A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION

BY

VINCENT ZVENHAMO

B1441662

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF GIRL CHILD DROP OUT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: CASE STUDY OF SCHOOL A IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE (20014 to 2016)

SUPERVISOR : MR K BASIRA
NAME OF AUTHOR:   (B1441662)

TITLE OF PROJECT:  Causes And Effects Of Girl Child Drop Out In Secondary Schools: Case Study Of School A In Midlands Province (20014 To 2016)

PROGRAMME FOR WHICH PROJECT WAS PRESENTED:  Post Graduate Diploma In Education (PGDE)

YEAR GRANTED:  2015

Permission is hereby granted to the Bindura University of Science Education to produce single copies of this project and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only. The author reserves other publication rights and neither the project nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s written permission.

SIGNED

PERMANENT ADDRESS:  4857/2 MKOBA
                      Gweru

DATE:  September 2016
The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance; a dissertation entitled “Causes And Effects Of Girl Child Drop Out In Secondary Schools: Case Study Of School A In Midlands Province (20014 To 2016)” submitted by B1441662 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Post Graduate Diploma In Education (PGDE).

............................................................... Date:......................

SUPERVISOR

............................................................... Date:......................

CHAIRPERSON

............................................................... Date:......................

EXTERNAL EXAMINER
DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my wife Rose and my kids this should inspire them that determination is the key to success.
Acknowledgements

This research would not have been successful without the help of a number of people. I would like to thank everyone especially extending my deepest gratitude to these people since the result of this research was through their unwavering support and help. For the guidance and patience that you have given me during this research through supervision thank you Mr Basira. In addition I thank my mother and family members as well as church believers for the financial support. Special thanks also goes to my wife Yeukai Zvenhamo, Obert Chiweshe, and my work mates for being part and parcel of my struggles.

My gratitude also goes to the respondents of questionnaires, focus group discussing and interviews for sparing their time to cooperate with me during the writing of this research. Lastly I thank everyone who ever managed to help in any way either directly or indirectly.
Abstract

This research aimed at revealing effects of use of computer technology as an instructional media on the behavior of students. The targeted area of study was Gweru Urban in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. Only 3 secondary urban schools were selected to be studied. Both qualitative and quantitative designs were employed as means to carry out the study in a descriptive manner. The gathering of data was through the use of questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions with teachers and students. The sample consisted of 18 class teachers, 6 computer teachers, 9 disciplinary committee members and 180 students. The selection of class teachers and students was done through stratified random sampling while purposive or judgmental sampling was used to select computer teachers and disciplinary committee members. The study revealed that use of computer technology as an instructional media negatively affects the behavior of students in secondary schools and as such suggested ways to curb the effects. However to achieve such a goal there is need for all sectors involved to bear with each other especially teachers, students and parents with support from the Ministry of Education.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cover Page</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release Form</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Form</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 1. Introduction**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of study

1.2 Statement of the problem

1.3 Objectives

1.4 Research Questions

1.5 Significance of the study

1.6 Delimitation

1.7 Limitation of study

1.8 Definition of terms

1.9 Summary

**Chapter Two Literature Review**

2.0 Introduction
2.1 Theoretical framework...........................................................................................................................................8

2.3 The socio-economic causes of school dropouts among girls.................................................................8

2.4 Religion, tradition and culture as factors influencing school dropout among teenage girls.................................11

2.5 Teenage pregnancy and truancy as causes of school dropout.................................................................12

2.6 School distance and absenteeism as a factor toward girl child school dropout....................................................13

2.7 School based causes and effects of dropouts among teenage girls.............................................................14

2.8 The effects of school dropouts among girls..................................................................................................16

2.9 Summary.........................................................................................................................................................19

Chapter 3 Research methodology

3.1 Introduction.....................................................................................................................................................20

3.2 Research Design.............................................................................................................................................20

3.3 Population........................................................................................................................................................21

3.4 Sample............................................................................................................................................................21

3.5 Research Instruments......................................................................................................................................22

3.5.1 Questionnaire................................................................................................................................................23

3.5.2 Interviews....................................................................................................................................................23

3.5.3 Focus group discussions...............................................................................................................................24

3.6 Data collection procedure ...............................................................................................................................25

3.7 Data analysis procedure......................................................................................................................................26

3.8 Reliability and validity.....................................................................................................................................27

3.9 Summary..........................................................................................................................................................28

CHAPTER 4. Data presentation analysis and discussions

4.1 Introduction.....................................................................................................................................................29

4.2 Demographic data..........................................................................................................................................30
4.3 Causes of school dropouts among girls in schools around Gweru..........................31
4.4 Financial problems or crisis..................................................................................32
4.5 Truancy..................................................................................................................33
4.6 Failure in school from focus group discussions.....................................................35
4.6.0 Early teenage pregnancy......................................................................................36
4.6.1 Poor health...........................................................................................................37
4.6.2 Data presenting school dropouts because of poor health.................................38
4.6.3 Tension between teacher and girl child...............................................................38
4.7.0 Effects of school dropout....................................................................................39
4.7.1 Effects of school dropout as provided by students and school drop outs.............42
4.7.2 School development committee members’ response on social effects of dropouts....43
4.8 School development members’ response on effects of school dropout....................44
4.9 Summary...............................................................................................................45

CHAPTER 5 Summary, conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction............................................................................................................46
5.2 Summary................................................................................................................46
5.3 Conclusions............................................................................................................48
5.4 Recommendations.................................................................................................48
References..................................................................................................................50
Appendix A...................................................................................................................55
Appendix B...................................................................................................................58
Appendix C...................................................................................................................60
Appendix D...................................................................................................................62
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on introducing what the research is all about. The chapter’s focus includes the background of the study. The chapter state the research problem. The study’s objectives, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the study, limitations as well as the delimitations of the study and definition of terms are part of chapter one.

1.1 Background of the study

Dropping out of school among girls is a major issue which has raised eyebrows of many scholars of all over the world. In general, in Africa the causes and effects of girl child dropouts on development are not well researched thus leaving much to be done (Mawere, 2012). School dropout means the proportion of student’s aged 16 -24 not currently enrolled in schools, which have not yet completed high school or a diploma. The causes and effects of school dropouts amongst girls are experienced in both developed and developing countries. It is crucial to note that reasons for girl school drop outs differ from developed to underdeveloped countries Hanny and Ross (1997).

According to the World Conference on Education (2001), all children, particularly girls, must have access to and complete quality education by the year 2015. It is well known that both boys and girls should have equal right to be educated and in developing a nation it is important to provide education irrespective of gender. The 2015 research by Karim and Shahidul in Malaysia shows that girls' dropout rates are higher compared to boys' in most parts of the world. According to UNESCO (2012), the dropout rate is higher for girls in 49 countries compared to boys. Chimombo
(1999) observes that though the enrolment in school is almost same for girls and boys, boys have a higher likelihood of continuing school compared to girls.

The real main cause of girl child dropout has been a contested subject in Africa in Zimbabwe in particular. The problem has been generally attributed to various factors ranging from abject poverty, economic hardships, early marriages and the mistaken religious and traditional belief that educating a girl child is a waste of resources (Mawere, 2012). While these causes can be true of Africa in general, it is important to examine whether they are the same problems affecting the Zimbabwean urban secondary school girl child. Reasons for school dropout among the urban based girl child other factors come into play these include parental investment, schooling costs, household works, extra-curricular activities, teachers’ attitudes, school distance and teenage pregnancy (Chivore, 1986).

