UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE PERCEIVED CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF FEMALE STUDENT DROP OUT

IN ASHANTI MAMPONG MUNICIPALITY

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A Project Report in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree.

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, AKOSUA NYANTAKYIWAA, hereby declare that this project report is the results are of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: ……………………………………………………………….

DATE: ……………………………………………………………………….

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this project report was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of project work laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: PROF. FRANCIS OWUSU MENSAH

SIGNATURE…………………………………………

 DATE: …………………………………………….

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I am appreciative to my supervisor, Professor Francis Owusu Mensah for his timeless dedication during the supervision of this work. Special appreciation goes to the entire teaching staff, parents, dropout girls and all other stakeholders of education in the Mampong Municipality for their enormous contributions in diverse ways in making this study a success.

My sincere thanks go to the Academic Board of Educational Leadership and staff of the program in the office who offered my admission to this program. To end with, I give glory to all who directly and indirectly contributed to the completion of my education. You are all dear to me especially YOU.

DEDICATION

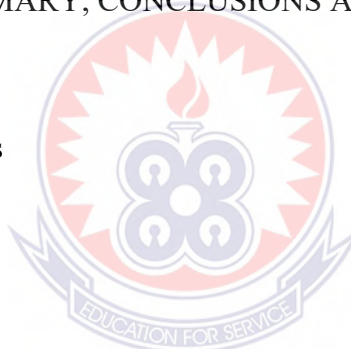To my parents Mr. & Mrs. Essilfie, my siblings, my future husband and children.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceived causes and effects of female student drop out in Ashanti Mampong Municipality. The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological case study design. The research population covered headmasters, female student dropouts, teachers, policy makers and parents. A sample of four (4) head teachers, four (4) ordinary school dropout learners and four (4) teachers, comprising of 2 males and 2 females, were purposively drawn from each school. The parent population was purposively selected from among those who had dropout daughters from the school registers. The instruments used were focus group discussions and an interview guide. The study found among others that dropping out of girls has generally been related to the low education of parents. Most female dropouts were also found to belong to medium and small-sized families. Cultural practices and institutions, including early marriage, engagement, circumcision, home parental services and neglect of female health and nutrition significantly contribute to female dropouts. Based on the findings, it is recommended that school authorities should provide a conducive atmosphere for learning, in which adolescent girls can easily adapt to and complete their education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is a very important part in developing human beings. Sharma (2004) writes that human beings need education because they are destined to be real men, not beasts, dull animals or chimps of wood. This is because education is the cornerstone of economic growth and socio-development and a principal means of improving the welfare of an individual. As a result, education increases the productive capabilities of the socio-political, economic and scientific institutions. It also helps to reduce poverty by increasing the value and efficiency of labour offered by health and nutritional consequence of poverty (Mulwa, 1998).

The development of a society can be judged by measuring the issues that extend educational inequality prevalent in the society. The prevalence of unequal distribution of education in female students hinders development at every stage of a nation. According to the World Conference on Education (2001), all children, particularly girls, must have access to complete quality education by the year 2015. We know it very well that both boys and girls have equal right to be educated and in developing a nation it is important to provide education irrespective of gender.

Among the serious obstacles to female education, premature departures or dropping out from schools by female students is notable in Sub-Saharan Africa. Early departures of girls from schooling certainly results in wastage. Wastage here means the inefficient utilization of both human and economic resources. The interruption of schooling by female students is also costly in terms of the quality of life of those who drop out as well as to the society at large. (Teshome, 2002).

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In fact, Liu (2004) carried out quantitative research in two rural communities in the North of China, in particular focusing on drop outs at the basic level and carrying out interviews with drop outs and the families of drop outs. Among the reasons put forward for dropping out was perceived future prospects or lack of them, school failing to provide impetus/motivation for continued study and youngsters admiring the lifestyles of contemporaries who had already left.

In Nigeria, about 7.3 million children do not go to school, of which 62% are girls (UNICEF 2004). The same UNICEF report indicates that girls' junior high school completion rate is far behind that of boys, at 76% compared with 85% for boys. This gender gap means that millions more girls than boys are dropping out of school each year. This goes to show that the majority of children not in school are girls. UNICEF (2003) showed a worrisome report from sub-Saharan Africa where the number of girls out of school rose from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002. The report also indicated that 83% of all girls out of school in the world live in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific.

It is challenging to provide education for all citizens and to observe the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that entitles everyone to the right to basic education. The drop out of female learners from schools denies them the opportunity for employment as well as the means to increase their social and political participation. In addition, the non-completion of schooling by females contributes to their low social status in society as well as to their reduced decision-making power in the household and over their lives. Given the economic and social benefits of female education, the drop out of female students from schooling represents a significant regression in the development of nations (Beyene, 2008).

In Ghana also, there is a marked difference between the enrolment rates between males and females. Although the Ghana government has been working hard to overcome the gender gap in the formal educational system, there is still much work to be done. The dropout of female children from schools is due to a complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic and structural factors. Finding and implementing solutions to this problem has implications well beyond the benefits to individual female students particularly in Africa.

Underlying factors of dropout of female children from schools in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality in Ghana seem not to be adequately researched. Given that, the municipality has high rates of female dropout in it basic schools, it is important to examine the causes and consequences of the problem of female dropouts. These causes and effects will be used as benchmarks from which to start new actions to investigate the problem of female dropouts. This study is a practical step to research into female dropouts and to promote girl-child education in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality.
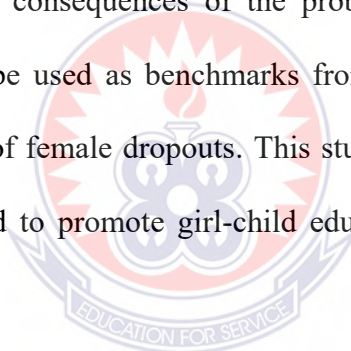
1.2 Problem Statement

In Ghana, over 20% of school going age girls have either dropped out or never enrolled in school at the primary level (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009). Reports on the state of education in Ghana by Akyeampong et al., (2007) and other studies confirm the reality of girl dropout in Ghana's basic school system (GSS, 2003; Hashim, 2004; MOESS, 2007; 2008). In 2006, non-completion rates stood at 15% and 35% for primary and junior high school (JHS1) levels respectively (MOESS, 2007).

Over the past few years, concerns have been raised about the variations in female students' dropout rates in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality. Since the

elevation of the district to a municipal status in 2005, it seems to be making interventions aimed at contributing to the field of female enrolment. One tends to wonder, what are the contributions the municipal assembly in the area has been making such that retention rate of girl child in Ashanti Mampong Municipal over the past few years is improved since it still persists and seems to be retrogressing. From other related research in the context, it is clear that there are push and pull factors that influence whether girls will enroll and stay in school or not.

A number of reasons have been advanced with conflicting opinions. No context-specific research has been carried out to confirm and rank the causes of female school dropouts as well as to map out strategies to address this problem. Whereas this lack of evidence makes remedial measures experimental instead of systematic and directed, it also does not provide guidance on further program design. It is important to note that most of such studies were conducted in developed countries and therefore, it is very difficult to apply their results to explain why Ghanaian female students dropout from junior high schools. The studies on education have focused on school dropout in primary and secondary schools generally (Oywak, 2002; Sesanga & Garrett, 2005; Namuddu, 2008; Odubuker, 2014). No research has been found that represents a way of slicing through a variety of social, economic, cultural and political problems that beset the Ashanti Mampong Municipality.

Moreover, the existing studies were skewed towards quantitative methodology. This current study will adopt the qualitative approach to investigate the issues of female dropout to identify the factors causing females to drop out from JHS in order to assist educational authorities to develop appropriate strategies to improve upon the situation.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the factors that account for the dropout of females from education in Ashanti Mampong Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.The study adopted qualitative methodology approach to investigate reasons of the swift or early exit of females from effective participation in JHS education and the strategies that could be adopted for improving the situation to retain females in schools.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. explore the causes of high female dropout in Junior High School education in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality.

2. investigate the effects of drop out of girls from junior high schooling in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality.
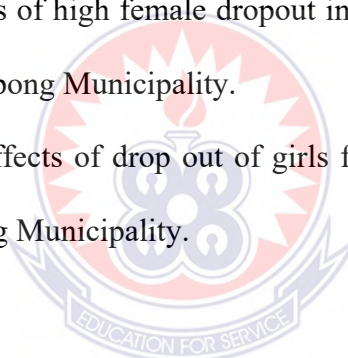
1.5 Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the causes of the high female dropout rates in Junior High School education in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality?

2. What are the effects of female dropout from Junior High School in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study is significant in the following respect:

1. The findings of the studywill enhance knowledge about female education at the grass root level and raise some basic issues that could encourage others to do more research into the problem.

2. The outcome of the study will create a base line data from which actions for expanding and retaining more female students in schools will be made possible.

3. Studying the factors that influence female pupils/student dropouts in the municipality will contribute to the better understanding of the conditions under which female education is planned and implemented, and what is specifically needed to make a success out of the entire effort.

4. Finally, the results of this study will provide the selected Junior High Schools in the Ashanti Mampong Municipal Assembly and its Education Directorate, the Government of Ghana, and other stakeholders with relevant information for their efforts to improve the retention of female students in school. More broadly, the study will help the GES in seeking a solution to the challenges facing girl child educational administration.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study is delimited into content and geographical scope. In terms of content, this study is delimited to address issues of dropout of females in Junior High School education in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality of Ghana. On the aspect of geographic scope, this study was delimited to public basic schools in Ashanti Mampong Municipality.

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This study was confined to variables such as economic constraints, cultural, school factors, political and institutional factors. These factors were given prominence because they serve as cogent indicators that help in determining the possible causes of dropout of females in junior high school education in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality. This study was not concerned with studies on education that focused on school dropout in primary and Senior High Schools.

1.8 Chapter Organization

The study report was presented in five chapters. Chapter One deals with the introduction which comprised background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study. Chapter Two presents reviews on the existing literature of the study. Chapter Three presents the detailed methodology of the study (i.e. research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, methods of data collection, data collection procedure and data analysis and ethical considerations). Chapter Four also covers findings and discussions of the study. Finally, Chapter Five contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.9 Ethical considerations

As part of enhancing the validity and reliability of data that was gathered, research ethics was as much as possible observed during the study. According to Sarantakos (2005), ethical considerations in social research enhances the quality of the study, since relevant research methodology is applied, accurate methods of data collection are employed and fabrication and falsification of data among others are avoided. As a result, the topic and the objectives for conducting the study was

explained to the respondents. The researcher also ensured that confidentiality of information and anonymity of respondents was respected and observed. The consent of respondents was obtained during data collection. In this research, the respondents participated voluntarily, free from any coercion. More so, all works cited will duly were acknowledged and referenced in text and reference list. By this, data gathered was genuine and hence analysis reflected the true situation as required by the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter broadly discusses the literature review of the study. The objective of this chapter was to conduct a review of relevant literature pertaining to causes and effects of female student drop out from Junior High School in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality. The literature review is broadly categorized into conceptual and empirical literature. The conceptual aspect addresses the relevant theories and concepts on the theme of the study topic. Whereas the empirical aspect addresses the previous works and researches that have been carried out in similar studies.

