UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

ENROLMENT AND RETENTION OF THE GIRL- CHILD AT THE BASIC

SCHOOLLEVEL WITHIN THE AMASAMAN CIRCUIT OF THE GA

WEST MUNICIPALITY

OF THE GREATER- ACCRA REGION

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A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES, FACULTY OF SOCIAL

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PHILOSOPHY (SOCIAL STUDIES) DEGREE

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I, Barbara Amoako Kissi, declare that this thesis with the expectation of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature : …………………………………………..

Date   : …………………………………………...

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervisions of the Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's name : Eric Ananga (PhD)

Signature   : …………………………..

Date   : …………………………

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely daughters Yenma and Nsoma Abambire Bawa

for their understanding, support and love during this study.

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GLOSSARY

CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity
FSP	Female Stipend Programme
JHS	Junior High School
MOE	Ministry of Education
THR	Take Home Ration
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

The study examined the view of people including the girl-child, parents and teachers on the enrolment and retention of the girl-child on school at the basic level, in Ga-West Municipality. It considered the socio- economic characteristics of the girl-child that affect her education and other factors that motivates or de- motivates the girl-child to study in school. Qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing phenomenological design. Samples were drawn from the Amasaman circuits. A sample size of 25 respondents made up of girl-child officer, parents, teachers, female students and female drop outs in the municipality were used. Data were analyzed under themes that emerged from research questions. Data collected through interviews revealed that poverty; broken homes and teenage pregnancies were paramount causes of girls dropping out of school. Other factors which will motivate a girl child to choose to stay home or go to school were the absence of girl friendly facilities, performance of the girl child, and age of the girl and the size of the school. Like parents, the support given by teachers is important. It was found out that attitude of teachers discouraged some girls from staying in school. The use of female role models to increase enrollment and retention was also identified to be significant. Public education and reducing cost of education were also identified as significant mechanisms to support the girl-child in the municipality to enroll and stay in school. Based on these findings, strategies to combat the phenomenon of dropouts in the municipality have been recommended.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

The girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen (18) years of age. This is the age before one becomes a young adult. This period covers the crèche, nursery or early childhood (0 – 5 years), primary (6 – 12 years) and secondary school (12 – 18years). During this period, the young child is totally under the care of the adult who maybe her parents or guardians and older siblings. The girl-child is ductile and, builds and develops her personality and character during this period (Offorma, 2004).

As cited by Ocho (2005), education is the process through which individuals are made functional members of their society. Education is therefore a means of preserving, transmitting and improving of the culture of the society. Thus, in every society, education connotes the acquisition of something good, and something worthwhile. A keynote address by Offorma in 2004 on girl child education in Africa, indicated that, the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help him/her develop physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically, is the pivot of education. Children are future leaders of tomorrow and mothers are guardians of the future, and the first aim of every family and society should be to raise healthy and productive individuals who are physically, psychologically, socially, and mentally well developed. These can be achieved through the education of the girl-child who is the mother of tomorrow.

In 2000, the United Nations declared that by 2015, all countries should achieve the millennium Development Goals. The goals 2 and 3, which are related to women empowerment, emphasized that every child of school going age should be educated. Hence the education of the girl- child cannot be over looked. As a fundamental rights of the individual, article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December, 1949, stipulated that, everyone has the right to education, which shall be free at least at the elementary and primary stages; elementary education shall be compulsory while technical and professional education shall be made generally available. It further indicated that education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit, and parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education which shall be given to their children (Nwangwu, 1976).

A normative question is asked: Why should everyone have the right to education? The answer to this question is: The child is born helpless and has to rely entirely on the parents and other older members of the society to survive and satisfy his or her growth needs in all their ramifications. The degree and quality of participation in the life of any society depends to a large extent on the degree and quality of its educational system. This will enable its members perform their political and other citizenship duties and exercise the rights pertaining there to effectively. Indeed, Dr Aggrey, one of the foremost educators in Ghana remarked that "if you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a whole nation". Education is critical to economic and social development. A child who has received a good education is more likely to develop into a better parent, make informed decisions, earn a better living, adopt new technologies, cope with crisis and be a responsible citizen (World Bank, 2011).

The above summarizes the essence of education to the girl-child and indeed, to every individual. This effectively calls for special attention to be focused on the education of the girl-child. No nation can afford to toy with the education of her citizens, especially, the child, who will be the father or mother of tomorrow, because education is the bedrock of all facets of development. Kotwani (2012) stated that female education is the need of the hour. In his view without educating the woman of the country, we are unlikely to hope for a developed nation. He further stated that if we want to make democracy successful, women must be educated because they are real builders of healthy homes. This implies that the education of the girl child is a necessity and should be given all the attention it deserves.

The former first lady of Ghana, (Mrs.) Ernestina Naadu Mills (2010, April 2nd, Monday's edition, Daily Graphic) noted that, investing in the education of the girl-child is a pre-requisite for the development of any nation. According to her, the Ghana government is making all efforts to increase the enrollment of girls at the basic level, giving the necessary support for the development of their human resource capacity. Traditionally, in Ghana parents generally prefer to educate their male to female children because they believe that the male children will get well-paid jobs after their studies, and will be better able to take care of their families (Obeng, 2009). This view is supported by similar comments from the past United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, who commented that in Africa, when families have to make a choice, due to limited resources, of educating either a girl or a boy child, it is always the boy who is given that opportunity.

It has been reported in BBC News (2006), that African patriarchal societal viewpoint favours boys over girls because boys maintain the family lineage. Additionally,

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despite the introduction of free primary education in the country which accounted for an increase in enrolment, a sizeable number of children, especially girls, still find themselves out of school owing to a number of reasons. These reasons include: demands for their labour in the homes such as assisting in looking after their young siblings, child marriage, house chores, death of mother, and caring for sick members of the family. UNICEF (2003) reported that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of girls out of school each year has risen from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002. A report by Asare (2009) revealed that the complexities in the challenges to attain gender parity in basic school enrolment, retention and completion, and appreciating that the existing quantity and quality defects in girls" education, is a result of structural deficiency deeply rooted in policy and practice. He added that working to remove barriers to quality girls" education should not only be seen as a statutory duty in fulfillment of girls" right but a building block to sustainable development. In his opinion, the need for Government and Civil Society to collaborate to safeguard gender interests in basic education is immediate and imminent for Ghana to remain on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on education and gender.

Considering the enormous role of women in the upbringing of children, it is quite evident that the basic educational foundations begin with the mother at home. Any degree of illiteracy exhibited by a mother can affect the care and maintenance of the child. For instance, a mother who cannot read and understand drug prescriptions will automatically administer wrongly and this can result in all sorts of complications and problems. It is therefore imperative for the girl-child to have formal education, which will not only be beneficial to her and her family, but also go a long way to enhance the growth and development of the nation. From this assertion it is clear to that the importance of the girl-child education cannot be over-emphasized.

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Although much has been done by governments since independence to improve the caliber and existence of girls' education in Ghana, there is still much needed to be done. The largest hurdle that needs to be overcome before all Ghanaian girls can get the education they deserve is the prevailing social attitudes that discourages or minimizes the importance of education for girls. This study is therefore focused on investigating the phenomenon of low enrolment and retention of the girl- child in school in the Ga West municipality.

1.2 Statement of problem

My personal experience as a teacher over the past ten years in four schools within the municipality gave me an opportunity to have a close scrutiny of records in the municipality and these reflect low enrolment and high school absenteeism among girls, though equal opportunity is created to give access to both boys and girls. The statistics from the Municipal Education Directorate over the period of five (5) years gives an indication to the fact that about 50% of girls are only retained before the SHS level (Ga West Municipal Education Directorate Report, 2010).

Available statistics from the Ghana Education Service and Ministry of Education indicate that as at 2007/2008 academic year, girls‟ enrolment for primary level stood at 98% at the primary, 75% at the junior high school, and 44% at the senior high level. This statistics show that the enrolment rate of girls in school is very low especially at the senior high level.

There have been a lot of sensitization programmes to abate the problem, but the objective of enrolling and sustaining girls in school has not achieved the desired result. According to the annual performance review of the Municipal Directorate (2011), gender parity index has been biased against the girl child with figures reading

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at 0.93. The incidence of some girls" terminating their education very early has become a major problem in the study area.

It is against this backdrop that this study aims to identify and explore factors that account for low enrolment and retention rate of the girl- child in school in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality.

1.3 Purpose of study

The major purpose of this study was to explore the factors that militate against the enrolment and retention of girls in school; and the support mechanisms put in place to increase enrolment and retention of girls in the Ga West Municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To investigate the demographic and socio- economic characteristics of girls" who enroll and stay in/out school.
2. To establish the factors that motivate girls to stay in of school.
3. To establish the factors that de- motivate girls to stay out of school.
4. To ascertain the support systems and mechanisms which are in place to positively influence the girl-child to stay in school.

1.5 Research questions

The study sought to address the following research questions:

1. What are the demographic and socio- economic characteristics of girls who enroll and stay in/out of school in the Ga West municipality?

2. Which factors motivate girls to stay in of school?

3. Which factors de- motivate girls to stay out of school?

4. Which support systems and mechanisms are in place to support girls within the municipality to stay in school to achieve positive learning outcomes?

1.6 Significance of study

In a society committed to fighting poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), girls" education should be given a priority. There are evidence that demonstrates strong benefits of girl education, which span across a wide range of areas including maternal and child health, social stability, environmental and economic growth. Girl education and the promotion of gender equality in education are critical to self and national development, and policies and actions that do not address gender disparities miss critical development opportunities. Girls" education is a significant variable affecting children"s education attainment and opportunities. A mother with a few years of formal education is considerably more likely to send her children to school (Offorma, 2008). The study aims at giving insight in to the factors that militate against the enrolment and retention of the girl child in school in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality.

It is hoped that, the study will help inform government and non-governmental bodies in policy planning relating to girl education. This investigation will inform policy makers of education such as the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service on the need to restructure policies on girl child education for ultimate results. The study will also give some indication on the effectiveness of the support systems and mechanisms that exist in the municipal.

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The work will assist in evolving alternative strategies at retention of girls in school. It will also contribute to academic discourse and add to the literature on girl- child education, which may generate hypothesis for further research on issues affecting female enrolment and retention in the Ga West Municipality.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The study is limited to the enrolment and retention of the girl- child in Ga West Municipality. The study is also confined to the Amasaman circuit though the Municipal has six (6) circuits. Also, the large size of the circuit, coupled with poor road network may serve as a hindrance during the collection of data.

1.8 Limitation

There was difficulty getting access to dropouts and seeking their consent to be involved in the study. This delayed the analysis of data. In as much as this limitation was overcome eventually it delayed the submission of the thesis.

1.9 Operational definition of terms

This section deals with the definition of some important terms in order to lay proper perspective for subsequent discussions.

Girl- child: The girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen (18) years of age. During this period, the young female child is totally under the care of the adult who maybe her parents or guardians and older siblings.

Dropout: A student who leaves school before completing the academic year in a cycle in which she/he is enrolled.

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1.10 Organization of the study

The report of the research is in five chapters. Chapter one includes the introduction of the study, the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, the purpose of study, the significance of study, delimitation, limitation, definition of terms and the organization of the study.

Chapter two (2) reviews the literature related to female enrollment and retention. It also describes the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. This is done under three (3) broad areas. These are: the demographic and socio- economic characteristics of girls who enroll and stay in/out of school then, factors that motivate and de-motivate the girl child to stay in/out of school and lastly systems and mechanisms in place to support girls to stay in of school.

The third chapter describes the methodology that was employed to collect data for the study. These include the research approach and design, population, sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, pilot study, data collection procedure and data analysis procedures. Chapter four looks at the results and discussion of findings, whereas chapter five provides the summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework and a review of related literature on girl- child education. The areas discussed under review of related literature were;

1. Demographic and Socio- economic characteristics of girls who enroll and stay in/out school.

2. Factors that motivate/de- motivate girl to stay in/ out of school.

3. Systems and mechanisms that support girls to stay in school till completion.

4. Conceptual framework

5. Summary of literature review

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Social Learning Theory

The study adopted social learning theory of Albert Bandura (1977) which states that behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. Bandura (1977) believes that humans are active information processors and think about the relationship between their behavior and its consequences. Children observe the people around them as they behave in various ways. Bandura (1977) in his explanation of social learning theory indicated children"s learning is heavily reliant on observation. To Bandura, children are likely to imitate those they admire and like, or those whom they identify themselves with in some way. Owusu- Mensah and Ammisah (1998) expatiating on this school of thought observe that children learn

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how to respond to a wide variety of situations by observing others and modeling or imitating their behavior.

According to Bandura (1961), children are surrounded by many influential individuals, such as parents within the family, characters on TV, friends within their peer group and teachers at school who serve as models. These models provide them with examples of behavior to observe and imitate. Children pay attention to these models and encode their behavior which at later time may imitate the behavior they have observed. Nonetheless , they may do this regardless of whether the behavior is „gender appropriate‟ or not but there are a number of processes that make it more likely that a child will reproduce the behavior that its society deems appropriate for its sex.

To begin with, the child is more likely to attend to and imitate those people his/her perceives as similar to his /herself but it is more likely to imitate behavior modeled by people of the same sex. Consequently, the people around the child will respond to the behavior it imitates with either reinforcement or punishment. It must be noted that, if a child imitates a model‟s behavior and the consequences are rewarding, the child is likely to continue performing the behavior and vice versa. This according to the social learning theorist is known as reinforcement

Reinforcement can be external or internal and can be positive or negative. For example if a girl- child is rewarded for getting good grades at the end of the academic year or being regular at school, that reinforcement is said to be external, but feeling happy about being rewarded is an internal reinforcement. The theory indicates that, a child desiring for approval will behave in a way which it believes will earn approval. This way the child is motivated to continue with the deed.

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Positive or negative reinforcement may have little impact if the reinforcement offered externally does not match with an individual's needs. It may be noted that reinforcement either positive or negative, should lead to a change in a person's behavior.

Subsequently, the child may also take into account of what happens to other people when deciding whether or not to copy someone"s actions. In observing the consequences of other people"s behavior and the child is motivated to imitate the behavior it has seen reinforced and avoid imitating the behavior it has seen punished. This is known as vicarious reinforcement.

This relates to attachment to specific models that possess qualities seen as rewarding. The motivation to identify with a particular model is that they have a quality which the individual would like to possess. Bandura, believed that identification is different from imitation as it involves a number of behaviors being adopted whereas imitation usually involves copying a single behavior.

2.2.1 Implications to the study

Everybody has the right to education but the rights of girls to education is one of the most critical of all rights yet some are denied this significant right for several reasons. Albert Bandura"s social learning theory suggests that children learn by observation and imitation. This implies that if a girl child is surrounded by people who have negative attitude towards education, the tendency of the girl- child forming such an attitude is high. Likewise, if an appropriate model is place in the girl- child's environment, also influeces the attitude of the girl- child. This makes the caliber of people in the girl-child"s environment very significant as they serve as model for the child to copy. For instance, if the model perceives girl education to be important as

just like boys education, he/she will put in his/her all to get the girl child to enroll and stay in school. This could be seen in the preparedness of the model to take up the responsibilities that come with educating the girl child.

This is worsened when the passive model is of the same sex, in this case a female (the mother or other females) in the girl-child‟s environment. Bandura stipulates that the child is likely to imitate the behavior of a model of the same sex. The implication is that, if the female model in the girl-child‟s environment is not supportive of girl‟s education, thereby showing negative attitudes towards school then the girl-child is likely to see herself in those females and taking after such behavior.

The role of parents and teachers in the process of getting the girl child to enroll and stay in school cannot be overlooked. One significant role is reinforcing whatever behavior the girl child portrays. This implies that, if a girl is encouraged for doing well at school, the likelihood of her staying on is high. However, tact should be taken in punishing the girl-child, as it might end up waning her interest in school. To collaborate this, Bandura, states that, a child is likely to take into account what happens to other people when deciding whether or not to copy someone‟s action. This way, punishment serves as vicious reinforcement as the girl child will desist from behaviors that will end up in receiving punishment.

Identification with a particular model for imitation is another assertion by Bandura in explaining social learning theory. The girl child is likely to identify with a model which possesses qualities that she may like to possess in the near future. Thus, if the girl child is exposed to females who are educated and in high positions, they will be motivated to stay in school to be like them or more. This way, the girl child adopts different behaviors aiming to achieve her goal.

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2.3.1 Demographic and socio-economic characteristic of girls' who enroll and stay in/out school.

This section reviewed literature on indicators in the girl- child's immediate environment which affect enrolment and retention in school. They were discussed under following headings:

1. Socio- cultural features

2. Economic constraints

3. Educational and occupational background of parents

2.3.1.1 Socio-Cultural Features

Family is the most important aspect of the Ghanaian society and the bonds among lineages is great and roles are very profound. Socio-cultural attitudes and traditions often determine the status of females in the society, Pauline and Tembon (1999). Traditionally, women have been restricted to raising children and taking care of the home, while men are able to work in the formal sector.

A study by Bardley (2000) indicated that gender stereotyping both at school and at home contributes to low enrolment and retention. In her paper, "barriers to girls" education in Ghana" she identified that girls are considered less intelligent than boys, and the test books testify to this. According to the research, over burdening girls with house hold chores is a contributing factor for girls staying out of school. In her observation, she noted that girls are responsible for the vast majority of house hold chores and little time is set aside for school work and home work. Juggling through certainly gets too much on the girl child and school becomes the last priority. This indicates that it is unreasonable to think that children can learn while they are physically and mentally exhausted. Obviously for many of these girls, hours spent in

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school becomes a time for resting not learning, and this invariably will affect their performance and lead to the girl not enrolling at all or leaving school before completion.

A study in Honduras by Kimberly, (1998) showed that the cost of schooling was a major factor in keeping many girls out of school. The study showed that most parents find investment in girl-child education wasteful as she will eventually marry. Consequently, Kukreti et al. (2007) studied the drop out problem among Indian school girls with the main objective as finding out various reasons of school drop-out among girls in rural areas. The research found that drop-out rate among rural girls in Kathua District was 80%. To add to this, the research showed that majority of the parents, 72%, engaged their girls in house hold chores due to family circumstances such as poor economic conditions which compel the girl child to stay out of school to help in the house hold activities or in the field and factories. In furtherance to this some parents, 35% believed that instead of wasting time on education, it was fruitful for girls to engage in some vocational activities. Besides, they were of the view that any economic gain that results from educating the girl will go to her husband and the husband"s family. Kukreti et al. (2007) noted that; the poverty of parents, teenage pregnancy, parental irresponsibility, and desire for money, peer influence and cultural practices as causes of drop out among girls.