From a global perspective another constraint is that some societies consider sports as a male activity. For instance, in Senegal participation in sports is socially and culturally prohibited for Muslim women (Hewett, 2010). In England, during the secondary school cycle, Muslim women face restriction by their culture and religion to participate in sports activities in schools (Benn, 2002; Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993). In fact, Muslim culture does not permit some kit requirements of sports or outdoor games such as wearing short skirts, shorts and tee-shirts and public changing and showering. According to Chivore (1986: 11) “dropouts has a negative impact on the schools, communities and the country at large”. The problem of school dropouts among girls need to be solved because it is affecting people in multiple dimensions of their daily life and it is contributing to a rampant spread of diseases, abortion, crime, peer influence and social disorder.
Due to widespread pressing nature of the crisis of dropouts, a national re-enrolment strategy should be fundamental part of education agenda. Reid (1986:218) asserts that despite all structural, organizational and legislative changes which have taken place in the education of secondary school pupils the last century or so, approximately 10% of students continue to drop out of school daily in England and some other regions. Some students in developed countries drop out because of gang violence, teacher discrimination based on race, class and ethnicity (Manacorda, 2012). In order for re-enrolment to take place the education sector should be dedicated to bring dropouts back to school, provide mentors that check upon the students frequently.

More so, dropping out of school is increasing and causing a widespread concern among educators and it needs to be solved before it has caused a severe damage upon the lives of many students and people at large that are living around schools thus the socio-economic impact of school dropouts in a school in Gweru, Zimbabwe will be explored in this study

1.2 Statement of the problem

This study looks at causes and effects of girl child dropouts at ‘School A’ in the Midlands Province in Zimbabwe for the period 2014 to 2016. The community is suffering a lot from school dropouts and there seems to be no remedy to deal with the situation. The major problems faced by society as result of girl child dropout is an increase in crime rate which include prostitution, theft, drug abuse, spread of HIV and AIDS as well as unwanted pregnancy.

1.3 Objectives

Informed by the statement of the problem above, this study anchored on causes and effects of girl child dropouts in relation to the following objectives:
a) The socio economic causes and effects of girl child school dropout in the community.
b) Traditional and religious causes of school dropout among the girl child.
c) Possible policy alternatives to curb causes and effects of dropout among girls.

1.4 Research Questions

The causes and effects of girl child dropouts of school dropouts in Gweru captured the researchers’ attention with specific focus on School A. It resulted in many problems affecting the community and the children at large. Therefore the researcher formulated the following questions:

a) What are the socio-economic causes and effects of school dropouts among girls?
b) What are the traditional and religious causes of school dropout among the girl child?
c) What recommendations can be provided to solve the problem of school dropouts?
d) What are the school based causes and effects of school dropouts on girls?
e) How can the community be educated to curb the causes of school dropouts?

1.5 Significance of the study

Carrying out the research was of great importance to the researcher because it increased the researcher’s knowledge on the socio-economic causes and effects of school dropouts among girls through the research findings. The findings equipped the researcher with skills necessary to address problems associated with dropouts emanating from the social related matters and hence will be able to help both parents and students with advice when necessary. The researcher can also make a living through carrying out further research on the subject matter.
Qualified teachers and student teachers awaiting training also benefit from the study since it unveils strategies teachers will use to address causes and effects of school dropouts among girls. As such when they are allocated to schools where dropout among girls is high they are able to draw ideas as to the means in dealing with such circumstances. It is the researcher’s belief that the study prompts teachers to read widely on the causes and effects of school dropouts among girls to enhance their knowledge.

A detailed exploration of the root causes and effects of school dropouts among girls will help policy makers to come up with appropriate solutions. The research will help them to have an in depth knowledge of the different causes and effects of school dropout among girls in urban areas and those in rural areas. In turn this will ensure that the entire problem is addressed from its grassroots level. Education policy makers will urge the government to intervene were it is necessary in order to help girl students who have dropped from school but still willing to continue with their education.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

Since the study is going to focus on causes and effects of school dropouts among girls at School A. This implies that the study will focus on secondary level excluding primary schools. The research will be on the effects and causes of school dropout among girl children thus there will be little focus on the boy child, although a comparison will be made during the research. The targeted school is a high school which is an urban school located in the high density area in Gweru within the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. Teachers will be selected as well for the investigation of the study but only those from the school under study considered as the sample. Theoretically the main
limitation is that there are few researches done in the country related to the similar topic. The period of the research will be from

1.7 Limitation of the study

Firstly the researcher is a full time teacher hence time to carry out the research will be distributed to teaching as well as moving around carrying out the research. Inadequate time will influence the sample size, since a large sample requires more time to work with in terms of data collection. A small size sample implies that findings from the study cannot be generalised across all secondary schools country wide. To curb this limitation the researcher will try to use sampling techniques that limit bias. These techniques include simple random sampling and stratified sampling. If it was not for time limitation the researcher would have increased the sample size to 3 schools.

Financial constraints as well as inadequacy of material since the researcher is an undergraduate student who is employed but has a lot of family members to look after may result in limiting his work on the project. A lot of money will be spent on typing and photocopying questionnaires. Some questionnaires may not be returned especially the posted. Some respondents may ask friends or spouse to answer questions on their behalf hence the gathered information may not be reliable. The researcher will use many techniques to gather data.

1.8 Definition of terms

Loxley in Hussen & Postlewhite (1985:12) defines dropouts as “those pupils who leave school before the final year of the educational cycle in which they are enrolled, which could be primary,
ordinary or advanced level, or even college or university levels”. At the same time, Chivore (1986:11) defines dropout as “a pupil who ceases to attend school either temporarily or permanently, before completing the given educational cycle”. A study in Botswana on a similar topic by Molosiwa and Moswela (2012) defined dropout as a student who discontinued school with or without the intention of returning. The term will be used also to refer to teenage pregnancy drop-out globally since almost all of secondary going pupils are teens. With regard to these definitions the researcher of this study will use the term dropout to refer to a pupil who leaves school before completing a given educational cycle and without the school’s consent.

1.9 Summary

The chapter discussed the significance of the study and the background. The purpose of the study and research questions is highlighted in the chapter. The limitations and delimitations of the study were included as well as the justification of the research problem. Definition of key terms also made part of the chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the theoretical framework, the causes and effects of school dropouts among girls which is a subject matter that many scholars have taken interest in. According to Holt et al (1998) literature review refers to an evaluative report of information found in the literature related to a selected area of study. The history of the socio economic causes and effects of school dropouts among girls in urban schools, the effects of culture and religion on school dropouts and school based causes as well as effects of dropouts in the community will be part of the chapter. Apart from these the chapter will also look at the ways to curb the causes and negative effects of school dropouts among teenage girls.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Findings from the Dallas Commission on Children and Youth Report (1998-2000) and from Nelligan (2003) show reasons for dropping out of school as varied and influenced by among other factors, a student’s ethnicity, socio-economic status, home life, poor attendance and failing grades. Reyhner (1992) attributes school related factors such as uncaring teachers, passive teaching methods, inappropriate curriculum and poor conditions created by large schools to school dropouts.

2.3 The socio-economic causes of school dropouts among girls

From the colonial era the majority black population was not in the financial capacity to fund for their children’s education. There were colonial policies which ensured that it was difficult if not impossible for the black majority to receive decent and standard education among this was high
school fees Kapakasa (1992). The situation was dealt with in Zimbabwe through the Education For All policy introduced after independence but the economic turmoil’s experienced from the mid 90’s to present day resulted in the scenario repeating itself. According to the Poverty Status Report (PSR, 2005), lack of adequate funds among parents in the years after 2000 in Africa has contributed immensely to school dropout on the part of girls, although boys were also affected the magnitude is low.

