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DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT STUDIES

**AN ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS INFLUENCING RURAL FEMALE
LEARNERS' PROGRESSION IN EDUCATION AT GAMBIZA SECONDARY
SCHOOL**

BY

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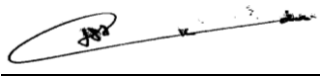
DECLARATION

I, Mawadze Tracy T. hereby declared that, except for references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is the result of my own research and has neither in part nor in whole been presented in education programme.

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This research work was undertaken under the supervision of Dr. Chikuvadze P.

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Date: 27.01.22

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family with special mention of my late father, Junias Vunganai Mawadze, who would have been proud to witness this achievement.

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First and foremost I offer my earnest gratitude to the Creator, my God for guiding me and protecting me throughout the entire process of my learning up this degree level.

I also dedicate my sincere acknowledgment with gratitude to the critical role played by my supervisor, Dr. P. Chikuvadze for his priceless help and guidance through inspiration and encouragement during all stages of the study. He gave me constant support and motivation with patience to remain focused.

I would like to offer special thanks to my mother Lucia Mawadze for being my inspiration in giving me unceasing encouragement, attention, financial and emotional support throughout the course. I also dedicate my sincere acknowledgments to the school head, teachers and students for their cooperation and assistance rendered during interviews.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore factors influencing rural female learners' progression in education. Data generation, analysis and interpretation was grounded in interpretivist paradigm and qualitative approach. The researcher used document analysis, and personal interviews in generating data. In this study twenty - five rural female learners and six class teachers were purposively selected to form the sample for this study. The generated data was analysed according to themes derived from the formulated research questions. Findings of the study revealed that though, there are policies advocating for equal participation and progression of learners in education at the school under investigation learners have limited access to these documents. In addition, it was noted that the way rural female learners are socialized has an influence on their behavior at school. This in a way plays a critical roles when rural female learners make decision on whether to progress or not to progress with their education. It was also revealed that rural female learners in their progression in education encounter challenges such as stereotyping, lack of role models, work load at home, home to school distance, etc. From the findings the following strategies were proposed as a way of overcoming the challenges: empower rural female learners through workshops of gender equality and equity. From the generated, analyzed data and interpreted data, the researcher reached the conclusion that the continued dropping out of education by rural female learners was due to multiple factors such as social, economic and among others. The researcher recommends that parents or guardians should transform their mind-sets towards the rural female learners' progression in education.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is generally giving an overview of the issue under investigation and going to offer the following: background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, definition of the key terms and chapter summary.

1.2 Background to the study

In Zimbabwe, as is the case in other countries, the education system comprises primary school, secondary school and tertiary education. This study focuses specifically on secondary school education, which is comprised of an academic course of four years (Form 1 to Form 4) after Grade 7 (the primary school exit point). However, it is prudent to highlight that learners' progression from one level to another is not a bed of roses, since some of them fall by the way side. It is in this context that researchers such as Ajaja, (2012); Burrus and Roberts (2012) concur that school dropout is a challenge facing many education systems globally. While many countries have made great strides in boosting enrolments in education, Mhele and Ayiga (2013) observe that rural secondary school dropout rates seem to be eroding efforts to increase access to education, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Zimbabwe has not been spared by the challenge of female learners dropping out of secondary schools (Dakwa, Chiome, & Chabaya, 2014).

Prior to independence in 1980, Zimbabwe's education system was characterised by racial discrimination. Education for the black community was a privilege, not a right (Mhizha & Muromo, 2013). It was the preserve of the small white community, thus access to education was a struggle and levels of literacy were low among the black majority. The post - independence period, however, ushered in improved access to education for the black majority (UNESCO, 2011). The expansion and democratisation of the education system was comprehensive, ensuring that every Zimbabwean would have access to that which was once denied to some during the

colonial period. Shizha and Kariwo (2011) report that at some point Zimbabwe achieved one of the highest adult literacy rates - pegged at 92% - in Africa. Zimbabwe's education system could then be trusted to prepare children for a secure and bright academic future and, ultimately, paved the way to a meaningful life for all. This was a highly commendable achievement compared to education standards in Africa. However, the problem of pre-mature school exit, as observed today, seems to be militating against progress towards adequate education for the younger generations, hence this study.

In Zimbabwe numerous education policies have been enacted in an effort to address inequalities experienced in the pre-independence era with emphasis being placed on education as a basic human right. Thus, in principle Zimbabwe has taken the requisite steps, by means of policy enunciation, to respond to the challenge of premature school exit (Zengeya, 2011). In addition, some Non-Governmental Organisations stepped in to further consolidate government efforts related to the provision of education. In some they were providing stationery and furniture, paying school fees for some disadvantaged children and, in some cases, building and/or rebuilding schools especially in rural communities (UNESCO, 2011).