In a study in Kenya which represents a typical case in Africa, Kimani (1991) observed that efforts to educate Massai girls in the Narok district of Kenya have been thwarted by early marriages resulting in high rates of girl drop-out.Anyagri"s(1993) found that parents withdrew their daughters from school to be given out as maids and for marriages in order to collect bride prices to support their large extended families. To

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buttress Anyagri"s findings Abukari (1996) also stated in his report findings on causes of low level of education among Muslim girls in the Nanumba district that majority of parents withdrew their daughters for marriage purposes at the ages between 15 and 20 years., From these contributions, it is possible that females will therefore see themselves as important primarily for procreation. This is engraved in the minds of girls and causes them to fulfill societal expectation, by aspiring towards what society expects of them at the expense of education.

According to Gibson (2004) most of the factors that militate against the girl-child access to education are socio-cultural.This assertion is analogous to the finding of Agambilla (1984) in his study of marriage and its effects on girls" education in the Kusanaba educational circuit in Bawku East Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. He noted that some parents view literate girls as being more liberal with the use of their sexual organs than illiterate ones. These revelations, indicates that many parents are discouraged from supporting the education of their daughters since the appreciation of female education is minimal in the society.

Religion, especially Islam, is usually associated with low female participation in schools, Shani (1996). He stated in his findings in religion and education that Muslim parents prefer Islamic Education for their daughters, for fear that western education promotes in girls, values and behaviors which are contrary to Islamic ethics. For example, Yidana (2000) reports that some Muslim parents prefer to send their children to learn Koran instead of sending them to a regular schools to learn, read and write in English. Formal education is however seen as satanic and drives children to engage in vices which lead eventually to teenage pregnancy.

In an interesting study by Yeboah (1997) on how households made decisions about girls" primary schooling in Ghana, he found that there were some favoring of boys over girls, but also gender only became an issue to families when they were obliged to make a decision on who should have access to school. According to the research, interviews conducted on fifteen families in both Accra and Koforidua laid to bare that culture, quality of school, gender, sex role stereotyping, and perceptions of which the child will most likely look after a parent, were critical variables in family decision-making around girls" education. The literature therefore suggests that, the viability of girls" education may be affected in terms of distributing resource as boys are considered more capable of taking care of other members of the family especially their parents at old age.

These socio-cultural features cause parents to see the formal education of a girl as a deviation from accepted societal norms and practices. From the above finding, there is no doubt that, some families perceive formal education as inappropriate for girls and is consequently not valued. These cultural attitudes most at times are so entrenched that young girls of school age feel that they need only to learn how to cook.

2.3.1.2 Economic constraints

Poverty is widespread and affects families and schools alike. Parents have to cover the shortfalls due to the devastating impact on household income and educational systems (Asomaning Argarroal, Grieco & Turner 1994). Boakye Donkor (1997) highlighted this idea by stating that due to high cost of education most parents find it difficult to provide for their wards education. In such a situation the little resources are therefore spent on the boy, with the notion that the girl will be married off and be catered for by the husband. This view point is supported by Sekyere (2002), when he observed that

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some parents still consider education for girls as a waste of resources because the girls would end up as wives in men"s homes.

Most parents are of the view that girl"s demands where education is concerned are more than boys. Confirming the above, Davidson and Kanyuka (1992) in a study showed that in Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, and Zimbabwe, the cost associated with schooling are higher for girls than boys. This is due to the high cost of girls" uniform. For modest reasons, girls are not likely to go to school in torn or ill-fitting uniforms. Again, for safety sake parents tend to spend more on transport for girls for fear of abuse or exploitation on their way to school. To those parents educating a boy is less of a burden compared to the girl. As indicated in a study in Zimbabwe, girls who had no under wear or sanitary protection remained at home while menstruating and this undermined their confidence on return to school and ultimately contributed to early dropout of school (CAMFED, 1994).

In an investigation in Awutu-Senya district by Boateng (2005) on the causes of girls dropping out in public schools, observed that about one-half (48%) of those who drop out alluded to lack of financial support as a major reason. In the same study, child labor justified for a fifth of all drop outs. Boakye et al (1997), for example argued that poverty, costs, pregnancy, early marriage, among others were precarious factors influencing participation and retention in schooling. Avotri (2002) asserted that, faced with affordability constraints, parents tend to send boys to school over girls.

Public education in Ghana is assumed to be tuition free. Nonetheless, the cost of non-tuition in education could be scaring many parents and guardians. As cited by Oduro (2000), the high cost of schooling is the commonest reason given by some parents for

non-attendance to school by their girl children. He alluded to the fact that cost of providing for food and clothing, school levies such as P. T. A. dues, extra class fees, and registration fees are the three largest expenditure facing households. In a study by Yidana (2000) on the main factors accounting for the disparities in male and female enrolment ratios and low retention of female students in the Mamprusi Districts of Northern Ghana, he noted that poverty, unemployment and lack of a regular income were often cited by parents as the main reasons for their inabilities to support the education of their girl child. As noted by Murard (1998, cited in CAMFED 2012), the reasons for parental choices are complex and varying. When income is low, the son is more likely to be school; they are compelled to withdraw the girl child once demands are not possible to meet. This supports the idea that high cost of education wanes the interest of most parents because they find it difficult to provide for their female wards education. In such a situation the little resources are therefore spent on the boy, with the notion that the girl will be married off and be catered for by the husband. Hence the official and unofficial fee associated with schooling negatively correlates school participation and the girl child bears the brunt.

2.3.1.3 Educational and occupational background of parents

Numerous studies have shown that parental level of education has an impact on girl child education. For instance, the higher the level of parents" education, the higher the educational participation of daughters

In a report, Cervantes and the Crowther as cited in Fobih (1987) indicated that parental financial constraints and academic difficulty among others, accounts for low enrolment and retention of girls in school. The Crowther report sampled 10,000 dropouts using father"s education and occupation status as correlated and concluded that the number of dropouts whose parents came from professional and managerial

positions are fewer, as compared to higher dropout figures for fathers with high level illiteracy and its economic correlate of poverty and low occupation category. The home could therefore be a potential predisposition factor for girls not remaining in schools.

A survey of teachers, university students and secondary school students in Ghana, which examined the educational background of parents of students, illustrated the multiplier effect of female education. Female students who had mothers with higher levels of education were themselves given opportunities and funding to promote their own education to higher levels. Only a very few female students at the university and secondary school levels had mothers with no education at all or education limited to primary school (Daily Graphic of 15th May, 1989). The implication of this fact is that, for the multiplier effect to work, it is important for females to be educated beyond the primary level.

Similarly, Oxfam report (2000), argues that in families with educated mothers, daughters are more likely to go to school, producing a vicious effect. These may be true since these mothers know and understand education and its importance. In a qualitative study by Mensah (1992) on attitude towards female education, a correlation was made between level of education and attitudes towards girls" education. It was found that parents with little or no formal education tend not to appreciate the importance of schooling for female children.

Akyeampong (1992) explored the factors that impede females from attaining higher levels of education. He concluded that, girls who aspired to the tertiary education level were those whose parents had either secondary or tertiary education. To

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emphasize parental educational influence on girl education, Hashim (2004, cited in Hashim, 2005:17) describes how the likelihood of children‟s enrolment was based around a complex mix of factors which included the education levels of parents, particularly mothers, the ability to pay the direct or indirect cost of formal education, and the types of livelihoods the households were pursuing. She further stated that the prospect of a child‟s enrolling in school, is an outcome of the different ways in which households are organized, the manner in which household members time is occupied, and the types of asserts they invest in, including human capital. Tansel (1997) highlighted in his research findings on the relationships between schooling attainment and parental education in Ghana and Cote d‟Ivoire and found that, households are credit constrained in their schooling investments decisions. From the above arguments, it is clear that the girl child‟s education is the least on the priority list of most illiterate parents since studies suggests that parental education, particularly the mother‟s education has big influence on children‟s education thus attendance and achievement. However, there are parents who admire the outcomes of formal education and will go at length to give their female children the opportunity irrespective of the cost.

2.3.2 Factors that motivate and de-motivate girl to stay in/ out of school

This section reviewed literature on issues outside the immediate environment of the girl- child (the home) which affect the enrolment and retention of the girl in school. Issues discussed were as follows:

1. School factors
2. Gender biases
3. Role model

2.3.2.1 School factors

Situational Analysis of Children and Women (2000) states that the school related factors are important determinants of whether children enter and remain in school. The accessibility and child friendly nature of school, the relevance of the curriculum, sex roles, and teacher – pupil relationship influence how parents, as well as students make schooling decision. This indicates that accessibility is not only a matter of availability of schools or distance to school, but the entire school environment. Curriculum developers, educational policy makers and implementers as well as school authorities have a greater role to play to ensure that the right of the girl-child to education is feasible.

In Ghana, Osei (1991) points out that the maximum distance a child has to walk to school in principle is three kilometers. However, in rural areas and some parts of the country, for example the northern part of Ghana where population is very sparse and schools scattered with few transport facilities, the majority of children walk this distance and more before they get to school. She claims that, this might explain why gender disparities are high in such areas. Children, particularly girls, find it difficult to withstand the routine walking to and from school due to fatigue. Herz (1991) confirms this when he quotes the findings of Robinson and others, that in Egypt, the location of the school within one kilometer of a community resulted in an enrolment rate of 94% for boys and 74% for girls, where distance was two kilometers boys" enrolment fell only slightly to 90% but girls" enrolment fell 64%. There are two dimensions to this concern, one relates to the distance and sometimes returning to the house feeling very hungry, dejected and tired. This situation certainly, puts children especially girls at a disadvantage, since many parents will not like their daughters to walk long distance along unsafe footpaths sometimes in the bush to go to and from school. Distance is

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significant for both rural and urban girls, but more so for rural girls. Most of the girls who live far away from school and have to walk are discouraged. In addition, it is typical for parents to feel a duty to protect their daughters and so may decide to keep them at home if they feel the school is too far away.

An important factor contributing to low enrolment of girls is the non-availability of girls" specific structures such as urinals and toilets (MOE, 1995) and dormitories (Atakpa, 1978). Ananga (2011) argues that school exerts powerful influences on people"s achievements, and dropout rate. A hostile environment, lack of supports at school and school practices and processes that children consider unsuitable could results in girls leaving school. It is true that governments make provision for the education of their citizens however, the provisions made, most of the time do not take cognizance of the peculiarities of the girl-child. In that case the viability of the girl-child gaining access to education may be ruined. In a keynote address on Girl child Education in Africa at the Federation of the university of Womwne in 2009, Offorma indicated that, research has shown that millions of girls do not have access to school despite the concerted efforts to push the course forward and that most public schools in Africa are often substandard, especially in rural and isolated areas. This implies that, even the few girls who are lucky enough to get access to education often receive one of poor quality and limited duration. In her opinion, many schools in Africa are nearly destitute, with classes being held in crowded, poorly constructed structures, in which there is very limited access to paper and pencils, and even less access to text books and computers.

In support Kraft (1995) also indicated that school buildings, curriculum, furniture, toilet facilities, textbooks, well stocked library, management, quality and motivation

of teachers are critical issues that deny some pupils and students access to school. Nyarko (2011)added his voice to the above saying, that lack of separate toilets for girls is a major cause of absenteeism for girls in schools. Adequate toilet facilities require the provision of separate and decent toilet and urinals for boys and girls in the school. The absence of toilets for girls does not only affect school attendance, but also contributes to the denial of their right to dignity and quality education.

UNICEF, (2012) indicated that, girls may face a poor and hostile school environment and that a school environment that may be acceptable to boys may be hostile to girls. Physical and sexual violence against women that is common in many societies is reflected in the school environment in a number of countries. The consensus implied in the literature suggests that the lack of specific facilities for girls in school can influence both parental and the girl- child decision to enroll or withdraw a girl from school.
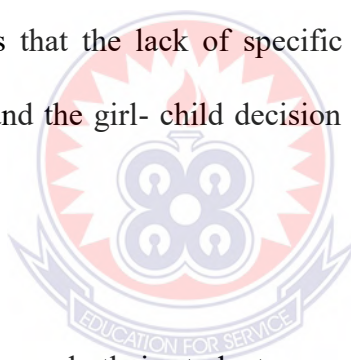
2.3.2.2 Gender biases

The teacher‟s attitudes towards their students are a reflection of the broader biases about the role of women in society and the academic capacity of girls. In Ghana, FAWE (1996) MOE (1995) and Osei (1991) mention poor teacher perception as a factor that can lead to poor performance of girls in basic education. Osei (1991:74) for example writes that, "Teachers just like parents, perceive girls to be different from boys" and as such hold different expectations for them. Thus, some teachers tend to give harsher punishment to boys than they give to girls. In this way they indirectly make boys realize that more is expected of them, whiles girls who may have nobody to guide them or role models for inspiration, may think they will always be favoured. As such they may not work as hard as the boys. Similarly, a survey conducted by

Braimah (1984, cited in CAMFED 2012) revealed that, Togolese high school teachers were unanimous in their view that female students were neither intelligent nor successful, whereas male students possessed positive social and personal goals and abilities. The study highlighted that a pattern of systematic discouragement and discrimination in teacher behavior was displayed towards girls.

 Evidence from Sierra Leone, Malawi, Guinea and Rwanda indicates both male and female teachers believe that boys are academically superior to girls (David &Kanyuka, 1992). For example, a sample of Malawian teachers characterized their female students as shy and unlikely to raise their hands in class. Eighty percent (80%) believed that girls are better behaved than boys and 90% were of the opinion that boys are academically better than girls. Most of the reasons given to explain why boys are academically superior to girls were negative response about the girls rather than positive characteristic about the boys. They include girls‟ lack of ambition, loose morals and early pregnancies (David & Kanyuka, 1992). Gordeons (1993) in a study of teachers and pupils in Zimbabwean secondary school arrives at similar conclusions to those in Malawi. Perhaps her most important findings is that while there was a general awareness among teaching personnel about poor performance among girls, the causes were not perceived as being the responsibility of the school or the teachers. In short, the stereotyping of gender roles in schools by teachers affects their own expectations and treatment of girls. In the study, there was a remarkable consistency among male teachers in the acceptance of female roles as being primarily domestic and the belief that the man is the breadwinner and provider. Many teachers saw it as their duty to prepare students for this role (Gordeon, 1993).

Osei (1991), reports that in Ghana, the main textbooks which are read in all schools at the basic educational level contain a number of pictures and information which can

directly influence the thoughts and aspirations of females. In the English language for Ghanaian schools for example, stories and pictures about people whose occupation demand high educations such as statesmen, lawyers and doctors are all mostly depicting men while females are shown either as mothers in the house caring for babies, selling in the market or at best primary school teachers and nurses. The author concluded that these hidden messages convey certain rules and norms which can influence the choices made by the girl child. In similar analysis of gender biases of primary school textbooks in Ghana, Bardley (2000) asserts that women are associated with inferior roles including selling, cooking, washing of clothes, caring for the baby and sweeping the compound whiles men are associated with security guards, engineers, doctors, carpenters, welders and butchers. This according to her does not motivate females to aim for higher educational achievement.

The common trend which runs through the opinion expressed on gender biased curriculum materials, suggests that females unlike their male counterparts are not given very favourable images in most of the textbooks. The consensus and impression gathered here are that such biases are inimical to academic aspiration of females. One way to help girls benefit is to promote and ensure the presence of female teachers in the class. Female teachers are taught to be effective, promoting girls" educational participation, access, persistence and achievement for a variety of reasons.

2.3.2.3 Role model

Female teachers and other educated role models play a variety of important roles. Their presence, particularly in rural areas, has been credited with making parents and girls perceive the school as a safe environment, as they provide role models for young girls, (Offorma, 2008). Additionally, she stressed that, the extreme shortage of female

teachers in most African countries cannot be resolved unless there is a substantial increase in the number of girls completing secondary and tertiary education.

The Academy for Educational Development stressed that inadequate number of female teachers to serve as role models serve as barriers to access education. This assertion confirms a study in Yemen (USAID 1988) on girl education which indicated that, the reluctance of parents to send their daughters to school by grade four (4) or five (5) was due to lack of female teachers. According to the study, this was overcome by introducing female teachers into the classroom and the retention of the fourth and fifth grade girls correlated highly with the presence of female teachers. For example, at one rural school, a precipitous drop in girls" enrolment in grade 4-6 was attributed to the departure of the female teachers who taught these grades (Caudra et-al, 1988).

2.3.3 Mechanisms and systems that support girl education

Literature reviewed under mechanisms and systems to support the girl- child to stay in school included two broad themes. They were:

1. School intervention
2. Out of school (Community participation)

2.3.3.1 School Intervention

Evidence from the progress report of the Girls education unit of the Ministry of Education shows that Ghana has embarked on a number of policy initiatives in her wake to enhance quality and equity UNICEF (2005). For instance the 1992 constitution of the republic stipulates clearly in article 25 that all persons, irrespective of their gender… shall have the right to education. To add to this, the 2003 Education Strategic Plan for both 2003-2015 and 2010-2020 addresses the issue of quality and equity especially gender.

A study conducted in Bangladesh found that Female Stipend Programme (FSP) saw girls" enrolment rise to around double the national average, (Ahmed and Ahmed, 2002, cited in CAMFED 2012). As of 2003, the programme was nationwide and 55–60 % of girls and boys were enrolled in secondary school (Khandkher, Pitt and Fuwa, 2003). This strategy has a positive effect on retention. In an independent research, Brazil"s Bolsa Escola stipend programme shows that it virtually eliminated dropouts (Morley and Coady, 2003). In Ghana, there have been a number of scholarships specifically for girls which have impacted greatly on the education of the girl child. Chapman, Emert and Osei, (2003, cited in CAMFED 2012), evaluated scholarship program by Child scope and highlighted that, overall increase in girls" primary school enrolment in programme areas over those nationally was 0.6% (1.1% compared to 1.7%), difference in enrolment rates boys to girls in programme primary schools was narrowed to 14.2% from 18.4%, The same pattern was seen at the JHS level, though initial disparities were greater and the reduction in the disparity was smaller. The overall difference in enrolment rates for boys and girls decreased by 2.2% from a 1999/00 gap of 31.6%, it dropped to a 29.4% gap in 2001/02. There is no doubt that scholarships/stipends could emerge as an effective strategy for girls" education in terms of enrolment and retention.