Direct and indirect schooling costs are important factors for the education of children and some research indicate that schooling costs especially school fees, are a central reason for early dropout from schools (Mawere, 2012). In rural China, parents’ incapability to pay school fees was the reason for the dropout of 47% of girls while only 33% of boys dropout in elementary schools; in junior secondary high school, fees were half for the girls but only 8% for the boy (Brown and Park, 2002). School fees were significant a reason for the dropout rate of 27% of boys but 30% of girls before secondary school graduation in South Africa Fuller and Laing (1999). From the families’ perspective observe that in poor households in India, the costs of schooling for girls are likely to be higher while the benefits more tenuous for them than the boys. The authors also observe that though direct costs are similar for boys and girls, parents are less willing to spend on girls. Lloyd et. al. (2000) also found that in Kenya, higher school fees increases the likelihood of dropping out for girls but not for boys.

Studies indicate that female students tend to drop out of school to take care of their younger siblings (Brock & Cammish, 1997). Another research indicates that if mothers work and get wage outside of the home, Female children take some responsibilities of the household which causes them to drop out, Fuller & Liang (1999). In general, girls take more load of household chores than
the boys and on the other hand urban girls in low income earning families do more household works than those from high income families (Ersado, 2005).

Parental investment for children's well-being can sometimes become gender biased. Although parents are altruistic to the gender of their children, they do not invest in education equally for all. In this regard, there are considerable evidences in the literature (Glick & Sahn, 2000; Kingdon, 2005) supporting this view whereby that, there is gender bias or pro-male bias in case of parental investment in children. In addition, Leung and Zhang (2008) found that parents' preference for sons encourage more of them to invest for in their sons' well-being to take care of parents in the future. In fact, parental gender bias investment occurs particularly when parents have limited or lower income and resource, causing girls to leave school earlier than boys (Grant and Hallman 2006). Fuller and Laing (1999) found an association between a family’s financial strength and the likelihood of the daughter's dropout in South Africa.

Holcamp (2009) found that in rural areas girls' and urban areas were parents have rural backgrounds; dropout rate became higher because parents consider girls' schooling as of no benefit when they leave their own family after getting married. Mansory (2007) also found that early marriage is the foremost cause of early school dropout of girls in Afghanistan. A lot of research have highlighted on girls' age and education and found that when girls reach puberty, parents consider it is time for them to be married and tend to arrange the marriage instead of continuing schooling (Molteno et al., 2000). For instance, in societies where girls leave parental household after marriage, girls' dropout might be higher in that society (Ackers et al., 2001). The PROBE team (1999) of India reported that in that country education might give girls better preparation for
marriage however, despite this, parents sometimes are reluctant to let their daughters have their education as higher education raises the cost of marriage for girls. Shahidul (2012) also found that in Bangladesh girls with lower socioeconomic backgrounds drop out from secondary school when schooling or higher education inflates dowry in the marriage market of girls.

2.4 Religion, tradition and culture as factors influencing school dropout among teenage girls

The children most affected by religious and traditional beliefs are children of uneducated parents and the Johane Marange’s Apostolic religious sect members who still consider the sell of the girl-child to a husband desired by the parents. Unwillingly, the girl-child has to conform to the parent’s obligations and join the husband before even completing school (Ministry of Education, 1986). As long as such beliefs go unchallenged, women will remain enslaved in the shackles of subservience and on the periphery of development. Though there are efforts by government to educate the girl child, the efforts seem to be just theoretical than they are practical. In fact, the efforts have little merit as they seem to be more visible in urban areas where there are active women human right groups and girl child networks

Save the Children (2005) indicates that cultural norms and beliefs constrain girls' education especially in many developing parts of the world. In these societies, traditional values and some religious beliefs constrain girls from making their own decisions and expressing their own opinions. Chege and Sifuna (2006) examined claim that many cultures favour education for boys more than girls. Kapakasa (1992) studied girls' persistence in school and found that initiation ceremonies (religious ceremony) have significant effect on girls' dropout rate when parents have more propensities to pay for the expenses of the ceremony than their daughters' education. Abena (1991) and Atayi (2008) observe that in Africa parents were more concerned about the role for
girls at home as in this role, girls do not need education since they are supposed to take care of the children and prepare meals. UNESCO (2010) indicate that traditional values are stronger in rural areas in developing countries compared to urban areas and people often do not allow girls to leave homes even for schools.

The study by Holmes (2003) found out that overall; females receive less education than males, and they tend to dropout, or are withdrawn earlier for both economic and social-cultural reasons. It is difficult to separate the social causes of school dropout and cultural issues. Holmes (2003) study further argues that the opportunity cost of sending female children to school in rural areas, where girls are married quite early, is high because benefits of their schooling will not accrue to their parental household. Similarly Kasente, (2004), Kakuru, (2003) explain how early marriages influence children’s dropping out of school especially as regards the girl child as it is perceived by parents that marrying off the girl child is an escape route from poverty. Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment (UPPAP, 2000) indicates that marrying off girls would benefit her family in terms of attaining bride price. This implies that apart from the teenage girls dropping from school due to their need to getting married, parents play a role in doing so as a cultural belief apart from the aspect of poverty.

### 2.5 Teenage pregnancy and truancy as causes of school dropout

Several studies also found that investigated that teenage pregnancy is a significant cause of school dropout for girls (Boyle et al., 2002). Some studies argue that there are some specific characteristics of girls with dropout status which are: Girls with poor school performance, girls who have experienced temporary dropout previously, low economic status, family migratory life
styles and the consequent vulnerability of girls. Dunne Leach, (2005) argue that some unexpected circumstances of girls such as lack of social and economic opportunities and gender inequality in education system lead to motherhood and consequent dropout from schools. Ramirez and Carpenter (2008) state that the dropout rate of girls is higher than the dropout rate of boys and the foremost cause for girls to drop out is pregnancy. Though some countries permit girls after getting pregnant to return to school, research found that the re-entry rate is not much higher. According to Grant and Hallman (2006), re-entry to school after pregnancy depends on some circumstances such as if they can get caregiver for their child and if they are able to share or relinquish childcare responsibilities.

A study by Mawere (2012) found out that in spite of pregnancy as a major of school dropout truancy has to be considered. From data obtained from open-ended questionnaire, it was revealed that dropouts also invoke anti-social behaviour and increase crime rates of the society in which the dropouts live. The most serious problems cited were drug abuse, robbery/pick pocketing, alcohol drinking and prostitution among both boy and girl dropouts. Dropouts thus set a bad example to the young people in the community as they engage in beer drinking, prostitution, drug abuse and theft.

2.6 School distance and absenteeism as a factor toward girl child school dropout

The odds that a girl pupil will drop out of secondary school increases with increase in the distance a pupil moves to school (UPPA, 2000). Female pupils travelling long distances to school are more likely to drop out of school. Whereas distance was found to be insignificant in influencing dropout for urban households, it is generally significant in rural areas except for girls. This phenomenon could be attributed to the easier access to schools in urban areas as compared to rural areas.
However even in the urban areas the influence of distance to school is traceable as some parents prefer to send their children to far schools but ones they can afford United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2015)

Manacorda (2012) also argues that girls are at a greater risk of absenteeism, repetition and dropout, and have lower educational achievement than boys in upper primary school. There are some causes for girls' dropout because of absenteeism. For instance, teenage pregnancy among girl is commonly associated with frequent absence from school initially, then permanent and or temporary dropout. In this regard, Gran (2013) indicates that female students were more likely to be absent if their toilets at school were dirty. In addition, Ngales (2005) found that in Ethiopia, female students were often absent in class during menstruation and frequent absence led them to drop out from school.

