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Factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades
of the Primary Schools In Mola Cluster, Kariba District

BY

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised, read and recommended for acceptance, a research study on the topic: Factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my dear parents Mr and Mrs Samukonde, my children, Shantel, Gerald and Takudzwanashe for the support rendered to me directly and indirectly.

ABSTRACT

The research study was based on the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in senior grades of the primary in Mola Cluster in Kariba District. The study employed the descriptive design. The sample consisted of thirty-six teachers and sixteen girl dropouts. The thirty six teachers completed questionnaires whilst the sixteen girl dropouts participated in the focus group discussion. Teachers were randomly selected and girl dropouts were purposively selected. Data was collected using questionnaires and focus group discussions. The main findings were that the school through lack of follow up on dropouts contributed to the high dropout rate of girls in the senior grades of the primary school. The family through failing to report cases of rape contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child from the senior grades of the primary school. Through failing to react to the increasing number of girls seated at home or getting married the community also contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child. The research recommends that the Ministry of Education in liaison with Ministry of Women affairs, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Youth and the local leaders including church should hold awareness campaigns on child abuse and gender equality.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

1.0 Introduction

In Chapter one the researcher focused on what made her to choose the topic under discussion. The researcher also looked at the background of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study and the questions which guided the researcher during her great task of unearthing factors that contributed to the high dropout rate of girls. The researcher also highlighted the significance of the study to the community, teachers and the policy makers.

1.1 Background of study

The high drop-out rate of girls from school has been a major concern of most educationists around the globe. Although, education is regarded as a basic human right, as enshrined in the United Nations Conventions- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN-UDHR) article No.11, girls have continued to drop out of school with little or no attention given to this disturbing scenario.

A preliminary survey of literature relating to dropouts indicated that the problem of girls' dropout is a global problem as confirmed by Subrahmanian (2005, p.396) who stated that

The Dakar Framework for Action represents to-date the most important international political commitment towards promoting Education for all. The Framework contains two gender based goals. In Article 7 [ii] participants commit to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005. The second commitment is to achieve gender equality in education by 2015. These goals are fully supported by Millennium Development Goals, which reiterate the importance of ensuring completion of a full course of good quality primary schooling by 2015[Goal 2], ...

In support of the above notion Zengeny (2014, p.2) pointed out that

The challenge posed by school dropouts is neither unique to Zimbabwe nor to the African continent, but is an international one. All over the world, education systems have been facing the challenge of school dropouts since the evolution of the formal school system. The United Nations has taken initiatives aimed at addressing this challenge. In December 2002, resolution Number 57/254 on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and UNESCO was designated as lead agency for the promotion of the decade (UNESCO, 2005). In addition, regional bodies (such as the Southern African Development Community, the African Union and the European Union) have acknowledged the existence of the challenges posed by school dropouts and have made proposals aimed at correcting the situation. This shows that the challenges posed by school dropouts are international, and individual governments are being called upon to seriously and decisively deal with this challenge.

Zengeya's (2014) observation meant that the problem of girls dropping out of school was not a problem of developing and poor countries but it was a universal problem. He also highlighted the fact that a lot of initiatives had been taken to address the problem. However the problem still persisted.

Sabates, Akyeampong, and Hunt (2010) carried out a research on the dropout patterns in fifteen countries in Africa and the results were so disturbing with countries that include Equatorial Guinea and Mozambique have the highest numbers of girls dropping out of school. Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) carried out a study on girls dropout rates in Nigeria and concluded that girls' dropout rate was a major issue. In their study they showed how the Nigerian government had tried to reduce the rate of girls dropping out of school but to no avail.

The Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987 declared education as a fundamental right of all children regardless of sex, ability, place of origin and religion. In support of the Act, the Zimbabwean

government introduced the National Gender Policy which stipulated that there should be an equal number of girls as compared to boys in schools. Despite the presence of this policy, a gap has been noted between the education of the girl child and the boy child. On the other hand this policy is only adhered to during the process of enrolling children but ignored as children move in the education cycle.

Section 81 (1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe states that every child, that is to say every boy and girl, under the age of 18 years has the right to education. Section 75 (1) (a) further provides that, every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe has a right to a basic state funded education, including adult basic education and that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within the limits of resources to it, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right. But regardless of the presence of these legislations girls continue to drop out of school.

Statutory instrument 36 Circular number P35(1999) was also introduced so as to increase the number of girls who stay in school but very few girls wish to go back to school after falling pregnant. According to the circular, girls who fell pregnant in school were now being granted maternity leave for up to three months instead of being expelled from school. It went a mile further to state that if a male student is involved in making a girl pregnant he would be given paternity leave equivalent to the girl's maternity leave. Due to fear of intimidation and being labelled negatively by either teachers or other colleagues, most girls resisted to go back to school after giving birth. Furthermore, because of the nausea and morning sicknesses associated with pregnancy most girls get frustrated and choose to drop out of school. On the other hand, most parents and pupils are not aware of this circular so when the girl falls pregnant their only option is to withdraw her from school. For those girls whose parents are aware of the circular, most parents deprive the girl child a second chance to go school. In such a scenario the girl child will end up out of school because the parents want to avoid negative labels or being the talk of the place.

Some girls even drop out of school before they reach grade seven. Organisations such as Campaigning for the Education of girls (CAMFED) and Girl Child Network were born and have

their focus on the education and protection of the girl child. In Mola cluster Kariba district, CAMFED has built a girls hostel so as to improve the number of girls who reach ordinary level. The hostel was also a way of reducing the distance being travelled by girls to school and promoting the education of the girl child. CAMFED went a mile further and provided their beneficiaries with school uniforms, stationery, shoes and sanitary pads. The organisation has also embarked on feeding the girls who stay in the hostel. But, besides the effort made by CAMFED the dropout rate of girls has been of great concern.

Zenganya (2014) states that the aim of the Zimbabwean government is to make sure that there is equity of educational opportunities amongst girls and boys. The Zimbabwean government through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in conjunction with Nyaminyami Rural District Council have tried to shorten the distance being travelled by girls to school and they have opened satellite schools with some schools having up to three satellite schools but still girls have continued to drop out of school.

Table 1.1 shows the number of girls and boys who were in grade five and those who managed to finish grade seven from 2012 to 2014.

Table 1.1 shows dropout trends of four primary schools.

School	Grade 5 boys in 2012	Grade 5 girls in 2012	Grade 7 boys in 2014	Grade 7 girls in 2014	Total dropout of boys	Total dropout of girls
School A	72	55	68	42	4	13
School B	45	38	43	34	2	4
School C	56	27	55	20	1	7
School D	15	17	15	16	0	1
Total	188	137	181	112	7	25

Source: Mola cluster school heads (2015)

Equal access to education is one of the Millennium Develop Goals (MDGs) which still needs to be achieved and yet there were set for the year 2015. This means that girls' access to education and completion of the education cycle should be achieved by all children regardless of their sex. From the table above one can tell that there is a problem that needs urgent attention.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the active participation of non- governmental organisations and the government towards the education of the girl child in Mola cluster schools the girls continue to leave school. When the Tonga language was introduced in schools and made examinable most stakeholders thought dropout rates would be reduced but it was all in vain. The opening of satellite schools in fishing camps was another strategy to try and reduce the dropout rate of girls. After observing this disturbing scenario the researcher decided to make an effort to research on the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school in Mola cluster in Kariba district.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study embarked on

- Determine the prevalence of girl child dropout rates in the senior grades of the primary school in Mola cluster, Kariba district.
- Establish how the family, the community, school and the girls' attitude contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1.4.1 Guiding research question

What are the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls in the senior grades of the primary school in Mola cluster, Kariba District?

1.4.2 Sub-research questions

1. What are the community and home factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls in the senior grades of the primary school?
2. Which school factors contribute to girls dropping out of school?
3. What are the girls' attitudes towards education?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 COMMUNITY

The study examined factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls in Mola cluster schools in Kariba district. After examining the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls in senior grades of the primary school, the community was enlightened on the factors that arise from the community. This helped them to try and reduce these factors so as to make the dropout of girls from school a thing of the past.

1.5.2 TEACHERS

This study was of great importance to teachers in areas with high dropout rates of girls because they were enlightened on the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls in senior grades of the primary school. This enabled them to find ways to minimise this problem considering the areas they are operating in. On the other hand teachers were enlightened on how they contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child in senior grades of the primary school.

The school heads and the members of the school development committee benefited from the study because knowledge on how they both contributed to the high dropout rate of girls was clearly spelt out.

1.5.3 POLICY MAKERS

The research findings are going to challenge policy makers to revisit and realign educational policies so that they are in tandem with international standards in the education of the girl child.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

It is assumed that the high dropout rate of girls is caused by factors that are found in the community they live in as well as in the school.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out in primary schools in Mola cluster, Kariba district, Mashonaland West province, Zimbabwe with teachers, of the selected schools and a few dropouts. Focus was on the

factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child at senior level in the cluster. The information was collected from dropouts and teachers in selected Mola cluster schools.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Firstly it was impossible for the researcher to collect all the information she required from all schools in the cluster due to the geographical location of the schools. However, the researcher made use of data collection instruments such as questionnaires to try and collect the required data. The researcher also made use of sports gatherings to gather the much required data for the research. Secondly some pupils and teachers were not willing to disclose the necessary information due to the fact that some of the information was highly sensitive. On the other hand some teachers failed to produce records of pupils who dropped out of school. However, the researcher through the assistance of her experienced supervisor crafted a clear research instrument that would produce valid and reliable data that would lead to correct information. Much effort was placed into the research to remove ambiguity.