2.1   Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by a conceptual framework (Figure 1.1). The conceptual framework represents the relationship between the independent variables, intervening and dependent variables that have been established from the retrieved literature and related theory. The adoption of multiple perspectives as implied in the review of literature requires investigating the economic, cultural, political and factors within schools that influence the educational outcomes for school dropouts-of females pupil/students.

This interactivity means a two-way influence among events and not a cause-effect relationship. According to Patton (2000) interactivity also implies revealing how all parts work together to form the whole without attempting to predict the future. The main interest is to reveal these relationships as they happen in real life without any manipulation. Following Merriam (1998) such an approach can be

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considered as interpretative in its orientation, since the main concern here is to understand how dropout occurs, what it means to "non-complete" schooling, and why it takes place. The following diagram shows the main units of analysis and observation as it implicitly guided the study.

Conceptual Model of Girls Dropout Rate
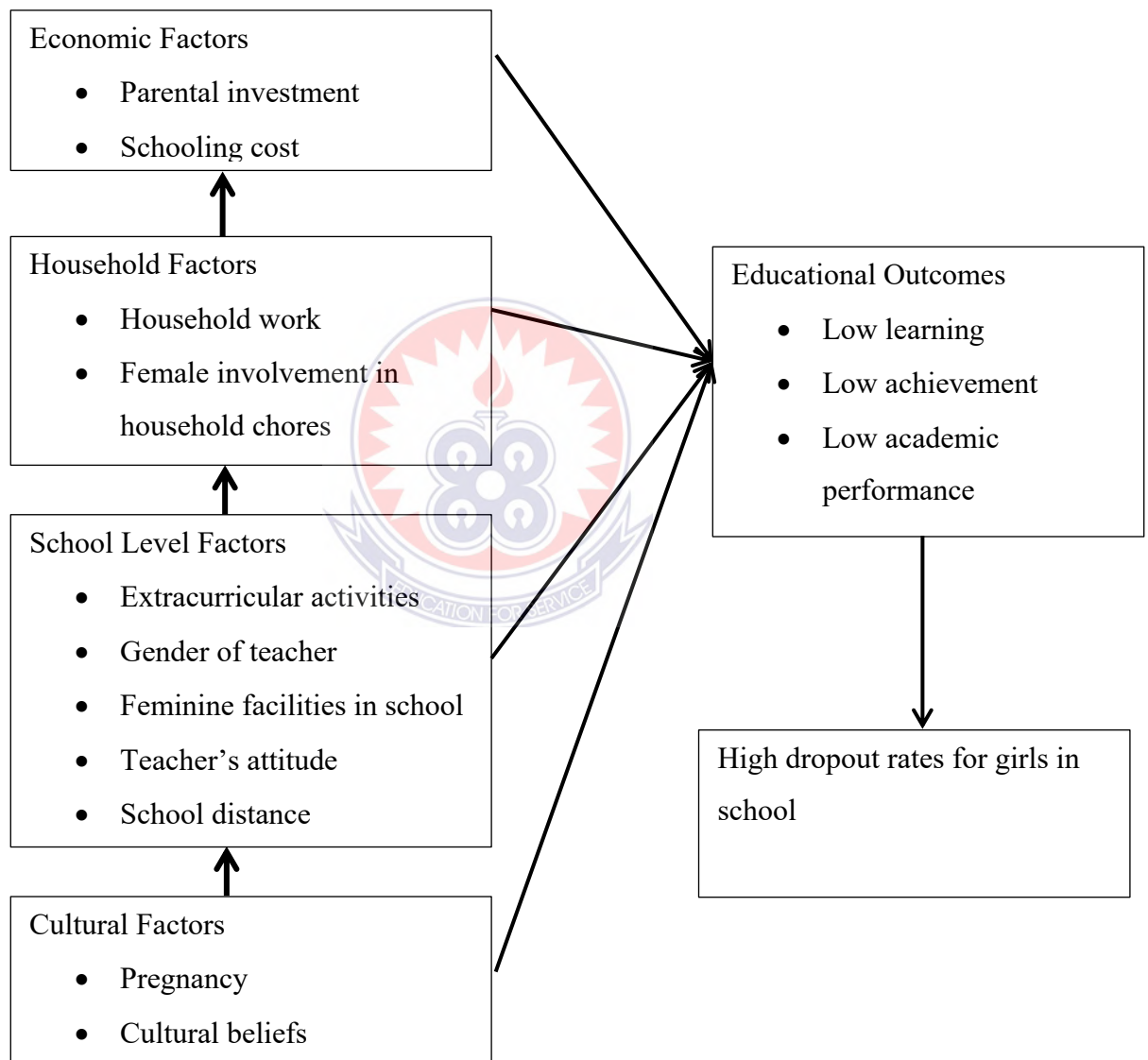
Figure 1: Conceptual Model of factors that contribute to school drop-out of Girls and their outcomes.

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This conceptual framework shows that there is a two-way relationship or common influences among economic, cultural, school or structural and institutional factors and school dropouts. Several factors will be investigated as reasons for school dropout in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality.

In this chapter the researcher reviewed relevant literature and empirical findings and conclusions of some researchers, authors and educators. The literature was used to support or refute findings made in this research at the analysis stage of the research. The researcher also identified strengths necessary for the purposes of improving the previous work. Gaps in the other literatures on causes and consequences of female school dropouts were identified and filled with ideas deemed necessary; the success depended on results of former researchers being subjected to critical examination and scrutiny. The aspects reviewed here include:

➢ Beneficial Effects of Female Education to Development

➢ Nature of Female Dropout: The Ghanaian Perspective

➢ Factors Influencing school Drop-out of the Girl-child.

➢ Reasons for Female Dropouts from Junior High Schools in Ghana

➢ Consequences of Dropout from Junior High School

➢ Approaches to overcome the factors responsible for school drop-out of the Girl-child.

2.2   Beneficial Effects of Female Education to National Development

Recent years have witnessed the recognition of female education as an important element in the discourse on education and development. Strong associations between female education and economic development have been noted, as well as the desirable effects of female education on social welfare, e.g. the high correlation

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between the enrolment rate of girls in junior high schools and GNP per capita, as well as life expectancy, infant mortality and total fertility rates. These have legitimised not only educationalists' but also development economists' focus on female education. Numerous publications from donor agencies have extensively documented these beneficial effects of female education (Floro & Wolf 2000, King and Hill 2002, King 2004, Schultz 2006, Herz, 2008, Subbaraoand Raney 2009, Summers, 2010, Hartnett & Heneveld, 2012, Ogubo and Heneveld2014). These studies employ evidence from econometric studies such as Hartnett and Heneveld (2012) to summarise the effects of schooling: each additional year of schooling is estimated to produce a 10 to 20 % increase in income for both males and females; disaggregated data show that female education has far greater social returns than male education as additional schooling creates substantial social benefits; educated women bring social benefits by having healthier, fewer and more educated children; and each additional year of schooling is estimated to decrease the mortality of the under-five age group by 5 to 10 % and the fertility rate by 10 %. In addition, at the national level, female education seems to be related to development.

Benavot (1989) shows from the analysis of cross-national data from 96 countries that long-term economic development in developing countries has been more strongly associated with the increase in enrolment among junior high school girls than boys .

A wealth of research over the last few decades has established that the benefits of female education are substantial. On the benefits of female education, Bani and Mooren (2005) indicate that education is a fundamental right. It provides children, youths and adults with the power to reflect, make choices and enjoy a better life. It breaks the cycle of poverty and a key ingredient in economic and social development.

The education of mothers has a strong impact on the health, family welfare and fertility. According to Oswak (2010), the child of a Zambian mother with a junior high education has 25% better chance of survival than a child of a mother with no education.

Educated girls generally have significant lower risk of HIV infection (UNESCO, 2002, Information Kit). Fagerlind and Saha (1989) refer to Psacharopoulos (1985) who reviewed research from 61 countries and concluded that the rates of return to the educational investment on women exceeds that of men, particularly in developing countries. According to the study, the average return for all levels of education combined was 15 percent for women as compared to 11 percent for men. Herz, Subbarao, Habbib and Raney (1991) also indicate that selection-corrected returns to schooling for women often exceed those for men, especially at junior high schools. In Thailand, for instance, the corrected return for junior high school is about 25% for women and 8% for men. In Peru, the returns to female education increased nation-wide when correlated for the selection bias, and correlated returns are higher for women than men at both junior high school and higher education. They further note that the social returns to female education are high and exceed the returns to male education: female education improves children's health, reduces the number of unwanted births and causes women to want smaller families. The potential for more productive labour, better health, and slower population growth all argue for more investment in female education (Hunnum, 2002).

2.3   Nature of Female Dropout: The Ghanaian Perspective

Dropouts are those who leave school before the end of the final year of an education cycle in which they are enrolled (Loxley, 1987). Dropping out occurs after

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pupils have obtained access to schooling. Together with failure and repetition it leads to low junior high school completion rates. Many studies also indicate that class repetition can cause dropouts. Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) indicate that fewer than 60 percent of the children who enter school in the low-income countries and about 70 percent of those who enter school in the low-middle-income countries reach the last year of junior high school. According to Odaga and Heneveld (2000), a significant number of children who enrol in the first grade do not complete junior high school in Sub-Sahara Africa. They note that dropout rates are high at the junior high school level in general, with slightly more girls dropping out than boys. All in all the World Bank (1995), estimates that only one-fifth of the countries in Africa have completion rates above 80 percent.

Attempts that study gender and junior high schooling focus on improving the retention of girls by schools in Ghana. These types of studies depend on the experiences of youngsters who had the probability to complete their basic education and as such they do not address the problems of female dropouts. However, there are a few studies that address the issues of female dropouts from schooling (Alhassan, 2002; Aboagye and Acheampong, 2004; Rose et al., 2007). Typically these studies focus on the reasons for dropouts, but differ from each other in the extent to which they investigate the magnitude of dropouts in schools. Those that attempted to examine the prevalence of dropouts have reported the unavailability of data at school level (see Rose et al., 2000).

By ignoring repetitions and transfers, however, Rose et al. (2000) reported that over half of the students who entered form one in 1993/4 did not continue to form two in the next academic year in their sample schools. Based on this information, they concluded that over a quarter of those students who register in form one do not make

it to form two and that although fewer girls enrol in school in the first place, a higher proportion of girls who do enrol drop out at this stage.

Aboagye and Acheampong (2004) have investigated the personal and family background of female dropouts in junior high schooling. Their findings indicate that the majority of female dropouts enter school older than the age for starting primary education (i.e. between 7-10 years), come from large families comprising eight or more members, have families who work neither on the farm nor for the government, have mothers and fathers with low educational levels and avoid and score less in hard sciences such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, etc.

