other hand state that social constructionism refers to knowledge as socially constructed, including our knowledge of what is real (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Galbin, 2014) thereby, bringing the call to knowledge which question what is real or not into the spotlight on whether what we know about disability being a deviant to the norm is real or not. Lisa (2008) reiterates Burr's assertions stating that social constructionism refers to a tradition of scholars tracing the origin of knowledge and meaning and the nature of reality to a process generated with human relationships. In fact, social constructionism may be defined as a perspective which believes that a great deal of human life exists as it does due to social and interpersonal influences (Gregen, 1985, p.265). However, as a way to give a better understanding of what this theory aims to achieve, I find that Tom Andrews simplifies the definition in stating that social constructionism is "an attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality" (1995, p.44). He further defines it as a perspective which believes that a great deal of human life exists as it does due to social and interpersonal influences. In other words, as a way to bring together all these varying ideas from different theorists, I would like to put social constructionism as a view of what we know as knowledge and truth to be created through the subjective experiences of our everyday life (Burger & Luckmann, 1966, 1991; Gregen, 1985; Andrews, 1995 & Burr, 1995). Social constructionism thus argues that there is no such thing as an objective fact (Burr, 1995) in that the 'truth' really depends on which side of the coin one chooses to look at and that in essence 'truth' is about perception. In view of Burr's assertions, it allows me to analyse the discrimination of PWD firstly by stating that the attitudes towards the discrimination of PWD are based on 'false truths' such as myths that render PWD as deviants from the norm. However, Berger and Luckmann (1991) view society as existing both as objective and subjective realities of our social interactions. The experience of society as subjective reality is achieved through primary, and to a lesser extent, secondary socialisation (Kahm, 2013). Kahm states that the former (primary socialisation) involves being given an identity and a place in society of which PWD are denied on account

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that they are excluded and isolated from the very identity and place they are supposed to be given by our social environment. This argument stresses what Burr (1995) suggests that our identity originates not from inside the person but from the social realm. In the case of WWD it serves to allow them to take off the hat that shakes what they know or institutions that embed notions of lack within them and transform their mind-sets to shake off these cultural stereotypes that make them invisible to the outside world. Socialisation therefore takes place through significant others who mediate the objective reality of society, render it meaningful and in this way it is internalised by individuals (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). As such, segregating and isolating PWD internalises feelings, thoughts and ideas within them that they are not worthy to become equal partners in the participation of the social world around them.

The internalisation of such feelings and thought patterns in PWD's mind sets are done through the medium of language. Burr (1995) comments that within social constructionism language is not an unproblematic means of transmitting thoughts and feelings, but in fact makes thought possible by constructing concepts. Language, as a tool for communication, is an essential part of the social construction that informs us that interactions between people determine how we understand and view the world. It is a vehicle for the exchange of ideas, information and creation of meaning and how the world gets constructed (Gergen, 1985; Eldly, 2001; Burr, 2007; Blundor & Greene, 2008). This concept (language) will be discussed more in the next section. The use of social constructionism has been applied widely in various social projects as it makes significant contributions to studies of deviances such as gender, race, education, health, disability etc. (Holstein & Miller, 1993; Hosking, 1999; Harris, 2010; Lock & Strong, 2010).

2.5.1 *The role of language in informing discriminatory practices towards WWD in Zambia*

Language, a fundamental aspect for the process of knowledge production, is not only conceived of as describing and representing the world, but as a way of constructing it, by being a form of social action. Language therefore gains its meaning from its use in context and culture such as in the emphasis of gender roles or power structures (Butler, 1990; (Gergen, 1994; Burr, 2003 & McNamee, 2004). The use of language and a focus on analysing the stories of experiences of WWD plays an important role in understanding what

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challenges towards the access to higher education WWD encounter. In my efforts to understand why disability informs discrimination through the words spoken, I paid particular attention to an essay written by Bogle, a man living with a disability. He wrote on his critical thoughts on disability and further related this to language on the local Zambian scene. Bogle, (2007) explains in detail how language plays an important role in the social construction that frame and informs disability. In his essay, he makes compelling arguments that the way we construct disability through language ultimately reinforces the legitimacy of the medical model. He states that this process results in the 'reciprocal typification of habitualised actions' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p.72) in the actual ways disabled people behave and the ways society reacts to them. He makes the assertion that as the process of treatment is carried out on PWD it leads to concepts of illness being adopted. As such these concepts are constructed linguistically thereby making the language of professionals and social policy (such as 'sufferers', 'carers', 'special needs', 'patients') reinforce the notion that PWD are helpless and tragic'(Bogle, 2007). Interestingly, it is the use of language that further acts as social markers that construct ideas of discriminatory tendencies towards those that are imagined as different (PWD) from able-bodied people.

Bogle states that definitions and descriptions of disability especially within the medical model are constructed mainly due to the nature and the stigma that is associated to disability. In fact, language, through words, informs a large part of how humans interact and consequently view disability. In one of the widely spoken languages in Zambia, Bemba, a PWD is called "*ichilema*". Literally translated it means disabled. However, the prefix *ichi* when spoken immediately points out as a marker towards something bad or not worthy thus connoting justifications towards attitudes that marginalise. In the English language, disabled/disability is also a term used to describe something of little value or worth. The prefix 'dis' as is 'ichi' proposes that it has connotations of lack of, separation from, or opposition to, whatever term it precedes (Linton, 1998). Notions of disability are dependent on contextualised notions of ability and the prefix creates a barrier. As stated by Linton (1998 p.30), disability is the "not" condition, the repudiation of ability'. The way society makes the distinction between these groups of people positions the one termed disabled as inferior (Bogle, 2007). The use of language in social constructs that frame disability especially in the Zambian local context are ones that portray PWD as useless, and in need of help. PWD as a result have been recipients of a range of offensive responses by able bodied people which include fear, anxiety, hostility, distrust and overprotection (Barton, 1996).

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However, this feminist study cannot ignore that in analysing these debates, it is imperative to also understand disabilities from the feminist disabilities studies perspective.

2.5.2 Feminist disability studies perspective

Apart from the debates surrounding social constructionism as given above, feminist theorists brought onto the academic realm, a scope of disability studies which goes beyond only looking at women and disabilities, but critically analysing how the entire gender system affects WWD by situating the disability experience in the context of rights and exclusions (Garland-Thomas, 2005). As a brief background, disability studies came about during the 1960s and 70s period when the women and civil rights movements started to gain momentum. However, during this time a number of rights towards WWD were being denied. Some of which have been briefly highlighted in Chapter 1 as either because of not being important or indeed that there were not enough WWD whose experiences needed attention. Nevertheless, as Knoll, rightly analyses in her paper on *Feminist Disability Studies: Theoretical Debates, Activism, Identity Politics, & Coalition Building;* the issue of inclusion/exclusion should never be about representation of numbers. Focusing on whether or not the group represents a small percentage, often allows us to dismiss the political powers that have oppressed a group of people. Saying that they either are not a minority or by rationalising that it made sense that they were overlooked because there was not much representation or need to address their experiences (Knoll, 2012, p.10). Either way, minorities were on the back foot when it came to inclusion.

Feminist disability studies aim to dismantle ideas that continue to oppress disabled bodies, excluding them among other things, such as equal access to education irrespective of representation based on numbers. It was therefore upon the realisation that they needed to stand up for their right to be heard, and to share their experiences from their perspective as people living with disabilities that feminist scholars (Linton, 1998; Wendell, 1996; Garland-Thomas, 2002, 2005; Hall, 2011) introduced this field of study, as a way to address factors that influenced the exclusion of people and women with disabilities form participation. Jenny Morris a feminist disabled scholar herself put it best and simply stated *"as disabled women, we have to find a way of making our experiences visible, sharing them with each other and with non-disabled people, in a way which - while drawing attention to the difficulties in our lives - yet does not undermine our wish to assert our self-worth" (1998, p.5).* Feminist

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disability studies' scholars therefore, identify the ways in which disability is socially and culturally designated, and provide a space for persons with disabilities to reassess what they have been told about themselves: their medical, psychological, rehabilitation, and/or general cultural experiences, and their rights (Knoll, 2012).

To emphasise what has already been stated, Simi Linton a woman living with a disability, in her book on *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity, raises* a pivotal point I try to make in this study. She states that "PWD have been hidden in many forms through institutions that confine PWD but that with the emergence of disability studies and the realisation by PWD of their need for inclusion on the social scene has brought about a disruption of the current social order" (1998, p.3). I like the assertion Linton makes when she refers to the disruption of the social order in that it turns away the focus of an able-bodied society from the 'truths' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 ; Burr, 1995), false or not, that inform the relational and political process of power, privilege, and oppression between able-bodied people and PWD. In turn this disruption is intended to invigorate and question the status quo and transform the political process that marginalises PWD from equal participation at all levels including the education of WWD.

Knoll (2012) in her paper affirms that disability studies scholars therefore, identify the ways in which disability is socially and culturally designated; that the "social constructionist model of disability" refines the observer's palette to better understand how ability ideologies are constructed around us (able-bodied), rather than depicted as inherent to the body or mind of a person with disabilities. Various feminist disability scholars have brought on these debates that argue against the medicalisation of disability and have firmly argued how disability is socially constructed. Linton (1998) however, questions this claim further and argues that feminist scholars need to demonstrate how disability is socially produced and reproduced in ways that further uphold existing structures that perpetuate barriers to inclusion and participation. Interestingly, Garland- Thomas (2005) in her article introduced one such example and highlights that disability is a cultural interpretation of human variation and it is in these cultural representations that disability is continuously produced over time. Further, she states that disability is socially produced and constructed through interactions between bodies and their social and material environments.

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Feminist scholars like Wendell a feminist disabled philosopher, has positioned her argument around the notion that people are disabled as a result of the built social environments, rather than a medical state that is intrinsic to the body of a given individual (Wendell, 1996; Silvers, 1998). Wendell argues that there are persistent social conditions within societies such as bad nutrition, lack of basic health services, support and violence, cause disabilities not only through direct injuries…but through the spread of diseases and the deprivations of basic needs. For instance, WWD especially in Sub Saharan African countries like Zambia are faced with extreme levels of poverty where there is not enough food, clean water and sanitation that is necessary for healthy living. The availability and distribution of basic resources such as water, food, clothing, and shelter have major effects on disability, since much disabling physical damage results directly from malnutrition and indirectly from diseases that attack and do more lasting harm (Wendell, 1996, p. 58). Wendell further argues that a great deal of disability is caused by this physical structure and social organisation of society. For instance, poor architectural planning creates physical obstacles for people with physical disabilities, but also for people who can walk but cannot walk far or cannot climb stairs (1996, p. 60).

In support of Wendell's assertion another feminist scholar Hamraie, (2013) argues that in order to 'disable' these environments that are disabling, there is need to adapt a universal design that seeks to design built environments to be as accessible as possible from the outset, to as many people as possible…that will not require future retrofitting or alteration to its current environments. As such, the incorporation of such designs to the built environment would at the onset of any infrastructure become accessible and inclusive to all persons with disabilities. Interestingly, Matonya, (2016) conducts a research on the *Accessibility and Participation of WWD in higher education in Tanzania* and cites that, colleges and higher education should ensure that the academic environment is barrier-free and allows everyone including marginalised groups to study without discrimination as well as without the need for adaptations and specialised designs to buildings (see also, Oliver, 1996; Wendell, 1996; Hamraie, 2013).

Having discussed theoretical perspective, this thesis then adopts the social model as the framework that underpins its discussions due its nature which emphasises that PWD are disabled by their environments. This is in contrast to the medical model that views PWD as weak, tragic and in need of help.

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I proceed to discuss how social constructions of disability affect the access to education for WWD and further explore social constructions of gender and culture and how these play a role in the discriminatory practices against WWD in the next session.

2.6   Experiences of Discrimination of Women with Disabilities

Across the world women are treated unequally and less value is placed on their lives because of their gender. Women's differential access to power and control of resources is central to this discrimination in all institutional spheres (Reeves & Baden, 2000, p.7). WWD's however face pervasive negative stereotypes and are more vulnerable to discriminatory practices while being more at risk of harm than men with disabilities and women without disabilities. Thus, the combination of their disabilities and inferior status as women goes beyond the mechanical doubling of discrimination to a situation of utter social alienation and policy neglect (UN enable, 2006). The double discrimination of WWD can be attributed to the constructions that view WWD as inferior and not in need of attention by looking at discrimination on the grounds of sex and disability, and also about disabled women's experience towards access to education within a policy framework that legislates against discrimination (Parker *et al*, 2007). Parker *et al's* analysis on the double discrimination based on gender and disability, strengthens ideas that WWD, particularly those who live in low income and poor countries like Zambia, are faced with this 'double discrimination'. This 'double discrimination' is based on the fact that they are women, and therefore powerless, and as such having a disability makes them invisible thereby being easily excluded (Fiduccia & Wolfe, 1999; ILO, 2015; Parker *et al.*, 2007; Clark & Sawyer, 2014). Attitudes following on such discrimination are also seen to discriminate WWD from equal access to education opportunities.

According to the feminist social theory, discrimination of women living with disabilities is as a result of the nature of identity bestowed on WWD whether visible or invisible (Burr, 1995; Garland Thomas, 2005) and that by virtue of these identities portrayed as being asexual, overly dependent, unattractive- generally removed them from the sphere of true womanhood and feminine beauty (Garland-Thomas, 1997, p.17). There are a number of empirical studies that have been undertaken towards the experiences of discrimination of WWD.

Maria Leonor Beleza a feminist in her report on the experiences of Discrimination against women with disabilities addresses these issues. She states that, although on the one hand,

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problems relating to women and, on the other, problems relating to people with disabilities are being addressed separately with increasing attention and urgency, no serious approach has yet been taken to tackle the dual form of discrimination to which WWD's are subjected (2003, p.9). She further postulates that there is still an insufficient level of awareness of the existence of this two fold source of discrimination whose effects have been largely un-researched (Beleza, 2003). The vulnerability of WWD within communities and homes has also seen them as easy targets and victims of violence.

The (Human Rights Watch, 2010) conducted a study on the experiences of women in Uganda towards discrimination and violence towards them in Northern Uganda after a period of civil war in the country. The study revealed that with a population of over 50% being women the majority of them had disabilities. The study also revealed that WWD were particularly vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence because of social exclusion, limited mobility, lack of support structures, communication barriers, and social perceptions that they are weak, stupid, or asexual. The exclusions were reflection of the social constructs that reinforced these notions of patriarchy and societies built for men (able-bodied) that internalise beliefs that anything out of the normal need not be a part of everyday living. As a result, WWD live in environments where they are exposed to risk towards infections such as HIV/AIDS, malnutrition due to lack of food etc. (Fiduccia & Wolfe, 1999; WHO, 2000; Kunda, 2006; World Bank, 2011). In view of that, it is important to understand the interplay between gender and disability and how these directly influence the discrimination of WWD.

2.6.1   *Gender and Disability*

Gender is a concept that everyone everywhere consciously and unconsciously performs. It is a natural reaction that enables us to determine whether one is male, or female, disabled or non-disabled (Butler, 1990). Determining one's gender is closely related to determining one's sex (Lorber, 2004). While sex refers to biological and physiological aspects of the body, gender refers to the cultural interpretations of the sexed bodies based on roles and norms set by society (Fine, 1992; Meekosha, 2004; Lorber, 2004; Garland-Thomas, 2005). Due to these interpretations human beings live according to culturally assigned gender roles. Cultural interpretations dictate that masculine roles are traditionally associated with strength, aggression, and dominance, while feminine roles are traditionally associated with passivity, nurturing, and subordination (Butler, 1990).

Kiani, (2009) conducted a study where he was assessing the challenges that WWD experienced in accessing education in Cameroon. In it he postulates that because of the gender roles and stereotypes attached to sexed bodies and assigning meaning to those bodies by power structures and hierarchies that maintain that these structures, men living with disabilities (MWD) compared to WWD have an easier time accessing the public domain. He further claimed that MWD were more likely to get married, as their wives, typically able bodied, could take care of the family needs. While most WWD however, did not have the same level of assistance from their male partners in caring for their children. This was due to the primarily gender roles attributed to most African culture (Kiani, 2009, p.527).