A retrospective study in Egypt by Rugh et al (1991) presented a clear evidence of reducing or eliminating the costs for girls travelling to and from school. In his findings, he highlighted that in the case of Egypt, constructing new schools in rural areas during the 1980s boosted girls" enrolments by 60%, and boys" by 19%. In a randomized evaluation on the effects of the establishment of village-based schools in Afghanistan, dramatic improvements in enrolment and test scores, particularly for girls was found. The study was based on 31 villages and 1,500 children. The findings

indicated that the more closer a primary school is to the village, enrolment for girls is higher. For example, a school located within a mile, from the village, recorded high enrolment for girls, that is, 19% as compared to 13% for boys (Burde and Linden, 2009). The data shows that when there is a school in the village, the gender gap in enrolment is 4 percentage points compared to 21 percentage points in control villages. To collaborate the above findings, a study by CAMFED in 2013 noted that reduction or elimination of costs for girls travelling to and from school to ensure their safety is a viable mechanism to improve enrolment and retention.

Wearing a school uniform is often compulsory, so providing free school uniforms helps with the indirect costs of schooling. For instance the Government of Ghana launched its Free Uniforms Programme in 2009, aiming to reach 1.5 million children in 77 of the most deprived districts across the country (CAMFED, 2012). Singling out the school where the programme was launched, enrolment rose by 75%, out of which girls" enrolment rose by 55% (Kwao Larbi, Anglican primary School records, 2009). Researcher was a staff of the school and could attest to the excitement on the faces of children for being in "good" uniforms and parents as such.

School feeding and other health-related programmes, as an incentive to come to school, can improve concentration and growth, and enhance girl education. School feeding and Take Home Rations (THR) are widely used strategies internationally, targeting attendance as well as learning outcomes. Given the current global food …crisis school feeding has a new prominence (Bundy et al, 2009a). A 2010 WFP Country Programme Evaluation reports that Take Home Rations (THR) for girls in 18 districts increased completion rates over the three year period of implementation (2006/07-2008/09) from 64.6 % completion at primary to 76.3 %. The report notes

that this followed the general trend in the population of girls in northern Ghana. There was also progression of girls through the primary school grades, which suggests a reduction in the dropout rate of female students, particularly in the upper primary school. Seidu‟s(2003, cited in Akyeampong 2007) offers an alternative view on school-feeding in Ghana. He argues that although food aid is an incentive for girls to enroll, attend and remain in school until completion, creating more awareness of the importance and benefits of girls‟ education was equally important in improving girls‟ participation in basic education. This study highlights the importance of looking at the synergies between school feeding programmes and other interventions, as well as the process of engagement with the community.

Miguel and Kremer (2004) noted that de-worming programmes in Kenya have dramatically raised attendance of both girls and boys. It will therefore not be far from the truth to conclude that, School-Based Health Programs coupled with school feeding enhances girls‟ participation in education.

Gender friendly infrastructure, Child protection and safety- in terms of training, development of codes of conduct, and school guidelines, are mechanisms that may go a long way to ensure girls‟ safety in the school environment. Dunne (2007), in a robust qualitative research in Ghana and Botswana argues that school initiatives on counseling…, did make a difference. In the year 2010 CAMFED‟s programme in Ghana addressed the issue of child protection in its work with school counselors and teacher mentors combined with advocacy by district officials and mothers‟ support groups. The survey indicated some differences in attitudes in schools which are new to the programme and those where the programme is well-established, suggesting some impact on awareness and attitudes. The evidence showed that 57% of girls in

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school where programme is established agreed that girls invite sexual advances, compared with74% in schools that are new to the programme.

A robust, qualitative research in Ghana, Zimbabwe and Malawi by Leach et al (2003) suggests that girls" clubs are an effective way of increasing the level of assertiveness and confidence in girls to enable them speak out on issues of abuse in schools. In Ghana, a number of programmes have included a gender sensitive infrastructure component such as Childscope, which included latrine building and provision of water. This package project had modest gains in access … retention or transition, or learning outcomes. However, community drama durbars and radio programming created larger awareness about the issues on reducing teenage pregnancy at school and increasing girls" assertiveness. The establishment of girls" clubs as well as the establishment of a support system should receive urgent attention from the Girls Education Unit in collaboration with actors in this area (Ofori-Bah, Kudzi and Donney, 2004).

One key to quality education is teacher recruitment, training, placement and attendance. (Huisman and Smits, 2009) asserts that programmes aimed at recruitment and training more female teachers and the use of complementary teaching staff in large classes enhances gender balances in the classroom. In their recent study in India of primary school enrolment in 30developing countries found that girls" enrolment, but not boys", was positively associated with the percentage of female teachers in the district. However, they further cautioned that if these female teachers are trained, this „gives an extra boost to test scores". In addition, they noted that, at the JHS, more qualified as well as more female teachers, help in increasing enrolment and retention.

To this end there is no doubt that institution and implementation of policies which aim at addressing gender equity, create better learning environments for girls through the provision of separate latrines, employing more female teachers, and providing a more gender-sensitive curriculum has positive impact on girl education

2.3.3.2 Out-of-school (Community Participation)

Education which is an important building block in promoting the participation of girls‟ particularly has traditionally low female participation rates. Increasing community awareness and responsibility in addressing some of the barriers to education had impressive results in strengthening Community Ownership and Participation through activities by and for the community for and about girls‟ education, and promoting positive attitudes and local resource mobilization support girls in obtaining an education.

A case study by Sutherland-Addy (2002) on an extensive evaluation of the girls‟ education activities in Ghana since 1987 particularly, highlights community divisions hindering community library projects and other community sensitization activities. However, she notes that the way in which divisions impacted negatively on wide ranging strategies for girls‟ education; from school feeding to scholarships suggests a need for more, not less, investment in community relations. She also points to the need to focus on the process of engagement and accountabilities to communities as critical success factors.

The role of the community and parents in enhancing girl education cannot be overemphasized. Family involvement in education has been identified as a beneficial factor in young children‟s teaching (Griffith, 1996). Parental involvement at school

can be associated with greater school work. This stresses the fact that parents are the pivotal stakeholders of education.

To add to this, higher levels of parent involvement in their children‚'s educational experiences at home (e.g., supervision and monitoring, daily conversations about school) have been associated with children‚'s higher achievement scores in reading and writing, as well as higher report card grades (Epstein, 1991). Other researchers have shown that, community as well as parental beliefs and expectations about their children‚'s learning are strongly related to children‚'s beliefs about their own competences, as well as their achievement (Nyarko, 2011). Parents as well as communities who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, attending Policy Council meeting) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents and from communities with low school contact (Parker el al., 1997). The implication is that the beliefs and aspirations of the girl child will either motivate her to see possibilities beyond the impossibilities and enroll and stay in school till completion or give up and view education as a mere waste of time for the girl child. However, through intensive sensitization on the importance and the need to send the girl child to school will enhance community participation which in no doubt develop positive attitude to the education of the girl child. Dolphyne (1991) advocates changing parental attitude to girls‚' education, the establishment of more girls secondary schools, and the strengthening of guidance and counseling at all levels of the educational structure, as a way forward in girl education.

The literature suggests that the involvement of the community in the education of the girl child is vital and cannot be undermined. If children whose communities or parents get involve in their schooling, demonstrates greater social competences and had higher scores, then parents of girl children have a crucial role to play in the enrolment and retention of the girl child in school.

2.3.4 Conceptual Framework

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                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │ Status of the girl child │
                    │ (in or out of school)    │
                    └──────────────────────────┘

 ┌── Demographic/ socio-economic ──┐        ┌── Other factors ──┐
 │  ┌────────┬──────────┬────────┐ │        │ ┌────────┬───────┐ │
 │  │ Socio- │          │Parents'│ │        │ │        │Gender │ │
 │  │cultural│ Economic │educat- │ │ ◄────► │ │ School │biases │ │
 │  │        │          │ional   │ │        │ │        │Role   │ │
 │  │        │          │and     │ │        │ │        │model  │ │
 │  │        │          │occupa- │ │        │ │        │       │ │
 │  │        │          │tional  │ │        │ │        │       │ │
 │  │        │          │backgr- │ │        │ │        │       │ │
 │  │        │          │ound    │ │        │ │        │       │ │
 │  └────────┴──────────┴────────┘ │        │ └────────┴───────┘ │
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 ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
 │ Mechanisms and systems to enhance enrolment & retention │
 └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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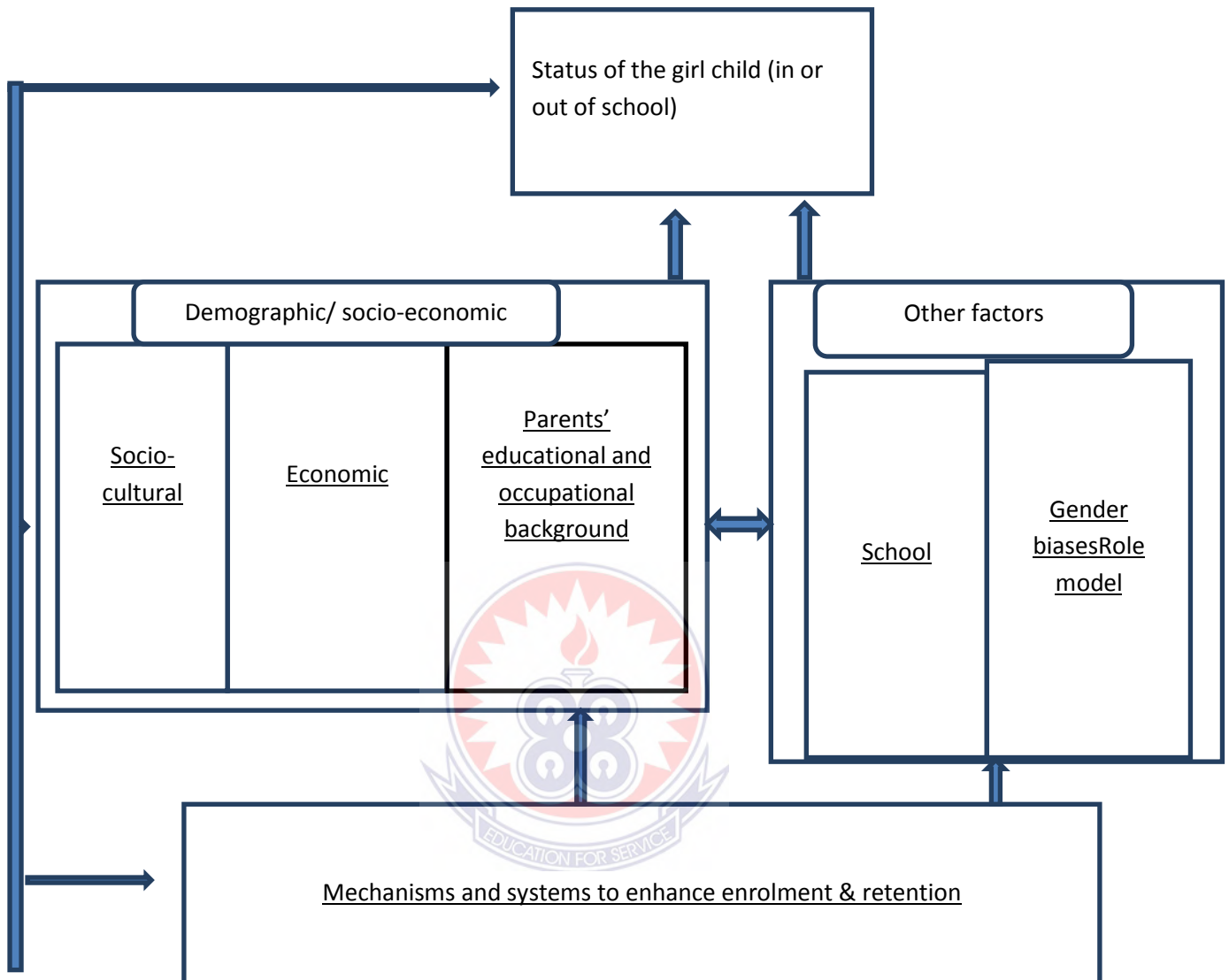
Conceptual Framework of the Study (Adapted from Hyde et al, 2005 with modifications)

The literature review provides the conceptual framework for the study by analyzing the Ghana situation within African context on two assumptions, firstly, Ghana is a sub-Saharan nation, and most of its experiences on girl child education are similar to other countries in the sub region. Secondly, using the experiences of different countries provides a wide perspective for analyzing the reasons and processes that interrupt girl education in the Amasaman Circuit of the Ga West Municipality.

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According to Gibson, (2004) most of the factors that militate against the girl-child access to education are socio-cultural. Similarly,Bardley (2000) indicated gender stereotyping both at school and at home as contributory factors to low enrolment and retention. Girls are considered less intelligent than boys, and the text books testify to this. As reported by Kukreti et al. (2007), poverty of parents, teenage pregnancy, parental irresponsibility, and desire for money, peer influence and cultural practices as the causes of drop out among girls. Additionally, Emebet (2003), on the basis of the findings of different studies, pointed out that the major factors responsible for the low participation and high dropout rate of children could be categorized as family related, cultural and school related factors. Such factors include economic constraint, marriage by abduction, load of household chores, school distance, sexual harassment and early marriage.

The adoption of this framework enabled researcher investigate and reveal the relationship between the factors that influence enrolment and retention, and assess mechanisms and systems that supports female participation in education especially at the basic level. Hence, the conceptual framework diagram of this study indicated above.

2.4 Summary of the Literature

This chapter discussed the theoretical framework underlying this work and reviewed related literature on the research topic and the conceptual framework. Literature was discussed under the following strands, demographic and socio- economic characteristics of girls who enroll and stay in/out school, factors that motivate and de-motivate girls to stay in school, and systems and mechanisms that support girls to stay in school till completion. The conceptual framework indicating factors which fight

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against the girl- child in her bid to acquire formal education and how best the girl-child can be supported to stay in school to enhance enrolment and retention, were also discussed.

There were indications with regards to literature reviewed that most works on girl education focus in the rural areas or less privileged regions especially those from Ghana. However, this work looked at girl education in the heart of the country, that is, in Amasaman which is in Accra, the capital of the country to highlight on issues affecting the girl- child, with regards to enrolment and retention in school.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used for the study. It consists of the research approach, research design, the population, sample and sampling technique, procedures and instruments for data collection and data analysis. Validity and reliability issues were also discussed.

3.2 Research approach

The study used the qualitative approach to explore the issues that affect enrolment and retention of the girl- child in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality. Crisp (2000) indicated that in qualitative approach, the researcher relies on views of respondents, ask broad questions or general questions and also collect data consisting largely of words from respondents and analyze them. The researcher chose the qualitative approach because the researcher sought the views of the respondent (pupils, dropouts, parents, teachers and education officers) about issues that affects the enrolment and retention of the girl- child at the basic level of education.

Again, this is because the approach lends itself to exploring individual and group perspectives in complex human phenomena. Qualitative approach seeks to make sense of personal narratives and experiences (Mouton, 2001). The researcher collected data from respondents who have experienced the phenomenon in the study area. In other to do this effectively it was critical to hear them share their views, feelings and lived experiences through interactions and discussion. Qualitative research lends itself to such an approach.

3.3 Research design

A research design is a strategic framework for action (Durrheim, 2002). The research design used is the phenomenology. Creswell (1994) described phenomenology as human experiences that are examined through the detailed descriptions of the people being studied. Manen (1990) added that, what first of all characterizes phenomenological research is that it always begins in the life world. He further describes phenomenology as oriented toward lived experiences and interpreting the text of life. The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences by describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (Manen, 1990).

This design gave the researcher the opportunity to collect data from persons (girl-child) who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. It consists of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). He subsequently, noted that it is important to take note of

1. The lived experiences of the individual
2. The view that these experiences are conscious ones.
3. The development of descriptions of the essences of these experiences

This design was found convenient because it gave the researcher the opportunity to describe lived experiences of the girl-child with regard to enrolment and retention in the Ga West Municipality. The design was also found appropriate as it illuminated the specific and identifies what actually influences the enrolment and retention of the girl-child at the basic school level. Then again, the researcher was able to gather deep information and perception from the perspective of the research participants. As

asserted by Moustakas (1999), phenomenology is not just description but also seen an interpretation process in which the researcher makes an interpretation of the meaning of lived experiences of participants.

Phenomenological studies require data collection from the individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Often data collection in phenomenological studies consists of in- depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants Moustakas (1994). Though other forms of data such as observations, and journals may also be collected. Polkinghorne (1989) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Using interviews enabled the researcher to delve deep in to issues regarding the phenomenon under study and also helped to bracket personal experiences of researcher as much as possible and dwell on the lived experiences of participants. Manen (1990) says that bracketing personal experiences is essential though may be difficult for the researcher to implement due to the interpretive approach of phenomenological design.

This gave the researcher the opportunity to understand the experiences of the girl-child. In this study the investigator used both one-on-one and focus group interviews to understand the lived experiences of the girl- child with regards to enrolment and retention at the basic school level. The design also provided a platform for the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of participants and examine them for a better understanding of issues concerning enrolment and retention of the girl- child in the study area.

Analyzing data in phenomenological studies involve building on the data from the research questions and going through the data to highlight "significant statements", sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants

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experienced the phenomenon Moustakas (1994). For effective data collection and analysis, all interviews were recorded and transcribed, the researcher then developed clusters of meaning from significant statements from interviews into themes. The themes were then used to write description of what the participants experienced (textural description) and how the participants experienced the phenomenon (structural description). As indicated by Polkinghorne (1989, p. 46), it is essential for a reader of the findings of a phenomenological study to come away from the phenomenology with the feeling, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that". This aided better understanding and interpretation of the experiences of the girl- child with regards to enrolment and retention

Limitations of this research design are that it is restricted to a particular setting and the findings of the research cannot generalized though may be adopted in similar settings. In this study, the researcher was not seeking to generalize the findings of the research but to bring to bear issues affecting enrolment and retention of the girl- child in the study area. Bracketing personal experiences is essential though may be difficult for the researcher to implement due to the interpretive approach of phenomenological design (Manen, 1990). Thus, the researcher needs to decide how and in what way his or her personal understandings will be introduced into the study.

Phenomenogical design is advantageous because it provides a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals. Knowing these common experiences can be valuable for therapists, teachers and policymakers among others Manen (1990).

3.4 Study area

The study was conducted in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality in the Greater Accra Region. Ga West municipality has an estimated population of 262,742 (2010, population and housing census). The municipality has six circuits, namely; Pokuase, Mayera, Ofanko, Ayikei Doblo, Kotoku, and Amasaman. Amasaman is the municipal capital. For the purpose of the study Amasaman circuit was used. The circuit has six basic schools, three (3) of which was selected for the study.