2.4   Factors Influencing School Drop-Outs of the Girl-child

Conditions that influence the improvement of girls' education have been discussed in a number of ways. With particular reference to Sub-Saharan Africa, Odaga and Heneveld (2005) discuss factors affecting female education under three categories: socio-economic and socio-cultural, factors related to the school environment, and political and institutional factors. Hyde (2009) summarizes conditions for improving women's education in Sub-Saharan Africa from four perspectives: family level, societal level, school level factors and factors influencing achievement. Njau and Wamahiu (2008) indicate that some of the critical factors in female dropout include pregnancy, psychological cost of pregnancy, direct cost of schooling, societal perceptions, the labour market, opportunity costs, family poverty, irrelevant curriculum, insecurity, structural attributes and classroom culture. For the sake of convenience this review will summarize the literature under the following categories: economic, cultural, school and societal factors.

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2.4.1 Economic Factors

The dropout of girls from schooling has been found to have links with socio-economic factors by several studies in Africa South of the Sahara. According to Odaga and Heneveld (2005), and Njau and Wamahiu (2008) the most important of these factors include direct and opportunity costs of schooling, limited employment opportunities, socio-economic status, parental/family investment behavior, the economic value of girls, rural/ urban residence, and the level of parental education.

Direct schooling costs have been found to be the major reason parents choose not to educate or remove girls the school. Apart from tuition, such costs include fees for registration and admission, examinations, boarding, school building fund, parent and school association fees, book rental, the cost of uniforms, the provision of furniture, extra tutorials and transportation. Reasons for the increasingly prohibitive cost of direct costs have been discussed from several perspectives. Graham-Browne (2001) and Nejema (2003) argue that poverty and the fiscal crises which force families to cover shortfalls have a devastating impact on households and the education system as far as girls' education is concerned. Kinyanjui (2003) and Namuddu (2004) and Palme (2003) link the severity of direct costs with the shift of educational costs to parents in the name of cost sharing. In Cameroon, Cammish and Brock (2004) found out that many secondary schools are private and charge fees. In general, several studies suggest that the direct costs or financial constraints hold back more girls than boys from schooling.

The opportunity costs of girls' schooling are associated with resources/services lost due to sending the child to school. Child labor is indispensable to the survival of many rural households in Sub-Sahara Africa: agricultural work, domestic work (cooking, collecting fuel, fetching water) marketing as well as child care services are

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required from children, with girls demanded more than boys (Odaga and Haneveld, 2005). The need for domestic labour has grown also with the rapid growth of urban areas. According to Fanta (in Odaga Heneveld, 2005) poor rural parents responded by sending their daughters into the domestic labour market in exchange for regular cash income. Dorsey (2009) refers to a Zimbabwean experience where the economic value of girls takes priority over education. In many Sub Saharan African societies the continuing importance of bride price, polygamy, adultery fines, and value accorded to marriage and motherhood depress the demand for female education.

The prospects of low economic return for girls reinforce dropout rates in Africa. Historically, formal education has been linked to employment, particularly in the civil service sector in this region. When families learn that women earn less than men or are excluded from the labour market due to economic policies, boys are sent to school and girls are kept at home. Sometimes legal or regulatory barriers to women's participation in the labour force or policies that restrict women's access to information and resources also help to perpetuate the tradition that girls stay home from school to do more domestic chores (Herz, 2001). Njau and Wamahiu (2008) note that the lack of economic alternatives in the labour market even when girls complete schooling, is not only a factor influencing female students to dropout, but also one of the reasons for pregnancy. Many girls, they say, perceive marriage as an escape from family poverty, and mistakenly believe that pregnancy will help them to "hook" husbands.

Girls from better-off homes, who live in urban areas, and whose parents are better educated are more likely to enroll and remain in school longer than those from poorer homes and rural areas. In areas where overall enrolments are low, the gender gaps in participation are wider (see Cammish and Brock, 2002; Davison and Kanyika, 2004).

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Parental perceptions or investment behaviour concerning the irrelevance of girls' education influences both the enrolment and persistence of female pupils in schools. Odaga and Heneveld (2005) indicate that the educational investment behaviour or decisions of most African families is based on gender-differentiation, birth-order and number of siblings. According to them, parents often consider that boys are a better investment than girls and that they are also better at school.

Davison (2003) indicates that parental decisions to educate boys are also influenced by patrilineal inheritance systems where boys are prime beneficiaries. According to him, there is a strong belief among families that, once married, girls become a part of another family and the parental investment is lost.

The view that other educational agencies are more efficient than formal education systems at preparing girls for life is another factor for keeping or sending girls to school. Apprenticeships in sewing or trading are still popular among parents who seek for their daughters to acquire some skills before marriage. Tied up with these tendencies, parents often give the excuse of lack of resources for not educating their daughters.

2.4.2   Cultural Factors

Socio-cultural beliefs, customs, practices, pregnancy, insecurity, girls' expectations and other traditions play a significant role in decisions to withdraw girls from school and their own decisions to drop-out of school. Save the Children (2005) indicates that cultural norms and beliefs constrain girls' education especially in many developing parts of the world. In these societies, traditional values and some religious beliefs constrain girls from making their own decisions and expressing their own opinions. Chege and Sifuna (2006) examined claim that many cultures favor

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education for boys more than girls. Kapakasa (1992) studied girls' persistence in school and found that initiation ceremonies (religious ceremony) have significant effect on girls' dropout rate when parents have more propensity to pay for the expenses of the ceremony than their daughters' education.

Abena (2001) and Atayi (2008) observe that in Africa parents were more concerned about the role for girls at home as in this role, girls do not need education since they are supposed to take care of the children and prepare meals.Falkingham and Baschieri (2006) observed that in Tajikistan many girls attend only religious classes which provide relevant skills for future married life as skilled wives. Sawada and Lokshin (2009) found that purdah (ideal) or seclusion of women was a factor for girls' dropout. However, traditional values can be different from location to location and in this respect, UNESCO (2010) indicate that traditional values are stronger in rural areas in developing countries compared to urban areas and people often do not allow girls to leave homes even for schools.

Initiation ceremonies still mark the transition from childhood to adulthood among communities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence indicates that initiation creates a lot of confusion and dilemmas for girls. Ceremony schedules usually overlap with the school calendar and that leads to absenteeism and dropouts. Although, communities accept the girls as adults, teachers or schools continue to consider them as children. Sometimes they may be punished for not participating in some activities which adults do not normally participate in. Initiated girls may also feel it difficult to continue schooling after passage to adult hood as the next step is expected to be marriage.

Circumcisions another ritual that creates similar dilemmas to those who pass through initiation ceremonies. Circumcised girls not only perceive themselves as

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adults, but also become negative influences on their uncircumcised peers. They may become rude to teachers. They often reject schools as institutions for "children". Frequent absenteeism and reduced performance leads them to drop out from schools and eventually to marry (Ghicharu, 2003). Together with the payment of bride price and early marriage, circumcision functions to enhance the social status of teenagers and acts as a mechanism for curbing female sexuality and pre-marital pregnancy. Due to emphasis placed on female virginity before marriage, these practices were perceived to increase economic returns to the family through bride wealth (Njau & Wamahiu, 2008).

Security and the needs for physical safety or protection are traditions that often demand special concern for girls' privacy and social reputation (Herz 2001; Njau and Wamahiu, 2008). In cultures where female seclusion is practiced, the impact of that tradition on girl's enrolment after puberty is substantial. Odaga and Heneveld (2001) indicate that in some rural areas of Mozambique families keep daughters out of schools after their first menstruation and initiation rituals.

In some other countries, school distance from home gives rise to issues of special concern for security. Adolescent girls may be victims not only of sexual harassment but also of abduction, after which they are forced to marry their abductors. In many countries, a relationship has been found between late entry of girls to schools, frequent absenteeism and finally dropping out of school. Girls may start school at the age of 10, since the distance from school may be too great to allow small children without older siblings to walk on their own. At the age of 11 or 12 they are forced to leave school as their parents may be afraid of sexual harassment and abduction.

Several studies also found that investigated that teenage pregnancy is a

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significant cause of school dropout for girls (Boyle et al., 2002). Some studies argue that there are some specific characteristics of girls with dropout status which are: Girls with poor school performance, girls who have experienced temporary dropout previously, low economic status, family migratory life styles and the consequent vulnerability of girls. Dunne Leach, (2005) argue that some unexpected circumstances of girls such as lack of social and economic opportunities and gender inequality in education system lead to motherhood and consequence dropout from schools. Dunne and Leac (2005) state that the dropout rate of girls is higher than the dropout rate of boys and the foremost cause for girls to drop out is pregnancy. Though some countries permit girls after getting pregnant to return to school, research found that the re-entry rate is not much higher.

According to Grant and Hallman (2006), re-entry to school after pregnancy depends on some circumstances such as if they can get caregiver for their child and if they are able to share or relinquish childcare responsibilities. Odaga and Heneveld (2005) indicate that fear of pregnancy is another factor for parents to remove their children from schools. They refer to a study in Cameroon where Christian parents were found to marry off their daughters at puberty even if they have not finished primary school for fear of pregnancy. The health implications of teenage pregnancy are another reason for early dropouts. A study in Kenya showed that secondary schoolgirls who had been pregnant were twice as likely to report poor health as those with no pregnancy history (Youri, 2003).

Religion is frequently associated with low female participation in schools (Appleton and others, 2000; Odaga and Heneveld, 2005). The reasons have to do with the fear of parents based on the assumption that western education promotes values and behaviour for girls that are contrary to cultural norms. Brock and Cammsih

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(2001) imply that religion is a proxy for cultural views about appropriate female roles as there are examples among entrepreneurial Muslim communities, which invest their wealth in the education of their daughters. Christian communities also withdraw their daughters because they fear that formal schooling brings about non-traditional customs to girls. Particularly, the possibility of pregnancy among teenage girls and the economic responsibility for their adult daughters and grandchildren induces Christian parents to marry off girls rather than keep them in schools.

Girls' expectations of their school performance and career prospects play significant roles in their persistence at school. Odaga and Heneveld (2005) refer to studies in Malawi, Gambia, Sierra Leone and Kenya, which show that both girls and boys have low expectations of female achievements in school and of career prospects. Studies in Guinea and Zambia show that although junior high school pupils showed few gender stereotypes in the first grade, by the form two boys and girls subscribed to gender stereotypes that generally favored boys, and that girls internalized self-images of inferiority that finally leads to dropouts (Anderson-Levitt and others, 2004).

The socialization process which constantly presents a subservient wife and mother role for girls affect not only the self-image and performance of girls, but also their career aspirations. There are now several studies, which show that children in urban areas and male students articulated a wider range of career choices (including law, engineering and medicine), while children residing in rural areas, and female students, had a more limited range of career aspirations, teaching and nursing being the most popular. Girls tend to aspire to traditional 'female' occupations, particularly teaching and nursing, regardless of place of residence. Studies from Ghana and Malawi indicate lack of interest in school attendance among girls. In Mozambique lack of parental control has been emphasized as a reason for school absenteeism

among girls (Odaga and Heneveld, 2005).

Chore time or the amount of time girls spend on chores and other productive activities such as marketing reduces the time and energy they spend in schools, affecting their success and persistence. In Guinea and Niger, girls are prominent in petty trading in border towns and spend much of their time away from schooling. (Long & Fofanah, 2000). In Uganda, Nammuddu (2001) argues that poor performance of girls has relations with the greater demand on their time to perform household chores including fetching water and wood, cooking and the care of younger siblings.