2.7 School based causes and effects of dropouts among teenage girls

Solotaroff et al. (2007) found that in Afghanistan, lack of female teachers is an obstacle to girls' participation and enrolment in schools. Afghan people believe that girls should not be taught by male teachers; however, female teachers are not available in Afghan society which is the foremost reason for the low rate of female education. Solotaroff, et al. (2007) presented that in Pakistan, girls usually drop out early because of lacking of female teachers in schools. Though parents are sometimes reluctant to send girls to schools based on their religious feelings, in fact female teachers are effective in achieving educational outcome for female students. In this respect, a number of studies have attempted to examine the effect of having female teachers in schools. For instance, many studies found that having female teachers in the school has a positive impact on female students' academic achievement outcomes (Carrell et al., 2010) Therefore, lack of female teachers in school negatively impacts on girls’ dropout outcome.
A study by Colclough et al. (2000) found that in Ethiopia, teachers in school more positively viewed boys than girls because they usually expect girls to quit school early. Teachers’ attitude and their teaching practices have foremost impact in sustaining girls in schools. According to Nekatibeb (2002) study from several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa indicate that both female and male teachers believed that boys were academically better than girls. This study also found that most teachers tend to pay more attention to boys in the classroom than girls. Research by Fawe (2001) shows that teachers were not conscious in using their language toward girls in the classroom. They also viewed girls as less intelligent to those boys and that girls are just there to marry early. According to Njau and Wamahi (1994) in a study on dropout rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, it was found that the foremost cause of higher rate of girls' dropout was the attitude of teachers towards girls in class. Teachers tend to favour boys than girls in terms of academic performance and achievement which led to dropout.

Jacqueline et al. (2012) investigated gender dynamics in the valuing of extra-curricular activities and their survey results show a significant difference in the proportion of participation in extra-curricular activities of male and female students. Results show that approximately 76% of male students participate in extracurricular activities compared to only 48% of female students. Sometime girls' participation in extra-curricular activities constrained by the lack of facilities in schools. For instance Osiki Jonathan Ohiorenuan (2008) observes that 90% of the schools in the study area had extra-curricular facilities for the boys but the facilities for the girls were either not available or were provided minimally. This occurs in schools in most developing countries, especially in the rural areas.
2.8 The effects of school dropouts among girls

According to Chivore (1986: 11) “dropouts has a negative impact on the schools, communities and the country at large”. According to the Poverty Status Report (PSR, 2005), the phenomenon of high school dropout rate continues to pose a big challenge to the successful implementation of national policies. It is well documented that students’ educational outcome is related to a range of factors and when some factors produce poor educational outcomes, they will likely increase the dropout rate of students. In this respect, much of the literature examined students' low educational outcomes and among them, low learning level (Croft, 2002), low achievement level (Boyle et al., 2002; Hunter & May, 2003) and low academic performance or academic results (Batbaatar, et al., 2006) are more likely to cause dropout from schools. Therefore, based on the affecting factors of school dropout for girls, we can make judgments guided by the girl child’s personal view on education.

United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2009) studies carried in Uganda all demonstrate that Parental decisions do affect children retention. Students whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision making and are generally more involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school. Taking into account of the gender dimension of dropouts, UNICEF, (2015) notes that girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys and that pupils whose mother’s have not attained any level of education will most likely dropout of school.

Fuller and Liang (1999) argue that the advantage of having females as household heads may be the result of increased autonomy of the females when males are absent in the decision-making process. Shahidul (2013) examine data in Bangladesh and found that if a mother participates in the
household's decision-making process, the dropout rate of girls is decreased. Though female headship eventually gives advantage to girls, studies sometimes show controversial results. This is because, many studies found that single-female headed households face greater financial and time constraints than two-parent households in general which may impact differently on children's academic achievement (Guo & Harris, 2000; Pong et al., 2003). In fact, children in households headed by married women have higher educational attainment while children of widows are more likely to work.

The study made by Mawere (2012) reviewed that from an economic perspective, dropouts cause under-utilisation of resources and faulty government planning. Besides, child trafficking and child labour (which are against international laws) to neighbouring countries like South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique are on the rise for reasons among which is school child dropout. On the other hand, most of the street kids in the country are a consequence of school dropouts.

Also, people are nowadays employed on the basis of their qualifications. Those with higher qualifications, academic or otherwise, have higher chances of getting employment. This means that the least educated like dropouts risk being unemployed (Manyuchi, 1990). Consequently, their potential to contribute to the national economy is compromised. This results in the perpetuation of the vicious circle of poverty where the poor and uneducated together with their families remain the same or even worse. In fact, many rural women remain disadvantaged in the Zimbabwean despite legal provisions, societies due to illiteracy and economic dependency that prevent them from combating societal discrimination (Mawere, 2012). The government’s failure to do so is not only a crime against women, but a failure to honour the unemployed (Manyuchi, 1990).
In addition to the socio-economic impact of school dropouts in schools Cloete and Conradie (1983:44) says in Britain at least 3 million students or quarter of the child population under the age of fifteen are growing in families of four or more children as group. They tend to be average; relatively underprivileged whatever the socio-economic level of parents financially there is often a drop in the standard of living since most children will stay with the mother who now depends on alimony which is not only reduced but also not reliable sources of income, even if she is earning a salary that is less than the previous joint income.

Psychologically it is difficult to help a child to understand the reasons for the breakup, so at a younger age, they will be bitter feeling towards parents. As a result the child performance at school drops and some therefore will drop out of school reason being that she comes from a disadvantaged family also where parents broke up this is evidenced by Williams (1976:27).

Steinberg (1996) “the consequences of dropping out are that they are unable to compete for jobs that pay enough to keep them out of poverty. Dropping out of school is strongly related to many troubling factors facing the students, but the most difficult one are the repercussions of leaving school. This include a low view an under estimation of the girl child within the society. Even her counterparts will develop an elusive relationship with the teenager (International Labour Organization, 2003). Apart from this, the parents tend to favour the educated child than the one who would have dropped from school irrespective of the reasons.

Most family financial favours will be given to the educated child especially if it is a male at the expense of the female child. At the end the female child will end up developing a dejected behaviour thus failing to take care of herself (Lloyd and Mench, 2006). This will result to the involvement of the teenager in criminal activities such as drugs. Hence the problem of school
dropouts among girls need to be solved because it is affecting people in multiple dimensions of their daily life and it is contributing to a rampant spread of diseases, abortion, crime, peer influence and social disorder. Ersado (2005) is of the idea that as peer pressure mounts on the school dropout due to pregnancy the end result maybe an attempt to abort if the parents fail to be supportive and considerate, subsequently such an action may lead to death.

2.9 Summary

This chapter focused on the causes and effects of school dropout among girls at secondary level. Most scholars highlighted that the causes are diverse and differ from one place to the next globally due to various reasons. However most of the studies carried out do not show exclusively all the negative effects of school dropout among girls as they focused on certain specific issues. The next chapter focuses on research methodology.
CHAPTER 3

3.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses the methods used to collect data from the sample and how the data was collected. The chapter focuses on the data collection method, research design, research instruments, data analysis procedure, sample, reliability and validity.

3.2 Research Design

According to, Kmnear (1998) research design is the basic plan guiding the data collection and analysis phase of the research project. Research design according to Leedy (2005) is a road map that depicts the direction format and theoretical structure underpinning the study. White (2000) says a research design includes the aims of the research, the final appropriate methodology, data techniques one intends to use and the chosen method of data analysis and the interpretation. The study however, adopted qualitative research design as the main research model. Elements of quantitative research design were integrated into the study to enhance the presentation and analysis of data.

Qualitative research design is usually adopted in social research in which human beings are the primary sources of data. It is a research design that is characterized by an intensive study of as many features of one or a small number of phenomena under investigation (Kmnear, 1998). Consequently, qualitative research proceeds inductively from the general to the specific meaning that the research did not only focus on the causes and effects of secondary school dropout among girls on the part of students, but also consulted other educational members such as teachers in order to have an in depth knowledge. The qualitative research design is considered appropriate in social
sciences for it aims at uncovering the respondents point of view from within the social situation they occur (White, 2000).