1.9 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Dropout refers to someone who has left an educational institution without completing the course (Oxford Dictionary 2010). In this case one can say that dropout is a girl child who has failed to complete the full primary.

1.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher discussed the background of the problem, the statement of the problem and the challenges that she is faced in carrying out the research. She also discussed how she was able to overcome some of the problems that she is faced. Furthermore she stated the importance of this research to different groups of people that include teachers and the policy makers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction.

The researcher did not create a new helm but taped from a rich fountain of body of knowledge established by well recognised research gurus. Literature review therefore helped the current researcher avoid the same educational blunder made by yesteryear researchers who include Mandina and Atayi . The review of related literature shaped the current research and thus helped the researcher produce findings that have validity and reliability.

2.1 HOME AND COMMUNITY FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE HIGH DROPOUT OF THE GIRL CHILD FROM SCHOOL.

2.1.1 Home factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child from school.

Many researchers have written on the many factors that contribute to the dropout rate of girls. The factors can be classified under the community and home, the school and the girls' attitudes.

Mandina (2013) carried out a research in Gokwe North and under family related factors identified factors that include; low family socio-economic status, low family support for education, low parental education, conflicts between home and school, having to work or support the family, cultural practices and pregnancy.

Hunt (2008) said bereavement amongst family members and in particular parents who were bread winners often makes children more vulnerable to drop out, non-enrolment, late enrolment and slow progress. Whilst being orphaned is often linked to an increased likelihood of childhood poverty, this is dependent on the household context and who then becomes the child's carer. In most rural set ups it is the elderly or the senior girl child who is made to look after the orphans. In cases where the elderly were given such a difficult task most children are faced with dropping out because the grand parents cannot afford to send the children to school and at the same time provide them with food. Orphanhood often exacerbates financial constraints for poorer households and increases the demands for child labour and drop out, (Bennell et al, 2005). Thus, when the bread winners of the girl child pass on the girl child is the one who is more vulnerable

because she is made to go and find employment mainly as a maid or to get married so that the family receives a bride price. Case and Ardington (2014) indicated that in most cases it is the girl child who is affected more by being orphaned. The girl child is made to drop out of school to take care of her little siblings and in some cases the grandparents are included.

The Zimbabwe National Strategic Plan for the Education of Girls, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2005-2010) (ZNSPEGOVC) purports that lack of parental supervision and guidance due to wide spread labour migration has become one of the crucial factors that have made the girl child dropout of school. According to the paper, due to increased economic hardships parents have migrated to neighbouring countries in search of employment. Children are left behind with relatives who sometimes deny the children access to education by denying them access to the remittances sent by their parents. As a result of the migration the girl child is overloaded with household chores that later drive the girl child out of school.

Atayi (2008) said that poverty lessens the possibility and opportunities of children from affected house-holds to acquire progress in education. Children from child headed families, poor parents, those involved in cultural practices such as initiation ceremonies and nocturnal religious practices are most likely to drop out of school because of the family environment they come from (ZNSPEGOV 2005-2010). This implies that the family environment has much contribution on the dropout rate of the girl child. As outlined in the ZNSPEGOV 2005-2010 children who are exposed to nocturnal practices especially from the apostolic sects end up out of school because of fatigue after some of their meetings that go for more than a week. More so some apostolic sect are well known for having all night prayers were the girl child can be made to marry early due to false prophecy by unscrupulous prophets. These incidents will never be reported due to the way they observe their church doctrine.

Abena (1991), cited by Atayi (2008) wrote that in African traditional societies, cultural norms and values dictate that the major role of the woman is centred on maintaining the home-front, where she is expected to marry soon after puberty. In this role, she does not need formal education to fit in. Traditionally, patriarchal attitudes lead to preference by parents for boy's education. This was supported by Hunt (2008) who said that for children from poorer backgrounds the pressure on them to withdraw from school increases as they get older. In many

instances it is the girls from poor households who are withdrawn earlier than the boys. The girl child is made to look for employment so as to fend for the family. This is because girls are trusted and believe they can easily find employment in grocery shops and as cheap domestic workers. This exposes the girl child to sexual abuse, exploitation and HIV and AIDS.

Atayi (2008) notes that age-specific dropout rates for older children increases drastically after the age of 10. According to UNICEF (2004), the pressure on girls to leave school tends to increase as girls grow older and as their opportunity costs rise. This is due to the fact that for older children the opportunity cost of schooling increases significantly and with this a pressure to work or to get married (UNICEF (2004). Other age related factors which can influence schooling access and dropping out include passage ceremonies which mark the move from childhood to adulthood. These ceremonies and preparations for adulthood may overlap with the school calendar, which can increase absenteeism and potential dropouts from school (Boyle et al (2002). Initiation ceremonies disrupt schooling since most ceremonies take place in term time. Thus, this results in absenteeism lasting up to three months and sometimes leading to drop out. For girls it has been often considered 'shameful' for them to return to school after the ceremonies (Colclough et al 2000). This is because of how the ceremonies and where these ceremonies are held. On the other hand it is a question of who attends the ceremonies. In most instances the girl will be half naked in front of men and small boys who some happen to be their colleagues. On the other hand money available for schooling might be used for the initiation event (Kane, 2004). This leads to the girl child to be a victim of dropping out because of the gender roles socialised to the girl by the community.

The level of education of the parents or guardians is one such contributing factor to the high dropout rate of the girl child (Hunt 2008). The more educated the household members the more they see the importance of education thereby translating the same view to the little girls. Bourdieu in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) argues that cultural capital is not evenly distributed throughout the social class. He furthermore articulates that for a child to be successful in education it all depends on the education given to the child in the early stages. This implies that for a girl to complete her education cycle it all depends on the education that she was given in

her early stages of life. Since the family is the sole provider of primary socialisation, it is the one which plays a pivotal role in the dropping out of school of the girl child. If girls are taught the importance of education in their early stages this can help reduce the rate of dropout of girls from school. In support of the above notion Hunt (2008) indicates that the importance household members place on education is an imperative contributing factor on whether children gain access to schooling and for how long, but there is less research on how this may attribute to dropping out. This implies that the more resources the parents put towards the education of their children the greater they stay in school and their children achievement.

According to the functionalists' in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) the family performs four basic functions in all societies. These functions are sexual, reproductive, economic and educational. If the family fails to perform any of these functions this means that the society will not function. Thus, the family is the one which is responsible for the provision and preparation of food, existence of human kind and the transmission of norms and values to its young ones. However in the process of making the society to function, some individuals are deprived of their rights. For instance, the girl child is deprived of education to go and get married. Although reproduction is a key function of the society the girl child is prematurely engaged in that function by being married off to rich families, wife pledging(kuzvarira), wife substitution (chimutsa mapfihwa)and avenging spirits (kuripa ngozi). It is clear that it is the girl child who is always on the losing side during the process of making the society to function.

2.1.2 Community factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child from school.

The community has been noted as one of the agencies of high dropout of girls from school. . Chimombo et al (2000) say that the disadvantage of girls' education is mediated through gender-based divisions of labour and social roles. Thus, there are in most societies, gender-based divisions of labour in both the production of goods and services and in household-based production, which affect access schooling. UNICEF (2004) highlighted how gender roles and stereotypes from within the society have contributed to the high dropout rate of girls. The paper articulates that gender roles and gender stereotypes are learnt. This clearly shows that it is the same with the Mola community. This implies that gender roles are created by the community and

translated to the family and school. Girls gender roles from their parents and other members of their neighbourhood. The way girls are brought up and how they are taught has great influence on the education of the girl child. Thus, girls are taught that the women's place is in the home whereas men are the ones who go in the public sphere. Thus, gender roles and stereotypes are consciously and unconsciously carried to school. This is done during the teaching and learning process where women are portrayed as care givers whilst men are there to provide for the family. As a result of this, girls dropout of school to get married on the basis that their husbands will take care of them.

Colclough , Rose and Tembon (2000), talked about gendered cultural practices which influence girls' educational chances and experiences. They describe, for example, gendered roles in society which shape, the balance of incentives for girls and boys to attend school. Thus, cultural notions around gender and poverty interact to restrict educational access for girls. The move into adulthood at times means that the 'new' adults can view themselves to be too grown up for school, Kane, (2004). He describes how communities in Ethiopia accepts these girls as 'adults', but teachers or the schools continue to consider them as children and this may create conflict. In certain communities, girls in particular are encouraged to marry as they reach puberty and/or become sexually mature (or even in some contexts even earlier). The early marriage of girls is linked to drop outs in certain contexts. Initiation ceremonies thus affect girls' access to school although differently in different cultures and societies.