3.5 Population

The target population comprised JHS (pupils and drop outs), parents, and teachers of the Ga West municipal basic schools and officers of the Ghana Education Service Directorate of the Municipality in Greater Accra Region.

The accessible population however comprised, dropout school girls of basic schools (JHS), JHS pupils, the parents of both dropouts and pupils, JHS teachers and head teachers, as well as an officer from the girls" desk of the Education Directorate of the Ga West Municipality.

3.6 Sample and sampling technique

A sample of twenty five (25) was selected for the study. Multi- stage sampling technique where two or more sampling strategies are use in selecting participants for a study was used to select the sample respondents, which include, six (6) JHS drop outs, six (6) JHS pupils, three (3) parents of drop outs and three (3) parents of pupils selected and three (3) teachers from selected schools as well as three (3) head teachers of the schools selected. An officer from the girls" desk of the educational directorate was also part of the respondents. Twenty five (25) respondents were chosen for the study because it was manageable, accessible and geographically convenient and gave

way to an in-depth application of the instruments. This is in view of the caution by Creswell (2005:2004) that "a large number of interviewees for qualitative research, in particular will result in superficial perspective…, gather the relevant data from relevant individuals to learn and understand the central phenomenon". Polkinghorne (1989) also recommends that for better descriptions of participants" experiences it is viable for researchers in phenomenology to interview from five (5) to twenty (25) individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. In this vein, relevant data was gathered which led to both textual and structural descriptions of the lived experiences of the girl child.

For the purpose of the research, the researcher found it necessary to use non-probability sampling technique in selecting participants for the study in the Ga West Municipality. These people were selected because it was assumed they would be able to give the information needed on enrolment and retention of the girl child at the basic school level in the municipality. Three (3) schools in the Amasaman circuit were purposively selected. Purposive sampling was used to also select two (2) JHS pupils each from selected school. Purposive sampling was chosen, because as considered by Welman and Kruger (1999), it is the most important kind of non-probability sampling to identify primary participants. This gave the researcher the opportunity to sample female pupils whose friends or colleagues might have left school. This is consistent with Maxwell (1998) who posits that in purposive sampling, particular settings, persons or events are deliberately selected for information which otherwise could not be obtained elsewhere. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) say in purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of the typicality. This was also because as described by Groenwald (2004), it is the most important kind of non-probability sampling to identify the

primary participants of a research, participants who have had experiences relating to the phenomenon being studied.

Two (2) dropouts were also selected using the snowball technique. This technique was considered because of the sensitivity of being a dropout and so to avoid the stigmatization attached to drop out. It also gave the participants the opportunity to come out without being intimidated. Additionally, the researcher was able to get the required samlped for the study. As indicated by Sarantakos (2005) that, the process continues until you get the require sample size for the study or reach a saturation point. Snowballing technique, according to Greig and Taylor (1999, cited in Kusi) creates an opportunity for the researcher to expand the sample by asking one participant to recommend other. In all six drop out were used . This is because of the difficulty in getting access to drop- outs who were willing to participant in the research.

Three (3) parents of selected pupils and dropouts were also purposively selected. As recommended by Creswell (1994), it is the most manipulative way of building up a sample… to the needs of the researcher. This way the researcher had the opportunity to select who to include in the study since all twelve parents of the girls were not going to be used for the research. Again, Gay and Airasian (2000) point out that qualitative researcher generally rely on purposive selection of participants. These participants are selected so that they can provide rich data concerning the research topic. Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling procedure in which researchers intentionally select individuals" and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2005).

Again, purposive sampling was used to select an officer from the girls" desk at the Municipal Directorate as well as head teachers of each school. This was in line with the purpose of the research and enabled the researcher to have first-hand information on the state of the girl child as well as programmes and policies geared towards improving enrolment and retention of the girl child at the basic level of education in the Municipality. Using purposive sampling implies that the respondents involved in the study were the specific people from whom data needed for the study could be required.

Due to the large number of teachers in the selected basic schools, the researcher used convenience sampling technique to select one (1) teacher each from each of the three (3) schools selected for the study. As indicated by Weiler (2012), convenient sampling gives the researcher the opportunity to select respondents who were available at any particular moment. This way the researcher is able to assess who should be included in the sample (Kusi 2012). The researcher chose these individual because they were available and willing to talk.

3.7 Instrumentation

3.7.1 Interviews

In this study, interview schedules were used as an instrument for data collection. This tool was considered because it was appropriate for phenomenology designs. Additionally, it offered the researcher the opportunity to gather pertinent data about the participants. Moustakes (1999) states that to fully describe how participants view a phenomenon, researchers must bracket out, as much as possible, their own experiences. Interview gave the researcher that opportunity to set herself aside and concentrate on the lived experiences of participants

The nature of the interview was semi structured and conversational. In the interviews, the researcher included probes to aid further exploration of the line of questioning. This helped to explore and develop views of respondents and to prevent respondents from going off the main line of questioning (Rodgers, 1999).

Questions based on the research questions in chapter one guided the interviews. This is in line with what Robson (2003) says that interview is used as the most preferred means of gathering information or collecting data which has direct link or bearing on the research objectives. One- on- one interview was used for the dropouts and parents of the dropouts as well as parents of girls in schools, the head teachers and the girl-child coordinator. Robson (2003) says that interviews typically involve the researcher asking questions and hopefully receiving answers from those who are interviewed. Creswell (2005) also shares the same view and says that one- on- one interview is ideal for interviewing participants who are willing to speak, articulate and share freely their ideas.

Every participant in the one- on- one interview was given a fair opportunity to respond to the interview question. The interview guides were based on issues from the research questions as follows:

1. Demographic and socio- economic characteristics of girls in/ out of school
2. Motivating factors affecting girl- child enrolment and retention
3. De-motivating factors affecting girl- child enrolment and retention
4. Systems and mechanisms in place to support enrolment and retention of the- child.

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In the one- on- one interview, the researcher asked only one of the respondents questions one at a time. One- on- one interview was conducted at places of the respondents convenience. This was because the researcher for saw the difficulty in getting them together, especially the dropouts, as they might feel intimidated due to the stigma attached to drop outs. Again, it gave room for open and private discussions which made respondents to answer freely without intimidation.

An interview for pupils in a focus group of six (6) was conducted. According to Krueger (2002), a focus group is a small group of six (6) to ten (10) people who are led through open discussions by a skilled moderator. He further noted that, this way the researcher is able to generate rich discussion from participants and a maximum number of different ideas and opinions from participates in the time allotted. Krueger (2002) further expanciated that, ideally, focus group interview is useful as participants are stimulated and influenced by comments and thinking of others. He says, people even find themselves changing their thoughts and opinions during the group as the interview proceeds.

The researcher‟s choice of focus group interviews enabled the researcher to identify the depth of their feelings and again observe how consistent they were with their comments. Teachers were also interviewed in a focus group of three (3). Different date‟s schedules by both researcher and participants were noted for the interviews.

The interview guide had between five to seven strands with accompanied probes. It sought to find first hand information from interviewee on enrolment and retention phenomenon in the Ga West Municipality. As indicated by Wragg (2002, cited in Kusi 2012) that while interviewees were offered the opportunity to express their opinions, feelings and experiences in detail, they should be guided to prevent "aimless

rambling", thus the need for an interview guide. Semi structured interviews is relevant to this study because of its factor of flexibility as participant get the opportunity to pour out their heart as it is worth noting in phenomenological study. As indicated by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), semi structured interview is an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomenon. The researcher moderated the interview, making sure that the participants understood the purpose of the interview. The researcher used a month to select respondents for the study. The researcher personally visited schools and homes of respondents to conduct interviews. With permission sought, an introduction was made, and the purpose for the visit made known. This enabled the researcher establish rapport with the respondents. Interviewees were given a duration of one week to choose any day of convenience within the week to be interviewed. An interview took between forty five (45) and sixty (60) minutes for focus group and between twenty (20) to twenty five (25) minutes was used for the one-on-one interviews. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed.

3.7.2 Pre- testing of Instrument for validity and reliability

A pre- testing was conducted on seven (7) people who were not part of the participants in the actual study. They comprised two (2) JHS girls, one (1) dropout, two (2) parents and two (2) teachers. This was to make out for any difficulty or ambiguity that may be identified and for their rectification before administering them to the sample that was to participate in the actual study. The pre- testing helped in determining the suitability and feasibility of the interview guides. The pre- testing also helped the researcher to know the short falls in the interview guide.

Oppenheim (1992) and Wilson and McLean (1994) states that pre- testing helps to establish reliability, validity and practicability of the questions. It serves among other things

1. To check feedback on the response categories for data analyses

2. To eliminate ambiguity of questions

3. To check the clarity of the questions

Oppreheim (1992) also indicated that everything about questions should be pre-testing, nothing should be excluded. Kumar (1999) asserts that validity is the way a researcher conceptualizes the idea in a conceptual definition and measure. To achieve this, a pilot study involving seven (7) participants was conducted. Interviews were conducted on one- on- one basis lasting twenty (20) minutes each at separate times and days. This was to ascertain the efficacy of the interview questions. It was realized that some of the interview questions were not addressing the research questions thus the need to restructure the interview questions to help answer research questions. There was also a realization that some interview questions were beyond the understanding of the pupils so there was the need to modify interview questions to suit the levels of participants. The pre- testing aided the researcher to improve and modify the instruments for the main study. It also helped to examine the clarity and appropriateness of the instruments. Data gathered from pre- testing was reliable because questions asked were clear and not biased in any way. This led to consistency in responses given.

3.8 Procedures for data collection

This section involved all the processes the researcher undertook to gather data for the study. These include

a. Access

The researcher personally went to the schools to sought permission from the head teachers who subsequently informed the teachers about the study in order to solicit their cooperation and assistance. This is consistent with what Creswell (2005) noted that it is important to respect the site where a research takes place. The homes of other respondents were also visited and permission sought to interview the girl- child and possibly the parent. This respect according to Creswell (2005), is shown by gaining permission before entering a site. The purpose of the study was explained and participants assured of necessary confidentiality on information to be gathered.

b. Ethical Issues

Ethics in research refer to the considerations taken to protect and respect the rights and welfare of participants and other parties associated with the activity (Reynolds, 1982). The rights of respondents and other parties involved at every stage of the study were particularly treated with utmost care. The following considerations were made to promote and/or protect the rights and interest of participants at all stages of the study. Efforts were be made to be certain that the twenty five (25) participants understand that their participation was voluntary. Consent from the girls was sort through their parents in an initial brief discussion that the girls could sign their name to if they chose to participate. Pseudonyms were assigned for each participant, location, and specific setting to protect the privacy of all involved. The interviewees were given a time frame for the interview ahead of time, and effort was made to meet them where

and when it was convenient for them. It is also important that respondents are clear with what is expected of them. This way their willingness to participate was assured. Results presented were reported truthfully. All original data transcription was stored on a password protected hard drive for use in the ongoing research. Again, the researcher was honest, as well as accommodating, tolerant and sensitive to the needs respondents. This created a more conducive atmosphere for data collection.

c. Interviews

The sampled group of dropouts, parents, head teachers and the girl- child coordinator were interviewed one- on- one, with each respondent having the same opportunity to answer questions. Sampled pupils and teachers were interviewed in a focus group of six (6) and three (3) respectively. Interviews were conducted at convenient places for privacy and clarity. Permission was sought to record interviews on tapes for later transcription. The interviews began with an introduction that explained the purpose, the grounds rules and the duration. With the help of an assistant the researcher takes notes and record as well whilst conducting the interviews. This is in line with what Newman (2000) asserted that note taking during interviews can help the interviewer formulate new questions as the interview progresses, especially where it may be appropriate to cross check what has been said earlier during the interview process.

Two focus group interviews were held, they were a focus group of six pupils and three teachers. Focus group interviews were held at an easy- to- find, convenient meeting place. This created a warm and friendly as well as permissive environment where participants were alert, free from distractions and set for discussions. Permission was sought to record interviews on tapes for later transcription. Interviewees had their names written and placed before each member to help remember each other's name, though the names were not be used in later analysis. The

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interviews began with an introduction that explained the purpose. Ground rules and guidelines were given that there were no right or wrong answers and that only differing points of view and that each interviewee should feel free to share their point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Complete confidentiality was assured. The researcher served as a moderator who asked questions and listened for inconsistencies and vague comments and then probed for better understanding. A friend of the researcher served as an assistant moderator, who took notes and note of body language and other non- verbal activity between participants that would indicate some level of agreement, support or interest. This is in line with what Krueger (2002) indicated that the moderator should not be expected to take written notes during the discussion for sake of clarity and consistency in note taking. It is anticipated that others will use the field notes and clarity and consistency is essential. To end the discussions the researcher reviewed the purpose of the meeting and gave each participant the opportunity to have a final take on the issues discussed (enrolment and retention of the girl- child). Participants were given drinks and biscuits as incentives.

3.9 Data analysis procedure

Analyzing qualitative data requires understanding on how to make sense out of text obtained. Data obtained was assembled and checked thoroughly for inconsistencies. The various recorded responses on interviews were transcribed and then typed. Typed interview responses were then read through to get a feel for what is being said, identify key themes and issues in each text. To avoid presumptions on the part of the researcher and remain true to the phenomenon being studied, the researcher consciously bracketed herself in order to understand the perspectives of the participants interviewed. As remarked by Hycner (1999) that, this calls for even more judgment and skill on the part of the researcher to ensure truthfulness. Data was then

coded, taking in to consideration significant differences that exist among the various themes that emerged. this is in line with what Geonewald (2004) asserted that , unique or minority voices are important counterparts to bring out regarding the phenomenon researched. Data was then analyzed on themes that emerged. Verbatim expressions of participants were also used where necessary. This gave the opportunity at surfacing deep issues and making voices heard.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides the analysis and discussion of findings of the study. The research questions were used as a guide for the analysis of the data.

Data was analyzed to reflect the following themes

1. Demographic and socio- economic characteristics of girl who enroll and stay in/out of school in the Ga West Municipality.
2. Factors that motivates the girl- child to stay in school in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality.
3. Factors that de- motivates the girl- child to stay out of school in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality.
4. Systems and mechanisms that are in place and can be put in place to support the girl child to enroll and stay in school in the Ga West Municipality.

4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: What are the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of girls who stay in/ out of school?

This research question was analyzed based on the variables emerging from the tables prescribed.

Table 4.1 The general characteristics of girls' in-school

Number of Girls	Age/Point of Entry	Present Age/Class	Guardian	Number of Siblings	History of Dropouts
1	3yrs/Crèche	17yrs	Both Parents	m6 f2	None
2	6yrs/Nursery	16yrs/ JHS 3	Both Parents	m4 f2	None
3	-	18yrs/JHS 3	Both Parents	m4 f1	None
4	3yrs/Nursery	16yrs/JHS 3	Both Parents	m2 f3	None
5	3yrs/Nursery	16yrs/JHS 3	Both Parents	m2 f2	None
6	9yrs/Class 1	17yrs/JHS 2	Aunty	m3 f2	None

Adapted from UNESCO (2008b), EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 with modifications

As indicated in Table 4.1 above the researcher sought to find out the characteristics of girls who stay in school. The above Table shows the ages and points at which the girls started school. It also indicated that the guardianship of the girl-child. The Table also reveals the number of members in each girls household including members who dropped out of school. The Table indicates that there is an average of six (6) members in the household of each pupil with no history of dropouts. There is also an indication that there are more males in a household than females, "m" indicating males and "f" indicating females.

Table 4.2 The socio- economic characteristics of parents of girls' in school

Number of Girls	Parental Marital Status	Educational Level of Mother	Educational Level of Father	Occupation of Mother	Occupation of Father
1	Married	None	Elementary 4	Trader	Taxi Driver
2	Married	Elementary 4	Elementary 4	Trader	Company Driver
3	Married	Elementary 3	Elementary 4	Trader	Mason
4	Married	None	Elementary 4	Trader	Mason
5	Married	None	Elementary 4	Trader	Taxi Driver
6	Married	None	None	Unemployed	No Idea

Adapted from UNESCO (2008b), EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 with modifications

Table 4.2, indicates the educational and occupational background of the parents as well as their marital status. From data, all respondents stay with both parents who are still married. There is also an indication that seven (7) parents have had some sort of formal education (elementary education) whilst five (5) had none (illiterates). All parents were in the informal section with one being unemployed.

Table 4.3 The demographic characteristics of out-of-school girls

Number of Girls	Age/Point of Entry	Present Age/Class	Guardian	Number of Siblings	History of Dropouts	Dropout Age/Point
1	2yrs/Crèche	19	Mother	m1 f1	None	18yrs/Yr 2
2	5yrs/KG	18	Mother	m3 f4	Brother	17yrs/Yr 1
3	4yrs/Nursery	18	Mother	m2 f3	Brother	17yrs/Yr 1
4	4yrs/Class 1	16	Mother	m2 f5	Brother	15yrs/Yr 1
5	4yrs/Nursery	17	Mother	m1 f3	Sister	16yrs/Yr 2
6	3yrs/Nursery	19	Mother	m2 f3	Brother	17yrs/Yr 2

Adapted from UNESCO (2008b), EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 with modifications

Table 4.3 shows the demographic characteristics of girls who are out of school. It shows the guardians as well as the marital status of parents. It also indicates the educational as well as the occupational background of parents. The Table further reveals the number of members in a household and the number who have dropped out of school. It is observed that the guardians are the mothers who are single with one widowed. The average members of a household are indicated as eight (8) and every household had history of dropouts except for one household. The Table also shows the number of females as compared to the number of males in a household. "m"

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represents males and "f" indicates females. It is evident that there are more females in each household.

Table 4.4 The socio- economic characteristics of out of school girls

Number of Girls	Parental Marital Status	Educational Level of Mother	Educational Level of Father	Occupation of Mother	Occupation of Father
1	Widowed	None	No Idea	Trader	Deceased Farmer
2	Single	None	Elementary 4	Trader	Do not Know
3	Single	Elementary 3	None	Trader	Farmer
4	Single	None	No Idea	Unemployed	Do not Know
5	Single	JHS	No Idea	Trader	Do not Know
6	Single	Elementary 1	JHS	Trader	Do not Know

Adopted from UNESCO (2008b), EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 with modifications

Table 4.4 indicates that, five (5) parents had some sort of formal education (elementary education) whilst four (4) had none (illiterates), three (3)had no knowledge of the parental educational background. It further indicates that the mothers (guardians) are traders with one unemployed, whilst one father is deceased, one a farmer, and the four (4) had no knowledge of what the fathers do.