In addition, qualitative research design provides detailed appreciation of both the immediate interactional circumstances of events in the social world and the historical as well as cultural context out of which they grow (Leedy, 2005)

The qualitative research design is therefore appropriate for this study in that gender considerations were made in comparing the rate of school drop out between boys and girls (Dooley, 1995). Qualitative research design was adopted in this study because it is the most perfect in a study which involves human beings as primary sources of data.

3.3 Population

According to Chiromo (2009:16), “population is all individuals, units, objects or events that will be considered in a research project”. (Churchill, 1987) Population is the totality of cases that conform to some designated specifications. The population of the study included all the students at school A, teachers and school development committee members. It is from this population that the study was made.

3.4 Sample

Sample is defined as the smaller group or subset of the population selected from the population (Chiromo, 2009). A sample as defined by Gosh (2002) is a limited number taken from a large group (the targeted) for testing and analysis on the assumption that the sample can be taken as a representative of the entire target population. (Churchill, 1987), states that, “a sample that is
representative and carefully selected permits the researcher to make inferences and generalization and draw conclusion on an entire population by applying the evaluation to a sample.”

Descriptive research often uses a sample size of 10-20% of the population size since in qualitative research sample should not exceed this percentage (Kmnear, 1998). In the study the researcher used a sample of 1 secondary school out of the 12 secondary schools in Gweru urban. All forms were targeted at the school with each form having 10 students as participants in answering questionnaires, giving a total sample of 60 students. The study employed the use of 2 focus group discussions were each group consisting of 20 members equally divided into boys and girls summing to 40. Out of the population of school teachers only 6 class teachers were selected at the school for interviews. Only 3 School Development Committee members were interviewed to act as representatives for parents and society at large.

3.5 Research Instruments

According to Skouteries (2003), a research instrument is a tool used to gather data in a scientific investigation. The researcher made use of different instruments in order to reach valid conclusions such as questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

Respondents to questionnaires were students in this research. Dooley, (1995) defined a questionnaire as a set of questions that are used to draw conclusions and to collect data. Skouteries (2003) says a questionnaire is a document with pre-set questions sent to respondents to solicit appropriate responses about a given phenomenon. Information sought included the main causes and effects of teenage school dropout among students and the results of such action as well as impact on society. The questionnaires include a combination of both closed and open ended
questions depending on the amount of information required from students. Questionnaires were administered to students selected for data collection because they offer quick responses and save time for both the researcher and students.

Questionnaires were used to collect personalized information which is factual on the main causes and effects of secondary school dropout among girls in urban areas. Questionnaires helped unveil different causes of school dropout from one student’s point of view to the next which include issues such as early pregnancy, financial crisis, poor health, truancy and drug abuse. Therefore the use of questionnaires allowed for the collection of data from the ‘inner person’, which is factual and easy to standardize and analyze (Skouteries, 2003).

When respondents answered questionnaire documents anonymously they felt free to relay their views on the causes and effects of school dropout among teenage girls at secondary school level. They were able to give suggestions on the means to curb such causes. Since the concept of measuring a person’s attitude is tied to the individual, respondents had the liberty to express their perceptions without fear that the information will be disclosed to their counterparts.

3.5.2 Interviews

Respondents to interviews were class teachers and members of the School Development Committee who were interviewed by the researcher. Gosh (2002), defined an interview as a verbal technique for obtaining data. The use of an interview is fundamental in qualitative study because questions asked by the interviewer bring about the feelings, opinions, and behaviour that can be evaluated by the researcher (White, 2000). Sensitive and delicate observable facts which are often difficult to investigate were discussed in confidence and respect between interviewer and informant when using the interview as a research tool. 6 Class teachers were interviewed in order
to gather in depth information on the causes and effects of teenage dropout in urban secondary schools. School Development Committee were interviewed by the researcher with the intention to find out society’s perspective on the reasons behind school dropouts.

The interviews involved the acquisition of information through reading the respondents comments, facial and bodily expressions, gestures, reactions, feelings, attitudes, evasiveness and non-cooperation which are not usually captured by other forms of data gathering techniques (White, 2000). The unstructured interviews were conducted with class teachers with open ended questions that enabled the researcher to rephrase interview questions when an initial question was not understood or interpreted correctly. Secondly the interviewer sought clarity on responses that sound vague and ambiguous. An unstructured interview also allowed the researcher to ask questions as they arose during the dialogue. The interviews were held face to face.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussions

This research instrument was conducted with students who dropped their education either temporarily or permanently. The priority was to gather diverse views from these dropouts through discussion. Diverse perspectives were thrown in the open in order to pour out all possible causes and effects of school dropout among girls. According to Morgan (2008) focus group discussions are a relevant way to gather information from people with similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. 30 school leavers participated in focus group discussions. The researcher used them because they have an advantage of allowing participants in this case school dropouts to agree or disagree with each other. It provides an insight into a group’s perspective on the issue, the range of opinions and ideas inconsistencies and variations. In this respect school dropouts had a chance to talk to each other and share feelings on the ways to curb school dropouts
not only among girls but boys as well. The researcher ensured that group discussions were done with school dropouts as separate groups based on gender. Separating them in these groups helped to have gender related facts revealed including gender stereotypes without fear of intimidation from one sex.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection refers to the practical steps that the researcher follows soliciting for information from the research field (Purvis, 2011). The administration of data collection instruments was done after the researcher made an appointment with the school authorities.

Questionnaires were self distributed to the students and they decided whether to be participants in the research, their willingness to participate resorts to selection. The researcher explained the purpose of the research to the class teachers and if one was willing to part of the research a questionnaire was given to him or her to. The selection of students to respond to questionnaires was done through the use of simple random technique. Where necessary the researcher offered clarification of instructions and questions. Respondents were advised to answer questionnaires individually. In the case of students the researcher took time to clarify and give meanings of some words and sentence, were difficulties occur the researcher resorted to using vernacular for more clarity.

Through the use of judgmental or purposive sampling technique class teachers were selected for interviews. After getting the informed consent of each teacher in the sample a copy of the interview guide was given to each teacher to read. The researcher read one question at a time and waited for the response from the interviewee after being satisfied with the answer. The researcher proceeded to the next question making clarification were the interviewee seems to be losing focus of the
question. During all this time the researcher was taking done notes and at the same time observing gestures that were being displayed by the interviewee.

The researcher probed interviewees to elicit more information. Interviews were conducted with the first class teachers who showed a desire to be participants in the research. Stratified sampling technique was used for selecting members of the School Development Committee. They were interviewed separately in offices using interview guides prepared for them interchangeable a male teacher followed by a female one. Responses were recorded by the researcher on the interview guide while the interview was in session.

In order to enhance triangulation the researcher further used simple random sampling technique to select school leavers for focus group discussions. This helped in bringing out the causes and effects of girl child dropout at secondary school. The participants were both boys and girls in order to archive gender balance. These discussions were held without the knowledge of current or enrolled students since it would have led to the collection of biased information.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure

Data obtained through interviews was analysed qualitatively through content analysis that is description of what data revealed. (Dawson, 2002) says that this is the assessment of the information that would have been gathered from a research. In qualitative research design, data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organizing the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories (Hancke, 2009). Qualitative data was categorized into graphical data that include the use of charts and graphs according to the similarity of information. It is a systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesizing and interpreting to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest, (Hartt etal 2009)
In order to organize data collected from the school was coded to formulate a sorting or categorizing plan because this helps to break down the data into small, but homogeneous units. Data was categorized and ordered in relation to themes, topics and sub topics that reflect the demands of the research questions. Analysis was enhanced through comparing different dominant responses from one form to the other using the coded data on the questionnaires. Comparison of similar responses through description from the interview record book was used to analyze the data collected from School A through the coding system. Such data enabled the researcher to interpret systems and patterns therefore leading to a valid conclusion.