All these efforts are strong indicators of a commitment by all to the achievement of Education for All, with access to education having, to a large extent, been achieved. A look at the education scenario shows Zimbabwe as having achieved near to universal primary education for all, for example the net enrolment in 1994 was 81.9%; literacy levels for 15 to 24-year olds rose from 95% to 98% between 1992 and 1999 (Mafa & Tarusikira, 2013; Zengeya, 2011). However, a close look at the enrolment statistics of the secondary school under investigation shows a different picture from that being portrayed by the above-mentioned authors. The researcher noted that there has been an increase in the under of drop out cases especially female learners despite concerted efforts from different stakeholders. This scenario strengthens the researcher's argument for the present study, namely that the problem of rural female learners dropping out of secondary school needs attention. The researcher's argument is based on the reason that the situation seems to be deteriorating further, despite the existence of policies promoting female learners' progression in education and is, therefore, a cause for concern. It is against this background that this study sought to gain insight into factors influencing female learners' progression in secondary education.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Upon the attainment of independence in 1980 Zimbabwe ratified various convention and treaties, which acted as the backbone for the formulation of clauses in different policy documents such as 2013 Constitution, Education Act, National Gender Policy, Affirmative Action, among others with the view to promote equality and equity of citizens when participating in different spheres of life such as education. However, the number of female learners dropping out of secondary education at Gambiza High School is significantly high. It is in this context that this study sought to gain insight into this issue guided by the following main research question: Why are female learners dropping out of education at Gambiza High School?

1.4 Research questions

From the above main research question the following sub-questions were formulated:

1. What policies promote female learners' progression in education?
2. How does sex role socialisation influence rural female learners' progression in education?
3. What challenges do rural female learners encounter in their progression in secondary education?
4. What strategies can be implemented to overcome these challenges?

1.5 Significant of the study

The study is going to benefit the learners, the teachers, the dropouts, the parents and the community as a whole. It is also going to benefit the urban schools and the school Management Teams. These groups can be able to use the data which is going to be collected in this study to develop systems that can reduce and prevent student dropout at Gambiza Secondary school. Learners will learn and understand the issue of school dropouts and will be able to understand the consequence of dropping out of school. Learners who are at risk of dropping out of school will also benefit from the study since they are to take part in the study, some schools and educational stakeholders might apply some of the findings and the recommendations made in this study. The study will also benefit researchers especially those who are focusing on the issue of school dropout as they will use this study to notify further research studies.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Midlands Province has the following education administration districts: Gweru, Gokwe, Mberengwa, Zvishavane, and Kwekwe this study was carried out at Gambiza Secondary School in Gweru District. In this study focus was on factors contributing towards rural female learners dropping out of school. Thus, Chinyoka (2014), is of the view that dropping out is an act of ceasing to attend school either temporarily or permanently before individuals complete a giving educational cycle.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study will be limited with time and funding since the research might be self-sponsored and due to Covid 19 restrictions. To minimize limitations, the researcher will assure participants that information gathered will be used for academic purposes only and their identities will be protected.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Ajaja (2012) defines school dropout as ultimate withdrawal from school. In this study school dropout refers to learners leaving secondary school before completing Form four by Zimbabwean standards. In addition Brown (2010) postulates that school dropout as an action in which a person becomes detached from a group or system. It could also be defined as leaving school earlier than at the expected exit point.

Female learner can be defined someone who attends an educational institution. Webster (2018) mention that a learner is a person who attends a school or studies under a teacher.

According to Ajaja (2012) progression the act of progressing; forward or onward movement a passing successively from one member of a series to the next succession sequence.

1.9 Chapter layout

Chapter 1 puts the problem and its setting was put into context; chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework that forms the lens through which the study the will be observed. In addition the gaps to be filled by this study will be identified; chapter 3 outlines the strategy through which data for this study will be generated, presented, analysed and interpreted; chapter 4 explores the generated data through presentation, analysis, and interpretation with the view to provide answers to sub-questions raised in chapter one; and chapter 5 gives an overview of the study conclusion and recommendation.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the study as well as its relevance. An investigation on the causes of female dropout and it was of secondary school. In the same chapter the statement of the problem has been outlined, followed by the significance of the study. The chapter proceeds to highlight delimitations and limitations of the study. In addition to this the definition of key terms was defined. The next chapter focuses on the discussion on relevant literature.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was centered on giving an overview of the problem and its setting. With this chapter two focusing the identification of gaps to be filled by the study. In this chapter the researcher will outline the theoretical framework, females' socialization in a patriarchal society, education related policies and their influence of female learners' progression in education. In addition challenges encountered by female learners in their progression in education will also be at the center of the discussion.