2.4.3   School Factors

The school also affects the survival of girls and perpetuates the gender gap in education. The working environment, distance to school, teacher attitudes and teaching practice, gender bias in curricula and classroom culture all affect female attainment and persistence in schools.

Learning environments have been well recognized as inadequate in Sub-Africa due to the low level of economic development and poverty (Lockheed and Verspoor et al., 2001, Odaga and Henevld, 2005). Most learning institutions are in short supply of classrooms, facilities and learning materials. In many countries, teachers are paid relatively low salaries compared with other sectors or they are not paid regularly. The result is teacher absenteeism, lack of motivation or attrition. There are also conditions where schools and teachers are forced to search for alternative incomes from parents or to use student labour. This situation has had a negative impact on girls' education, because it discouraged parents from sending girls to school or shortened the time spent on teaching and learning.

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Distance from school has been another deterrent factor for girls' education in many countries in Africa. Odaga and Heneveld (2005) refer to a large number of studies in the region where it has been reported that the long distances girls (particularly rural girls) travel to school has two major problems: one relates to the length of time and energy children have to expend to cover the distance, often on an empty stomach, the other relates to the concern and apprehension parents have for the sexual safety of their daughters. The problem of distance from school also has implications for the motivation of girls to stay in school. In Guinea, studies show that close proximity of schools had a positive motivating impact on girls' participation in schools while in Mali, most girls stated that living far away from school and having to walk discourages them.

Teacher attitudes and teaching practices have important implications for the success and persistence of girls in schools. Studies from several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa indicate that both female and male teachers believe that boys are academically better than girls (Anderson-Levett et al., 2000; Brock and Cammish, 2001; Long Fofanah, 2004; Davison and Kanyuka, 2005). In many countries there are indications that teachers paid more attention to boys than girls in the classrooms. Still in others there are conditions where boys are being given priority in the distribution of books and other learning materials. Palme (2003) reports from Mozambique that there is little communication between pupils and teachers, and that the higher rate of failure for girls might be due to inequality of treatment. Although the promotion of female teachers has been recommended as a strategy to create role models for girls as well as for their safety, studies indicate no difference in low expectations of female students between male and female teachers (Odaga & Haneveld, 2005). However, studies from Uganda show that the largest gender-gaps in enrolment exist in poorer regions where

the percentage of female teachers is low (World Bank, 2002).

Gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate school facilities have a great impact on school persistence of girls. Studies show that parents are unlikely to retain girls in school if they lack private lavatories, particularly after puberty (Herz et al., 2001). According to Wangai and Wamahiu (2008), it is rather embarrassing for adolescent girls to share toilets with boys, especially if they lack provisions to dispose used sanitary napkins.

Curricula, textbooks and learning materials are often related to girl dropouts in Sub-Sahara Africa. Studies refer to parental doubts as to the relevance of the curricula to their daughter's life. They sometimes prefer more learning related to practical skills for future employment and the daily life of students (Brock & Cammish, 2001; Kinyanjui, 2002; World Bank, 2003). These studies also indicate the limited options available to girls within the present educational systems, the gender bias in subject choices as well as the negative and inaccurate presentation of female images in textbooks as push factors for girls to dropout from schools. With reference to gender bias in subject choices, it is commonly reported that girls are often streamed out of the Sciences and Mathematics into the traditional 'female' subjects. In a study on the portrayal of girls and women in Kenyan textbooks, Obura (2001) reports that women and girls are nearly invisible in textbooks, even in agriculture where women are very productive and contribute much of the labour. A review of textbooks in Gambia shows that despite efforts to remove gender bias in schools books, the tendency to portray women in nurturing, passive roles in relation to men persists (Odaga & Heneveld, 2005).

Sexual harassment has been an issue of special concern since the mass rape of 75 schoolgirls in Kenya. Hallam (2004) indicates that there is a pandemic of sexual

violence and harassment in educational institutions in Africa, and it is a real concern for students, parents and school authorities. Male students are mostly identified as offenders and their acts include verbal abuses, cartooning, harassing, beating and raping. Anderson-Levott et al. (2004) report that in Guinea boys are very aggressive towards girls and that they used physical force, threatened and teased girls to silence them in the class.

Teachers also prey on their female students, threatening to fail them, or publicly humiliate them, to prod them into sexual liaisons. Teachers are also reported to reward female students who 'co-operate', with grades and tuition waivers. During confrontations between students and state forces, it was reported that females have been raped by police officers and soldiers (Hallam, 2004).

2.4.4 Reasons for Female Dropouts from Junior High Schools in Ghana

Different studies have provided a variety of explanations, but Rose et al. (2007) concluded that many of the reasons for dropping out of schooling are similar to those for not attending school at all. According to them the most important reasons identified for dropping out of school for girls include lack of money to pay for school expenses (direct costs of schooling), need for child labour (opportunity costs), parental attitude and support, early marriage, health, curriculum and teaching practices, distance between home and the school, coverage enrolment and corporal punishment in schools.

Leka and Dessie (2004) found that the main reasons for female dropout include poor home environment (poor illumination, lack of study places, lack of books, lack of time to study), teacher and director biases against girls, poor school environment (lack of learning materials, lack of security on the way to schools, poor teaching,

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parental attitudes and parental expectations from daughters' education.

Assefa (2001) did a study on female dropouts in rural primary schools in Ethiopia and his findings were mostly consistent with those of other studies. He mentions that the most important reasons for female students to drop out are labour demands by the family, unsafe road conditions from home to school, distance from home to school, inability to buy learning materials, inability to pay schools fees, lack of interest in schooling, unclear future career, parents knowledge of and attitudes towards girls education, early marriage, pregnancy, illness, repetition and fear of abduction.

2.5   Consequences of Female Dropout from Junior High School

2.5.1   Increase in illiteracy

Nnadi (2003), corroborates that Zimbabwe, with a population of 14.5 million, has an estimated literacy rate of 80 percent, one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. Surprisingly girl child dropout rate remains high. High dropout rate poses a threat to the development of the country as this reduces the educational level of the people in the country. Also dropouts increase illiteracy levels in the country. Yet it is not only the question of percentage that should be checked, but the fact that mothers are the first teachers of children in any society.

According to Ghartey (2012), while it is true that mothers are the first teachers for our children and that in today's society a woman is valued because of her education and not her beauty, little has been done in Ghana to curb girl child dropout. Results from open ended questionnaires revealed that majority (90%) of the respondents believe that a woman for whom higher education has not been attained has no full dignity and socio-economic value to his husband and the society at large.

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As one of the respondents aptly commented: "It has become a norm in today's society that a woman who has attained higher education has more socio-economic value and is more respected than the uneducated counterparts". Majority of the respondents thus cited education and not beauty as a value that the society cherishes and believes helps stabilizing today's matrimonial systems. This means that the saying that "educating a woman is educating a nation" should no longer be valued only in principle, but in practice in Ghana. Since the girl child has the potency of motherhood, she bears potential to become a good teacher of her own children if she is educated. More interestingly was the remark by one of the participant who happened to be a female teacher: "one of the mothers of the girl child dropout in form two is my former classmate who was also a dropout".

A number of respondents echoed similar sentiments that most uneducated parents have the tendency of not encouraging or sending their own children to school. This is because uneducated parents normally do not see the value of education. However, while a majority of respondents showed support for the above mentioned view, they were quick to point out that not all uneducated parents see no value in educating their own children. They however concurred that most of such parents require enlightenment on the importance of educating children, especially the girl child.

2.5.2 Unemployment Problems and Underdevelopment of the Country

From an economic perspective, dropouts cause under-utilisation of resources and faulty government planning. Besides, child trafficking and child labour (which are against international laws) to neighbouring countries like South Africa. According to Bonniqwe, (2005), Botswana and Mozambique are on the rise for reasons among which is school child dropout. On the other hand, most of the street kids in the

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country are a consequence of school dropouts. All these problems constitute a socio-economic burden to the country thereby making dropouts a prejudice to the development of the community in which the school is found and the nation at large.

Also, people are nowadays employed on the basis of their qualifications. Those with higher qualifications, academic or otherwise, have higher chances of getting employment. This means that the least educated like dropouts risk being unemployed. Consequently, their potential to contribute to the national economy is compromised. This results in the perpetuation of the vicious circle of poverty where the poor and uneducated together with their families remain the same or even worse. In fact, many rural women remain disadvantaged in the Zimbabwean societies due to illiteracy and economic dependency that prevent them from combating societal discrimination. Despite legal prohibitions, rural women and in particular the rural girl child is still vulnerable to entrenched tradition of dropouts which in turn limit her potential to contribute to socio-economic development of the nation. Most of Zimbabwe's women population lives in the rural areas, urban women being the better educated and most of them employed. This entails that a lot is desired to help the rural girl child or rural women in general. The government's failure to do so is not only a crime against women, but a failure to honour the United Nations led Convention on Women issues such as the 1980 Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1993 Declaration of violence against women, both of which Zimbabwe is signatory (Beyene, 2001).

2.5.3   Anti-Social Behaviour and Increase in Crime Rates and HIV/AIDs

School Dropouts also invoke anti-social behaviour and increase crime rates of the society in which the dropouts live. The most serious problems cited were drug

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abuse, robbery/pick pocketing, alcohol drinking and prostitution among both boy and girl dropouts. Dropouts thus set a bad example to the young people in the community as they engage in beer drinking, prostitution, drug abuse and theft. This is possibly a result of customary marriages such as kuzvarira which are still common with most of the religious sects in the area. Kuzvarira involves marrying off, without her consent, an underage girl (sometimes as young as eight or even before birth) to a rich man who already has another wife or wives in exchange for money, food and other material possessions that guarantee the girl's family not to suffer acute economic deprivation ever again (Financial Gazette, 2/12/2004). Customary marriage is potentially polygamous and permits some negative practices that have the effect of discriminating against women (Sardc, 2008).

They also expose the girl child to HIV pandemic. Because the rural girl child leaves school for early marriage or due to pregnancy, mostly by "sugar daddy's" she is exposed to the deadly HIV/Aids pandemic. A "Sugar daddy" is a rich man who already has another wife or wives. Since the men have many sexual partners the risk of the young girl(s) getting infected with HIV/Aids is very high as the husband can get it from any one of his other partners and then pass it to her. A man who has so many partners is not very different from a man who sleeps around with prostitutes because the many wives can never be trusted to be faithful as they will often be sexually starved. The young girl's life thus is put to risk by dropping out from school. (Lockheed & Verspoor 2003).

2.5.4   Wastage in Education

It is factual that the cost of providing educational services to any country is very high; it is a big investment. This being the case, the Ministry of Education should

always fully account for all educational expenditure. According to Chanakira (2006:13), "it is imperative that the government eliminates all forms of resource wastage, financial, material and human" if it is to avoid wastage in education. From an educational perspective, educational wastage is a term that can be used to describe the total number of years spent by repeaters and dropouts in the education system, that is, before they repeat or dropout respectively. It implies the loss of resources by the government through the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture as a result of dropouts and repeaters. In some quarters, "the promotion of good classroom teachers to positions outside the classroom promotes educational wastage" (Chanakira, 2006).