3.8 Reliability and Validity

According to Babbie (1997) reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique applied to the same object or subject, would yield similar results each time. Validity on the other hand refers to appropriateness of data to the subject in question. The researcher employed a pre-test of the instruments before the actual execution of them in the field for reliability. In this case the researcher made use of the pilot study. Jefferies (1999) says that a piloting of instruments is the first step before instruments are used. The researcher conducted a pilot test of research instruments using 5 students and 5 teachers from a local secondary school. After the pilot study adjustments were made were necessary on the questionnaires and interviews for teachers, committee members and students.

Triangulation was used, the use of more than two research instruments so that the weakness of one instrument is strengthened by another. Hartt et al (2009) the validity of questionnaires will be ensured through administering them simultaneously to respondents from the same school so that information contained within does not leak to other targeted groups before their turn to answer
questionnaires. Questions which address the same aspect were grouped together starting with closed questions and systematically arranged formulating a coherence so as not to confuse the respondents. During the conduct of questionnaires and interviews the researcher ensured that secure places were used and the environment free from noise that may disrupt the respondents whilst attending to the research instruments.

3.9 Summary

This chapter gave a clear understanding of how the research was done during field work and the actions that the researcher took during the research process. It outlined the research design, target population, sampling techniques, and the data collection procedures. The results were coded, edited and then analyzed to clearly depict the information. It also offered an outline of validity and reliability as well as the data analysis procedures undertaken by the researcher during field work. The interpretation and discussion of the results will be done in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 4

4.1 Introduction

All the data collected from the research field was arranged according to themes and research questions. Data collected through questionnaires will be presented in simple statistical form. These include tables, graphs and pie charts since the data can be quantified. Data that cannot be quantified is presented in the form of direct quotations, reported or discussed. After data is presented in simple statistical form such as graphs explanation follows basing upon the responses from targeted groups. The comparison of similar responses using the computer coding system has the date analysed through description from the interview record book.
4.2 Demographic Data

TABLE 4.0

n= 6 class teachers    n=3 school development committee members    n=60 pupils    n=40 school dropouts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Questionnaires distributed</th>
<th>Interviews conducted</th>
<th>Focus group</th>
<th>Num of respondents</th>
<th>Response rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Students</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/committee members</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School dropouts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During field work 60 questionnaires were distributed to students in order for them to answer and 40 school dropouts participated in focus group discussions conducted by the researcher. 6 class teachers responded to questionnaires, whilst interviews were conducted with 3 school development committee members. There were 40 school leavers who participated in focus group discussions;
these were separated into 2 groups equally based on gender. All this was done at school A in Gweru urban. The targeted groups were willing to cooperate with the researcher.

4.3 Causes of school dropouts among girls in schools around Gweru

The study focused on school dropouts on teenage girls within age range 13 – 20 years. Looking at the causes of school dropouts as a researcher I have found out that financial crisis, early teenage pregnancy, tension between teacher and child, truancy, failure in school and health problems are part of the causes of school dropouts among teenage girls in schools around Gweru, Zimbabwe.

Class teacher response on causes of dropouts among girls

TABLE 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial crisis</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truancy</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early teenage pregnancy</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure in school</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health problems</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension between teacher and child</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers highlighted that most causes are non gender related and were responsible for dropouts not only on the girl child side alone but include their male counter parts. In this respect they argued that financial restraints have been on the increase but affected mostly girls who unlike boys find it difficult to fund their education. This has been attributed mainly to the prevailing difficult economic situation.
4. 3 Financial problems or crisis

Financial problems as given by students and school dropouts

From the questionnaires distributed to students financial crisis or difficulties were cited as a major cause for drop outs in recent years. The financial crisis which reached its peak between 2007 and 2009 to the present has led to the gradual increase of school leavers. Children from poor backgrounds dropped out of school because their parent’s salaries were extremely below the poverty datum line. For example a form two student at School A dropped out because the father died and the mother had to take care of other seven siblings. The economically deprived child dropped out of school because she felt the need to find work or any source of income to help the family. One high school teacher at the school where this child dropped mentioned that

“low class parents tend to have a minimum involvement in their child’s academic performance, they regard school as an alien and hostile institution probably on account of their poor financial status families and thus are not likely to get involved with their girl child’s education”

This brings to limelight the fact that financial crisis in Gweru has taken aback a number of people especially the girl child since they are forced to drop out of school hence their future has been doomed.
Table 4.3 illustrates that 60% in the study indicated that the financial crisis influenced students to drop out of school, while 40% were of the idea that there are other issues other than financial crisis. Girls indicated that parents favoured reserving the little finances they have for their boy children than girls. They argued that parents portray boys as more important than girls. This explains why more girls drop out of school than boys something derived from cultural belief.

4.4 Truancy

From focus group discussions school dropouts reflected that peer pressure, absconding, drug and alcohol abuse constituted as causes of school dropouts in general but also to girl dropout in particular. This was supported with results from interviews conducted with class teachers who pointed out that unlike in the past were such miscellaneous was associated with boys. The involvement of girls in these vices has increased tremendously. Girls abandon education mostly due to peer pressure which results to pregnancy and absconding.
TABLE 4.4

N=60 all students n=6 class teachers n=3 school development committee n=40 school dropouts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Truancy</th>
<th>Student response</th>
<th>Teacher response</th>
<th>School development committee members</th>
<th>School dropouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absconing</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug and alcohol abuse</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were at liberty to point out that substance abuse such as alcohol and dagga is responsible for most school dropouts including girls. Due to this they were now in conflict with teachers and parents. Usually students would absent themselves saying they had not paid the fees, but in actual fact they were smoking dagga /mbanje because of pressure from peers and wanting to abscond from doing school work or attending classes. The students who have dropped out of school because of truancy have met bad company at school, the child meets such youngsters and because of an inability to adjust to life at school they seek companionship of the outcasts and become one of them. Most of the school development committee members mentioned that girl students dropped out of school because of peer pressure, absconing, drug and alcohol abuse, they are seen as social misfits who commit crimes, influencing others to take part.
4.5 Failure in school from focus group discussions

Failure in school as a cause of dropout as given by school dropouts

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>responses</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During focus group discussions with school dropouts one teenage girl said she dropped out of school because of continued failure in her academic work. Her performance was below average...
and this made her decide to abandon school. However boys were adamant to stay put in school, although others admitted that they dropped school because they are not academically gifted and were labelled dull by their counter parts.

From focus group discussions with pupils, girl students said they abandoned their education due to failure in their academic work. Most of the students said education is difficult and they felt discouraged by such developments. Poor school performance when a student results are below average resulted to failure at the end of the term. These kids became less interested in school and this in turn led to truancy and running away from home. Most of the delinquents failed at least once in school, results showed that these kids have maladjusted to what is required for a child to be in school. This was attached to the issue of bad or poor student teacher relations.

4.6.0 Early teenage pregnancy

Response from class teachers, dropouts and school development committee members on teenage pregnancy

Early teenage pregnancy is one of the major causes of school dropouts in schools around Gweru. As I interviewed a teacher said in Zimbabwe previously according to the regulatory policies of the Ministry of Education which seeks to regulate behaviour amongst students. It states that all students who fall pregnant must drop out of school in case they may influence others, however this have been revised to allow them back to school. It is believed there is nothing good that comes from their minds when it comes to advising their fellow colleagues. During the interviews the early teenage pregnancy victims and teachers mentioned that the girls are falling in love with sugar daddies or boys who mostly are dropouts. Due to pregnancy they leave their education either
permanently or temporarily. The study found out from school development committee members that teenage mothers generally did not have a good relationship with their boyfriends.

