AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CHALLENGES FACED BY THE GIRL CHILD TOWARDS COMPLETING O-LEVEL IN ZIMBABWE’S COMMERCIAL FARMING COMMUNITY: THE CASE OF CHISHAWASHA-ARCTURUS COMMERCIAL FARMING COMMUNITY.

BY

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation has been the result of my own original effort investigation and such work has not been used elsewhere for the purpose of the degree assessment. All additional sources of information have been acknowledged by means of references

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Date……………………………..

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Signature…………………………
Date……………………………..
Abstract

A lot of researches on school dropouts have been done. Although research on girls’ school dropouts in rural areas, resettlement areas and urban areas were done, little work was done on girls’ dropouts in commercial farming communities in Zimbabwe. This research investigated challenges faced by the girl-child towards the completion of Ordinary Level in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. In-depth interviews, focus group discussion and records analysis were used to collect data to collect qualitative data. Snowball sampling method was employed to identify the school dropouts and parents with children who failed to complete ordinary level. Stratified purposeful sampling was used to select, church leaders, school leaders, community leaders and focus group participants. The major findings were that the girls in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community dropped out from school before completing their secondary education mainly because of ignorance and negative attitude towards school which led to early marriages and teenage pregnancies. Loss of breadwinners, negative social relations, poor academic performance and long distance to school after tiresome household chores at home are some of the key findings of this research study. Parents and guardians must prioritise educating both girls and boys, the church and the community must work together to support and encourage their children to complete Ordinary Level unlocks the avenues to various destinations of success. The Ministry of education must provide schools which offer relevant curriculum within walking distance to commercial farming communities.
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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my loving grandmother, Martha Dzvuke.
### Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEAM</td>
<td>Basic Education Assistance Module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMFED</td>
<td>Campaign for Female Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CESCR</td>
<td>Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education For All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESAP</td>
<td>Economic Structural Adjustment Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAWEZI</td>
<td>Forum of African Women Educationalist Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMSI</td>
<td>Marist International Solidarity Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>Girl Education Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEDCs</td>
<td>Less Economically Developed Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEDCs</td>
<td>More Economically Developed Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCLB</td>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCWGE</td>
<td>National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBE</td>
<td>Public Report on Basic Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Education Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Fund for Population Activities</td>
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<td>WOZA</td>
<td>Women of Zimbabwe Arise</td>
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

School drop outs is a common phenomenon around the globe and Zimbabwe is not an exception. There are a number of researches that have been carried out to try and establish the causes of school dropouts in rural and urban areas (Dakwa, Chiome, & Chabaya, 2014; Hartl, 2006; Machingambi, 2012; Mawere, 2012; Minnaar, 2006; P. Mupa & Chinooneka; Nmadu et al., 2010). Recently researchers like Chinyoka (2014) and Munyati, (2014) have been focussing on school drop outs in resettlement areas. In Zimbabwe, there are limited meaningful and detailed studies on the girl-child school dropouts that have been done in commercial farming communities. It is commonly believed that the causes of school dropouts are common and obvious. But this is not so. It is important to get to the ground and find out the root causes which are unique to each community or society. However this study has explored the challenges faced by the girl-child. The girl-child is the most vulnerable and is usually deprived and disadvantaged hence they drop from school before their Ordinary Level graduation (Hartl, 2006; Nmadu et al., 2010). There are numerous factors that militate against the girl-child’s progress in school. Poverty and early marriages are cited as the main causes of the girl-child’s dropouts (Hartl, 2006; Machingambi, 2012; Mawere, 2012; Minnaar, 2006; P. Mupa & Chinooneka; Nmadu et al., 2010). There is need to investigate the reasons why young girls choose to get married before completing their Ordinary Level education. Marriage could be a symptom of a deep seated problem. Poverty on its own cannot lead to school dropouts but rather it motivates one to attain education for positive meaningful contribution to the development of the community. There are little or no documented studies on school drop outs on commercial farming communities in Zimbabwe. The purpose of this study was to explore the causes of school dropouts of the girl –child in the Chishawasha –Arcturus commercial farming community.
1.2 Background

Globally, education is the most important vehicle to critical thinking, social and economic development of individuals, communities and nations (UNICEF, 2007). (Maatz, Graves, & Cordovilla, 2012) has referred to it as the ‘window of hope.’ Zengeya,(2007) Chetsanga, 2002 and Government of Zimbabwe, 2005 in Zengeya,(2007) realised that the problems of school dropouts in Zimbabwe was an acute problem at both primary and secondary educational levels. A school dropout is a student who leaves school with or without the school’s permission before completing an educational cycle enrolled voluntarily or involuntarily(Mawere, 2012; P. Mupa & Chinooneka). In Zimbabwe many researches have been done to try and establish the causes of school dropouts in rural areas, urban areas and resettlement areas by both boys and girls (Chinyoka, 2014; Hartl, 2006; Machingambi, 2012; Munyati, 2014) . The findings by the various researchers seems to common. They discovered that most of the girls drop out of school because of poverty, early marriages , cultural beliefs , illness and death(Chinyoka, 2014; Dakwa et al., 2014; Hartl, 2006; Machingambi, 2012; Mawere, 2012; Minnaar, 2006; Munyati, 2014; P. Mupa & Chinooneka; Nmadu et al., 2010) . Rumberrar 1987 in Dakwa et al.,(2014) pointed out that the challenges causing school dropouts are complex and diverse. This researcher realised that most of the researches done so far in Zimbabwe have failed to look at the causes of school dropout of the girl-child in commercial farming communities. To find the real challenges that leads to school dropout by girls in commercial farming communities, this study was conducted in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community located about 20-35 kilometres east of Harare. This study will help to come up with the most appropriate measures to the commercial farming communities’ unique challenges forcing the girl child to drop out of school before sitting for her O-Level public examinations.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community has a number of young mothers who are supposed to be in school. They usually move from one plot to another looking for piece jobs, especially during the farming season. This is a clear sign that girls from the commercial farming communities are dropping out from school before completing Ordinary Level. This is highly contributing to poverty and risk behaviours by the victims. Mupa and Chinooneka (2014) referring to Goffman’s theory of student engagement argue that students drop out of school due to distractors that are within the learning institutions , the home and the
local environment. They further assert that there is a tug-of-war between teachers’ efforts to capture student’s attention and the multi-stimuli that distract students from pursuing their formal studies. It is on this basis that this study has explored the root causes of the distractors leading to girls dropping out of school without completing Ordinary Level.

1.4 Justification

The failure of the girl-child to attain the basic Ordinary Level qualification is a cause for concern as it has ripple effects on the future generations of these girls who are victims. The victims’ families fail to break out of the poverty cycle. The girl-child is deprived of the right to education as parents and guardians uphold cultural traditions that oppress the girl-child preventing her opportunity to right and access the basic education. Various studies have been done on the subject but focusing on rural, resettlement and urban communities. No meaningful study was done focusing on commercial and former commercial farming communities. There is need to find out the real causes proved by research leading to girls dropouts in farming communities. There is need to unearth the causes of the girl-child school dropout in commercial farming areas.

1.5 Significant of the study

The findings from this study would benefit the children in the commercial farming community, their families and the community at large. It sort to empower the young boys and girls and also find ways of giving young mothers who were victims of circumstances leading to their failure to complete their Ordinary Level education, a second chance. The girl child should become not only vehicles of change but also active drivers of change in the farming communities. This research project must inform the policy makers to draft policies that promote the empowerment of girls and young mothers through education and life skills programs. The policies must also include laws that encourage parents and guardians to prioritise the education of both boys and girls. Once the young individuals are educated, families and the community at large will develop in all facets of life breaking off the cycle of poverty. The study must also draw attention
of the organisations that support the girl-child and provide sponsorship for or any other help to enable them to pursue their education until they complete Ordinary Level.

1.6 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to explore challenges faced by the girl-child towards completion of Ordinary Level in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community.

1.7 Objectives of the study

The study sought to:

1. Identify the major factors forcing the girl-child to drop out of school before writing their Ordinary Level public examinations in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community.

2. Explore the role played by the environmental factors in promoting or hindering girls’ education.

3. Establish the effect of the family’s socio-economic background in the education of the girl-child.

1.8 Research questions

1. What are the major factors that lead to secondary school girl-child dropout in commercial farming communities of Chishawasha-Arcturus?

2. How does the Chishawasha-Arcturus environment contribute to failure by girls to complete Ordinary Level education?

3. What is the effect of the family’s socio-economic background on the girl-child education?
1.9 Definition of key terms

This study has frequently used the following defined terms:

1.9.1 Girl-child

Arat (2002) defined a child as anyone below the age of eighteen. Ifijeh & Odaro (2011) citing The National Child Welfare Policy (1989) defines the girl-child as person who is below 14 years of age. Offorma, (2009) in Goodluck and Odaro, (2011) defines the girl-child as a biological female child from birth to eighteen years of age. A girl child is therefore made up of infancy, childhood and adolescence stages of development. The girl-child is a young female person, who would eventually grow into a woman and get married one day. In this study, a girl-child was any female below the age of eighteen years.

1.9.2 Basic education

SADC protocol on education states that nations must provide universal basic education, i.e. providing for minimum of nine years of schooling. Kamwendo, (2009) explains the term basic as referring to the aspects forming an essential foundation; fundamentals of education. It is the elementary and fundamental stages of education as outlined the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Assembly, 1948). Primary education is referred to as the formal basic education which enables one to become literate(Assembly, 1948). Equally important is the secondary education which is fundamental in equipping one to further their studies and become eligible to contribute to the economy and development of a nation meaningfully and constructively(Kamwendo, 2009). In this particular study basic education referred to primary education. It has also considered secondary school as basic education for the youth.

1.9.3 School dropout

Mawere,(2012) defines a school dropout as a student who leaves school before completing a given educational cycle without the permission of the school. Unger, (2007) in Mupa and Chinooneka (2014) defines a dropout as a school going child who withdraw from school without completing the intended level of education for various reasons other than enrolling in another school. What is common in all definitions is that a person who is considered as a school dropout is someone who fails to complete an educational cycle intended. Fine and Rosenberg (1983) in Chavez et al., (1991) viewed the term dropout as a colloquial term which is
understood to mean youth that have been thrown out, pushed out, or never allowed into the mainstreams of secondary education. In this study, a school dropout was a student who left school with or without the school’s permission before completing an educational cycle enrolled for voluntarily or involuntarily.

1.9.4 Social Relations

Mucha, (2003) defines social relations as referring to the mutual orientation between the actions of two or more individuals. The relationship can be positive or negative. Two people can be in agreement or disagreement. In this study, social relations referred to all individuals who had an influence in the whole being, that is, socially, economically, spiritually or intellectually, of the girl-child.
1.10 Chapter organisation

This research work consists of five chapters as follows:

**Chapter one** – In this chapter is the introduction to the study. It outlines the aim, objectives and the research questions of the research study.

**Chapter two** - this chapter covers literature review. The educational legislations pertaining to are discussed at different level. Causes of school dropouts from related studies are discussed and few theories that attempt to explain the causes of school dropouts are outlined in this chapter.

**Chapter three**- research design and methodology, sampling methods and data collection instruments are discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter four** – research findings are outlined in this chapter. An analysis is given based on the findings.

**Chapter five** – a summary of the findings and recommendations are outlined in this chapter.

**Conclusion**

The chapter outlined the introduction to the study which comprises background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. Key terms were also defined in the chapter. The next chapter will review the works done by other researcher related to the topic under study.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Children who drop out of school before completing their Ordinary Level are not a new phenomenon. Machingambi, (2012); Mawere, (2012); Minnaar,(2006); Nimadu et al, (2010); Hartl, (2006); Dakwa et al.,(2014); Mupa & Chinooneka, (2014) are researchers who have worked in this area of study. This chapter discusses the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework and the legislative framework of the challenges faced by the girl-child on her path towards the completion of Ordinary Level studies.