2.2 Theoretical framework

This study will be viewed through a lens comprised of the following theories: feminist (liberal and radical), structural strains, socialization and social stratification. Thus, these theories will contribute towards the formation of a lens through which the issue under discussion will be observed.

2.2.1 Feminist theories

Theorell and Svensson (2013) mention that many feminists have argued that the ideology of patriarchy in sociology at large is a major cause of inequality in schools. The ideology of patriarchy suggests that the dominant ideas in society tend to favor men and operate to keep women in subordinate positions, such as home and in part-time low paid jobs. For example according to Arnott (2001) the introduction of the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative with its emphasis on gender inequality through increasing female choices actually did very little to achieve gender equality. Kane (2004) suggesting is that given free choice girls and boys tend to respond according to society's view of what is proper for each gender so that girls tend to avoid choosing science and technology subjects. Therefore, there should be a great compulsion in schools to ensure that there are common experiences for girls and boys which in turn will ensure that equality comes about. In the case, of Zimbabwe, gender parity is one of the core objectives of the new constitution which is the

supreme law of the country for instance, Clause 4.7 of the Constitution provides for equality and non-discrimination recognizes in specific terms the equality between men and women (Chivore, 2003). Even if the girl get pregnant when still at school she will continue with school.

2.2.2 Socialization theory

According to Newcomb (2005) family is the earliest and the most significant impact on persons' general deviance and on psychological distress (Newcomb, 2006). Family forms a foundation not just for the academic achievement of the children and how well they do in school, but also make a basis for their future. According to Garnier (2001), level of family's commitment to different lifestyles and values is a predictor for children probability of dropping out of the school.

Poverty in the family affect children in rural schools who had to walk long distances bare footed and hungry to school which leads to school dropout. Stevens et al (2012) alluded that poverty is associated with the high rates of academic failure and the higher occurrences of school dropout. Shumba (2015) also propounds that, more than forty-seven thousands form four and six learners either dropped out of school or failed to register for public examinations country wide in 2015 due to poverty. Mutenga (2012), postulates that societies which are poverty stricken are the ones whose children have to quit school and start working at a tender age to supplement family incomes or get married (child marriages).

2.2.3 Social stratification theory

Education is an activity that has existed since early human life and has greatly affected a person's social stratification in a community group. Sarajek (1992), observe that education as an institution functions to determine the social environment especially in an open society. Siddhu (2011) mention that in society there are several institutional arrangements, this indicates inequality in society. Social sources mean anything that is deemed valuable by the community but limited in numbers so there is a need for sacrifice to get it. Social coating basically talks about mastering social resources. Social stratification occurs because there is no balance between rights and

obligations so that a sense of social responsibility diminishes resulting in ownership imbalances and prices. According to Garnier (2001), education systems with more comprehensive tend to generate more equal outcomes. Systems with more early selection for example Germany have more inequality and stratification. Systems with more choice and marketization have higher levels of inequality.

2.3 Education related policies and their influence on female learners' progression in education

In 1980, upon emancipation from the colonizers, Zimbabwe faced many challenges that needed attention from the government of the day (Chikuvadze, 2020). In addition, the ordinary citizens had their expectations from the government, one of which was education that would equip them with knowledge and skills to empower them, regardless of their gender. The Zimbabwean government endorsed, and consented to, for instance, the following international treaties (Dube, 2013):

- The Convention on Rights of the Child (Sections 29 and 30)
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Section 26)
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1991)
- The Beijing Declaration on the Platform for Action (1995)
- The 2004 Solemn Declaration on Gender and Equality in Africa
- The Dakar Platform for Action
- The Beijing Declaration
- The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development
- The Millennium Declaration

This led to better designing of strategies to fight against, for example, gender inequality in education as the basis for policy formulation (Chikuvadze, 2020). Therefore, it can be argued that these conventions supposedly brightened the expectations of disadvantaged groups, wishing to have a gender-neutral, and gender-sensitive approach to education, among other things (Matswetu & Bhana, 2018). It is in this context that this section will look at the influence of policies on rural female learners' progression in education.

According to the Education Act (1987) every child in Zimbabwe shall have a right to education. The wording of the clause was a means of addressing colonial imbalances in education to include Africans in the education stream. This clause however ignores the gender differences and the position of the girl child in that she is already disadvantaged in society. Maluwa-Banda, (2004) add on to say girls are often precluded from education when they fall pregnant and this policy is welcome development which increases access of education for girls. To note however couched in a policy document addressing disciplinary matters, therefore it is not specifically aimed at addressing gender disparity in education. The policy clarified that a student maybe punished, expelled or suspended for misconduct but an exception can be made in the case of pregnant girls depending on the circumstances of each individual case (Kadzamira & Ndalama 2005).