2.2. SCHOOL FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO THE HIGH DROPOUT RATE OF THE GIRL CHILD

Under school related factors, Chirtes (2010) listed factors such as; low socio-economic status of the school, school population, high level of racial or ethnic discrimination of students, school phobia, school violence, conflicts (with teachers, school mates) among others. A school with a lot of violence prevailing is most likely to chase the girl child away from school. Birdsall et al (2005) question the quality of schooling systems in low-performing countries, where the institutional and management challenges are significant. They describe institutions with high teacher absenteeism, low spending and low investment which are unresponsive to local needs and preferences, a lack of accountability and incentives for performance as contributing to high

dropout rate. In other words teachers contribute highly on the dropout of pupils when they absent themselves from work.

Fraser (1997) identifies recognition as a well-known foundation of social justice which focuses mainly on cultural aspects. The principle seeks to redress cultural domination, non-recognition and disrespect. In schools teachers deployed anywhere in the country. The education staffing officers do not consider the issue of language and culture of teachers whom they deploy in schools. Some teachers end up making their language and cultures dominating the classroom at the expense of the pupils' language and culture. Some teachers tease school girls about the practices in their culture which teachers regard as negative. This will lead to girls dropping out of school since they cannot separate themselves from their culture and language. This can also result in conflicts between the school and the community thereby destroying the purpose of a school which is to transmit the norms and values of a society.

Hunt (2013) cited repetition as a contributing factor to girls' high dropout rate. According to hunt children who are made to repeat a grade are more likely to drop out of school than non-repeaters to drop out from school. Repetition is mainly because of low achievement. The Zimbabwean education system recently introduced the Performance Lag Assessment Programme (PLAP) as a way of assisting the low achievers without making them to repeat a grade. Repeaters are often labelled negatively by their colleagues. Although some children fight very hard to remove the negative label most of them carry the label with them and make it a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is unclear whether grade repetition increases the chances of completion, but what is apparent is that grade repetition extends the age range in a particular grade, and thus increases the possibility of drop out (Sabates, Akyeampong, Westbrook and Hunt 2010). Repetition will make the girl child look too old for that grade and as a result the girl will drop out of school.

Azikiwe (2000) found out that bullying and sexual harassment of adolescent girls by males are some factors responsible for dropout of school by girls. Violence by the opposite sex was noted as one of the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls from school. This happens at school or on the way to school or from school. Molteno et al. (2000) say that inadequate resources such as desks and text books make pupils to scramble for them in most cases it is the

girl child who is on the disadvantage. In instances where there is shortage of furniture it means that the girl child is the one who always sits on the floor. If the teacher does not control these habit girls will see no reason to be in school. In fact they will ask themselves questions like “why should I go school to spend the whole day seating on the floor without a textbook?” The answer that they give themselves is to dropout and stay at home. Furthermore, the availability of (separate) sanitary facilities is important for female retention, particularly as girls get older and start menstruation.

Mbilinyi (2003) further notes that an irrelevant, complex, rigid and congested curriculum normally puts learners off and predisposes them to dropping out. The Zimbabwean education is such a good example. In areas where minority languages such as Tonga are taught, the timetable is so congested. The timetable has three languages namely Tonga, English and Shona. The introduction of agriculture and guidance and counselling was an addition on the existing load.

Unfriendly school environment and distance of school from home also contributes to high dropout rate of girls. This could be as a result of biased curriculum, teachers’ unfriendly relationship to the girls; some parents may withdraw their girls from school for these reasons. More so, where school population is large, most teachers tend not to attend lessons in classes with below average pupils. Thus, the negative attitude of teachers towards the girl child and the methods of teaching contribute highly to the withdrawal of the girl child. Most teachers ask pupils to copy notes from other classes. This leads to withdrawal of pupils which later leads to dropout.

Nziramanga (1999) reported that teachers to some extent contributed to the high dropout rate of girls. According to Nziramanga (1999) reports from education regional offices show that there were cases of teachers being charged for improper association with minors. However, not all cases were reported. In some cases the parents are bribed or the girls are forced to marry the culprit. At the end the girl is forced to drop out of school. On the other hand despite the presence of circular p35 of 1999 which prohibits teachers to employ corporal punishment, most teachers especially those in rural areas are still administering corporal punishment. More so some school heads are suspending pupils from school which was prohibited by the same circular. Girls who

are suspended from school eventually dropout of school because of the negative label that goes along suspension.

2.3. GIRLS ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL

Despite many strategies put in place to make the girl child stay in school it has been discovered that the attitudes of the girl child are also a contributing factor towards their dropout. A research carried out by Johnson (2008) clearly states that despite the affirmative action taken on behalf of girls in formal education, their participation in school is still a thing that most educationists still wonder how to overcome. According to Johnson (2013) most girls are not participating. This implies that most girls are present in school but not participating and achieving. Johnson (2013) found out that girls have a positive attitude towards school. Regardless of their positive attitude towards school girls end up dropping out of school because of different factors that follow them.

Kinniard (2010) postulates that the attitudes of girls towards school is affected by different factors in the areas that they live. Most girl respondents from Johnson (2013) said that they are always punctual and regularly attend school. However, only a small minority was irregular in school and unpunctual in school. However, regardless of all the effort being put by girls towards their education they are made to get out of school because of issues that include violence and gender stereotyping.

Indeed as noted by Thompson (1991), formal education is firmly entrenched in Africa and enjoys a position of prestige, popularity and acceptance. In support of this Johnson (2013) pin points that education makes girls better women and better wives. Thus, most girls have a positive attitude towards school because they believe it quality that most men require when searching for their life partners.

Attitudes have been identified as an important factor influencing achievement Soi, Barmao, Ng'eno (2013). Thus, girls should be assisted to have positive attitudes towards school for them to finish the education cycle and achieve.

2.4 THE LINK BETWEEN THE CHILD, FAMILY, SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY ON THE DROPOUT RATE OF THE GIRL CHILD.

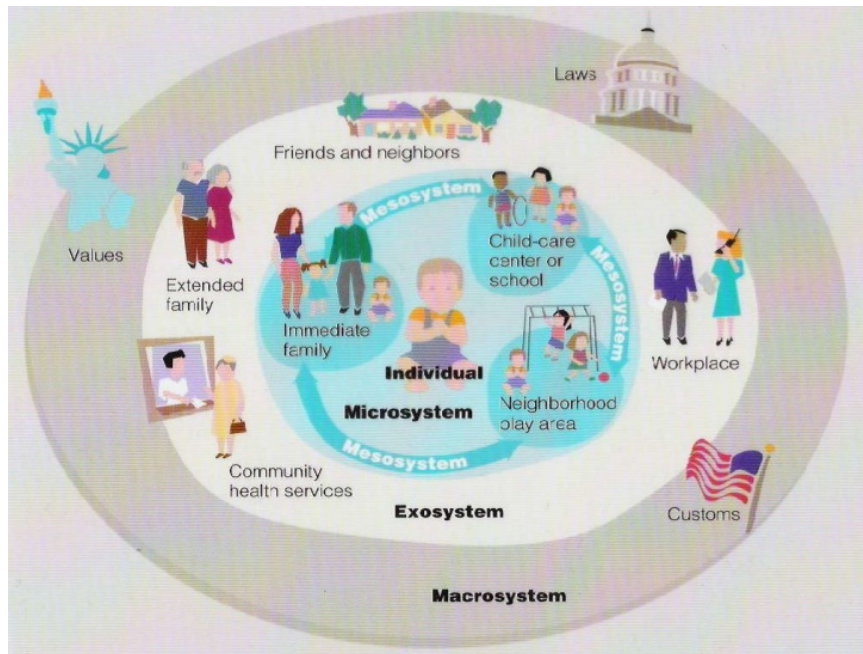


Figure 2.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development.(google images)

Bronfenbrenner in Santrock (2006) says that behaviour is influenced by environmental factors that are represented by five stages. Unlike the ethologists who stress that behaviour is a result of biology, Bronfenbrenner says behaviour is a result of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Thus, according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological model the girl child is affected by so many factors to result in her dropping out of school. As shown in fig 2.1 above, the way an individual interacts with her is family, peers, school neighbourhood is more important because the girl child interacts with these social agents directly. According to Santrock the individual is not seen as a passive recipient of her social construction but she has a part to play. Furthermore, the relation between the social institutions again helps to shape the girl child. Santrock (2006.p.52) gave a valid example when he said "...children whose parents have rejected them may have difficulty developing positive relations with teachers." From the example it is clear that a negative label attached on a girl child by their parents has great impact on a child's future. This implies that the home experiences of a girl child affect the school experiences. As highlighted earlier on by Bourdieu in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) the cultural capital given to a girl child contributes to her completion of the education cycle. Therefore, it is clear that no one single factor is responsible for the dropout rate of girls from school in Mola cluster, Kariba

district. The school, family, community and the attitudes of girls intertwine and push the girl child out of school.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter the researcher managed to review literature that was in line with the research topic. The researcher used research questions to guide her in the selection of literature and so as to make it more relevant to the research topic under study. From what has been discussed it is clear that no one single factor was the only cause for the dropout of the girl child from school.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology encompassed the research design, research instruments, population and sampling procedures and data collection procedures. Ethical considerations were also looked into, to address confidentiality and informed consent. The issues of validity and reliability of the findings were also addressed in the research methodology.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1 The descriptive survey design

Leedy (2000) viewed a research design as the general blue print for collection, measurement and analysis of data and it provides the glue that holds the research project together. The research design therefore forms the domain to generalise, that is, whether the interpretations obtained can be transferred to a larger population or different situation. The research employed the descriptive survey design. Leedy, (2000) described a descriptive survey design as involving methods of research that look with intense accuracy at a phenomenon of the moment and then describe it. Leedy, (2000) further reiterates that a descriptive survey design involves the acquisition of information about one or more people. In brief Chiromo (2006) said that a descriptive survey design enables the researcher to see over the beyond.