Also, the under-utilisation and misuse of educational facilities (like school library) by the school is an indication of wastage and may promote dropouts. The time and money spent on dropouts at any grade level means a great loss to the government investment. As given by Chivore (2006: 11), the implications for dropouts are that they cause educational wastage in following ways:

- The money which is invested by the state is under-utilised.

- Materials and resources are not put into use, which is uneconomic

- The dropout cannot attain a full educational capacity.

- Consequently, the dropout cannot maximally contribute to the country's economy building.

- As a result, the dropout becomes a liability to the country instead of being an asset.

- The dropout reduces opportunities for other children who could have better utilized those resources to the benefit of the country.

The above points by Chivore buttress Hussen and Postlewhite's (2005: 12) sentiments that "the money invested and lost through someone who does

not complete an educational cycle, cannot be recovered and means a loss of resources by government".

2.5.5   Approaches to the Promotion of Female Education at Different Levels

A review of promising approaches to let girls learn has been given by Herz et al. (2009) and Odaga and Heneveld (2005). Herz (2009) summarized these solutions at school, community and national levels. They note that at school levels major approaches emphasized were the reduction of direct and opportunity costs of schooling, addressing access and safety concerns and improving the quality of schooling offered. According to them, some of the measures to be taken include the following: reservation of school places for girls, bringing schools closer to homes, awareness campaigns focused on girls, incentives (i.e. scholarships) or fees waived only for girls,, separate toilets and facilities in co-educational schools for privacy, more female teachers and child care.
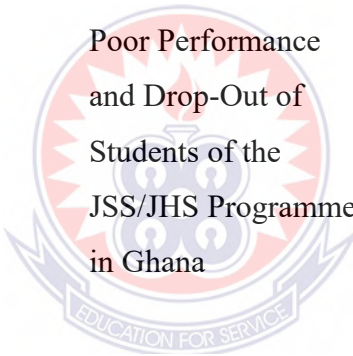
At the community level, they emphasize the need to address issues related to direct and opportunity costs as well as safety concerns. Some measures include the provision of wood and water supplies, childcare and public transport. At the community level, they emphasize the need to address issues related to direct and opportunity costs as well as safety concerns. Some measures include provision of wood and water supplies, childcare and public transport. At the national level they underline the importance of policies to raise women's economic returns to schooling. This requires removing macro policy distortions affecting the sectors in which women predominate, ease barriers to female labour force participation, increase access to information, credit, and resources for self employed women and improve health care, nutrition and food supplies for girls to increase learning ability. Odaga and Heneveld (2005).

Empirical study review aspects addresses the previous works and researches that have been carried out similar topical issues of the study as shown in Table 2.1

Table 2.1: Empirical Study Review for this Research

Author	Date	Country(s)	Topic	Methodology	Findings	Concluded
Munyaradzi Mawere	2012	Zimbabwe	Causes and effects of girl child dropouts in Zimbabwean schools	Quantitative	The study revealed that most of the girl child dropout cases were a result of early marriages, abject poverty, and economic hardships as well as religious and traditional beliefs that work against educating girl child.	From the foregoing, the paper recommends that civil education and concientisation of rural parents, teachers and the girl child on the importance of girl child education be made as a matter of urgency
Serefete Molosiwa	2012	Botswana	Girl-Pupil Dropout in Secondary Schools in Botswana: Influencing Factors,	Mixed Method	The analysis concluded that although pregnancy among schoolgirls is a global problem,	The prevalence of the problem, the authors argue, has cost implications to the government.

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			Prevalence and Consequences		developing countries are worse off because of the socio-economic factors that affect the level of education	Governments incur costs on the affected girls in different ways such as cost on unemployment, cost on the girl's health during pre-natal care
Jackline Sigei	2014	Kenya	Influence of Home-Based Factors on Dropout Rates of Students in Co-Educational Public Day Secondary Schools in Rongai District,	Quantitative	The highest causes of dropouts were identified as those caused by early marriages and teenage pregnancy respectively	Additionally, cost is incurred on post-school programmes aimed at behaviour rehabilitation of the affected girls
Benjamin Koskei,Catherine Simiyu	2015	India	School Based Factors As Determinants Of Secondary School Students Dropouts In Bomet	Quantitative	The finding of this study revealed that the governments' objectives of retaining all students in school have not been	The study recommended that, there is need to efficiently and effectively run the Constituency

			India		met in the study area	Development Fund (C.D.F) and bursary schemes operated by the Ministry of Education (MEO).
Charles Gyan	2015	Ghana	Push Out or Drop Out? Taking a Critical Look at the Poor Performance and Drop-Out of Students of the JSS/JHS Programme in Ghana	Qualitative	After several years of implementation, the success rates of students from the JSS/JHS system have been abysmally poor. The situation is even more abysmal in the rural areas of Ghana where most schools lack basic teaching and learning tools.	This paper, from a study of some JSS/JHS schools in some rural and urban settings in Ghana, takes a critical look at some of the factors in this educational system that has pushed many pupils to drop out of the school system hence making the system ineffective and incapable of meeting its intended purpose.

| Liu Chin | 2004 | China | School Drop out: Patterns, Causes, Changes and Policies | Quantitative | They have achieved this by identifying children at risk of dropping out and attended to the factors that contribute to their chances of dropping out such as, providing writing material and food on condition that children attend school regularly. | There is some evidence that when teachers take a more proactive approach to the problem of poor participation and drop out this is able to improve the situation. |
| Rani Gul, Arshad Ali | 2007 | Pakistan | Causes of Dropout Rate in Government High Schools (Girls) | Quantitative | The major findings of this study concluded that our educational system is not able to fulfill the demands of the society. Poverty, illiteracy, unawareness | This situation may be improved if the government provide scholarships and job opportunities, to the educated peoples and arrange awareness |

					of parents and unemployment of the educated people are the main causes of dropout.	programs for the girls drop out.
Gabriela Chirteş	2010	Romania	A case study into the causes of school dropout	Quantitative	School dropout leads to failure in social integration, and as a result greatly diminishes a person's chances to achieve personal success in legally accepted fields of activity.	Research that has been carried out into this problem leads to the conclusion that there has been an increase in the number of students facing school adjustment problems
Kudzai Chinyoka	2014	South Africa	Causes of School Drop-Out among Ordinary Level Learners	Quantitative	Findings revealed that poverty in households, child labour/household chores, broken families, poor supervision by parents, were identified as	The study recommends that parents provide adequate school learning materials to their children such as school uniforms,

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					being the major factors influencing girls school dropouts.	school fees and stationery to encourage school retention
Ijeoma Henrietta	2012	Nigeria	Drop Out From School Among Girls In Edo State	Quantitative	Poverty had the highest percentage (53%), while death of parents, pregnancy, ill health, inadequate teaching had the least percentage of 1%	It is recommended that Government should identify indigent students, who are likely to dropout of school as a result of poverty, and help negotiate some form of scholarship or financial assistance for them.
S. M. Shahidul, A. H. M. ZehadulKarim	2015	Malaysia	Factors Contributing To School Dropout Among The Girls	Quantitative	Findings revealed that economic factors, household factors, school level factors influencing girls school dropouts	This study provides a few important recommendations. Governments should plan some special polices to improve

	female education like introducing special stipends for female students

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used to conduct the study. The methodology lists the research strategies of inquiry It provides intellectual discourses on the knowledge claims within which the research is based and the research protocols associated with them. It is important to mention that this chapter is organized as follows; research design which was used in collecting useful data for the research, the population, the sample, and its selection that is, the actual group that was included in the study and from whom data was collected. The chapter also highlights the research instruments used as well as the data collection procedure, analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

In this study, the qualitative design was employed. This was because this approach was ideally suitable to the objectives of the research. More specifically, the purposes of this study indicate a qualitative approach in a number of ways suggested in the qualitative research literature.

The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological case study design in order to explore and present the causes and consequences of female students drop-out in Mampong Municipality. Qualitative phenomenological case study approach is used to highlight the specific and to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in the situation. A case study design was developed in order to gain insights into, not only what was happening to children's access to schooling, but also why events might be happening in that way (Yin 2012; White 2012). One of the

advantages of this approach is that it allows the researcher to gain an understanding of social phenomena from participants' perspectives in their natural settings (McMillan & Schumacher 2010 cited in Chinyoka & Naidu, 2013).The qualitative research protocol is considered appropriate as it helps to build a complex and holistic picture of events or phenomena. It analyses words and reports the detailed perspectives of the research participants in their natural setting (Creswell, 1998).

3.2   Population

Polit and Hungler (1995) explained population to mean the entire aggregation of cases that meets a designated set of criteria. A study population is therefore, the aggregation of elements from which the sample is selected. Preliminary visits to Mampong Education Directorate revealed the following circuits in the municipality: Adidwan, Central A, Central B, Central C Kofiase, Benim (Mampong Municipal Assembly, 2015). Out of the six circuits, two circuits were used for the main data collection namely Adidwan and kofiase. This was because records at the Municipal Education Office indicated that the dropout rates were high. The schools within these circuits were used as accessible schools. The research population covered headmasters, female dropouts, teachers, policy makers and parents.

3.3   Sample and Sampling Procedure

A crucial decision in case study research is the selection of a case(s) to study. The research population included head teachers, female dropouts, teachers, policy makers and parents. The selection of research settings for this study purposefully included the two biggest circuits in Mampong. These were Adidwan and Kofiase Circuits. In Adidwan, the study was carried out in Adidwan MA JHS, Bosomkyekye

MA JHS, Bunuso MA JHS, Atonsoagya MA JHS and Dome MA JHS. From these circuits, a total of ten schools were included. In Kofiase, the study covered the Methodist JHS, SDA JHS, Islamic JHS, Otuasekan JHS and Aframano JHS. Area taking ten schools within the municipality as specific settings for the study. The target population comprised junior school female dropouts who were purposefully selected and also teachers teaching these pupils. A sample of our (4) head teachers, four (4) female school dropouts and four (4) teachers comprising of 2 males and 2 females who were purposively drawn from each school.

The parent population was purposively selected from among those who had dropout daughters from the school registers. Parents were selected to participate in focus group discussions on the recommendations of teachers and school principals. Policy makers and implementers were selected as key informants based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in female education.The logic and power of purposeful sampling depends on selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. The information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry" (Patton 2012:169).

Table 3.1: Sample Frame of study population

Categories of Population	Sample size[1]
Head teachers	4
Female Dropouts	4
Teachers	4
Parents	5
Policy makers	4
Totals	21

3.4 Sources of Data

Data for the study were collected from both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was collected using from interview guide whiles secondary data was sourced from reports and other documented evidence by civil society groups and Ghana Education Service that are of relevance to the study objectives. These two sources were relied upon to gather primary and secondary data for analysis.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Basically, two instruments were used for data collection. These instruments were focus group discussion and an interview guide. This instrument is a written guide that contains broader questions mostly on the thematic areas of the study objectives. The instrument provides the direct pattern of discussions of issues with the institutions that were involved in the study. Contextually, the interview guide was be directed at female student drop outs, teachers, parents, women groups and policy makers because in the context of the study their responses pertain to their experiences in the various schools relating to the causes and effect of female student drop out from junior high school.