Similarly, WWDs are less likely to go to school compared to MWDs because men were seen to be able to find work and provide for their families compared to WWDs. A feminist analysis of disability, with a focus on 'gender and disability' not only examines the so-called 'double disadvantage' experienced by WWD's but also the inevitable consequence of treating disabled women's concerns as a 'minority interest' (Morris, 1993a). Drawing onto the cultural perspective of disability, these beliefs play a huge role in assigning gendered roles for women and men in most patriarchal societies. In the African setting more value is placed on boys than girls, so that when resources are scarce, boys are given a priority (Mumba, 2009; Jayachendran, 2014). While sons with disabilities can be tolerated and often married, disabled daughters are merely a drain on already stretched resource (Atshan, 1997, p.54). Also, because WWD's are less likely to become married unlike their fellow disabled male, they are more likely to be single heads of households (Cohen, 2006). If I apply the social model and theory to single households headed by WWD, poverty is highly prevalent because WWD are less likely to go out and get paid work thereby resulting into reduced earning power as well as higher daily living costs (Rousso & Jansen, 1988; Traustadottir, 1990); Morris, 1993a; Haq, 2003).

Social constructions that portray WWD as deviants become problematic because, WWD still share the same sexed bodies that able-bodied women have and as such have the same needs and fill many roles like other women do in that they are sisters, mothers, wives, daughters, girlfriends (Fiduccia & Wolfe, 1999). Gender not only informs disability but also plays an important role in education and development. Thus the role of gender also has a direct impact on the discrimination of WWD in education (Kelly, 2006; Mumba, 2009; Mulenga, 2011) and will be explored later in the chapter.

2.6.2 Culture and the Social Constructions of Disability

Fundamental to the feminist disability movement as well as this study is the need to break down these walls that 'other' PWD. In Southern African countries where culture mediated by gender is heavily entrenched in our social interactions (Markson, 2006; Kiani; 2009; Matonya, 2016), disability is not desired, and those viewed as different will be hidden from society and not spoken about and given much attention (Mumba, 2004; Kiani, 2009; Lawson, 2001). Culture dictates to society what is 'right' and what is 'wrong' (Burr, 1995). Therefore, whether consciously or subconsciously, culture informs people living with a disability that they cannot function on their own. As a result able bodied people are largely left unaware of the challenges and experiences encountered by people with disabilities. Thus, disability in many ways is usually defined by culture which consequently informs the various gendered roles that are assigned to disabled men and women (Butler, 1990; Morris, 1993) creating an atmosphere where discrimination of WWD is prominent. Disability notions, like those of gender, are therefore socially and culturally constructed and continue to be constantly recreated through human interactions and social life (Butler, 1990; Lorber, *et al.*, 1991; Wendell, 2006).

In an interesting piece of scholarly work conducted by Goffman, (1968, p.15) in which he also coined a theory named after himself, he stated that in every society, some persons have greater power than others and those with power generally impose their norms, values, and beliefs on those that are without power. Dominant groups construct stereotypes which stigmatise groups they deem inferior and thus facilitate the exercising of authority over them (Goffman, 1963; Ainlay, Becker, & Coleman, 1986). This formulates a telling and classic picture of how relationships and attitudes between PWD/WWD and able - bodied people exist within these dominant power structures, often with WWD being regarded at the bottom of this power structure food chain.

Although Goffman provides a grounded argument as to why PWD/WWD are dominated , his theory does not provide further specific explanations as to why society stigmatises PWD outside these power structures (Goffman, 1963). Interestingly, (Oliver, 1990; Titchkosky, 2003) offers more specific explanations and place disability in a social context which shows that disability is as a result of complex intersecting social relations that highlight WWD lack, weakness and exclusions and cultural relations that stipulate that women both disabled and

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abled must be confined to the home. Nevertheless, Goffman's theory provides an understanding of the ways in which power relationships between the people with disabilities and those without disabilities are structured. Goffman's theory (1963) underpins the ways in which those without disabilities construct those with disabilities as "deviant" by creating standard rules that render the latter as "outsiders." Such dominations limit PWD access to wealth, power, and education in society. The theory promotes a critical engagement with the relations of power embedded in societal institutions/structures that serve to reproduce and maintain social discrimination and inequities for WWD. Such a perspective is important in understanding the challenges WWD face by allowing us to gain insight and explore their lived experiences.

2.7   The Gendered Nature of Educational Opportunities for People Living With Disabilities in Zambia

Everyone has the right to education regardless of their status whether disabled or not because education is a basic fundamental human right and it can occur in a formal or non-formal way (Chishimba, *et al.*, 2013). It is a basic human right that should be made available to all regardless of status, race, religion and gender (Mumba, 2002, p.2). In education, consideration of gender is crucial in designing and implementing education programmes that are inclusive to both male and female disabled and able-bodied (Matonya, 2016). Understanding of the inter relationship between gender and education helps in understanding how to remove the barriers that influence women's and girls' education (Edmonds and Pavcnik, 2005).

2.7.1   *Interconnections of gender and education*
Women and children with disabilities encounter numerous challenges in their access to basic or primary education. Children and girls with disabilities including WWD's have for a long time been excluded from mainstream education opportunities (Clark & Sawyer, 2014; ILO, 2006; Fudiccia & Wolfe, 1999) mainly due to the levels of cultural and institutional (Wendell, 2006) discrimination that are prevalent within our societies. Rousso in a paper she prepared *on the Education for All Monitoring Report* analyses education opportunities for girls with disability from a wide range of debates about opportunities for this group of girls. In her paper she highlights that children and girls with disabilities are the most marginalised

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when it comes to educational opportunity at all levels and that girl's with disabilities in particular have limited access to education (Rousso, 2003). She explains numerous factors such as limiting cultural attitudes within family and communities about girls attending school, violence towards girls and more importantly economic challenges that affect choices of girls with disabilities being taken to school over boys. I make a point in call here that the access to education for children and especially girls with disabilities is especially important because it offers them a chance to become visible, acknowledged and helps them develop skills that can be beneficial to their participation in communities. A few studies have affirmed my assertions and argue that basic education offers children the foundation in maths, science as well as basic knowledge (Fiduccia & Wolfe, 1999; World Bank Report, 2011; Clarke & Sawyer, 2014) on how to understand life around them while helping them to negotiate their roles effectively in and around their communities. Unfortunately, there are studies both internationally and locally that show evidence that there is more importance placed on boys with disabilities than is placed on girls with disabilities which indicate that girls with disabilities are the most marginalised and less likely to enrol in and complete their basic education as their rights are often denied (see: Mumba, 2004; Kelly, 2006; Kiani, 2009; Clarke & Sawyer, 2014; Matonya, 2016). Nevertheless, it is imperative that educational opportunities for both boys and girls with disabilities are improved at the lower levels if access at tertiary level is to be achieved.

2.7.2   *The need for inclusive education*

I thought it would be imperative for me to very briefly locate the context within which I am conducting my study. In my analysis of the access to education for WWD I consider this access within the realm of inclusive or mainstream education. Matonya, (2016) indicated in her study that inclusive education plays a vital role. She stated that education broadens educational opportunities for marginalised groups, especially WWD, to be part of a larger academic community. This is essential in that it helps WWD build strong social skills, build a strong self-imagine and also generally to spark attitudinal change within families and communities but also more importantly within one's self (Massenga & Mkandawire, 2007). It is also worthy to note that including WWD into mainstream education is important because it brings together different people from different backgrounds regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, language, socio-economic status and any aspect of an individual's identity that might be seen as different (Polant, 2010a). Inclusive education is also important in that through the interactions and experiences that are shared between peers helps WWD develop
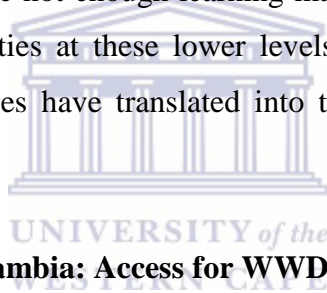
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not only decision making skill but also leadership skills that they may find useful in their future roles within their careers and individual lives. In aligning this to the theoretical perspective as well as the social model undertaken for this study, I find that looking at the access to education for women who are marginalised and discriminated against, inclusive education makes WWD who do not believe that they can be worthy of something undergo a process of transformation within themselves which can ultimately become empowering for WWD.

2.7.3   Access to lower levels of education in Zambia

Based on a study conducted in a rural setting on the challenges that children with disabilities face in Zambia, Ndhlovu, (2009) reveals that, the most significant challenges that these children faced, but not limited to were: 1) *Transport*: the children with disabilities had to walk long distances to get to schools as there was no transport system that could ferry them to and from school. This was a major problem in that most children that had access to school could not attend classes on a regular basis making them miss out on lessons. Consequently they fell behind their peers in class especially in school environments where little or no extra attention is offered in helping the child with a disability grasp material. They also miss out on important tests and exams which help them advance to the next level; 2) *Economic challenges*: Most parents with children with disabilities were faced with unemployment and high poverty levels. Therefore, they had limited resources to extend towards children and especially girls with disabilities' education needs. Ndhlovu further indicated that most teachers in schools were not trained to effectively deliver education materials to children with disabilities which made the learning experience for these pupils very difficult. Also there was very little learning materials provided to schools by government which made it difficult for teachers to effectively deliver educational materials to children with disabilities.

Apart from these challenges, Mumba, 2004; Kiani, 2009; Matonya, 2016 highlighted that cultural representations that confine girls and women to the home are beliefs that they had to break down, in order for families and communities to understand the importance of sending a girl to school. Furthermore, another study conducted by Kelly (1991) also suggests that girls with disabilities are the largest victims of poverty; the girl was expected to do house chores while boys were allowed to interact with others outside the home. On the other hand however families that although live in poverty, but can afford to pay for education needs would rather send a boy with disabilities as opposed to a girl with disabilities to school with the view that

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the boy will be able to support the family (Fudiccia & Wolfe, 1999; Parker, *et a*l., 2007; Clarke & Sawyer, 2014). This offers a narrative lens through which the relationship between gender and culture that reinforces the roles and discrimination of women and girls with disabilities from effective contribution to society. Poor infrastructure also posed a challenge to children with disabilities (Kelly, 2006, Wendell, 2006; Hamraie, 2013). Access around the school grounds were limiting to children and girls with disabilities and so most of them either stayed away from school or were confined to one place within the school thereby affecting educational outcomes and participation. This especially posed a serious challenge to children who were physically disabled involving their limbs or blind as their mobility was limited. Negative attitudes of teachers and fellow pupils within the school also hindered the access and participation of children and especially girls with disabilities. Added to this, Matonya, (2016) highlighted that overcrowded classrooms especially in secondary schools for girls with disabilities were also a challenge in that learning in such environments was extremely difficult especially that there were not enough learning materials for use within the schools. The limited education opportunities at these lower levels as a result to factors related to transport and economic challenges have translated into the huge challenges in access for WWD at the tertiary level.

2.8   Tertiary Education in Zambia: Access for WWD

The access to tertiary education in many countries is on account that an individual had successfully completed the lower levels of education. In Zambia, the access to any tertiary or vocational training institution meant that an individual needed to have acquired a General certificate of Education qualification (GCE) or an International General Certificate of School Education (IGCSE) qualification. These qualifications are obtained after successful completion of grade 12 (G12) examinations.

Higher education enables youth and people of all ages irrespective of cultural and social background to face the challenges of development, especially with regard to eradicating poverty both at individual and national levels (Rule & Modipa, 2011; Matonya, 2016). Matonya in her work pointed out that it is not a questionable fact that tertiary education plays a vital role in the alleviation of poverty especially in developing countries such as Zambia and Tanzania (Toumi, *et al.*, 2015). It is therefore, important for me to align the importance that WWD in accessing tertiary education has on the alleviation of poverty in that they would

be more knowledgeable in how to handle and deal with various challenges that would threaten their inclusion and participation on the social scene. Toumi, *et al.*, (2015) and Matonya, (2016) indicated in their work that higher education functions first to train people to attain specific and self-determining opinions, investigative and problem-solving skills and knowledge needed to make informed decisions on a personal level as well as broader national level that can be empowering for WWD.

2.8.1 Obstacles to participation in Tertiary Education

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) carried out a study in which it looked at the access to education for PWD (OECD, 2003). In this publication, findings within the OECD countries revealed that there were varying findings regarding the levels of access to education but that overall there was an increase in the number of PWD entering tertiary level. What was interesting to note in the study was that among some of the barriers to access to education that people and WWD highlighted, traditional and cultural attitudes such as confinement account for very little. In all the countries where this study was replicated, the general barriers were as a result of institutional limitations and barriers emanating from bureaucracy from policy to school enrolments and acceptance. Nevertheless, the situation in relation to barriers to education, in developing countries was different.

A study conducted in Kenya on the access to education for students in higher education identified that negative attitudes form family and community members, segregation practices together with inaccessible school environments were key barriers that excluded students form participation (Tugli, *et al*., 2014). Furthermore, scholars such as (Aisncow & Miles, 2009; Oliver, 1990 & Tregaskis, 2002) suggest that in order to break down these barriers that hinder the participation of students in higher education, stakeholders from families, institutions, communities as well as schools need to come on board and find ways that would make PWD more included in daily life (Matonya, 2016). Rule and Modipa, (2011) conducted an interesting study on the attitudes and experiences of adult learners with disabilities in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) using an interactional model that put PWD at the centre of the development and research of the study. During this study, students with disabilities in KZN expressed barriers such as transportation and the lack of finances as discussed earlier. However, of interest was that one interview participant indicated that one of the biggest

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barriers to access to higher education especially for WWD was the negative attitude that WWD had towards accessing education.

Rule & Modipa further offered explanations as to why the numbers of WWD's in tertiary institutions is minimal. The authors highlighted that there were a number of illiterate WWD who had challenges in reading and writing which was as a result of poor access to education and outcomes for this group of people. As a result of WWD not being able to have equal access to education, there were negative effects on their access to employment. To this effect, the World Bank (2002, p. 3) points towards the fact that a strong relationship exists between education and economic growth patterns, where growth increases with increased education and declines with decreased education. Education opportunities for WWD's improve their access to employment opportunities because they are able to compete effectively with disabled males and non-disabled females. In turn, this improves their social and economic participation while reducing their dependency on others thus reducing their poverty levels. After all, in any country, an increased proportion of highly-educated people may result in higher income for the country (Mumba, 2009; Kochung, 2011). Therefore their need to access education especially at tertiary level is more magnified in the hope that they can get gainful employment in exchange for wages to provide for their families. It is therefore not surprising that WWD would have similar reasons for seeking and valuing education as non-disabled people in the community because: '*You… get an education so you can later get money. If you don't have any how can you live?'* (Kaye, 1989. p.14).

In conclusion, the chapter draws on numerous feminist scholars on disability studies with the focus on experiences of women that shape and frame their lives. The chapter drew a comparison between the medical models which views PWD as weak and in need of attention with a focus on the social model that portrays PWD as willing and able to function on their own. As such it takes an analysis on what informs disability in such a way that it imposes negative attitudes towards PWD that are used to discriminate them. It directs its focus on the social constructionist theory that looks at disability as 'not' a condition thereby framing the study in a more empowering way for PWD.

In the discussion I look at feminist disability studies and the role it plays in contributing to academic scholarship that address specific experiences of WWD by WWD which gives a rich insight into factors that result and lead to their discrimination. I also analyse how factors such

as culture, gender and disability intersect in shaping the lived experiences of women living with disabilities. In the study I further look at studies that look at the gendered nature of education and the factors that lead to the unequal access to education for WWD at the lower levels of both primary and secondary school. I then further look at the tertiary level by giving insights into reasons why access at this level suffers as a result of the challenges that children and girls encounter.

In the study I look at the access to education at the lower levels first because it is my assertion that access at higher levels cannot be achieved if it is hampered in primary and secondary school. Finally I highlight that opportunities to employment are severely limited for WWD as compromised access to tertiary education which would result in poverty alleviation both at the individual and national level. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology where I look at the role of feminist qualitative research in this study.

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CHAPTER 3

3.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological processes that were employed in this study. It unpacks qualitative and feminist research methods which were undertaken in this study. Finally it also addresses the ethical considerations surrounding the study.

3.2   Research Question

The research asks the following question:

What are the lived experiences of women with physical disabilities in contemporary Zambia regarding their access to tertiary education?

This question allows me to draw on the subjective experiences of women living with physical disabilities enabling me to examine the various factors and challenges that see fewer WWD accessing education at the tertiary level. It also explores what strategies can be employed to improve access to tertiary education.

3.3   Research Aims and Objectives

3.3.1   Main Objective

The main aim of the study is to explore the experiences of Women with Physical Disabilities in a tertiary school in Kamwala, Zambia.