Santrock (2006) said the descriptive survey design enabled the researcher to capture feelings, ideas and opinions of the respondents with regard to the issue of factors that contribute to a high dropout rate of the girl child in Mola cluster of Kariba District. Gray (2011,p. 220) said "Descriptive surveys are designed to measure what occurred rather than why" and thus, this design was more appropriate for this research because it looks at why the girls dropout of school. He further articulates that, descriptive designs are used to measure the extent to which social problems such as crime, poverty and drop out affect a given community. Thus, descriptive survey design was the most appropriate research design for this research because it enlightened the people concerned about the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child.

Furthermore, the researcher chose to use the descriptive survey design for this research because it helped in the identification of problems which later became the cornerstone on the action. In descriptive survey the researcher was able to collect data from respondents and use it to draw conclusions. Lastly, this design allowed the researcher to employ method triangulation so that the weakness or bias of one method covered up the strengths of the other method. This built validity and reliability of the findings.

However, Santrock (2006) highlighted the following disadvantages. Firstly descriptive survey design needs trained observers who practice the observation skills regularly. This is because the researcher might not know what to look for, or forget what was observed.

3.2 Population

Sherman, (2006) define a population as a universe of objects whose attributes or parameters are to be investigated. Thus, the population in research comprises of a set of elements that the researcher focuses upon and to which results obtained by testing the sample should be generalized. In this research the population covered one hundred and twenty. In addition the research population also included fifty girl child dropouts in the Mola cluster who were accessible to the researcher. The area under study was different from most schools in the country. In the area thirteen and fourteen year olds are found in grade six. This is because of the long distances between home and school and the wildlife found in the area. Hence parents and guardians prefer their children to start school when they are a bit older.

3.2.1 Sample

Mudemu and Muchengetwa, (2005) say a sample is a subset of the universal set, that is, a population under study or under investigation. The process of sampling made it possible to draw inferences on the basis of careful analysis of variables within a relatively small proportion of the population. Ary et.al (1996) say that there are two methods of sampling, which are probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is a process of selecting a representative sample with each variable having an equal chance of being selected (Leedy 2000). Under this we have simple random sampling and systematic random sampling. Non probability sampling according to Borg and Gall (1989) is a method of choosing a sample without basing on a

mathematical chance. Examples of non-probability sampling includes quota, purposive, and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is a method of selecting a representative sample of a population by selecting only those subjects whose views do matter in the research study to be carried.

The researcher employed stratified and purposive sampling. The sample comprised of primary school teachers and girl dropouts from Mola cluster, Kariba district. Thirty- six teachers and sixteen girl child dropouts were in the sample for the research. Due to the geographical location of some schools the researcher used five schools from the cluster which were easily accessible to the researcher.

3.2.2 The sampling procedure

As a result of the different layers in the population, the researcher employed the stratified random sampling procedure (Leedy, 2000). For each group of respondents the researcher made small blue cards and mixed them with small pink cards. The researcher asked each group of respondents to pick cards. Those who pick blue cards will be part of the research. The blue cards were equal to the number of respondents needed for the each group of respondents. Only one girl was selected using the purposeful sampling because the researcher had observed her dropping out of school.

3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The researcher employed questionnaires and focus group discussion interview schedules.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

For this research the questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers. The questionnaires enabled the researcher to organise the questions and receive answers from a large number of respondents without actually having to talk to them (Walliman 2009). This helped the respondents to answer the questionnaire freely because they remained anonymous thus allowing potentially embarrassing questions to be asked and answered in a fair chance to getting a true response. Considering the geographical location of the schools under study the questionnaire helped to cut down research costs and time which would have been spent travelling to and from

schools. The researcher use questionnaires with both open questions and closed question. This allowed the respondents to say out their views on the questions asked.

The researcher made personal deliveries of the questionnaires this helped the researcher to make special persuasion and reminding respondents on the importance of the research thereby increasing the rate of responses. However, considering the low rate of illiteracy in the area under study it was very difficult for the researcher to use the questionnaire as the only tool for collecting data since a questionnaire can only be administered to literate respondents. Thus, it was used alongside with other data collection instruments. More so, a questionnaire usually provides limited space for responses this made respondents to leave out some much needed data. These advantages about the questionnaire clearly show that it cannot be used as the only data collection tool in this research. Thus, for this research the questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers only.

3.3.2 Focus group discussion

Considering the large number of school girls drop outs in the research, the researcher shall employ the focus group discussion interview. Morgan (1996) says focus group discussion is a research technique which is moderated by a discussion leader. This focus group discussion is held in an informal setting with the purpose of obtaining information from a group interaction. The girls were put in groups so as to answer the questions prepared. Focus group interviews saved time since the researcher interviewed a large number of respondents in a short space of time. For this research each focus group had five respondents. All in all the research had three focus groups.

Walliman (2009) says in an interview the researcher will be in a good position to be able to judge the quality of the responses. This allowed the researcher to ignore irrelevant data and capture relevant data. Equally, the researcher could easily notice if the respondents did not understand the question thereby giving the interviewer to repeat or simplify the question. Since gestures help in completing responses in an interview, the interviewer was guided by gestures if she was asking highly sensitive questions. On the other hand gestures helped the researcher to check whether the respondents were still willing to continue. Although this was a very expensive

way of gathering data, responses were usually slightly higher than in questionnaire especially when a letter was sent before the interview explaining the purpose of the interview (Gray 2011).

Considering the high sensitivity of some of the information expected by the researcher, the researcher made use of structured interviews. Structured interviews helped the researcher to use probing questions in responses that are not clear or that are incomplete. Thus, for this research the Focus group discussion interviews were guided by the question **why are you not in school?**

3.4 Pre- testing of instruments

After preparing the research questions on the questionnaire and interview guide, the two instruments were subject to pilot testing. A pilot test was a minor experiment to test the accuracy of the research instruments (Mudemu and Muchengetwa 2005). This was done to fine tune the questions before the main research. A sample similar to the one that would take part in the main research was involved in the pre-test. After the pre-test all ambiguous words would be removed replaced by simpler ones that are understood by the research respondents. To ascertain the effectiveness of the questionnaire designed, a pre-test revealed the need to incorporate adequate skip patterns into the questionnaire designed and also to clarify certain questions to eliminate ambiguities to enable respondents provide appropriate responses.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

4.5.1 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which the results can be replicated in future by another researcher under the same conditions (Ary et al 2006). The researcher analysed the characteristics of the entire targeted population and from that analysis selected a representative sample of the population. Sherman (2006) said that the sample should have all the characteristics of the entire population. The researcher then carried out the research with the sample that really understood the purpose of the research. Confidentiality and all other considerations were explained and understood by the research subjects. The researcher carried the research within a short space of time whilst the research subjects' interests were high. Through the selection of a representative sample, the results would definitely reflect a greater population as outlined by Sherman, (2006).

3.5.2 Validity

Validity is the extent to which the data measuring instruments measures what is intended to be measured (Ary et al 2006). This degree of accuracy encompasses content validity. To ensure validity the researcher analysed the research questions and then crafted questions on the questionnaire and interview guide in line with the research questions. After crafting the questions on the questionnaire and interview guide, the researcher' supervisor was awarded an opportunity to scrutinise them critiquing them so that ambiguity was removed. The researcher' colleagues were also awarded the opportunity to fine tune the questionnaire items after an analysis of the research questions. The questionnaire and interview guide were pre tested to a sample of the population which is not going to take part in the main research but having similar characteristics with the sample that took part in the research. This was done to measure the degree to which the instrument measured what it was crafted to measure (Sherman 2006).

3.6 Data collection procedures

The researcher first of all sought authority from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education for permission to carry out the research in the schools that fall under its jurisdiction. A personal letter was written to the respective school heads highlighting the purpose of the research and the issue of confidentiality. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the teachers (respondents) by the researcher. A collection box was placed in the head's office and a date of collection was fixed. As for the girl child dropouts, an interview was be carried out by the researcher and the responses were audio recorded and then transcribed.

3.7 Data analysis and presentation

After capturing the data from the questionnaire the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was employed so as to analyse the data. The data was thematically analysed in an effort to answer the research questions. To present the data the researcher used the computer to draw bar graphs, tables and pie charts to answer the research questions and explain in details the findings.