Table 4.5 The general characteristics of parents of students

Number of Parents	Marital Status	Number of Children	Educational Level	Occupation	Income(Monthly) Cedis	History of Dropouts in the Family
1	Married	5	None	Shop Assistant	80	None
2	Married	5	None	Company Driver	350	None
3	Married	4	Elementary 4	Taxi Driver	80	None

Adapted from UNESCO (2008b), EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 with modifications

Table 4.5 shows the marital status of parents of girls who are still in school as well as the educational and occupational status of the parents.

It also indicates the number of household members and the number of children who have dropped out of school. Data collected indicated that all parents are still together as married couples, and had on the average of seven (7) members in the household. The Table above also indicates that two (2) of the parents have had no formal education (illiterate) whiles one has gone through elementary education. All parents are also in the informal sector and earn between 80cedis and 350cedis a month. None of their ward has ever dropped out of school.

Table 4.6 The general characteristics of out-of-school girls' parents

Number of Parents	Marital Status	Number of Children	Educational Level	Occupation	Income(Monthly) Cedis	History of Dropouts in The Family
1a	Single	7	Elementary 4	Trader	80	None
2a	Single	5	Elementary 3	Trader	150	Son
3a	Single	7	None	Trader	220	Son

Adopted from UNESCO (2008b), EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008 with modifications

Table 4.6 reveals the marital status of parents of girls out of school. It also indicates the number of members in a household as well as the occupational and educational background of the parents.

The Table also shows the number of household members who have dropped out of school. There is an indication from table 4.6 that all parents of dropouts are single (mothers) and have a household size of about 8 members on the average. It also indicate that two (2) of the parents have elementary education whilst one has no formal education (illiterate). Interview data also revealed that parents are in the informal sectors and earn between 80-220 cedi per month.

Emerging variables from tables are as follows;

1. Age of the girl- child

2. Household size

3. Chore time

4. Income

5. Parental educational and occupational background

6. Parents" general view on education

7. Parents' view on girl education

8. Teenage pregnancy

4.2.1 Age of the girl- child

Students were asked about their ages at the point of entry in school and their present age. The ages of students somewhat gives an idea as to whether they entered the educational system at the standard age of six (6) years in class one (1) or they entered late. The findings show that all respondents entered the formal system of education late; however, all respondents have had some level of pre-school education before entering primary one (1).

From the data collected, though respondents entered schooling a bit late than the standard age of six (6) years, it must be noted that they all progressed steadily until some dropped out at the JHS. Findings indicated that girls who are still in school had pre-school education as well as drop outs. However, there is an indication that a pupil had an opportunity to be ahead of her peers by being jumped twice in her class. It was also observed that, the ages of students and drop out coincide with both the onset of puberty and with the increased demand for labour of older children which has its own implications on schooling. This gives an indication that respondent would have other

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responsibilities which could influence their decision to either combine schooling and those responsibilities or neglect schooling and its attended demands. Their ages contradicts the national standards because at ages 16 and 17, those about 70% that age should have been near completion of Senior High School. The reasons why these girls entered school late were not revealed in the research, however, it must be noted that within the same age brackets, some girls stayed in school but others dropped out, Consortium for Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (2007). It is worth noting that, the study showed most parents believe in enrolling children in pre-school which is a positive thing.

This results confirms the findings by CREATE (2007) that about 52 percent of girls aged 15- 17 years are more likely to end their education before JHS 3 or at the end of JHS 3. The findings further indicated that the age at which a child starts school is significant as it plays a significant role in girls dropping out of school before the end of basic education cycle or staying on.
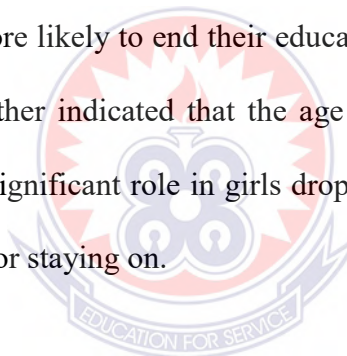
4.2.2 Household size

The household is the smallest task-oriented and culturally defined framework for meeting the welfare needs of the individuals, Carter (1984). The household is usually organized around the needs of its members and the composition of the household may include parents, children and other dependents living under the same roof and sharing a few basic things together. An item in the interview guide to check the number of household members indicated that respondents have averagely between three (3) and ten (10) members in a household.

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Considering the present economic hardships and the rising cost of education, one is tempted to conclude that taking care of the girl-child becomes challenging. Notwithstanding these, the research findings indicated that some girls have progressed and are still in school whiles others have dropped out. It is worth noting that there are no dropouts in household of respondents who are still in school, though some of the parents had no form of formal education or little education. Moreover, the size of respondents in school"s household is more than those of out of school respondents with more males than females, yet they were still in school. This implies that the size of one"s household is not enough to let a girl- child drop out of school as there may be other demographic factors which could push the girl - child to stay or drop out of school.

These findings contradict the findings made by Yeboah (1997) that parents would normally choose the education of the boy- child over the girl when it comes to resource distribution. In addition, Rakodi (2002) argued that the household size or composition determines strategies available to it. Therefore the viability of girls education may be affected in term of distribution of resource, however, the findings of this study again contradicts the above. Findings show that the families of the respondents in school have more males than females yet the females had their fair share and are in school whereas the data collected show that out of school respondent had more females and yet most of the drops out in the household were males. In as much as a large house size may affect the girl- child"s education especially were the income of the household is inadequate to cater for its members, girls are likely to be denied the opportunity of access to education, in the research area, and same cannot be said because all things being equal most girls are in school and it seems there is more to it than just the size of a household.

Nonetheless the result also supports the findings in the Ga West Municipality by the Ghana National Education Coalition Campaign (GNECC) that if poor families send children to school, their education becomes a significant (CREATE, 2007)

4.2.3 Chore time

Regarding their use of time, one pupil commented that:

> Only help my mother to sell so that she
> can also help me. I wasn't sleeping very
> early at night so I was used to sleeping in
> class but I was the only one helping my
> mother so I wasn't punctual at school"
> (Dropout 1).

Another girl who had dropped out of school remarked that:

> Yes the girls because everything in the house is
> the girls, we are supposed to do it, like sweeping
> like this, my brother will never do it. It is not right.
> No! The guys can fetch water while the girls are
> doing other things. Like my brother when he wakes
> up from bed, he will go out. If you will see him,
> unless around 5pm (Pupil 3).

She quickly added that,

> My mom will not talk about it because he is
> the only guy and sometimes, he sells for her at
> the roadside. She's always pampering him. Not
> really happy and sometimes, if you do a little
> thing because of that you the girl she will rather
> insult you (Pupil 3).

To confirm the girls' comments, a parent of a dropout also made it clear that they had no one but their daughters to help them. She said that,

> The school complains but she is all
> I have to take care of the little ones,
> I cannot do without her (Parent B1).

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There is clear indication that parents need the help of their daughters to lessen the own burdens but in the end, these girls are overburdened with house chores which has its own toll on the girl- child‟s studies. To buttress the above point interviewed pupils prayed that their chores be reduced so they can have enough time for further studies

A pupil commented that:

> Yeah, we the girls we work a lot because
> for me like this my brother will not do anything
> unless my dad is at home. Even my father always
> talks but he‟s just doing what he‟s doing. It affects
> me somehow but like if he could help me in some
> things. Because when he comes and I am cooking
> he goes to sleep but may be if he can help me in
> washing of the bowls and those things, when I
> can finish cooking…. It saves time and I can go
> and study (pupil 1).

These findings give an indication that parents prefer engaging their girls in household chores more than their sons irrespective of its toll on their education. Most families in the rural or urban areas cannot do without their wards. Bradley(2000) claimed that gender stereotyping both at school and at home contributes to low female enrolment and overburdened with household chores the girl- child see school as a place for resting and not learning. Keukreti et al (2007) studying dropout girls in India found that majority of parents engaged their girls in household chores due to family circumstances which compels the girl child to stay out of school.

From the evidence above the girl- child is saddled with more responsibilities than the boy- child at home and this has its own adverse effect on their schooling.

4.2.4 Family income

The highest economic factor named by respondents was low income which has landed them in poverty, this, in conjunction with other factors such as direct and high cost of educating the girl- child were revealed in the study as a paramount reason why girls drop out or stay in school in the Ga West Municipality. Poverty has been cited in many research circles, that it accounts for the inability of parents to support the education of their children especially the females; this seems to be no different in the Ga West Municipality. Results from the study indicated that all girl respondents had financial issues as well as all parents interviewed.

When parents, were asked about difficulties they face in educating their daughters, a parent commented that;

> My inability to provide for her needs worries me a lot.
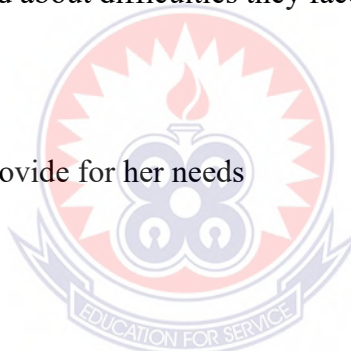
He quickly added that,

> it is all because I cannot afford (Parent A).

A pupil also commented that;

> My main issue is financial problem, when I was in JHS 1, some weeks before our end of term, you know for driving job they don"t use to pay like the way they use to pay the workers. So whenever my dad ever goes to work and he do not get money… sometimes when I am even at home, I ask myself that, Why should I go to school? Daddy will not even give me money so why should I go to school? So sometimes I use to fail in some subjects because of the money he doesn"t give me. Why should I learn; I cannot send empty stomach to school too. So sometimes when I even come to school, I just even use to cry in class without reason. I don"t even know the reason why, so to me I can say financial problem (Pupil B).

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Two others pupils also responded that:

> I quite remember it was, it was last 2 years or
> something like that, my father is a driver but the
> car is not for him. The owner took the car, my father
> couldn"t get the car to work again so he couldn"t even
> provide for us, it reaches to a certain point we couldn"t
> even get money to cook and those things … (Pupil 3).

> I had to go to Accra with my mother before getting
> money for my books. Sometimes I use my money to
> buy the books … at times we do not even get money
> to cook (Pupil 5).

These responses give an indication that all is not well at home financially due to the

low incomes of the families. Furthermore findings of the study indicated that girls had

to find means to provide for their educational needs, which sometimes coerces them

to engage in unchaste behaviors leading to early pregnancies among other things.

A pupil expressed the difficulties she goes through to make ends meet, with regards to

her education she said that;

> I do sometimes manage my finances; when
> they give me money like this, sometimes when
> the job flows like this they give me a lot of
> money. I sometimes keep it. I manage it so
> that when it gets to a time that there is
> disappointment, I use that one. Sometimes
> when the money is a bit big enough we use
> it to buy toffee to the school to sell to get
> some profits. Apart from that, I save some
> of my money my parents give me to pay
> for extra classes and buy books since
> teachers do not take excuses. I save to buy
> certain things I need at school (pupil 3).

To add to this, another remarked that,

> I sell fried fish for a woman in our area
> by the road side, she gives me a little and
> I manage though I do miss some lessons
> at times because of the time I have to take
> the fish to the road side. Hmmm, I also
> save part of my feeding fee to buy my text
> books (Pupil 4).

It is worth noting that these girls have to engage in one commercial activity or other to help them meet the cost of their education since parental support is minimal due to low incomes of parents. This is no different for the girls who dropped out. Interviewed dropouts had this to say when asked how their needs at school were provided for:

One said that:

> I had to take a boyfriend. Mum was not
> providing for me because she said she did
> not have. This boy helped me but it is
> unfortunate it got in to this. He refused the
> pregnancy… (Dropout 1)

She went further to show her frustration when she said that:

> My mom was not helping. She couldn"t
> pay for anything.

To indicate why she eventually dropped out of school, she added that;

> I could not pay for the registration so
> I was sacked to go home. Eventually I
> got pregnant (Dropout 1).

Another dropout expressed the pain she had to go through which eventually made her leave school. She responded that:

> I struggled for books, mother could not
> provide money, and I send kenkey out to sell.
> Mother once came to the school and told
> them that, I am her only daughter so I
> have to be helping her (Dropout 2).

When asked whether she complained to her mother to allow her to go to school and help her after school, she had this to say:

> I just feel like, oh she doesn''t have
> money, if she had she would have
> given me so I have to help her. I am
> all she has (Dropout 2).

Another girl who had dropped out commented that:

> Mother failed to provide me some books
> I needed, I feel unhappy and unable to learn
> at school. When I don''t have materials it is
> difficult to attend school. Was selling condense
> milk, which teachers do seize sometimes, it
> made me sad. I got a boyfriend; I kept him
> because I felt he could help me (Dropout 4).

 The evidence above gives an indication of the frustrations the girl- child goes through just to get their educational needs provided for. The reason being that, parents simply do not have the means to provide for them. This directly leads to the survival of the fittest as some eventually drop out.

Besides, the interview data indicated that, almost all the girls in school had some of their needs catered for by either their mother or father or both whereas drop out girls had only their mothers to take care of them. This is because; the dropouts are from

broken homes where they are left in the care of their poor mothers and due to financial difficulties could not provide for their school needs. This puts the girl in situations that hinders their studies as some engage in irresponsible behaviors such as having pre-marital sex and prostitution. Others also engage in commercial activities that hitherto they would not do. The findings also illustrated that, some girls trade or save part of the little monies given to them by their parents, to take care of their needs at school.

From this there is an indication that girls would go any length to get their needs sorted out. These lengths can either keep them in or out of school.

4.2.5 Parental Educational and Occupational Background

Studies conducted on female education Kelly and Elliot (1982) point to the fact that the higher the educational level of parents, the higher the educational participation and attainment of their female children. However, one important finding in this study regarding the educational background of parents revealed that parents had little or no form of formal education but irrespective of their educational background want the best for their children. The findings revealed that parents of both girls in school and dropouts would have wished to have gone a bit further in formal education than they had. Confirming this, a parent of a pupil commented as:

> It pains me that I did not go; my siblings
> who went are well to do now, so schooling
> is good. I feel so ashamed when am in their
> mist (Parent 1).

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Similarly three other parents also asserted

> …education is important in this present day
> and age. The fact that I did not attend is my
> only regret. All children should go to school
> for a good future (Parent 2).

> It is better than illiteracy, it will help you.
> Education is important, you will get white
> collar job to do (Parent 2a).

> Yes of course, because in this era if you are
> not educated, life won't go on well. Nowadays,
> our grandchildren speak English to us so when
> you do not know how to speak it you can't
> communicate with them. Where ever you go
> English is what they speak, even in churches they
> speak English (Parent 1a).

The evidence above demonstrated that the respondents could not get the opportunity to go to school as they would have wanted but still holds the view that it is important. Having established that parents irrespective of their level of education would want the best for their children, it is worth noting that all guardians of the dropouts are single parents (mothers). These mothers earn next to nothing and supporting these girls gets challenging.

One said that: It is not easy but I tried (Parent 1a).

A third of the parents interviewed think boys" education supersedes that of girls. However, in the end they all agreed that intelligence counts and will determine who goes and who stays in times of scarce resources. This is confirmed by their responses to whether performance will inform their choice if need be.

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Parents commented as follows:

> Performance will influence my decision…good
> one will continue and the other will learn a trade
> …if they are all good, I will share for them (Parent 1).

> I wouldn"t consider gender but rather if they have the
> ability I will send the girl to school if she performs
> better than the boy (Parent 2a).

Parental income as an indicator of socio economic status was indirectly measured, by asking parents the total amount earned in a week. Additionally, parents were asked to describe their economic condition during interviews. Overall results indicated that most of these families have low economic status even families of girls who are still in school. All respondents indicated that they were in the informal sector. The highest paid was three hundred and fifty (350) Ghana cedis per month and the least eighty (80) Ghana cedis per month.

Respondents commented that:

> I didn"t go to school; I am just a shop
> assistance and earn twenty (20) cedis on
> a good day (Parent 2).

> I drive a company car and earn three
> hundred and fifty (350) Ghana cedis
> per month. It is not enough for the family
> but I manage (Parent 1).

> I sell some little things in a school. I
> completed elementary 4. My father said
> girl child education is not important; now
> look at me (Parent 1a)

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> …went to school and completed in elementary
>
> 3. I sell beans; I earn only ten (10) cedis a day
>
> (Parent 3a).

These findings supports the findings of Cervantis and Crowthers cited in Fobih (1987) that, parental financial constraints and academic difficulty among others, accounts for low enrolment and retention of girls in school. However, the findings are encouraging since some parents try and the girls also try to help themselves. Nonetheless it is also disconcerting, as to how long would the girl- child try to fend for herself and at what risk? How far would they go before parents give up because of poverty? Perhaps the answer might lie in a response by a parent,

> Good education always gives you an advantage
>
> over others and if I had had one, I would have
>
> been in a better paid job, earning something
>
> good for myself and family. My children
>
> should have it but how? I pray (Parent 3).

In the end, it cannot be said that parents with less education see no need to educate their daughters as there is an indication that parents appreciate the benefits of education. The results support the findings made by Sherrow (1996) that dropping out of school affects ones income level and economic wellbeing. This is seen in the income level of the parents which affects their ability to provide the educational needs of their girl child. Results also affirm the research findings of Kamaldeen et al, (2012) that poverty among households is one (1) of the three (3) most ranked factors militating against girl child education. Additionally, a research findings by CREATE (2007), found out that the likelihood of child enrolment is based on several factors which include the educational level of parents particularly mothers. Other studies confirm the results of this study that, the benefits of parental education to schooling

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and access for the child cannot be over looked. (Johnson and Kyle (2001), Montgomery, Kouame, Oliver (1995) noted in that parental education, particularly that of mothers has great influence on children"s attendance and achievement.

4.2.6 Parental General View on Education

There was a general perception that education is important for one"s achievement in life by parents interviewed. Irrespective of the fact that some have wards that have dropped out of school, they express regrets and wish their girls would go back to school because they perceive schooling as the only way one can make it in this age. For instance, a parent commented that:

> Education is important in this present age and
> it pains me I did not go, my siblings went and
> are well to do now. I feel so ashamed when I
> am in their mist (parent 1).

Another parent expressed regret for not going to school, he said that:
> The fact that I did not go to school is
> my only regret. Schooling holds the keys
> to the future, yes it is important (Parent 2).

Parents whose girls were out of school equally saw education as the only security in life.

