GIRL CHILD DROPOUTS IN ZIMBABWE’S SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE OF BUHERA CENTRAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS (2014-2016)

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Science Education Degree in Geography

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September 2016
APPROVAL FORM

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DEDICATION

This thesis is a special dedication to my late father Mr A. Chibade aka *Kumotsa*. 
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the guidance of the good Almighty God in my life. Without you God, I would not have made it. Teach me to love you more. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my mentor and supervisor, Prof C. Denhere for his help, dedication and commitment in helping me put this project together. Without his help and commitment, I would not have successfully completed this project. To the administrators and teachers of Buhera central secondary schools, who took part in this study, I would like to say thank you to them for the information and assistance received from each one of them. My sincere thanks go to my mother, wife and brother for their financial and moral support. To my wife and son, I would like to say thank you for your love and support. Last but not least, I would like to thank Mr T. Tsabora and Mr C. Vengesai for the assistance and words of encouragement. God bless you all
ABSTRACT
This study sought to examine the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Buhera central secondary schools. The study adopted the qualitative case study research design which enabled the researcher to use questionnaires, interviews and document analysis to collect data. Data were collected from a purposively selected sample of fifty four respondents which included three school heads, thirteen class teachers, five girl child school dropouts and thirty form three and four girl child students. The collected data were presented and analyzed qualitatively. This research study revealed that girl child dropouts in secondary schools tends to be perpetuated by causes such as personal, school based, socioeconomic and socio cultural factors. The study also revealed several effects of dropping from school and some of them encompass prostitution, increases in crime rates, early marriages, and wastage of government resources. It was recommended that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should continue develop and implement policies meant to ensure that girls who drop out from secondary schools due to pregnancy enrol back to school and should implement affirmative action strategies meant to benefit the girls’ education. Another recommendation was that school counsellors should counsel girls to stay in schools.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

UNESCO – United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization

UNICEF – United Nations International Children Education Fund

TVE - Technical Vocational Education

ESAP- Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

GER – Girl Child Enrolment rate

EIs – Education Indicators

LEDGs- Less Economically Developed Countries

MEDCS- More Economically Developed Countries

HIV- Human Immuno Virus

AIDS- Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

USA- United States of America

AFR- Apostolic Faith Religion

ATR- African Traditional Religion

STEM – Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UK – United Kingdom

ZIMASSET – Zimbabwe Agenda for Structural Socioeconomic Transformation

IPCC- Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change
CAMPFED-Campaign for female education

ATR- African Traditional Religion
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction
This chapter discussed the background to the study as well as the statement of the problem. The Chapter also highlighted the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, the assumptions and significance of the study. Finally the chapter presented the limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of key terms and the summary.

1.1 Background to the study

Zimbabwe is experiencing a rather high girl child dropout rate within its general education system, (Government of Zimbabwe, 2003). Girl child dropouts are female students, who enrol into a school but fail to complete or progress beyond a given level within the school system. (Chivore, 1986). Girl child dropouts are a challenge because the majority of those who drop out of school tend not to contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of a nation. Within the United Nations decade for education for sustainable development (2005 to 2014), member states including Zimbabwe have been called upon to ensure that all their citizens have access to quality and universal education. This suggests that girl child dropouts should be eliminated and strategies to ensure their continued education and training have to be put in place by member states.

Patrick (2008) postulates that, there is a general agreement that the girl child dropout problem has reached epidemic proportions internationally. In this regard, UNESCO (2000) points out that, about 130 million children living in developing countries are denied their right to education through dropping out. UNICEF (2003) reveals that in sub-Saharan Africa, the
The number of girls out of school rose from 20 million in 1990 to 2 million in 2002. The problem of girls dropping out of school should be a concern of every member of society since it has negative consequences at both the individual and at the social level, (Maton and Moore, 2010). However Chirites (2010) posits that, the prevention and reduction of school dropouts tends to be extremely difficult to achieve due to the high complexity of its causes.

Chetsanga (2002) posits that the problem of school dropout seems acute both at primary and secondary school levels. It has been widely observed that the girl child dropout rate is rather high at secondary level, resulting in a large number of young girl child students failing to acquire relevant formal technical and vocational education (TVE) entry qualifications. Chigwedere, (1996) says this seriously impacts negatively on the achievement of sustainable development targets.

Kanyongo (2005) adds that the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes in Zimbabwe between year 1991 and 1995 resulted in the introduction of school fees in schools which were all along tuition free since independence and also brought about increases in educational levies. This triggered increases in girl child school dropout rates in both primary and secondary schools. It goes without saying that, the formulation of certain economic policies within a nation tends to impact negatively on the education of the nation’s young citizens. A case in point is the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in Zimbabwe which ended up perpetuating high levels of school dropouts especially girl child students within the country.

Hunt (2008) postulates that, studies conducted on girls’ education showed that the global enrolment rate (GER) of girls was 83.1% in 2001. Hunt (2008) goes on to note that a large number of developed countries in Europe, Central Asia and Middle East have witnessed very little improvement in girls’ enrolment in Net Enrolment Rate (NERS) between 2001 and
2006. In light of the above, Mwanza (2014) posits that education indicators (EIs) across the globe clearly indicate that female students are disadvantaged in terms of education opportunities because they are affected by socio cultural, religious, and socio-economic factors. Sifuna (1990) postulate that, in 2007 about 77 million girl child pupils failed to enrol in secondary schools globally. Hunt (2008) further stated that in sub-Saharan Africa more than 50% girls drop out of schools yearly.

It has been widely acknowledged that in most sub-Saharan African countries girls are still less likely to enrol and remain in secondary schools as evidenced by a number of research studies. For instance Chigwedere (as cited in Stewart, 2004) posits that there are fewer girls who survive through all the stages of the education process. Osakwe et al., (1995) note that despite the obvious benefits of education to national development, research findings indicate that girls’ dropout rate from schools is higher than that of boys. This is often attributed to such reasons as religion, culture, socio-economic background and school related factors. Mohammed (2004) highlight that girls may withdraw from secondary schools if good marriage prospects arise and early marriage is a socio cultural factor that hinders pupils especially the girl child’s access to school. In his studies into the factors that contribute to the problem of school dropouts in Turkish Secondary schools, Kirazoglu (2012) points out that some contributing factors that trigger school dropouts are economic problems, family structure problems, tension between teachers and students and disciplinary problems.

In their study into the causes of girl child school dropouts in Nigeria, Alika and Egbochuku (2009) concluded that, there are a number of reasons that cause female students to withdraw from secondary schools and some of these causes include poverty, poor academic performance, bullying by the opposite sex, unfriendly school environments, inadequate teaching and death of parents. Therefore this signifies that the phenomenon of girls dropping out of secondary schools is a problem which is often necessitated by a number of complex
factors. The phenomenon of girl child school dropout tends to be a severe aspect of school adjustment. It is also a phenomenon which should be attributed to a multitude of different as well as complex factors.

In his investigations of school enrolment rates in Zimbabwe, Nziramasanga (1999) found that the prevalence of school dropouts is highest among girls. In Zimbabwe it has been observed that the enrolment figures in secondary school for girl child pupils continue to decline in relation to those of boys. FAWE (2006) revealed that in 1987 in Matebeleland South girls made up forty five percent (45%) of enrolment in form one but in form four this dropped to 36.6%. Magwa and Ngara (2015) notes that such a drop does not augur well for a country such as Zimbabwe which wants to develop its human resources from both sexes for better national development through policies such as ZIMASSET. In another similar study carried by Chadzoka (2008) on Primary school dropouts in Mutare Zimbabwe, the researcher found that female dropouts presented a greater percentage of fifty nine percent (59%) as compared to male dropouts who showed fifty one percent (51%).

In Zimbabwe similar studies regarding the phenomenon of girl child dropout have been carried out by a number of researchers. For instance Machingambi (2003) also conducted a study in Masvingo District of Zimbabwe on the factors that push students out of schools. The study was mainly focusing on studying the school based factors that cause school dropouts thereby overlooking the fact that the phenomenon of school dropouts cannot be facilitated by a single factor, rather it’s a phenomenon which is often caused by a number of different factors. Kurebwa and Mabhanda (2015) also conducted a study on the factors contributing to student dropout rates in Shurugwi resettlements. The study was mainly focusing on investigating factors that cause pupils to dropout from primary schools. Therefore, it is against this background that this study sought to examine the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Buhera Central Secondary Schools.
1.2 Statement of the problem

The major focus of the study was to examine the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. Very little attention has been directed in researching about the causes and effects of girl child dropping out from secondary schools globally. In Zimbabwe this subject which concerns the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools has been studied by other researchers though they are few, for instance Machingambi (2003) conducted a study in Masvingo District of Zimbabwe on the factors that push students out of schools. The study was mainly focusing on studying the school based factors that cause school dropouts. Mawere (2012) also carried out a study concerning the causes of girl child dropouts in Gutu District in Masvingo Province. This research study sought to find out the causes and effects of girls dropping out of secondary schools.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to identify and examine the causes as well as effects of girl child dropouts in Buhera central secondary schools.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To identify the causes of girl child dropouts in Buhera central secondary schools.
- To examine the effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools.
- To suggest possible ways of enhancing the retention of girl child pupils in secondary schools.
1.5 Research Questions

The study revolved around the following research questions:

- What causes girl child dropouts in secondary schools?
- What are the effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools?
- To suggest possible ways of enhancing retention of girl child pupils in secondary schools.

1.6 Assumptions of the study

The following assumptions were established about the study:

- Girl children are dropping from secondary schools
- There are some causes and effects of the girl child dropout phenomenon
- Girl child dropout is a phenomenon which is difficult to prevent or reduce due to the complexity of its causes.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study may equip educational planners, practitioners and officers in the region with the knowledge of the factors that cause girls to dropout from secondary schools. The research findings into the causes and effects of dropouts among girls in Buhera Central Secondary Schools may help teachers teaching in secondary schools, since they will get to understand better the causes of girl child dropouts in their respective schools. The study may also sharpen the researcher’s ability to engage in academic research. Finally the study may be used as literature by other researchers who might want to investigate on the similar problem.
1.8 Limitations of the study

The researcher encountered several constraints in conducting the study. Some of the constraints include shortage of financial resources to finance the project. Given this drawback at hand the researcher made efforts to seek financial assistance from his relatives and friends so as to make the project to be carried out successfully. Also due to this constraint of shortage of financial resources, the researcher selected a small sample for the study. The researcher met with some respondents who were not cooperative and this threatened the validity of the results. Given this constraint, the researcher assured the respondents that the information gathered was solely to be used for academic purposes. Owing to time constraints, the researcher conducted spot interviews and administered questionnaires on the same day. The researcher also encountered problems with the Official Secret Act. The respondents, as civil servants, are bound by the Official Secrecy Act. The Act expressly prohibits one from disclosing certain information acquired during the course of one’s official duties. The Act therefore, discouraged some respondents who were having valuable information, effectively preventing them from sharing such information with the researcher. The researcher was as professional as possible and conducted the research within the confines of the law and ensures that the research will be intended for the benefit of the teaching and learning of pupils in schools.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

The research study was carried out in Buhera central circuit of Buhera district in Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe. The researcher selected nine secondary schools which he used for the purpose of the study.
1.10 Definition of key terms

The following terms were operationally defined as follows:

**Girl child dropout**

Girl child dropout entails early withdrawal of girls from schools without completing the level registered for.

**Dropout Rate**

This is the percentage of pupils who withdraw from school before completing the level registered for.

**Gender discrimination**

This refers to unequal or preferential treatment to individuals of groups based on their gender that result into reduced access to or control of resources and opportunities.

**Gender Equity**

This is the equal treatment of women and men boys and girls so that they can enjoy the benefits of development including equal access to and control of opportunities and resources.

**Gender disparity**

This entails the differences or unequal or unfair treatment of either females or males.

**Sexual harassment**

These are unwelcome acts of sexual nature that cause discomfort to the targeted persons and they encompass words, persistent requests for sexual favours, gestures, touch, suggestions, and coerced sexual intercourse.
1.11 Summary

The chapter has managed to present the background information to the study concerning the causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitations of the study, limitations of the study, assumptions of the study and definition of key terms were also clearly outlined and discussed in the chapter. The following chapter will focuses on the literature review on the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, the research focused on providing reviewed literature and reviewed studies that have been done on the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The following issues were discussed in this chapter; the conceptual analysis of the term school dropouts as well as the phenomenon of girl child dropouts in secondary schools, the causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools which include personal, socio economic, socio cultural, and school based factors. The climate change related hazards and disasters which also triggers girl child dropouts in secondary schools were also discussed. Finally the effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools and the theoretical framework were also discussed.

2.1 Conceptual analysis of the term school dropouts and the phenomenon of girl child dropouts in secondary schools

Uche (2013) defines a school dropout as any pupil, who for one reason or the other leave school prematurely before graduation, without transferring to another school. However, The Government of Zimbabwe (2003) views school dropouts as pupils who enrol into schools but fail to complete, or advance beyond, a given stage within the education system. On the other hand, Brown (2004) defines a school dropout as a pupil who exits the schooling system before finishing the program which he or she has registered for. Therefore, it can be noted from the aforementioned definitions that, girl child school dropouts entail girls who leave schools before completing a given educational cycle without the school’s consent. More so it
can be noted from the foregoing definitions that, the term school dropout relates to the untimely withdrawal of pupils from schools prematurely without obtaining a certificate of graduation

Balfanz and Legters (as cited in Machingambi, 2003) postulates that, though there is much agreement among classroom practitioners, policy makers, researchers and educators that children of school going age should remain in secondary schools until they complete their educational cycle, paradoxically many young people especially girls continue to leave secondary schools prematurely. Relatedly, Chimombo (1999) notes that, in Zimbabwe though the enrolment in both primary and secondary schools is almost equal for girls and boys, boys have higher chances of continuing school compared to girls. In this regard, The Zimbabwe National Plan of Action (2005-2010) observed that, the secondary completion rates for girls between the period 1996-2001 was 5.78% as compared to 7.76% for boys and between 1999-2004, the secondary school completion rates were 8.29% for girls as compared to 12.51% for boys. It can be noted from the above figures that, there are various hidden reasons which makes girl child pupils more susceptible to secondary school dropping as compared to boy child pupils.

Holmes (2003) noted that girls usually attain less education and tend to drop out earlier as compared to boys in secondary schools. In this regard a report of UNICEF (2004) indicated that in sub-Saharan Africa there are about 7.3 million children who have not gone to schools in 2004, of which sixty two percent (62%) are girls. Magwa & Ngara (2015) found that globally approximately ten million girls each and every year experience early or forced marriage which is equivalent to one girl in every three seconds. The same authors further noted that, one in every three girls is married by the age of 18 and approximately one out of every seven girls in the world’s Least Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) is married before their fifteenth birthday. It has been observed that in countries such as Niger,
Chad, Mali, Bangladesh and Guinea, the percentage rate of early and forced marriage is sixty percent (60%), (UNICEF, 2004). Therefore it can be noted from the foregoing that, girl child school dropping is a phenomenon which is common and more pronounced in developing countries. In light of the above, UNESCO (2012) highlighted that all children, particularly girls, must have total access to and be in a position to complete quality education by the year 2015. This suggests that, developing countries like Zimbabwe have a mammoth task of ensuring that girls access their secondary school education.