3.3.2   Specific Aims and Objectives

- To investigate what challenges women with disabilities face within their communities and how these shape their access to education.
- To explore the subjective experiences of women with physical disabilities, within the context of higher education in Zambia.
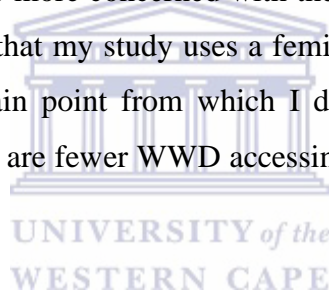
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3.4   Qualitative Research

A qualitative method of approach is favoured more than a quantitative method in this kind of research. Qualitative research explores social phenomena that leads to fewer WWD being able to access education which little can be assumed a priori (Vermeire, 2005), provides rich descriptions and well founded rationale for explaining the underlying behavioural and environmental processes at work in local settings (Kunda, 2006). Scholars have argued that qualitative methods are more appropriate for feminist research by allowing subjective knowledge and a more equal relationship between the researched and the researcher (Westmarland, 2001; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Qualitative research relies heavily on verbal expressions and written expressions and involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of these expressions (European Commission, 2005). The interpretation and analysis of the data collected from my participants allowed me to give meaning to these expressions. The use of qualitative research enabled me to relate the data collected to the social world and concepts and to an extent the behaviours of my participants within the framework of their own social context. The expressions as given by the participants can therefore be viewed as windows into their inner lives and as such these participants must be given the space to relay these experiences to the outside world (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). My aim was therefore to allow my participant to share as much of their life experiences as possible through the semi-structured interviews so that I could relate to their stories and understand how these experiences framed their lives and their relationships to the world around them.

Qualitative research also allows us to place persons and their families within a historical context and shows in a realistic sense how they adapt to changing conditions both culturally and socially (Kunda, 2006). This study therefore explores the access to education at tertiary level for WWD in Zambia, by analysing the narratives given by the different women with disabilities. This is because the subjective knowledge of WWD within a tertiary institution are better placed to share their experiences in accessing education as well as offer insight into what experiences those that are not in any institution may encounter. Qualitative research is more concerned with texts and words as derived from the interviews conducted with the women and analyses themes that are embedded within these transcripts in order to provide meaning (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). It is also worthy to note that Hesse-Biber argues that women and men occupy different social positions that produce different life experiences,

different access to economic, cultural, and political reward system thus, ultimately different standpoints (2006, p.29). As such, I chose to focus this study on the experiences of WWD as they are more disadvantaged in accessing educational opportunities compared to men with disabilities and able-bodied women (DFID, 2015). Furthermore, (Pascall, 1991) suggests that qualitative research strategies lead to a richer and more complex understanding of the subjective experience of individuals and their social contexts aiming to gain a more in-depth understanding of the particular phenomenon being studied. This argument illustrates further why I focused on WWD as they are the most stigmatised and marginalised section of society.

This study is therefore more specifically suited for qualitative procedure because of its exploratory nature. Investigating a topic such as this one calls for an inductive approach because no "tailor made pre-defined answer to the research questions are available" (European Commission, 2005, p.6). In trying to find meaning and answers to my research question, I was therefore more concerned with the subjective experiences of WWD. In light of this, it can be argued that my study uses a feminist lens to tap into the subjective experiences of WWD as the main point from which I draw meaning. This helped me to understand the reasons why there are fewer WWD accessing education at the tertiary level in Zambia.

3.5   Feminist Research

Feminist research is concerned with the subjective knowledge of women's lived experiences in order to understand a particular phenomenon. The mode of enquiry argues that women take up subordinate roles which have brought about the fight for gender equality. Feminist research therefore moves away from patriarchal ways of doing research to focus on women's (and men's) subjective experiences (Harding, 1987). It concerns itself with issues of who is the knower and what is known and as such focuses on the lived experiences of those that are marginalised in order for us to understand complex phenomena from their own standpoint (Harding, 1987). Hesse-Biber & Leavy, (2007), point out that it is through concrete lived experiences of those oppressed and marginalised that provision for a platform from which we build knowledge and stimulate social change can be achieved. She further claims that feminist research recognises the importance of women's lived experiences with the goal of unearthing subjective knowledge that can then be used to transform gender equality. My research uses a feminist qualitative methodology, which is primarily concerned with women's

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lived experiences and gender relations in understanding the historical and contemporary forms of social organisation (Enslin, 1994).

An article on the history of discrimination of people with disabilities (PWD) explains that the way in which societies treat PWD can be traced historically both in the western as well as African societies (Munyi, 2012). As a brief background, both societies in early centuries had varying beliefs that PWD were either a curse or a blessing (Roeher, 1969; Barker, 1953; Munyi, 2012). However, these beliefs have continued to define how societies treat PWD today. Social constructions of disability, reinforced by such historical perspectives on disabilities have continued to perpetuate negative attitudes that exclude WWD from accessing education. Hesse-Biber, (2006) argues that feminist research also engages itself politically for women living with a disability and seeks to improve their lives. Further, it transforms and changes patriarchal oppression and gives voice to women by enabling them to effectively participate in economic activities. It also and allows them to make informed decisions about their own lives.

My intention for undertaking a feminist qualitative research such as this one is so as to stimulate meaningful conversations at the family, community and national levels in order to breakdown stereotypes that marginalise PWD and especially WWD thereby improving their access to education at multiple levels. Improving the access to education for this group of women also improves their economic participation both at community and national levels and ultimately improves their living conditions. In addition, (Harding, 1987 & DeVault, 1999) concur that, feminist qualitative research differs from the traditional qualitative research for several reasons. It actively seeks to remove the power imbalance between the researcher and the subject, it acknowledges the researcher as part of the research subject, and it increasingly focuses on differences in the experiences of oppression of the marginalised. Feminist qualitative methodology also allows me to share my understanding and perceptions of the WWD whose stories and experiences have become not only a theoretical and academic journey but a personal one as a result of the time and emotions I have shared and experienced through them. This research method created an opportunity where I was able to explore this group of women's lives from their own standpoints and reflections and also through my own reflections on their experiences.

3.6   Participant and Selection Criteria

The basic participant selection criterion for this research is women participants who have physical disabilities and are currently students in a tertiary institution in Kamwala, a high density area in Lusaka, Zambia. I looked at women with physical disabilities ranging from 19 to 30 years. I considered this age range as I was firstly, mindful of the fact that being a tertiary institution, people of all ages enrol into such academic institutions owing to their social and economic backgrounds. Secondly, for some students progression onto the next stage of their academic journey is mainly due to the affordability of tuition costs. As such those that could not afford to cover such costs had to either source for funding or have to get into employment so as to raise funds to pay for their tuition costs or rely on well-wishers to offer support. Thirdly, cultural and societal attitudes have seen fewer people living with disabilities access education from lower levels. Therefore, my research target population is a section of the marginalised population of WWD, and is characterised by numerous issues some of which (as I have indicated above) hampered their entry into the education system.

In Zambia, the issue of race does not really account for much as the majority of the citizens are black. Ethnicity on the other hand also plays a negligible role in this research as the majority of people living with disabilities are mostly poor people living in the peripheral of society regardless of their ethnic or tribal background. Thus the experiences of WWD are irrespective of ethnicity and race because the cultural and societal attitudes towards disability in Zambia are constant across these lines. However, I do not in any way claim that my participants constitute a homogeneous group. Quite the contrary because the participants come from different social backgrounds while some come from rural settings, others come from low density urban settings. While some come from supportive families, others lack that support. It is also of importance for me to note that my participants do not comprise only women with physical disabilities, but that some of these participants have other secondary disabilities such as speech and visual impairments. The research therefore is more concerned with the social construction of women living with a disability even if I mostly refer to women with physical disabilities.

The scope of my research originally accounted for a sample size of 6 respondents that were purposively sampled. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that is a non-probability sample, selected based on characteristics of the population (Crossman, 2017). It allowed me

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to save on time and money as the participants belonged to one institution thereby making it convenient for me. Feminist qualitative research is not particularly interested in large numbers of participants but is more concerned with how particular groups of people feel in a particular way, and how these processes and attitudes are constructed (Palys, 2008). Purposive sampling allowed me to use my judgement in selecting my respondents. I wanted to obtain a representative sample of participants that would encompass many areas that I was interested in exploring such as education levels, family background, cultural and attitudinal constraints but at the same time mindful of 'non-representativeness' in qualitative studies. As a result, when I began my field work, I learned that there were more WWD interested in my work that had different experiences and facets to their stories that were both beneficial and insightful. I was then able to gather more information that enriched my data allowing me to collect deep personal stories. It gave me a certain appreciation for the kind of resilience that they had showed in terms of getting out of some of the situations these women found themselves and to get to where they are now. I found myself in awe of how some of these stories inspired me but also admired what determination these women had to overcome these challenges. I felt compelled to give these women the opportunity to share their stories as it gave them a platform to share their journey to the world. I also imagined that it gave them a sense of comfort and conviction knowing that their story was going to encourage another girl or woman living with a disability somewhere. I therefore decided to include four participants to my original sample of 6 respondents, which brought my total sample size to 10 women with physical disabilities.

3.7   Personal Characteristics of Participants

The sample consisted of (n) 10 participants. All the participants were women living with a physical disability (WWD). The average age of the participants was 25 years. All the WWD had a physical disability while (n) 4 had a secondary disability with (n) 2 participants suffering from visual impairments, (n) 1 with deafness and (n) 1 with speech impairment. The participant who had a speech impairment was audible enough and I was able to understand her. The deaf participant read the questions on her own and answered them accordingly. All my communication with her therefore had to be written down before she responded. I read out the questions to the two participants who had visual impairments (V.I) and they were able to respond to these questions properly. The data gathering process generally did not pose any challenges as I was able to effectively communicate with the women. Interesting to note is

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that 30% of the participants were married, 20% were in relationships and the remaining 50% were still single. This was an interesting balance in the marital status between those in a relationship and those who were not. This revealed that even though the portion of the WWD that were married was less than those that were single, it still shows that WWD just like able-bodied women are not asexual beings to be 'othered'. However, the majority of the WWD who participated was between 23 and 28 years. It was noteworthy that there was a fair representation of various major tribes in Zambia among the participants. All the participants had attained high school certificate, or grade twelve (G 12) certificate as commonly known in Zambia and were also in a tertiary institution.

Also interesting to note is that all the WWD participants were given pseudo names in order to maintain anonymity. The participants came from poor backgrounds both urban and rural with poor living conditions. The majority lived in high density populations, commonly known as shanty compounds, with improper structures, unhygienic and poor sanitation, while four grew up in rural areas. These characteristics are summarised in a table below.

TABLE 1: Personal Characteristics of the participants

Participants Name	Age	Marital Status	Disability Type	Education Level	Tribe	Habitation
Kalonga	21	Single	Lower extremity paralysis, at birth & deafness	Attaining Certificate in General Teaching Methods	Tonga	High Density area
Miyanda	24	Married	Blindness & spinal cord infection	Attaining Teaching Diploma in Special Education	Bemba	High density area
Lubono	24	Married	lower extremity paralysis, quinimax injection	Attaining Certificate in Guidance and Counselling	Bemba	High density area
Masi	25	Single	lower extremity paralysis,	Attaining Certificate in General Teaching Methods	Bemba	Rural area

			quinimax injection			
Lumba	25	Relationship	Clubfoot & speech impairment	Attaining Teaching Diploma in Special Education	Lozi	High Density area
Buumba	25	Single	lower extremity paralysis, quinimax injection	Attaining Teaching Diploma in Special Education	Nyanja	Rural area
Uyandwa	26	Married	Blindness & lower extremity paralysis, quinimax injection	Attaining Certificate in Guidance and Counselling	Tonga	Rural area
Makala	28	Relationship	Amputation of right upper limb	Attaining a Teaching Diploma in Special Education	Tumbuka	High Density area
Chintu	30	Single	Stroke right body paralysis	Attaining Certificate in General Teaching Methods	Luvale	Rural area
Chipo	30	Single	Lower extremity paralysis	Attaining a Diploma in Special Education	Namwanga	High Density area

3.8   Data Collection

In collecting the relevant information that I needed to shape my discussion I looked at gathering information from two aspects namely secondary and primary sources of information.

3.8.1   *Secondary sources of information*

I obtained secondary sources of information for my paper mainly from hard copy books, newspapers, journals and past research papers on the subject from libraries. Additionally, the

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internet played the most significant role in allowing me to collect relevant articles that I was able to use to formulate my discussion. Major sources of information came from various periodicals, and evaluation reports came from different journals of both, local and international organisations. However, I found myself struggling to gather much information on the Zambian scenario as there was limited literature relating to the issues affecting people and women living with disabilities in general, such as access to proper health care, support from families and communities and more specifically their access to education both at lower and tertiary levels. Nevertheless, I was still able to find relevant articles with rich data which enabled me to frame my discussion. Secondary sources of literature were important for me to use because they provided insights on the literature of what has been done already on the topic. It allowed me to collect the relevant primary information through semi-structured interviews that my participants were able to give answers to.

3.8.2   *Primary sources of information*

The nature of my research relied much on the primary information as obtained from my participants. This was achieved through the use of semi-structured interviews that were guided by an interview schedule. Primary data focussed on the actual responses from the WWD who willingly took part and gave their insights into the questions asked. This part of the data collection allowed me to draw closer to my participants and it gave me rare insights into what some of their struggles are and still continue to be. This was the most difficult part of the data collection for me as I had to be aware not to influence the participant's responses in any way especially that I had developed a personal connection to the participants as well as to my work. I had to keep my emotions and expressions in check no matter how much I felt affected by what some of these women had shared. I had a responsibility as a researcher to uphold my ethical values by ensuring that all the information that was being shared with me was done so voluntarily and that I reported the data reflecting the participants' experiences as it was narrated to me. The interviews also gave me a chance to give the participants a platform to express their experiences in a way they had probably never been able to albeit in a small way.

3.9   Semi - Structured Interviews

In order to collect in-depth data, semi-structured interviews were used. According to Hesse-Biber (2006) semi-structured interviews allow feminist researchers to access the voices of

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those who are marginalised in society. The interviews acted as a platform where WWD who had chosen to be part of my research were able to share their experiences of their daily lives with me. The interviews also enabled me to collect favourable data for the study. This favourable data was broken down into themes and sub themes. These will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. The semi-structured interviews had an interview guide which had a list of questions that were covered in each interview (Hesse-Biber, 2006, p.115). This enabled me to have some control over how the discussion was developing allowing me to get as much out of the interview as possible. An article by Hesse-Biber (2007, p.134), illustrates that my primary role as a researcher is that of active listener to the comments of the researched. All the interviews were conducted in English and lasted between 30-45 minutes.

During these sessions, I was able to record all the information first hand without having to translate the information from one particular language to English which avoided most of the information gathered from getting lost in translation. Therefore, I was able to listen intently to the stories of these women with disabilities and what their experiences were as I picked up cues that allowed me to ask further questions for more understanding of certain occurrences. The use of semi-structured interviews was appropriate for a more in-depth feeling and understanding of themes that came out in these sessions. These themes were further broken down into various sub-categories that emerged under the main themes which helped me in presenting my findings in a more chronological manner. As a result I was able to elicit rich and detailed information that could later be used during the data analysis stage. The use of semi-structured interviews was so as to bring to light what things were happening rather than to determine the frequency of predetermined kinds of things (Gilbert, 2001, p.125).

3.10   Research Site

The study took place in a vibrant high density area of Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. The area is commonly known as Kamwala and houses a population of middle to low income citizens.

The area is well known as a trading base with many formal and informal trading spots (Mubita, 2015). It is also strategically located near the city's central business district (CBD) and has easy access to local transport for people who live and trade in that area. Kamwala has a number of schools from pre-school all the way to tertiary institutions. These institutions range from government run and community run, to privately owned institutions. Most of the government and community run institutions have poor teaching and learning facilities and a shortage of qualified teachers, lack of access to adequate desks, chairs, books, as well as well stocked libraries (Thody, 2000). The area as described housed the tertiary institution where I conducted my fieldwork. The institution is a mainstream teaching college that offer courses in Diploma in Special Education as well as a Diploma in Long Distance Education, Certificate in Counselling and Guidance and Certificates in General Teaching Methods. The school's mission is to empower Special Education Teachers, parents, community and other professionals with the knowledge skills and attitude change through training and workshops. The school's mission resonates well with what my study hopes to achieve in that improved attitudes will see more WWD being included at the family and community level while eliminating and improving access to education.