Two parents remarked that:

> Education is good, you will not work in common
> places, you will have white collar job. It is better
> than illiteracy; your child can help you understand
> things. How I wish she changes her mind to go
> back to school (Parent 1a)".

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> "My mother was careless and irresponsible;
> it was too late when she realized she had failed
> us (parent 3a).

These findings indicate that parents appreciate the importance of education though some had none or little education and would want to go any length to educate their wards and even those whose girls are out of school wish there is a way to get them back to school.

This results is supported by findings made by Samal (2012) that there was no significant difference between parents so far as attitude is concerned and that not the parent per se, but the living conditions affecting the parents, shapes their perceptions and attitude.

Bandura"s Social Learning theory (1977) feeds into current parental general view of education. Data revealed how regretful parents are for not attending or completing. Taking into account what their lives would have being if they had completed their education, parents wish their children irrespective of being a boy or girl would have some sort of school education. This way they hope the children"s future will be better than theirs. Bandura"s social learning theory suggests that, a child may take into account of what happens to other people when deciding whether or not to copy someone"s actions. Here, the parents have being there and know the repercussion of their own behavior, which is now serving as a motivation to protect their wards from making the same mistakes they made. This in social learning theory is known as vicarious reinforcement.

4.2.7 Parental View on Girl Education

It was learnt through the interview with parents that they deem girl education to be important. All six parents interviewed saw the education of the girl child as necessary.

To support that he is interested in her daughter's education a parent stated that:

> Education is important for females for
> instance, they cannot be deceived by
> men. I check her books whenever
> she comes home from school, I
> sometimes award them to challenge
> each other (Parent 1).

Another parent remarked that:

> It is important irrespective of boy or girl
> but more beneficial to boys than girls,
> they will take care of us". (Parent 2).

A parent expressed similar concern on the subject. He said that:

> It is better for boys than girls; he can
> move forward and bring something
> home (Parent 3).

Notwithstanding the above, parents perceived girls education as equally important.

A parent commented that:

> In this era if you are not educated,
> life won't go well. They are all important;
> girls can also do what boys are doing
> (Parent 2a).

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When asked whether intelligence matter in making a choice as to which child to send to school with your last penny.

> Three parents indicated as follows;
>
> I would consider the girl if she"s intelligent though I think it"s more beneficial to boys than girls (Parent 1).
>
> I will send the girl to school if she performs better than the boy (Parent 3).
>
> I would educate my son first, when they grow they help their mothers but the girls usually do less because they follow their husbands when they get married, but I would consider the girl first if she"s intelligent (Parent 3c).

From the above responses, it is evident that though parents view girls education as important they have reservations that boys" education is more beneficial to girls" education except where the girl is more intelligent than the boy. This result supports the research findings of Yeboah (1997) that household decisions about primary education favors boys over girls and perception of which child will likely look after a parent informs decisions. Notwithstanding the above, parents perceived girl education as equally important. Additionally, these findings confirms Kamaldeen, et al (2012) that most parents view education as a child"s right and that educating a girl child is important because it gives the female child the best start to life and protects the girl child from exploitation.

4.2.8 Teenage Pregnancies

The study identified teenage pregnancy as a social factor that affects girls" education in the municipality. It was identified that all drop outs respondents except for two, left school because of pregnancies. To add to this, the findings revealed that pregnant school girls leave school before pregnancy even starts showing, teachers commented as follows:

> Some failed to show up because of pregnancy (Teacher 3).

When asked whether they would want to go back to school?

One of the girls who had dropped out of school commented:

> Now that I have given birth I can"t
> go back to school. There will be no one
> to take care of my child since the
> father did not accept the pregnancy…
> my mum says the head teacher will
> not admit me. And who will take care
> of my boy (Dropout 1)?

These comments give an indication that these pupils who drop out though would wish to continue their education; they are unable because they have to take care of their babies. These findings contradict the findings of Anyagri (1993) that parents withdraw their daughters from school to be given out as maids or in marriage. It is worth nothing that none of these girls left school because a parent forced (directly) her to withdraw. All the drop outs were as a result of pregnancies with none ending in marriage. However, the results support the findings of Kamaldeen, et al (2012) that, pregnancy among girls of school age is a significant factor militating against girl-child education.

4.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: Which Factors Motivate the Girl- Child to Stay in/ out of School?

The focus of this question was to establish the factors which motivates the girl child to stay in school. The analysis and discussions has being done under the following sub- themes that emerged;

1. Hopes and aspirations for/ of the girl- child
2. Teacher/ parent and student relationship

4.3.1 Hopes and Aspirations of/for the Girl Child

Hopes, aspirations and fears of both the girl- child and parents emerged as a motivating factor for girls to stay in school. Findings of the study revealed that the girl- child either in or out of school has dreams that they hope to achieve just like any other individual. Data suggested that the girl child see education as significant in pursuing their dreams.

One girl commented:

> I want to be a nurse …Yes; I would
> like to go to school again. My role
> model is educated and serious. She is
> an actress (Dropout 1).

Three others opined that:

> I want to be an accountant or a journalist. I really
> have to complete and do those things. I could also
> be a journalist? I admire them a lot. At least I will
> be able to take care of my parents. I have made up
> my mind not to be pregnant like some of my friends
> so as to bring a good name on myself (Pupil 1).

> …learnt that if you don't learn or you don't go to
> school there is no way that you'll get any proper job to
> do. We look at those stars and other things you wish you
> were like them, it's through the school so we have to learn,
> so with that it motivates you that you want to be like this
> person… (Pupil 3).

> I would like to be a nurse. I would like to go back
> to school, would choose schooling to finding a job
> and I would like to be a nurse. I have regretted not
> finishing school and having a baby now. It wasn't
> my intension to do so I have even regretted (Dropout 3).

It seems evident that these girls appreciate the benefits that come with schooling and though some are out they are hopeful to go back and make it in life. The study also highlights the fears and regrets of the girl child.

The remark of one of the girls is noteworthy here:

> I am ashamed when I see my friends who are still
> in school. I will go back to school though I don't
> have a benefactor yet, but I will sell and pay the
> fees. I regret that I have conceived at this young
> age. I wish my child will also go to school…
> (Dropout 1).

Other two girls also remarked that:

> I want to be a nurse and a fashion designer.
> My fears are my parents should be alive at
> that level since there is no one again to cater
> for me (pupil 2).

> I will like to continue but I am not intelligent
> enough but I will learn a trade (Dropout 3).

The findings also revealed that parents expected their children to do better than they had. Parents appreciate the benefits of being an educated individual and thus urged their children to make up for what they couldn"t achieve.

Two parents commented as follows,

> I want them to be in high places, I would be
> happy. I wish she completes school and get a
> good job and then marriage the last level (Parent 1)".

> I will be happy to see her finish before marriage
> (Parent 2).

These comments are from parents whose girls are still in school but it is no different from some parents whose daughters have dropped out of school.

> Two of such parents also commented that:
> I wish she could continue her education. I wish
> to see her continue her education to the highest
> level (Parent 1a).

> I wish she could continue and become someone
> great in future, such as a nurse (Parent 2a).

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From the above, there is an indication that parents of both girls who are still in school as well as those out of school still have high hopes and aspirations for their girl- child just as they do for the boy- child in terms of education. Dissenting voice of one parent out lay his fears that higher education corrupts an individual and thus he would not want his child be it a boy or girl to go to the university.

He commented:

> I don"t want them to attain very high
> level in education… all what they have
> to attain to secure a job… like SHS is
> okay but not to a level that I should expect
> them to be great people (Parent 3).

The above echoes the fact that even though a parent might know the importance of formal education, that parent will not allow his/her ward to go any further than he/she (parent)wants because of their own "demons" (fears). He went further by saying that:

> Normally after university people expect
> to further their studies to secure their
> dream job whilst with SHS qualification
> you can be employed. University exposes
> them to a lot of evil (Parent 3).

This observation is interesting as a child will not get the opportunity to pursue his/her dreams because of the parent"s fear of the unknown. It is worth noting that even though a parent thinks going to the university is not a good idea, parents have high hopes for their girl- child.

It was evident that the girl child either in or out of school has fears just as parents. Finding shows that though some of the girls are out of school, they are hopeful to go back or do something meaningful with their lives. Likewise girls who are still in school (pupils) were optimistic about the future. These findings confirms conclusion made by Hashim (2005) that households decision on who gets access and why most often favors those who are most willing, able and determined to going to school, while other children stayed at home to ensure the availability of necessary labor to secure household assets.

4.3.2 Teacher/ parent and student relationship

There was a general consensus from both teachers and parents interviewed that the relationship that exit between them is cordial.

A parent stated that:

> Teachers are always nice with us; they
> receive and respond to us nicely (Parent 1).

Another parent also asserted that:

> I enjoy going to the school and I attend
> Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A)
> meetings. I am even an executive member;
> I visit her at school very often. Teachers
> are nice to us and they even encourage
> us to visit the children more often at school.
> Teachers talk to us a lot and they respond
> and receive us well. Some of the teachers
> are even our friends (Parent 3).

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In addition, another parent commented that:

> I am always in the school and aware of
> whatever goes on there. The teachers are
> nice. They were even sad when my girl
> left school. The Akan teacher spoke to
> her several times but she did not listen
> (parent 1a).

These responses give an indication that the relationship between teachers and parents who are both partners in terms of the education of the child is cordial as it offers a breeding ground for effective academic work. However, teachers feel some parents are unbearable as they sometimes come to the school to attack teachers for punishing their wards.

A teacher expressed her concern that:

> They sometimes come in a group to fight
> us because his/her child has been beaten…
> but on a whole, we understand and we
> are working together for the children‟s future
> (Teacher 1).

The above gives an indication that the atmosphere at the school is friendly and parents can walk in to check on the progress of their wards. The above also echoes the fact that even though most parents see the parent/ teacher relationship as cordial and can approach teachers for discussions on their wards, it is not the case in all situations as some parents are harsh.

Pupils also saw their teachers as friendly and role models.

One commented that:

> They teach us and advise us as well, Madam
> sometimes buys food for me. Sometimes, I tell
> master I can't pay my studies fee and he
> allows me to stay (Pupil 1).

The above gives an indication that pupils are confident in their teachers and are comfortable around them.

Two teachers interviewed had this to say:

> I even adopted one. I do so every year and
> I keep sanitary pad in my bag always when
> coming to school because you never know
> when a girl child might need it (Teacher 1).
>
> We sometimes give them money for food
> because some of them come to school with
> empty stomach and no money (Teacher 2).

Despite the fact that teachers see pupils as their own and treat them as such and vice versa, some dropouts interviewed were of the view that teachers treated them badly.

One noted:

> ... teachers treated us badly; false accusation
> and refusal to further explain lessons over
> again… most of us were treated badly except
> a few. The teachers wrongly accused me all
> the time (Dropout 4).

This seems interesting   and affirms comments by Quashigah (2013) that, to everything that is good, there is something bad about it and to everything that is bad there is something good about it. Some pupils feel threatened at school by teachers and would rather stay home or do something else than to go to school. The perception teachers hold about the value and profitability of female education has several implications for the retention in school and the achievements of the girl child. It is expected that teachers are fair in their dealings with pupils either boy or girl.

 A pupil commented as:

> Sometimes Sir thinks I cannot work out the
> math but I always prove him wrong. Maybe
> he is just pushing me to my best, who knows.
> The girls always top in the BECE and I wish
> all girls will represent the school where
> necessary (Pupil 6).

Clearly the indication is that, girls feel less motivated by their teachers though they have cordial relationship and wish they will trust them enough to handle certain responsibilities. These findings to some extent supports evidence by Osei (1991) that teachers just like parents perceive girls to be different from boys and as such hold different expectations for them. Having established this, the findings show that girls are ready to match with the boys and are even prepared to do better than them. However, it is necessary for them to be motivated to give off their best in all situations. It also collaborates the assertions of Ananga (2011), that school exerts powerful influences on people"s achievements and dropout rate. In addition to this, a review by Academy for Educational Development-ERNWACA (2002) on issues of access, quality and community participation in education in West Africa identified

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that community participation has benefits of compelling parents to send their children to school. This will in a way affect girl education positively.

4.4 Research question 3: Which factors de- motivates the girl- child to stay out of school?

The focus of this question was to establish the factors which de-motives the girl child to stay in school. The analysis and discussions has being done under the following sub- themes that emerged;

1. Lack of infrastructure and gender sensitive facilities
2. Low attendance/Academic Performance of the girl- child
3. Distance to School.

4.4.1 Infrastructure and gender sensitive facilities

The extent to which infrastructure and gender sensitive facilities at school affect enrolment and retention of girl child cannot be over looked. Literature on female education generally indicates lack of female specific facilities such as washrooms are likely to influence girls as well as parents decision to enroll and retain girls in school. When both pupils and those that dropped out were asked which facilities their school can boast of; they all had little to say. The response was in the negative.

All twelve (12) girls both those in school and those who had dropped out indicated that their schools lacked facilities which hitherto would have make life a bit more comfortable for them in school. Some interview comments to confirm this assertion are as follows:

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Two pupils said:

> I wish the school was painted, we need
> a whiteboard and more desks. Some of
> us sit in three‟s (3‟s) others on kitchen
> stools just to study. The school has no
> canteen (Pupil 5).

> The building was not properly built,
> when it rains, no matter what the teacher
> has to stop teaching. This is because the
> rains get into the room wetting all of us
> up (Pupil 3).

To support this, another girl child in the same school as pupil 3 commented:

> Our desks, everything in the class even
> our books get wet. In fact we have to
> even stand for them to get dry before
> reusing them. We don‟t get time to
> learn due to that especially in the
> rainy season (Pupil 4).

To express their frustration on the lack of toilet facilities at the school premises, two pupils who dropped out remarked;

> The school has nothing, not even a toilet
> for both students and teachers. We are
> coerced to use that of a filling station
> nearby. Though it is clean, it just wasn‟t
> right (Dropout 4).

> We visit the public toilet nearby, but
> the place is untidy and as such I
> prefer to go home instead (Dropout 1).

Additionally, a pupil who had dropped out indicated that, she was forced to visit those facilities even though she did not like them because she had to change herself if not she stands the risk of disgracing herself before the boys. These findings give an indication that most schools lack toilet facilities which are essential in any educational institution. These tend to make life quite unbearable especially for the girl- child‟s stay in school.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that under the same circumstances, some stay in school and others drop out of school. When asked why they had to stay in school, the pupils stated that:

> Almost all the schools had none and thus,
> this school is closer than the others (Pupil 1).

Another pupil also said that:

> I just had to endure; I know it‟s just a phase,
> I manage, there is nowhere to go (pupil 3).

Comparatively, responds from girls out of school indicated same.
One dropout pupil remarked that:

> You need it so you have to use it like
> that…how to change or check in on
> your menses is something else. I
> sometimes prefer to stay at home
> till it‟s almost done (Dropout 5).

Having established that gender friendly facilities such as wash rooms has a toll on the girl- child either in or out of school, it is encouraging to know that some still stay on to continue their education.

The findings collaborate the findings of Kraft (1995) and Moe (1995) that, the non-availability of girls" specific structures such as toilets and urinals partly attribute enrolment and retention of girl students in school. These findings also confirmed the finding of UNICEF (2012) which states that a school environment that may be acceptable to boys maybe hostile to girls. These findings are also in confirmation of comments made by Offorma (2008) that in Africa, many schools are nearly destitute with crowded classes and poorly constructed structures.

4.4.2 Low attendance/ academic performance

Girls both in school and those out were asked how they fared in school academically and whether they had any challenges academically. There was a consensus that, they enjoyed being in school but they all had challenges academically.

Individual comments from both pupils and those who had dropout were as follows:

> I am not on top of the class but at least I
> will say I am very good. I do well in
> subjects like Math and English (Pupil 1).

> School is interesting and I have made up
> my mind that I am going to complete.
> I am good, but I have challenges with Social
> Studies, RME, French and Arabic (Pupil 6).

> I am not academically good. I was not doing
> well at all (Dropout 1).

> I don"t feel happy when learning, and would
> lose concentration. I was performing well
> when I started but when I reached JHS one,
> I began to flop (Dropout 2).

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> I wasn"t able to perform well, I felt ashamed
> (Dropout 4).

The above comments attests to the fact, the girls in school believe that no matter what the challenges are, they feel they are good enough and can go through with their education. However, responses from those out of school suggest that, though girls are happy in school despite the challenges, they feel de- motivated by their academic challenges there by leading them to leave school. The frustration they go through makes the school uncomfortable for them to stay.

One commented that:

> I will just stay home or come home after
> reporting at school. I felt happy at school
> because when you are at home, you feel
> lonely but I can"t cope with the pressure
> at school (Dropout 4).

All these are indications that academic performance of a child could either motivate or de- motivates that child to stay in school or drop out.

The question is what must have accounted for their low performance for them to go through those frustrations? To help clarify this, teachers were asked about some challenges of the girl child.

One teacher commented that:

> Punctuality of girls is not encouraging. Some
> absent themselves due to menstrual periods;
> others take care of the house before reporting
> in school. Boys are more punctual (Teacher 2).

When the girls were asked what must have accounted for their inability to be punctual.

One out of girl had this to say:

> I was the only one helping my mother so I
> wasn"t punctual at school; I wasn"t sleeping
> early at night so I used to sleep in class. I
> also help my mom to sell so that she could
> also help me (Dropout 1).

Another remarked that:

> Mostly I engage in house chores than the boys don"t
> get time to learn. Will close from here around 3:30pm,
> when I get home, I have to go to the roadside. Sometimes
> we close around 11 to 12 mid night. So by the time I"ll
> come back from the road side, I"m tired so I"ll just come
> and I"ll not learn and I"ll just sleep (Pupil 1).

This gives an indication that the girl- child is affected academically by several factors which affects her performance. To confirm the challenges that the girl- child goes through in her bid to make it, the comments of parents are important:

Two parents commented that:

> The girl does house chores and does
> not get time to study. The girl sweeps
> and after school sell, cook for the household
> (Parent 3).

> …the girl does house chores and does not get
> much time to study but the girl is still better (Parent 1)
> .

This suggests that the girl- child's inability to do well at school is basically not a matter of just access or lack of girl friendly facilities at the school as asserted by some researchers on girl education such as offorma (2008) and Ananga (2011), but factors which go beyond the reach of the girl- child such as the home, play significant role in a girl's academic performance which subsequently influences her stay either in or out of school. In support to the above, findings made by CREATE (2007) indicated that irregular appearances at school can hinder the girl-child's ability to achieve the learning outcomes expected of schooling. Findings also supports comments by Oduro (2000), that the repercussions of high cost of schooling is cited for non-attendance of girls at school, as households are faced with the cost of providing food, clothing, school levies and registration cost which makes the girl child to stay home instead of being humiliated at school.