For financial support and emotional support they relied on their parents and guardians. Teenage mothers said early pregnancy was something they had not planned for. During focus group discussions the researcher found out that many teenagers who were pregnant regretted so much since they had lost a chance to achieve their careers.

4.6.1 Poor health

During interviews on school dropouts one senior class teacher said,

‘Poor health is one of the causes of school dropouts in school as it interferes with the child’s capacity for education. Good education predicts good health and disparities in health and educational achievements are closely interlinked.’

The fieldwork’s findings showed that some students do not finish school on time due to health problems. Some students’ health problems are associated with taking strong stuff like dagga and cigarettes causing their health to deteriorate from severe coughing and lung diseases to mention just a few. Other students have dropped out of school because of diseases like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. It was brought to limelight during the research that mental illness and emotional disturbances also account for a significant percent of girl child dropouts. These health problems also pose a significant rise in school dropouts indirectly by forcing young people especially girls to cope with physical illness of their parents and relatives. This imposes responsibility on the girl
child leading to the abandonment of education while they take care of their sick relatives and parents.

4.6.2 Data presenting school dropouts because of poor health

Response from class teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows clearly that poor health is one of the causes of school dropouts in schools around Gweru, Zimbabwe though it covers a small percentage. It is causing students to lag behind in terms of their education either the student herself is the one sick or taking care of a sick relative.

4.6.3 Tension between teacher and child or misunderstanding between girl student and teachers

During the investigation conducted the tension between teacher and child had been proved to be among the problems of school dropouts in schools around Gweru. Some students tend to dislike extra – curricular activities and they appear not to familiarise themselves with the syllabus. Teachers interviewed said students blame teachers saying they favour so and so if they see that child excelling in their endeavours. During focus group discussions girl child dropouts said their
fear of corporal punishment at school created enmity with teachers. Thus most students drop out of school to avoid these school related problems.

4.7.0 Effects of school dropout

Class teacher’s response on the effects of school dropout

Female teachers were of the idea that the most serious effects girl child dropout are socio-economic related. These dropouts are also associated with traditional beliefs and stereotypes. Those who drop school either temporarily or permanently end up in the streets dealing with drugs, a social issue and prostitution with the mandate of raising money. In fact female teachers alluded that there is a direct relationship on the causes and problems of girl child dropout. They said because when forced to abandon their education due to pregnancy they will need money to feed the child. This pushes them to engage in illicit activities that usually result to HIV and AIDS. The spread of HIV and AIDS is another effect of school dropout and was said by educators to be more prominent in urban schools. Tension between parents and girl students was also cited as another effect of dropout that leads to family disintegration.

Effects of school dropouts

Class teacher response on effects of school dropouts

During interviews all class teachers said that the major effects of school dropout include teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, spread of HIV and AIDS. They highlighted that family disintegration was another result of girl child dropout. Socio economic effects touch the community negatively
impacting its development and the nation at large. Due to dropouts among girls the community is robbed of vital knowledge necessary to sustain it. One class teacher said,

‘the main effect of school dropout is economic as these school leavers fail to get employment within and without the country contributing to nothing except an increase to unemployment’

Socially the findings revealed that girls who drop out from school become engaged in numerous vices such as prostitution and drug abuse. There is a relationship between these atrocities in order for them to make a living they turn to prostitution. Drug abuse and alcohol consumption are also sponsored from such activities which in turn include pocket picking.

PIE CHART 4.1
4.7.1 Effects of school dropout as provided by students and school dropouts

Students indicated that the effects of school dropout are mostly social decay through questionnaires and focus group discussions.

From the graph above students in the first group consisting of both boys and girls in forms 1 and 2 said social effects were limited as well as those in forms 3 and 4 represented by the middle bar graphs. However, forms 5 and 6 were of the idea that social effects were present. School leavers both boys and girls were not shy during focus group discussions to point out that dropouts among girls led to social crime and an increase in socially related problems. Girls pointed out that there were deemed as outcasts by most of society something that discouraged them to return to school. Such utterances were said to trigger anti social behaviour. One boy student said that,
‘when my sister dropped out of school due to pregnancy very few people wanted to talk with her including their parents and this pushed her into committing suicide because of rejection’

Advanced level students were of the idea that such a situation is pathetic and means that social neglect is a serious issue. When it is ignored the repercussions are devastating for the community and the family at large. Both school dropouts and students highlighted that drug abuse and prostitution were on the rise as a direct effect of both temporary and permanent school dropout among teenage girls.

Children who dropped out of school especially because of financial crisis said this impact badly in their lives as they become uncertain about life what the future holds for them. Most school leavers have resorted to involvement in illegal activities like pick pocketing within Gweru’s Central Business District bus rank. Some become murderers who stay within the outskirts of town waiting for passer-by’s so that they can get money for their upkeep. Surprisingly school dropouts mentioned that such illicit activities are even led by girl dropouts who initiate the process of stopping passer by’s because they are females the victims do not suspect them.

4.7.2 School development committee members’ response on social effects of dropouts

Committee members were of the idea that the society is decaying because of girl students who drop out of school for different reasons. They said that most girls change their behaviours totally and in turn start to influence others to drop out of school in order to join them in their miscellaneous activities. These activities include going to the clubs, drinking alcohol and taking drugs or substances. Their views further stated that such action have results to increased tension between parents and their teenage girls.
HIV and AIDS were viewed as disturbing social effects of school dropout among teenage girls by school development committee members. The reasons provided by these members were numerous but they emphasised that the spread of HIV and AIDS among teenagers is surprising but can only be accounted for due to school dropout.

**TABLE 4.5**

**4.8 School development members’ response on effects of school dropout**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIV and AIDS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early pregnancy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug abuse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Development Committee members live within the community hence they gave examples during interviews as displayed in the above table. They were also of the view that girl dropouts were more dangerous to society than boys because they could influence even persuade boys into more dangerous criminal activities such as stealing and robbing. From their responses the community is the one that has to bear all these troubles and problems but has little to offer in order to eradicate the situation.
4.9 Summary

The findings of the research are not very different from other researches in some countries, although there are minor differences on certain aspects it is because of focus. The demonstration made by students on the knowledge of causes and effects of school dropout among teenage girls both positive and negative is a clear indication that they are familiar with adolescence school dropout. Most of what other authorities confirmed in chapter two was related to the findings of this research. The findings of the research show effects of teenage girl dropout and its main causes for schools within the urban area. The next chapter is on the conclusion and recommendations.
CHAPTER 5

5.1 Introduction

The chapter acts as the last summary of the entire research based upon the results obtained from the study. It presents the summary, conclusions and recommendation relating to this study. Also it highlights ways to curb dropouts among teenage girls.

5.2 Summary

The research focused on the causes and effects of girl child dropout in Zimbabwean urban secondary schools. The research identified that girl child dropout in urban secondary schools due to a number of reasons. The effects of these dropouts are diverse and seem to be on the increase. From the findings by other researchers there is a relationship between the causes and effects. The research found out that most of the causes are economically and socially related especially monetary issues. Within this sphere social aspects such as culture and tradition also contribute but a lesser extent. Teenage pregnancy was identified as another cause for girl child dropout in urban secondary schools, one that seems to be on the rise despite enormous campaigns against early teenage pregnancy.