I used convenience sampling to select the institution in the area because of the nature of the school, being a co-educational mainstream institution, as well as the location of the school. This is because convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method where members of the targeted population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility,

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[1] Kamwala is indicated by the highlighted area on the map.

geographical proximity, availability at a given time or willingness to participate are included for purposes of the study (Etikan, *et al.*, 2016). I used convenience sampling because the respondents were easily accessible within the institution. The school accommodates both able and persons with disabilities. I felt that this was the best institution to conduct my research as the participants were not 'othered' by their own environment as would have been the case if they were in a 'special needs school'. The location of the school was also perfect in light of the fact that there was easy access to town, the local markets and shops as well as easy transportation to get them to where they needed to go. The institution was also convenient for me because it is a boarding school and there was no need for me to organise an office or secluded area in which interviews were to be conducted as the participants were comfortable with using their own spaces for this purpose.

3.11   Research Procedure/Process

3.11.1Preliminary Field Work

At the beginning of my field work, I was able to visit the selected research site. While there, I was able to see the Principal of the school who I sought permission from to collect my data and gave me permission to speak to the students when I was ready to gather my information (see Appendix 1). I was also able to speak to two (2) lecturers who gave me some insight into how to deal with my selected target group as these are people I had no prior interaction with. The lecturers then assisted in linking me with a few students who I could initially talk to so that I could explain the nature of my study to them. This gave me the opportunity to leave them with the information sheet (see Appendix 2) which introduced me and the study to them before I could contact them again. This gave me the opportunity to reflect and get an insight into the importance of drawing from the experiences of these women. It also gave me the opportunity to not only use this platform for gathering information for purposes of my research, but to use the opportunity as a way to encourage other WWD in similar circumstances that they can achieve anything.

3.12   Limitations

Just like any other qualitative research, this study is not exempt to limitations. Having approached the school, I requested for the necessary permission to conduct my interviews, I encountered minor challenges in that despite the enthusiasm and willingness of the

participants to take part in my study (which looked at the access to tertiary education for WWD), it was exam time at the institution. Therefore, the participants had limited time in which to respond to my questions as they were either busy with exams or preparing to go home for the holidays. I felt that the quality of responses they gave me may have been affected due to the fact that the participants' minds were preoccupied. Although it was challenging to hold interviews with them at this busy time I was able to conduct key interviews with all the participants. This also meant that I could not ask for follow up interviews with the participants on certain questions that I needed clarity on. However, my participants were all willing and gave me the permission to make follow up interviews through telephone conversations and text messages in order for me to get further clarifications on certain areas that I needed. This was beneficial and insightful as it allowed me to be in constant contact with them, while allowing them to catch up on their daily lives outside the institution. Worth noting is that this method of communication was not as effective as the face to face exchanges because I missed out on the intensity of responses which allowed me to get 'holistic responses' from my participants.

The limited literature available, especially in the Zambian context, on the access to education for WWD posed as a serious limitation. There is not much that has been done to understand the reasons why there are fewer WWD accessing education at the tertiary level that could be relied upon in reviewing the literature and I would like to assume that this makes my study even more significant. I therefore had to rely on similar empirical studies mostly concentrated in the global north while a few studies in Sub-Saharan Africa also gave me some information from which I could draw. Disability is by no means homogeneous (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 2000). This is evident in the fact the majority of the participants had secondary disabilities. However, I was more concerned with the social and cultural constructions surrounding their experiences which are shaped by the interaction within the discourse of culture and gender.

3.13   Self-Reflexivity

During data collection, it was important for me to reflect on why I was looking at the access to education for women living with disabilities. PWD are a section of society that is mostly excluded from participating equally on the social scene. Before embarking on this journey, the idea of investigating access to education for women with disabilities was purely an academic one. However, during my interactions with these women living with disabilities, I

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found myself developing a deeper connection with them which allowed me to begin a journey into a personal relationship with this group of women and consequently my work. I realised that my experiences as a researcher continually framed the views and perceptions of issues experienced by these women living with disabilities. As such these views and perceptions cannot be divorced from the analysis that I make later in the next chapter. To this effect, I kept two journals during the research process, one of field notes and a second of personal thoughts, feelings and reactions during the process of doing my fieldwork. This was in order to enable me to compare the two as I later analysed data. While conducting my field work, I had to contend with a number of issues that I was faced with. I was conducting my research from my position as a Zambian young woman who is able bodied and pursuing a higher tertiary qualification. The nature of my research project already placed me in a position of power in comparison to my participants. As a feminist scholar I needed to address these unequal power relations. I had to ensure that these power relations are diffused so that the quality of the information collected from them was not subjected to the unequal power structures. Bannister et al., (1994) argue that part of being reflexive requires a conscious awareness of the unequal power relations inherent in the research process and that researchers should constantly be aware of the dynamics that are set up in their data gathering processes and attend to those in an effective manner. To do this, I needed to ensure that the voices of my participants were the most important and that they were allowed to come through without imposing my perceptions in the data gathering process.

There were also issues of difference that existed between me and the participants. These differences played an essential role in this study. This is because, when coming to the interview, my participants and I approached it from different perspectives and backgrounds such as class and education level. I was 'more educated' compared to the WWD who participated in my study, therefore, I was in a position of power. However, Hesse-Biber & Leavy, (2006) go on to argue that acknowledgement of differences allow the researcher to take account of these differences and its impact on the interview analysis. Before the interviews I was mindful of the fact that the women I was interviewing were not going to share their experiences with me willingly. I therefore had to make a deliberate effort to make them as comfortable as possible and discuss the many similarities we had in order for them to open up to me. This brought in the question of the insider/outsider relationship as I shall discuss below.

I am an insider because I am a black, Zambian, woman, and therefore share similar experiences in that regard. And yet I am an outsider in that I am able bodied and do not share the experiences that people with disabilities, especially women, experience. In order for me to gain access to interviews as well as get rich data from the participants, I had to use my insider status for them to share these experiences with me. To substantiate this, Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2006, p.137) suggest that researchers overcome the impact of difference by matching some of the important status characteristics, in my case these were similarities in the gendered and cultural experiences that I shared with my participants.

3.13.1 A First Time Feminist Researcher

During the interview sessions, I realised that my own positionality towards PWD was taking on a different dimension from when I originally started this project. Having come from a background of economics, my exposure was limited to analysing micro and macroeconomic phenomenon from a quantitative point of view and making assumptions on pre-determined outcomes of events. Approaching this study meant that I was undertaking a feminist qualitative research which required me to be self-reflexive during my research process. This turned out to be essential in providing critical and reflective thinking into understanding the voices of my participants. Having come from a background such as mine, I had difficulty in immersing myself in the study, establishing my positionality, and understanding that I played a part in the co-creation of knowledge in this study. Initially I found that a lot of the times, I fell into the trap of silencing the voices of my participants, making my own voice more dominant, instead of listening more as my participants held the knowledge or truth of certain phenomena through their experiences. Allowing the voices of participants to come through and assigning meaning to these stories meant that outcomes were not pre-determined but co-constructed and created out of my social interaction with the participants. Ultimately listening intently to participants resulted in the collection of multiple truths on the discrimination of WWD in this context and how such discriminatory practices impacted their access to education as shown in the next chapter.

I was often questioned as to why I decided to undertake a master's degree in gender studies and why I chose to investigate the access to tertiary education for WWD. I was often mistaken for having a background in education. Nevertheless, in explaining that I studied economics, I was always met with judging nuances and suggestions of why I did not look at studies more aligned to economics with a feminist approach. Though at times I did agree, I

often found the suggestion got me conflicted and made me question my own reasons of why I took on this journey. As I got more and more involved with my work and also my participants, I became more reflexive in my journey and thus more analytical in my thinking towards my research. My initial idea of choosing this study was to show how important education is for this particular group of women who are always portrayed as vulnerable and often marginalised. How such opportunities were a catalyst to improving the development of our economy in the long run (macro gain), but more importantly, the improvement of WWD's lives in the short term (micro gain) for gender justice. The idea to highlight that education opportunities had the potential to enable WWD to make informed decision about their lives became more apparent to me. As such I felt even more compelled to dig deeper in wanting to understand why there were fewer WWD accessing education when this is the one thing that could change the course of their lives. This initial idea however took on a new direction after I encountered a personal loss.

During the course of my master's program, I had a devastating experience where I lost my husband. I was therefore presented with what could very well have been a hopeless situation as a 'young powerless widow'. Nevertheless, I was able to make certain decisions that went against socially constructed cultural norms and beliefs about widows especially in our African settings regarding customary laws, cleansing and inheritance (see: Morrow, 2004; Mwenda, 2008; Ndulo, 2011) especially for me being a young woman. However, upon reflecting on why I was able to go against such cultural beliefs that were supposed to place me in a subordinate and 'othered' position (as a 'widow'), while 'others' made decisions that did not benefit me, I realised that education was key. I came to the realisation that because education had given me the power and opportunity to reason, resist and challenge the world around me, I gained the knowledge and power to make informed decisions that benefited me. This reflexive journey, gave me a fresh agenda, and perspective, into why my study was important. WWD are often othered and treated as inferior while decisions about their lives and bodies are often made for them resulting in, exclusion from the public scene. My reflections were directed towards the lack of education for WWD and how as a result, these women were unable to make informed decisions about their own lives further 'disabling' and disadvantaging them (Wendell, 1996; Fine & Asch, 1998; Garland-Thomas, 2005). My experience presented me a new reason to complete my study and why I decided to look at access to education for WWD in the first place. This is because they are a section of the Zambian economy that is invisible in many aspects of societal life and as such are at risk of

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abuse and neglect. Being self-reflexive enabled me to analyse the subjective experiences of WWD through a feminist lens which allowed me to critically look into how socially constructed factors shaped their participation in education thus giving my discussions in chapter four more depth and meaning.

3.14   Data Analysis

A thematic analysis of the data collected through the interview process was used in the interpretation of data. This involved reading through the data that was collected using the interview guide. I broke down the data collected from the interviews into themes, categorising, building it up again in order to understand what themes emerged and what theories back those themes (Braun & Clark, 2006). Braun and Clark (2006) state that thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data collected through interviews and organises and describes the data set in rich detail. It is also argued that a benefit to thematic analysis is its flexibility. The process of thematic analysis also enabled me to familiarise myself with the data which helped with the methodological and theoretical thinking essential for interpretation (Lapadat, 2000). The transcripts from the interviews also helped to analyse and identify the themes that women with disabilities experience and the social constructs that women with disability encounter. Transcribing of the data allowed me to engage in a process of deep listening (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006) which I did as I listened to the responses during the interviews but also as I read and re read the texts from the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Reading these texts also gave me an opportunity to actively engage with the texts collected through the interviews.

3.15   Ethical Considerations

Ethics refer to principles or rules of behaviour that act to dictate what is actually acceptable or allowed within a profession (O'Leary, 2010, p. 41). Following on this Haworth, (1996) states that ethical considerations encompass the essential principle that the investigation should be considered from the standpoint of all participants and any threat to participants' psychological well-being should be eliminated. Since this was a social science research, it involved human beings as subjects of inquiry. Like any other social science research, consent from the participants was sought (see Appendix 3) and participation was voluntary. Respondents were informed about the purpose and benefits of the study. The informed

consent gave details about the purpose and aims of the research. It also emphasised that participants were free to leave the study at any time without any consequence. Their confidentiality was assured unless in instances where they stated otherwise. The study also ensured the participants' anonymity and pseudonyms were used instead. Before proceeding with any interview, I ensured that the consent form was signed and that the participants had read and understood the contents. I was also able to answer any questions that were asked and made sure that I explained all the areas regarding the consent form, before we proceeded with the interviews. At the commencement of the semi-structured interviews, I asked the participants for permission to audio-record the proceedings and to take notes and explained to them that it was solely for the purpose of my analysis and this was done with their consent. The audio recordings as well as the transcripts are kept safe where only I have access to them. The following chapter discusses the findings and themes that emerged from the semi-structured interview session.

CHAPTER 4

4.   DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1   Introduction

The chapter discusses the emergent themes from the semi-structured interviews. The discussion reveals among other things, the gendered exclusionary practices experienced by the participants in the study. The participants reveal factors which they perceive to be discriminatory and hindering their inclusion and interaction within their homes and communities. I also look at participant's experiences in accessing education by analyzing the challenges encountered at the various multiple levels of education and how these challenges continue to limit access at the tertiary level. The participants indicate that accessing the tertiary level is not only closely linked to the compromised access at the lower levels but is also shaped by different forms of support as well as various financial constraints. The financial constraints were seen to affect this group of WWD in accessing education because they all came from poor families and as such schooling opportunities were often given to able-bodied females and males and to disabled males. At the centre of all the discussions in the chapter, social constructionism offers a theoretical perspective that shows how the social construction of bodies with a disability and particularly, women, as excluded from equal access and participation at home in the communities and ultimately in schools. It also discusses how socially constructed belief systems and attitudes see fewer women with disabilities accessing education. In this chapter, I give meaning to the participants' stories using my own interpretation of their experiences, my relationship with the work and also through the analysis of various readings related to my research topic.

4.2   Experiences of WWD: Gendered Exclusionary Practices

During the interview sessions, participants raised a number of issues that highlighted feelings of exclusion and rejection in their families and communities. Such feelings seemingly emanated from multiple discourses around what disability meant to this community. Factors included a lack of basic access to information about disabilities resulting in multiple myths and misconceptions surrounding disabilities. Cultural beliefs and practices excluded and at

times isolated WWD and negative attitudes that were expressed towards these women within families and communities also often saw them exposed to abuse and violence.

4.2.1 Myths, Misconceptions, Othering and rejection

During the interview sessions the majority of the participants indicated that they were treated unfairly and that other people's misconceptions about living with a disability played a huge role in 'othering' and excluding them. This resulted in feelings of WWD being considered as outcasts or unworthy persons. Participants' responses revealed that gender and gender roles (Butler, 1990; Lorber, 2004) were socially constructed, encouraging discriminatory practices that marginalized and limited their participation within families and communities. Participants indicated that within their communities, disability was not desirable and most of them were considered as burdens and often hidden in the confines of homes and given less attention (Burr, 2005; Garland-Thomas, 2005), as shown in the following extracts:

> *"... I was constantly reminded of how I was a burden and a curse by my family, they had no time to help me around the house especially when I needed to go to the bathroom ...I was mistreated and was made fun of by people including my family. (Kalonga)*

In this extract, Kalonga's response highlights how culture plays a huge role in beliefs that construct disability as a curse that has befallen a family (see also: Kiani, 2009; Munyi, 2012). Different socio-cultural contexts define disability in many forms that perpetuate and reinforce othering attitudes and marginalization of PWD especially women. Kalonga speaks of how these constant reminders that she was a curse and burden took away her self-esteem. By indicating that: ('…*it really killed my self-esteem…*') Kalonga, further reveals how the lack of assistance from her family to get around the home combined with the fact that she was not permitted to go outside the home during the day crippled her confidence and negatively affected her. The lack of social stimulus has the potential to affect the necessary brain development needed to make informed decision while also inhibiting a person's psychological and social development (MacMillan, 2013). Kalonga's experiences of othering and exclusion were echoed by Masi, Uyandwa and Makala who emphasized that myths and misconceptions were linked to their disabilities.

> *"...my grandmother believes my mother was bewitched by an uncle who used African medicine on her due to a family dispute because my leg started getting weaker and painful eventually I couldn't put pressure or walk on it ... (Masi)*

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"...it's surprising how my own relatives think that my parents were being punished with a disabled child because they had me out of wedlock... (Uyandwa)

"...I was locked up in a room, I wasn't allowed to go to school, go outside to play or even to just sit and watch TV with the rest of the family because they used to say I was bewitched" (Makala)

Disability in many African cultures is perceived to be a result of witchcraft, a punishment from the gods or bad omens to the parents or family into which such a child is born or belongs. Such misconceptions heighten "othering" as PWD are mostly rejected or abandoned (see also: Mallory, 1993; Mbah-Ndam, 1998 & Munyi, 2011). It is therefore not surprising that the participants raise sentiments of being "othered" as a source of their 'rejection' as indicated in the extracts above. A study by Dinokopila (2011) states that people with disabilities are viewed as incapacitated and most of the time described as having been bewitched by some other member of the community. In other African traditions different disabilities are related to different causes and could either be a good or bad omen (Mallory, 1993; Munyi, 2012). It is also interesting to note that beliefs and misconceptions about child disability are also sometimes blamed on a mother's misconduct while she is pregnant or an indication that the mother did not adhere to certain cultural taboos (Landsman, 1998; Lamp, 2006). Such gendered misconceptions emanating from the blame placed on mothers as being the cause of a disability contribute to the rejection experienced by WWD from their families and communities. Furthermore, participants also revealed how culture and cultural beliefs intersected with misconceptions and myths that played a huge role in reinforcing stereotypes of disability as undesirable (Mumba, 2004; Mulenga, 2006). Such propositions marginalized and excluded WWD from effective interaction in and within their communities. As one participant revealed in the following extract:

"...when I came of age and started my periods, I was supposed to go for my initiation ceremony where you are secluded in a house for a certain period while elderly women teach you about womanhood... but these elderly women said that I couldn't do mine because of my paralysis. I felt so bad, like they robbed me of my pride as a lady" (Chipo)

Chipo reveals the pain of exclusion from a cultural practice she had looked forward to most of her young life up to that point. The extract allows me to deeply reflect on Chipo's thoughts about her own relationship with womanhood and how culture, sexuality and disability influenced her relationship with her community and ultimately her own identity as a woman living with a disability. In Chipo's community, a woman is defined by the different stages that present her to the world as a 'heterosexual' woman, ready for marriage and child-bearing. It is interesting to note here that, despite reaching the age and 'woman defining' process-'menstruation' as she indicates, Chipo is excluded from this ritual that defines her sexuality and womanhood. In essence, by denying her the right to participate in this ritual, her culture, families and community brand her as 'asexual' (see: Saxton, 2013; Aronowsky, 2010). She is therefore denied the identity she has looked forward to because her body is not aligned to the criteria desired for womanhood in this community.