Ary et al., (2002) posit that an interview is used to gather data on subjects opinions, beliefs, and feelings about the situation in their own words. Kruger (1998) cited in Creswell (2003) posits that, the interview provides for interaction among interviewees, collection of extensive data and participation by all individuals in the group.

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3.6 Pilot Study

In order to sharpen the definition of the research problem and the associated research questions and instrument, a pilot study was conducted at Atonsoagya School and Kofiase SDA School. In the pilot study, ten interviews were conducted in a group of professionals homogenous to those planned to be involved in the study. All the interviews were carried out by the researcher himself. One of the aims of this study was to ensure that the data collection instruments would help in collecting the appropriate data to assist in answering the research questions, hence the necessity to pre-test the interview guide. This process also helped in estimating the average length of time the data collection period would actually take. In all, the pilot study covered a period of one month (March to April 2016). This was done alongside a supplementary review of extant literature and discussion of the research with experts and professionals in the field. The researcher made time to gauge the suitability and applicability of items to the respondents to discuss any ambiguity, doubt, and incoherencies that the respondents may be faced with. Based on the pre-test results, discussion guides for interviews were focused and some unnecessary content was removed.

3.7 Data Validity and Reliability

Validity is the most important consideration in developing and evaluating measuring instruments (Ary et al, 2002). Reliability is achieved when the same research process is repeated and reproduces results within stated confidence limits. Durrheim (2006) stated that the 'reliability of an investigation is satisfying if another researcher can conduct the same research and draw the same conclusions'

Even though qualitative researchers reluctantly use the words, validity and

reliability to describe the process of understanding reality in social constructions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) because of their traditional usage in quantitative research, these terminologies seek to ensure that the credibility of the research process is devoid of any doubt. The veracity or the credibility of the data used in this study is documented in an audit trail involving interview transcripts, archival documents and correspondence between the researcher and other institutions that have any part to play in the entire process of conducting this research. In addition, the multiple sources of data collection (also known as triangulation) (Yin, 2002) ensured internal validity and reliability of the information in the study.

3.8   Procedure for Data Collection

Initially, a letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Educational Leadership, University of Education, as an instrument to seek the consent of the identified actors and/or institutions to release information and grant audience to the questions contained in the interview guide.

3.9   Procedure for Data Analysis

The interview data was analyzed using content analysis which according to Kruger (1998) is comparing of the words used in the answers of the respondents. Each participant was interviewed at least once, whiles some were engaged in multiple sessions of interviews. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive one-on-one conversations with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, programme or situation (Kvale, 1996; Boyce & Neale, 2006). Initially, the researcher studied the field notes, reduced the tapes into transcripts and carefully read through them. This was done to

look for themes and similar ideas or responses to the questions posed to the respondents. The respondent's information or speeches were translated into specific categories for the purposes of analysis. This exercise according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) is referred to as coding which enables the researcher to organize large amount of text and to discover patterns that would be difficult to detect by just listening to a tape or reading a transcript.

Similarly, Goldenkoff (2004) is of the view that a brief summary and analysis, highlighting major themes, is sufficient when decisions must be made quickly, the results are readily apparent or the purpose of the group is purely exploratory. Goldenkoff warns that to get an in-depth understanding of a complex issue, one should conduct a systematic analysis using full transcripts. In all, a qualitative approach was used in the analysis and interpretation of interview data. Where necessary, the verbatim expressions of the respondents were used within the thematic context of the discussion.
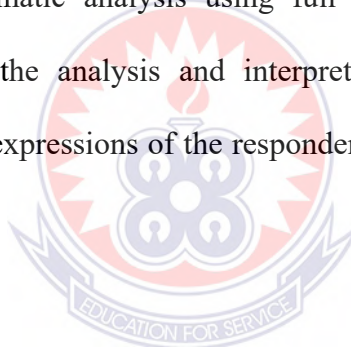
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the results generated from data gathered are discussed and presented as findings.

4.2   Extent of female dropouts in sample schools

The data indicates that on average, the enrolment rate of female students at Junior High School has been about 42% for the 3 academic years in the selected circuit schools in the Mampong Municipality. This represented an appreciable rate of female education in the municipality. Among those who enrolled in schools, there was an average of about 12% dropout at JHS level over the same period. The magnitude of girl dropouts from junior high education was investigated the at school level from the selected head teachers. The indicators cover the three academic years (i.e. 2012-2015). Findings from this investigation are summarized in Table 1 & 2 below and represented in the pictorial chart per each circuit.

Table 1. **Total Female Student Enrolment and Dropout figures.**

School Name (JHS)	Enrolment	Dropout	% Dropout
Kofiase SDA	189	14	8%
Kofiase Methodist	96	20	20%
Kofiase Islamic	127	10	8%
Otuasekan MA	122	9	8%
Aframano MA	125	10	8%
Atonsuagya MA	123	10	8%
Adidwan MA	146	11	8%
Bunuso	75	16	21%
Bosomkyekye	123	10	8%
Dome	75	18	24%
Total	1203	129	12%

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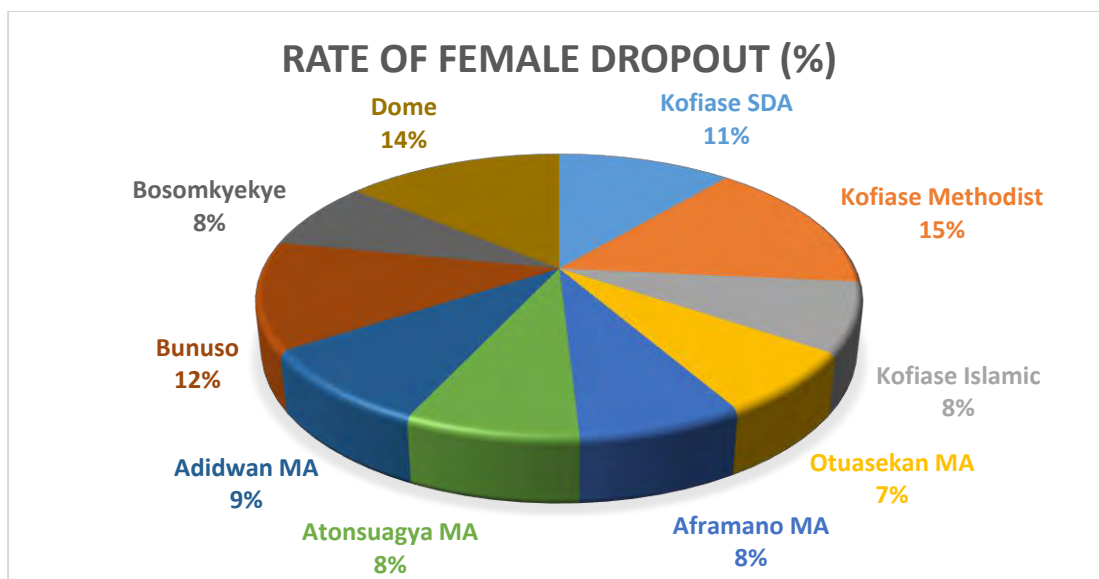
Figure 1: Female Dropout Rate (%) Per School

Table 2. Enrolment & Dropout Figure (2012 - 2015 Academic Years)

Year	2012/2013		2013/2014		2014/2015	
School Name (JHS)	Enrolment	Dropout	Enrolment	Dropout	Enrolment	Dropout
Kofiase SDA	56	4	64	5	69	5
Kofiase Methodist	30	8	31	9	35	3
Kofiase Islamic	34	3	40	3	53	4
Otuasekan MA	37	3	43	3	42	3
Aframano MA	39	3	42	3	44	3
Sub total	197	21	220	24	243	19
Atonsuagya MA	32	3	43	4	48	4
Adidwan MA	46	4	49	4	51	4
Bunuso	23	6	23	2	29	8
Bosomkyekye	37	3	41	3	45	4
Dome	21	5	24	6	30	7
Sub total	160	21	180	18	203	26
Total	357	41	400	42	446	45

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The above table 1 which depicts female enrolment and dropout rate from 2012-2015 for the Kofiase and Adidwan Circuit Schools. The data indicates that the

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highest rates of girl dropout happened in Adidwan Circuit schools than in schools in the Kofiase circuit. Kofiase Methodist reported the highest dropout rate of 20 students under Kofiase circuit for the three academic years. This represents 20 percent of the total enrolment for the period, with the highest number of 9 students being recorded during 2013/2014 academic year.

The top two schools which recorded the largest dropout rates as a percentage of enrolment incidentally fell under Adidwan Circuit. Bunuso JHS and Dome JHS had 21 percent and 24 percent during the three academic years. Whiles Bunuso JHS rewarded the highest dropout rate in 2014/2015 academic year, Dome School highest rate per enrolment happened in 2013/2014 year. This significant higher rates in Adidwan circuit schools can be attributed to the seemly less serious approach attached. One significant factor identified as the reason behind this poor dropout rate was that most of these schools do not keep proper records of dropouts. Unless such practices are improved, it will be problematic to understand the magnitude of the problem as well as to seek appropriate solutions.

Surprisingly, the other remaining six schools had an 8% dropout rate of the total enrolment and this includes; Kofiase SDA, Kofiase Islamic, Otuasekan MA, Aframano MA, Atonsuagya MA, Adidwan MA & Bosomkyekye school. Each of these schools had a different number of students dropping out of their total enrolment per academic year.

The information depicted in figure 1 represents the ranking of school dropout in percentage terms. Kofiase Methodist appeared at the top with a 15 percent dropout, followed by Dome JHS and Bunuso JHS with 14% and 12%. Otuasekan MA school had the lowest dropout rate out of the total 10 schools.

In terms of trend analysis, three schools maintained the same absolute number

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of dropouts throughout the three academic years. Aframano MA and Otuasekan MA had 3 students whiles Adidwan MA also recorded 4 students dropping out each academic year. They appear to be putting some effort in stabilising the dropout rate.

Also it is worth nothing that the Dome School showed a progressive increases in the dropout numbers on year-by-year basis. This, perhaps, may be explained in terms of decreasing vigilance due to the already attained success. It may also be attributed to parents' feelings about the relevance or quality of the curricula to the future of girl child's development. As this study later shows, many parents have the view that the present curriculum requires being oriented to vocational skills.

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Answers to the Research Questions

4.3 Research Question 1: What are the causes of high female dropout rate in Junior High School education in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality?

The results in this study represent entirely qualitatively gathered data through face-to-face interviews using a set of questions. The researcher studied the field notes, reduced the tapes into transcripts and carefully read them. This was done to look for themes and similar ideas or responses to the questions posed. Where necessary, the verbatim expressions of the respondents were used within the thematic context of the discussion.