Lee and Loeb (2000) posits that, opinions about the detrimental effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools have been almost universal, however there has been much interest all over the globe in trying to explain why girl child pupils drop out from secondary schools. In his study on the implications of school dropouts in education and training policy. Zengeya (2007) reiterated that, the problems posed by girl child school dropouts are neither unique nor new to Zimbabwe, but they are global problems. The same author goes on to note that all over the globe, almost all education systems have been experiencing the challenges posed by school dropouts since the birth of formal schooling systems. Therefore it can be noted that, the phenomenon of school dropping tend not to be new in secondary schools, rather it is a common issue, which is posing many problems to the socio economic development of different national economies.

Girl child dropping from secondary schools is a serious problem because it denies individual pupils their fundamental human right to education. Globally, the individual’s right to education has been frequently acknowledged in many treaties and conventions such as the 1948 convention on the rights of the child and the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, (UNESCO, 2000). Patrick (2008) and Wotherspoon (2004) concurs with each other when they succinctly pointed out that, there is a general agreement among policy makers that the girl child school dropout problem has reached epidemic proportions globally. In this
regard, a UNESCO report of the year 2000 on the state of the world’s children in the developing world indicated that, there are about 130 million children living in these countries who are denying themselves the right to education through dropping out, (UNESCO, 2000).

These statistics clearly signifies that, large numbers of girl child school dropouts are found in the developing world where both relative and absolute poverty is rampant. Magwa and Ngara (2015) notes that recent studies conducted globally have revealed that there are notable differences in enrolment rates in secondary schools between boys and girls. This gender gap has been noted to be on rise since the turn of the 21st century (Amjad, 2007). When school dropout rates vary significantly by gender, it manifests that there are various exceptional factors which contributes in increasing girl child dropout rates in secondary schools.

Maton and Moore (2010) says that, the problem of girl child dropouts in secondary schools should be a worry of every member of the society since it poses negative consequences on both the individual and the society at large. Azzam (2007) notes the major effects of dropping out of school encompasses reduced political participation, increased demands for social services such as health, increased crime rates, and poverty. At individual level, the costs of girls dropping out from secondary schools have been noted by Thurton et al., (2006) as increased unemployment prospects, unattractive earnings and greater likelihood of health problems. Therefore it can be noted that, by dropping out from secondary schools, most girl child pupils severely limit their chances of economic and social well being in the future. Mawere (2012) asserts that in Zimbabwe, girl child school dropouts have stimulated overstaffing in secondary schools. The problem of overstaffing causes some teachers to lose their jobs or to be transferred to other schools thereby disturbing the learning process of pupils.
2.2 Causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

Girl child school dropout is a complex phenomenon which is caused by a number of different factors. In this regard Hunt (2008) postulate that, school dropout is often a process rather than an outcome of one single event, and therefore has more than one immediate causes. Shahidul and Zehadul (2015) succinctly pointed out that, though a lot of researches have been done concerning the issue of school dropout for both girls and boys, dropout patterns significantly differs by the gender of the pupils. This suggests that, girl dropout from schools tend to be a gendered phenomenon. Wehlage et al., (1989) identified four general causes of girl child dropouts from secondary schools and these are: personal factors, school based factors, socio economic factors and socio cultural factors. On the other hand Piromruen and Keoyote (2001) identified six factors associated with school dropouts, namely; demographic, family, socio-economic status, school-related, behavioural, and psychological factors. Magwa and Ngara (2015) notes that these factors affect learners differently that is; situations which affect one girl child’s decision to drop out of school may be different from another one’s. Hence the complexities of these factors suggest that girl child students drop out for different reasons at different times from secondary schools.

2.2. Personal factors leading to girl child pupils dropping out from secondary schools

It has been widely confirmed by many research studies carried out globally on the causes of school dropouts that girls’ personal attributes can cause them to withdraw from secondary schools. The major personal factors that trigger girl child dropouts have been noted to be student’s characteristics and pregnancy. These factors have different effects on various girl child pupils in secondary schools. Wrigley (1995) propounds that once pupils are enrolled in secondary schools they interact and associate with each other; hence secondary schools act as places or sites of socialization. This form of interaction often sometimes causes girl child
pupils to think beyond ideological limits laid on them thereby predisposing them to secondary school dropping. Wanyoike (2003) and Wrigley (1995) were in agreement when they pointed out that, pupils peer groups which develops in secondary schools if not well monitored can lead to devastating effects such as engaging in drugs/ substance abuse, and early sex. This eventually leads to the contraction of dangerous diseases such as HIV/ AIDS and early pregnancies. These factors contribute significantly in causing girl child students to drop out of secondary schools.

Okumu (1995) clearly pointed out that, in many African cultures, child bearing is strongly related to adulthood. This implies that if a girl child falls pregnant whilst still at school she is viewed as a grown up person hence has no business in the education system and she will have to be expelled from secondary schools. Fatuma and Sifuna (2006) noted premarital pregnancies as a cause of high dropout rates among girls in secondary schools. In his study Sabates et al., (2010) noted reproductive health problems and teenage pregnancy as powerful factors that push girls out of secondary schools. Molosiwa and Moswela (2012) assert that, global rates of teenage pregnancy ranges from 143/1000 in countries in the Africa South of Sahara region to 2.9 /1000 in South Korea. Mehta et al., (1989) also noted that there are about 70 000 reported teen pregnancy cases in third world countries each and every year. It can be noted from the above revealed findings that, teen pregnancy continues to be the main causal factor that pushes most African girl child pupils out of secondary schools.

In light of the above, Boyle et al (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, 2015) revealed that several studies carried out worldwide have found teenage pregnancy as a significant cause of school dropout among girls. The same authors also highlighted that, there are various unforeseen circumstances faced by girls which leads them to early motherhood hence consequently dropping out of secondary schools. Some of the circumstances include the lack
of socio-economic opportunities and gender inequality in both primary and secondary education system. Moswela (2006) postulate that the dropout rate of girl child pupils is higher than the dropout rate of the boy child and one of the major causes for girls to drop out from secondary schools is teen pregnancy. In Zimbabwe there is a policy which allows girls to return to school after getting pregnant; however the re-entry rate has been very low since the inception of the policy. Grant et al.,(2013) observed that, re-entry to school after pregnancy tend to be a function of a number of circumstances which includes the availability of a caregiver for the newly born child to assist in childcare responsibilities.

Abagi (1992) noted that a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa tend to have numerous reported cases of male teachers preying on female students, threatening to fail them if they fail to comply with their demands. The author observed that male teachers will be having the intention of prodding girl child pupils to indulge into sexual relationships with them. High numbers of such cases were recorded in Kenya, where male teachers being reported to reward girl child pupils who cooperate with good grades and school fees waivers, (Abagi, 1992). Ngwe'no (1994) views early withdraw from secondary schools by girls due to pregnancy as a sexist’s societal attitude manifested in gender insensitive pregnancy policies. Thus it seems apparently clear from the above that, some of the circumstances faced by girls in schools expose them to early withdrawal from the education system.

In a more similar study carried out by Mgwangqa and Lawrence (2008), secondary school attrition among girl child pupils has been seen as a consequence associated with traumatic social and educational experiences. The authors revealed that, school children reported sexual harassment, parental neglect, teacher’s abuse and HIV/ AIDS related conditions as factors contributing to the phenomenon of girl child dropping out from secondary schools. Mgwangqa and Lawrence (2008) goes on to argue that, where these negative consequences
were absent in secondary schools, pupils showed interest in returning to school. These findings clearly reveal the fact that, there are some depressing circumstances which militates against the continuing survival of girl child pupils in secondary schools.

**2.2.1 Socio economic factors that cause girls to withdraw from secondary schools**

Fuller and Liang (1999) used a non-cause specific hazard model to determine the socio economic factors associated with girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The model found an association between family’s financial powers, calculated by the level of household expenses and access to credit lines and the likelihood that girl child pupils remains in secondary schools. In another similar study carried in Botswana, Fuller and Liang (1999) found that household asset ownership and housing quality were always inversely related to girl child’s educational attainments or academic achievements.

The National Centre for Education Statistics (as cited in Dube, 2011) suggests that poverty seems to be one of the major universal causes of secondary school dropouts among female students in sub-Saharan Africa. In the United States of America (USA), poverty is high among Hispanics and African Americans and girl child dropouts from schools among these groups are higher and more rampant compared to the non-Hispanics, (Dube, 2011). This implies that, a direct relationship exists between poverty and the phenomenon of girl child school dropouts.

Amadi et al., (2013) postulate that, girls tend to be victims of school dropout as compared to boys in families with low socio-economic status. In the same vein of thought, Nkinyangi (1980) vividly highlighted that, in situations where parents cannot pay fees for boys and girls, the latter is a sacrifice. This means that, boys are allowed to proceed with their education while girls dropout from secondary schools. Badan (1997) noted that there is a positive relationship between poverty, involvement of girl child in household chores, early marriages
of girls; with drop out of girls in secondary schools. This suggests that, there are various socio economic factors which contribute in pushing girl child pupils out of secondary schools.

Government of Zimbabwe (2005) posits that, in Zimbabwe, among the poorest people, eighteen percent (18%) of pupils aged six years and above had never been to school in 1995 compared with eight percent (8%) for the non-poor. These statistics clearly signifies the fact that, poverty tend to be a critical factor which triggers school drop outs in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Okumu (1995) denotes that in Kwale and Nairobi in Kenya, participants of a situation analysis survey gave poverty as the most important factor which causes girls to withdraw from secondary schools. The survey revealed that, forty two percent (42%) of the respondents indicated that they would only send their girl children to schools in times of economic boom in contrast to only eight percent (8%) who decisively stated that they would send their girl children to school in times of economic recessions, (Okumu, 1995). In sub-Saharan Africa, large numbers of people live below the poverty datum line and poverty plays a critical role in causing female students to withdraw from schools.

Okeke et al., (2008) postulate that girls find themselves out of secondary schools due to various reasons and some of the reasons include child trafficking, poverty, lack of funding, need for money, absenteeism, engagement in household activities and child headed families. Uche and Maliki (2011) concurs with Okeke et al.,(2008)’s views when they reiterated the fact that adolescence militancy, poverty, and joblessness tend to be some of the contributing factors which triggers girl child dropouts in secondary schools. Uche (2013) notes that in the face of extreme hardship, girl child pupils are more susceptible to drop out of secondary school than boys.

Okpukpara & Chukwone (as cited in Uche, 2013) views poverty status of household as a critical factor that has a strong influence on girls’ retention in secondary schools. Obanya
(2010) pointed out that, poverty and poor economic backgrounds strongly militate against girl child’s education in secondary schools. It has been noted that even if both primary and secondary education are to be offered for free, there are always hidden, indirect, illegal costs that inhibit girl child pupils to complete their schooling. In this regard Alika and Egbochukwu (2009) indicated that the socio-economic status of girl child pupils has a strong impact on their ability to complete secondary school. From the above mentioned findings, it can be noted that, socio economic backgrounds of girl child pupils have a strong influence on their continual survival in secondary education systems.

Hunter and May (2002) postulate that the direct and indirect costs of secondary schooling have the potential of completely removing some children from schools especially the girl child. Hunter and May goes on to note that, one of the most important direct cost underlying high numbers of girl child dropouts in secondary schools are fees which they are levied. In South Africa school fees have been found to be a potent reason for the dropout rate of 27 percent of boys and 30 percent of girls before the matriculation level (Dube, 2011). Lewin (2008) points out that many countries have adopted fee free for the basic education in a bid to try to counteract the problem of secondary school dropping by girl child students.

Brown and Park (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, 2015) noted that in the rural settlements of China, parents' incapability to pay school fees was the major reason for the average annual dropout rate of forty seven percent (47%) of girls and thirty three percent (33%) of boys in secondary schools. This clearly shows that in situations where parents face challenges in raising school fees for their children, it is the girl child’s education which they negatively affect first. Shovan Ghosh Susmita & Sengupta (2012) also observed that in poor households of India, the costs of schooling for girls are higher as compared to boys. The same authors noted that even if the direct costs of education appears to be similar for both boys and girls, guardians are less willing to pay out for the education of girls. Lloyd et al., (2005)
found that in Kenya, higher school fees charged in secondary schools increases the chances of dropping out for girls. In the same vein of thought, Dube (2011) highlights that the costs of pens/pencils, books and school uniforms remains a relatively economic burden for poor households and this ultimately acts as a trigger for girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

Kadzimira and Rose (2003) argue that, shortage of money to buy school materials for the girl child’s schooling tend to lower their enrolment in secondary schools. Mukudi (2004) supported Kadzamira and Rose (2003)’s view by indicating that in Kenya, the dropout rates among the children of economically disadvantaged families have risen up due to lack of resources to pay for the costs of education for their children. Chugh (as cited in Mwanza, 2014) observed that in Bangalore, India, low wage earnings of parents/guardians have an impact on children’s education especially the girl child. According to Chugh’s observations, girl child pupils are the ones who are usually called up by their parents to supplement household incomes either by working or by taking on other household responsibilities so as to free up other household members for work. The aforementioned findings clearly indicate that, socio economic factors play a pivotal role in pushing girl child pupils out of secondary schools.

2.2.2 Socio cultural factors leading to girl child pupils dropping out from secondary schools

It has been widely acknowledged globally by policy makers, educationists, and classroom practitioners among others that, family set up and beliefs tend to contribute in causing girls to withdraw from secondary schools. World Bank (1996) acknowledges that in the developing world, there are some certain socio-cultural norms that infuse school’s normal day to day functioning. In this regard, Wanjiru (2007) asserts that, in many African societies girls are socialized to know their brothers’ education as much more important than theirs. From the
foregoing it can be realized that in most cases girls drop out of secondary schools for the sake of their brothers’ education and this reflects how parents perpetuate unfairness and injustice in relation to the distribution of resources and opportunities such as education in societies.

Wanyoike (2003) concurs with Wanjiru (2007)’s views when he reiterates that, the way in which family foundations are laid down pose a lot of difficulties in trying to remove the attitudes and behaviour patterns formed around girls and boys. Wanyoike (2003) further notes that, boys are more valued and more superior to girls and hence even in education they are given the first priority in their studies. This signifies that, in societies there are attitudes, biases and stereotypes which constrain women and girls and these attributes are laid down in such a way that, girls are ranked second always even when it comes to the distribution of critical resources and services such as education and jobs.

A study carried out by Wanjiru (2007) in Mombasa on factors contributing to school dropout in secondary schools revealed that 54.4% respondents valued boys’ education better than that of girls. The study goes on to reveal that, families which cannot easily afford to send both boys and girls to secondary schools reckon that financial profits on the expenses for girl education are smaller than those of boys. The argument being that, educating girls is a loss since they will eventually leave their parents/guardians once they get married. Therefore, their education is seen as a financial asset or benefit to their in-laws rather than to their blood relatives. Ultimately this will force parents to withdraw their girl children from schools.

Okwori et al., (2014) suggest that some girl child pupils may be forced to withdraw from secondary schools due to early marriage and this has been noted to be common in poor and uneducated families. In light of the above, Zombwe et al., (2010) asserts that in Africa there are some cultural traditions that order a dowry to be paid while a girl child is still very young. Thus when a girl child reaches puberty she is forced to stop schooling so as to pave way for
marriage. Moyo and Muvezwa (as cited in Stewart, 2004) also noted religious beliefs as a strong factor which affect girl child’s persistence in schools. In Zimbabwe, large numbers of girls from Apostolic Faith Religion (AFR) sect are married as soon as they reach puberty stages, (Magwa and Ngara, 2015). The belief being that girls’ role is to marry early and bear children and they will be looked after by their husbands. The sect holds a belief that girl child pupils should only have minimum schooling for instance primary education and ultimately be married off at puberty stages. In Zimbabwe this kind of cultural belief is the one which also enhances large numbers of girl child dropouts in many rural day secondary schools.