'Othering' Chipo marginalizes her from her embodied experience, dims her sense of self and excludes her from inclusive existence in her community (Garland- Thomas, 1997, 2005; Hughes, *et al.*, 2005; Hall, 2011). Chipo was not allowed to undergo this part of her journey to womanhood, and she is still viewed by people in the community as just a 'girl.' She explained that people in her community make fun of her as there are women younger than her that have undergone this initiation ceremony and are considered more of 'a woman' and more mature than she is.

> "...some girls in my village would laugh at me on their way to fetch water and say I wasn't a woman..."

I believe that for a person like her, denying her the right to be initiated displaces her from a culture and from values that she has grown to know. This further perpetuates othering practices that exclude her from her culture, womanhood and her social scene. As a cultural insider, I have gone through this initiation ceremony myself. I have a deep appreciation for the role initiation ceremonies play in the rite of passage to womanhood for any young woman. Chipo's recollection of this experience allowed me to share in her sense of disappointment, exclusion and to some extent, 'humiliation' and 'shame' at being denied a chance to take part in what she believed was her rite of passage to womanhood, making her question her own identity (Mohanty, 2007). In her work, Mohanty argues that women are firstly 'a cultural and ideological composite other, constructed through diverse representational discourses' and secondly 'as real material subjects of their collective

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histories' (2007, p.53). Thus in understanding Chipo's relationship between her culture and her identity, it is clear that Chipo is displaced from what defines her and her role as a woman both from the historical perspective as well as the representational discourse from the traditional aspect.

Closely linked to the othering and rejection discourse as discussed above, misconceptions towards disability and connotations of asexuality resulted in ideas that portrayed WWD as incapable of love and marriage. The participants shared that Men living With Disabilities (MWD) were able to get married and start families compared to WWD. Misconceptions towards disability showed that WWD struggled to get married as most men did not believe that they were able to perform household chores as was required of women in this context (Asch & Fine, 1988; Kiani, 2009). In the extract below, Lumba explains;

> *"...my husband's friends would sometimes come over just to see if I was able to cook for him and do other chores. One day my husband told off his friend because he overheard one friend telling his other friend 'kanshi ichilema chalishiba incito sha munganda, chalikwata amano'. (this disabled woman has some brains and can actually do house chores"* (Lumba)

It has been argued that MWD were more likely to marry women who had no disability and would have no difficulty in performing chores and the primary role of childbearing (Asch & Fine, 1988; Simon, 1988; Hannaford, 1989; Traustadottir, 1990). WWD are believed to be incapable of fulfilling this primary role of childbearing because they are perceived to be asexual or if they do fulfill this misconception that they would conceive children that have disabilities. However, Lumba refuted these beliefs as she stated that:

> *"…people think when you are disabled you can give birth to children who are also disabled. I have two children and they are both able-bodied and very intelligent…"* (Lumba)

In the above extract Lumba contradicts notions and beliefs that suggest that WWD cannot fulfill the primary role of womanhood which influences attitudes that marginalize and discriminate them from inclusion within families and communities.

Participants further indicated how the social context in which disability is understood as well as the stereotyping of WWD led to their marginalization and discrimination, often putting

them at risk of emotional, physical, sexual and other disability-related abuses (Curry et al., 2001; Hughes, *et al.*, 2012). The participants expressed how they were often open to such marginalization and intimidation. Chipo explained that there was a community initiative in the area she lived where funding was offered towards improving entrepreneurship opportunities for vulnerable women in order to improve their livelihoods. The initiative was aimed at encouraging women to help start up business ventures with the view to pay back the loan over a period of a year. Chipo explained that when the funding was given to the cooperative she belonged to she was not given any help despite already having a business she had started on her own.

> *"...I knit things... these people refused to give me funding even though I had qualified for it and I was among the people the donors had listed to get the funding. I already had a business and I just needed some capital to buy extra supplies. I knew I would be able to pay it back... Chipo)*

In the above extract, Chipo's efforts to improve her life through the funding initiative being offered were denied due to what she assumes was marginalization associated with her disability.

> *"...I tried to report these people and fight it but I was threatened and told to leave it to those who were better than me to get the funds..."(Chipo)*

Chipo's narration reveals how her disability socially constructs her as vulnerable and therefore positioning her as an easy target for intimidation. Such marginalization and discrimination often resulted in WWD being victimized and abused as explained in the following theme.

4.2.2   *Vulnerability, physical abuse and sexual violence*
WWD with disabilities are also often victims of sexual and physical abuse because of their vulnerability (Groce, 2005). Participants indicated how they were often in danger of abuse, physical and sexual violence as they were left in isolation at times. This isolation posed a greater risk on their lives as they were easy targets of violence and abuse. Makala hesitantly shared her chilling story of being attacked.

> *"I remember when my family had all gone out to the field to farm. I was sitting in the hut by the fire, as it was cold and raining. I heard a noise outside and when I turned around there were two guys in the hut...they beat me and started undressing me. I*

screamed so hard and was scared but I could not fight them coz they were stronger. One started getting on top of me... luckily my uncle came just in time..."

Meer and Combrink (2015), argue that the complex combination of the effects of disability and related negative social constructions result in disproportionate exposure to violence towards WWD. In the above extract, Makala rationalizes how having a disability confined her and exposed her to violence, harassment and intimidation by potential abusers (see also: Groce, 2005; Davis, 2011; Kabeer, 2014; Mitra, *et al.*, 2015; Opoku, *et al.*, 2016). Studies by Sosbey and Doe, (1991) and Furey (1994) also reveal that sexual abuse remains the most prevalent form that women and children with disabilities suffer. Violence against WWD did not only present itself in the form of sexual abuse as is the case with Makala. This is because it is part of a larger issue of violence against persons with disabilities in general and includes violence accomplished by physical force, economic coercion (as in the case of Chipo above), intimidation, psychological manipulation, deception, misinformation and legal compulsion (see: INWWD, 2010), as is the case with Chintu below

"...he forced himself on me...he told me not to tell anyone or else he would come back and hurt me...I was so afraid...my aunt then took me to the police and we reported the case but nothing came out of it, his uncle was a policeman. They just accepted the blame and paid my family off...that guy took my dignity away" (Chintu)

The sad incident is a case that shows the general lack of consequences for abusers of WWD (Groce, 2005). In her narration, Chintu explains that her family was paid off by the perpetrator's family. This reveals to a large extent the level of poverty that her family found themselves in for them to have to accept the monetary compensation at the expense of the emotional and physical wellbeing of their daughter. Chintu expressed her displeasure in the manner in which the case was 'swept under the carpet' by trivializing the matter through the monetary compensation given to and accepted by her family. She indicated how the perpetrator took advantage of her and stripped her of her dignity. Dignity can be linked to feelings within the self that often left victims of sexual violence with mixed emotions. Such emotions ranged from fear (as indicated by Chintu) to embarrassment, self-blame, shock and anger, which makes the victim feel rejected and unworthy (Bass & Davis, 2002). Dignity can also be closely linked to the respect that is accorded to female bodies as mothers and nurtures. Unfortunately this same respect is seldom accorded to WWD who are portrayed as

tragic, weak and easy targets who are less likely to report cases of abuse (Perrault, 2009; Hughes, *et al.,* 2012).

4.2.3 *'Ugly and embarrassing bodies' - young women talk about low self esteem*

Having a disability means that you are socially positioned as different (Adams-Spink, 2003; Agbenyega, 2003) and are systematically 'othered'. The irrationality of discrimination is sometimes theorised in relation to ignorance and lack of education for families. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of an encouraging environment, including the lack of attention, awareness and support from family, peers and the community have been common (Kenosi, 2000) and have contributed to the majority of women with disabilities experiencing challenges in accessing education (DeKrerk & Ampousah, 2003; Hailemariam, 2006). While these negative perceptions tend to be based only on the societal beliefs about bodies with a disabilities they are of no value and thereby unnecessarily hinder WWD from participating in higher education. Participants highlighted how multiple discourses on disability embodiment shaped their identities and how they perceived their bodies. Such discourses from family and society constructed their bodies as 'ugly' and also 'embarrassing' as can be seen in the following extracts:
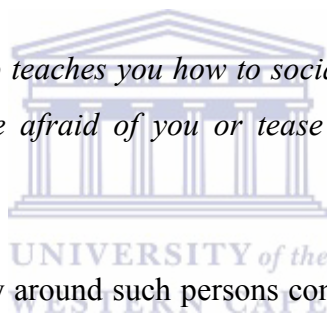
> *"Other kids used to laugh at me because they said I look funny…so I was very lonely with no friends and felt ugly you know…no one had time for me. I was very miserable at school so my performance was very bad…there was no support from the school so it affected me emotionally a lot" (Masi)*

> *"My parents… didn't want to take me to school because they were embarrassed by me …it made me embarrassed too…but later I just accepted the way I am because that how God made…" (Chintu)*

Identity and the embodiment of female bodies with a disability play a huge role in defining beauty and what beauty is and means to girls with disabilities. For Masi, embarrassment of her body was aligned to the portrayal of beauty as being the absence of bodily distortions. Her bodily distortions therefore placed her outside the context of beauty and therefore ugly. 'Unwanted' 'bodily distortions' exhibited by disability go against the ideas of beauty within the discourse of media where female bodies are portrayed as having high cheek bones, even skin tones, long legs, and the absence of fat, wrinkles, physical disabilities, and deformities (Kilbourne, 1994). In Chintu's case, her mother's embarrassment can be attributed to feelings

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of 'failure' in her role as a woman, having given birth to a child with a disability (Groce, 2005; Garland-Thomas, 2005; Dinokopila, 2011). Chintu explained that her mother felt judged by the other women who mocked her and questioned her as a woman. This resulted in little respect accorded to her within her community. As a result of her mother's attitude towards her, Chintu also admitted that because her mother was embarrassed by her, ("…*it made me embarrassed too and I just didn't want to be seen in public or even go to school…"*) she too was embarrassed by the narrow representations of her own body (Kilbourne, 1994; 1999). Narrow representation of beauty surrounding Chintu's bodily image, coupled with the isolation imposed on her by her mother, resulted in Chintu developing a low self-esteem, which also saw her intentionally refusing to attend school. In the extract below, what Chintu highlights about the misrepresentation of bodies with a disability, Chipo also emphasizes as the 'fear of' bodies living with a disability. In the extract below, Chipo explains that socialization within communities and schools was difficult because people were afraid of PWD.

> *"…Being with others also teaches you how to socialize but that's difficult sometimes if people around you are afraid of you or tease you because you are disabled."* *(Chipo)*

The 'fear' of PWD by the society around such persons comes about as a result of the bodily difference between the abled and those living with disabilities. The notions about the perfection or imperfection as the case may be of the human are infused with 'fears of the imperfect body' about disability (Mohammed & Shefer, 2015, p.2). The exclusion of the disabled female body from the definition of real beauty reflected historical understandings of not only female but also male disabled bodies as inhabitable and de-authorized bodies that should be feared, ignored, and/or rejected (Garland-Thomson, 2002; Hiess, 2011).

What was key and strongly evident in the participants' voices here was how experiences at home and in the community, not only were mirrored, but were also translated into the school environment. The exclusionary practices of discrimination and othering seemingly marginalized and severely limited access to education for these WWD as evidenced in these embodied experiences. Additionally, myths that surrounded disability further denied WWD not only access to education but also equal and fair learning opportunities once they entered the education system as well. The above discussion demonstrates that the exclusion of WWD from the social and cultural practices and even from their communities has largely influenced

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and gendered access for WWD to the school system. Such exclusionary practices are not only influenced by the social-community but are more importantly influenced by the family unit. The social-community and family unit creates an atmosphere where WWD are included, supported and encouraged or where they are isolated and disregarded, thereby affecting their access to educational opportunities. The participants involved in the discussion clearly demonstrate that access to education is largely dependent on the support of the family unit.

4.3   Gendered Social Constructions of Participating in Education

WWD faced many obstacles in their struggle for inclusion, fair treatment and education as previously discussed. At the heart of such exclusion is the support or lack thereof from their families that resulted in WWD equally participating and accessing school. For some participants, reinforced attitudes that place WWD as inferior, cultural biases and gendered stereotypes that marginalized and excluded WWD from accessing education resulted from the lack of family support.

Families played a very important role in ensuring that WWD and especially young girls with disabilities had a strong, self-image, strong self-esteem and a strong sense of self that would make them feel included, loved and treated equally. Unfortunately, some of the participants revealed that they lacked support and encouragement from their family members. Participants stated that for WWD to have a strong positive self-image and to become assertive decision makers both in their personal lives or indeed in their communities, they needed a strong support system from family members. Lumba strongly pointed out how the gendered nature of discrimination towards girls needed to be tackled within the home first.

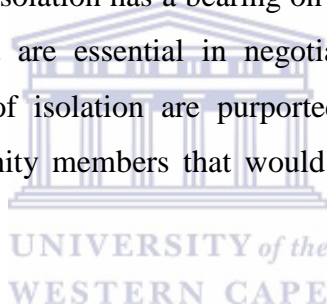> *"In any home, the parents especially need to be supportive and treat their children equally regardless of whether you are disabled or not… for me it was not an issue…my parents were supportive of me and even gave me more attention. They support my studies very much." (Lumba)*

> *"I am grateful to my husband coz he encouraged me and took me back to school, it really boosted my confidence" (Uyandwa).*

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The women all agreed that the attitudes of members of their family were important as they determined the general wellbeing and development of women living with a disability. Such support was seen to be a catalyst that bolstered self-confidence and determination required to overcome the myriad of challenges encountered in accessing the multiple levels of education. Another participant explained that:

> *"for me, my parents used to lock me up in the bedroom, I wasn't allowed to go to school, go outside to play or even to just sit and watch TV with the rest of the family "* *(Makala)*

A report by Groce, (2005) backs Makala's experience which gives a counter narrative to that of Uyandwa and Lumba regarding their family support. Makala highlights the negative attitude from her family that isolated her not only from the rest of the family, but also from school and the community. This isolation has a bearing on and potentially affected her social and decision making skills that are essential in negotiating her role within the school environment. Family practices of isolation are purported to stem from families fear of negative reactions from community members that would put these families to shame and ridicule.

Some participants indicated challenges they experienced as a result of discrimination and marginalization in ways that affected their socialization. In the extract below, it is evident that the marginalization of Buumba extends to the community because extended families form part of the community and school environment that WWD access. It is common in most African countries for families to take over looking after children of their relatives who have since passed (Kunda, 2005). However, taking on an extra child is already an added burden on the family that takes on such responsibility as it means that this family now has one or more extra mouths to feed with resources that are already limited. Nevertheless, the burden may perhaps be lighter when the children are able bodied and can assist in various income generating activities such as menial informal jobs within the community. Research has also shown that most families who took on orphans mistreated them, at times denying girls access to school, treating them differently from their own (Kunda, 2005). From Buumba's response, there was a feeling of powerlessness and sense of despair at the possibilities of ever getting out as she called for someone to save her from her situation as indicated below. She portrays

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a bleak scenario for herself when she had no one to rescue her from her daily challenges linked to her paralysis and also with her general state of wellbeing.

"I prayed for someone to come and save me and give me a better life than I was living. Maybe if my parents were still alive they would have cared for me more and allowed me to continue going to school" (Buumba)"

Buumba further explains how a religious priest who took her in and offered her help by providing her a home and the opportunity to study saved her from such a situation.