In furtherance to this, the conclusion supports the findings of Bardley (2008) which she clearly notes in her observation that juggling through house chores and school work is too much on the girl child and as such, school always becomes the last priority. It is worth noting that the girls who stayed on in school helped with chores at home as well but still managed. What then made others leave?

4.4.4 Distance to school

Researches on female education claim that parents are reluctant in allowing their daughters to cover long distances to school. Osei (1991) noted that long distances covered to school, has its own effect on enrolment and retention of the girl child.

The findings of this study indicated distance to school as one of the factors that makes the girl- child stay or drop out of school. The results indicated that, schools which are closer to the residence of the girls motivates them to go to school regularly and easily

since it's a walking distance. All twelve girls interviewed commented that, they walk because the distance is not far, yet they said they get to school tired and wished they could get to the school by other means rather than walking.

One pupil commented that:

> …we do walk, you get to school tired, it's
> a little bit far from home and I usually walk
> (Pupil 1).

Another remarked that:

> School is not far but I get tired getting there (Dropout 4).

This support Osei (1991) who pointed out that the maximum distance a child has to cover to school is three kilometers (3km) but children, particularly girls, find it difficult to withstand the routine walking to and from school due to fatigue. Consequently, some pupils choose to stay in school and others dropout.

4.5 Research Question 4:

Which systems and mechanisms are/ can be in place to support the girl- child to stay in school?

The research question sought to examine the systems and mechanisms which are /can be in place to support the girl child to stay in school in the Ga West Municipality. To answer this research question six (6) sub- themes emerged as follows:

1. Public education
2. Reducing cost
3. Improvement infrastructure
4. Role models
5. Teacher support
6. Improvement in extra curriculum activities

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4.5.1 Public education

The interview data suggested that it is essential to intensify public education on the need to enroll and retain the girl child in school. There was a general perception among respondents that public education is important and that the girl child not just their parents should be educated as well on the need for education so as to motivate them to enroll and stay in school. For instance, the municipal girl child coordinator indicated that parents in the community are more concerned with their girls getting married than being in school thus, the need to intensify the campaign on the education of the girl child.

She commented that:

> House to house visits as a means to educate
> the parents will help. In this community,
> they like marriage, a typical Ga community
> like this … (Girl- child coordinator).

To support this assertion that there is the need to intensify sensitization, other respondents commented as follows:

Three parents said:

> There are people in our villages that still
> don‟t know the importance of education,
> so it is necessary to educate the public
> especially villages that girl education is
> important (Parent 5).
>
> They have to be advised to stay away from
> boy-girl relationship. It will not help them.
> When I was in school, I managed but just
> that…because I wanted to make it but had
> to drop out eventually (Parent 5a).

> There is the need to inform the girl child
> on the need to be educated and how to take
> care of themselves during the adolescent age.
> I advise them on life matters and use mentors
> to encourage them and also invite people to
> have talks with them. (Head teacher 3).

A head teacher also remarked:

> Girls should be counseled and advised on the
> negative effects of dropping out of school and the
> effects of early marriages. It is good to advise
> them to still continue after having the baby
> (Head teacher 2).

These findings suggest that respondents view sensitization as one way of getting more girls in school. To affirm the need for public education on girl enrolment and retention, girls both in school and those out of school identified ignorance on the part of both parents and the girl- child as a deterrent on girl enrolment and retention.

One girl said:

> Education is good, educate all on the need for
> girl education". "Girls should even aim higher than
> the guys. They shouldn''t listen to anybody (Pupil 3).

Another pupil responded:

> We should always be determined and focus
> on whenever…..people don''t know. Advice
> them to ignore bad friends, focus on what
> they want to become in future because some
> friends can help you and others can spoil
> you. They can just influence you (Pupil 4).

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Interview data collected also indicated that there is the need to get both parents and the girl child informed that there is always an opportunity for girls to go back to school in spite of the thinking among some girls that they cannot go back.

A pupil who is out of school commented that:

> I can't go they will not take me. Mum says she
> will go and find out but she is still here. I am shy
> but I will try and see (Dropout 3).

A pupil remarked that:
> I wish friends who have delivered will come back
> to school (Pupil 6).

Adding to the above, a girl remarked that:
> …they should teach us more of the effects of
> pre-marital sex and teenage pregnancy.
> The girls should be counseled to avoid early
> relationship (Drop out 5).

The above comments give an indication that the girl child needs to be motivated to make the right educational decisions even after child birth. This can be done through public campaign on the importance of girl education and the rights of the child. Parent involvement in the girl child's education goes a long way to either motivate or demotivate the girl to enroll and stay in school thus, the need for parents to be well informed about the needs for the girl child as well as the boy child to be enrolled in school. The research revealed that parents view education as important and necessary for every individual.

Girl respondents both in and out of school noted that when parents support them, they do better in their education. This implies that parental attitude cannot be overlooked in terms of girl child education. This is emphasized in a comment by the girl child coordinator when she said; "parents should motivate them, it helps a lot" . This attest to the fact that, when parents are informed they would support their ward"s education, be it a boy or girl.

These findings are consistent with findings made by Parker et al (1997) that intensive sensitization on the importance and the need to send the girl child to school will enhance both community and parental participation which in no doubt develop positive attitude to the education of the girl child. Results also supported an earlier findings made by Dolyhyne (1991) that changing parental attitude to girl"s education is a way forward in girl education. This change can be effective when parents are well informed. Furthermore, the results collaborates the findings of Sutherland- Addy (2002) that, engaging communities in the bid to enroll and retain girls in school is a critical success factor. She affirms this by noting that community divisions hinder library projects and other sensitive activities thus the need to invest in community relation and co-operation. One sure way of doing so is through effective public education. Pryor and Ampiah (2003) in their finding also indicated that parental involvement in the education of the child brings academic success. This implies that the girl child could be successful academically and move on to achieve her dreams and aspirations if parents get involve in their bid to achieve success.

4.4.2 Reducing cost

Having established that intensive sensitization on the importance of girl education is a way forward in girl education, financial improvement to reduce cost of education on

the part of stakeholders can also not be overlooked. Though parents are the most important stakeholders, other stakeholders equally play significant role in financing education.

Findings of the study indicated that the reason behind the not-so-favorable attitude towards schooling is due to the low socio-economic status of parents.

Parents noted as follows:

> I am a shop assistant and earn only twenty Ghana
> Cedi on a good day. They need financial support
> especially so that they can pay fees and come
> to serve the government again (Parent 3).

> I am a company driver, and get GH¢ 350 per month
> which is not enough for the family… (Parent 1)

> I sell some little things in a school… I get only about
> GH¢10 a week. She will become a great person and
> will be paying revenue to the state, I think that the
> government should be giving jobs to their parents
> and buying books for the children (Parent 1a).

The findings indicate that the respondent (Parents) were low income earners ranging from GH¢40 - GH¢350 per month. Their livelihood was based on either petty trading or driving commercial vehicle. This suggests that they in no doubt face financial constraints thus, would be very much appreciated if they are supported in their bid to educate their wards. The findings indicated that parents wish government would come in and support the girl child more than it is doing at the moment. To parents, free basic education is not enough for a girl child to be enrolled. To them, it takes more

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than just saying *"take your girl child to school"*. Parents showed their frustration in comments they made.

For instance a parent commented:

> The government should support the girls most so
> that we will get more female future leaders (Parent 3a).

Two others commented:

> There is the need for financial support especially,
> so that they can pay fees and come to serve the
> government again (Parent 3).

> …the girl child will need some little things like
> shoes, bag, uniforms and many more because
> even ones dressing show how he/she is supported
> (Parent 2a).

When parents were asked, what role they will play in the education of their daughters if government takes it all, the view was that they are all Ghanaians and will eventually serve the nation so it is the right thing to do.

A parent asserted that:

> They will eventually work for the state and pay
> taxes. We are all Ghanaians; we are trying but no
> job. He should help us to help the girls. We can't
> do it. He is trying but it's not enough. There is
> more to it… (Parent 3a).

In addition, the research findings revealed that irrespective of the fact that parents have low income, they do manage through to take care of their daughter's education. It must be noted that parents of dropouts did not state that their daughters left school because they couldn't provide for them. However, they (both parents) are all of the

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view that supporting the girl child financially will go a long way to encourage her to enroll and stay in school. Contrary to the above, interview data obtained from dropouts also did not indicate directly that they stopped because parents did not take care of them. However, it gives an indication that they were pushed into activities which affected their studies and eventually making they drop out of school due to financial constraint of the family.

A girl remarked:

What they give me is not enough so my friends

sometimes feed me or pay for my classes fee (Dropout 2).

From the above, it can be deduced that the underlying reason for the girl child to enroll and stay in school is basically finances. The study identified that reducing cost of education will lessen the burden of the cost of education on parents and the girl child will be the primary beneficiary. Comparing the responses of all the respondents, conclusion can be drawn that cutting the cost of education is a sure way of getting more girls to school.

It must not be over looked that the government of Ghana at the moment has made basic education free in compliance with the 1992 constitution and several effort in the direction of girl education but much is still needed.

Interview results also indicated that the girl child not just the parent also sees the need for government support in education as paramount.

One remarked:

> The government should help the girls financially.
>
> There should be financial support from government.
>
> Government should really make education free (Dropout4).

These results emphasize the call on government to put in more in education. The findings also revealed that, head teachers were of the same opinion.

One stated that:

> Some consertion must be given to girls in terms
> of school placement, job placement among other
> things. Special package must be put in place for
> them to at least take care of their basic needs
> in school (Head teacher 2).

Contrary, teachers see parents as equal partners in education and that they should be responsible to the wards with or without government‟s support.

A teacher remarked:

> A parent needs to take care of his/her child
> with or without government help. Every
> parent has a responsibility that is why it is
> important that you plan your life. Parents
> should try. It is not easy but some are not
> trying at all(Teacher 2).

Findings from the research indicates that all respondents support the view that when the cost of education is less, the lesser the burden on parents to take care of the girl child in school and one sure way of cutting the cost of education is by government and other non- governmental organizations coming on to support. The results of this study is consistent with the findings made by Rugh (1991), that reducing cost for girl

education is one sure way of dramatic improvement in the enrollment and test scores. This gives an indication that girls who hitherto would leave school because of poor performance will stay as test score increase. This result also echoes the fact that not just government but parents need to play a role in their children"s education. The question is who should bear more of the cost?

The results affirms the findings of CAMFED (2012) in their evaluation of scholarship by child scope schemes in Ghana, that there were vast increase in the enrolment of girls, and gender parity was reduced. As revealed by this study, when the burden of footing the cost of education by parents are lessened through providing supplies and scholarship for the girl- child, it will go a long way in getting every child into school. In addition, it was evident in the increase in girl enrolment when free school uniforms were launched by the government of Ghana in 2009. A typical example is the increase in girl enrolment at the kwalarbi Anglican primary in the Awutu Senya District. Again, Seidu (2003) as cited by Akyeampong (2007) and Burde and Linden (2009) in their finding in Ghana and Afghanistan respectively argued that reducing cost of education has positive effect in enrolment and retention of girls in school as parents are less burdened.

4.5.3 Teacher support

The study identified teacher support as a mechanism to get girls to stay in school. Both girls and parents interviewed were of the view that the attitude as well as the support the teacher shows towards the girl child is paramount in relations to whether the girl- child stays or leaves school.

A parent remarked that:

> The teachers should ensure that the child
> develops interest in education. Teachers should
> be lenient with students (Parent 1a).

Additionally a girl commented that:

> …teachers should try to get closer to us to
> Know our problems and when teaching they
> should have time and patience for the students.
> They should also encourage the girls in the
> School to study hard (Pupil 6).

The above comments indicate that not just the students expect support from their teachers and parents feel same. To the parents the school is like a "second home" so the teacher has all the responsibility to make the girl- child comfortable to learn.

A parent goes:

> The teacher knows best so he/she has to find a
> way to let her stay. We are also trying. Hmm!
> teachers should try for us, to let them learn (Parent 1a).

This finding is an indication that parents feel teachers have a higher responsibility to keep the girl child in school than they do. However, the findings also revealed that parents see teachers as partners in the education of their daughters and that would appreciate efforts made by the teacher to let the girl- child stay in school. Interview data collected from teachers revealed their preparedness to support the girl child to stay in school.

A respondent commented that:

> We try to find out why the students want to
> dropout and see whether it can be solved (Teacher 1).

The girl- child coordinator emphasized the fact that teachers in the municipality are encouraged to give off their best in making the school friendlier to the girl- child.

She remarked that:

> Teachers are encouraged to let the girl child feel at
> home, attend instantly to their plight. When the interaction
> with the girl is cordial they open up. Teachers are
> encouraged to use teaching and learning methods
> suitable to the girl, organizing durbars to educate
> teachers on how to better involve the students
> in their lessons… (Girl- child coordinator).

The above indicates that teachers are concerned about the welfare of the pupils, not just the girls but the boys as well and the role of the teacher in retaining the girl child at school is paramount. However, it should be noted that parents have a higher responsibility at that as they spend more time with the girls. Nonetheless, the teacher plays a vital role in the retention of the girl child. The amount of support a girl child gets from teacher‟s guides her to make a decision either to leave or stay in school. To emphasize this, a pupil who dropped out commented that;

> …teachers shout at me. They accuse me falsely.
> I prefer talking to a woman who sells around
> the school to the teachers. The teachers are
> nice to only a few students. As for me they
> don‟t like me (Dropout 4).

Despite these comments by both parents and the girl child, teachers feel up to the task. One commented that:

> We counsel them and show them how to set
> their priorities. It is challenging but we do
> our best (Teacher 2).

Findings of the study indicated that the perceptions teachers" hold about their pupils could either encourage or discourage them to stay in school. Additionally, the study revealed that teachers appreciate the importance of support to the child irrespective of a boy or girl and they were ready to render the needed support to the girl- child to encourage the girl to enroll and stay in school.

These results are consistent with the findings made by Osei (1991) that poor teacher perception can lead to poor performance of the girl- child which might drive the girl-child to leave school eventually before completion. The finding supports the theoretical framework of the study. Bandura (1977) stipulates that children learn through observation and imitation and people around the child respond to the behavior the child imitates with either reinforcement or punishment. It is also noted that if a behavior is rewarding, the child is likely to continue. This way, the reward or punishment given by the model is essential because if the reward or punishment is inappropriately administered, it will either make or mar the girl child"s ability to stay in or out of school. However, a child desiring approval will behave in a way which she believes will earn approval.

4.5.4 Improvement in infrastructure

Findings from the study indicated that female dropouts and those still in school are all challenged by the facilities at their various schools. As already discussed under the

Research Question Two (2), they all wished to have better facilities so as to improve teaching and learning. In view of these difficulties, the research result suggests that adequate infrastructure would make a difference in the girl- child's decision to stay in school or drop out.

The municipal girl- child coordinator commented that:

> Adequate school facility is another way of getting
> them retained. In terms of books, furniture, etc.
> we need all to make the school better place to study.
> Adequate facilities are needed …most of the schools
> are not girl friendly but we are trying with the help
> from some NGO's to improve infrastructure. Girls
> go home to change and they don't come back, if
> we have facilities in place, they will stay
> (Girl- child coordinator).

She further added that:

> The classrooms are choked and do not support
> effective teaching, learning and monitoring.
> Some are even poorly constructed but we are trying
> (Girl- child coordinator).

These comments suggest that the municipal education directorate appreciates the need for infrastructural development in the various schools as they go a long way to support children not just the girl- child to stay in school. There is also an indication that, when infrastructure is improved, it will go a long way to support more girls to stay in school. Interviews with teachers also attested to the fact that if adequate infrastructure is put in place, it will support them to deliver effectively in teaching, learning and supervision. Teachers complained about not having wash rooms as well

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as staff common rooms and were of the view that with these in place, they will be better placed to give off their best.

A head teacher remarked that:

> We don't have wash rooms. We use that of the
> Mobile Filling Station, even that we share with
> the students. The teachers take care of themselves.
> No tables or chairs, for the girls, it's a pity
> (Head teacher 2).

A teacher also stated that:

> We don't even have staff common rooms to
> sit. We sit on verandas to mark assignments
> and hold teacher meetings. You can imagine
> when it rains, we can't teach because everything
> gets wet. When it's sunny, we chase the shade
> (Teacher 3).

The above findings suggest that if infrastructure is improved as suggested by the respondents, it will go a long way to support the girl child to stay in school in the Ga West Municipality. This finding is in line with Ananga (2011) who argues that school exerts powerful influences on pupil's achievements, and dropout rate and a hostile environment, lack of supports at school and school practices and processes that children consider unsuitable could results in girls leaving school.

4.5.5 Role Model

Interview data indicated that female teachers see themselves as capable role models for the girl child.

One commented that:

> We the teachers should set good examples so
> that the child might say that I really want
> to become like this teacher, we should make
> them see the essence of being educated and
> then make them have role models so as to
> help gear towards their aims and aspirations
> (Teacher 2).

The above indicates that female teachers appreciate being good examples; not just for their own good but the good of the girl child.

Furthermore, the girl child coordinator indicated that outreach programs to expose girls to a wider female higher ranking personality will ginger the "I can do it" spirit in the girl child. This, to her, will let the girl- child see all impossibilities as possibilities.

She relates that:

> Outreach programs are good, they allow the
> girls to meet professionals at their workplaces,
> speech and prize giving day events where the
> girl- child is awarded for some good done
> as well as periodic route march in communities
> will go far to do more good to the girl- child
> (Girl- child coordinator).

In addition, the girls indicated that they do admire females and friends in high places and really look up to them. The girls both those in school and out of school indicated the same thing.

Three pupils stated:

> When I see the newscasters and all, I admire
> them. I sometimes imitate them. I want to be like
> them (Pupil 3).

> When I see a lady in a car, I admire her. I really
> want to be somebody in future. A nurse or a female
> police, it will be good (Pupil 4).

> I wanted to be a lawyer but a neighbor told me
> it is too much for a lady so now I want to be a
> nurse. Lawyer! I have seen some young ladies
> and I admire them, let"s see how it goes (Pupil 2).

Another pupil who fell out of school remarked:
> I wish I am in school. I feel bad when I see
> my friends but if I want to be somebody like
> an actress then I have to find a way to go
> back (Dropout 6).