For the interviews the data was first audio recorded and then transcribed. The responses were put in themes which tally with the research questions. Narrative reports were given using the transcribed data.

3.8 Ethical considerations

3.8.1 Confidentiality

Confidentiality was highly stressed to the respondents by not mentioning their identity when completing questionnaires. In interview schedules the respondents did not say out their names. Furthermore, during data presentation the researcher used pseudo names so that the respondents remained anonymous.

3.8.2 Informed consent

Human beings and animals have rights that need to be observed by any researcher. Consent is one such right. Before holding the focus group interviews with the school dropouts, the researcher first asked for permission from the parents and guardians of the girls to allow the girls to take part in the research. For the girls who were granted permission to take part in the research the researcher went further to ask the girls if they were willing to take part in the research. The researcher highlighted to the respondents that they were at liberty to take part in the research and to withdraw their participation at will. Furthermore for focus groups the respondents were given the green light to withdraw whenever they felt like withdrawing their participation in the research. All respondents were assured that their responses were used in this research only.

3.9 Data management plan

Data management can be defined as ways of storing data. As purported by Maxwell (2005) the researcher should have a data management plan allows data to be retrieved for analysis. In this study the researcher used questionnaires and focus group discussions. Information gathered from the focus group was audio recorded using a cell phone memory card and interview guide was kept on a T-flash. Completed questionnaires were put a flat file whereas a soft copy of the questionnaire was kept in a laptop and a T- flush. The ways chosen by the researcher make the data to be retrieved at any time.

3.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher managed to identify the research instruments she is going to use, to whom and why? I also managed to state how I was going to sample my sample from the population and why? Furthermore issues of reliability and validity were also pointed out.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on the presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the research findings. The findings are presented in the form of frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs. Data collected from teachers was analysed, compared and linked to the responses from the focus group interviews and the personalised interview. The responses were linked to relevant literature reviewed in chapter two of the research.

4.1. Demographic information of respondents.

Teacher respondents indicated their gender. From a total number of thirty-six teachers who participated in this research 72.2% of the teachers were males. The remaining 27.8% were females. This clearly shows that there were more males than female teacher respondents in this research. The reasons behind it are the geographical location of the cluster, poor road network, poor telecommunication, limited health facilities and unavailability of banking facilities.

Teacher respondents also provided their age ranges as indicated below.

(N=36)

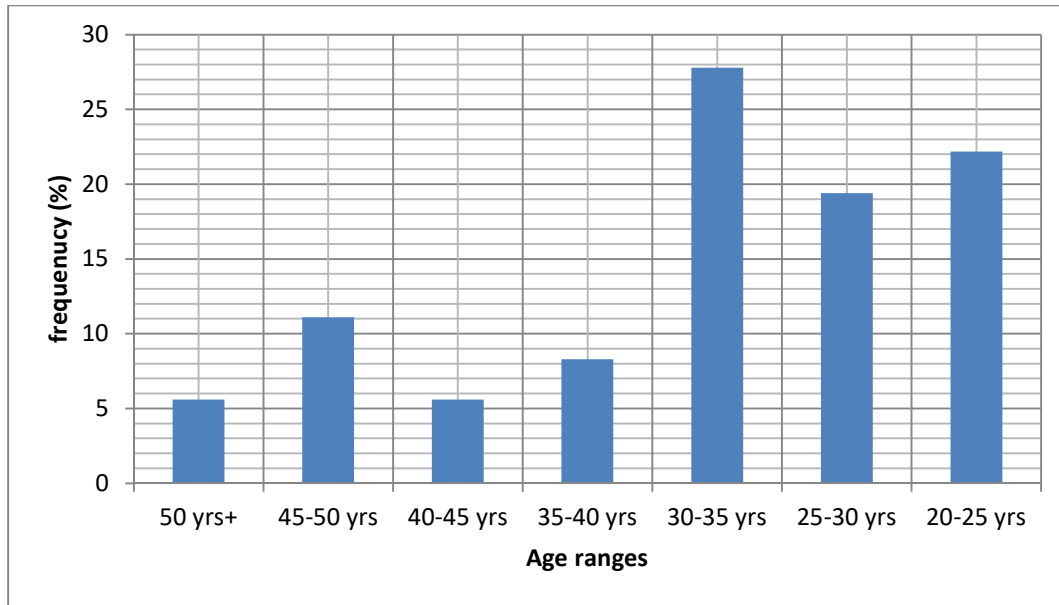


Figure 4.1 age ranges of teacher respondents.

The findings in fig 4.1 above shows the age ranges of the teacher respondents. From the findings it is clear that the age range 30-35 years had the highest number of teachers (27.8%). However the researcher was glad to note that all age groups were represented although at very low numbers that is 5.6 % for the 40-45 years and 50 years+ respectively. The presence of all age groups in the research was of great importance because the researcher heard the views of all teacher age groups. That assisted the researcher to see how the young teachers and elder teachers participated in the research.

4.2 Professional qualification of teachers

Teacher respondents were also asked to provide their professional qualifications.

(N=36)

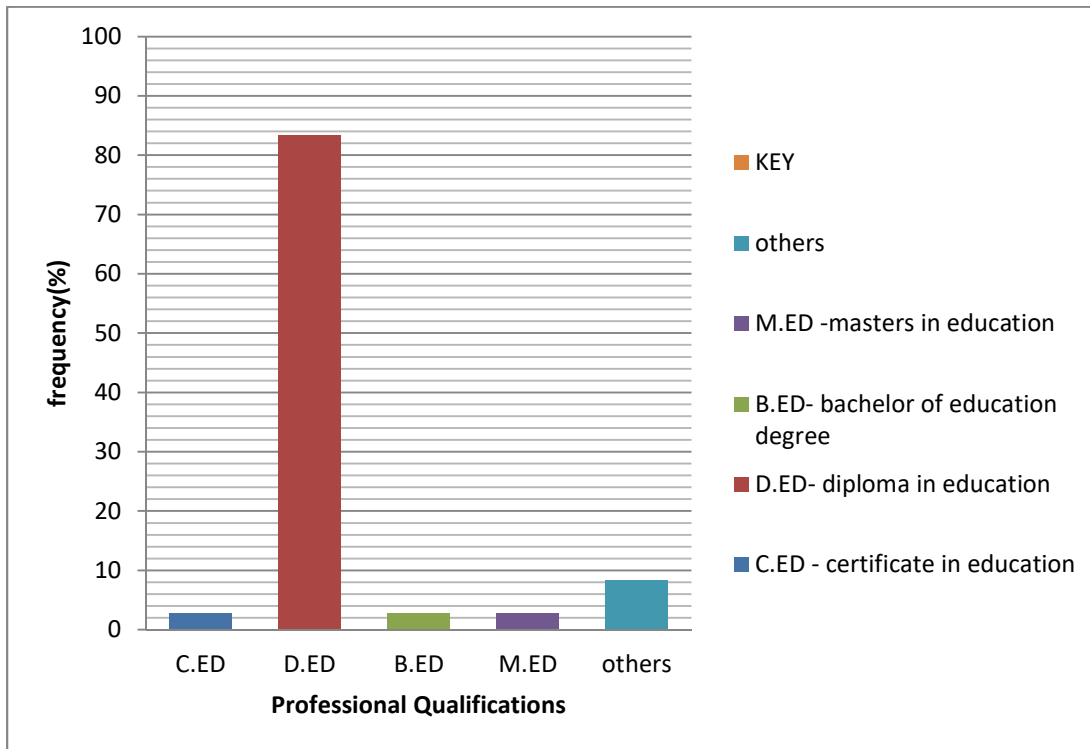


Figure 4.2 Professional qualifications of teacher respondents.

The findings figure 4.2 revealed that 83.4% of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire were diploma in education holders, 8.3% were teachers who had other qualifications that included certificate in agriculture and A' level. 2.8% were certificate in education holders. Masters in education and bachelor of education holders were also 2.8% respectively. Figure 4.2 also show that most of the teachers who took part in the research were qualified teachers. This could mean that they have vast knowledge on how to help the girl child stay in school and complete the education cycle. On the same note qualified teachers are equipped with various teaching methods that will make pupils enjoy the learning process. Teachers who are A' level holder are mainly Tonga resource teachers. The presence of these teachers in schools was of much significance because they became the middle man between Shona speaking teachers and the Mola community.

These findings were of great importance to the researcher since the researcher was enlightened on the types of teachers found in the schools. More so qualified teachers are aware of the

expected behaviour of the girl child hence they could easily note any quire behaviour displayed by the girl child.