In most rural settlements of Zimbabwe, poor parents and guardians often give their girl children to rich people and this custom is known as Kuzvarira in the Shona tradition, (The Zimbabwe National Plan of Action, 2005-2010). The Kuzvarira customary involves marrying off a girl, without her consent to a married man in exchange for money, food and any other material possessions that save as assurance that the girl’s family will not suffer future economic deprivation , (Financial Gazette, 2/12/2004). The customary completely inhibits girls to continue with their schooling as soon as they reach puberty stages. Thus, the victims of the custom drop out of schools as soon as they reach puberty stages.

The Zimbabwe National Plan of Action (2005-2010) notes that, the Chimutsamapfihwa cultural customary continues to be a flourishing practice which is perpetuating girl child school dropouts in Zimbabwe. The Chimutsamapfihwa cultural practice involves young girls replacing their deceased sister's marital position. The cultural practice believes that marrying off young girl children conciliate dead spirits and at the same time settling standing disputes among families. The Zimbabwe National Plan of Action (2005-2010) also found that within the country young girls are often given to their living sister's or aunt's husband when an aunt or a sister fails to conceive. This practice has been noted to encompass other forms of cultural practices such as the Chiramu. The Chiramu practice involves a man engaging in a friendly
relationship with his younger sister-in-law. These cultural practices often result in unplanned pregnancies, subsequent forced marriages or early marriages forcing girl child pupils out of the education system.

In their study, Falkingham and Baschieri (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul, 2015) found that in Tajikistan many girl child pupils attend religious classes which provide education for future marriage life only. In light of the above, Sawada and Lokshin (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul, 2015) succinctly pointed out that, seclusion of women in many institutes of learning such as secondary schools is the main cause for girls’ dropout in developing countries. UNESCO (2012) revealed that traditional values are stronger in rural settlements of Least Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) as compared to urban areas of More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs). UNESCO (2012) goes on to note that, people in many developing countries often do not allow girls to leave homes to go to schools. Thus, it can be noted from the foregoing that, there are various traditional beliefs which perpetuate girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

UNICEF (2001) revealed that in Bangladesh, girls are usually withdrawn from secondary schools if good marriage opportunities arise. Mwanza (2014) noted that in countries such as Nepal, Kazakhstan and Indonesia though attitudes towards the attainment of education for girls have changed, many parents and guardians still have the belief that investment in girls education is a wastage of resources since the girls soon get married and work in another different household. In Zimbabwe, this belief is prevalent in many societies especially in rural environments where it is causing many girl child pupils to drop out from secondary schools.

Dube (2011) indicates that, child-headed households have become relatively common and more pronounced since the turn of the 21st century. It has been generally observed that, as more and more parents and guardians became victims of HIV/AIDS pandemic and die,
children especially girls are left to head and run the households. Malaney (2000) suggests that in Africa as a result of HIV/AIDS pandemic, many girls are removed from secondary schools to care for other family members. Apparently, paying school fees and other expenses becomes a problem forcing girls to drop out from secondary schools. Dube (2011) observed that in the Central African Republic and Swaziland school enrolment figures and school completion rates have been reported to have fallen by twenty percent (20%) to thirty six percent (36%) due to HIV/AIDS pandemic. Thus, children are left orphaned without anybody to finance their school fees, thereby pre disposing them to dropout from secondary schools.

2.2.3 School based causes leading to girl child pupils dropping from secondary schools

The following are some of the school based causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools: Poor performance or school failure, the school environment, student’s discrimination by teachers, sexual harassment by teachers, distance from schools and absenteeism.

**Poor performance**

School failure is an attribute of school retention which contributes immensely in causing girls to withdraw from secondary schools. Dube (2011) propounds that failure leaves pupils with a meticulous view of what they can or cannot do and ultimately this opens up a variety of options for them and those without strong support from both school and home, they will often withdraw prematurely from secondary schools. Te-Riele (2005) argues that pupils do not drop out of schools because they do not want to learn, but because they will be failing their academic studies. School failure linked to home backgrounds, local contexts, state of health and other socio economic issues tend to cause girls to drop out of secondary schools.

Aloise- Young and Chavez (2002) note that, school failure causes frustration and desperation and this will cause learners to feel alienated from schools thereby forcing them to withdraw
from the education system. In South Africa, The Ministerial Committee (2007) revealed that, the way the school and parents handle failure plays a critical role in determining whether pupils stay or leave secondary schools. Therefore, it can be noted from the foregoing that, school failure and low academic achievements have their own psychological implications among girl child students. The way these aspects are handled and treated by both parents and school authorities becomes very important for the retention of girl child learners in secondary schools.

**School environment**

A study carried out by Rumberger and Thomas (2000) revealed that secondary education systems are increasingly becoming a hub of criticism and controversy as far as the drop out problem of girls from schools is concerned. In the same vein of thought, Stewart (2008) argues strongly that much of the task of reducing dropout rates among girls falls directly on the schools attended by them. In this regard, Wootherspoon (2004) summarized the school related factors that are central to the dropping out problem of pupils from secondary schools. Wotherspoon identified five characteristics which are seen prevalent in both primary and secondary schools influencing the chances of girl child pupils dropping out of the education system in any different expected directions. The characteristics are:

(i) Practices and policies found in the schools.

(ii) Teacher student relationship present in the schools.

(iii) The type and nature of the school curriculum available.

(iv) Availability of resources in the schools.

(v) Quantity and quality of learning in the schools.

The above mentioned characteristics reflect some of the facilities and conditions that are supposed to be present for the smooth flow running of activities in secondary schools. Hence
if these conditions are not in place, schools will not function properly. In this respect, it is this mal functioning of the schools which makes girl child to withdraw from the education system. In his contribution on to the debate on school related factors that trigger girl child dropouts, Azzam (2007) also contends that pupils withdraw from schools because they would have attended secondary schools that have poor facilities and inadequate resources. These conditions significantly affect girl children’s academic performance thereby causing them to withdraw from secondary schools.

Bruce as cited in Patrick (2008) adds that, humiliating teacher attitudes and punishment often leads girl child pupils to withdraw from secondary schools. This view links very well with Bourdieu as cited in Machingambi (2003)’s observation that, the classrooms are characterized by disagreements between the teacher who stresses on rot knowledge and pupils who employs indigenous knowledge (ethno science) from their home backgrounds. This clearly shows that the environments found in the classrooms play a critical role in the retention of girl child pupils in secondary schools. Relatedly, Stewart (2008) argues that the excessive demand of expensive school uniforms by school heads and authorities tends to amplify the gap between children of poor and rich backgrounds. This tends to cause a feeling of embarrassment and discomfort on certain girl child pupils and due to these effects they may evade schooling. Bowles and Gintis as cited in Balfanz and Legters (2004) further stress the above mentioned view by postulating that, secondary schools were once thought to be areas responsible for the provision of enlightening and equalizing roles. The same author further noted that secondary schools are now increasingly seen to be places full of exploitive characteristics. In light of the above, it is this oppression and repression that stimulates girls to withdraw from secondary schools.
Stewart (2008) adds that in a society where there is a rigid pattern of dominance and in subordination, it becomes difficult for secondary schools to shape pupils with domains that show an expression of intrinsically motivated behaviour. In this regard, it will be these characteristics that are seen by other pupils that make them not seeing the essence of going to school and ultimately choosing to withdraw from secondary schools. Toldson (2008) gave his analysis on the basis of his research study of American Secondary School (ASSE) Education and in his findings the author revealed that secondary schools expect pupils to do things that they might not choose to do. Toldson (2008) goes on to elaborate that many secondary schools make demands that run counter to pupils’ choices and natural inclinations. This act by schools usually forces some pupils to withdraw from the education system.

Beinstein as cited in Christie and Martin (2007) reinforced the above mentioned views by arguing that, in classrooms pupils are expected by their teachers to remain silent unless called upon and to sit in their seats for extended periods of time listening to tedious and monotonous lessons. All this tends to de motivate learners and ultimately causing them to withdraw from secondary schools. Okwori et al., (2014) asserts that, the attitude of some teachers causes pupils to drop out of secondary schools. The same author also notes that, some teachers have natural hatred for some certain individual pupils and this will be reflecting on their faces. This ultimately results in either punishing the pupil if he/she commits a mistake in the class or performs badly in the subject. A teacher is a manager of a class and it is expected of him to care and show love to all the pupils in his/her class irrespective of his/her character, religion, race among others. Paulynice (2014) also noted that many pupils especially girls withdraw from secondary schools due to lack of motivation in the class. It can be noted from the above that, some teachers’ behaviours de motivate pupils thereby causing them to withdrawal from secondary schools.
In Bowles and Gintis (1976)’s view, secondary education systems are basically methods of disciplining pupils. Implied above is the view that, girl child pupils drop out from secondary schools because the learning environments will be overemphasizing disciplinary issues at the expense of classroom learning. In capitalist societies, Hess (2000) notes that, schools tend to discard the individual pupil who thinks and behaves in an independent manner. Therefore this seems to suggest that secondary schools suppress pupils’ natural creativity. Thus, it is this suppression of natural creativity which predisposes girl child pupils to drop out from secondary schools.

Christie and Martin (2007) observe that in British secondary schools, about fifty percent (50%) of teachers’ time and energy is spent managing pupils’ attention, getting them organized to do school work and disciplining them for deviant behaviour. In light of the above, Bowles and Gintis (as cited in Maton and Moore, 2010) called this the “alienating and repressive attributes of the school”. Therefore, it is this alienating/repressive attributes of secondary schools that push girls out of the education system. Zins et al., (2004) argues that the quality and nature of modern secondary school environments tends to reject meaning to human action and foster disappointment among the girl child students. Apparently, this causes girl child pupils to withdraw from secondary schools.

Petrie (2001) contributed on to the debate on the effects of school related factors which causes girl child dropouts from secondary schools by saying that, the education system’s examination grading system degrades the pupils. Usually pupils who fail in the examinations at different levels in the educational system become frustrated and de-motivated thereby predisposing them to dropping out. Bourdieu (2005), views examinations as merely mechanisms by which the dominant groups in societies measure and select those girl child pupils who are worth and fit to inherit an appropriate level of cultural capital from their
families. Implied above is the notion that, girl child pupils go to schools for them to get a qualification to inherit cultural capital through writing examinations. This means that those who fail to inherit cultural capital through passing examinations have no business in the education system and have to withdraw from secondary schools.

Rumberger and Thomas (2000) carried out a study on the causes of secondary school drop outs in Mauritius and the study wanted to confirm whether there was an association between poor academic achievement as measured by grades and test scores and the dropping out problem. However it was fascinating to note that their findings tallied very well with Bowles and Gintis (1976)’s findings who also noted that, schools everywhere in the world have some egalitarian and repressive features which only serve to persuade people to admit that success and failure are deserved by pupils.

Burgett (2001) carried out a study in New York and found that school dropouts among girls were caused by school programs that were failing to meet their expectations. UNESCO (2000) also observed that many secondary schools in the developing world act as foreign worlds which try to offer or disseminate knowledge of little relevance to the pupils. The type of education imparted to the pupils will not be fit to their social environment or to the society they will be living. Thus, many pupils end withdrawing from secondary schools since they would have realized that they will be merely wasting their time in schools, doing things that will not help them in the future.

Petrie (2001) argues that, children are directed into secondary schools, taught to sit over extended periods of time, forced to acknowledge or admit whatever the teacher says, regardless how boring or unrealistic it is and a pupil who refuses is thrown out of the classroom. This again actually signifies the fact that, the conditions which girl child pupils
experience in secondary schools at times are not conducive such that some of them may resort to withdraw from these schools.

Worrel and Hale (2001) conducted a quantitative study in Japan, and their findings revealed that the presence of positive social relationships in schools create powerful incentives for the retention of girl child learners in secondary schools. These findings largely apply to girl child pupils experiencing difficulties or problems in their schoolwork and those who will be finding it difficult to meet their school expectations. In light of the above, Maton and Moore (2010) also demonstrated how social capital (measured as association between pupils and classroom practitioners both in and out of class) was powerfully related to the phenomenon of dropping out. Again, the study’s findings revealed an indirect or inverse relationship between social capital and dropping out of girl child pupils from secondary schools.

In a study on the relevance of school curriculum to employment in Zimbabwe, Mandebvu (1996) observed an inverse relationship between what secondary school education develops in pupils and the needs of the world of work. The research revealed that, most employers particularly in Harare criticized the Zimbabwean curriculum for being too academic. The findings are in tandem with the plight of many employers in Zimbabwe since they are bemoaning the education system’s curriculum which lacks the characteristics of inculcating proper work ethics. Having realized this deficit, pupils particularly the girl child might opt to drop out of secondary schools.

Machingambi (2003) goes on to highlight that, if secondary schools do not necessarily develop career related competencies, pupils lose motivation to pursue it. Therefore, it is this de motivation and lack of self-confidence in the education system that negatively affects the school-life expectancy of pupils, thus giving rise to the occurrence of girl child dropping out of secondary schools. Lauer (1992) also found similar findings in his studies which he
conducted in America whereby he observed a mismatch between education and the demands of national economies. Lauer revealed that although there are weak associations between education, jobs and remunerations, a large number of institutions of higher learning graduates have problems in finding jobs. The study further established that few graduates who manage to secure jobs tend to work in tasks that do not demand the kind of knowledge and skills they have learnt, leading to dissatisfaction and disappointments.

In this regard, education is seen as something that does not always pay off in terms of remunerations and social upward mobility. In view of the above, it is the diminishing economic payoff of education or schooling that causes girl child pupils to lose self-confidence in education thereby preferring to dropout. Lorrell and Hell (as cited in Dube, 2011) supports the aforementioned views by pointing out that lack of economic alternatives in the labour market even when the girl child pupils complete their educational cycles is a strong factor that influences them to drop out of secondary schools in many Third World Countries.

UNESCO (2000) noted that, many secondary schools in less economically developed countries (LEDCs) have little resources or incentives that make themselves more relevant or attractive to pupils. The same UNESCO report also indicated that classrooms in most urban environments are poorly constructed and overcrowding is a common feature. The report goes on to note that in these classrooms children struggle for adequate space and for a small amount of attention from an overtaxed classroom practitioner. The above mentioned remarks clearly signifies that, the quality of educational infrastructure tend to play a potent role in the retention of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

Machingambi (2003) has demonstrated through a study on school dropouts in Zimbabwe that, lack of diversity in school infrastructure and curriculum can predispose girl child pupils to
secondary school dropping out. Therefore, education of below expected standards and schools themselves act as “depressants” to the continual survival of girl child pupils in secondary schools. In this respect, it can be argued that if survival of girl child pupils in the secondary schools is to be assured, it is not enough simply to ensure that girls attend school without paying more attention to the quality of education services that they will be acquiring from these schools.

In their study, Aloise-Young and Chavez (2002) also revealed that there are areas of school life that marginalizes pupils especially girls. According to the authors’ findings, these areas include the curriculum, teaching and learning activities, associations, assessment methods and qualifications. The authors also noted discipline, organization of the schools, administration present at the schools, environment and resources available in the schools, external links and staffing at the schools as other school environment related factors that are critical for the retention of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

**Student Discrimination by Teachers**

Blackmore and Cooksey (1981) postulate that, when pupils are admitted into secondary schools, there are some certain routine procedures that should take place for instance pupils are supposed to be commanded by their teachers. Thus if these routine procedures are not properly executed by teachers to pupils, this may lead to the rise of the dropping out phenomenon. Fatuma and Sifuna (2006) and Obura (1991) posit that, in the African society, there is the general wrong perception that girl child pupils have to be socialized to be housewives whilst boys to be husbands. The aforementioned findings serve as a reminder of the influence of gendered thinking in the provision of resources such education to pupils in schools.
In his studies, Brigeon (2005) noted that girls might find little reason to attend secondary schools if they are tracked to low paid careers considered conventional for women. Therefore, it can be noted from the above views that, gender plays a pivotal role in the retention of girls in secondary schools. Gender is important in the sense that if schools and families as chief socializing agents are not gender responsive, chances for the rise of dropping out problem becomes very high in the education system. In a more similar study carried by Antwi-Danso and Edet (2011), teacher’s unfriendly attitude towards girl child pupils was reported as another factor which contributes to school dropout. Thus, it can be noted that, some attitudes done by teachers to pupils can force them to withdraw from the schools.