"...because my guardians were just not able to spare any of the little money they made taking me to school...I was lucky because a priest from the parish in our community took me in and paid for me to finish up to secondary school...he was a good man that priest...up to now he still encourages me. If it weren't for him and his encouragement, I would not have gone to school..." (Buumba)

Her new improved social status can be attributed to the exposure to an environment and a space where she was able to receive the care and attention (Morris, 2001; Shakespeare, 2007) which presented her to the outside as a person capable of accomplishing anything. This exposure introduced her to an atmosphere which stimulated her mental, physical and emotional development which she previously lacked due to her isolation (Groce, 2005) and truly exemplifies the power of a strong support system. Buumba's experience drives me to the conclusion that because she was now in an environment where she was treated equally and fairly, she managed to develop a strong sense of self identity (Garland-Thomas, 2005) which gave her the confidence and motivation to pursue her studies with the aim of improving her social economic status.

As already alluded to above, the community played a huge role in the successful participation of WWD on the social and economic scene including access to tertiary institutions. This is really because, the community level presented a platform where participation, decision-making, conflict resolution and general social activities ranging from arts and culture to sport begin. In most African communities it is common that women are given the lowest priority in education. A study by (Matonya, 2016) indicated that communities and families where a woman is valued and given the same opportunities as men in education, she is able to successfully excel in higher education. Therefore, if WWD are allowed to participate within

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their communities and are provided equal opportunities as men and able-bodied persons, then their inclusion in institutions of learning and in formal (and informal) employment would be guaranteed. Such opportunities should start with equal access thereby removing barriers that make such access gendered.

4.4   Stigma and Gendered Access to Education

Educational opportunities are generally gendered with statistics in Zambia revealing that there are more males than females in the education system across multiple levels (CSO, 2010; State of Education Report, 2015). For girls and WWD attendance in schools from primary through to tertiary level is severely compromised due to the numerous barriers to access (that have already been discussed). Such barriers make access challenging, especially when it takes on a gendered stance due to cultural attitudes as shown in the extracts below:

> *"I stopped going to school because my father thought it was a waste of time for me to go to school as a girl" (Chintu)*

> *"... my father stopped paying for me when I was in grade 4...I had to go and fetch firewood and come and prepare food for the others.." (Masi)*

> *"...my father didn't see the need for me to go to school because I was a girl and I would get married" (Uyandwa)*

Apart from the reasons given by Chintu as to why her father stopped paying for her to go to school, Masi highlights how girls and WWD occupy the role of domestic worker in their own homes by doing all the chores. It is interesting that despite having physical disabilities, the majority of these women still used to do all the house chores. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of an encouraging environment, including the lack of attention, awareness and support from family, peers and the community have been common (Kenosi, 2000) and have contributed to the majority of women with disabilities experiencing challenges in accessing education (DeKlerk & Ampousah, 2003; Hailemariam, 2006). While these negative perceptions tend to be based only on the community's beliefs about PWD, they are of no value and thereby unnecessarily hinder WWD from participating in higher education. Possi (1998) in Tanzania, and Matshedisho (2007) in Sub-Saharan Africa, call for urgent positive changes in the

attitudes and cultural beliefs of families, education institutions and communities in order to help people with disabilities access and participate in education without limitation. Social construction theorists such as (Oliver, 1996; Shakespeare & Watson, 2002) advocate for family and the community positive attitudes towards people with disabilities so as to create a barrier-free environment that would enable them to freely participate in higher education. WWD tend to internalize negative constraints and ill treatment of disabled bodies, mistaking such constructions for truth. Such mistakes consequently damage their levels of self-confidence.

Uyandwa was denied the opportunity to go to school because of the belief that she would be married off and be 'provided for'. Traditional gendered discourses have a tendency to create 'marriage' as an achievement that most girls need to aspire to (Lamb, 2011) and also position heterosexuality as the norm. Nevertheless, for Uyandwa and many other girls and women with disabilities, marriage was rarely an option because as illustrated earlier, disability was viewed as a curse, a deviant and women as asexual. It is therefore, interesting that Uyandwa's father mentions marriage in a way that justifies her exclusion from school as a way to indirectly inform her that she didn't need to go to school because she would get married. Interestingly, the idea that Uyandwa would get married went against the cultural discourses around the myths and misconceptions that were created around WWD. In many cases, stigma and marginalization of bodies of women living with disabilities were as a result of social connotations that instruct that gaining access to education for WWD was not just about their disabilities but as a result of these disabled bodies being female. As such they were considered undeserving of being empowered through education (Fiduccia & Wolfe, 1999; Clarke & Sawyer, 2014). Leonard Cheshire (2014, p.6), emphasizes this view, asserting that "girls with disabilities are far less likely than either boys with disabilities or able-bodied girls to attend primary school. If they do attend, they are less likely to complete primary school and progress to secondary education or undertake vocational training that would enable them to become economically self-sufficient" (see also: World Bank, 2003; UNESCO, 2005; Kiani, 2009; Clark & Sawyer, 2014; DFID, 2015).

The limited numbers of WWD accessing education was not only because cultural attitudes reinforced beliefs that girls were not deserving of education but was also directly and indirectly linked to the kind of foundation that the girls and WWD were given in order to improve their access to and improved participation and completion within the school system.
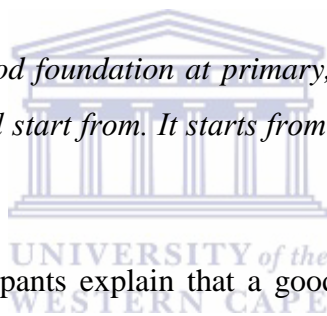
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4.4.1 *It all starts with 1, 2, 3: The importance of a firm foundation at primary level*

A successful education is largely dependent on a solid foundation at elementary (primary) school level. Participants spoke about the importance of having a strong foundation which begun at primary school:

> *"...primary school gives you foundation, but my foundation was very poor..."* (Miyanda)

> *"I had difficulties understanding the work when I went to high school as an adult because I stopped in grade 6...but still even before that I was always missing classes so my reading especially was bad " (Lubono)*

> *"if you do not have a good foundation at primary, how can you access other levels because that's where it all start from. It starts from 1, 2, 3; a, b, c, how to count read and write..." (Chipo)*

In the extracts above, the participants explain that a good foundation at primary school is essential for one to develop and move on to the various multiple levels of higher learning. Lubono indicated that her foundation at the primary level was very poor due to her erratic attendance which eventually saw her, dropping out of school. She explains further that her poor foundation in developing the reading skills essential for understanding academic material saw her struggling through her school later on. A good foundation in education not only advances hierarchies within the educational system but has the ability to develop confidence, self- esteem and character which has a profound effect on girls' and women's ability to claim their rights and achieve status in society. A solid foundation in education can also positively impact and improve economic independence for women like Lubono and Chipo, as well as their outlook on the social and political representation which gives them power to negotiate their position of being female, living with a disability and being capable of positive contribution more effectively (DFID, 2015). The importance placed on such a foundation not only helps in academic achievements but helps the development of WWD personal ideals and beliefs system about the world around them, creating a litany of personal structures and ideals that break down social constructs and stereotypes against the stigma

attached to WWD. It is noteworthy however that in spite of the participants' poor educational foundations, propelled by their own personal desire, they were able to change the narrative of disability from "defective and weak" to "able and powerful" so as enable them access tertiary education.

Completing primary education indeed helps to lay the foundation for building a skilled and better-educated workforce (State of Education in Africa Report, 2015). After all, investing in early childhood development is one of the most cost-effective ways that can be used to improve educational achievement and increase skills, capabilities, and productivity on a personal as well as national level (State of Education in Africa Report, 2015). The formative years of a child between 7 and 16 years are vital in that throughout these formative years, children gain self-esteem and a sense of identity, experience dramatic physical changes and develop interests and abilities that can last a lifetime (McCoy, 2015; UNICEF, 2013). Evidence from this study shows multiple complicated discourses of barriers that constrained these young women's efforts in getting this solid foundation as unpacked in the following theme. A number of theorists point to the significance of education in disrupting narratives around disability, and how education can free WWD from these fixed identities of inability, that have been enforced overtime by regulatory regimes embodied in cultural and societal prejudices (see: Murugami, 2009; Watson, 2002; Garland-Thomas, 2002; Kidd, 2001; Shakespeare, 1996).

Gendered access to education for girls and women with disabilities must and should not only be understood, but analysed from the social construction of female bodies living with a disability. Social constructions foreground that female bodies are not deserving of participation on the wider social platforms including the educational front. As a result, participants explained that because of their disabilities and because they were female, they also felt that gendered access to education for WWD is the reasons why girls and WWD are invisible within the school environment.

4.4.2   *The visible and invisible bodies in School*

Visible and invisible bodies outline how the majority of WWD tend to be cast out from the public domain (including schools). It seems to be easier to keep a person with a disability at home excluded from the outside world as opposed to having to tend to their needs while outside of the home. In other words, disabled bodies live in a world guided by patriarchal

structures and are positioned as invisible to the outside world with very little known about their lives and experiences. The participants explained various challenges they continued to encounter as a result of their disabilities. The irony however lay in having a system that allowed WWD to access it, yet having the very same system make them invisible.

4.4.2.1 Teachers, peers and the invisibility of bodies with a disability within the school

Socialization of WWD within the school system could not be divorced from their interaction with their teachers and peers especially within the classrooms. The study revealed that when such interaction between fellow pupils and WWD came into play, the participants were at times shamed and abused and their needs were not taken into consideration. In the extracts below, participants reported feelings of being humiliated, mistreated and misguided by fellow learners at their high schools.

> *"Some of those pupils in my high school class were so mean. Instead of telling me what was written in the text books or on the board, they would tell me all sorts of wrong things, sometimes even insults…the teacher also didn't help because they had no time to pay extra attention to me." (Chintu)*

> *"…they (teachers) mostly dictated in the class and most of the time you had to do your own research and teach yourself. For me I struggled a lot because I am blind and so had no one to help me with most of the work so I was always struggling in class…the school also didn't have any textbooks that were in braille so it was just really hard for me to learn." (Kalonga)*

Chintu's experience highlights how attitudes of pupils and teachers in the class environment contributed to the negative outcomes of people and WWD. Chintu explained that the teacher in her class did not allocate time to make sure that she understood the material that was delivered in the class. The lack of attention given to Chintu's learning process forced her to rely on the assistance of her peers as a way to have access to the material delivered during the lessons. It is not surprising that her peers met this imposed duty with hesitation and aggression (in the form of insults in this case). These pupils were also in school to learn and it was not their duty to teach their peers with disabilities, although it was expected of them to be supportive and offer assistance where necessary. The responsibility was therefore on the teachers to ensure that all pupils in the class understood the work. This highlighted the poor teacher- pupil relationship for pupils and especially women with disabilities in their classes

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(Konza, 2008). The amount and quality of interaction in learning and the teacher- pupil relationship is very important as it affect the quality of learning (Mash & Wolfe, 2002).

Another study conducted in Zambia by Muwana (2012) justifies Chintu's experience by arguing that teachers looked at learners with disabilities as being slow learners and time wasters which offered explanations of why pupils with disabilities were not offered any extra attention. Chintu further indicated

> *"...the way I would be treated by my fellow pupils sometimes I would cry because they would insult me 'big things'[extremely foul language], all because I just wanted help to understand what was being taught...so sometimes, I would just sit alone in class and not ask for anything or I just wouldn't attend class."*

Chintu's experiences within the classroom highlight the shame and humiliation she experienced. She felt excluded and an even unworthy or deserving beneficiary of education from her treatment, both by her teachers and peers because of her disability. Chintu's experiences indicate the negative attitudes of her teacher and peers that made her isolate herself from the ordinary learners making her invisible within this learning environment (see also: Chilufya, 2005; Ghai, 2006; Muwana, 2012; Hughes, et al., 2012). Kalonga's experience highlighted the challenges that pupils with disabilities had in general in terms of having access to the necessary material needed for the effective engagement and participation in schools. Visual impairments for pupils like Kalonga relied on the use of braille to read and write in order to convert the learning material presented in class into one which visually impaired students could assimilate (Agesa, 2014, UNESCO, 2015).

Perhaps I should acknowledge here that although this was not necessarily a challenge affecting only female students living with a disability in secondary school MWD too experienced such challenges. However, the views expressed here are those of WWD who participated in the study. The participants' responses therefore raised issues on how the invisibility for female bodies in secondary school and higher institutions arose from challenges within the poorly managed Zambian education system.

> *"... I remember in my class there were 75 of us pupils...it was very difficult for me to learn... (Miyanda)*
>
> *"...secondary school was survival of the fittest...you had to have strong will power to get through it..." (Lubono)*

The classroom environment which made WWD invisible within the school system largely influenced the learning outcomes. Miyanda pointed to the overcrowded nature of her classroom which made learning for her difficult. Although overcrowding was a factor that affected all pupils, for WWD the impact was more significant resulting in low classroom participation, high absenteeism and drop-out rates (Chimombo et al., 2000). An overcrowded classroom meant that Miyanda (being partially blind) needed to report for school early enough for her to sit in or at least close to the front for her to be able to follow any lesson. Lubono referred to the learning experience in school as survival of the fittest referring to how thick skinned one needed to be to endure the learning conditions outlined. Similarly, Makala's experience pointed to challenges in terms of transport to and from school. Makala indicated that:

> "...my high school was quite far from where I lived, so I had to travel long distances just to get to school and would be late for class..."

Transport posed a challenge for pupils with physical disabilities in general who couldn't walk or had difficulty in walking to get to school (see also: Chimombo, et al., 2000; Chongo, 2011; Hamusonde, 2014). For girls and WWD, walking to school was further complicated by their vulnerability not advisable because of their vulnerability and risk of being attacked. The challenge encountered in terms of transport to school therefore played a role in making female bodies invisible within the school environment as most of them were unable to access school or eventually dropping out.

Besides transport as a challenge, the structural environment of the school was also a major factor contributing to the invisibility of bodies with a disability within the school. Inaccessible classrooms and the general mobility around the school therefore saw most WWD drop out of school (Hamraie, 2013). Not all the participants felt that the school environment made them invisible. Here, Lumba expresses how her experience in her school made her feel accommodated and included in the learning process:

> "I never had any trouble at my high school coz teachers at that school were very helpful. Maybe it's because it was a mission school, but they would make sure that in class I understood what was being taught, if I didn't I was offered extra tuition to help me catch up with my friends. Because of my speech impairment, also teachers took time to listen and understand me...it boosted my confidence" (Lumba)

Such differing experiences attest to the possibility of inclusivity for bodies with a disability. The inclusion of Lumba within the learning process entailed that her needs were met by the teaching staff at her school. She explains that her school was a mission school. This suggests that there were possibly fewer pupils in a class thereby making teacher- pupil engagement more feasible and manageable compared to the public schools which were characterized by overcrowding of learners. It is interesting to note that visibility within the schooling environment was as a result of positive social interaction between teachers and peers and the general school surrounding thereby yielding positive learning outcomes for WWD. Improved learning outcomes at both primary and secondary schools required improving the visibility of female bodies within the school system which would consequently see more WWD accessing the tertiary level.

4.4.3   Participation of WWD in Tertiary Institutions

The discussion regarding the participation by WWD in tertiary education should inevitably be preceded by a careful consideration of how all the constructs of WWD are understood by their families and communities. These constructs offer a lens which foregrounds the challenges faced in access at the lower levels and offer explanations as to why there are fewer women participating in tertiary institutions.

For WWD, accessing tertiary education was about being resilient, in the face of the numerous adversities encountered at the lower levels, determination to complete each level of education and hard work to ensure that educational attainments are achieved. The realization of the importance of education and the right to education were the key factors that motivated the majority of these women to pursue higher education. Some of their thoughts are shared below;

> *"I am motivated to work hard because of my disability. If it weren't for my disability maybe I would be lazy and not work hard at school and be at this institution, but because I don't want to suffer the way I have I need to work hard." (Lumba)*

> *"...my dear, I have no choice but to work hard otherwise people won't respect me or recognize me. School is the only way I can succeed in life" (Lubono)*

> *"Some of us here at this school it's because despite struggling through high school we were determined" (Masi)*

Lumba specifically attributes her hard work to the fact that she lives with a disability which dictates an outlook on life marred with poverty, suffering and the inability to provide for herself. In order for WWD to improve their own personal circumstances and outlook on life, the majority of the women with disabilities were not only motivated to access education, but also to develop the necessary skills that would transform their lives. A study done by UNICEF (2007), explains that the main goal of education is to give people the power and capabilities to change their own lives, improve their own communities and influence their own destinies. It follows therefore that the participants feel that pursuing higher education is a means for them to shift the power structures that view them as invisible/excluded WWD to visible/ included WWD. Lumba, views her education as a platform that places her in a position of power in that she will be able to command respect thereby being able to shift these power structures and gain status, compared to if she is without an education.