4.3 Teaching experience of teachers

(N=36)

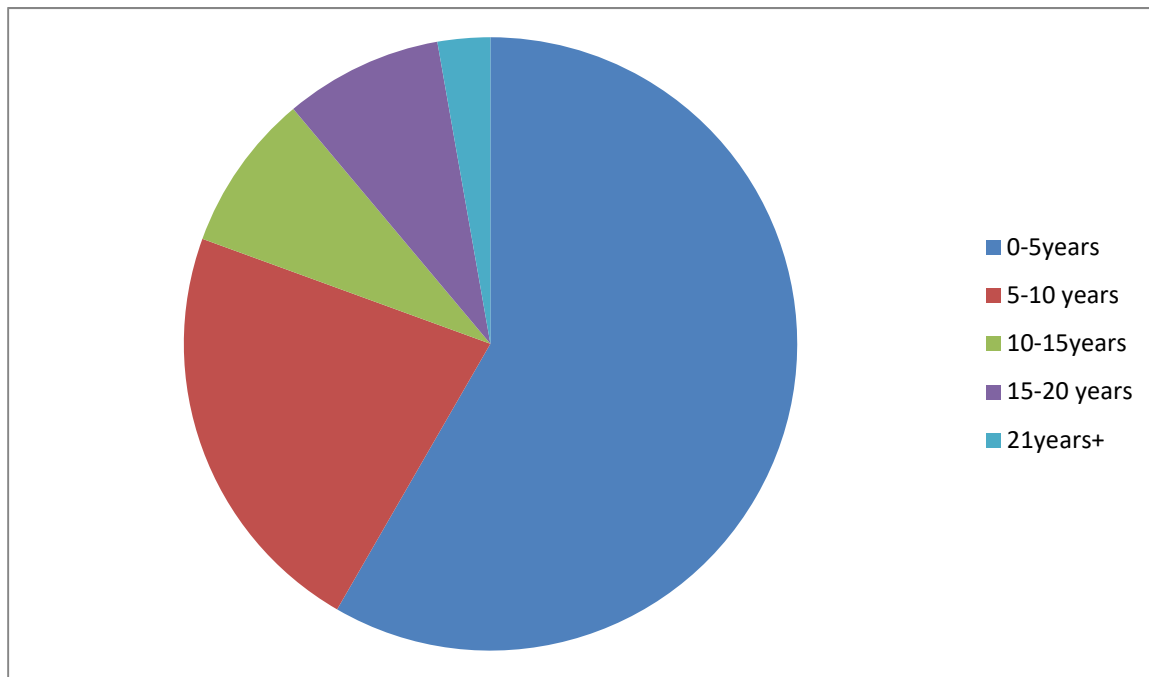


Figure 4.3 Teaching experiences of respondents

From figure 4.3 the majority of the respondents were in the category 0-5 years (58.3%) this is because the area was previously dominated by untrained teachers and it was after most provinces and districts declared overstaffing that the teachers were deployed to the district. Kariba District and in particular Mola cluster was the only option left for the newly trained teachers. From figure 4.3, 58.3% of the teacher respondents were in the category 0-5 years, 22.2% were in the category 5-10 years, 8.3% in the category 10-15 years, another 8.3% fall in the 15-20 years category and lastly 2.8% had a working experience of more than 20 years.

In the ranges 0-5, 5-10 and 10-15 years there are a number of teachers who have served in the cluster for quite a long time. These teachers I believe made a fruitful contribution during data collection. On the other hand the three named categories also comprised of reappointed teachers whom the researcher felt gave constructive information since they had worked in the education

system for quite some time. Furthermore most of them had worked in different parts of the country including other neighbouring countries. The reappointed teachers are believed to be well knowledgeable on how to monitor their classes and reduce the dropout rate of the girl child.

The girls who were part of the focus group interview and personalised interview provided their ages.

Table 4.1 Shows the age distribution of the girls who participated in the research.

Table 4.1 Age of dropout respondents

(N=16)

Age	<i>F</i>	%
11-12 years	4	25
12-13 years	4	25
13-14 years	8	50

From table 4.1, it is evident that the researcher dealt with respondents who are still in the primary school going age. In Mola cluster most pupils start school at the ages of eight this is because of the wildlife found in the area and some pupils travel long distances to school. Most girls go for initiation at the age of twelve as from the age of eleven it is clear that some girls dropout of school as they enter puberty.

4.4 Problems of girls high dropping % of school in senior primary school grades.

Using the questionnaire the researcher asked the respondents whether they had problems of girls dropping out of school. For those who answered yes, they were asked to state the trend. The responses are shown in table 4.2

Table 4.2 shows the responses on dropout

(N=36)

Response	frequency	%
Constantly rising	27	75
Constant	5	13.9
Declining	3	8.3
None	1	2.8

Table 4.2 shows that there is high dropout of girls in the senior grades of the primary school. According to the findings 97.2% (a cumulative total) confirmed that they had problems of high dropout of girls from primary school. In support of the same notion, 75% of the respondents indicated that the problem of girls dropping out of school in the senior grades of the primary school was constantly rising. Whereas 13.9% said it was constant and only 2.8% said the problem was declining. This is possible that the school is in a peri urban set up or may be the school is situated in a national park where most parents know the importance of education and role models are readily available. More so there is little activity for the girl child to do since it is a small settlement in the middle of the jungle. Thus, the girl child will go school and will result in no dropouts.

4. 5The community factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary schools.

Participates were asked to indicate whether the community contributed to the problems of girls dropping out of school. The respondents were asked to tick either yes or no. For those who said yes they were further asked to indicate how the community contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child. The responses are shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 shows teacher responses of how the community contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school.

(N=36)

Response	frequency	%
Failing to react to the rising number of girls in the primary school going ages getting married or seated at home	33	92
Through cultural activities that collide with school days eg nkolola	33	92
Supporting cultural activities that promote early marriages eg initiation ceremonies.	33	92
Allowing the girls to get married at a tender age	31	86.1
Cultural acceptance on inferiority of the girl child	31	86.1
Seeing marriage as the only destination of the girl child	30	83.3
Traditional practices eg kubatirwa and polygamy.	30	83.3
Lack of inspirational support	28	77.8
Lack of proper guidance and counselling	24	66.7
Seeing education as the last priority on the development of a human being	18	50
Poor role modelling by those in influential positions	18	50
None	1	2.8

From the findings in table 4.3 it was discovered that the community has a hand in the dropping out of school of the girl child. Through failing to react to the alarming rate of girls who are getting married or sitting at (92%), through cultural activities such as nkolola that collide with school days (92%) and through supporting cultural activities such as initiation ceremonies that that promote early marriage(92%). It also emerged from the study that through traditional practice such as kubatirwa (83.3%) and lack of proper guidance and counselling the community had a hand in the high dropout rate of the girl child. Not making the first priority and lack of roles models were the least factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child with 50% respectively.

It is from these findings that one can deduce that the cultural activities that are being practiced in Mola area are perpetuating the high dropout rate of the girl child from school. As stated by Kane (2004), the school and the girls end up in conflict. According to Kane (2004) after the cultural practices such as initiation ceremonies (*nkolola*) the little girls would see themselves as adults because they will be ready for marriage. On the other hand the teachers would treat them as school pupils. This conflict will eventually force the girl child to drop out of school. This notion was also supported by one of the respondents who participated in the focus interviews. The girl said

I was doing grade seven when I was told by the elders that I was due to go for initiation. At first I refused but was told it was a taboo to refuse to go for initiation because it was part of our culture.

Traditional practices such as kubarirwa and polygamy have also been noted as part of the activities practiced and accepted by the community that help intensify the dropout of girls from school (83.3%). Haralambos and Holborn (2004) state that one of the key functions of society is to reproduce, the girl child is made to prematurely engage in this function through traditional practices such as *kubarirwa (kujatilwa)*. This has been noted as a common feature were the girl child's bride price is paid whilst still young. Although the man or boy is given a condition that he will take his wife after completing school very few adhere to this. At the end the girl child will be forced to drop out of school because the man or boy will threaten to cease support rendered to the girl. Many respondents from the focus group discussion interviews echoed that the issue of kubarirwa was mainly because of poverty. Although some respondents who went through this kubarirwa said their husbands were boys, some indicated that there were made to get into polygamy because of this practice.

Although not all girls who drop out of school get married early, the community has been found out as the main perpetuator of this problem. From the findings 92% of the respondents indicated that the community has failed to react to the alarming rate of primary school girls are seated at home or who are getting married. This is because they have failed to take appropriate action on the girls who stay at home doing nothing. For those who get married it is in the same community where one family releases a girl whilst the other receives the girl. If all members of the

community come together and give inspirational support as well as proper guidance and counselling the rate of female pupils dropping out of school will definitely decline.

Seeing marriage as the only destination for the girl child (83.3%) is another community factor that has been observed as contributing to the high dropout rate of the girl child. The same idea was raised by the girl dropouts who clearly said how the community through the elders in the families contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child through directing them to marriage. One respondent said

After the three months my dad and auntie told me to get married to a man who already had a wife.

The other respondent had this to say

My parents told me that I should stay at home because I was wasting resources since I will get married

The two respondents clearly show that the community has attached the girl child's life to marriage.