Brigeon (2005) reiterates that many third world countries practice gender streaming in secondary schools, directing girls away from Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects while directing boys away from practical subjects such as clothing and textiles and food nutrition. In secondary schools, this kind of streaming pupils makes some female pupils to feel alienated pre disposing them to school dropout. Nyaga (2010) notes that some teaching methods practiced done by teachers in schools tend to give boys more opportunities than girls to ask and answer questions.

A study conducted out by Mwandosya (2001) in Kenya and Tanzania on girls education revealed that over 2000 teachers who participated in the study maintained distinct separate rows for boys in classrooms and asked them more questions compared to girl child pupils. Eshiwani (1985) also obtained similar findings in his study when he notes that, school academic achievement of girls is mostly hindered by gender stereotyped attitudes among teachers and parents about the capacity of girl children.
Eshiwani (1985) denotes that stereotyped roles that make girls easily abused in secondary schools encompass preparing breakfast and lunch for teachers. In light of the above, Abagi (1992) observed that in most Kenyan secondary schools a lot of teaching time of girls is lost when they are sent to teachers’ houses to collect books. The author noted that this has tended to create room for various forms of abuse such as sexual harassment. These roles cause girls to sacrifice their studies ending up performing poorly in the class. This act by teachers is one form of child abuse which causes girls to withdraw from both primary and secondary schools.

In his study on gender mainstreaming implementation in Afghanistan, Solotaroff (2007) found that, shortage of female teachers in schools act as stumbling blocks for girls’ participation and enrolment in secondary schools. The author observed that Afghan people have a belief that girls should not be taught by male teachers in both primary and secondary schools. Therefore, this will force girl child pupils to drop out from schools if there are no female teachers to teach them. Solotaroff (2007) noted that in Pakistan, girls usually drop out early from secondary schools due to lack of female teachers in the schools. It has been noted that in many Pakistan societies, parents stop their girl child’s education before they complete their cycle of schooling solely because female teachers will not be available in the schools. Thus it can be noted from the above findings that, the availability of female teachers who acts as role models to girl child pupils in schools tend to be an effective way of enhancing the retention of female students in secondary schools.

In light of the above, Shahidul and Zehadul Karim (2015) postulate that, many studies globally are now attempting to examine the effects of not having female teachers in secondary schools on the education of girl child learners. Carell et al., (2010) and Hoffman & Philip (2009) were all in agreement that, having female teachers in educational institutions such as schools, colleges and universities have a positive impact on female students’ academic achievement and performance. Therefore it can be noted that, lack of female
teachers in schools tends to be a factor which also causes girls to dropout from secondary schools.

**Sexual harassment**

There have been a number of reported cases globally of teachers harassing female students sexually. A survey carried out by Brigeon (2005) in Kenya indicated that girls were prone to sexual harassment from male counterparts and predation by male teachers. Brigeon (2005) compares this with the survey carried out in Cameroon which revealed that twenty seven percent (27%) of girl child pupils who were interviewed revealed that they had sex with their teachers. Sexual harassment has been noted globally as a factor leading to females dropping out of secondary schools. Fatuma and Sifuna (2006) noted that there was high dropout rate among girls compared to boys (5.1% and 4.5% respectively) in Kenya. The same authors revealed that the high dropout rate among girls were due to pre-marital pregnancies whereby most of the pregnancies involved male teachers. Therefore it can be noted that, sexual harassment which involves male teachers impregnating girl child pupils in secondary schools tend to be another major cause of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

**Distance**

In many African countries including Zimbabwe, long distances in which girl child pupils travels to and from schools tend to cause them to withdraw from secondary schools. Odaga and Heneveld (1995) postulate that long distance in which girl child pupils travel to and from schools can cause them to withdraw from secondary schools. Chetsanga (2002) and Government of Zimbabwe (2005) were in agreement when they noted that in Zimbabwe, the Land Resettlement Programme from the year 2000 onwards caused many people to drift from
one area to another. This has resulted in some pupils failing to access schools within walking distances in the newly resettled farming regions in which their guardians were designated.

There are many problems encountered by girl child pupils in the process of travelling long distances to and from schools. One of the problems relates to the length of time and energy children have to use in the process of covering the long distance. The other problem relates to the sexual safety of the girls in the process of travelling long distances to the schools. Mwanza (2014) pointed out that the problem of travelling long distances to and from school has serious implications on the motivation of girls to stay in secondary schools. The author goes to point out that, in Guinea, studies show that pupils who live nearer to secondary schools are motivated positively. In Mali, it was reported that girl child pupils who stays far away from schools do not go to school regularly hence they become dropouts in the long run. (Mwanza, 2014).

UNICEF (1998) noted that, proximity and access to school are the predetermining factors of enrolment and retention of girl child pupils in the schools. In a similar study, Ainsworth et al., (2005) found that the chances of attending secondary school for girl child pupils decrease with the greater the distance from schools. In this regard Nekatibe (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, 2015) noted school distance as a prime impediment for girls' education in many Sub- Saharan African countries.

Ainsworth et al., (2005) observed that proximity to schools had a positive motivating impact on girls’ retention in the education system. In Bungoma District, Kenya, distance in terms of mileage and time have been considered as critical factors that influenced girls’ dropout in secondary schools, (Wanyama, 2011). Therefore, it can be noted from the aforementioned that, distance tend to be a critical factor which enhances girls to drop out from secondary schools.
**Absenteeism**

Absenteeism is another school related factor that causes girl child dropouts in secondary schools. Bond (2004) defines absenteeism as continual, habitual, and unexplained absence from school. The same author postulate that in secondary schools absenteeism takes three major dimensions which normally give rise to school dropouts and these are truancy, condoned absenteeism, and school refusal. Cunningham (2005) views truancy as the absence of a pupil from school without permission of guardians or parents. Therefore, a truant leaves home under the pretence of going to school but ultimately turns away and he or she occupies himself in out of school activities. School refusal occurs when children refuse to attend schools even when there are influence and disciplinary measures from both guardians and teachers, (Mwanza, 2014). McShane et al., (2001) says that these pupils stay at their homes with the full knowledge of their parents and school teachers. In their study, Dube and Orpinas (2009) noted three reasons for pupils’ refusal to attend school and these reasons are; fear or anxiety-generating environments, helping parents at home and school avoidance.

Alika and Egbochuku (2009) indicates that some female pupils are forced to be absent from schools by parents solely to assist in household chores such as baby sitting of younger children, accompanying parents to hospital or to public gatherings and caring for the sick relatives. In the same vein of thought, Mwanza (2014) observed that the amount of time girls spend on domestic chores and other activities such as marketing reduces the time and energy they have to spend in schools. This tends to influence negatively girls’ academic performance in the class thereby predisposing them to dropping out from secondary schools.

Long & Fofanah (1990) found that in Guinea and Niger, girls are well-known in business activities such as minor buying and selling deals in towns. Thus they spend much of their time away from schools thereby perpetuating absenteeism which culminates into causing dropping out of secondary schools in the long run. Namuddu (1994) argues that, in Uganda
poor performance of girls is caused by too much time they spend performing household chores such as fetching water, cooking and the care of younger siblings. Thus, it can be noted from the above findings that, extra domestic responsibilities which are assigned to girl child pupils enhances absenteeism which will cause girls to withdraw from secondary schools.

2.3 Climate change induced hazards and disasters as causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools

Climate change has been recently noted globally to be another factor which is triggering girl child dropouts in sub-Saharan African region. Kaswan (2013) notes that the impacts of climate change will be terrible for everyone but very terrible for the weak such as girl children, and the disabled. UNDP (2007) denotes that, research in India revealed that girls born during flood times were 19 per cent less likely to have attended secondary schools. In light of above, it can be noted that, climate induced hazards have the potential of increasing rates of girl child drop outs in secondary schools globally. Elimu Yetu Coalition (2005) concludes that, inaccessibility of education due to climate change induced hazards has a detrimental impact on learning outcomes, reducing the chances of girl child pupils to break the vicious cycle of poverty. This actually signifies the fact that, debilitating effects of climate change is impacting negatively the education of pupils in schools especially girls.

Climate change has been defined by the IPCC (2014) as the change in the state of the climate that can be identified by using statistical tests or by changes in the mean or the variability of its properties that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. However, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (2007) Article 1 views climate change as a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activities that changes the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural
climate variability observed over comparable time periods. Therefore it can be noted from the above definitions that, climate change entails the changes observed in the state of weather elements noted and recorded over a long period of time, say for instance after 30 years.

UNESCO (2012) notes that, the majority of recent researches carried out globally on the nexus between education and climate change are now focusing on the impact of climate change induced hazards on the education of pupils particularly the girl child. It has been clearly revealed by Save the Children (2008) and UNICEF UK (2008) that, it is the girl child who will be hardest hit by the effects of climate change related hazards and disasters such as droughts. The impacts are seen in the direct effects on educational provision associated with increasing frequency of harsh weather events such as drought, flooding, cyclones, heat waves, and diseases.

UNICEF (2007) propounds that while natural hazards such as climate change related disasters are devastating for anyone who experiences them; school pupils are the most vulnerable, due to their very young ages and relative inability to take care of themselves. Therefore, children are more likely to suffer during events of climate change induced natural disasters such as drought, cyclones, and diseases among others, (Mangizvo, 2015). In such situations school children are forced to dropout from schools since some of the disasters such as cyclones, droughts and floods may be requiring them to leave their homes.

In his research study on the relationship between climate change and children in Zimbabwe, Manjengwa et al., (2014), revealed that, in the year 2013-2014 in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe drought impacted negatively the education of pupils in secondary schools. Thus it can be noted that, climate change related hazards and disasters such as droughts and cyclones are now considered by many researchers, policy makers and educationists globally as emerging factors which are causing girl child school drop outs.
Amanchukwu et al., (2015) contends that large numbers of children in the River State of Nigeria always fail to attend their secondary schooling during heavy rains. The same author noted that, these heavy rains induce floods which often force school children to migrate with their families to safe areas. Ultimately this form of migration affects pupils’ education negatively since a number of them are forced to withdraw from schools. The Zimbabwe Independent (2014) notes that, approximately 3 000 families were affected by the Tokwe-Mukorsi Dam flood basin. The affected families were moved to a new and safe place called Chingwizire transit camp in Nuanetsi Ranch in Masvingo. Again, thousands of schoolchildren who moved to this new area had their secondary education affected negatively since most of them became school dropouts.

Bangay and Blum (2010) posits that, on extended periods of time, incremental environmental changes induced by climate change such as drought, desertification, species loss among others are likely to result in deteriorating livelihoods, which impact upon both household expenditure on schooling and the nutritional status of children. The above mentioned assertion signifies the fact that, climate change induced hazards and disasters often impact negatively the livelihoods of people, reducing their disposable incomes such that parents are left without money to pay the fees for their children.

Whilst addressing a rally on the 13th of May 2016 at Chamisa Business Centre in Gutu District of Masvingo Province, the President of Zimbabwe, His Excellence Comrade R.G Mugabe reiterated the fact that, due to El Nino induced drought which has hit the country, school authorities must not sent back home pupils who have not paid school fees, (personal communication, May 13, 2016). The sentiments echoed by the President clearly indicates the fact that, climate change induced hazards such as drought erodes households’ disposable incomes, leaving them without money to pay for their children’s school fees. Ultimately in
such circumstances school dropouts are necessitated and in most cases it will be the girl child’s education which is affected negatively first.

2.4 Effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools

It has been widely acknowledged worldwide by many researchers that, girl child school dropouts pose negative effects on the girls themselves and the society at large. Girl child drop out of secondary schools is not only an educational predicament or quandary but has significant social and psychological problems as well ,(Mawere , 2012). The negative effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools are many; however the impacts vary depending on who is directly or indirectly affected by the phenomenon. The problem of girl child dropouts affects directly the girl child herself, teachers, parents/guardians, society, environment and the nation at large. Okwori (2014) envisages that, the effects of girl child dropping from secondary schools encompasses the following; prostitution, early marriages, spreading of diseases, increase in crime rate among others.

2.4.1 Social problems such as prostitution, high crime rates, early marriages and spreading of diseases such as HIV/AIDS

Okwori (2014) noted prostitution as one of the effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools. When girls drop out of secondary schools, they end up having nothing to do economically and this forces them to indulge into prostitution as a means of earning a living. It has been widely observed in many African countries that large numbers of girl child school dropouts end up being prostitutes in the societies they will be living. In his studies on school dropout patterns among senior secondary schools in the Delta State of Nigeria, Ajaja (2011) found that, the high rate of prostitution within and outside Nigeria is associated to school
dropout because of high numbers of girl child pupils involved. The author further revealed that a sizeable percentage of girl child pupils who dropped out of secondary schools indulge into prostitution not for the sake of sexual satisfaction but because of financial problems since they cannot get jobs. From the foregoing it can be noted that, girl child school dropouts are a serious social liability since they do not contribute meaningfully to nation building.
Early marriage is another negative consequence of girl child dropouts from secondary schools. Girl child dropouts from secondary schools give a window of opportunities for parents especially those living in rural areas to give out their daughters for marriage at an early age. Research study carried out by Mbani (as cited in Wanjiru, 2007) in Mombasa revealed that once girls get pregnant they will drop out of schools. These girls due to desperation end up indulging into early marriages. It has been widely noted in many African societies that, parents do not value girl child’s education, (Mwanza, 2014). This suggests that, when female students withdraw from secondary schools prematurely, the society or parents expect them to indulge in early marriages.

Girl child school dropouts from secondary schools also enhance the spreading of diseases. Piromruen and Keoyote (2001) postulate that in developing countries, school dropouts easily become victims of the HIV/AIDS pandemic since they can be easily exploited in their search for basic wants and needs for survival. In sub Saharan Africa, large numbers of girl child dropouts from secondary schools indulge into prostitution as a way of earning a living. In Zimbabwe, prostitution is among the top as far as the spreading diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are concerned. In light of the above, Wanyoike (2003) pointed out that, unguided peer group pressure which results when girls drop out from secondary schools can lead to devastating results like HIV/AIDS and early pregnancies.

Mawere (2012) propounds that, many girl child dropouts end up indulging into anti-social and criminal activities that stimulate dissonance and socio-economic instability. Some of the criminal activities which girl child dropouts engages into includes robbery, pick pocketing, and drug trafficking. It has been widely witnessed globally that many secondary girl child school dropouts end up taking drugs as a result of frustration and desperation. Thus, they
become a financial burden to their parents or guardians since they end up stealing money from them so as to buy drugs.

In his studies on school dropouts’ patterns among senior secondary schools, Ajaja (2011) observed that in the Delta State of Nigeria cases of theft, murder and kidnapping are rampant and they are associated with youth and most of them are secondary school dropouts. Ajaja (2011) goes on to note that, Nigeria is today most insecure country in the world because of scandalous youths activities and over eighty five (85%) of these activities are perpetuated by youths who dropped out of secondary schools. In this regard, The National Centre for Education Statistics (1998) established that school dropouts make up a disproportionate percentage of prisons and death toll imamates in Nigeria. Therefore it can be noted from the aforementioned research findings that, girl child dropping from secondary schools tend to be a phenomenon which causes very big social problems in pupils’ lives and the country at large.