2.2 Universal legislative framework promoting education

Education is important in every individual’s life. It is the vehicle by which persons gain critical thinking, acquire life skills and contribute meaningfully to their societies. Governments at international levels down to national governments need to be custodians of this unique and important factor: education. That it be accessible to all without discrimination. On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations resolution 217A proclaimed, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. Of interest in this study is Article 26 which states that:

Everyone has the right to education.

- Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.
- Elementary education shall be compulsory.
- Technical and professional education shall be made generally available

1. Higher education shall be equal to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations Everyone has the right to education.

- Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.
- Elementary education shall be compulsory.
- Technical and professional education shall be made generally available
3. Higher education shall be equal to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

- It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

4. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children

(Assembly, 1948)

The Universal declaration of Human Rights of 1948 clearly states that education is a right to all hence it must be free and compulsory at the primary level. Professional education must be easily accessible to all despite their social and economic status in society. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, it is the high school education that equips and develops an individual who is compatible to the multi-racial and diverse religious beliefs. The first clause of Article 26 of the same declaration is further discussed below.

2.2.1 Analysing the right to education

Education not only empowers a human being to achieve other basic human rights, but it is also an effective catalyst for social development and economic growth in developing countries (UNICEF, 2007). Educating the young including the girl child not only benefits an individual but the whole society at large. Unicef, (2011) states that, education offers what the World Bank has referred to as a “window of hope”. UNESCO, (2015) states that the education for all goals was set in 2000 together with the Millennium Development Goal number 2. The general comment Number. 13 of the United Nations’ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) of the 21st session in 1999 outlined the state responsibilities in ensuring that the set goals are achieved as respect, protect and fulfil the right to education (UNESCO, 2015).

Respect obligation ensures that governments enact laws that protect all human beings regardless of their status or condition in society ensuring access to quality education especially children. It does not matter one is rich, poor, free or in bondage, they all have right to education. According to Rebell,(2011) a right refers to an individual claim that is entitled to come first before any other societal goals. A right can be based on a moral principle or legal principle as enshrined in particular laws. Education must be accessible to all to fulfil the UN Declaration
on Human Rights Article 26 that everyone has right to education which is a window of hope. Education is the underlying base that comes before any other right. It is education that opens our doors to all other rights in life hence referred to as the window of hope.

States must give equal opportunity to all groups of people in its society to access and enjoy education (Carrim, 2007). States or governments must ensure that no one group interferes or hinders the other from accessing and enjoying education. The Government fulfils its obligation by making sure that it provides and facilitates all groups of people including the lowly placed and disadvantaged groups or individuals (Acker, 1992).

The states must meet the minimum standards to achieve their goals in providing education to its citizens. These standards fall into four categories which stipulate that education and educational institutions must be available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. The United States of America Federal Government came up with the ‘No Child Left Behind Act’ (NCLB) which ensured that it availed comprehensive educational opportunities to all through its stated goal of providing fair, equal and substantial educational to all children (Rebell, 2011). UNESCO, (2015) expanded these standards by further explaining that by ‘available’, governments or states must make sure that there are adequate well equipped schools in the physical structures, resource and professional instructors with locally competitive salaries. This standard is however not readily achievable in most Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) which lack financial capability and hence a lot of disparities in the education sector. Those families who occupy middle to upper classes have better schools in all aspects as compared to those in the lowest level of the social ladder. In some More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs), inequalities are evidenced in racially discriminated groups in society.

After the government provides learning institutions in all areas of its society, the schools must be accessible. The distance, the requirements and expectations must be achievable and enabling anyone to enrol and acquire quality education (Dohho, 2015). States must therefore ensure that it enacts laws that are not discriminatory to anyone in society. Different states have different cultures and values. The states must therefore ensure that the type of education they provide is acceptable within its members, both students and the community but being of good quality. Education is not for the sake of having an educated nation. It must be flexible and dynamic, always moving with the demand of change. It must be a solution to all the challenges faced by
its society and therefore states must ensure that it is relevant to the prevailing demands of the society (Lanzi, 2007).

Education must be adaptable to the needs of students within their diverse social and cultural settings (UNESCO, 2015). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that it is important for states to enact laws that encourage regular school attendance until graduation of a particular education level reducing school dropouts (UNICEF, 2007). Poverty and discrimination barriers must be eliminated. The existence of a child centred, child friendly and empowering environment was stressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child article 29 (UNICEF, 2007). It is further argued that development of education goes beyond formal schooling to encompass a broad range of life experiences which enables positive development and learning to take place.

In the Chishawasha- Arcturus commercial farming community, a number of people have not benefited from the declaration. A number of young mothers are seen roaming the community hence the need to find out the reasons that has led these young mothers dropping out of school before completing Ordinary Level public examination.

2.2.2 Education must be free and compulsory at least in the elementary and fundamental stages

Carrim, (2007) states the Education for All (EFA) campaign of the United Nations aims at ensuring that every child has equal opportunity to access basic education. The declaration emphasized that education was to be free in the elementary and fundamental stages of education. (UNESCO, 2000) in the document, World Education Forum, Dakar Framework for Action, EFA goal two stated that by 2015 all children, especially girls in disadvantaged circumstances, must have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality (Kamwendo, 2009). The commercial farming communities in Zimbabwe like Chishawasha-Arcturus are trailing behind and the girls are the most affected. What could be the reason for failure to complete secondary education if they have managed to go through the primary education successfully in the Chishawasha-Arcturus community.
2.3 Framework on Education: African Perspective

The SADC member states are signatories to the international protocols, declarations and charters on human rights and rights to education (Secretariat, 2000). The African legislative framework is therefore aligned to the international legislations on education (UNICEF, 2010). African states have also come up with their own instruments derived from the universal instruments within their various regional groupings such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1981) Article 17 states that every individual has a right to education (Union, 2003). The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) Article 1.1 on education states that every child must have the right to education and that governments must ensure that the right to education is achieved and fully realised (Union, 1999). This is enabled through providing free and compulsory education as stated in the charter (Kamwendo, 2009; Union, 2003). The SADC Protocol on Education and Training adopted in Blantyre, Malawi in 1997 Article 5 describes the need for co-operation in basic education: primary and secondary levels (Secretariat, 2000). According to Article 5, African member states agreed that primary and secondary education forms the critical foundation upon which tertiary education is developed or built. The member states agreed that the primary and secondary curriculum to include content on SADC countries so as to promote regional integration. Individual states were to provide basic education for at least 9 years in order to eradicate illiteracy so as to equip its citizens with lifelong skills (Secretariat, 2000). The SADC member states undertook to work together in the development of curriculum, educational materials, national examination and accreditation systems and exchange experiences of educational professionals to move towards educational comparability, harmonisation and eventual standardisation. A Framework for Action in Sub-Saharan Africa: Education for African Renaissance in the Twenty-first Century (1999) emphasizes that education is a basic right and a basic need for all Africans despite their age, gender, ability or status as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Resolutions of the Union of African Parliaments - Education and Population in Africa adopted in Nyamey, Republic of Niger from 22 to 23 August 1998 and of the 29th Conference, Bujumbura in November 2006 (Murray, 2004): The role of parliaments in the promotion of Education and Culture in Africa were that governments must make primary education free and compulsory. African governments were to ensure the development of technical and professional training to cater for
those who were deprived of attending general education systems an opportunity to find their way into the nation’s economic fabric (Kamwendo, 2009; Union, 2003).

The African Charters, resolutions and protocols previously mentioned focuses on the right to education especially of the girl child and any other disadvantaged and deprived persons (Secretariat, 2000). There are Non-Governmental Organisations such as the Girl-child Network that encourage the female children to claim and obtain their right to education. It appears that the African states have strong instruments that encourage everyone to acquire education. It is the legal enforcement of the instruments that is not in existence (Kamwendo, 2009).

2.4 National Education Framework in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean Education Act is drawn from the SADC protocol on education. And it is aimed at fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals (Secretariat, 2000). All children have the right to education according to the Zimbabwean Education Act (Zimbabwe, 1987). In Zimbabwe, education should be free and compulsory(Kamwendo, 2009; Thabethe, 2009; Union, 2003).

2.4.1 Free and Compulsory Education in Zimbabwe

In section 5 of the Zimbabwe Education Act advocates for compulsory primary education for every child of school going age (Zimbabwe, 1987). The Zimbabwean government makes it the duty of every parent or guardian to ensure that their children attend school. It is important for the government to have taken up the responsibility to ensure every child attend school (Secretariat, 2000; Thabethe, 2009). Zimbabwean government tried to place a number of measures to ensure free and compulsory education. This included free primary education, Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) soon after independence in 1980 (Thabethe, 2009). However the Zimbabwean situation is currently different. Since the 1990s upon the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP), there was no free and compulsory education in Zimbabwe any more (UNICEF, 2010). Due to economic hardships experienced by the Zimbabwean government national education from the ECD level is paid for. The Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) examination was stopped. Recently the government made a directive that grade sevens will be expected to pay for primary examination fees. This action is likely to cause more school dropouts since a number of families were already struggling to pay tuition fees. The Zimbabwean government issued directives to school
administrators not to send students home on the basis of failure to pay schools fees. Although BEAM was very helpful in the past it is currently failing to fulfil its mandate. Of late BEAM assistance to pupils has been erratic and financially inadequate. Zhou & Zvoushe, (2012) think that the free and compulsory education policy presented financial, material and human resource challenges to the Zimbabwean government. Low income earners find it difficult to meet the financial obligation of the hidden costs such as uniforms, stationary and food. Quality education in Zimbabwe is becoming a preserve for the rich. Mudavanhu (2011) commented that Zimbabwe has failed to achieve free and compulsory basic education for its citizens.

The 1979 Education Act abolished compulsory education, but later reinstated compulsory universal primary education for every school-age child (Peresuh & Barcham, 1998). Zimbabwean government has placed a number of measures to ensure free and compulsory education. These included free primary education, BEAM soon after independence in 1980 (Kanyongo, 2005). However the Zimbabwean government failed to put mechanisms in place to ensure the enforcement of the policy especially in communal and remote rural areas (Bray, 1997).

The free primary education and BEAM must allow the financially disadvantaged including the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community girls enabling them to complete their secondary education. This study investigates the reason why the girls are failing to complete the secondary level of education if the Zimbabwean government has put in place measures to enable all children to have access to free and compulsory education.

2.4.2 Civil society support

Schools are supposed to be available and easily accessible to all (Secretariat, 2000; I. Unesco, 2011). Zimbabwe is one country that is among the African nations with the highest literacy rate. Zimbabwe has more primary schools compared to secondary schools. This is an indication that bottle neck education is still dominant (Nziramasanga, 1999; Zhou & Zvoushe, 2012). It is the girls who are mainly affected. Secondary schools are usually inaccessible in terms of distance and requirements (Chinyoka, 2014). Cultural beliefs favour the boy child who is said to carry the family name and will become the breadwinner of his family (Mawere, 2012; Shahidul & Karim, 2015). Girls are expected to carry out household chores before and after school. They usually get tired before they started travelling to school hence are likely not to continue to attend school (Ntumva & Rwambali, 2013). The National Coalition for Women
and Girls in Maatz, Graves, & Cordovilla,(2012) state that pregnant and parenting students usually face discrimination in schools. Women of Zimbabwe Arise, ChildLine, the Girl Child Network, Farm Orphan Trust and the Family Support Trust are some of the organisations working tirelessly to help the disadvantaged and discriminated children and women so that they realise their right to access education and exercise their full rights as Zimbabwean citizens (Arat, 2002). These Human Rights Organisations believe that a disadvantaged child should not fail to accesses education and practise all other rights. Such a child must get financial assistance from various welfare organisations to at least access quality education. If the Human Rights Organisation are supporting and financially assisting disadvantaged children, why then the girl-child in the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community drop out of school hence the need to carry out this study.