50% of the respondents indicated that failure to prioritise education of the girl child was a way in which the community contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child. Mola cluster is one of the richest wards in the country with a lot of wildlife around, but it is amongst the worst clusters in terms of literacy. As boys leave school to become fisher men girls do the same to go and get married to the fishermen. Fishing is the only viable industry in this part of the county so every young girl fights hard to be wife to a fisherman thereby killing potential leaders of tomorrow. The leaders of the said community are to blame because every time when they get their Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) dividends nothing is directed to the education of the girl child.

4.6 Family factors that contribute to the high dropout rates of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school.

The respondents were asked to indicate whether the family contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child. For those who said yes, they were further asked to indicate how the family contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child. The responses are shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 shows teacher responses of how the family contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school.

(N=36)

Response	frequency	%
Exposing the girl child to adulthood through cultural practices	35	97
Failing to report cases of rape	35	97
Failing to take positive action when a girl is involved in early marriage	35	97
Exposing the girl child to environments that will make them dropout of school	34	94.4
Delaying the girl child to start school	34	94.4
Encouraging the girl child to take part in cultural activities that direct them to marry early	33	92
Traditional beliefs that the girl child is meant for child bearing	30	83.3
Type of family the girl child the girl child comes from	30	83.3
Lack of positive motivation from family members	28	77.8
Lack of proper guidance and counselling	27	75
Giving the boy child first preference to education	22	61.1
Overloading the girl child with chores and care giving duties	12	33.3
Failure to provide for the girls' basic needs eg clothes	6	16.7
Failure to provide resources that facilitate learning	3	8.3
None	1	2.8

It emerged from the findings that the major contributing family factors were exposing the girl child to cultural practices, failing to report cases of rape and failing to take positive action when the girl child is involved in early marriage with 97% respectively. Exposing the girl child to environments that will make them dropout of school (94.4%) and delaying the girl child to start school (94.4%) were also noted as family factors that contributed to the high dropout rate of the

girl child. The findings above show that the family is a contributing party in the high dropout of the girl child. Failure to provide resources that facilitate learning was also echoed as a family factor that contributed to the high dropout rate of girls from school.

Since the family is found in the community that has been revealed as intensifying the high dropout of girls, it is clear that the family has a hand in taking girls out of the school. From table 4.4 parents and guardians encourage or sometimes force the girl child to get married as seen by their failure to report cases of rape (97%) and encouraging them to take part in the cultural activities that direct them to marry early (92%). As indicated by Atayi (2008) cultural norms and values have been revealed as dictating the pace for women and in this case the girl child. Cultural practices such as *nkolola* where the girl child is made to stay in a hut for up to three months to appease the ancestors expose the girl to adulthood. It is evident when the day arrives when the maiden has completed the initiation. The girl is made to dance half naked. Couclough et al (2000) pointed out how some cultural practices make the girl child feel shameful to return to school after the initiation ceremonies. After the *nkolola* most girls do not go back to school because of the number of days she would have been absent from school. Furthermore, the fact that she would have danced in a half-naked state in front of many people including other school pupils from her neighbourhood, she will shy to come back to school. Her only option is to get married or stay at home. This was also echoed by respondents who participated in the focus group discussion. One girl dropout said:

I was made to take part in nkolola and after the ceremony I didn't want to hear anything about school.

On the same note another respondent said

I failed to go back to school after the initiation ceremony just because my teacher came to witness me come out of the hut. Seeing the way I was dressed I was so shy.

Failure by parents and guardians to provide the girl child with the basic needs such as clothes and food (16.7%) will drive the girl child to accept any man who wants to marry or pay the bride price earlier (*kubatirwa*). Other girls go to look for employment in safari camps, fishing camps and crocodile farms nearby. Not all girls who go to seek employment get the employment. Most girls end up being abused by fishermen and traders who come to buy fish and carpenter fish. The

very few who get employed will be employed as house maids or tuck shop keepers. When all this is happening the girl child is already out of school. Ricardo et al (2010) indicated that as the girl child grows older their opportunity costs increase and as a result most parents and guardians fail to meet these costs and as a result the girls are forced out of school either by pregnancy, marriage, and employment or just to stay at home.

In the cases where the girl child has been raped, most parents and guardians prefer to settle the matter out of court (97%). The perpetrator is made to pay a bride price and take the girl as a wife. Thus, the girl will be abused further because she will be forced to live with a man who she doesn't love and she will be haunted the rest of her life. Such marriages rarely last. In support of the above the ZNSPEGOV 2005-2010 reiterated that some unscrupulous prophets take advantage of churches to drive the girl child out of school by making false prophecy that the 'holy spirit' told them to take a certain girl as a wife. The prophets threaten the girls with bad luck and as a result the girl child says good bye to school as she goes into early marriage. Due to the respect rendered to these prophets the matter is not reported at all.

Primary socialisation begins in the home and it is in the home where a girl child is taught gendered roles. Although the roles are a preparation of the adult life, parents and guardians tend to overload the girl child with chores (33.3%) that will result in the girl child delaying to go to school as well as to prefer to stay home because the girl will always be late for school. This same issue was also raised by the respondents in the focus group discussion. One respondent said,

I would wake up early in the morning fetch water, cook our breakfast and lunch for grandmother and then go to school.

Although the girl might be willing to go to school she will end up withdrawing because she gets punished everyday for late coming.

Delaying to start school (94.4%) has a negative end for the girl. It results in the girl seeing herself older for school. As a result of this the girl child might be labelled negatively by other pupils and teachers thereby resulting in dropping out. The girl child will have most of her friends in secondary school or other dropouts. Peer pressure will result in the girl dropping out of school.

Lack of proper guidance and counselling from the family members (75%) was discovered as another way the family contributed to the high dropout rate of the child. This was also witnessed by the dropouts with one responded saying

After I was made to stay in a hut for three months being fed on meat only I saw myself fat and beautiful because I was light in complexion.

The dropout respondents indicated that lack of proper guidance and counselling from family members was a contributing factor to girl child dropout. Due to improper guidance the girl child associated beauty to marriage. This could have been intensified by primary socialisation on gender roles and stereotypes or the level of education of the members of the household as stipulated by Hunt (2008).

The girl dropouts also indicated how bereavement displaced them and later made some of the girls to drop out of school.

My father was a fisherman. He drowned in Lake Kariba and my mother got married to another man. My two siblings and I were made to stay with our grandmother who is always sick.

Another respondent said:

My father was the one who worked for the family. After he died I had no one to pay my levies and provide all the resources needed by someone to be in school.

From the two respondents it is clear that bereavement in the family is also a factor that contributes to the high dropout rate of the girl child. The first respondent left school to look after her two siblings and her grandmother a duty that could have been carried out by other elder members of the family. More so the mother as the remaining parent had the great task to take care of the orphans up until they become old enough to fend for themselves. The second respondent shows that the mother was socialised to be a house keeper which made her to fail to take full responsibility of her orphaned children. All the above is in line with Hunt (2008) who indicated that bereavement lead to non-enrolment, late enrolment and dropout. Bennell et al (2012) explained how orphanhood worsened financial constrains which lead to child labour and dropout.

4.7 The school contributes to the high dropout rate of the girl child in senior primary school grades

The teacher respondents were also asked to indicate whether the school also contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child.

Table 4.5 shows teacher responses on how the school contributes to the dropout rate of the girl child.

(N=36)

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	%
High school levies	18	50
Lack of follow ups on dropouts	16	44.4
Lack of proper guidance and counselling	15	41.7
Failure by female teachers to be good role models	14	38.9
Overloading the girls with manual work eg fetching water	13	36.1
Poor infrastructure	13	36.1
Violence amongst pupils	12	33.3
Insufficient teaching and learning material	10	27.8
Negative labelling of the girl child	9	25
Sexual abuse from teachers	8	22.2
Lack of a multicultural environment in schools	4	11.1
None	4	11.1

The findings in table 4.5 above have revealed that the school also contributes to the high dropout of girls in the senior grades of the primary school. Although most respondents did not write much on how the school contributes to the high dropout rate of pupils, the data represented in table 4.6 clearly shows that the school in some way contributes to the high dropout rate of the girl child. From the data in table 4.5 it has been discovered that as the girl gets older, she is allocated to a lot of duties in the school (36.1%). High school levies (50%), lack of follow ups on dropouts (44.4%) and lack of proper guidance and counselling (41.7%) have emerged as the top three school related factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child.

Since Mola cluster is in a rural setup the girl child is overloaded with manual work (36.1%). The girls are made to fetch water from the borehole either during lessons or during co-curricular activities. More so, most boreholes are quite a distance from the school. The water is either for teachers' personal use or for use by the entire school for drinking purposes or construction. It is in most occasions that the elder girls are the ones sent to fetch water. These same girls are the ones who also fetch water at home. As a result of this continued work load the girl child might end up out of school. One focus group respondent said:

Madam it was so boring to be sent to fetch water for teachers during lunch time. After school when I got home I would also carry another twenty litre bucket to the borehole.

Due to the non-availability of industries in Mola area very few parents and guardians are absorbed by the fishing industry, crocodile farm, hotels and safari camps. Thus, if the school levies are high very few parents will be able to pay for their children (50%). In some instances the girl child is disadvantaged because the parents or guardians will give first preference to the boy child whilst the girl child is left to seat at home.