Another stated that:
> I am not happy especially when I see my
> mates because I wish I was in school and they
> will laugh at me but I still want to be like
> Jackie Appiah, I like her… (Dropout 4).

The finding revealed that the presence of individuals who can be looked up to is one mechanism that can get more girls in school and retain them. There was also an

indication that teachers recognize the need to be of good example to the girl- child. To add to this, it was realized that having teachers and parents as role models cannot be understated as they are found in the immediate environment of the girl- child and set up a pace for the girl- child to follow.

The findings are in line with assertion of Offorma (2008) that, the presence of female teachers in schools provides role models for young girls. Additionally the findings of the study affirms Bandura"s (1977) Social learning theory, which proposes that children observe and identify with the character they want to be like (models) thus they behave in different ways to achieve that. This relates to the fact that as the girl child is introduced and exposed to female role models, she harnesses the desire to be like the models thus puts in all to achieve that aim. This can be seen from responses by students as they admire females in high positions.

4.5.6 Improvement in extra-curricular activities

Respondent were asked what can be done to get more girls in school and retain them.

A teacher commented that:

> …introducing peer education to them so
> that whilst they move out they educate their
> peers who are even outside school or elsewhere
> (Head teacher 2).

These comments give an impression that there are no clubs in the schools as it stands and having one would really motivate the girl child to stay on in school.

A girl- child who is still in school commented that:

> Girls club should be more effective. I saw
> it once. I attended and learnt a lot.
> I waited for another but we have never
> had any to date (Pupil 1).

Though there might be club activities such as the girls club in the school, they are not functioning as they should. Nonetheless, all teachers and the girl- child coordinator interviewed indicated that club activities is one mechanism that if effectively put in place will go a long way in supporting girls to stay in school.

That the girl- child appreciates the existence of such activities and when effectively organized will help turn around the lives of many girls as they will learn to better their lives and as such would want to stay in school. Results supports the findings made by Atoyebi (2012) that when girl-pupils are excluded from extra-curricular activities they get bored and feel isolated and that lack of recreational activity has negative impact on academic performance and could impair healthy living. The results also confirms the findings made by Leach et al (2003) in Ghana, Zimbabwe and Malawi that girls clubs are effective ways of increasing the level of assertiveness and confidence in girls, that nothing is impossible.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusions and recommendations from the study.

5.2 Summary

The major purpose of this study was to explore the factors that militate against the enrolment and retention of girls in school; and the support mechanisms put in place to increase enrolment and retention of girls in the Ga West Municipality.

The study was a qualitative research that employed phenomenology as a design. Instrument for data collection was semi- structured interview. The sample involved twenty- five (25) respondents made up of six (6) pupils, six (6)dropouts, three (3)parents of pupils, three (3)parents of dropouts, three (3) teachers, three (3)head teachers and the girl- child coordinator. The findings are summarized here as follows:

It became clear from the findings that the issue of enrollment and retention of girls in the Ga West Municipality is partly influenced by the demographic as well as the socio- economic characteristics of the girls. These characteristics were as follows:

1. Ages of the girl child

2. Household size

3. Parent level of education

4. Occupation of parent

5. Parental general view on girl education

6. Parental view on girl education

7. Chore time

8. Teenage pregnancy

It was evident that the girl- child is faced with other problems apart from those stated above which motivates her to enroll and stay in school in the Ga West Municipality. These issues were related to the hopes and aspirations for/ of the girl- child and the relationships that exist between teachers, parents and the girl- child.

Moreover, there were other issues which de-motivated the girl- child to stay out of school in the study area. These issues included, inadequate infrastructure of school, low school attendance and poor academic performance of the girl, as well as the distance a girl- child covers to school.

The study also identified some systems and mechanisms which are already in place in the municipality to enable more girls to stay in school as well as other systems and mechanisms that can be put in place to support the girl- child to stay in school in the Amasaman circuit of the Ga West Municipality. These include, intensifying public education to sensitize parents and the general public on the need to send a girl- child to school, making education affordable by reducing the cost of schooling, improving infrastructure to make the schools girl friendlier, exposure of the girl-child to well to do and educated female role models, effective teacher support and improvement in extra curriculum activities.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

1. Significantly, the study revealed that most school dropouts were from broken homes and were basically left in the care of only the mothers who due to financial difficulties could not provide their needs. Whereas the girls who were in school were leaving with both parents. This gives an indication that with the support of both parents (mother and father) the needs of the girl-child, with respect to providing for both her educational and emotional needs, forces could be joined together by both parents to support the girl- child.

2. It was revealed that, parents see education as necessary in every individuals life as that is one sure way of making it in life. It was also realized that though parents in the study had little or no education (illiterates"), they wished they had done better by going to school and that, see education not just for the boy-child as necessary but the girl-child as well.

3. It was also revealed that, the level of education and occupation of parents has implications on their income level which adversely affects their level of financial support to the girl- child in school.

4. That poor academic performance has its share on retention of the girl-child in school. It came out that as the girl-child experiences constant failure; they leave the school to avoid painful experience of failure, especially if her peers receive praise for their work.

5. It came out that most of the facilities at the schools in the Municipality are non-girl friendly. This in turn affects retention as well as performance of even those who stay on in school.

6. The study also brought to light the importance of teacher- support to the girl-child to stay in school. That the relationship that exists between teachers and their students is essential as it promotes cordiality which improves efficiency.

7. It was noted that, intensive sensitization of the general public on the need for girl-child education will be viable in retaining girls in school.

8. The research revealed that the provision of toilet facilities and general improvement in infrastructure such as spacious and well ventilated classrooms will provide a good learning environment thereby increase the chances of the girl-child staying in school.

9. Extra-curricular activities such as club activities were also identified as a mechanism to get girls to enjoy school and stay.

The findings and subsequent analysis has led to the development of the following recommendations that can be taken by all stakeholders in the pursuit of getting the girl-child to stay in school.
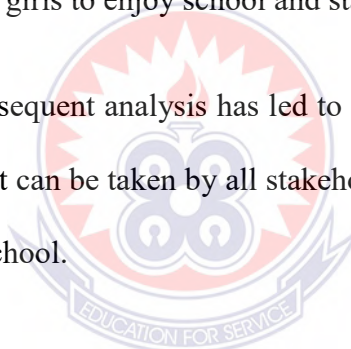
5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in the light of the findings:

1. It is recommended that the Municipal education office should embark on an on- going sensitization programs for parents and guardians as well as pupils and teachers. This may include workshops for pupils. parents, community durbars to sensitize parents on their primary responsibility in caring and ensuring that their children especially the girl-child obtains minimum or higher formal education. Such fora will enlighten parents on the need to send the girl-child to school and retain them in school.

Considering sensitization of parents and guardians on the toll of household chores on the girl-child, and the need to reduce the workload on the girl- child so that girl-child will get the opportunity to study so as to improve and compete with her peers.

2. It is also recommended that, the Municipality Assembly should extend its poverty alleviation fund to needy persons. In this way, parents and guardians would be empowered economically to enable them be in a better position to support their girls in schools. In addition, scholarship schemes can be put in place to support needy girls, especially the brilliant ones in the basic schools. This can be done in collaboration with the girl"s desk of the Municipality's education office. This scheme should aim at increasing enrollment and retention of the girl-child for the realization of the Educational Millennium Development Goals.

Special scholarship schemes should be instituted for dropout girls who return to school. This can be done in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO"s).

School feeding programs should also be extended to all schools in the municipality from pre-school to the junior secondary level. This will get more children especially the girl-child in school and lessen the cost of education on parents. Government program of providing free school uniforms to school children should be selective. Selectively so that it goes mainly to poor school pupils who really need them and help in realizing the Millennium Development Goals. This would be realized if effective education aim at sensitizing the need for girl education is embraced by parents.

3. Getting girls to enroll and stay in school come with its challenges. One of such challenges is inadequate infrastructure. To curb this, it is important for the Municipal education directorate to map out all schools in the Municipality to ensure fair distribution of resources. The Municipal education directorate should also work hand-in-hand with the Municipality's Assembly to get sponsorships to improve on the existing infrastructure and build new ones. There should also be provision by the Municipality's Assembly to plan for a standard school structure with girl friendly facilities which could serve as a model for future establishment of school.

4. Well- to- do educated women in the communities should be encouraged to show interest in girl- child education in their various communities. This can be done by organizing periodic symposia where these successful female professionals will talk to students as well as parents and teachers. They will serve as good role models for the girl- child.

5. There should be the enforcement of child labor laws. There is the need to discourage child labor especially those that hinder the education of children. Furthermore, it is recommended that by- laws should be enacted by the municipality to ban children from roaming the streets or selling at odd times. There is the need to ensure that those who violate these laws be brought to book.

6. It is also recommended that club activities be revived in schools. Clubs such as the girls club be revived to sensitize the girl-child on the need to be educated and stay in school irrespective of all the challenges it comes with.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

In relation to the study, the researcher suggested the following areas for further research:

a) Research in to role community relationship in improving enrolment and retention of girls in the municipality.

b) Investigate the influence of teacher attitude on enrolment and retention of girls in the municipality.

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Northern Region of Ghana". Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast.

APPENDIX I

University of Education, Winneba

Department of Social Studies

Box 25

Winneba

15thMarch, 2014

Dear Madam/Sir,

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I am a student at the University of Education, Winneba pursuing a Master's programme in Social Studies Education. I am to conduct research in your school as one of the requirements for the course. The focus of my research is on the enrolment and retention of the girl- child at the basic level of education. This school was purposefully chosen for the study to explore the issues that affect the girl- child in her bid to acquire formal education. A teacher and two pupils as well as the head teacher will be interviewed.

However, individuals may choose to participate or not, and withdraw from the study voluntarily, if they reasonably think so. All information provided will solely be used for research purposes and shall be treated with confidentially.

On your part, you are requested to decide voluntarily by signing below if you accept to be a participant in this research. Please do not write your name in this letter.

Thank you.

…………………………

Research Participant

APPENDIX II

University of Education, Winneba

Department of Social Studies

Box 25

Winneba

15thMarch 2014

Dear Madam/Sir,

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I am a student at the University of Education, Winneba pursuing a Master's programme in Social Studies Education. I am to conduct research in your school as one of the requirements for the course. The focus of my research is on the enrolment and retention of the girl- child at the basic level of education. You have been chosen for the study to explore the issues that affect the girl- child in her bid to acquire formal education.

However, you may choose to participate or not, and withdraw from the study voluntarily, if you reasonably think so. All information provided will solely be used for research purposes and shall be treated with confidentially.

On your part, you are requested to decide voluntarily by signing below if you accept to be a participant in this research. Please do not write your name in this letter.

Thank you.

………………………

Research Participant

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APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS/DROPOUTS

School: **Date:** **Time:** **Duration:**

General characteristics of Girls

1. Tell me about yourself.
   Prompts:
   a) How old are you?
   b) At what age did you start school?

2. Tell me about your family

   Prompts:

   a) Who are you leaving with?
   b) How many siblings do you have?
   c) What do your siblings do?

Parental Educational and Occupation Background

3. Tell me about your parents/guardians?
   Prompts:
   a) What do your parents/ guardians do for a living?
   b) Can you tell to the best of your knowledge the educational background of your
   parents/ guardian?

Academic Performance

4. How are/were you faring?

   Prompts:

   a) How are/were your grades?
   b) Which is your favourite subject?
   c) How are/ were you performing in this subject?

Encounters at school

5. What challenges do/did you go through at school?
   Prompts:
   a) Can you explain further?
   b) How far is/was your school from home?
   1 - 2 km ( ), 3 - 4 km (   ), 5 -6 km (),7 and above (   )
   c) How do/did you get to school? By: Foot, Vehicle( ), Bicycle(), Any other
   d) Describe further some encounters that you face/ faced as a student?
   e) Are/were you engaged in any commercial activity after school?

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Educational provisions

6. How are/were your educational needs provided for?

 Prompts:

 a) Explain further?

 b) What part do/did you play in providing for your educational needs?

 c) To what extent do/did you contribute?

Factors that Inspired or demoralized

7. What was your motivation for staying in school?

 Prompts:

 a) Explain further

 b) Describe how your parents/ guardian relates/related to your school?

 c) How old were you and at what grade did you leave school? (Drop out)

8. What made you leave school eventually? (Drop out)

Prompts:

 a) Explain further

Hopes, aspirations and fears

9. What are your dreams and aspiration for the future?

 Prompts:

 a) How/Where do you see yourself in the next 10- 15 years?

 b) What do you want to become when you grow up?

 c) Explain further your decisions

10. Who is your role model?

 Prompts:

 a) Why this person?

 b) To what extent do you admire him/her?

 c) Explain further

Worth of formal education

11. Would you say, that the education of the girl child an asset or a liability?

 Prompts:

 a) Explain further

b) To what extent is the education of the girl child necessary?

Support systems and mechanisms

12. How functional are/were club activities in your school functions?
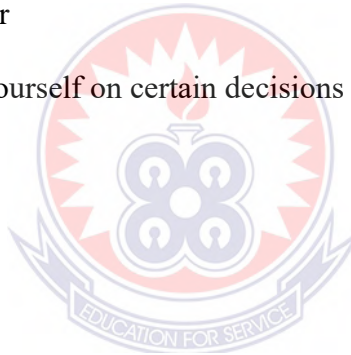
   Prompts:

   a) Which programmes are/were held and how frequent?

   b) Explain further

   c) What else could be done to encourage more girls to stay in school?

13. What are your regrets and wishes?

   Prompts:

   a) Do you wish things had been any different?

   b) Explain further

   c) Do you beat yourself on certain decisions you made?

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Date: **Time:**   **Duration:**

Characteristics of Parents

1. Please tell me about yourself?

    Prompts:

    a) What is your marital status?

    b) What do you do for a living?
    c) Around how much do you earn in a day/ month?
    d) What is educational background?
2. Tell me about your children?

     Prompts:

    a) How many children do you have and their sexes?

    b) What do they do?

Parental view on girl education

3. Why would you spend your last penny on a child‴s education? Boy (   )

    Girl (   )

     Prompts:

    a) Which is more important, girl education as compared to boys?
     b) Explain further

    c) What is the performance of your girl child as compared to the boy?

    d) To what extent would their performance inform your decisions?

Inspirational/ demoralizing factors

4. What challenges do/did you have with her schooling?

    Prompts:

    a) What is the distance from home to her school?

    b) Do you think it has/ had any influence on your her academic wellbeing?

    c) Did she ever show signs of disinterest in schooling?

    d) Explain further

Support systems and mechanism

5. What was the nature of your relationship with her school?

    Prompts:

    a) How often did you visit the school and for what purposes?

    b) Explain further

    c) Describe how comfortable you are/ were in visiting your ward''s school?

Hopes, fears and aspirations

6. What are your hopes (dreams and aspirations) for her in the near future?

    Prompts:

    a) How do you see her in the next ten (10) to fifteen (15) years?

    b) Explain

7. In your opinion, what can be done to improve on female education?

    Prompts:

    a) Explain further

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APPENDIX V

INTERVIEW GUIDE (TEACHERS AND HEAD TEACHERS)

School: Date: Time: Duration:

Performance of the Girl Child

1. How would you explain the general performance of your students compared to others in the circuit?

   Prompts:

   a) Explain further

2. What do you think accounts for the performance of boys and girls in your school?

   Prompts:

   a) Can you explain further?

   b) What must have accounted for the differences in their performance?

c) How punctual are girls to school?

d) How could that affect their performance?

3. How has the enrolment of the girl- child been as they proceed year after year, as compared to the boy- child?

    Prompts:

   a) Please, can you tell me more?

Preparedness of teachers to support girls'

4. What challenges do students (the girl child) often encounter?

   Prompts:

   a) Explain further how teachers relate with the students especially the girls?

   b) How often do female students approach teachers with their challenges?

   c) How are issues affecting students handled?

Effectiveness of parent/ community and teacher/ school relationship

5. Can you describe how the school relates to parents/ community?

   Prompt:

   a) Explain further

   b) How do parents channel the grievances?

   c) How effective is the parent/ teacher association?

   d) Can you explain further?

Environment of school

6. Which facilities can this school boast of?

   Prompts:

   a) Describe it/them?

b) How convenient are these facilities?

   c) Are these facilities girl friendly?

d) Can you explain further?

Support systems and mechanisms

7. What measures are in place to help the girl child enroll and stay in school till

   completion?

   Prompts:

a) What kind of enrolment drive programmes does the school embark on to get

more children in school especially the girl- child till completion?

 b) How effective is the girls club at the school?

c) If a student gets pregnant, what happens to that student?

d) What has/can the school done/ do in   its small way to encourage girls to

stay in

school till completion?

APPENDIX VI

INTERVIEW GUIDE (GIRL CHILD COORDINATOR)

Date: Time: Duration:

Frequency of school Visits

1. What is involved in your visit to schools?

Prompts

    a) How often do you visit a school in a term?

    b) Which activities are held on such visits?

    c) Explain further

Reasons for dropping out

2. According to the annual performance review of the Municipal Directorate (2011) gender parity index has been biased against the girl child, what must have accounted to this phenomenon?

    Prompts:

    a) Explain further.

Community/ private participation

3. How effective is private/ community participation in girl education in the
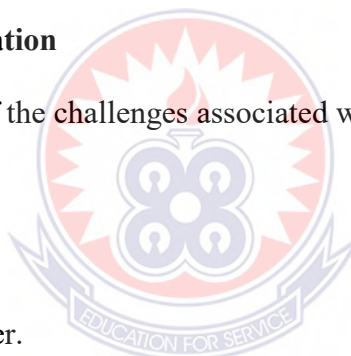
    municipality?

    Prompts:

    a) Are there NGO's who are interested in girls'' education in the municipality?

     b) How involved are these NGO's?

    c) Explain further

    d) Explain how the directorate gets the community involve in the education of

    its citizens?

Challenges to girl education

4. What are some of the challenges associated with female education within the

    municipality?

    Prompts:

     a) Explain further.

    b) To what extent are facilities in the schools girl friendly?

    c) Describe further the nature of what girl friendly environment entails.

Support systems and mechanisms

5. What measures and mechanisms are in place to motivate girls in the

    municipality to stay in school till completion?

    Prompts:

    a) Explain further what has been done so far to encourage more girls to stay in

    school?

     b) What measures are in place to make the school friendlier to girls?

6. What are some of the challenges the municipality face in relation to girl education?

    Prompt:

    a) Explain further

7. How are these challenges dealt with?

    Prompts:

    a) What is the way forward, in terms of getting more girls to stay in school?