2.5 Zimbabwean government support of the girl-child education

The Zimbabwean government has noted that girls’ rate of completion of primary school level is steadily declining since 2001. The highest completion rates are experienced in Harare province while Mashonaland Central has the least completion rates (Unicef, 2006). It is observed that orphans and vulnerable children are more likely to drop out of school than other children. Girls are generally the more disadvantaged at all levels of education. The survey carried out by the government noted a number of reasons for school dropouts especially for the girl-child (Gordon, 2002). Labour migration as a result of high unemployment rates have left children without parental guidance (Chinomona, 2014; Unicef, 2006). The girls have fallen victim of being overburdened by household chores in extended families compared to their male counterparts. This has resulted in girls failing to concentrate on as well as committing time to school work. In mining settlements, girls are victims of sexual abuse resulting in early unwanted pregnancies (Chinomona, 2013)

It has also been noted that the cost of education is unaffordable to many (UNICEF, 2006). Textbooks and uniforms are expensive. Girls have an extra cost especially when they reach puberty hence are likely to be kept out of school in favour of boys. Despite there being a common statement that “educating a female is educating a nation”, parents still think that it is a waste of resources sending girls to school because they will get married to another family (Chinomona, 2014; Unicef, 2006).
Behind these reasons and many others, the government has made some efforts to address the situation of girls’ education. The government enrolled a number of female teachers to work in schools to encourage the girls as role models (Unicef, 2006). The female teachers were also united with their husbands. The government also made it a point that all stakeholders in the lives of girls played their roles. The children themselves, school systems, the religious communities, parents/guardians and the society in general has to encourage and create opportunities for girls to attend and remain in school until they complete Ordinary Level and go beyond.

The main aim of the government in proposing the Strategic Plan for the education of girls, orphans and vulnerable children is to ensure that societies empower girls and women to take control of their lives and to actively participate in national development (Phiri, 2007; Unicef, 2006). They also aimed to reach all orphans and vulnerable children in Zimbabwe with basic education to positively impacting their lives. The government targeted to fulfil two sustainable millennium goals, that is compulsory primary education and gender equity and women empowerment (Assembly, 1948; Maatz et al., 2012). The Education for All by year 2015 through free and compulsory education, eliminating gender disparity and improving all aspects of quality education and excellence in education and life skills (Swainson, Bendera, Gordon, & Kadzamira, 1998; Unicef, 2006). The government vowed to keep girls in school at all cost through compulsory free basic education and community participation. They have undertaken to ensure that schools be within three kilometres radius for easy access. Where fees are to be paid the government is to make sure fees are reviewed every year in line with the prevailing economic situation.

BEAM has been in operation for a long period of time. The Government of Zimbabwe assigned the Ministry of Education to administer it through a decentralised model. They noted that BEAM beneficiaries were not properly selected (Unicef, 2006). The selection committees were to prioritise orphans and vulnerable children of which the majority of the population are girls. There is need to closely monitor the whole processes involving all stakeholders. In 2004 the Girl Education Movement (GEM) was launched (UNICEF, 2007). The movement was to promote the formation of clubs in school advocating for the rights of girls and protecting them
from abuse of any form within the school, home and community environment (Falkingham and Baschieri (2006; UNICEF, 2006).

The Government of Zimbabwe realised that it needed support from a number of organisations to fully implement its plans. It engaged a network of non-governmental organisation such as Forum of African Women Educationalist Zimbabwe Chapter (FAWEZI), Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), the Girl Child Network, Save the Children/UK, Save the Children/ Norway, the Women and AIDS Support Network, the MUSASA Project, CHIPAWO, Mavambo Trust and other NGOs to help implement the policies (Unicef, 2006).

In 2011 UNICEF gave a report on the success of the 2005-2010 Strategic plans (Unicef, 2011). They reported that in the education sector, primary enrolment remained high above 90% but the number decreased at secondary level. Grade 7 pass rate was reported to be declining showing symptoms of deterioration of education quality. However it should be noted that of the over 90% enrolled in primary schools only 68% were able to complete their primary course with a pass rate of about 39%. Disparities in education were noted as increasing also with the top rich sector estimated to have three times more chances of attending secondary school than children from the poor bottom sector. They also reported that girls represent only 35% of students in upper secondary. The 2007/8 economic challenges saw a number of children out of school especially girls and declining quality in education due to ensuing exodus of teachers (Arat, 2002; Unicef, 2011).

Obura, et al (2011) argues that there was near achievement of gender parity in primary and advanced levels. It is still very evident that girls are few at secondary level and are outperformed by boys. Generally girls perform better at primary level and advanced level. This report shows that there are still challenges faced by the girl child in completing the basic primary education and secondary school level (Obura et al., 2011). Thabete, (2009) in basing on the SADC barometer concluded that there is still need to pay attention to women’s rights in Zimbabwe especially in the education sector. Obura, et al.,(2011) commented that it seems there is still some form of resistance to gender mainstreaming in all sectors. Obura, et al, (2011) further explained that the resistance could be as a result of the socialisation of the duty bearers into dominantly patriarchal value systems which promote male domination/visibility versus female subordination/invisibility (Kambarami, 2006). The implementation of the girl-child
Empowerment policies are donor driven and lack government budget commitment hence the program suffered financially and was stalled.

It is evident from the above discussion that from the global perspective to the local Zimbabwean perspectives, governments are trying their best to come up with appropriate policies to ensure the girl-child is raised to the level of their male counterparts but it is the implementation process that is largely ineffective. It is very difficult to overcome the power of culture and traditional beliefs especially in the African and Asian countries and Zimbabwe is not spared. All stakeholders need to work together to achieve gender parity in all spheres of life.

2.6 Theoretical framework

This study is premised on a number of theories. These are Erving Goffman’s ‘Student Engagement and Interactive Theory’ (Melander & Wortmann, 2011), James Coleman’s ‘Social Capital Theory’ (Coleman, 1988) and Bernard Weiner’s Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1985). The three theories though diverse, have some common elements that try to explain students’ dropout before basic education level graduation.

2.6.1 James Coleman’s ‘Social Capital Theory’

Wagle, (2012) based his study on Coleman’s social capital theory. Smith et al (1992) in Wagle (2012) referred to social capital theory as social networks and social interactions that help in educational achievement or attainment. Coleman social capital theory occurs within or outside the family. Coleman in Wagle (2012) suggests that a relationship should exist between students, their families, friends, communities and schools in order to attain higher academic achievements. Social capital theory therefore occurs within the family or outside the family hence has internal and external factors just like the distractors in Goffman’s theory of student engagement. Coleman (1988) argued that social capital is affected by the amount of positive parent-child interaction which empowers the children to convert the financial and human capital present in the family into the positive achievements that increases well-being. Palas (1986) in Wagle (2012) explained the three broad theoretical orientations that account for dropping out behaviour. The author said academic performance is a major drop-out cause for students who lack the required ability to attain academic success. Maturity also plays an
important role in academic success. Shouldering a lot of responsibilities beyond one’s age while in school creates role strain that will culminate in dropping out of school. Coleman, (1988) refers to this as the accelerated role transition. Children that are orphaned early usually fall in this category. The first born usually becomes the breadwinner of the family hence failing to meet the demands of the student’s and parent’s roles. In most cases they leave school to look after their sibling full time. Girls are mainly affected in such a situation. This study was therefore to investigate the challenges forcing the girl-child in the Chishawasha-Arcturus farming community to drop out of school before completing ordinary level. Can it be as a result of failed internal and external relations from her stakeholders.

2.6.2 Erving Goffman’s ‘Student Engagement and Interactive Theory’

Mupa & Chinooneka, (2014) referring to Goffman’s theory stated that school dropouts are mainly as a result of what Goffman referred to as distractors. Goffman stated that distractors are found in both school and home environments. Mupa & Chinooneka, (2014) highlighted that a tug-of-war exist between school’s effort to win their students’ attention and the multiple stimuli that distract students from pursuing and achieving their academic studies. Chinyoka, (2014) points out that students’ attempt to explain their achievements or failures by looking on ability, effort, mood, knowledge, luck, help, interest or clarity of instruction. All these address internal and external factors or distractors that lead to someone dropping out of school voluntarily or forcibly.

2.7 Factors that leads to school drop-outs

School drop-outs are not a new phenomenon around the globe especially in least developed countries and less economically developed countries. There is so much research that has been carried to try and establish why students leave school before completing the course (Buono, 2011; Dakwa et al., 2014; Dianda, 2008; Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, 2008; Hartl, 2006; Machingambi, 2012; Mawere, 2012; Minnaar, 2006; Nmadu et al., 2010). Buono, (2011) states that there are different elements which contribute to school dropouts. The researcher pointed out that the most vulnerable groups are from large and poor families who struggle to raise their families because of financial challenges. The common causes of school drop-outs were cited
as poverty, child labour, early marriage and teenage pregnancies, distance to schools and language of instruction

2.7.1 Poverty and education

Dianda, (2008) cited poverty as the most powerful demographic factor that has high percentage in increasing an individual student’s chances of dropping out of school. Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, (2008) argue that poverty is often cited as an important reason why learners drop out of school as pointed by Dianda, (2008) and other researchers. They are of the opinion that poverty is not really a cause for school dropout. Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, (2008) are cited in a South African case as disputing poverty as the main cause for school dropouts. They argued that despite South Africa experiencing high levels of poverty that is, about 70% of children were in poverty in 2006. During the same year the South African education department recorded very high gross enrolment averaging over 90%. The two writers agree that poverty does contribute to school dropout but not in the way being preached by many scholars. Mowafi, (2004) pointed out that poverty is a reflection of the social concerns and values or beliefs associated with the subject. Mowafi mentions that the meaning of the term poor is not clear and that researchers and policy makers have grappled with it. Poverty is divided into broad concepts, absolute poverty and relative poverty (Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, 2008; Mowafi, 2004)

Absolute poverty is defined as referring to the set of resources a person must have in order to maintain a minimum standard of living while relative poverty deals with how well-off a person is with respect to other individuals in the same community (Mowafi, 2004). Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, (2008) defined absolute poverty as minimum standard of goods and services that are required to meet basic needs and sustenance. The Millennium Development Goal declaration refers to anyone surviving on less than a US dollar a day as extremely poor (Pan, 2007).

Mowafi, (2004) stated that there is great confusion of the $1 per day meaning. The $1 per day simply refers to purchasing power parities or PPPs, basing the poverty line as the equivalent of what an individual can buy with a dollar in United States of America. Lipton (1996) in Mowafi (2004) argues that $1/day does not truly reflect the value of a dollar in other currencies but what it can buy in the United States. Absolute poverty as the inability of families or individuals to afford schooling costs is generally used to explain limited access to education. Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, (2008) quoted Kattan’s description of dramatic changes in 2004 Kenya’s school
enrolment when its government reduced and eliminated school fees. Schwartzman (1998) in Mowafi (2004) concluded that absolute poverty is designated as the line below which survival becomes an issue of acute deprivation, hunger, premature death and suffering. Many children found their way into schools. It is generally agreed that absolute or abject poverty deprive access to education. This is because the costs of the full requirements associated with schooling are unaffordable to households (Chinyoka, 2014; Coleman, 1988; Dianda, 2008; Mowafi, 2004). However Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert,(2008) is of the opinion that absolute poverty actually draws children into school and keep them there longer as is witnessed in South African poor communities. The main reason could be that of changing their predicament, breaking out of the cycle of poverty to give their next generations a brighter future.