2.4.2 Increases Illiteracy levels within the country

One of the greatest negative impacts of girl child dropouts from secondary schools is that, it increases illiteracy levels of the country. Alika and Egbochuku (2009) envisage that, education enables girl child pupils to make their own personal decisions as well as capacitating them to influence their families positively. The authors further reiterated that, education improves and saves the lives of girls as well as allowing them greater control of their personal day to day lives. In this respect, education or literacy of girls is seen as something which provides them with skills so that they contribute meaningfully to their societies and the nation at large. Therefore, this implies that, by dropping out of secondary schools, girls will be severely limiting their chances of contributing meaningfully to the socio economic development of the country.
Zimbabwe is one of the countries in the world with very high literacy levels. However it has been disturbing to note that girl child dropout rates remain high especially in rural day secondary schools of the country. Mawere (2012) opined that, high girl child dropout rates poses grave challenges to the general development of the country since this degrades the quality of education and literacy levels of the citizens.

2.4.3 Wastage of resources in the education system of a country

Mawere (2012) highlight that, since Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, the cost of providing educational services has been very high. This represents a major investment and educational expenditure, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education must account for. Chanakira (1986) clearly stated that, it is critical for any government in the world to remove all forms of resource wastage whether financial, material or human from its system. Chivore (1986) describes educational wastage as the number of years spent by pupils in the education system before they dropout. The time and financial resources spent on girl child dropouts especially at secondary level school education represents a huge loss and wastage of government expenditure.

In this regard, Hussen and Postlewhite (as cited in Mawere 2012) clearly pointed out that, financial resources invested and lost by someone who does not complete schooling, cannot be recovered easily. The author further stresses that, this represents a great loss of government resources. Thus, girl child dropouts from secondary schools tend to be a problem which wastes government resources especially financial resources and measures to curb it must be put into place with immediate effect.

2.4.4 Unemployment problems and underdevelopment of the country

Ananga (2011) envisages that the education of girls is beneficial since it contributes to economic productivity, social development, intergenerational education, social equity, and sustainability of national developmental efforts. This assertion signifies the fact that, girl
child dropouts in secondary schools is a phenomenon which seriously undermines the general economic development of a country. In his research study, Mawere (2012) reveals that, employees today are recruited by employers on the basis of their qualifications. Therefore, individuals with better qualifications have higher chances or opportunities of securing better jobs as well as better remunerations. Implied above is the fact that, those who will not be educated including girl child school dropouts risks themselves of not getting jobs. 

Ajaja (2012) notes that the decision to secondary school dropping is a dangerous one for the girl child pupil, especially in this era of technologically controlled economy in which employees are required to have vast skills to compete in the modern world of work. This assertion clearly indicates that, girl child school dropping tend to be phenomenon which also perpetuates problems in industries. In light of the above, World Bank (as cited in Amadi et al., 2013: 124) contends that, “girl child’s education is not only important as a social indicator or an engine for economic development leading to a greater level of health, economy, security, liberty and participation in social and political activity, but can possibly yield higher rate of return than any other investment available in developing world”. This assertion indicates that, by dropping out of secondary schools, the girl child will be seriously undermining the chances of a country to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment.

Chigwedere (1996) has it that in Zimbabwe, girl child school dropout rates are rather high in secondary schools. The author goes on to highlight that this causes a large number of young people to fail to acquire relevant Technical Vocational Entry (TVE) system entry qualifications, seriously compromising the country’s achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs). This suggests that, by dropping out from secondary schools girls will be threatening the achievement of certain set national and global targets. This becomes very unhealthy for a country like Zimbabwe, which is trying to revive its economy through such
policies as the Zimbabwe Agenda for Socio-Economic Structural Transformation (ZIMASSET).

UNICEF (2004) notes that, girls’ education leads to a more equitable distribution of resources such as health services as well as effectively participating in governance issues. This indicates that, girl child dropping from secondary schools hinders the general social and political development of a country. Mawere (2012) envisages that, by dropping out of secondary schools, girls create a vicious cycle of poverty. This is because these girl child school dropouts remain poor and uneducated and they will also have their families in future and these again will be poor and uneducated as well. In such a situation the general development of the nation’s economy will have been seriously compromised and threatened.

2.4.5 Environmental deterioration

It has been widely acknowledged by environmentalists that, environmental education plays a critical role in the conservation of natural environments. It is through schooling were pupils acquires knowledge pertaining environmental issues. Therefore, by dropping out of secondary schools, girls will be missing critical knowledge on how they are to use their resources wisely and sustainably. Merchant (1995) noted that women plays a critical role in conserving and appreciating how natural environments functions. The author goes on to highlight that women are invited to show the way on how to reach an ecological revolution so as to save our mother earth. Shiva (1998) postulates that, this can only be done if women and girls are allowed to construct environmental knowledge through going to school. From the foregoing it can be realized that, girl child school dropouts tend to be a phenomenon which causes other secondary problems such as environmental degradation.

2.5 Theoretical framework

The theoretical frame work used in this study was based on two theories namely; liberal feminism and radical feminism. The liberal feminism has been defined by Giddens (2002) as
a feminist theory which holds a belief that gender inequality is perpetuated by reduced access for women and girls to civil rights and provision, distribution of social services such as education and job opportunities. However, Brookes (2008) views the liberal feminist theory as a special individualistic form which specialises on women and girls attaining their equality through being responsible for their choices and actions.

From the above mentioned definitions it can be realised that, the liberal feminism is a theory that acknowledges the existence of differences in societies that are gender based, however the onus is given to the individuals who are affected so that they can improve their unique situations. The major tenets of liberal feminism theory are human rights, democracy and natural justice. The theory strongly supports the idea of having equal opportunities in access to education and jobs regardless of gender (Giddens, 2002). The liberals hold a belief that, the discrimination of women is based on socialisation, sexism and prejudice. More so the proponents of the theory strongly support affirmative action as a strategy for girls in educational institutions, family set ups and the world of work.

Samkange (2015) defined radical feminism as a theory which focuses on patriarchy. Walby (as cited in Smelser, 1994) views patriarchy as a system of socially constructed structures and practices which perpetuates men dominance, oppression and the exploitation of women. On a similar note, Bazili (1991) defines patriarchy as a belief of male dominance that emanates from social construction of gender which in turn justifies the socio-economic and political differences between men and women. From the two definitions it can be noted that, patriarchy entails a form of male supremacy exercised by societies over women and such dominance tend to be viewed or accepted as normal by societies. The philosophy underlining the theory is of challenging male supremacy, the need to dispute the status quo so as to radically rearrange society and reorder families and other important institutions. The theory of radical feminism focuses on the complete removal of foundations which anchors
patriarchal structures. Radical feminists vehemently challenge the oppressive structures set by men to women based on gender differences.

Therefore, in this context, the liberal feminism purports that both boys and girls should be awarded same or equal opportunities in the education system. These same opportunities must apply at both home and school environments. Also girl child pupils should not be discriminated in whatever form in school environments or at home. Girl child pupils must not be forced into early marriages as well as to perform household chores such as cooking, caring for siblings, fetching water among others. More so girl child pupils must be given the opportunity to choose freely the subjects they need in secondary schools depending on their capability (Wrigley, 1995). This will go a long way in reducing the number of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

In this study, the radical feminism theory has been noted to be similar to liberal feminism. This is due to the fact that, from the literature review there have been various cited incidences of oppressive actions perpetuated by men against females. These incidences and actions encompass deprivation of financial and material support, early or forced marriages through cultures such as chimutsamapfiwa and kuzvarira. Some other oppressive actions which were also cited in the reviewed literature are sexual harassment, teen pregnancies, and parents/guardians preferring to educate boys than girls. All these incidences were noted to be the ones responsible for causing girl child pupils to withdraw from secondary schools.

Thus, girls must reject gender roles and gender differences in secondary schools by taking desirable characteristics since they are socially constructed. Lastly in educational institutions such as secondary schools, women must struggle on their own for their own liberation or freedom against their male oppressors. In fact a war should be waged against men in these institutions since this assist in enhancing accessibility of equal educational opportunities for
both girls and boys, thereby counteracting the problem of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

Therefore, it was imperative to adopt both the liberal feminism and radical feminism theories in the study since all the theories advocates for equal and fair treatment of girl child and boy child pupils in secondary schools. Girl child pupils should not withdraw from secondary schools due to teen pregnancy leaving male child pupils free and unpunished. Furthermore in times of financial shortages or any other problem, the education of the girl child pupils should not be sacrificed in favour of the boy child pupils. Both boys and girls should be awarded same opportunities in participation and access to educational services. Hence the need to make use of the theories since the study sought to examine the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Buhera Central secondary schools.

Therefore it can be noted from the above presented reviewed literature and reviewed studies, that the causes and effects of girl child drop outs from secondary schools seems to be an understudied subject in most countries especially those in the sub Saharan Africa region including in Zimbabwe. Hence there is a need for current studies to fill this academic gap. This study therefore seeks to examine the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Buhera central secondary schools.

2.6 Summary

The chapter managed to present reviewed literature pertaining to issues of personal, socio economic, socio cultural, school based and climate change related factors that causes girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The chapter also discussed some of the effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. Lastly, a theoretical framework guiding the study was presented in the chapter. The next chapter, chapter three focused on the research methodology of this study.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlined the research methodology which was used to answer the research questions of the study. It explained why the qualitative case study design was used to establish the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The chapter also included information on population and sample, sampling procedures and research instruments used in the study. The chapter further presented sub sections on data collection procedures, the data analysis plan and the summary.

3.1 Research design

Martyn as cited in Mpofu (2012) defines a research design as the structure of research and the “glue” that holds all of the elements in a research project together. On the other hand Walker (2006) views a research design as an analytical plan for data collection, enhancing clear data analysis which answers the research questions. Thus research design is the way in which the researcher plans and structures the process of data collection. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the qualitative research approach. Marshall and Rossman (2006) views qualitative research as a broad approach employed in the studying of social phenomena. The authors go on to state that, its various genres are naturalistic, interpretative, ethnographic and increasingly decisive or critical and they draw on several methods of inquiry.

Similarly, Creswell (2003) defines qualitative research as an enquiry process of grasping a social or human problem, based on constructing a complex, holistic picture shaped with words, reporting detailed views of respondents, and carrying out the study in a natural setting or environment. Therefore it can be noted from the aforementioned definitions that,
qualitative researchers study people in their natural settings, to identify how their experiences and behaviours are shaped by the contexts of their lives such as the social, economic, cultural and physical contexts. Qualitative studies aspire to gather an in-depth understanding of people’s behaviour and the reasons that manage such behaviour. More so, qualitative methods produce information only on the particular cases being studied.

The qualitative approach was employed so as to obtain an insight into the perceptions and feelings of school heads, senior lady teachers, class teachers, girl child school dropouts and girl child learners on to the causes and effects of girl child secondary school dropouts. The quantitative approach was also used to a limited extent to determine the prevalence and frequency of opinions and perceptions of the sampled participants of the study. Burns and Grove (2005) denote that, quantitative research approach entails a formal, objective, systematic process which involves the usage of numerical data so as to obtain information about the world. Thus, it is a paradigm which is used to determine the cause and effect interactions between different variables.

Within the qualitative approach or paradigm, the study adopted the qualitative case study design. Punch (2000) notes that, a case study is a broad area of inquiry that investigate a precise area of study so as to gain access to the real life situation where the problem is apparently visible. On the other hand Kothari (1990) views case study as an intensive study of a particular unit under deliberation or consideration and the objective will be to locate the variables that account for the patterns of behaviour of a given unit as an incorporated totality. Therefore, a case study is a thorough in-depth study of a precise individual, group or institution in a specific framework. The qualitative case study design was employed because the researcher wanted to have a clear understanding of the causes and effects of girl child dropout in secondary schools. The qualitative case study design helped the researcher to create or build a detailed description pertaining to the causes and effects of girl child dropouts
from secondary schools. Also the design assisted the researcher to explore in detail some of the causes and effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools.

More so, the qualitative case study design was selected so as to get a representative sample of girls who drop out from school in Buhera Central District Secondary Schools. The design has also been considered since it has the advantage of minimizing prohibitive factors such as transport costs and time management, (Magwa and Ngara, 2015). The design focused mainly on the exposure of salient aspects of the causes and effects of girl dropout from secondary schools. This entails the use of simple words or expressions to explain some of the causes as well as the effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools.

However qualitative case study designs have got their own limitations. Anderson (1993) note that, one of the major weaknesses of the qualitative case study design is that, it lacks internal reliability since another researcher may come out with completely different conclusion and the research findings cannot be generalised. However, this shortcoming was countered through triangulation by the use of questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. This was meant to ensure that the information obtained was authentic. The researcher used the interview and the questionnaire to validate the findings of the study.

3.2 Research instruments

These are techniques employed to collect the necessary information from the chosen sources by the researcher. In this study, data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and document analysis.
3.2.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire has been described by Chiromo (2006) as a form of inquiry, which contains a systematically complied and organized series of items that are sent to the population sample. This research used a combination of both closed ended and open ended items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire sought to solicit information linked to research objectives and questions, that is, causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools, effects of girl child dropouts, and recommendations which can be put into place so as to enhance the retention of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

There were three sets of self designed questionnaires: the senior lady teacher’s questionnaire, form three and four class teacher’s questionnaires and form three and four students’ questionnaires. The questionnaires for the senior lady teacher had two sections. Section A sought general background information. Section B consisted of eight closed and open ended questions which sought information related to causes of girls to drop from secondary school, effects and possible solutions. Questionnaires for form three and four class teachers had two sections. Section A sought background information. Section B consisted of six closed and open ended questions seeking information related to causes of girl child students to drop from secondary school, effects and the possible solutions. Questionnaires for form three and four students consisted of two sections: Section A sought background information. Section B consisted of five closed and open ended questions related to causes of girls to drop from secondary schools and possible solutions to improve the retention and smooth transition of girl child pupils in secondary schools.

The questionnaires presented information to the respondents in written form and required the respondents to tick or fill in blank spaces provided. Closed ended items were used to minimize irrelevant responses and to obtain standardized responses. An advantage of closed
ended items is that they require less time to respond and are easy to respond. Open ended items enable the researcher to obtain or garner information that reflects the opinions or thinking of respondents on to the possible causes and effects of girl dropouts from secondary schools.

3.2.2 Interviews

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) view an interview as an oral presentation of a set of questions that are prepared in advance. Cohen et al., (2007) argues that an interview is the most effective way of collecting data in a survey to enlist cooperation of respondents. Since the study was conducted using the qualitative case study design, unstructured face to face interviews were employed. By saying unstructured interviews it entails orally presenting a series of questions to an informant and then recording the responses in a notebook for consequent transcription as well as analysis. The researcher used interview guides which were a set of questions in interviewing the respondents. Interview guides made it possible to garner the required data to achieve specific objectives of the study. Questions on the guides were open ended depending on the objectives of the study so as to get information from the participants.

In constructing questions on the interview guide, I was being directed and guided by the works of Hofstee (2006). Hofstee (2006) notes that, the background type questions are critical when conducting interviews. The author further pointed out that, it is very important to keep the interviewee connected to the topic under discussion; however it will not produce any benefits to be too inflexible. Unstructured interviews have an advantage of that; the interviewee may provide more information which you might not have asked for. (Mawere, 2012). The major objective of conducting interviews was to substantiate and complement data collected from the document analysis exercise. The interview guides were in one section
only. The Interview guides assisted the researcher to obtain adequate information on the causes and effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools. The interviews were for the school heads and girl child school dropouts. Also the researcher had the opportunity to clarify questions that the respondents were not familiar with.