Economic reasons related to female dropouts

The responses revealed that poverty was one of the major causes of school dropout. The Mampong Municipality is predominantly an agrarian economies majority of its residents involve their female children farm work. The income levels are also very low creating widespread of poverty. It is therefore not surprising that

respondents cited poverty as a main cause of junior high school dropout. Most respondents opined that many female students from poverty stricken households come to school on empty stomachs, do not have decent school uniform and usually faint during school hours. A teacher interviewed, T1, posits that:

''Due to economic hardships, parents cannot raise the required money for uniforms and stationery. Financial costs include also other indirect costs such as the costs of food, transport, exercise books, textbooks, pens and school uniforms, forcing many children to leave school as a result.

During interviews, another teacher, T3, reported that:

''Textbooks and uniforms were beyond the means of many poor families, exacerbating the academic performance of learners thus leading to school dropout". Participants from the two focus groups, FG1 and FG2 supported that the demand for education may be quite sensitive to the costs of education, so that high transport costs and school fees may reduce the demand for education substantially thus leading to the exclusion of children from poverty stricken households, negatively impacting on both the quality of education and on attendance rates of learners.

In support of the above, majority of female students who were interviewed also highlighted that poverty was a major cause of school dropout in Kofiase and Adidwan Circuits. Most female students revealed that their parents could hardly get enough resources to use at school which includes stationary, uniforms and even school fees. Measured against the attribution theory, dropout is mainly because of external factors. This also corroborates findings established by (Chinyoka, 2013; Chinyoka and Naidu, 2013) who pointed out that living in poverty has a wide range of negative effects on the physical and mental health and the wellbeing of children.,

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In support of the above, Donald et al (2010) posit that a vicious cycle of poverty can be noted when children from poor backgrounds suffer malnutrition, poor physical health and poor academic performance, thus leading to school drop-out. It is therefore not easy to break the cycle of poverty among poor children. This, however, does not rule out the fact that some children are resilient and will continue to excel despite coming from impoverished backgrounds (Chinyoka, 2013).

In addition to this, selected parents were asked to describe their economic conditions during the data gathering. Overall results indicate that most of these families have low economic status. In the Adidwan Circuit one of the respondent said the following.

''If you see our living standard you can understand from our face that we live at the lowest level. I do not know what others will tell about their general incomes, but I do not earn more than GH 50 every month. The question then is how to cover school materials for our children, to bring them to a clinic when they are ill, to properly feed them and so on.''

Another parent in Kofiase states:

''I engage in petty trading of all types for a living. Under normal circumstances this is a low-income job, but nowadays it is worse because we find no market for our products. Due to this we are not only able to meet school costs or demands for our children, but instead we force them to stay at home with us.''

Also, it was found out in the study that, some female students were in school and at the same time working to take care of themselves in school. Conditions like these will certainly lead to high absenteeism.

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4.3.2   School-related factors influencing female dropout

During the field work, respondents revealed different school related factors responsible for female students dropping out of school. The major ones were low distance to school, sexual harassment, school environment, academic performance, and sometime minor factors such as dislike of school. This is supported by Chugh (2011) that states teachers' attitude, school environment and infrastructure, students' interest, or disinterest influence school dropout. Results from the findings, indicated that Adidwan circuit, recorded the highest proportion of female dropout rate with reasons similar to the above mentioned as major causes of female dropout.

4.3.3   Teacher attitudes towards educating female students

School teachers were made to answer questions on "whom they would prefer to teach, if they have their own way to decide. They were given three alternative responses: boys, girls and "I make no difference". Results indicate that an absolute majority of them wanted to make no difference between the opposite sexes. It is not surprising that the teachers claimed officially that they respect the equality of educational opportunity when it comes to gender. In fact, female dropouts have also confirmed the teachers' claims since they rated teacher practices to show low differentiation between boys and girls in the classroom.

4.3.4   Teacher awareness of gender issues

Teachers were asked to rate the level at which they understand gender issues in education. Only a handful of teachers believed they had sufficient understanding of gender issues. However, almost half of the teachers took a neutral position. These findings indicate that more is required to improve understanding of gender issues in

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the education system. Unless teachers understand the needs and problems faced by female students in the education system, it will be difficult to expect the situation of female students to improve in practical terms. One teacher reiterated this by indicating that:

''The college of education curriculum for training teachers hardly infuse gender responsive pedagogy which affect teacher awareness of gender issues''

Several authors point to the teacher factors as one of the major contributory factors to female drop out (Gubert & Robilliard, 2006; Ersado, 2005). Ainsworth et al., (2005); Connelly and Zhen, (2003); Duyea, (2003), Gubert and Robilliard (2006) found that lack of awareness of gender responsive pedagogy is one major obstacle facing teachers today as well as an apparent lack of gender skills for instruction. However, the ability of the teacher to effectively use gender responsive pedagogy can be accomplished if the teacher is well grounded in gender responsive teaching skills. Their understanding and awareness of gender responsiveness is key to the effective participation of girls and boys in learning processes.

4.3.5 Home Environments Influencing female dropout

During interviews with female students and teachers, the following factors were also indicated as contributing to school dropout;

- *Household chores*
- *Death of parents*
- *Single parenting*
- *Domestic quarrels by parents*
- *child neglect*
- *unstable homes*

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In support of the above, a teacher lamented that the exposure of the female student to divorced parents, unstable homes characterised by domestic quarrels by parents contribute not only to poor academic performance but also lead to them dropping out. Student from intact homes were less likely to drop out of school even when socio-economic status was removed (Adell, 2002). From the above, female students from unstable family homes are disturbed emotionally and therefore underperform academically.

The demand for female labour to such a high degree has an implication either for not sending girls to schools at all or for withdrawing them from school. Herz (1991) argues that in deciding whether to send a child to school, parents weigh the advantages of keeping a child at home against the advantages of whatever schooling is available. There was also a clear revelation that employment of girls for household services and on the local market were significant in Kofiase and insignificant in Adidwan. In both circuits, going to the market, and farming are activities that take female labour in the given order of significance. The fact that domestic work takes most of the time available for female students should be analysed from cultural perspectives. In both circuits, domestic work is believed to be the role of females and girls are brought up to accept these roles. In addition to this, the lack of basic services like access to pure water, energy sources, flourmills, etc. contribute to this problem. Thus, much time is spent on these activities. Fetching wood, or participating in farming activities was rated at a high level.

Relationship of cultural practices with female dropout

Both parents and female dropouts were asked to rate the extent to which a list of cultural traditions and practices hinder female attendance of school in their locality. Female dropouts and teachers were also asked to give an account of the cultural practices or institutions that contribute to the early departure of females from schools. It came out that cultural practices and traditions play an important role for the dropout of female students. In the Adidwan Circuit the following statement was expressed:

''If a woman delivers a baby both inside or outside of marriage and shows an interest to continue schooling everybody makes her a laughing stock…if she also rethinks of coming back to school after interruption she is told by people that she toils for nothing. Beyond these, the harassment, discouragement, and the psychological pressures for early marriage all contribute to dropouts.

A similar expression from a respondent in Kofiase was blaming the feeling of hopelessness in girls' success and early marriage for dropping out of school by females as follows:

''The society in general and parents have little hope that females can be successful in their education. This hopelessness emanates partly from the situation of educated unemployment…. Early marriage imposed either by parents or abduction against the will of girls is another danger in the tradition of society here….

Abena (1991) and Atayi (2008) observe that in Africa parents were more concerned about the role for girls at home as in this role, girls do not need education since they are supposed to take care of the children and prepare meals. However, traditional values can be different from location to location and in this respect, UNESCO (2010) indicated that traditional values are stronger in rural areas in

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developing countries compared to urban areas and people often do not allow girls to leave homes even for schools.

4.4 Research Question 2: What are the effects of female dropout from Junior High School in the Ashanti Mampong Municipality?

The effects of girl child dropouts are many. They however vary depending on who is directly affected by the problem. Those affected directly or otherwise include the female students, parents/guardians, teachers, immediate society, and the nation.

4.4.1 Increase in illiteracy

Results gathered revealed that majority of the respondents believe that a woman for whom higher education has not been attained has no full dignity and socio-economic value to his husband and the society at large. As one of the respondents aptly commented:

"It has become a norm in today's society that a woman who has attained higher education has more socio-economic value and is more respected than the uneducated counterparts".

Another respondent also remarked that

''Education, and not beauty, as a value that the society cherishes and believes help stabilizing today's matrimonial systems. This means that the saying that "educating a woman is educating a nation" should no longer be valued only in principle, but in practice''

High dropout rate poses a threat to the development of the country as this reduces the educational level of the people in the country. Also dropouts increase

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illiteracy levels in the country. Yet it is not only the question of percentage that should be checked, but the fact that mothers are the first teachers of children in any society.

Since the girl child has the potency of motherhood, she has the potential of becoming a good teacher of her own children if she is educated. More interestingly was the remark made by another participant who happened to be a female teacher that:

"One of the mothers of the girl child dropouts in form two is my former classmate who was also a dropout". A number of respondents echoed similar sentiments that most uneducated parents have the tendency of not encouraging or sending their own children to school. This is because uneducated parents normally do not see the value of education.''

4.4.2 Problem of unemployment and underdevelopment of the country

The study revealed that the consequence of school dropouts constitutes a socio-economic burden to the country thereby making dropouts a prejudice to the development of the community in which the school is found and the nation at large. During the interview with the Education Coordinator of Care Ghana, she remarked that:

''Those with higher qualifications, academic or otherwise, have higher chances of getting employment. This means that the least educated, like dropouts, risk being unemployed. Consequently, their potential to contribute to the national economy is compromised.''

The head of training and advocacy at Action-Aid also made the following comment that:

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'' This results in the perpetuation of the vicious circle of poverty where the poor and uneducated together with their families remain the same or even worse. In fact, many rural women remain disadvantaged due to illiteracy and economic dependency that prevent them from combating societal discrimination.''

All these problems constitute a socio-economic burden to the country thereby making dropouts a prejudice to the development of the community in which the school is found and the nation at large.

4.4.3 Anti-social behaviour and increase in crime rates and HIV/AIDS

From data obtained, it was revealed that dropout also invokes anti-social behaviour and increase crime rates of the society in which the dropouts live. The most serious problems cited were prostitution, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, robbery/pick pocketing, etc. One other respondent mentioned that:

'' These also expose the girl child to HIV pandemic. Because the rural girl child leaves school for early marriage or due to pregnancy, mostly by "sugar daddy's" she is exposed to the deadly HIV/Aids pandemic.''

A "Sugar daddy" is a rich man who already has another wife or wives. Since these men have many sexual partners the risk of the young girl(s) getting infected with HIV/Aids is very high as the husband can get infected and then pass it to her. There is no difference between a man who has so many partners and a man who sleeps around with prostitutes because the many wives can never be trusted to be faithful as they will often be sexually starved. The young girl's life thus is put at risk by dropping out from school.

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4.4.4   Wastage in education

From the analysis, this revealed that the cost of providing educational services to any country is very high; it is a big investment. As remarked by gender activist during the field work:

'' The time and money spent on dropouts at any grade level becomes a great loss to government investment.''

As given by Chivore (2006: 11), the implications for dropouts are that they cause educational wastage in following ways:

- The money which is invested by the state is under-utilised.