Absolute poverty is theoretically a line of measure that remains stable even if prices are adjusted over time. On the other hand, relative poverty is a line which is expected to shift with the overall standard of life in a given community or society Foster,(1998). Foster further argued that relative deprivation depends on its relative position within poor families and as a result it considers information beyond the “poor” families own data. On the other hand, Foster,(1998) pointed out that if a family poverty is purely depended on its own characteristics that mainly include its resource level that is absolute poverty.

It is very crucial to classify the kind of poverty that leads to school dropouts in different educational levels in different communities at given particular periods. It must be understood that poverty is multi-dimensional and complex that it is difficult to classify different groups of people in different societies as being poor. Poorness is relative from one society to another (Tomlinson, Walker, & Williams, 2008).

2.7.2 Child labour and education

Child labour is factor that has been greatly cited as a cause of school dropout. Child labour is closely linked to poverty. Education international (2013) defines child labour as the exploitation of most vulnerable children who are disadvantaged and marginalised in society. ILO conventions 138(1973) and 182(1999) states that, child labour refers to children under the age of 12 years working in any economic activities. ILO also pointed out that even children above age 12 years old engage in heavy work or enslaved, forcibly recruited, prostituted, trafficked, forced into illegal activities or exposed to hazards (Unicef, 2006). Zivira,(2014 )
argues that there are many forms of child labour and according to ILO these include agricultural labour, in mining, in manufacturing, in domestic service, types of construction, scavenging and begging on the streets, forms of slavery in armed conflicts, debt bondage (to pay off debts incurred by adult relatives and organized begging just to mention a few. It should however be noted that there is a difference between child labour and child work. Child work is when children participate and perform small tasks around the house, or in work appropriate to their level of development which allows them to acquire practical skills and learn responsibility. These are chores undertaken in their own home, which do not disrupt the child’s education, safety, and development. Child labour includes work that is hazardous to their health, safety and morals (physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development). The economic activities performed out by children, whether paid or unpaid, in the formal sector or informal sector, part time or full time and legal or illegal constitute child labour (Unicef, 2006; Zivira, 2014).

Mwangonde, (2012) argued that poverty is the main cause of child labour. Buono, (2011) states that some families have no choice but to work with their children who then help to supplement the labour necessary for the farming of food crops and cash. Buono, (2011) cites that even where children are not considered as full time labourers and encouraged by their family members to pursue their education, the combination of these activities makes it impossible for them to concentrate properly on their studies because of tiredness. In most cases such children will drop out of school because of poor performance resulting from lack of concentration hence failure to perform positively. Wagle, (2012) argues that parents who are not educated might not realise the importance of educating children. What they expect is the ultimate benefit for their children in an early age and pushes them to work. These typically work on weekends, summers, before and after school. Isreal & Beaulieu, (2004) in Wagle (2012) families with high educational expectations who choose to spend more family time on activities that support learning for children. Coursen-Neff & Sheppard, (2011) argues that agriculture is the most dangerous industry where young children are exposed to pesticides, some directly, others through drift and residue. He went on to explain that agriculture is an extremely dangerous industry because of high rates of fatalities, open to children accounting for more than fifty percent of all children dying from work-related injuries.

Brown, (2012) states that child labour is the new form of slavery in today’s societies. According to Brown (2012) the only solution to child labour is compulsory education. Brown explained that education leads to poverty reduction and empowers children with life skills needed in
boosting growth, generate and create jobs. This will eventually lead to inclusive societies. Mwangonde, (2012) argued that compulsory free education is not really free neither is it really compulsory. She cited the Malawian situation that despite having a law for all children to access free compulsory education, it has a challenge that there is no law that really enforce and ensures that every child attend school compulsorily. Cohen,(2006) states that according to UNESCO 2006 Education for All Global Monitoring Report argues that universal primary education will only be achieved when all children have equal opportunity, access to and complete primary education. The UN Millennium Development Goals also describes Universal Primary Education as completing of primary level education by every child. Buono, (2011) argues that compulsory education plays an important role in eradicating child labour. It is generally accepted that poverty forces many children to dropout from school choosing to work but it is also important to note that many children are working because education is unaffordable, inaccessible, or seen as irrelevant (Buono,2011). It is therefore important to find the real cause of girl-child dropout from school inorder to address the real problem coming up with correct applicable solutions to eradicate child labour in favour of school attendance till graduation.

2.7.3 Early marriage, teenage pregnancies and education

Tomaševski, (2001) argued that early marriage and teenage pregnancy are the biggest obstacles that prevent girls from graduating their Ordinary Level education. Tomaševski, (2001) states that early marriage and teenage pregnancies are causes that lay beyond the schools jurisdiction. Shahidul & Karim, (2015) pointed out that girls dropout rate increases as parents consider girl child schooling as a wastage of family resources because they will eventually get married to another family. The two writers further argue that once girls reach puberty, parents pressure the girls to get married. The Public Report on Basic Education (PROBE) team (1999) of India discovered that education empowers girls to make better preparation for marriage but parents are reluctant to let their daughters have higher education because it raises the cost of marriage for girls (Shahidul & Karim, 2015; Team, 1999).

Shahidul (2012) in Shahidul & Karim, (2015) explains that in India and Bangladesh girls with low parental socio-economic background who attain higher education find it difficult to find a husband. Parents will find it difficult to pay high amount of dowry to marry their educated daughters. This becomes one big reason for girls’ early marriages resulting in school dropouts. This is anchored in the cultural and traditional belief that the best achievement a girl is expected
to attain is getting married, bearing children and taking care of the household activities. Traditional values and some religious beliefs deprive girls of power to making their own choices and expressing their own opinions. Chege and Sifuna (2006) in Shahidul & Karim, (2015) argued that cultures favour education for boys more than girls. Baschieri & Falkingham, (2006) observed that many girls attend only religious classes which provide relevant skills for future married life as skilled wives (Shahidul & Karim, 2015). Schalkwyk, (2009) states that early marriages are a violation of human rights to both girls and boys and it represents the most prevalent form of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls. It separates children from parental love and care and decreases their opportunity for education. Girls or boys who are forced into marriage before the age of eighteen suffer enslavement, commercial sexual exploitation and violence because they cannot decide to abstain from sex or insist on the use of condoms Schalkwyk,(2009) and Maatz, Graves, & Cordovilla,(2012) assert that pregnant and parenting teens face many challenging obstacles in attending and succeeding in school because of absence of adequate support resulting in many dropping out lowering their chances of finding or creating employment that offers economic security.

2.7.4 The long distance to schools

Buono, (2011) points out that the length of the distance between school and home can become a reason of loving or hating school. Juneja (2001) in Shahidul & Karim, (2015) realised that long distance to school is an obstacle for young girls to attend school hence they tend to drop out more. Parents fear that if the girl child is to travel long distances, they become vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse. Shahidul & Karim, (2015) argued that school distance can discourage girls from being educated mainly because of the length of time and energy needed to travel the distance with empty stomachs and the parental anxiety about sexual safety of their daughters. Shahidul & Karim, (2015) discovered that girls are motivated to attend school until graduation if it is close to their homes.
2.8 Conclusion

The main reasons why girls drop out of school before completing Ordinary Level from the discussion are greatly influenced by culture and societal values which work against girls. Financial difficulty and struggling economies affect both boys and girls but girls suffer the most because the first priorities are given to boys. The challenges faced by girls are usually unique to females. From the researches done, it has been noted that little research has been done in the commercial farming communities in Zimbabwe.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Rajasekar, Philominathan, & Chinnathambi, (2006) define research as a way of finding new and useful information on a particular problem or topic. They further explain that it is a way of coming up with solutions to real social and scientific problems. Research is therefore a search of new knowledge or discovery of hidden truths (Rajasekar, et al., 2006). Research is the systematic way of finding solutions to problems. This chapter outlines the research methodology, data collection methods and instruments applied in carrying out the study.

3.2 Research design and methodology

Research methodology explains stages or path the researcher takes in carrying out a research (Rajasekar, et al 2006). In summary, it gives the work plan of research. Research methodology is based on some underlying philosophical assumptions about what constitutes truth or a valid research (Hancock, Ockleford, & Windridge, 1998). It includes the research methods which are appropriate for the development of knowledge in a given study.

The research design for this study was case study that was analysed through qualitative methods (Hancock, et al, 1998). It used the interpretive paradigm framework. Walsham,(1993) and , Willis,(1995) argue that truth is socially constructed hence there is no single right or wrong. Qualitative researchers are anti-foundationalists and they believe that there are several ways to knowledge (Hancock, et al, 1998). They believe that truth or knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation hence there is no absolute or objective truth. Truth is obtained by social construction through the language, consciousness and shared meaning, which is culture. The interpretivist qualitative paradigm emphasizes contextual interpretation and analysis. It understands the world through subjective experiences of individual persons (Hancock, et al, 1998). The design was appropriate for this research study because a small area was studied, the commercial farming area of Chishawasha-Arcturus. The females who failed to complete their Ordinary Level were targeted. Reasons for their failure to complete Ordinary Level were gathered.
Malterud (2001) argues that a qualitative research method is the systematic collection, organisation, and interpretation of textual material gathered from discussions and observation. It explores the meaning of social problems as experienced by individuals in the natural environment. Qualitative research method is becoming more famous and relevant because it provides culturally specific and contextually rich data (Mack, et al 2005). They further explain that qualitative research helps to provide the human side in understanding problems. The strength of qualitative research is in its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue (Hancock, et al 2009).

The nature of this research study is a descriptive and interpretive case study and research methods were employed to explore the challenges faced by the girl-child in the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. Qualitative research paradigm enabled the researcher to gather much information that could not be obtained by the use of other methods such as quantitative. The causes of school drop-outs differed from one person to another hence the need to pay attention to the individual participant. The descriptive interpretive approach enabled the researcher to analyse each reason given as separate entity and with great importance. Reality to the participants was subjective and was affected by their socialisation from a tender age (Yilmaz, 2013).

In this study 20 females who failed to complete their Ordinary Level, four community and church leaders and three parents with children (girls) who failed to complete their ordinary level were interviewed three females and four males. Three were females and four males. Three headmasters were also interviewed. A focus group discussion was also done comprising six participants giving a total of 36 participants in this research project.

### 3.3 Data collection instruments

The data collection methods used in this study include: in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

#### 3.3.1 In–depth interviews

Boyce & Neale, (2006)) define in-depth interviews as a qualitative research method involving intense one-on-one interviews with a small number of participants. A small number helps the
researcher to explore their perspectives on a particular idea or program. Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, (2005) state that in-depth interviews are important for collecting information on individuals’ personal histories, perspectives and experiences especially when exploring sensitive issues. A researcher engages a participant by asking neutral open-ended questions to enable the participant to freely answer without any limits (Hancock et al, 2009). The researcher can probe further for clarification or more information basing on the responses given (Hancock, et al, 2009). In-depth interviews help to give an interpretive perspective to a research problem. In-depth interviews are prone to bias as the girls who failed to finish secondary education and their parents might want to prove or hide something. They are also time-intensive evaluation activities because of the time consumed in conducting interviews, transcribing them and analysing the result. The in-depth interview was used to gather as much information as possible. The open-ended question gave participants the platform to give detailed information on the reason why they failed to complete Ordinary Level. Women and girls from the commercial farming community who failed to complete or enrol into secondary education level were interviewed as individuals on the challenges they faced until they were forced to drop out of school. A set of prepared guide questions were used in conducting the research. The guide questions helped the researcher to remain focused in order to collect desired information. All the participants in this work were flexible to use their mother language.