3.2.3 Document analysis

Maree (2007) notes that, document analysis means focussing on all types of written information or communication that may assist to shed more light on the phenomenon that one is studying. It is a non reactive and unobtrusive method of data gathering technique that yield a lot of information pertaining the values of respondents in their natural settings (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The analysis of documents augments questionnaires and interviews in the data collection process. Also it assists in answering questions that questionnaires and interviews may have failed to address. In this study, the researcher visited the schools to undertake a close document analysis of admission registers and classroom attendance registers so as to check the sex enrolment ratios and frequency of attendance of girls to school. The researcher thoroughly analysed the admission registers for 2014 and attendance class registers up to 2016. Through undertaking this process the researcher managed to obtain information pertaining to the number of girl child dropouts.

3.3 Population and sample

A population denotes all those who fall into the category of concern, or objects or events that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the researcher, (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). On the other hand, Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define a target population as that population in which the researcher needs to generalize the results. A sample has been defined by Chiromo (2006) as a subset obtained from the accessible population.
The population for this study consisted of 9 secondary schools drawn from Buhera Central circuit of Buhera district. In this case, the target population comprised of 9 secondary school heads, 9 senior lady teachers, 38 form three and four class teachers, 829 form three and form four girl child students, constituting a total of 885 as target population from which a sample was drawn.

3.4 Sampling procedure and sample size
Singleton (1993) defines sampling as that part of research which shows how objects are to be selected for an investigation or an observation. Therefore sampling simply entails a process or activity of selecting a number of participants for a study in such a way that the participants selected represent the large entire group from which they were selected. Sample size refers to the number of items to be chosen from the whole entire population to make a sample, (Mwanza, 2014).

The respondents for the study were selected using purposive sampling technique. Walker (1985) notes that sample design in qualitative research studies are usually purposive. This means that instead of taking a random entire cross-section of the population to be investigated, small numbers of participants with unique or specific behaviours, characteristics and experiences are chosen. In this regard, Miles and Huberman (1994) posit that qualitative researchers normally operate with small samples of respondents that are studied in depth and nested in their social context.

Purposive sampling was used to select the 3 participating schools from a target population of 9 secondary schools. This technique was used because schools in the circuit were not of the same status though they are in the same district. The 3 secondary schools which were picked into the sample were categorized into two groups that is mixed day secondary school and
mixed satellite day secondary schools. The study used sampling so as to reduce the costs and labour of doing the research.

The researcher also used purposive sampling to select the 30 form three and four girl child pupils, 5 girl child secondary school dropouts, 3 heads of schools, 3 senior lady teachers and 10 class teachers giving a total of 51 respondents who participated in the study. Cresswell (2008) posits that, purposive sampling seeks individuals and sites that can best supply relevant information needed to answer research questions raised. Cohen and Manion, (1994) note that purposive sampling is done when the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their typicality. This technique allowed the researcher to select cases that were likely to be information rich in respect of the study. Purposive sampling is the best sampling method where the researcher does not intend to generalize findings beyond the sample. (Bennet, 1994).

3.5 Validity and reliability

Validity refers to the degree to which a measuring instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, (Chiromo, 2006). Reliability has been defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1998) as a fit between what researchers have to record as data and what actually takes place in the natural setting that will be being researched for instance the extent or degree of accuracy and totality of coverage of the research study. To ensure and enhance validity and reliability in this research, the researcher conducted a process known as member checking. Member checking has been defined by (Doyle, 2007; Merriam, 1998) as a process of giving an opportunity for respondents to approve or check specific aspects of the explanation of the data they have provided.
Similarly, Curtin and Fossey (2007) views member checking as a general way of checking out whether data analysis is in consistence with the respondents’ experiences. Thus it can be noted that, by doing member checking the validity and reliability procedures shifts from the researcher to the respondents in the research study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted member checking as a fundamental technique for establishing validity in any given research study. The process of member checking can be done individually or can take place with more than one person per specific time, such as focus group discussions with the researcher. (Doyle, 2007). Creswell (2009) noted that member checking is best conducted with refined interpreted pieces of data such as patterns and themes emerging from the data rather than the actual transcripts.

After the researcher collected data for this study, he revisited his individual respondents and gave them transcripts from the narratives they have contributed during questionnaire and interview sessions and he asked them to check and verify their accuracy. The respondents were kindly asked to edit, clarify, and elaborate some of their own words from the narratives which they considered not valid or incorrect. Throughout this process, the researcher asked his respondents if the categories or themes make sense, whether they are developed with satisfactory evidence, and whether the overall account is realistic and correct. In turn, the researcher included the respondents’ clarifications and comments into the final narrative. In this way, the researcher managed to ensure credibility as well as validity of the study.

3.6 Data collection procedures

Tuckman (1994) describes data collection as the procedures that are followed in gaining data from a sample. In this study, the researcher used an introductory letter from the Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) to seek for permission from the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education of Zimbabwe to conduct the study in Manicaland
province. The letter of permission from the Secretary for Primary and Secondary education was used to get permission from the Provincial Education Inspector (PEI) of Manicaland province to conduct the study in Buhera district. Finally the letter from the Provincial Education Inspector was used to get permission from the District Education Inspector (DEI) of Buhera district to carry out the study in selected secondary schools.

The researcher made appointments with three heads of schools and five girl child dropouts in the sample for school heads interviews. The interviews were conducted after the researcher had fully explained the purpose of the study and sought informed consent from the interviewees. The researcher wrote the responses in a notebook. The researcher personally administered the students, senior lady and class teachers’ questionnaires. The researcher also personally collected the completed questionnaires so as to ensure a one hundred percent response rate.

3.7 Data analysis

Data collected in the study will be analyzed using qualitative methods. Kumar (2005) posits that, the analysis of data involves a number of closely related operations such as the establishment of categories, the application of the categories of raw data through coding, tabulation and drawing statistical inferences. Data for this study will be analyzed according to research questions. Thus data obtained concerning the causes and effects of girl child dropouts will be coded and themes will be established. The data will be analyzed using the manual sort and count method, grouping, classifying and categorizing.

3.8 Summary

The qualitative case study design was employed in this study and it helped the researcher to use self designed questionnaires, unstructured face to face interviews and document analysis.
Questionnaires consisting of open-ended and close-ended questions and face to face unstructured interview guides were used. A sample of three schools was purposively chosen from a population of nine secondary schools in Buhera Central circuit. Sampling procedures adopted and data analysis technique employed by the researcher were also discussed. The study will proceed to the presentation of data, analysis and discussion of the results.
CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter focused on the presentation, analysis and discussions of the results of the study into the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The data were presented according to the research questions. The data were analyzed using the manual sort and count method, grouping, classifying and categorizing.

4.1 Demographic details

Table 4.1 showing student participants by sex No (30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows that (30) thirty girl child students participated in this study. There were no male students who participated in this research study since the researcher aimed to study the views of female students into the causes and effects of girls dropping from secondary schools.
Figure 4.1 showing students’ religions

Figure 4.1 shows that 95% of the student participants were Christians, whilst 3% were from the African Traditional religion and 2% were Muslims. From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents were Christians.

Table 4.2 showing girl child secondary school dropouts participants by sex No (5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 shows that there were 5 girl child school dropouts who participated in this study. There were no male child school dropout students who participated in this research study since the researcher aimed to study the views of female child school dropout students into the causes and effects of girls dropping from secondary school.
Figure 4.2 showing girl child secondary school dropouts’ religions

Figure 4.2 above shows that 3 (60%) of the girl child school dropouts participants were Christians while 2 (40%) of the girl child school dropouts were followers of the African traditional religion.
Figure 4.3 indicating class teacher respondents by sex No (10)

Figure 4.3 show that there were 4 (40%) male class teachers and 6 (60%) female class teachers who participated in this study.

Table 4.3 Indicating class teacher respondents’ professional qualifications and teaching experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Highest professional qualification.</td>
<td>A’ Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching experience.</td>
<td>0 – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows that all the 10 (100%) respondents possess advanced level qualification and all of them hold diplomas in education as their professional qualification. Also it has been revealed that, only 1(10%) respondent has a teaching experience that ranges between 0-5 years and the rest have teaching experience which ranges between 6-10 years. The study
revealed that the majority of the class teachers had a teaching experience of between 6-10 years. This experience is very important since it enables them to grasp better the problems facing girl child students in class. More so their experience makes them better placed to give proper guidance and counselling to enhance retention of girl child pupils in schools.

Table 4.4 showing senior lady respondents No (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 shows that 3 senior lady teachers participated in this study.

Table 4. 5 indicating senior lady teacher respondents’ professional qualifications and teaching experiences

n=3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A’ Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Highest professional qualification.</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 5 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 years</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 and above</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that 100% of the respondents possess an advanced level qualification and all of them hold diplomas in education as their professional qualification. Also 100% of the respondents further revealed that they have teaching experience that ranges between 6-10 years. The study revealed that majority of the senior lady teachers had a teaching experience that is between 6 -10 years. This experience is very important since it enables them to grasp
better the problems facing girl child pupils in secondary schools. More so their experience makes them better placed to give proper guidance and counselling to enhance retention of girl child pupils in secondary schools.

![Pie Chart](image)

**Figure 4.4 Illustrating school heads interviewees by sex No (3)**

Figure 4.4 shows that 2 (67%) female school heads and 1 (33%) male school head were interviewed in this study.

**Table 4.6 indicating school heads interviewees’ leadership experiences**

\[
\text{n}=3
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th>0 – 5 years</th>
<th>6 – 10 years</th>
<th>16 and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td>n 0</td>
<td>n 2</td>
<td>n 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 shows that 66% of the interviewees revealed that they have teaching experience that ranges between 6-10 years whilst 33% of the interviewees have teaching experience
which is in the range of 16 and above years. Therefore the majority of school heads have teaching experience which is in between 6-10 years. This means that they have more experience in managing schools which makes them better understand the challenges facing girls in secondary schools. The school heads can also devise customized programmes and strategies to help to minimise rate of girl child dropouts in secondary schools.

![Pie chart illustrating schools which participated in this study by category No (3)](image)

**Figure 4.5 Illustrating schools which participated in this study by category No (3)**

Figure 4.5 shows that 1(33%) mixed secondary day school and 2 (67%) mixed satellite day secondary schools participated in this study.
Figure 4.6 showing the number of girl child dropouts in the three participating secondary schools between the periods of 2014-2015

Figure 4.6 shows the number of girls who have dropped out from the education system in the three participating secondary schools. In school A in 2014 there were 13 cases of girl child dropouts recorded whilst in 2015 there were 17 cases of girl child dropouts recorded. In school B in 2014 there were 15 cases of girl child dropouts recorded whilst in 2015 there were 12 cases of girl child dropouts recorded. In school C there were 16 cases of girl child dropouts recorded in 2014 whilst in 2015 there were 14 cases of girl child dropouts recorded. From these findings, it can be clearly noted that the problem girl child dropouts tend to be a serious issue in Buhera Central secondary schools; hence there is need for urgent intervention to curb this problem.
Figure 4.7 showing the number of girl child dropouts by school in year 2016 No (38)

Figure 4.7 shows the number of girls who dropped out from the three participating secondary schools in the year 2016. In school A, there were a total of 10 girls who dropped out of school, whilst in school B; there were a total of 15 girls who dropped out of school. In school C there were a total of 13 girls who dropped out from school. These figures help to illustrate that the phenomenon of girl child dropouts is real and is occurring in rural secondary schools.
4.2 Causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools

4.2.1 Personal factors leading to girl child dropouts in secondary schools

Summary of results from students, class teachers and senior lady teachers’ questionnaire

Table 4.7 Illustrating personal factors which cause girl child dropouts in secondary schools as demonstrated by the students, class teachers and senior lady teachers No (46).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal factors</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive health problems</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Pressure/ drug or substance abuse</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination at home/parental neglect</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 shows that an overwhelmingly majority 100% of the respondents stated pregnancy as a leading factor that causes girls to drop out from secondary schools. This revelation is in accordance with Wanjiru (2006)’s findings who also revealed that in most sub Saharan African countries girls usually drop out of secondary schools due to teen pregnancy. Similarly Boyle et al (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, 2015) also revealed the same findings when they noted that several studies carried out worldwide have found teenage pregnancy as a significant cause of school dropout among girls. An overwhelmingly majority 87% of the respondents also indicated reproductive health problems as another cause of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. However 13% of the respondents refuted this view. This revelation agrees with Magwa (2006)’s findings who noted that many girl child pupils may
miss secondary schooling as they try to fight challenges emanating from shortage of protective clothing and sanitary pads and towels. As a result of abject poverty experienced in most rural communities of the country most girl child pupils often lack sufficient proper sanitation facilities. This often triggers a variety of reproductive complications for instance some adolescent girls may have menstruation complications and in such a scenario they may miss out school for a long period of time.

With regards to how peer pressure relates to the dropping out problem, an overwhelmingly majority 93% of the respondents believe that it is strongly associated with girl child secondary school dropping. Only 7% of the respondents did not rate this view as a valid one. This finding is in line with Wanyoike (2003) and Wrigley (1995)’s findings who also revealed that, pupils peer groups which develops in secondary schools if not well monitored can lead to devastating effects such as engaging in drugs/ substance abuse, and early sex. This leads to the contraction of dangerous diseases such as HIV/ AIDS and early pregnancies eventually leading to girl child students to drop out of secondary schools.

Also an overwhelmingly majority 98% of respondents indicated discrimination at home parental neglect as a cause girl child dropouts in secondary schools. Only 2% of the respondent did not agree on this position. This study shows similar results of those reported by Mgwangqa and Lawrence (2008) that, secondary school attrition among girl child pupils has been seen as a consequence associated with traumatic / discriminatory social and educational experiences. The authors further revealed that, girl child school children reported discrimination at home, sexual harassment, parental neglect, teacher’s abuse and HIV/ AIDS related conditions as factors contributing to the phenomenon of girl child dropping out from secondary schools.

Relatedly, responses from school heads interviewees on personal factors that cause girls to drop out from secondary schools, revealed that an overwhelmingly majority 80% of them
were in agreement that personally related factors such as pregnancy, illness and discrimination at home are some of the major causes of girl child drop outs in schools. Also the majority of interviewees were in agreement that other factors such as student’s discipline or character, girls not interested in schooling, drugs and substance abuse, peer group influence also triggers girl child dropouts in secondary schools. These revelations concurs with findings made by Chirtes (2010) who also revealed that there are a plethora of personally related factors that triggers the problem of girl child dropouts in schools. some of them being sickness, caring for sick relatives and parental neglect among others. Similarly responses from girl child school dropouts’ interviewees revealed that the majority 100% of the interviewees were in agreement that there are personal factors that influence girl child pupils to take the decision to drop out from secondary schools. Some of the personal factors which they revealed includes sickness, imitating others / peer pressure and drug abuse. Three (60%) of the girl child dropouts interviewees aptly indicated that they have dropped out from school whilst they were in form 3 due to pregnancy. These findings are in accordance with Moswela (2006) who also revealed that the dropout rate of girl child pupils is higher than the dropout rate of the boy child and one of the major causes for girls to drop out from secondary schools is teen pregnancy.
4.2.2 Socio economic challenges that pushes girl child pupils out of secondary schools

Summary of results from students, class teachers and senior lady teachers’ questionnaire

Table 4.8 Demonstrating socio economic challenges which causes girl child dropouts in secondary schools as revealed by students, class teachers and senior lady teacher respondents No (46)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio economic factors</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of school fees</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of uniforms</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of learning materials</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8 shows that the majority 65% of the respondents indicated lack of school fees as one of the socioeconomic factors that cause girls to withdraw from secondary schools. However 35% of the respondents indicated that lack of school fees would not cause girls to drop out from secondary schools. Conversely, this finding is at variance with Eshiwani’s (1985) that revealed that poor parents invested their limited financial resources in the education of their girl children. A possible explanation for the significant differences lies on the pessimism of educating girl child pupils on the part of parents. That is to say some parents or guardians in poor rural communities actually understand the benefits that come through educating their girl children whilst some other parents or guardians tend to be sceptical about the benefits of educating their girl children. Therefore, those poor parents who understand the value of educating their daughters will struggle to send them to secondary schools and those parents who do not value the education of their daughters will take advantage of being poor and they
force their girl children to withdraw from secondary schools. However lack of school fees tend to be a socio economic factor that the government, education partners, and other stakeholders need to address urgently so as to enhance the retention of girl child pupils in secondary schools.