A factor that emerged and is reflected in table 4.5 is that of poor infrastructure (36.1%). As girls approach the senior grades of the primary school most of them begin to menstruate. A school needs to have appropriate infrastructure to accommodate the girls during their cycle. A lockable room with a mirror, sanitary pads, soap and clean water will make a school girl child friendly. In support of the above notion female teachers should be given time to meet all girls in grades four up to seven. In their meetings they should equip the girls with knowledge on how to stay in school. More so this will build a good relationship with the girls and this will allow the girls to open up whenever they are facing problems.

Sexual abuse by teachers (22.2%) was also raised as a contributing factor to high girl child dropout. The same factor was raised by the focus group respondents. One girl said

My teacher always sent me to his house to sweep and cook. One day he came and told me i was more beautiful than all female teachers in the school.

A second respondent said

I used to stay in the corner in our classroom my grade six teacher would move around marking and he would push my breasts.

Male teacher should not see the elder girls as prospective wives. If a male teacher proposes love to a primary school girl the girl will definitely hate school. On the other hand failure by female teachers to be good role models can send girls out of school (38.9%). Girls should wish to be as educated as the female teacher because of the behaviour show cased by the female teachers. If female teachers are respectful and if they wear descent clothes they will be praised by the community and as a result every girl would wish to emulate the teachers.

Failure by the school to provide all the necessary material for teaching and learning (27.8%) has been observed as another way in which the school contributes to the high dropout rate of girls. Because of patriarchy boys will always grab the available resources in the expense of girls.

4.8 The attitude of girls towards school contributes to high dropout.

Most respondents indicated that the negative attitude of girls is contributing to the alarming rate of dropout. As indicated by Johnson (2008) a lot of affirmative action has been done in favour of girls by still they are seen dropping out of school. Some respondents indicated that most girls tend to have a negative attitude because they lack inspiration. More so, one respondent indicated that due to the girls' negative attitudes towards school the girls practice sex early which leads to under age pregnancy and under age marriages. Due to the gender roles and gender stereotyping which view the girls place as the kitchen most girls end up with a negative attitude towards school. More so there are no local role models for the girls to see the importance of education this results in girls thinking that education is for boys only. Thus they conform to the standards of the community. The negative attitude of girls towards school often makes them to lose interest in learning and as a result find the whole learning process boring.

However other respondents indicated that the negative attitude of girls towards school is a result of the community, family and school. The respondents highlighted that through lack of guidance and counselling from the family, community and school the girl will end up having a negative attitude towards school. Furthermore the financial background, lack of mentors, little exposure to the outside world, purposeless visions and self-actualisation. The above is in line with Johnson

(2013) who said that girls have a positive attitude towards school which is affected by different factors that follow them. Bronfenbrenner in Santrock (2006) clearly shows how the family, school, peers and the community influence the behaviour of an individual.

4.9 Summary

In Chapter four data collected from questionnaires and focus group interviews was analysed and presented. Various responses were observed and presented. Data was analysed in relation to the research questions. The findings were free from bias since the responses from questionnaires and focus group interviews were similar.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the whole research and gives conclusions based on the findings. Recommendations on the way forward about the dropout rate of girls were given. The recommendations were directed to the government, Ministry of Education, community leaders, school heads, primary school teachers and parents.

5.1 Summary

The research focused on the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school in Mola cluster schools. The population comprised of all primary school teachers and girl child dropouts. The sample was selected using the stratified approach and it comprised of thirty six teachers (36) and sixteen (16) girl child dropouts who were accessible to the researcher. The study used questionnaire and focus group interviews to obtain data. Thirty six teachers answered questionnaires and fifteen girl dropouts participated in the focus group discussions. The research findings were obtained from both teachers and girl child dropouts. The research set to answer the following research questions:

5.1.1 What are the community and home factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in senior grades of the primary school?

The research question was further split into two so as to identify the family factors differently from the community factors.

5.1.1.1 Community factors contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child in senior grades of the primary school.

It was discovered that community such as failing to react to the rising number of girls marrying early or seated at home, lack of proper guidance and counselling, poor role modelling by those in influential positions and failure to prioritise education of the girl child were some of the factors that contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child.

5.1.1.2 Family factors that contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child in senior grades of the primary school.

It was discovered that family factors such as failing to take positive action when a girl child is involved in early marriage, failure to provide adequate resources, type of family the girl child comes, delaying the girl child access to education and encouraging the girl child to take part in cultural activities were some of the factors that contributed to the high dropout rate of the girl child.

5.1.2 Which school factors contribute to the high dropout rate of the girl child in the senior grades of the primary school?

Some of the school factors discovered to be contributing to the high dropout rate of girls in the senior grades of the primary school were as follows: high school levies, lack of follow up on dropouts, poor infrastructure, violence amongst pupils and sexual abuse from teachers.

5.1.3 What are the girls' attitudes towards education?

It was discovered that most girls have a positive attitude towards education but however due to other external forces they end up having a negative attitude.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

From the findings the researcher came up with following conclusions:

- Cultural activities that collided with the school calendar affected the girl child's completion of the education cycle.
- Cultural activities that exposed the girl child to adulthood have a lot to play in the girl child's completion of the education cycle.
- Early marriages still remain a major constrain to the education of girls.
- Poverty forced the girl child to drop out of school.
- Proper guidance and counselling is needed to help the girl child stay in school.
- The home, community and school have a role to play in getting the girl child out of school.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the research the researcher made the following recommendations.

- The Ministry of Primary and Secondary education in collaboration with Ministry of youth, Ministry of women affairs, Ministry of Home affairs and local leaders should carry out awareness campaigns on gender equality and child abuse.
- The family, school and community should work together and try to reduce the rate of girls dropping out of school by holding collective guidance and counselling with the objective of reducing the dropout rate of the girl child in senior grades of the primary school.
- Schools and families should offer equal opportunities and equal access to all male and female pupils to school and all educational resources.
- The community should reschedule their cultural practices so that they are done during holidays.
- Schools should come up with girl child programmes that will help the girl stay in school. For example coming up with committees that look at girl child issues. More so, schools should timetable sessions where female teachers get a chance to talk with the girls on issues affecting them.
- Industries in the Mola area should help alleviate the problem of girl dropout by forming scholarships for the girls.
- The teachers, being the ones in whose hands the children's future education lie should motivate and give more attention to girls, and also counsel them on pre-marital sex leading to teenage pregnancy, and how it could be avoided.
- Parents should not overburden their girls with household chores but give them equal chances as boys to study. Moreover, parents should try their best to provide the needs of the girls. For example clothes and sanitary wear.
- More researches should be carried out by teachers to found out more factors that lead to the high dropout rate of the girls in the senior grades of the primary school.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

I am Samukonde Portia Kuziwa a Bachelor of Educational Foundations student at Midlands State University. I am carrying out a research on the topic: Factors that contribute to the high dropout rate of girls at senior levels of the primary school in Mola cluster, Kariba District in Mashonaland West Province. I kindly ask you to respond to this questionnaire freely and honestly. For the purpose of confidentiality, please do not write your personal details or any information that may lead to your identification.

Thank you.

Please tick in the appropriate box

Sex Male Female

Age

20 – 25 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	25 – 30 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 – 35years	<input type="checkbox"/>	35 – 40 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 – 45 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	45 – 50years	<input type="checkbox"/>
50years +	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Professional Qualifications

Cert in Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dip in Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bachelor of Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Masters in Education	<input type="checkbox"/>

Others (Please specify).....

Teaching experience

0-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 – 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 -20 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	21 years +	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. (i) Do you have problems of girls out of school? Yes No

ii) If Yes, what is the trend like?
.....
.....
.....

2. i) Do you think the community contributes to the high dropout rate of girls?

Yes No

ii) If Yes, how.....

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

3. i) Do you think the family contributes to the high dropout rate of girls?

Yes No

ii) If Yes, how.....

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

4. i) Do you think the school contributes to the high dropout rate of girls?

Yes No

ii) If Yes, how.....

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

5. In what ways does the negative or positive attitude of girls towards school contributes towards their high dropout rate?

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

APPENDIX 2

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION INTERVIEW GUIDE

Why are you not in school?

APPENDIX 3



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FACULTY OF EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES

7 JANUARY 2015

Ministry Of Primary and Secondary Education

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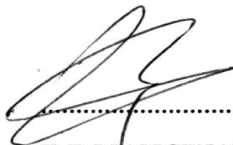
CAUSEWAY

REF: SPECIAL PERMIT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY

The faculty of Education's Department of Educational Foundations, Management and Curriculum Studies at Midlands State University is seeking your permission to allow Mr. Mrs. / Ms. SAMUKONDE PORTIA KURWA a Bachelor of Education / PGDE/ Masters in EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION degree student in the department , to conduct his/her research in your ministry. The research will be conducted in KARIBA DISTRICT District/ Province.

May I have this opportunity to thank you for the cooperation you have always given this department in this respect.

Thank you


.....
E.P MANGWAYA Ph.D.

(Chairperson) Department of Educational Foundations, Management and Curriculum Studies