Twenty girls (table 3.1) who completed their primary level, enrolled into secondary education but failed to complete the secondary educational level were chosen for the research using the snowball sampling method.

3.3.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions also formed part of the data collection process. Mack, et al (2005) explains that focus group discussions are qualitative data collection method which helps researchers to gather information and learn traditions and values of a community or subgroups. In focus groups, two researchers at best and seven to twelve participants at most gather to discuss a given research problem (Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins, & Popjoy, 1998). It is usually encouraged to tape-record or video-tape the discussion sessions so as to make reference to it when analysing the data. The moderator asks questions which elicit in-depth, detailed responses and the note-taker records (Mack et al, 2005 and Freitas et al, 1998). The main advantage of focus groups is their ability to yield or collect large amount of information in a short space of time (Mack et al, 2005. Focus groups also allow access to multi-dimensional
views on a specific topic mainly because group dynamics stimulate discussion and reaction. On the other hand, focus groups are not the best methods to acquire information of highly sensitive topics (Mack et al, 2005). Focus groups are expensive and time consuming because it is difficult to manage and convene people to participate (Hancock, et al, 2009). A minimum number of eight was used. The focus group participants were purposively chosen. They comprised women/girls who had failed to complete Ordinary Level. The focus group participants were asked to sign their consent forms prior to the discussion. Guide questions were used to direct the discussion. The group members came up with the ground rules before the discussion. A sitting plan was drawn and members were given numbers for easy identification of participants to ensure confidentiality. An in-depth interview was used to make a follow up on certain individuals probing for more information especially from the focus group participants.

*NB participant 2 and 8 did not turn out for the discussion
Numbers 1 and 3 – males
Numbers 4 to 7 – females

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Figure 3.1 Focus group discussion sitting plan
3.3.3 Document analysis

Hancock, et al (2009) explains that written records can be good sources of information. Things like registers, diaries, reports or minutes from meetings. School registers are important in recording students’ attendance. School registers gives information from the time one joins a school institution to their exit from the same. Record books by teachers show performance of the students in various subject. School records keep documented information about student’s family backgrounds. Documented records are useful if they have been properly done and kept in a safe place where they are not tampered. In this research study, secondary school registers from 2012 to 2015 were used. Arcturus High School, Gejo raRubi Secondary School and St Peters high School were selected. The school administration was then be interviewed to help interpret findings from the documented attendance registers.
3.4 Sampling techniques

Sampling is a process where a fraction of data is taken from a whole commonly referred to as the population. It is a subset of the population (Latham, 2007). The results from the sample are applied to the whole group. There is probability and non-probability sampling techniques (Panacek & Thompson, 2007). Probability sampling is classified into simple random sampling, systematic random sampling and stratified random sampling. Simple random sampling is sometimes referred to as straight random sampling (Fink, 1995). Purposive sampling is when researcher looks for a predefined group to acquire required relevant information (Lathan, 2007). In this research snowball sampling method was used to select the twenty females who enrolled into secondary education but failed to sit for their Ordinary Level exams. The population was hidden to the researcher who has not grown in the community. Stratified purposeful sampling was used to select, church leaders, school leaders, community leaders and focus group participants. This was because there was enough information to identify the participants. The sample sizes were also too small for generalisation.

3.5 The Respondents

The participants in this study were identified through snowball sampling method and stratified purposeful sampling method. The respondents fall into three categories. The women and girls who failed to complete secondary education, school heads, the parents who had children who failed to complete secondary education and community leaders. The respondents were as follows:

a) Women/girls who failed to complete Ordinary Level

Table 1 below summarises the age of participants in the category of women and girls who failed to complete their Ordinary Level education.
The participants were identified through snowball sampling method. Of the twenty participants, 15% falls within the 15-19 years category, 30% within the 20-24 years category and 55% were 25 years old and above.

There was no participant in the 11-14 category. Snowball was used because it was not easy to identify the girls and young women who grew up in the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial community. It was also faster to be referred to specific individuals unlike going from one young mother in the community trying to identify those who grew up in the study area of Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community.

b) Parents with children [girls] who failed to complete their Ordinary Level and community leaders

Four community and church leaders and three parents were interviewed, three females and four males. They were as follows:
Table 3.2 Parents and community leaders participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Position / Denomination/ Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Church leader and soccer league chairman/married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Church leader/married [Masowe]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Deaconess/widow [AFM]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farm manager and Church leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Zion / divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>AFM/divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Johane Masowe [family not him]/ married</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c). School heads

Three school heads were interviewed. All of them were males. They headed Gejo RaRubi secondary school, Arcturus High school and St Peters Claver High school. The deputy head for St Peters Claver High School was interviewed instead of the head. The school head asked him to do so because of his many years in the school. The school heads were aged over 40 years. They have headed the schools for at least six years. The participants were identified through stratified purposeful sampling because there was enough information to identify them.

c) Focus group discussion participants

The focus group discussion was made up of six members, note-taker and a moderator. There were two male participants and four female participants. They were all drawn from the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. Their consent was sought orally. The moderator explained and asked those interested to sign against their names and numbers before the discussion. Numbers were used to identify participants.
3.6 Methods of data analysis

The qualitative data analysis methods vary from one research to another. Qualitative data analysis is done in two levels (Hancock, et al 2009). A descriptive account of data was given. This included the documented, recorded and observed data in its raw state. It was the manifest level of analysis. (Hancock, et al 2009) states the second level as the interpretive or latent stage of analysis. At this level looked for meanings of the verbal and non-verbal collected data. Schutt (2012) points out that analysis begins in the field as the researcher will be observing and jotting notes. Notes were made on the margins forming preliminary coding and interpretations. In the field analysis sometimes leads to change in the research questions (Schutt, 2012 and Hancock, et al, 2009). Notes were compiled daily whilst the scenes were still vivid (Schutt, 2012). The researcher and the assistant frequently convened to discuss the findings as preliminary analysis stage. This made it easier for the final analysis because the information was orderly and in detail. The researcher used information gathered in the field during the analysis to avoid bias. The researcher reengaged the participant associated with the thought which the researcher found difficulties to interpret. These are the analysis methods to be undertaken in this research study.

3.7 Conclusion

In qualitative research paradigm, it is important to carefully select the data collection method and methods of analysis. It is of great importance to understand the type of qualitative method used so as to apply the correct data analysis methods. In the descriptive interpretive phenomenology qualitative research, it is also important to use the descriptive interpretive data analysis method. There is need to be diligent and paying great attention to detail so as to come up with correct and authentic data analysis in a qualitative research.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to present and discuss the research findings. The research findings are going to be presented based on research themes. The research was carried out in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming area. Women and girls who failed to complete their Ordinary Level, parents with children who failed to complete secondary education, school heads, church and community leaders were interviewed. Data was also collected through a focus group discussion. They were six panellist drawn from the community using stratified sampling. The moderator was asking the questions whilst the note-taker wrote important points which were later compiled to come up with the following data

4.2 Major causes of school dropouts emerging from the respondents

The major causes that led to school dropouts are going to be discussed in this section. In-depth interviews and focus group discussion were used to come up with these factors. Table 4.1 and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girl-child based</th>
<th>Parents based</th>
<th>Church –based</th>
<th>Government/School-based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early marriage</td>
<td>Encourage early marriages and accept bride prize</td>
<td>Promote early marriage dreams and prophecies by</td>
<td>Teachers no longer have the passion, love and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted pregnancies resulting</td>
<td>for the young girls</td>
<td>male church leaders force girls into marriage</td>
<td>desire to see children succeed</td>
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<tr>
<td>from early relationships with men</td>
<td>Prioritise marriage than girls education</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>Financial challenges</td>
<td>Lack of counselling of the girl –child</td>
<td>Teachers worried about their pay cheque than</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step parenting</td>
<td></td>
<td>responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.1 Causes of girl-child school dropouts according to parents and community leaders*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause for dropout</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Decide to get married</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Death of the bread winner</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Poor performance</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Retrenchment of breadwinner</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Painful long distance to school</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Boring teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 No shoes and school uniform</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 No food to eat before and at school</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Jealous sibling and step parents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Was trouble maker at school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Failure by BEAM to pay fees</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Death of a donor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Converted school fees to personal use</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.2 Causes for school dropouts from girls/ women who failed to complete Ordinary Level*
4.2.1 Early marriages

Early marriage came out as one of the major causes of girls’ school dropouts. A number of reasons were given. One young mother who was supposed to be in form three and was expecting her first born said “The need and desire to get married forced me out of school though I was not pregnant.” Respondent 06[(16 August 2016)]. A single mother in her late teens staying with her parents has the following to say, “I chose to elope with my lover after misusing the money I was given to pay my fees. It was difficult to go back home. That is how I got married at a young age and the marriage never lasted.” Respondent 03[(16 August 2016)].

It is clear from the two respondents that some girls in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community were not directly forced into early marriage by their parents or relatives. Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, (2015) pointed out that girls dropout rate increases as parents consider girl child schooling as a wastage of family resources because they will eventually get married to another family. The challenge of early marriages in the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community are directly blamed on the girls who failed to complete Ordinary Level education unlike the findings by Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, (2015) which had shown that parents were at the core of the early marriages of the girl-child

A parent who had her daughter dropping out of school in form 3 had no kind words for her. She has the community to blame at large. She said “I sacrificed for my daughter, trying my best to provide what she wanted to go to school. She was spoiled by some members of the community arranging places and time where she would meet a boyfriend covering up for her. She just left school after I had paid my fees. Some women are so heartless for other people’s children.” Respondent 26[6 September 2016]. It was evident that some girls were lured into early marriage by other community members within their neighbourhood for their relatives. This was a clear sign of the breakdown of the social fabric that used to bind communities together. Collective responsibility is no longer evident in the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. A school head concurred with the quoted participants when he said “Some girls had a negative attitude towards school. Even those whose fees were paid by BEAM decided to get married for no apparent reason.” Respondent 25[8 September 2016].
Mupa (2014) stated that school dropouts are as a result of distractors according to Goffman’s theory. Boyfriends distracted the young girls from pursuing their education. They flash cash and promise the young girls heaven on earth. Once they win them out of school, all promises vanish. Tomasevski, (2005) states that early marriage and teenage pregnancies are causes that lay beyond the schools jurisdiction. This research study has proved Tomasevski view. Early marriage is to blame on some of the victims and their families and not the school. (Lloyd & Mensch, (2008) concur with Tomasevski that pregnancy and early marriage are not the major reasons for the girl-child failure to complete their secondary education hence the blame lies on the family and the community. This researcher has concluded that some girls fall victims of early marriage because of lack of proper information on the importance of education and the dangers of early marriages. Early marriage are symptoms of a problem of other distractors

4.3.2 Poor performance in school

School has never been easy for some individuals. Poor performance in academic studies has also contributed to the girl-child school dropout in the Chishawasha-Arcturus farming community. One girl testified that “I loved going to school but the challenge was that I was dull. I tried my best but could not understand anything. There was no point for me to continue with school wasting money of my parents.” Respondent 03[16 August 2016]. A school head echoed the same sentiments that “some girls drop out of school before completing their secondary education because their poor performance in school resulted in the loss of interest and development of negative attitude forcing one out of school early” Respondent 25[8 September 2016]. The Government of Zimbabwe has made some subject compulsory such as mathematics and science. It was revealed that Science subjects, Mathematics and English were cited by both students and parents as the most difficult and was forcing many from school. A father who was part of the Focus Group discussion (FG) said:

“I believe there is no child who is called dull. Teachers are not taking their time to assist the slow learners, they are moving with the pace of the academically gifted students. The second issue is that the policy in operation is not fair. They are forcing our children to be compulsorily taught subjects which are challenging to them. They should identify their strength like the Indians do and support them in their line.” FG Participant 1[12 September 2016].
FG participant number 06, an elderly woman agreed with FG participant 1. It was clear from the discussion that ‘a lot’ of students were being forced the academic subjects which some will never make use in their future lives. The issue was a bit different from the educators. Most girls who experienced challenges with their academic work were lazy, lacked interest and motivation. Ntumva and Rwambali (2013) argued that English language is mainly used in secondary school especially in former British and American colonies despite the majority of the students not proficient with it. This researcher noted poor performance contributed significantly despite 10% of the respondents accepted the challenge. The medium of instruction is English in almost every subject except Shona. A student who has not mastered the language will find learning very difficult and dreadful which was the situation with some of the school dropouts in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community.