Relatively the majority 67% of the respondents indicated lack of uniforms as another socio economic variable that causes girls to drop out from secondary schools whilst 33% of the respondents revealed that lack of school uniforms will not cause girls to withdraw from secondary schools. This finding agrees with Kadzimira and Rose (2003) who also revealed that, shortage of money to buy school materials such as uniforms for the girl child tend to lower their enrolment in secondary schools. An overwhelmingly majority of 89% of the respondents noted poverty as one of the challenges girls face leading them to dropping from secondary schools. Only 11% of the respondents disagreed with the fact that poverty causes girls to dropout from secondary schools. This finding is in line with Okpukpara & Chukwone (as cited in Uche, 2013)’s revelation who also noted poverty status of household as a critical factor that has a strong influence on girls’ retention in secondary schools. Obanya (2010) pointed out that, poverty and poor economic backgrounds strongly militate against girl child’s education in secondary schools. Due to extreme poverty and the economic hardships prevailing within the country most parents cannot afford to raise money to finance the education of their children especially the girl child. Thus, girl child pupils are forced to withdraw from secondary schools pre maturely.

An overwhelmingly majority 78% of the respondents indicated lack of learning materials as another challenge girls face in secondary schools predisposing them to the dropping out problem. However 22% of the respondents did note rate this factor as a valid one. This finding is accordance with, Dube (2011) who also revealed that the costs of pens/pencils, books and school uniforms remains a relatively economic burden for poor households and
this ultimately acts as a trigger for girl child dropouts in secondary schools. High poverty levels in rural settlements usually cause most parents to fail to afford to buy learning materials such as books, pens among others for their school children. This often forces a number of girls to withdraw from secondary schools prematurely.

The majority 70% of the respondents further specified climate change related hazards such as droughts as variables that also cause girl child dropouts in secondary schools. However 30% of the respondents did not rate this view as a valid one. This finding agrees with Save the Children (2008) and UNICEF UK (2008) who also revealed that, it is the girl child who will be hardest hit by the effects of climate change related hazards and disasters such as droughts. Climate change related hazards such as droughts often erodes households’ disposable incomes and this cause parents to be left without money to pay fees for their school children and ultimately this triggers girl child school dropouts.

An overwhelmingly 100% majority of school heads interviewees were in agreement that socio economic related challenges such as poverty can also cause girls to drop out from the education system. The majority of interviewees also noted climate change related hazards such as drought as a phenomenon that erode household’s incomes such that people are left without money to pay for the school fees as well as to buy learning materials for their girl children. This revelation is in accordance with Elimu Yetu Coalition (2005)’s findings who concludes that, inaccessibility of education due to climate change induced hazards has a harmful impact on learning outcomes, minimising the chances of girl child pupils to break the vicious cycle of poverty.

The majority of girl child dropouts’ interviewees indicated socio economic factors such as poverty, lack of school uniforms, lack of school fees among others as some of the causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. One (20%) of the interviewees indicated that she
dropped out from secondary school whilst she was doing form 2 due to lack of money to pay for her fees as well as to buy school uniforms and books. This finding agrees with Alika and Egbochuku (2009) who also revealed the same findings when they stated that, the socio economic status of girls imposes considerable constraints upon their continuity stay in secondary schools. More so, UNESCO (2000) posits that in most contexts girls have less access to education and are more prone to dropping out especially those poor households which reside in urban environments. Usually in many rural communities of the country, when economic situations get tense girl child pupils are withdrawn from the education system first by their parents giving priority to boys.

4.2.3 Socio cultural causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools

Summary of results from students, class teachers and senior lady teachers’ questionnaires

Table 4.9 Illustrating socio cultural factors which causes girls to dropout from secondary schools as revealed by girl child students, class teachers and senior lady teachers respondents No (46)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio cultural factors</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and religious beliefs (girls need not to go to school)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family beliefs about girls schooling</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early marriage</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 shows that, an overwhelmingly majority 87% of the respondents cited cultural belief and religious beliefs as some of the socio cultural variables that cause girls to drop out
from secondary schools. Only 13% of the respondents disagreed with the view that, cultural and religious beliefs cause girls to drop out from secondary schools. This finding is in line with Moyo and Muvezwa (as cited in Stewart, 2004) who also reported religious beliefs as a strong factor that affect girl child’s persistence in secondary schools. Magwa and Ngara (2015) note that in Zimbabwe, large numbers of girls from Apostolic Faith Religion (AFR) sect are married as soon as they reach puberty stages. In Zimbabwe there are some certain religious and cultural beliefs that do not believe in girl child pupils attaining higher educational attainments such as secondary level education certificates or even higher level certificates such as degrees. For instance most girl children of the apostolic faith religion sect get married as soon as they reach puberty stages and the belief within the congregation being that, girls’ responsibility is to marry early and bear many children and their welfare will be catered for by their husbands.

The majority 67% of the respondents revealed family beliefs about girls schooling as another socio cultural variable that causes girls to drop out from secondary schools. Only 33% of the respondents did not regard family beliefs about girls schooling cannot cause them to drop out from secondary schools. This finding is in accordance with Wanyoike (2003) who also revealed that, the way in which family foundations are laid down pose a lot of problems in trying to erase the attitudes and behaviour patterns that are formed in the provision of education to girls. In most rural communities of the country when parents face some financial difficulties, they opt to withdraw the girl child from education system first and prefer to further the education of the boy child and the reason for this will be that girls will soon get married, so it will be wastage of resources since the husband’s family will enjoy the benefits.

Relatedly, the majority 71% of the respondents indicated early marriage as another socio cultural factor that predisposes girl child pupils to the risk of being forced to drop from schools prematurely. However 29% of the respondents refuted this notion. This finding
agrees with Okwori et al., (2014)’s revelation who suggest that some girls may withdraw from secondary schools if good marriage prospects arise and this has been noted to be common in poor and uneducated families. Similar research studies carried out by Wanjiru (2000) and Mbani (2008) in Kenya revealed that once girl child pupils get pregnant they withdraws from secondary schools and some end up in early marriages. Thus, it can be noted from this current research that early marriage is a contributing factor to girl child dropping out of secondary schools. In most cases early marriage tend to be a function of poor socio economic backgrounds and religious beliefs.

With regards to the socio cultural reasons why girls drop out from secondary schools, many of the school heads interviewees indicated religion and culture as leading cultural variables that cause girls to drop out from secondary schools. The majority of interviewees further reiterated that, there are some other shona cultural traditions such as the kuzvarira which also perpetuates girl child dropouts in secondary schools. These research findings are in line with the Zimbabwe National Plan of Action (2005-2010) who also revealed that in most rural settlements of Zimbabwe, poor parents and guardians often give their girl children to rich people and this custom is known as Kuzvarira in the Shona tradition. The Kuzvarira customary involves marrying off a girl child, without her consent to a married man in exchange for money, food and any other material possessions that save as assurance that the girl’s family will not suffer future economic deprivation.

During interviews with girl child dropouts, an overwhelmingly majority of interviewees confirmed that there are some socio cultural factors that cause girls to withdraw pre maturely from secondary schools. Some of the socio cultural factors which they raised include religious beliefs and other various shona cultural traditions that promote early marriages. One (20%) of interviewee indicated that she was forced to drop from school when she was in form 4 so as to get married by her deceased sister’s husband. The Zimbabwe National Plan of
Action 2005-2010 notes that, the *Chimutsamapfihwa* cultural customary continues to be a flourishing practice which is perpetuating girl child school dropouts in Zimbabwe.

### 4.2.4 School based causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools

**Summary of results from students, class teachers and senior lady teachers’ questionnaire**

Table 4.10 Illustrating school based factors that cause girls to drop out from schools as demonstrated by students, class teacher and senior lady teachers respondents No (46)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School based factors</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ill-treatment by teachers</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination at school</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absenteeism</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender based discrimination at school</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10 shows that the majority 70% of the respondents indicated poor performance as one of the causes of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. On the other hand, 30% of the respondents thought otherwise. This finding agrees with Te- Riele (2005) who revealed that, youth do not drop out of school mainly because they do not want to study, but mainly due to the fact that they will be failing their studies. Relatedly Aloise-Young and Chavez (2004) postulate that, school failure causes frustration that results in students especially girls being alienated from secondary schools. School failure often instil a sense of desperation among learners and this will often cause some girl child pupils to feel unsteady in schools thereby forcing them to withdraw from the education system.
Also the majority 72% of the respondents indicated ill treatment by teachers at school as another factor that predisposes girls to the school dropout problem. However 28% of the respondents refuted to this view. This finding is in line with Eshiwani (1985) who also revealed that there are stereotyped roles that make girls easily abused in secondary schools and some of them encompass preparing breakfast and lunch for teachers. Similarly Abazi (1992) observed that in most Kenyan secondary schools a lot of teaching time of girls is lost when they are sent to teachers’ houses to collect books. This tends to create room for various forms of abuse such as sexual harassment ultimately leading to the dropping out problem.

Similarly the majority 74% of the respondents indicated discrimination at school as another cause of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. However 26% took an exception to this view. This revelation agrees with Antwi-Danso and Edet (2011) who noted that teacher’s unfriendly attitude towards girl child pupils tend to be another factor which contributes to school dropout. On the other hand, an overwhelmingly majority 83% of the respondents indicated absenteeism as a factor that pushes girls out of secondary school. Only 17% of the respondents disregard it as factor that can cause girls to drop from secondary school. This finding is in accordance with Alika and Egbochuku (2009) who noted that some female pupils are forced to be absent from schools by parents solely to assist in household chores such as baby sitting of younger children, accompanying parents to hospital or to public gatherings and caring for the sick relatives. In the long run such girls may opt to withdraw from the education system due to persistent absenteeism from school.

Similarly an overwhelmingly majority of 100% respondents indicated gender based discrimination at school as an integral factor that pushes girls out from secondary schools. Brigeon (2005) reiterates that many third world countries practice gender streaming in secondary schools, directing girls away from Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects while directing boys away from practical subjects such as
clothing and textiles and food nutrition. Nyaga (2010) notes that some teaching methods practiced done by teachers in schools tend to give boys more opportunities than girls to ask and answer questions.

Also the majority 71% of the respondents further noted distance to and from schools as another factor that determine the continual survival of girl child pupils in secondary schools. However, 29% of the respondents thought otherwise. This finding is consistent with Ainsworth et al., (2005) who also found that the chances of attending secondary school for girl child pupils decrease with the greater the distance from schools. In this regard Nekatibeb (as cited in Shahidul and Zehadul Karim, 2015) noted school distance as a prime impediment for girls' education in many Sub-Saharan African countries. In most rural communities girls walk very long distances from home to schools and they consume a lot of time and energy to cover these long distances. This often discourages them and eventually they will opt to drop out from school.

During school heads interviews, the majority of the interviewees revealed that school related factors such as sexual harassment at school, poor performance, ill treatment by teachers and gender based discrimination both at school and home tend to be some of the contributing factors that cause girls to dropout from secondary schools. Also the majority of interviewees revealed poor school environments that consists of shortage of infrastructure such as classroom blocks as other contributing factors that can trigger the problem of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. These findings agrees with Machingambi (2003) who also revealed that there are a number of school based factors that are closely associated with the girl child school dropping problem and some of them includes poor school environments, sexual harassment at school, gender based discrimination among others.
Also during girl child school dropouts’ interviews, the majority of the interviewees indicated school based factors such as sexual harassment at school, ill-treatment by teachers and absenteeism as factors which also triggers girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The interviewees noted that there are various reasons which cause absenteeism among female students in schools, some of them being menstruation, doing household chores such as cooking, fetching firewood among others. These findings concurs with Abagi (1992) who also observed that in most Kenyan secondary schools a lot of teaching time of girls is lost when they are sent to teachers’ houses to collect books.

4.3 Effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools

Summary of results from students, class teachers and senior lady teachers’ questionnaire

Table 4.11 Demonstrating effects of dropping from secondary schools as revealed by girl child students, class teachers and senior lady teachers respondents No (46).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects of dropping out from school</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to get jobs</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in crime rates</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early marriages</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increases in illiteracy levels</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wastage of government resources</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 shows that the majority 76% of the respondents indicated prostitution as one of the major negative effect of dropping from secondary schools. However 29% of the respondents refuted this view point. This finding agrees with Okwori (2014) who also revealed prostitution as one of the effects of girl child dropouts from secondary schools.
When girls drop out of secondary schools, they end up having nothing to do economically and this forces them to indulge into prostitution as a means of earning a living. On the other hand an overwhelmingly majority 91% of the respondents indicated failure to get jobs as another effect of dropping from school whilst the other 9% thought otherwise. This research finding is consistent with Mawere (2012) who also revealed that, employees today are recruited by employers on the basis of their qualifications. In today’s world of work people are now recruited on the basis of their qualifications, thus those individuals with better qualifications have higher chances or opportunities of securing better jobs as well as better remunerations. Implied above is the fact that, those who will not be educated including girl child school dropouts risks themselves of not getting jobs.

Also an overwhelmingly majority 83% of the respondents indicated increases in crime rates as another consequence that is associated with girl child dropping out from secondary schools. Only 17% refuted this view. This finding agrees with Ajaja (2011) who also revealed that in the Delta State of Nigeria cases of robbery, assassination and kidnapping are rampant and they are associated with youth and most of them are school dropouts. Ajaja (2011) goes on to note that, Nigeria is today most insecure country in the world because of criminal youths activities and over 85% of these criminal activities are perpetuated by youths who dropped out of secondary schools.

More so an overwhelmingly majority 87% of the respondents indicated early marriage as another consequence associated with secondary school dropping. Only 13% of the respondents refuted this view. This research finding is in accordance with Okwori (2014) who also revealed that in Nigeria many girl child school dropouts engage into early marriages. More so, an overwhelmingly majority 80% of the respondents indicated wastage of government resources as another effect of secondary school dropping. On the other hand 20% of the respondents did not rate this factor as a valid one. This finding agrees with
Hussen and Postlewhite (as cited in Mawere, 2012) who clearly pointed out that, financial resources invested and lost by someone who does not complete schooling, cannot be recovered easily. The author further stresses that, this represents a great loss of government resources. Thus, girl child dropouts from secondary schools tend to be a problem which wastes government resources especially financial resources and measures to curb it must be put into place.