In affirmation to this notion, Morley and Croft (2011) as well as Smith (2012) show that the desire to attain status and become 'somebody' motivated students with disabilities especially for those who have lived under the shadows of 'rejection' and 'othering' as highlighted earlier in the participants' reasons for pursuing a higher education. It can also equip them with the social interaction skills that promote a better life (see: Smith, 2012; Opini, 2012a; Matonya, 2016). The responses from the participants revealed that the majority of WWD came from poor homes and of those that entered the education system, only a few progressed to tertiary level. Some of the reasons that saw most of these girls and women with disabilities not accessing tertiary education included cultural beliefs that kept girls and WWD away from the public domain including schools. These included confining them to the home and lack of support or indeed lack of finances (these will be discussed later in the chapter). Alongside, social cultural attitudes that saw access to tertiary education hindered were the poor grades that WWD had attained from lower levels resulting from the multiple challenges within the classrooms as indicated above:

> "...getting into a tertiary institution you have to have the grades, if you don't have them then you can't gain entry to that school..." (Miyanda)

4.4.4 Support, motivation and access.

Participants agreed that WWD needed to have goals and dreams that motivate them to improve their lives through education. The participants agreed that more WWD needed to

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enter the tertiary level for them to be able to support their families better by getting into employment.

> *"...tertiary education is not easy because you need to have people around you who can help and encourage you...especially family."(Buumba)*

> *"...I decided to pursue my career in teaching here because I want to be able to help other WWD in the communities."(Chintu)*

As revealed in the extract from Buumba above and indicated by Opini (2012a), family encouragement and support, especially from parents, peers, friends and teachers, are essential in motivating the women to pursue a higher education as well as to successfully complete tertiary education. Chintu further revealed that she decided to pursue higher education because she wanted to support her fellow WWD especially young girls. This support can be offered in many ways such as providing information to their colleagues who lack the knowledge in how to navigate exclusionary practices, myths and misconceptions that confine them to the home as well as the resilience that is needed in order to successfully complete school. Support can also be seen as a way for these WWD who are in tertiary institutions to become positive images and role models to girls and WWD who may be encouraged to also aspire to a better life for themselves through education. Participants all agreed that they pursued tertiary education as a way to earn credible qualifications and expertise that can be used to improve the quality of learning outcomes for other children and WWD in schools. One participant particularly highlighted that:

> *"...these days you find that that there are now many teachers in schools that are not qualified... this is bad because they are compromising the quality of education that they are giving to the children and people with disabilities in schools...depriving the children of knowledge..." (Buumba)*

Compromised quality of learning offered by the unqualified teachers severely compromised the chances of WWD accessing tertiary level education. The participants also further indicated that financial challenges posed as a major obstacle that limited their access to education.

4.5   Access and Financial Challenges

A common challenge faced by WWD is that of accessing adequate sources of funding that would enable them to pursue their education. This one challenge often leads to high levels of poverty which most women were faced with, is described by MacFerson (2010). Women with disabilities can also not be left out of this cycle as they are even more affected by poverty than their able bodied counterparts. The cycle of poverty that is faced by WWD is one such factor that ensures and contributes to the illiterate levels of most WWD due to their inability to pay for their schooling.

The gendered and economic challenges encountered by the participants excluded them from the education system on the basis that there aren't enough financial opportunities either from their families or outside sources such as organizations and government. Owing to the fact that girls with disabilities were undesirable by nature (associated to their disabilities), educational equity for such girls was not attainable because most families with limited resources opted to "invest" their limited resources on their able-bodied male children. Children with disabilities and in particular female children with disabilities would seldom be allowed to the family's choice to send to school. As a result most families with limited resources would opt to use their limited finances on able bodied or particularly male children before they decided to send a female body with disabilities to school. Participants reported that parents of young girls with disabilities often did not feel that it was beneficial for their daughters to be sent to school and that the financial investment in their education was a poor one. Instead, parents sponsored able bodied siblings.

> *"… I am the oldest in my family, naturally I should have been going to school…but I was made to stay home when I was in grade 6 so my younger brother could go…" (Lubono)*

Lubono revealed that her mother used to work on a white man's farm and the pay was very little. She explained that initially she didn't understand why her mum would make her stop going to school but let her brother continue. She explained that although her mother never voiced it or spoke about it, Lubono suspected that it was because her mother thought that paying for her brother to go to school would lead to him getting employed and assisting with basics within the home. However, some participants indicated that despite the support they

had from home, the lack of finances dealt them a huge blow in that they were not able to go to school.

> *"My parents were supportive but they didn't just have money to continue taking me to school …so when I eventually got the chance to go to school through a scholarship, I had to learn everything and study really hard so that I could start working and help out my parents" (Lumba)*

> *"Money is a big challenge in accessing education especially at higher levels. Fees are so expensive. So you find that some of us here first worked a bit to save some money to pay for tuition. Me I did a certificate in teaching first then I went to teach at a community school, then now I have come to do my diploma after saving some money" (Makala)*

The challenge that Lumba and Makala faced in either getting an education was the lack of financial support. PWD especially WWD's in particular tend to be deprived of parental and financial support such as fees and even transportation. Many WWD that are not able to access education are from families that are poor. Education posed a barrier for just about anyone living in poverty and failure to access was a very common reality for WWD. However, access was not just limited to paying of tuition costs. With the introduction of Education for All, where costs related to tuition for all school going pupils in Zambia from primary to secondary school were eliminated, other cost related to school requirements still needed to be provided by parents or guardians (see: Education for All 2015 National Review- Zambia report). Otto, (2009), argues that the cost of shoes, books, uniforms and any other necessities for school as well as transportation to school in some cases are not. Families of PWD are frequently pushed to prioritize between the costs of feeding and those of schooling. The situation is especially precarious if there happened to be more school going people in the home. The priority of WWD was pushed further as able bodied and males with a disability got first preference (Grech, 2004).

The participants also indicated how tertiary institutions did not offer any financial assistance to PWD and especially WWD.

> *"…I have never heard of any person with a disability getting a bursary from even from the University of Zambia (UNZA) or the Copperbelt University (CBU)… do they even offer them to disabled people? … (Miyanda)*

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"...tertiary institutions must be offering bursaries especially to us with disabilities who have good grades. Some of us can't afford to pay for ourselves or our parents cannot afford to pay for our fees so at least bursaries would help us to just focus on our studies…" (Lumba)

According to the president of the Zambia Union of Persons with Disabilities (ZUPD), the Zambian government does not include persons with disabilities in loan schemes. He indicated in an interview conducted by Lungu (2016) that for the current enrolment of students at the University of Zambia (UNZA), for the academic year 2016/2017, there was no single student with a disability that was offered a bursary or student loan. He further reiterated what previous authors and scholars have indicated that the majority of students with disabilities attaining a tertiary education come from homes where their families cannot afford to pay tuition fees. This leaves student with disabilities having to rely on sponsorships from non-governmental organizations or the private sector. The bursary scheme at higher tertiary institutions in Zambia has been marred with many irregularities that see those who are in need of such loans left out of the system. Further there is little or no political will to rectify the discrepancies that poor people face in accessing bursaries and loan schemes in higher institutions in Zambia (The Mast, 2017).

Findings have shown that there is an undeniable link between employment and level of education that the WWD have attained. This correlation is reflected in the views of one participant:

"The higher levels of education are even more difficult to acquire than the primary level. Everyone knows without an education you can't get employed and without a job life has been really difficult for most families in this community." (Masi)

Masi's sentiments are also revealed in Sydney (1999) who argues that the higher the level of education, the more likely one is to be employed and the higher the salary they are likely to receive. Significantly, a survey carried out by the Healthy and Lifestyle revealed that fewer WWD possess degrees than men with disabilities (1999, p.14) while the number of people with degrees has increased WWD continue to have lower levels of education than their able-bodied counterparts. This means that the jobs made available to WWD as a result are those that are less rewarding or pay poorly. Until society prioritizes sending WWD to school they

will continue to lose out on the employment opportunities that demand a lot of educational qualifications. The participants stressed how much they understand the value of education in improving their livelihoods as well as how much their families or society in general did not seem as enthusiastic about seeing them complete their education at any level. One participant stated:

> *"My family mistreated me, I have many brothers and sisters who are older than me, when I was taken in by the priest he gave me a life. Now my family they like me, but I forgave them…because I went to school and started working, I was able to even pay for two of my sisters to go to school and also a brother. Despite my little teacher's salary I even send money to my mother almost every month…so sometimes it just how you treat a person that matters." (Buumba)*

In the above extract, it is clear that Buumba's family were not supportive both emotionally and financially because of her being disabled and female. It is interesting to note how the attitudes of her family members shifted because she was now working and able to support them. Mapuranga & Gandan (2012), suggest that WWD who become empowered act to meet their own needs as well as the needs of their immediate families. Employment opportunities for WWD are limited and so WWD are further pushed into a cycle of poverty (Kiani, 2009) exacerbating their levels of dependence. As people with disabilities have been taking their place in society around the world in recent decades, it has become clear that they are able to contribute positively to the development of any economy. It is therefore imperative that they need to have improved access to education, skills training to enable them to find jobs which are suited to their skills, interests and abilities. This is reflected by some of the participants who have against the odds attained a decent level of education enabling them to, find themselves suitable employment opportunities.
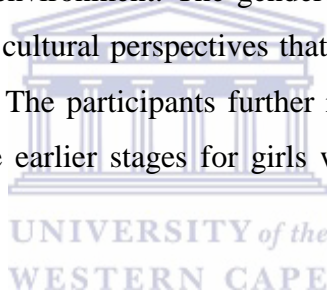
Women with disabilities represent a huge potential which can only be tapped into if these barriers are dismantled.

4.6   Conclusion

The chapter discussed four main themes that were dominant from the participants' responses. This research was aimed at finding out the reasons why fewer women with disabilities were able to access educational opportunities at the tertiary level. The study found that gendered

exclusionary practices saw many WWD suffering from discriminatory practices that excluded them from effective and inclusive participation within the home and community. The social construction of 'knowledge' around bodies with a disability revealed numerous myths and misconceptions that portrayed these bodies in different ways. Some of these constructions portrayed bodies with a disability as asexual, undesirable and at times fearsome. In some cases, such constructions placed WWD in vulnerable positions that exposed them to physical and sexual abuse.

The chapter reveals that the absence of a strong support system saw WWD even more disadvantaged and marginalized within at school. It therefore emphasizes that the family and the community played a huge part in excluding WWD from accessing education. A few participants who had strong support systems demonstrated that such support yielded positive outcomes in the WWD's personal circumstances and character as well as their participation and inclusion within the school environment. The gendered access to education for female bodies is viewed from the social cultural perspectives that see negative attitudes and beliefs that confine WWD to the home. The participants further revealed that access to the school system is compromised from the earlier stages for girls with disabilities and consequently affects access at the higher level.

Discussions revealed that the built environment within schools affected the participant's mobility with the school while the negative attitudes from fellow pupils and teachers within the class environment had an impact in excluding WWD from participation in the classrooms. Financial constraints saw WWD excluded from school and this perpetuated the cycle of poverty experienced by WWD. The limited educational opportunities resulting from the lack of finances to enable schooling also see fewer WWD having employment opportunities that would improve their lives economically. Nevertheless, despite the numerous challenges in the access and participation in school, they showed that WWD can, want and are able to complete school, find work and become positive contributors on the social and economic platforms. Some of these findings are in line with what has been raised in the literature and the details will be provided in the next chapter. The following chapter will discuss the conclusion drawn from this study and give recommendations and possible areas for further research.

CHAPTER 5

5.   CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

This research was undertaken in order to explore and analyse women with physical disabilities' access to tertiary education. The main aim was to understand why there are fewer WWD accessing tertiary education and to further gain an insight into their subjective experiences, by investigating what factors limit their participation not only within schools but also within broader spectrum of their communities. A sample of ten women with physical disabilities from a mainstream tertiary institution in Kamwala Zambia took part in the study through semi structured interviews. The results revealed the experiences and factors that discriminated WWD within their families, communities and also at the lower levels of education. These results offered explanations as to why there were few WWD at tertiary level. The findings revealed that WWD's access to education was mostly gendered with more males having access compared to females with disabilities. Family support was also revealed to be central in ensuring that WWD had access to education. However, the study revealed that the majority of participants came from families and communities where such support was limited with heavily entrenched socially constructed ideas of disability not being a desired condition. Challenges in accessing education were also seen to start form the lower levels of education and filtered into the tertiary level. The study also found that the finances within the home played a major role in making the access to education for WWD achievable. Nevertheless, the lack thereof made such options limited. This chapter will therefore give a summary of these findings, and also provide recommendations that suggest areas of further research.

5.2   Summary of Findings

The discussion chapter looked at factors within the discourse of gender and culture that excluded WWD from inclusion and equal participation within their families, communities and from education. In the methodology chapter, I shared my experience as an 'insider'/'outsider' and how I experienced this relationship as with my participants. My positionality as an insider and outsider resulted in the discussion being the co-construction of

meaning (between me and my participants) of the stories that they shared with me. In the discussion chapter, the research question was answered through analysing the experiences of my participants during the semi structured interviews. These offered reasons why there were fewer women accessing tertiary education. In sharing their experiences, I found that central to the participants being able to take up tertiary education was firstly, their determination to complete the different stages at the lower levels despite the challenges they encountered. Secondly, their realisation that education was vital in offering them better opportunities to improve their standard of living.

WWD, in the study discussed narratives surrounding various myths and misconceptions that created pathways encouraging exclusionary practices towards equal participation on all fronts including the access to education for this group of women. Participants indicated that in the communities where these women lived, disability was understood as a curse, or as a result of being bewitched, a bad omen, or as a sign of punishment from gods. Such misconceptions "othered" them. Although I found such myths outdated, it was clear from the participant's responses that such myths were still believed and practiced and at the core of neglecting, rejecting and mistreating PWD/WWD. These traditional narratives also influence how societies are socially created to socialise with PWD/WWD thus seeing them excluded from participation from within families and communities. Negative beliefs and attitudes towards disability saw WWD excluded from societal participation on numerous fronts. This was due to their weaker and more subordinate roles within the discourse of the power structures created within these patriarchal societies. Such structures made it difficult to challenge these assigned roles. Socially created and culturally defined gender roles entailed that these women were mostly confined to the home and were expected to take care of chores around the home (Butler, 1990; Lorber, 2004; Markson, 2006; Kiani; 2009; Matonya, 2016). Complexities arose from such confinement when their wellbeing was threatened because they became easy targets for abuse and violence which further isolated them from the public domain. WWD were then at risk of growing up in fear of being attacked, negative images of them not be worthy and losing their self-esteem and confidence. Discussions further revealed that social constructions of beauty and identity of female bodies as "the absence of distortions", made WWD become embarrassed by their own bodies. This meant that for WWD whose images fell outside the scope of the socially created ideological notions/portrayal of beauty (Kilbourne, 1994; Garland-Thomas, 2002), their sense of self and identity was affected. Some of the participants indicated that they responded to such feelings of embarrassment by

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isolating themselves from the public domain. However, I would like to argue that the complexities of how WWD saw themselves in relation to beauty, calls for new conversations about what beauty is and how it should and must be defined. This is not only for young women with disabilities who struggle with their own identity, but for young girls as a whole.

Key in the findings were complexities surrounding the role of family support as either caregivers or as taking an active role in including PWD/WWD into the daily activities of the home and ultimately the community. Discussions revealed that the family was pivotal in ensuring that children with disabilities developed social skills, built positive self-images and also developed a strong sense of self-esteem. These skills were all needed to become independent, social and active members of society. In the discussions, I drew the conclusion that a supportive and enabling environment provided by the family created a space where the skills developed at home allowed WWD to become confident and to negotiate their roles better in and outside the home. The findings also emphasize that a strong family support system is needed if WWD are to access and participate in school ultimately being able to access tertiary education. However, it can be inferred from my findings that the majority of WWD lacked this support from families therefore being denied opportunities to go to, and complete their schooling. Narratives within the discussion revealed that gender discrimination started within homes and needed to be tackled there first before expecting communities to be tolerant and inclusive towards WWD. I find that for WWD to have proper and equal access to school, there first needs to be a positive change in attitudes from family and especially parents who must offer this support. However, I must acknowledge that changing the attitude and beliefs of people is not an easy task and although this may take some time it is possible to achieve. I also believe that improved support from family would mean that there is improved attitudes within the community towards people and WWD because attitudes within the home were by extension found in the communities and ultimately in the schools due to the fact that these ideas revolved around these distinct social circles.