4.3.3 Loss or retrenchment of a breadwinner

Death is something that one cannot avoid or prevent. A large percentage of 65 failed to proceed with their education because the person who was responsible for their fees payment was no longer working or was dead. One of the respondents said “Though I was good in school and enjoyed going to school, I could not continue after my uncle who took my custody after the death of my parents was retrenched from work. I understood his predicament and had to stay home helping joining him for seasonal part time jobs to survive.” Respondent 1[16 August 2016]

Four participants failed to proceed because of death of parents and guardians whilst 9 had their parents and guardians losing their employment. Most of the parents/guardians were farm workers and provided unskilled manual labour. They could not find any other employment for they were not educated and skilled in other professions except working in the fields and garden. It was also noted that those who lost their jobs would have reached their retirement age or were no longer able to work because of ill-health. Respondent 15[22 August 2016] said “There was nothing I could have done because my father was old and had no money.” Most mothers were house wives and waited for their husbands to bring income for the family. Few women worked with their husbands in the farms and plots and smaller percentage worked as maids, one woman was into buying and selling. It should be noted that some parents and guardians struggled
sending their children to school because their salaries were not enough to cover all the children fees, food and clothing hence some would opt out or forced out of school.

Retrenchment and death of a working parent/guardian was a blow to the family and changes were experienced especially failing to send children to school. A school was sorry for some of the students who lost their parents. He said “Guardians who assume the custodianship of the orphaned children must treat them with love and dignity as well as observing their right to education. Most of these guardians convert the orphans into their workers while sending their own children to school.” Respondent 30[12 September 2016]. Chinyoka (2014) also found in his research that death of a parent or guardian was one of the major causes for school dropouts in a resettlement area in Masvingo. This researcher also agreed with Chinyoka that death and loss of employment contributed to a greater part in the study of Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. Schools have tried to help girls who lost their parents/guardians or suffer retrenchment be beneficiaries of BEAM. It was noted with sadness that some still drop out of school despite being on such a scheme. This shows that they could have been some underlying factors other than school fees. Goffman’s Student Engagement and Interactive Theory’ stated that school dropouts are mainly as a result of distractors which are found in both school and home environments (Mupa 2014). The same author, Mupa (2014) highlighted that a tug-of-war exist between school’s effort to win their students’ attention and the multiple stimuli that distract students from pursuing and achieving their academic studies. It is therefore a reality that there are a multitude of factors that pushes the girl-child out of school despite the availability of funds.

4.3.4 The school demands

This section is going to discuss the challenges faced by the girl-child in her attempt to complete Ordinary Level. These include the hidden cost to education other than school tuition and their relationship with the school personnel such as the subject teachers. Five respondents, which were about 25% of the participants, cited a painful long distance to school. “Going to school was painful because we travelled a long distance which was about 30km to and from school.it was the best school with good teachers but we had to struggle.” Respondent 13[18 September 2016]. One parent concurred with this participant and had the following to say “My daughter had to wake up very early in the morning and leave home at 0530hrs to be in time for the first
lesson at 0800hrs passing through a bush which was too risk for her. No wonder why she became prey to these boys.” FG Participant 5[(12 September 2016)]. As that was not enough, some mothers neglected their duties around the home waiting for the young girls to do everything. “These girls were not given a chance to study at home. They were expected to perform household chores early in the morning and late in the night. By the time they get to school they are already tired and cannot concentrate.” FG Participant 3 [12 September 2016].

90% of the Focus Group panellists were all in agreement that long distance to school without parental support was very difficult.

The welfare of girls is of critical importance besides paying the tuition fees only. Hidden costs tend to be ignored. Children need to eat before going to school, carry something to eat at school and eat at home after school. Girls in their adolescence stage are very sensitive hence they are worried about what happens to them or around them. School uniform gave a sense of belonging and would hide the challenges one might be facing at home. Some girls used emotion than reason. “Walking long distance barefooted especially in winter was not easy. One would tolerate at primary level not at secondary school. Visiting the toilet especially in the rain season was something else.” Respondent 16[22 August 2016]. Failure by parents to provide adequate uniform, stationery and sanitary wear can force young girls out of school. One participant in the focus group said “Some of the poor performance by girls is not because they are dull; they walk long distances to school on an empty stomach and expect her to concentrate. They don’t go to school some of the days because of no food, tiredness and every month no proper sanitary pads.” FG Participant 7[12 September 2016] FG Participants 1, 3 and 5 supported the view. It was these financial challenges faced by families that drove some girls into the hands of suitors who promised a ‘better brighter future filled with happiness.’ Books were heavy and were to stay at school hence no study was done at home. It was worse for those with younger siblings in the infant level at school for they needed help to complete the long distance by carrying them on their back part of the distance.

Two respondents gave the attitude of teachers as another contributory factor to their school dropout. “I was good at school except the science teacher was boring. I could not stand the humiliation of failing at the hands of the teacher.” Respondent 6[16 September 2016]. They said some teachers ignored or pretended that they did not know their predicament. They would ridicule their failures and dressing, it really discouraged the participants especially from the
female teachers who were expected to understand them. The two girls lamented that attending school was no longer a joy for there was no encouragement by some of the staff members. This researcher has noted that in the school environment, girls are sensitive to the little things that might not appear as important to boys or adults. Those little things such as unpleasant relationship with one staff member can push one out of school before completing the important Ordinary Level. It is important for the organisations which sacrificed to pay tuition for the children to adopt them in every aspect of their well-being that they are not distracted from school by seemingly pertinent issues. The girls lacked counselling from the school, home and church that would have motivated them to overcome challenges in order to complete secondary education (Meyer, McClure, Walkey, Weir, & McKenzie, 2009).

4.3.5 The impact of social relations to the girl-child

In section 4.3.1 step parenting was cited as one of the causes that pushed some into early marriages when opportunities came their way. It was also shocking to hear from one participant that her sister caused her failure to complete her Ordinary Level. She narrated that “My sister was so jealous, she called to visit them in Chinhoyi but refused to give me bus fare to go back home for my studies and I ended up working for as her maid.” Respondent 19[15 August 2016]. She said there was nowhere she could have found bus-fare except to give in to the demands of her sister. She later decided to work for other people who would pay her making it possible for her to attend night school. Her dreams were shattered when her employer refused her time to attend lessons. Another participant bemoaned her ruthless grandfather, “My grandfather did not want me to go school though a donor was paying for me. He wanted me to stay home helping with the household chores. I eventually dropped out school when my donor died.” Respondent 11[17 August 2016]. The blow came when the donor died when she was in form 4 and that was the end of the road for her dreams. A head in support of the view said that “Parents and guardians are not supportive of their children. They do not monitor their movements nor care for them.” Respondent 30[12 September 2016]. The head revealed that most of the girls who were neglected were orphans staying with grandparents as was evidenced by respondent 11. The young girls fall victim to early marriages and teenage pregnancies. Chinomona (2013) stated that the girls have fallen victim of being overburdened by household chores in extended families compared to their male counterparts. This has resulted in girls failing to concentrate on as well as committing time to school work. This researcher noted that getting married early is meant to be a sign of relief from the overburdened responsibilities they
are forced to shoulder at a tender age. Parents from the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community have accepted the marriage of their young daughters without rescuing them through whatever means that they keep them in school. They actually expect them to look after the family and their siblings. Both the parents and the community leaders appear ignorant of the law which protect the young girls from being married before maturity (Ansell, 2004).

Step-parenting was one other factor that was raised by the respondents. “I had divorced the father who was staying with the child. He failed to pay fees because he had remarried.” Respondent 28[05 September 2016]. The statement seems to suggest that the father was able to send his daughter to school until he remarried. It therefore meant that the new parent was not willing to send children from another woman to school. It was also the same with step fathers. Chuong & Operario, (2012) pointed out that most orphans are neglected in poor African communities.

4.3.6 Contribution of local community

This section analyses the effect of the local environment of Chishawasha-Arcturus on the education of girls. The discussion is in two levels, past and present environment. In the 1980s to the 1990s, the Chishawasha – Arcturus commercial area was flourishing. It was based on growing and exporting flowers to the western countries. Workers were fairly paid and smaller families would not struggle to lead a decent life, it was the young man who worked in these plots and farms that lured the girls into marriage before completing their Ordinary Level. “We were being paid good moneys which we could send our children to school.” Respondent 26[06 September 2016]. The Chishawasha-Arcturus community was not in poverty. The white farm owners used to pay their employees in time. “The environment was good because there was good rainfall and good management.” Respondent 27[06 September 2016]. The homesteads were closely packed and are still today such that it was easy to see what was happening at your neighbours place. This led to early marriages using money and goods such as televisions and good food to lure girls. It was also easy to get employed without any qualification for there was a lot of work to be done manually with on the job training. The Chishawasha-Arcturus community was flourishing that the girls’ would not think of any challenges in the future. The love for money lured them into early marriages shunning school. The situation is now different, new ownership and management is not sensitive to the plight of
its employees despite the prevailing economic hardship. “The new management pays us late or sometimes they don’t pay. Who are they punishing? My children because I will be not able to pay their fees, buy clothes and food.” FG Participant 1[12 September 2016]. In this case, it is the community that has failed the young girls. The employer was not able to pay the parent in time and that has ripple effect leading to the failure to pay school fees in time and then forcing the children out of school, preferably girls (Lloyd & Mensch, 2008).

4.3.7 Impact of girl-child’s socio-economic background

In this section the discussion focuses on the size of the families in which the participants came from, the form of employment their parents/ guardians were engaged in and the religious groups they attended during their school going era. The following table shows the number of siblings in each family by sex.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 shows that the smallest family had two children and the largest family had 11 children. On average each family had 6.5 children which are on the high side. Interestingly, girls outnumbered boys in families except for 3 families where the numbers were the same. The boys were almost half of the girls. One can conclude the participants came from big families dominated by girls. “There was no money for fees so I had to give my young brothers and sister chance to go to school.” Tuition for secondary education is generally higher compared to that of primary school. Girls in secondary school would give chance to the other siblings because it would be assumed that they are already literate hence waiting for marriage. The young sisters would admire their elder sisters in marriage such that they would think that it was best to get married than continue with school. The few girls who made decisions for marriage at the expense of education were under pressure from the other girls who were in marriage. Completing form 4 was not a priority if one was lucky to have someone wanting to marry.
Coupled with this demographic statistics, most of the victims came from the apostolic churches. This is summarised on the table 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family of God</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation arm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faith Apostolic</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mugodhi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCAP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Johane Masowe</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of Christ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahai faith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAOGA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 shows the different denominations that the woman/girls participants attended during the time they dropped from school. The three in bold are the apostolic churches and the Zion church which are dominant and dates back as far as the early 70s. Johanne Masowe alone had the highest attendance of 6 school dropouts. The apostolic churches and other missionary based-denominations such as Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist and church of Christ are also becoming popular except Roman Catholic which its strong base is within the Chishawasha community area. The Johanne Masowe religious grouping had no challenges with early marriages hence a lot of girls could marry earlier. “The Masowe religious grouping should stop threatening the girls. In the past they would use dreams to force girls into marriage. Today they are prophesying that they will never get married in their entire life. Once such girl meets any man showing to love her, she goes with him for fear of the prophecy once she misses the chance.” FG Participant 1[12 September 2016]. The commercial farming community of
Chishawasha-Arcturus freely accept bride prize for the minors. This shows that they do not observe the right of girls to education. “The problem with our community is that they have turned a blind eye on the law such that they accept bride prize for the minors instead of reporting them for prosecution. Greediness has betrayed our young girls.” FG Participant 2[12 September 2016]. Ada, (1992) in Goodluck and Odaro, (2011) stated that the Nigerian parent just like the people in Chishawasha-Arcturus farming community would prefer to invest their son’s education than that of their daughter in rural areas. The researcher concluded that the church in general has failed to help the girl-child to make rightful decisions. It has failed to protect the young girls. The girls have fallen prey to the church leaders who hide behind their fingers as they perpetuate sexual abuse of girls.