During the interviews, the majority of school heads interviewees revealed, failure to get decent jobs, increases in prostitution prevalence rates, increases in crime rates, and increases in illiteracy levels as some of the problems girl child pupils face when they drop out from secondary schools prematurely. Also the majority of interviewees also confirmed that girl child school dropouts usually results in to the emergence of uneducated mothers yet educated mothers have more socio-economic value to their husbands and the society at large. These findings are in accordance with Okwori (2014)’s findings who revealed that, the effects of girl child dropping from secondary schools encompasses the following; prostitution, early marriages, spreading of diseases, increases in crime rate among others.

Also during interviews, an overwhelmingly 100% majority of girl child dropouts interviewees were in agreement that by dropping out from secondary schools they have been exposed to various challenges. Some of the problems they noted include failure to get jobs, inability to read or write, being exposed to early marriages and socially unacceptable behaviours such as prostitution and theft. These findings agree with Mawere (2012) who clearly revealed that, there are many problems associated with girl child secondary school dropping. Some of them include failure to access jobs, engaging into socially unacceptable behaviours such as prostitution, theft among others. Piromruen and Keoyote (2001) noted that in developing countries, school dropouts easily become victims of the HIV/AIDS pandemic since they can be easily exploited in their search for basic wants and needs for survival.
4.4 Possible recommendations that can be put in place so as to reduce the girl child dropout problem in secondary schools

Summary of results from class teachers and senior lady teachers’ questionnaire

Table 4.12 Demonstrating recommendations that can be put in place to reduce the problem of girl child dropouts in secondary schools as revealed by class teachers and senior lady teachers respondents No (13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidance and Counselling</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting back to school girls who might have fallen pregnant whilst in schools.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community sensitization about the importance of girl child education</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongovernmental organisations should avail more funds to cater for the education of girls in schools</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of affirmative action strategies in schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12 shows that an overwhelmingly majority 100% of the respondents noted guidance and counselling as one of the most important measure that can be put into place so as to reduce rates of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. This finding is consistent with Chivore (1985) who also noted guidance and counselling as critical measure which goes a long in reducing the number of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The majority 69% of the respondents also indicated that girls who might have fallen pregnant whilst still in schools must be given the chance to enrol back to school as a measure to cushion their welfare.
However 31% of the respondents did not acknowledge this measure. This revelation concurs with Nyaga (2010) who also recommended that girls who might have fallen pregnant whilst still at school must be given the second chance to enrol back to school after they have delivered. The majority 62% of the respondents indicated community sensitization about the importance of girls’ education as another measure that can be put into place so as to reduce rates of girl child dropouts in rural day secondary schools. However 38% of the respondents refuted this view. This finding agrees with Rambe and Mawere (2011) who also revealed that impoverished students from deprived backgrounds especially girl children needs very strong support to enhance their capacity to take hold of the fundamental assumptions underpinning educational circles. This is to say that for girl child pupils to realize the negative effects of dropping out from secondary schools they will require both material and intellectual empowerment.

On the other hand the majority 77% of the respondents noted the encouragement of nongovernmental organisations such as CAMFED to avail more funds to finance the education of girls as another measure that can be devised so as to solve the problem of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. However 23% of the respondents refuted this view. This finding has been reported elsewhere by Mawere (2012) who also recommended that, the problem of girl child dropouts from secondary schools can be reduced by seeking donor funding for school fees, uniforms for poor girl child pupils as well as enforcing punitive measures that discourage parents who willingly deny girl child pupils their right to secondary school education. An overwhelmingly majority 85% also noted the implementation of affirmative action strategies in secondary schools as another important measure that can be put into place so as to reduce the number of girl child dropouts. However 15% of the respondents did not indicate this viewpoint. This revelation agrees with Nyaga (2010) who also recommended the implementation of affirmative strategies which should benefit the girl
child education in schools so as to ensure the smooth flow transition and retention of girl child pupils in secondary school.

During interviews, an overwhelmingly majority 100% of headmaster interviewees confirmed that the enforcement of measures such as guidance and counselling in schools, enrolling back in to the education system those girls who might have fallen pregnant whilst at school, implementation of affirmative action strategies, seeking funds from nongovernmental organisations, and community sensitization about the importance of girls’ education are some of the measures that can be put into place so as to solve the problem of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. This revelation is in line with Mawere (2012) who also recommended that responsible authorities within secondary schools and all other stakeholders should be in a position to identify impoverished girl child pupils, who are likely to withdraw from secondary schools as a result of abject poverty, and help negotiate scholarships or any other form of financial assistance for them. Also adolescent girls who will not be performing well in their studies should be quickly identified by the counsellors and remedial lessons should be arranged for them.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the following factors were found to be the causes of girl child drop outs in Buhera central secondary schools: the personal, socio economic, socio cultural and school based factors. Also in this chapter it was revealed that the effects of dropping from secondary schools by girl child pupils are prostitution, failure to get jobs, increase in crime rates, early marriages, and wastage of government resources. Chapter five presented the summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The previous chapter, focused on data presentation, analysis and discussions. This chapter presented the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5.1 Summary

This research was conducted out in three selected secondary schools from Buhera central district in Manicaland province. The main aim of the study was to investigate the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. The researcher was prompted to conduct this research due to persistent increases in the numbers of girls dropping from secondary schools in rural areas. Therefore, the researcher wanted to investigate the causes and effects of such a phenomenon of girls dropping out of secondary schools. Chapter one presented the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions of the study. The assumptions of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and definitions of key terms were also outlined in the chapter. A review of literature related on the causes and effects of girl child drop outs from secondary schools was undertaken. A number of themes emerged from the literature search and these were used in the data analysis to collate the findings and results in chapter four. The researcher adopted the qualitative case study research design which enabled the researcher to use self designed questionnaires, unstructured face to face interviews and document analysis to collect data. Out of the nine schools in the target population, three schools participated in this study and these were chosen using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used because the schools in the circuit were not of the same status that is to say
others were satellite mixed secondary schools and others were mixed high schools. The respondents included three school heads, three senior lady teachers, ten class teachers, five girl child school dropouts and thirty form three and four girl child students. The researcher first explained the purpose of this study to the respondents and assured them that the information they would provide would be used solely for academic purposes. The researcher then requested the respondents’ consent to participate in this study. Further, the researcher made interview appointments with the three school heads and five girl child secondary school dropouts. The researcher self administered the class teachers’ and students’ questionnaires so as to ensure a one hundred (100%) response rate. In this research study, the researcher used questionnaires, interviews and document analysis to collect data. Questionnaires helped the researcher to obtain standardized responses and to minimize irrelevant responses. Interviews helped the researcher to get first hand information and data of great depth. The researcher had the opportunity to clarify items that the respondents were not familiar with.

However in this research, the researcher encountered various constraints which included shortage of financial resources, time constraints, uncooperative respondents and problems with the official secret act. The data collected in this study were presented and analyzed, tables, pie charts and bar graphs being used for illustration purposes. The discussions were conducted qualitatively as numbers and percentages so as to capture interview findings as well as collate findings presented in the literature review. This study revealed that, the phenomenon of girl child drop outs in secondary schools is caused by a number of interlinked factors and some of them include the personal, socio economic, school based and socio cultural factors. It was also revealed in the study that, by dropping out of secondary schools, girls expose themselves to various problems. Some of the problems or effects revealed in the study include prostitution, failure to access decent jobs, increases in illiteracy levels of the country and wastage of government resources.
5.2 Conclusions

Since the purpose of this research study was to investigate the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in secondary schools, the following conclusions were made: girl child dropout from secondary schools is a phenomenon which is perpetuated by a number of different factors. In this study, four factors were identified to be the major causes of the phenomenon of girl child dropouts in secondary schools. These factors are personal, socio economic, socio cultural, and school based. Therefore, it can be concluded that, the phenomenon of girls dropping out from secondary schools is caused by four factors which affect girl child students differently that is: situations which affect one girl child’s decision to drop out of school may be different from another one’s. The study also concluded that there are various problems girl child pupils encounters after dropping from secondary schools. Some of the problems include prostitution, failure to access decent jobs, increases in illiteracy levels of the country and wastage of government resources.

5.3 Recommendations

In this study the following recommendations were made based on the findings:

- The government through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should continue to develop and implement policies that ensure that girls who drop out of secondary schools due to pregnancy were accepted back to school.

- The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should enhance monitoring of schools and implement affirmative strategies which should minimize school related causes of girl child dropout rates. This would ensure retention of girls in secondary schools.
• The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, and Education partners/ stakeholders and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) should provide more funding to alleviate the shortage of school fees for girls so that they can be retained in schools.

• The parents and the community should be sensitized on the importance of girl child education. The parents should be enlightened on the importance of giving proper parental guidance to their children and to be more involved in the education of girls.

• The schools’ management systems should enhance guidance and counseling in secondary schools so as to address the challenges facing girl child pupils such as relationships, peer pressure, drug and substance abuse. This enhances retention of girl child students in secondary schools.

• School systems should devise and implement special programs of assisting girl child pupils experiencing the risk of dropping out; pupils should benefit from the counselors advice concerning their stay in secondary schools.

• The researcher and other researchers should use this base line study to conduct ore related studies on the phenomenon of girl child dropouts in both rural and urban secondary schools.
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INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GIRL CHILD SECONDARY SCHOOL DROPOUTS

1. Which form were you doing when you dropped out from school?

2. What is your religion?

3. Who was paying for your school fees?

4. Tell me about your decision to leave school.

5. Who would you say influenced your decision to leave school the most?

6. How many of your sisters dropped out from secondary school?

7. What were the main reasons for your absence from school?

8. Can you indicate some of the types of jobs which you are given at home?

9. What would you say are the primary factors that cause most girls to leave secondary schools prematurely?

10. What are some of the problems you are facing which you think have been caused by not completing secondary schooling?
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL HEADS.

(1) Indicate your experience as a school Head at this school?

(2) How many girls were admitted at your school at the beginning of the year?

(3) How many girls have dropped out from your school this year?

(4) How many girls have also dropped out from your school in the past two years?

(5) What would you say are some of the causes that make female students drop out of school?

(6) How often do you interact with the female students in your school?

(7) Have the female students ever complained about mistreatment from their teachers during class times?

(8) Can you indicate some of the effects of girl child dropping from secondary schools?

(9) Suggest how the girl child dropout can be reduced.
QUESTIONNARE FOR FORM THREE AND FOUR GIRL CHILD STUDENTS

My name is CHIBADE TIMOTHY, a student at Bindura University of Science Education, (BUSE) in the department of Curriculum Studies, doing a Master of Education Science Degree in Geography. I am carrying out a research on the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Zimbabwean Secondary Schools. The information I am gathering is purely for academic purposes and will be treated as confidential. I therefore kindly ask you to answer the following questions truthfully. No NAMES must be included in this document. Please carefully read through the document and fill in all details, ticking where appropriate.

SECTION A: Background information

1) Gender           male          female

(b) Age            15           16+

2. Who pays for your school fees? Father          Mother

Other:
(specify)………………………………………………………………………

3) What is your religion? Christian  Muslim  ATR

Other:
(Specify)………………………………………………………………………

4) Category of your school

Girls          Mixed
SECTION B: Issues related to girl child dropouts in secondary schools

(5) How many of your sisters dropped out of secondary school?  

(6) Do you also intend to drop out of school?  
Yes  
No  

(7) Indicate reasons which make girls absent in schools:  
(a) Helping at home  
(b) Helping in the school  
(c) Sickness  
(d) Engaging in casual work  
(e) Caring for younger siblings  
(f) Caring for sick relatives  
(f) Others  
(Specify)……………………………………………………………………………………………………...  
…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...  
…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...  

(8) Indicate the types of jobs given to you at home  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doing Laundry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning the House and Yard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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(9) Indicate the factors that make girls to drop out from secondary schools?

(You can tick more than one factor)

(a) Ill-treatment by teachers
(b) Family attitudes and beliefs
(c) Pregnancy
(d) Sexual harassment
(e) School fees problems
(f) Gender discrimination at school or home
(g) Cultural beliefs
(h) Absenteeism
(i) School failure
(j) Long distance to and from school
(k) Peer pressure

Other:

(Specify)........................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................................

(10) In your own opinion, what are some of the problems associated with girl child dropping from secondary schools?

......................................................................................................................................................
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Thank you for your co operation.
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

My name is CHIBADE TIMOTHY, a student at Bindura University of Science Education, (BUSE) in the department of Curriculum Studies, doing a Master of Education Science degree in Geography. I am carrying out a research on the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Zimbabwean Secondary Schools. The information I am gathering is purely for academic purposes and will be treated as confidential. I therefore kindly ask you to answer the following questions truthfully. No NAMES must be included in this document. Please carefully read through the document and fill in all details, ticking where appropriate.

SECTION A: Background information

Gender      male   Female

Age         below 20  20-29  30-39  40 and above

(3) Highest professional qualification

Advanced level

Diploma

Degree

Other: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

(Specify)……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

(4) Teaching Experience

0-5 years  6-10 years

11-15 years  15 and above
SECTION B: Issues related to girl dropouts in secondary schools

(5) How many girls were admitted in your class at the beginning of the year?

(6) How many girls are currently in your class?

(7) How many girls have dropped out of school?

(8) Indicate the reasons for girls dropping out of school:

(a) Mistreatment by teachers

(b) Family attitudes and beliefs

(c) Pregnancy

(d) Peer pressure

(e) Lack of school fees

(f) Gender discrimination at school and home

(g) Illness

(h) Lack of uniforms/ books

(1) School failure

(K) Long distance to and from schools

Others:

(Specify)........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
(9) Indicate the challenges facing girls in your class

(a) Absenteeism

(b) Lateness to school

(c) Lateness to lessons

(d) Playing/ Truancy

(e) Lack of school fees

(f) Discrimination at home or at school

Other:

(Specify)

(10) Indicate some of the effects of girl child dropping from secondary schools?

(11) What are some of the measures you can propose to reduce the problem of girls dropping out of secondary schools?

Thank you for your cooperation
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR LADY TEACHERS

My name is CHIBADE TIMOTHY, a student at Bindura University of Science Education, (BUSE) in the department of Curriculum Studies, doing a Master of Education Science degree in Geography. I am carrying out a research on the causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Zimbabwean Secondary Schools. The information I am gathering is purely for academic purposes and will be treated as confidential. I therefore kindly ask you to answer the following questions truthfully. No NAMES must be included in this document. Please carefully read through the document and fill in all details, ticking where appropriate.

SECTION A: Background information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>20-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Highest professional qualification</td>
<td>Advanced level</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(4) Teaching Experience</th>
<th>0-5 years</th>
<th>6-10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>15 and above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION B: Issues related to girl child dropouts in secondary schools

(4) How many girls were admitted at your school at the beginning of the year?  

(5) How many girls dropped out in the following years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) Indicate the reasons for girls dropping out of school:

(a) Mistreatment by teachers  
(b) Family attitudes and beliefs  
(c) Pregnancy  
(d) Peer pressure  
(e) Lack of school fees  
(f) Gender discrimination at school and home  
(g) Illness  
(h) Lack of uniforms/ books  
(i) School failure  
(j) Long distance to and from schools
(Specify) …………………………………………………………………………………………
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(7). How often do the parents / guardians consult about their girl children’s education?
(a) Quite often
(b) Rarely
(c) Sometime
(d) Not at all

(8). How often do you interact with the female students at your school?
(a) Very frequently
(b) Frequently
(c) Rarely
(d) Never

(9). Have girls ever complained about mistreatment from their teachers during class times?
A. Yes
    No.
(10). If yes, indicate the nature or type of mistreatment which they have complained to you:

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(11) Indicate some of the effects of girl child dropping from secondary schools?
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(12) What are some of the measures you can propose to reduce the problem of girls dropping out of secondary schools?
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Thank you for your cooperate