I analysed that complexities around the gendered and cultural roles saw most women excluded from schooling opportunities. These complexities resulted in the gendered access to education that was prevalent within the educational system in Zambia. Cultural ideologies were thus found responsible for normalising girls' socialisation. WWD were mostly confined to the home resulting in fewer girls than boys attending school. My discussions with the participants revealed that their families experienced financial constraints and as a result were

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characterised by high poverty levels. The gendered ideological conceptions of disability found that families were likely to pay for their male children with or without disabilities to go to school at the expense of girls and WWD. As a result, WWD were denied the opportunity to access school because finances were diverted towards the education of able-bodied members of the family or indeed to other needs such as providing food and a roof over the head of such families.

Narratives around schooling revealed that a good foundation developed at the primary level was important for the continuation and completion at the tertiary level. The participants raised contesting views on the quality of foundation they had been exposed to at primary level. Primary level was discussed as being the foundation which sets building blocks towards higher levels of education. At the secondary level the participants expressed that they felt invisible within classrooms as there was not much support and attention given by teachers to WWD who struggled to assimilate the material that was presented during lessons. In order to progress to the next level, participants had to develop strategies that helped them to progress to the next levels.

The majority of the participants attended public schools that were characterised by classroom overcrowding, teacher absenteeism to name a few. This meant that pupils had to use study groups in order to learn the material required for progression onto the next stage. However, these study groups became exclusionary to WWD who had mobility constraints which potentially resulted in more WWD dropping out of school. For WWD with disabilities who had gone on to access tertiary education, it was clear that they had to adapt, survive and navigate their way through the challenges experienced within the various school environments. The majority of the participants were exposed to poor quality of education which had implications on the educational outcomes and completion rates.

The study then found that the challenges experienced by WWD at the lower levels offered explanations to why there were fewer women with disabilities at the tertiary level. The study argues that despite the challenges experienced at the lower levels, accessing tertiary education for the participants was about being resilient, determined, and being hard working in order to ensure that educational attainments are achieved. For the participants, accessing tertiary education was seen as an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty that they found themselves in. Tertiary education also made WWD become more employable because they

were able to gain the skills and training that enabled them to take up employment opportunities. The study was able to justify that education opportunities can improve access to gainful employment for WWD as most of the participants were already working.

5.3   Conclusion

The discussions revealed that cultural attitudes (Butler, 1990, Kiani, 2004) shaped and framed WWD as outcasts by othering disabled bodies and portraying them as deviants from the norm (Burr, 1995). I agree with studies conducted by Possi (1998), Hailemariam (2008) and Matshedisho (2007) in Sub-Saharan Africa, which call for urgent positive changes in the attitudes and cultural beliefs of families, communities and education institutions in order to help people with disabilities access and participate in education at all levels without limitation; (see also: Oliver, 1996; Shakespeare & Watson, 2002). They all advocate for positive attitudes from the family and the community towards people and women with disabilities in particular. In view of these findings, I would like to highlight that my study will contribute to knowledge on why there are fewer WWD accessing tertiary education in Zambia. In framing this study, I struggled to find studies similar to mine in the Zambian context which therefore resulted in this evidence lacking in my literature review section. I did however come across a few studies in the Zambian context that looked at the challenges faced by children with disabilities in their access to primary school in Zambia. These studies offered insight into the challenges at the lower levels which was vital in helping me build my argument around reasons that contributed to the challenges experienced in accessing tertiary level. Nonetheless, I did come across a similar study in Tanzania, Cameroon and Kenya, as well as studies in the global North that looked at the challenges, accessibility and participation to higher education which offered much help in formulating and discussing my findings. In the next section I will discuss the methodological and theoretical contributions that my study makes to the academic field.

5.4   Methodological Contributions

This study required me as a feminist researcher to be self-reflexive (Hesse-Bieber, 2006). I found being self-reflexive quite difficult to do because it required me to dig within myself in order to understand the phenomenon which I was studying. However, it later became beneficial to me as it allowed me to critically analyse the voices of the stories that were

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shared with me during the interview process. In the thesis I discuss self-reflexivity as being aware of the differences that existed between me and my participants and how I diffused the power structures that presented themselves. I further turned this theory into my own reflexive journey where I discuss my position as a first time feminist researcher, having come from a background where I was required to analyse and assume predetermined outcomes of events. In this study however, reflexivity played a major role in order to critically listen to the voices which helped to formulate my discussions. In approaching this research, on the one hand, I had to learn how to negotiate how to keep my voice silent and let that of my participants come through during the interview process. This process allowed for participants to offer narratives around how their disabilities shaped their experiences within communities and about their access to education. On the other hand, I had to learn how to let my voice, thoughts, feelings and reactions come through during the data analysis stage by giving meaning to the participant's responses. At the beginning of my interview sessions, a few of the participants hesitated to share any information with me because I was able-bodied and wondered what my motive for interviewing them was. I therefore had to bring out the similarities between my participants and I to make them as comfortable with me as possible for them to open up and share their experiences. In doing so I had to look into the similarities such as being Zambian and female, while also acknowledging and being mindful of the outside status I held being able-bodied. My outsider status therefore placed me in a position of power in comparison to my participants. Acknowledging these differences thus allowed me to collect the information I needed to frame my discussion.

5.5   Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical framework used in this study looked at the social constructionist model which emphasised that WWD were disabled by their social environments and not due to their bodily deficiencies (Burr, 1995; Wendell, 1996; Shakespeare & Watson, 2001; Rocco, 2002). Through the use of social constructionism, I was able to show that people with disabilities are discriminated by the social world around them. The study was able to indicate that despite the participants facing numerous challenges in terms of access to education, they were able to overcome such challenges and were able to participate at the tertiary level. The theory helped me give meaning to participants experiences of exclusion by finding that factors such as gender (Butler, 1990; Lorber, 2004) and culture (Markson, 2006; Kiani, 2009; Matonya, 2016) contributed to seeing WWD marginalized and excluded from equal participation in all

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spheres of public life. This research drew on the social constructionist view in order to emphasize the unique experiences of each participant and how this affected the participant's access to education. Interestingly, these unique experiences showed various similarities as shared by participants (Collins, 2000). Nevertheless, the participants in the study were by no means a homogenous group (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 2000) but that the similarities in the experiences of WWD are shaped through the challenges they faced in accessing tertiary education. Hence the social construction approach used in this study emphasised that WWD had poor access to education resulting from the negative cultural and social attitudes that confined them and positioned them as weak and vulnerable. The social constructionist framework was therefore the most effective tool to use in unpacking the reasons why fewer WWD were seen to access tertiary education. Key challenges experienced by the women were not only located in their social contexts but also shaped by the gender ideologies framing these very contexts. My participants were all WWD from poor backgrounds who had challenges in accessing educational opportunities but were nonetheless in tertiary institutions.

5.6   Recommendations

My study took a feminist qualitative approach to understand why there are fewer WWD accessing tertiary education. Perhaps as a first recommendation, I would like to suggest that a similar study be undertaken using a quantitative approach that would perhaps reveal the scale of women finding challenges in accessing tertiary institutions. Perhaps studies can also trace WWD's participation in education broadly tracing points of leakage and recommending strategies and alternative ways of ensuring retention, for gender justice. The study undertook a social constructionist approach and was very careful to acknowledge the intersectional challenges encountered by the women as well as the non-homogeneity, of WWD. It did not dwell much on intersectional analysis as a framework, something further studies can possibly pursue. It would be more interesting to look at the study through an intersectional approach in order to understand various intersecting factors affecting the access to education for this group of women. A key limitation is that although participants came from different backgrounds and social contexts, the study drew its participants from one institution. Perhaps it would be useful for further studies to draw respondents from several tertiary institutions which would give more in depth information to the factors that WWD experience when it comes to their access. It would also be interesting to use focus group discussions and a narrative analysis in order to highlight how the contesting views of what it means to be a

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WWD in Zambia and how this would impact on their access to education affected or improved their social and economic status.

I would also recommend that further studies take into account men with disabilities experiences towards accessing education in order for them to give more affirming comparisons between the access to tertiary education for WWD and MWD. My study focuses mainly on WWD and offers generalisations about the access for men. Thus looking at this study from the standpoint of men would give a deeper insight into the access to tertiary education for people with disabilities in general. I interviewed WWD to understand what some of the factors that saw other women not participate or complete their education were. It would therefore be interesting to locate WWD who dropped out along the way and account for why they were unable to access education at the tertiary level.

Besides the recommendations for further research, I would like to highlight some of the interventions that can be undertaken locally in order to transform negative attitude portrayed towards PWD in the social context. About two decades ago I remember as a young girl watching TV adverts and jingles on the importance of sending a girl to school. Although I was only about 10 years old at the time, I can imagine that more and more girls were enrolled in schools. This was also about the time that the feminist fight against gender inequality especially in the access to education gained momentum in my context. That jingle still rings fresh in my head today and I believe that reproducing such media campaigns with a focus in the education of girls and WWD would no doubt see improved access and retention in schools. The media plays a very important part in sending messages across, therefore, platforms such as TV, radio and social media can be effective tools used to sensitize the public. This would also give the much needed visibility within the social framework that WWD desperately need. Educating the public about the rights of women living with disabilities would eventually see practices that alienate and discriminate against them reduced.

In terms of the school setting, the government needs to ensure that mainstream schools that enrol people living with disabilities are resourced accordingly. This would include supplying schools with special educational materials such as braille in the case of blind pupils and sign language interpreters for those that are deaf in order to effectively assimilate the information in the class environment. There is also an urgent need to ensure that the school infrastructure

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is modified to accommodate pupils living with disabilities such as those that use wheelchairs or crutches for mobility. Incorporating disability friendly changes to existing structures within schools is less costly than governments having to build new schools that have disabled friendly amenities. Governments also need to ensure that there are enough well trained teachers specialised in teaching learners with disabilities. Support structures should also be established within the communities as well as within the school environment in order to deal with various issues that WWD experience such as abuse and neglect because they are more vulnerable and are more at risk of abuse. Having such support structures within these environments can help by providing counselling services and report cases of violence towards WWD to the relevant authorities in instances where such incidences present themselves.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Request for Permission to Conduct Interviews on School Premises

University of Western Cape Town

Faculty of Arts

Department of Women and Gender Studies

Private Bag, X17

Bellville,

7535

Zambia Institute of Special Education

Education Board

P.O. Box 320081

Woodlands,

LUSAKA.

10th February, 2015

Dear Sir/ Madam,

REF: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES FROM ZAMISE

The above caption refers.

I am conducting a research study on the **'Access to tertiary education' Exploring the experiences of Women with Physical Disabilities in Kamwala, Zambia.**

I am a student at the University of Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa where I am currently studying for a Master's Degree in Women and Gender studies. As part of the

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fulfilment for the completion of my program I am conducting a mini-thesis which will explore the access to education for women with physical disabilities in Zambia.

This research project is aimed at exploring the experiences of women with physical disabilities by conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants. The aim for the study is to enable me to investigate why there are fewer women with disabilities accessing tertiary education.

The study aims to recruit 10 participants. I would therefore, like to access participants from your tertiary institution ZAMISE in Lusaka with the hope that they would be willing to share their experiences with me. I will provide participants with a consent form and information sheet that will give them a background to my research. Participation in this study is purely on a voluntary basis. I would also like to assure you that no harm will come to any participant during the study. All discussions will be confidential and their anonymity will be guaranteed unless the participant chooses to waive this. I would also like to request for permission to be allowed to conduct interviews with participants within the premises of the institution.

I would therefore appreciate any assistance you can give me regarding my project. Kindly feel free to contact me on anything that you many need more clarity on and I will be glad to do so. I am looking forward to hearing from and working with you.

Yours sincerely,

Luyeye Matambo (Ms)

Contact Details
Email address: makalahope@gmail.com
Cell phone #: +260 964 839171/ +269 965 763544/ +27 76 072 4699
Supervisor: Dr. S. Ngabaza
Department of Women and Gender Studies
Email address: sngabaza@uwc.ac.za

Appendix II: Permission from ZAMISE to Conduct Interviews With Pupils

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION

ZAMBIA INSTITUTE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
EDUCATION BOARD
P.O. BOX 320081
WOODLANDS
LUSAKA.

19th July, 2017

The University of the Western Cape.
Faculty of Arts
Department of Women and Gender Studies
Private Bag X17, Bellville, 7535
SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sir/Madam

REF: PERMISSSION GRANTED TO LUYEYE MATAMBO TO CONDUCT SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES AT ZAMISE.

The above caption refers.

Ms. L.H Matambo a student at your University of the Western Cape studying for a Master's Degree in Women and Gender Studies approached our institution ZAMISE, with the aim of conducting semi-structured interviews with students at this institution. The purpose of the interviews was to assist her in gathering information to carry out her research on the "Access to Tertiary Education" exploring the experiences of Women with Physical Disabilities in Kamwala, Zambia.

Ms. Matambo assured the institution that no harm would come to students who agreed to take part in her study. She also provided an information sheet which described her study. She also provided consent forms to participants who agreed to participate in her study on a voluntary basis.

Yours sincerely

G. M Kachenga (Mrs)
PRINCIPAL
ZAMBIA INSTITUTE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

*bmn

Appendix III: Information Sheet

University of Western Cape

Faculty of Arts

Women's and Gender Studies Programme

Private Bag X17, Bellville, 7535

South Africa

INFORMATION SHEET

'Access to tertiary education'

Exploring experiences of Women with Physical Disabilities in Kamwala, Zambia

Dear Participant,

My name is Luyeye Matambo. I am a student at the University of Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa where I am currently studying for a Master's Degree in Women and Gender studies. As part of the fulfilment for the completion of my program I am conducting a research project which will explore the access to education for women with physical disabilities in Zambia.

This research project is aimed at carrying out an exploratory study on the access to education for disabled women. It hopes to gain some insight into why there are fewer women with disabilities in education at the higher levels of learning (i.e. tertiary institutions) in Zambia. The study will focus specifically on the experiences of physically disabled women to account for why there are fewer women with disabilities accessing education at this level.

The study will be carried out by conducting semi structured interviews (45mins- 1hr) and will recruit 10 participants to share your experiences. All discussions will be confidential and your anonymity will be guaranteed unless you (the participant) choose to waive this. The interviews will be conducted in a language and at a time and place that is convenient for you.

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Participation in this project is purely voluntarily and participants who wish to take part in the project have the right to withdraw from the study at any time before the project is finalised. At the beginning of the interview, you will be required to sign a consent form that will inform you of your rights as a participant in this research project. I also ensure that no harm will come to you should you wish to participate in this research project.

Your willingness to participate in this research project and to share your stories, your experiences and your knowledge is sincerely appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Luyeye Matambo (Ms).

Contact Details
Email address: makalahope@gmail.com
Cell phone #: +260 964 839171/ +27 76 072 4699
Supervisor: Dr. S. Ngabaza
Email address: sngabaza@uwc.ac.za

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Appendix IV: Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH: 'Access to tertiary education' Exploring the experiences of Women with Physical Disabilities in Kamwala, Zambia.

I, …………………………………………………………………………………………

hereby voluntarily give my consent to participate in this research project which aims to conduct an assessment of the access to special education for women with disabilities in Lusaka, Zambia.

- I understand that the research project is being conducted by Ms Lulu Matambo from the department of Women and Gender studies at the University of the Western Cape.
- I am fully aware of the aims of the project and am participating on a free and voluntary basis.
- I understand that I am free to leave this study at any stage before the completion of the project without any consequences to me.
- I understand that I can ask questions freely where I need clarity.
- I understand that all information I give will be kept confidential and my name will not appear on any report, and my identity will not be revealed to others unless I give my express consent for the divulging of such information.
- I also understand that the information that I give may be used in reports or in publications.
- I understand that the interviews will take place at a time and place convenient for me.
- I agree to the use of audio recordings during the interviews and the transcripts will be kept in a secure place where only the researcher will have access to.
- I am aware of and agree that the data collected could be published in reports or publications.

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- I understand that no harm will come to me during my participation in this project.

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form and voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Signature (participant) _____   Signature   (witness)   _____

Date_____   Date _____

Place _____

Should you have any questions regarding this study please contact:

Department of Women and Gender Studies

Ms Lulu Matambo - Email: makalahope@gmail.com.

Contact #: +260 964 839171/ +27 76 072 4699

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