The occupants of the Chishawasha–Arcturus commercial farming community were employed within the farms and plots in the area. The following table shows the occupations of the parents and guardians of the woman/girls who failed to complete their education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tractor driver</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver [pig Industry board]</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreman / supervisor at a farm [horticulture]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General farm workers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardener</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maid</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower cutter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that almost all interviewed persons worked in the agricultural sector in the commercial farming area except for maids and vendors. Generally this sector of the economy was lowly paid. The wages or salaries were usually not enough for big families as those witnessed in this research. This support the reasons why most parents struggled to pay their
fees and depended on donors and BEAM too. The driver, foreman and flower cutter occupied better paying jobs within the commercial farming community. Most of the victims had dreamt to become nurses and teachers but they were few inspirations within their community. The targets seem difficult to achieve hence the girls were motivated to drop out of school before achieving their goals.

Mupa and Chinooneka (2014) also discovered in their investigation that parents did not care about the welfare and whereabouts of their young girls which had led to their dropouts from school for they lacked monitoring. The community fabric that bonded families together was and is no longer functional. Neighbours were accused by some parents that they arranged meeting places for their young girls and protected them in their wrong doing. The worst situation that was cited was when one girl was closed in a house by an elderly woman who professed ignorance about her whereabouts for a number of days only to be told later that she had eloped with the elderly woman’s son.

The love for money than the future of the young girls was one of the challenges from parents. Parents accept parcels from the young girls without questioning. Parents accepted bride prize from the then husbands instead of reporting them for violating the rights of the young girls. Some of the mothers bragged about the early marriages of the girls instead of bemoaning the action. Economic hardships had forced some parents into small apartments where they were crowded and exposed the young girls who in turn developed sexual desires and drive to experiment.

4.4 Girl-child dropout trend from 2012 to 2015

The researcher visited three school heads and interviewed them on the girl-child dropouts in their schools which enrol students from the Arcturus-Chishawasha commercial farming community. Table 8 and graphs A, B and C shows the trends from the three schools from 2012 to 2015. Students were traced from the time they enrolled for form one in 2012 to the time they sat for their Ordinary Level examination in 2015.
The figures were obtained from the registers of the three schools. Gejo RaRubi Secondary school enrolled 26 girls for form one in 2012. Only 14 managed to sit for O-Level examinations in 2015. This shows that 53.8% managed to complete their Ordinary Level while 47% fall along the way, a drop out of nearly 50% which is a very high figure. Of the 12 girls who failed to complete secondary education, 23% left when they were about to complete their secondary Ordinary Level course between form 3 and 4. Gejo RaRubi is a farm school. Arcturus High School, a mine school surrounded by commercial farms enrolled 67 form one female students in 2012. Fifty six girls managed to complete secondary education. 83.6% sat for their examinations and 16.4 dropped out. A bigger percentage of 10% dropped out of school towards completion of secondary education. St Peters Claver High School is located in Chishawasha rural and is run by the Roman Catholic Church. It enrolled 55 girls in 2012 as form ones. 45 girls managed to complete their Ordinary Level. 18.2% of the girls failed to complete secondary education.

The statistics obtained from the school revealed the dropouts are common in both girls and boys but a greater percentage is of girls. Gejo RaRubi has the highest dropouts. This is mainly because it is located in a farm and enrolls students from the farm and the other surrounding farming communities. Besides the students who reside in the Gejo RaRubi Farm, the rest travel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gejo RaRubi Secondary school</th>
<th>Arcturus High School</th>
<th>St Peters Claver High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For m</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Girl s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Trends of school dropouts from three schools in Chishawasha- Arcturus commercial farming community
over 10 km to the school. One parent revealed that her daughter left home at 0530hrs so as to reach school at 0800hrs for the first lesson. The head from the school also cited that most of the dropouts from the school did so despite being on BEAM sponsorship or having parents who can afford to pay for their fees. The head revealed that most of the girls drop out because of lack of interest and negative attitude towards school leading to early relationships and marriages. Some are also lured by boys along the way and would stay in the bushes waiting for time to go back home. Dropouts from St Peters and Arcturus High Schools are a bit lower mainly because the students are from different settlements. A small percentage from the farming community and a larger percentage from the Chishawasha rural, and mission communities enrol at St Peters Claver High School. Most of the students would have failed to afford fees for St Ignatius College and St Dominic boarding schools. It is the girls from the commercial farming community who usually dropout from school due to early marriages and unwanted pregnancies. The majority of students enrolling at Arcturus High School are from the mining community and a few from surrounding commercial farms and plots. It is the students from the commercial farming community who travel generally longer distances to school.

4.5 Summary of Key findings

The research study came up with a number of key findings as summarised in this section. The major cause of girls’ dropouts in Arcturus-Chishawasha commercial farming community

Ignorance and negative attitude towards school by the girl child led to their early school dropouts. The girls lacked intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Goffman’s student engagement and interactive theory pointed out that there is usually a tug-of-war between the school and the multiple stimuli that distract students from achieving their academic studies (Mupa, 2014). The theory seems to apply in the community though there is no tug-of-war.

Teachers and parents do not really care about the welfare of the young girls hence they fall prey to the merciless individuals of the community. Schools have negative attitude towards the girls from the farming community. The school has also lost its mandate of ensuring quality education and guiding the young girls into a bright and promising future. The government has failed to provide schools close to the community that the children walk shorter distances to school.
Social relations are one the major causes of girls’ school dropouts. This includes step parents, guardians who assume the custodian of the orphaned children. They view the girls as labourers to take all the duties at home. There is need for a positive relation between students and their families, friends, communities and school to successfully attain higher academic achievements.

Churches have also played a crucial role in instilling fear and luring the young girls into early marriages. The young girls and the community at large are ignorant of the importance of education and dangers associated with early marriages. They only realise the fatality of their decisions to abandon school when it will be too late to return. People in commercial farming communities no longer feel for each other hence they do not rebuke wrong doings.

**Discussion**

The major factors forcing the girl-child to drop out of school are generally similar to those of other researchers such as early marriages, poverty and poor performance at school (Mupa and Chinooneka, 2014; Dakwa et al, 2014; Chinyoka, 2014 and Munyati, 2014). The root causes in the commercial farming community of Chishawasha-Arcturus are very different from the findings by other researchers in the related study areas. Dropping out of school of the girl-child before completing Ordinary Level is actually a symptom or evidence of the presents of ‘vector’ or deep seated problems. Lack of information and misplaced priorities. The girls lacked vision of the future and concentrated on the temporary short lived desires of life. Marriage seemed to be their greatest achievement and the final destination of their life for they dream of no better life except getting married as a solution to their challenges. It is with sorrowful regret that some of these young mothers who voluntarily plunged into marriage are regretting as they suffer abuse at the hands of their husbands. Some of their dreams and desires were short lived as they did not live long in these marriages hence their open confession and regret that they messed up and realised how life could be better if only they had pursued their education.

Lack of important structures in schools, communities and churches that help the young boys and girls to prioritise education could be the main cause. Absents of mandated structures to give correct information to the young generation in the commercial farming communities that
they acquire long life and problem solving skills to turn around their community both economically and socially has led to these misguided decisions. Venkatraja and Indira (2011) argued that Education is among the most crucial means in sustainably improving personal qualities, problem solving skills and making informed decisions for self and the community at large. It is therefore difficult to achieve community transformation without education hence the need to set up the structures to equip the young girls and boys in commercial farming communities.

Long distance to school and poor performance were also major causes for girl-child school dropouts. The nearest secondary school being about 6km away was a great challenge. Girls unlike their male counterparts are expected to carryout household chores before and after school such that they will travel to school already tired. Concentration in school will be very difficult leading to poor performance in class. [Zimbabwe strategic plan for the education of girls….2005-2010; Ntumva and Rwambali, 2013.] pointed out that walking long distance to school depletes concentration ability of students for they arrive at school tired and hungry. As that was not enough, teachers would not recognise their plight and chose to ignore their challenges. The secondary going age is in the adolescence stage which is very sensitive category to humiliation or negative things around them that affect their being. Some opted out of school instead of persevering. Long distance to school was also very risk for the young girls for they would pass through bushes and forest in the early and late hours to and from school. They fell prey to the boys of the community who lured them into purposely love unions which eventually led to their demise for they masquerade as a better and more attractive option than going to school.

The school curriculum does not accommodates those students who face challenges with most demanding subjects such as mathematics and English (Swainson et al, 1998) Maths, English and a science subject are compulsory in enrolling into higher tertiary institutions giving no hope of a bright future in the professional worlds. Teachers are no longer passionate about teaching and lack intrinsic motivation to help and see their students succeed especially in the commercial farming communities which have been marginalised in a number of things and are viewed as areas of moral decadence. Generally pupils from the farming communities are looked down upon and have been labelled vana vekumapurazi (children from the farms) hence they cannot do something positive.
In the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community, they lack role models who have succeeded in life because they have attained education. UNICEF, (2006) observed that there is generally lack of appreciation of education especially in commercial farming communities among parents with little or no education. There is limited motivation to the young girls of the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. The young girls are not exposed to other developed and progressing communities to open their mind and redefine their goals in life. They have not met successful women in society to encourage and motivate the young girls that they can make it to the top in life if they work hard in school and that marriage is not the ultimate goal and destination though it is necessary. The community leaders, churches and schools in the Chishawasha- Arcturus commercial farming community are not organising platforms where the young girls can interact with female professionals. Some parents and guardians are not educated of the importance of educating a girl-child in the commercial farming communities.

The commercial farming community has lost that Ubuntu when it comes to raising children especially girls. There is a lot of individualism, jealous and greediness resulting in condoning the marriage of the young girls before completing their Ordinary Level. Both the school and home environment is not encouraging and neither does it motivate the girl-child to consider completing their secondary education especially the orphans and those living with a step parent. Some parents/guardians in the Chishawasha-Arcturus farming community are not willing to support the young girls even those who are sponsored by well-wishers and the government through BEAM to pursue their studies. According to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights everyone person has the right to education and that it should be free and compulsory at basic level (Thabethe, 2009). It is however not being fulfilled in the commercial farming communities because there are no instruments and law enforcement agents that ensure that education is compulsory without any room for failure hence the social relations of the young girls are at liberty to abuse and trample upon the young girls’ rights to education. Besides other extenuating factors, BEAM has failed to keep the disadvantaged girls into school. Wagle (2012) argues that parents who are not educated might not realise the importance of educating children but pushes them early to work.