- Materials and resources are not put into use, which is uneconomic

- The dropout cannot attain a full educational capacity.

- Consequently, the dropout cannot maximally contribute to the country's economy building.

- As a result, the dropout becomes a liability to the country instead of being an asset.

- Dropout reduces opportunities for other children who could have better utilized those resources to the benefit of the country.

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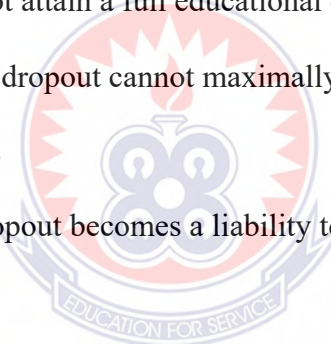
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations drawn from the findings of this empirical study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

In both the Kofiase and Adidwan Circuits, girls indeed drop out of school, but the prevalence of the event is less at Kofiase and higher in Adidwam when a comparison is made in relation to the data gathered. Findings revealed that more systematic efforts are exerted to reduce female dropouts from junior high schooling in Kofiase.

As far as the parental background of girls is concerned, most of the household heads included in the sample are females, both in Adidwan and Kofiase. In both Adidwan and the Kofiase, the dropout of the female child is much higher in families with a low standard of living, which have to deal with poverty and lack of motivation.

For both Adidwan and Kofiase, the highest proportion of respondents agree that domestic work is the one most important activity that dominates their time throughout the week and which is mostly required by parents. However, in Kofiase it was indicated that parental needs of children's labour has a low relation with female dropouts while in Adidwam, the need for child labour has a high relation with dropouts.

The dropping out of girls in this study has generally been related to the low education of parents. This is particularly true for Adidwan and Kofiase circuit of schools. Most female dropouts were also found to belong to medium and small-sized

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families in this study, indicating that larger families possess more resources to prevent girls from dropping out of school.

Cultural practices and institutions including early marriage, engagement, circumcision, home parental services, pregnancy, harassment, religious beliefs, employment in domestic market, and neglect of female health and nutrition significantly contribute to female dropout in both Circuits analysed and immediate action is needed on many of these issues.

There is some positive attitude towards the education of girls both in Adidwan and Kofiase as far as teacher attitudes and practices are concerned. Some teachers were able to make follow ups on dropout female students to encourage them and take steps to secure sponsorship for their education as well from the education services secretariat.

This implies some innovation ways of promoting female education in their small capacity. In fact, there are more things to be considered including school distance, safety, gender sensitive facilities, teachers' attitude, improving social amenities in schools and teacher absenteeism.

Overall, domestic work represents the single most important area for which parents need the labour of their daughters. Dropout from school is particularly high during harvest time. In Kofiase, the contribution of domestic work to female dropouts has been rated as low. This is apparently so because there is an abundance of labour on the labour market. Otherwise, this demand affects female education.

The highest proportion of respondents rated direct school costs to have a strong influence on female dropout from schooling. Within this framework, the single most influential factor that relates to female dropout is the cost of instructional materials.

5.3   Conclusions

This study investigated reasons for dropout from school amongst girls in Mampong Municipality. The results of the interview from respondents are a confirmation of the fact that poverty represents the main cause of school dropout, along with lack of interest and parents' low level of education and learning difficulties faced by almost all of the respondents. These factors greatly account for dropout from school amongst girls in Mampong Municipality.

In other words, the economic level or the standard of living of most families greatly affects the continued stay of the girl child in school.

In Adidwan, most parents have no education at all. In both circuits, the highest proportion of female dropouts come from families with 4 to 6 children (medium sized families). Parental income for families with female dropouts is generally low for both circuits. In Kofiase, results indicate that the problem exists in all families irrespective of their educational levels.

Findings about parental occupation and income also confirm the above observation since most parents of female dropouts are engaged in low income generating occupations in the informal sector and earn or possess an insignificant amount of property.

5.4   Recommendations

This section presents the recommendations that were drawn from the findings.

1. It is recommended, therefore, that school authorities should provide a conducive atmosphere for learning, in which the adolescent girls can easily adapt to and complete their education. Curriculum planners should be counselled on the need to be gender friendly in planning school curriculum.

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Education officers should be deplored through the municipality to enlightening parents about the need and benefits of educating the girl child. This message can be packaged in a catchy way and broadcast radios, televisions and through van address system stressing on the multiplier benefits derivable from educating the girl child.

2. Changing a cultural mind-set is difficult and slow, but in the case of Mampong's pervasive sexism, it is necessary for progress. A social campaign to emphasize the importance of educating females would be helpful in changing this mind-set. This campaign should come from the government and local governments, and be funded with money from the Girls Education Unit.

3. Institutional and administrative actions are required to minimize the prevalence of female dropouts. The existence of this problem on a considerable scale implies that more has to be done to minimize the situation in Adidwam and Kofiase. Experience from these circuits tells us that institutional and legal actions are required to reduce the incidence of dropouts it is also needed to strictly follow the policy of automatic promotion so that those who come to school are encouraged continually to stay in school.

4. There should be efforts to enrol girls in school at an earlier age according to the policy framework. If pupils enter school at 6 and take 8 years in primary education, they complete their schools just when they reach puberty. This gives female students enough time to complete their schooling before they get married or are demanded to do the bulk of domestic activities. Therefore, parents need not only to be encouraged to send children to school at an early age, but also they must have the school facility to which they send their children. Obviously, small schools including the multi-grade schools could

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help to supplement such efforts.

5.   Adopting a poverty-alleviation strategy, particularly for households headed by women is essential in the long term. Unless some income generating activities involving women parents are set in motion, the problem seems likely to continue to affect female children for a long time to come. In the short run, it is required that providing girls with financial support and supplying them with necessary items like pads, uniforms, sandals, textbooks, or materials for clothing will help to solve some of the barriers to stay in schools.

6. Information campaigns and permanent efforts to improve cultural and social traditions that affect the education of girl-child have to be carried out. Committees and societies have to be established and supported to teach on harmful cultures and practices. Particularly the churches and mosques could play an influential role to teach society to send its daughters to schools and assist them to complete it.

7.   Enhancing the rights and status of women through regulatory and legal processes is also essential. Particularly this is helpful in eliminating parental fears for the security of girls where such illegal actions as abduction, raping, etc. are common. Another legal action may be increasing the age of marriage from 15 to 18. This will reduce the impact of unnecessary pressures on female students to drop out of schools for marriage.

8. In addition to providing for instructional materials, it is necessary to invest in school structures including classrooms, libraries, gender sensitive facilities, and water supply as well as in teachers so that they come regularly to work. Increasing the number of female teachers and directors and providing them with encouragements creates a reassuring environment and also brings role

models very close to girls.

9. Providing gender sensitization courses in all pre and in-service teacher training courses and for educational managers will serve to eliminate negative attitude towards female education.

10. It is essential to let female students help their parents. This could be scheduled at local level so that female children may be allowed to work at home when parents require their labour. In this respect the expansion of multi-grade schools is useful for they add flexibility to school programs.

11. The Ministry of Education and the various teacher training institutions should consider as matter of urgency the need to introduce gender responsive pedagogy in teacher education. This should follow different approaches, such as, integrating the issue into the already existing courses or offering GRP as a separate course, integrating GRP in Higher Diploma Programs and providing short-term trainings on GRP and gender mainstreaming for educational leaders.
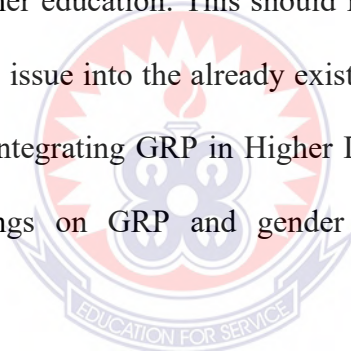
5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

Further studies should be conducted to investigate the causes and perceived effects of female student drop out in the other Metro, Municipal and Districts of the Ashanti Region.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION, KUMASI

Topic: The Perceived Causes and Effects of Female Student Drop Out In Ashanti Mampong Municipality

Dear Respondent

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me today. I am in final year of my Masters' programme and as required by the faculty, I am to submit a research work in partial fulfillment of a requirement to be awarded with a Degree Certificate of Master of Arts in Educational Leadership.

I am conducting research on the causes and consequences of female students drop out in Ashanti Mampong Municipality. I would like you to answer as frankly as possible. There is no right or wrong answer, and it is not a test or an examination. We will be very happy if you could tell us what you know and what you think honestly. Your answers will not be shown to anyone else. They will be used for our research only. So, I hope you will be able to help us with your answers.

I would be very grateful, if you could spare some time with me to engage in this interview, which may last between 30 to 45 minutes.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL HEADS

1.   Fill in the blank spaces with the required information**.**

Tell us the dropout rates of female students in your school over three academic years from 2012 to 2014/2015.

2012/2013   _____

2013/2014   _____

2014/2015 _____

2.   What extent do you think the following learning environments hinder female academic attainment in your school?

	High	Average	Low
Classrooms	_____	_____	____
Equipment	_____	_____	____
Textbooks	_____	_____	____
Separate facilities	_____	_____	____
Learning time	_____	_____	____
Library	_____	_____	____
Teacher absenteeism	_____	_____	____

Others (Specify)   ……………………………….

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

3. If you were asked to choose between boys and girls for teaching, whom do you think you will prefer and why?

4. What level do you rate your capacity to understand gender issues in education?

5. In your opinion what is the most common cause of JHS female drop-out

    a) economic factors   b) cultural factors   c) household factors

    d) school level factors

    e) other (specify) …………………………………………………..

6. In your own opinion, to what extent do teachers or learning materials reflect through their language and presentation any bias towards females?

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

I. Guides for Female Dropout Focus Group Discussions

1. From your experience, tell us the main home related factors that contribute to the drop out of girls from school.

2. From your experience what are the main school related obstacles for girls not to succeed in the education?

3. What are the main social and cultural practices that contribute to the discontinuation of education of female students in this area?

4. In your opinion does the community believe that girls are important? If your answer is yes, tell us in what major ways they are perceived important.

II. Guides for Parent Focus Group Discussions

1. In your opinion what are the major problems related to schools which may hinder girls to complete their education?

2. What major environmental (social and cultural) problems do you think contribute to the drop out of female students from schools?

3. Are girls important to parents in this area? If so, please tell us in what major ways.

4. Do you think that the community in this area believes that girls require education as much as boys? If your answer is yeas, tell the reasons.

5. Tell us what has to be done to make female students to be successful in education by schools, parents and the government.

III. Guides for Policy Makers/Implementers Focus Group Discussions

1. What are the problems or reasons for female students to drop out of schools in this area?

2. What major steps were taken to promote the successful completion of schooling among female students?

5. From your experience, tell us the main home related factors that contribute to the drop out of girls from school.

6. From your experience what are the main school related obstacles for girls not to succeed in the education?

7. What are the main social and cultural practices that contribute to the discontinuation of education of female students in this area?

8. In your opinion does the community believe that girls are important? If your answer is yes, tell us in what major ways they are perceived important.