Related to teenage pregnancy another cause for dropout is peer pressure. This is supported by most studies carried out by other researchers in urban areas within Africa states. Truancy which encompasses all these mentioned social related causes include other issues as drug abuse and teacher student relations. From the findings these factors contributed as causes of teenage girl child dropouts as well as poor health either on the part of girl child, parent or guardian.
The effects of dropout among girl child are many but the most highlighted from the research include teenage pregnancy (Mawere, 2012). This is a usual phenomenon in urban based secondary schools due to peer pressure and exposure to sex related material. Other effects revealed are sensitive like prostitution which is socially unpopular within the realms of society. This is associated with spread of HIV and AIDS which are other effects of school dropouts. Besides the fact that most schools conduct HIV and AIDS studies including School A the spread of the diseases is on the rise.

The study was carried out on one secondary school in Gweru urban in the Midlands Province. Students, teachers and school development committee members made the population of the study. The researcher conducted the study using descriptive research design. Questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions were administered by the researcher to students, committee members and teachers. 6 class teachers were selected for interviewing as well as 3 school committee members to represent parents. 60 students answered questionnaires distributed by the researcher. To achieve triangulation 40 school dropouts were engaged in focus group discussions in order to collect sufficient data.

Ways to curb girl child dropout include close student monitoring, limitation of student time spent on trivial issues by both parents and teachers. Educating parents and students on the main causes and effects of school dropout is another means to reduce dropouts. Awareness campaigns within the urban schools and the community at large should increase not seize. The government should ensure the upholding of laws that punish those who take advantage of economically disadvantaged girls and subject them to unprotected sex of drug abuse. Such cases should be immediately reported to law authorities in order for quick action to be taken before things get out of hand.
5.3 Conclusions

Economic difficulties are the major causes of dropouts in urban schools according to the research’s findings. Lack of adequate financial resources is a major cause for teenage girl dropout this is coupled by cultural belief with stereotypes that pushes parents to ensure that boys are educated than girls. This is because boys are deemed as more important to the family than girls. Girls abandon their education due to drug abuse, peer pressure or pregnancy. The school is within the high density this accounts for the rate of drug abuse since in the ghetto people these days mind their own business. HIV and AIDS is another cause of girl child dropouts since teenage girls are engaging in unprotected sexual activities while at a tender age. Nevertheless, the study findings lead to concluding that there is direct relationship between the social causes of girl child dropout and social effects.

The study also concluded that most girl students preferred leaving school before its completion because they will be discouraged by both parents and teachers. Thus, continued academic failure and lack of encouragement results girls dropping secondary education despite the level or form (Fawe, 2001). Those that would have done so would opt that their better gifted brothers continue with education at their expense.

5.4 Recommendations

Basing on the findings of the study the researcher recommends that;

- The Ministry of education should be supportive through sending teams to educate students on the main causes of school dropout.
➢ School authorities should monitor girl child movements and activities at school with increased alarm.

➢ All websites that expose students to non academic stuff should be removed by the school authorities in order to limit sexually related behaviour.

➢ The school administrators should severely punish students caught or reported to be involved in socially unaccepted activities such as drug abuse and alcohol consumption.

➢ Parents should control their girl children’s movements at home and monitor the type of friends they interact with.

➢ Society should be alerted through awareness campaigns in order to report immediately miscellaneous activities by girl students either to the school or parents.

➢ Girl students should be encouraged academically by both teachers and parents in order for them to improve.

➢ Teachers should conduct lessons to educate students on the dangers of abandoning their secondary education before its completion.
REFERENCES


Atayi, J. B. (2008). *Disabling Barriers to Girls’ Primary Education in Aura District (Uganda) – An Intersectional Analysis*. A Research Paper presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of Masters of Arts in Development studies


Glick & Sahn, 2000; Kingdon, 2005) *All educational perspectives in dropouts* Educational Journal


Holcamp, G. (2009). *Researching the girls’ dropout rate in Malawi. Why girls dropout of primary schools and in what way this rate can be reduced*. Master Thesis Special Education.


www.manushiindia.org/pdfs_issues/...03)/9.%20Book%20Review.pdf


APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

My name is Vincent Zvenhamo; I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education doing a Post Grad Diploma in Education. This questionnaire seeks to collect data on the causes and effects of school dropout among girls at secondary level. The researcher seeks for your honest opinion and material from your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of this research. Do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire.

SECTION A: Student Background Information

Please tick where applicable and fill the blank spaces provided.

1. Form

2. Sex
   Male
   Female
SECTION B

1a) At your school are there any reports of dropouts among girls?

Yes ☐ No ☐

b) If yes, how many leave school before completing ‘o’ level

....................................................................................................................................................

....................................................................................................................................................

c) Do parents report these dropouts to school authorities?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2a) How many girls have dropped school due to pregnancy?

....................................................................................................................................................

b) What are the social causes of school dropout among girls?

i) ....................................................................................................................................................

ii) ....................................................................................................................................................

iii) ....................................................................................................................................................

c) What should be done to reduce these social causes for school dropouts?

....................................................................................................................................................

....................................................................................................................................................
3a) What are the traditional and religious causes of school dropout among girls at your school?

i) ........................................................................................................................................

ii) ........................................................................................................................................

b) State the negative effects of school dropout among teenage girls?

i) ........................................................................................................................................

ii) ........................................................................................................................................

iii) ........................................................................................................................................

4a) Are there any cases of boys dropping out of school?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

   b) i) If yes, how many?

       .................................................................................................................................

   ii) What are the reasons for such dropout?

       .................................................................................................................................

       .................................................................................................................................

5) How often have school authorities addressed the issue of school dropout?

   Very Often ☐ Rarely ☐ Not At All ☐

6) List types of misbehaviour related to school dropouts done by girl students?

   i) ........................................................................................................................................
ii) ...........................................................................................................................

iii) ...........................................................................................................................

7) How do school authorities deal with such students?
...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

8) What measures should be put in place to reduce school dropout among girls at secondary level?

i) ...........................................................................................................................

ii) ...........................................................................................................................
APPENDIX B

UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

My name is Vincent Zvenhamo, I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education doing a Post Grad Diploma in Education. This interview seeks to collect data on the causes and effects of school dropout among girls at secondary level. The researcher seeks for your honest opinion and material from your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of this research.

1. Extent of school dropout among girls

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

2. Causes of dropout among girls

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

3. Negative effects of dropout among girls

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

4. Measures to reduce dropout among teenage girls
5. Nature of misbehaviour tendencies

6. The ways in which they are dealt with

7. Attitude of students towards school dropout

8. Attitude of parents towards school dropout
APPENDIX C

UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

My name is Vincent Zvenhamo; I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education doing a Post Grad Diploma in Education. This interview seeks to collect data on the causes and effects of school dropout among girls at secondary level. The researcher seeks for your honest opinion and material from your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of this research.

1. Extent of school dropout among girls

.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

2. Major causes of dropouts among teenage girls

.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

3. Social results of dropout among girls

.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

4. Economic effects caused by girl child dropout
5. Measures to reduce dropout among teenage girls

6. Nature of misbehaviour tendencies

7. The ways in which they are dealt with

8. Attitude of students towards school dropout
9. Attitude of school leavers towards other students


APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

My name is Vincent Zvenhamo, I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education doing a Post Grad Diploma in Education. This focus group discussion seeks to collect data on the causes and effects of school dropout among girls in Gweru urban secondary schools. The researcher seeks for your honest opinion and material from your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of this research.

QUESTIONS

1a. Why did you drop school before the end of your secondary education level?

b. Are there any school dropouts who returned to complete their education?

c. What are the main economic causes of girl child dropouts?

2. At what forms do most girls abandon their education?

3. In what ways do girl students break school rules which lead to dropouts?

What are the effects of school dropouts on both the girl and the society?

4. How is your relationship with your parents or guardians after you left school?

5. What has the society done to reduce girl child dropouts?