Their home environment gives an artificial ‘success’ of those who have not obtained any educational qualification. The success is limited to ability of acquiring gadgets such as
televisions, better food and clothing. The commercial farming community has no vision of the future but focuses on the here and now. The home environment is not conducive for study nor does it promote education. The young girls are seen as core helpers at home if not carrying the whole burden. Coleman (1998) refers to the early family responsibilities as the accelerated role transition which shifts the girls’ energy and concentrations to family issues at the expense of studying. Goffman argued that there are distractors at home and school that influences the decisions made by the girls against education (Mupa 2014).

Religion and culture has also played a crucial role in negatively influencing the decision of the young girls in the commercial farming community when it comes to education. In the past years the dominant religion in the Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community, the apostolic churches, came up with dreams to entice the young girls into marriage in the name of the ‘holy spirit’. Today’s churches ‘strategy is to instil fear into the young girls through prophesying that they won’t get married in their lives. Any male being that would approach them will overjoy the girls and without any hesitant agrees to the relation and suffer abuse at the hands of their male counterparts resulting in early marriages and unwanted teenage pregnancies (Schalkwyk, 2009).

The researcher has noted some individuals who have the desire for their children to succeed in their studies despite them having been denied education by their parents. Conflicts of interest between the girls and their parents seems to have culminated into the girls using emotion other than reason rushing into early marriages. It is however important that parents they show love but still maintaining firmness to their children that amicably solve their differences or challenges (Reese, 2001). The children have also the challenge of looking down upon their parents as still living in the yesteryear and out of touch with modernity and technology which has led to the young girls becoming victims of their own professed ‘modernity and technology’.

**Conclusion**

The causes that has led to school dropouts in Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community are girl-child based, family based, church based, school and government based. The causes are interconnected forming a complex web that need all the stakeholders involved
to work together in supportin and promoting the education of the girl-child turning around the Chishawasha-Arcturus community into a better society both socially and economically. Information rightly communicated by the rightfull people bears fruit of change and must be a priority in the Chishawasha-Arcturus farming community.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the major factors that cause the girl-child to drop out of school before completing secondary education in the case of Arcturus-Chishawasha commercial farming communities. This chapter is going to give a conclusion, summarise the investigations, give recommendations and identify possible areas of further study in the commercial farming communities.

5.2 Conclusion

This research study was carried out in the Arcturus-Chishawasha commercial farming community. A case study was used through qualitative methods. Snowball and stratified purposeful sampling methods were used to select participants. Data collection instruments used was in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and records analysis. The major findings from the research study are as follows:

1. Most girls are victims of ignorance hence they don’t know the importance of completing secondary education. They only regret later in life.
2. Large families find it very difficult to send all their children to school because of financial challenges to cover tuition and the hidden costs in education.
3. Relatives proved to be an obstacle of the girl-child as they do not consider secondary education important preferring them to supply labour, supplement family income through working or marriage.
4. Some religious groupings encourage early marriages through threats and instilling fear in the young girls.
5. Long distance to school on an empty stomach after carrying the tiresome household chores in the evening and morning was the other challenge.
6. Absence of a role model in the community to motivate the young girls.
5.3 Summary

This study sort to investigate the major challenges faced by the girl-child towards the completion of her Ordinary Level in Zimbabwe’s commercial farming community: the case of Chishawasha-Arcturus commercial farming community. In-depth interview, focus group discussions and records analysis were used to collect qualitative data. Snowball and stratified purposeful sampling methods were used to find participants. The study’s key findings were girls and the community at large need a not well informed on the importance of educating a girl-child and education in general, loss and retrenchment of breadwinners, negative social relations, poor academic performance and walking long distance to school after performing duties at home. All the identified challenges culminated into early marriages and teenage pregnancies. It is therefore important or the Government of Zimbabwe to revisit its policies targeting the upgrading and educating the commercial farming communities in Zimbabwe.

5.4 Recommendations

It has been noted that the girl -child had a high percentage of school dropouts. Financial challenges, loss of a breadwinner, poor performance and long distance to school are not the end in themselves. The young girls would eventually fall into early marriages and unwanted pregnancies. It has been noted that marriage is not a solution to the challenges faced by the girls in the commercial farming community. Early marriage exposed the young girls to a number of challenges such as abuse by the husbands, early divorces, promiscuity and exposure to HIV and AIDS.

The researcher recommends that commercial farming communities must get services of provision such as school within their locality. The government with the help of the community members or non-governmental organisations should set up schools that would ease the pain of walking long distances to school.

The schools and churches must offer guidance and counselling especially to orphans making sure that they are well informed and are influenced to make wise decisions in favour of education. The church and government must work hand in glove to help the young girls through
creating a favourable learning environment in the community and schools that enhances the desire to continue with education.

Teachers must be more ethical that they prioritise their duties over money inorder to help the young girls and boys complete Ordinary Level education. It is important that even the young girls from commercial farming community be treated equally just like any other students, school authorities must also be sensitive of the distance travelled by young girls that they would be able to encourage and motivate them to pursue their educational goals.

Step parents and guardians who took over the welfare of the left children should become more considerate wishing to see these children become educated so that they meaningfully contribute to the nation, community and their families.

Women and girls who became victims of early marriages and unwanted pregnancies must be able to get another chance of educating themselves through the establishment of adult education, night schools and income generating projects. Ihejirika (2012) have studied and noted that out-of-school educational programs were instrumental in empowering the disadvantaged in communities including farmers.

The civil organisation such as the Girl-child network and campaign for girls education have done great jobs in urban and rural areas but their activities have been absent and unknown to the Arcturus-Chishawasha commercial farming community. Lastly families and community members must uphold the right of girls to education. They should be courageous to hand over the violators of the young girls for prosecution.

5.5 Areas of further study

This research carried in the Arcturus-Chishawasha farming community was not conclusive. It was observed that a number of school dropouts are rising with more children failing to complete the primary basic education. One area is to investigate the effect of the western culture to the social fabric of the commercial farming communities. Lastly, it is also important to investigate
why commercial farming communities have lagged behind in the provision of services by the government at large.
APPENDICES
Appendix 1

**In-depth interview question guide 1 (girls/mothers who have been victims of school dropouts)**

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My Name is Blessings Mugari, a Master’s in Education (Geography) student with Bindura University of Science Education in a process of completing my research project. I would like to talk to you about girls dropping out of school before completing Ordinary Level education. The interview should take less than an hour and I will kindly request for your views and comments through honestly answering the questions. I will be taking some notes during the session. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be shared with research team members and we will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don’t have to talk about anything you don’t want to and you may end the interview at any time.

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

. Please be advised that all the information gathered will be treated with great care and confidentiality, it is going to be used for the purpose of the study project. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

| Interviewee | __________________________________________ |
| Witness     | __________________________________________ |
| Date        | __________________________________________ |
| Legal guardian | __________________________________________ |

*(if interviewee is under 18)*

[Tick where applicable]

1. How old are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. How many were you in your family?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Whom were you staying with?

_________________________________________________________

Explain

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. How many people worked in the family?

☐

May you please explain their forms of employment?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

5. How was your school fees paid for?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

6. To which church were you attending during the time

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

72
7. What is your marital status?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8. What level of education did you manage to acquire?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1-3</th>
<th>Grade 4-6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Form 1-2</th>
<th>Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. At what age were you married? (if married)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. How long did you stay in marriage? (If divorced or widowed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. What was your school experience from or as far back as you can remember?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

12. What was the reason that led you to drop out of school?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

13. Is there anything that could have been done to keep you in school

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

14. What is your source of income?

_____________________________________________________________________
15. Is there anything that could be different in your life if you had managed to complete your O-level?  

Yes  No

Explain your answer

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

16. If given the chance, would you like to go back to school? [adult school]

Yes  No

Explain your answer

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

17. What do you think can be done to help women who were disadvantaged and failed to complete their O-level?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking your time to respond to these questions.
Appendix 2

In-depth interview question guide 2 (traditional, religious, community and education leaders)

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My Name is Blessings Mugari, a Master’s in Education (Geography) student with Bindura University of Science Education in a process of completing my research project. I would like to talk to you about girls dropping out of school before completing Ordinary Level education. The interview should take less than an hour and I will kindly request for your views and comments through honestly answering the questions. I will be taking some notes during the session. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be shared with research team members and we will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don’t have to talk about anything you don’t want to and you may end the interview at any time.

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

Please be advised that all the information gathered will be treated with great care and confidentiality, it is going to be used for the purpose of the study project. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

Interviewee __________________________________________
Witness __________________________________________
Date __________________________________________
Appendix 3

In-depth interview question guide 2 (traditional, religious, community and education leaders)

My Name is Blessings Mugari, a Master’s in Education (Geography) student with Bindura University of Science Education in a process of completing my research project. I am kindly requesting for your views and comments through honestly answering the following questions. Please be advised that all the information gathered will be treated with great care and confidentiality, it is going to be used for the purpose of the study project. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

1. Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</table>

2. Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>30-35</th>
<th>36+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. What is your responsibility in your area of jurisdiction?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. What is your comment on girls and formal school education in your community?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

5. From your experience, what could be the reasons for girls’ failure to complete their Ordinary Level education?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

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6. Do the parents/guardians have any part to play in girls' early marriages?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. What could be the role of religion in the girls’ predicament of failing to finish O-level studies?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

8. As a leader, what measures have you put in place to help the girl-child attend and complete secondary school level?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

9. In your own opinion, what measures can the government put in place to ensure girls complete secondary school?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking your time to respond to these questions.
For school heads

I am kindly request that you complete the following statistical table? A different table for a different

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May you give detailed comment on each year focusing mainly addressing the following:
(a) Home locations of girls who dropped out of school
(b) The general academic performance of girls who dropped out of school
(c) Their family backgrounds
(d) The reasons for the dropouts
(e) If there is anything that could have been done to prevent the dropouts
(f) Any other vital information that could be useful to the research
Appendix 4

**In-depth interview question guide 3 (parents with children who failed to complete O-Level)**

My Name is Blessings Mugari, a Master’s in Education (Geography) student with Bindura University of Science Education in a process of completing my research project. I am kindly requesting for your views and comments through honestly answering the following questions. Please be advised that all the information gathered will be treated with great care and confidentiality, it is going to be used for the purpose of the study project. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

1. **Sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. **Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Below 30</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50-59</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

3. **Marital status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. Which church were you attending during the time when your child failed to complete O-Level?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

5. I understand life was not the same in the past as it is today. May you please explain the difference?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
6. I also understand that some of your children failed to complete their Ordinary Level. May you explain what the main challenges were?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. What do you think could have been done to keep your child[ren] in school?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

8. What was the environment in your community like during the days?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
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9. Looking at the girl child generally, what challenges do they face from the church, community and families that disturb them from completing Ordinary Level?

_____________________________________________________________________

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10. In your opinion, do you think marriage is the solution to the girl-child or her family?

11. What words can you say to the community, families, churches and schools in taking the education of the girl child seriously?

Thank you for taking your time to respond to these questions.
Appendix 5

Focus group discussion consent form

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My Name is Blessings Mugari, a Master’s in Education (Geography) student with Bindura University of Science Education in a process of completing my research project. I would like to discuss with you the subject of girls dropping out of school before completing Ordinary Level education. The discussion should take at most two hours and I will kindly request for your views and comments through honestly and freely participating in the discussion. I will be taking some notes during the session. All responses will be kept confidential. We will ensure that any information we include in our report does not identify you as the participant. Remember, you don’t have to talk about anything you don’t want to and you may withdraw from the discussion any time when you think you cannot continue?

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

Please be advised that all the information gathered will be treated with great care and confidentiality, it is going to be used for the purpose of the study project. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated

Are you willing to participate in this discussion?

Participant ________________________________
Witness ________________________________
Date ________________________________
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Team, P. (1999). *Public report on basic education in India*: Oxford University, New Delhi, IN.


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