The constitution in section 56, provides a strong framework for the protection and promotion of the rights women and men, girls and boys in Zimbabwe (Mutenga, 2012). It recognizes the equality of all persons and goes further to explicitly outlaw discrimination on the groups of sex or gender. In addition, the Government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development supports the promotion of gender equality across all government programs using the National Gender Policy (Chikuvadze, 2020).

According to Shumba (2015), the national analysis done by the National Gender Policy 2004 recognized that gender equality was a key to the Millennium Development Goals and proposed to strengthen personnel at all levels to address gender issues. Matope (2012) added on to say an affirmative action strategy has been adopted which calls the promotion of more women into important and influential leadership positions. Some of the interventions adopted have not produced the desirable results as although teaching is viewed by some as a feminine occupation, men benefited more from the expansion in teacher training (Gordon 2013; Swainson 2004), Zimbabwe has for 28 years used the Lancaster House Constitution which document has an inadequate framework for the protection of human rights particularly women's rights (Kakore, 2015). Zimbabwe's Lancaster House Constitution is silent on the rights of women. In fact, all British tailored constitutions were silent on the rights of women. In the process of reforming the Constitution in Zimbabwe, the Constitution will have to answer the quest for the protection of fundamental human

rights (Mutenga, 2014). The new constitution should address which rights will be guaranteed in the future and which rights will the women in Zimbabwe have for equality and respect as equal citizens of the nation and as required under international law. Non-provision of women's rights in the 1979 Constitution prejudiced women's rights in the enjoyment of their rights in the areas of education (Kakore, 2015). Petrie (2001), postulates that girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys and face expulsion in the event of pregnancy.

The researchers (Abdullahi, Zainalaludin, Paim, 2013; De Jaeghere & Lee, 2011; Murphy-Graham, 2016) believes that through acquiring education, one is empowered economically because by the virtue of being educated one is able to apply for whatever job they want as long as their academic qualifications meet the criterion. This notion is cemented by a comment proffered in the ZimStat (2012) highlighted that education acquired after secondary level is vital in shaping one's career in life.

According to Mosha (2014), the government set good Affirmative Action legislation and policies which are aimed at incorporating the girl child at the same level with the boy child. The more school dropouts are females and checking on the records of pass rate, boys at higher education levels excel more than their female counter parts. In accounting for this claim, the researcher draws back to the socialization of children at household level in that the girl child is left to do all the dirty work at home whilst the boy child will be left to study (Petrie 2001). Furthermore Rutororo (2012) supports the notion by saying the educational system doesn't take into consideration the fact that when children start attending school they came with inequalities already shaped within them. In addition, Birsall et al., (2005), highlighted that the school curriculum should then as a result be structured in a way that these inequities and not in a way that perpetuates them hence this shows that there are more loopholes in the implementation of the Affirmative Action policies.

At an international level, Zimbabwe is a party to a number of regional and international conventions and treaties that support gender equality in particular the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and the optional protocol to the African Charter on the rights of women in Africa (Ballantine, 2010). Despite progressive laws and treaties in support of gender equality, the biggest challenge has been on the implementation of these formal rights and their translation into tangible gains for women and girls. While women and girls constitute 52% of the population, they still lag behind across key sectors in the country (Mutenga, 2012).

2.4 Female learners' socialization in a patriarchal society

The socialization process begins the day we are born and ends the day we die (Ballantine, 2010). Young girls learn their gender roles in part through socialization. Gender, notes Thorne (2005) is a highly visible part of social and individual identity. Social organizations and institutions can play a role in constructing gender inequality (Thorne, 2009). Thus, the organizations in which young girls spend their time, such as schools play a role in constructing their identity.

Female learners are not simply passive victims, but participate in their own identity formation by making selections out of the choices presented to them. Female learners “act, resist, rework and create” the roles they are assigned (Rumberger, 2013). For example, although female learners may have difficulty in imagining themselves in the unfamiliar role of in different spheres of the economy, they may themselves choose to reject an identity they see as socially isolated or unbalanced (Margolis & Fisher, 2002). According to UNICEF (2004) teachers highlighted how primary socialization led to female learners' subservience and male dominance both in the home and at school.

Female learners' socialization and home activities can be summarized around confinement to the kitchen, lack of freedom of expression and activities centered on serving other people (Birsdall et al., 2005). With male learners on the other hand being given freedom of expression, adventure, experimenting and viewed as future breadwinners. Thus, this acts as the basis of female learners' poor self-esteem and weak career aspirations, with male learners seeking more dominant positions in society and hence were better motivated to progress in education (Shumba, 2015).

Hence these socialization experiences influence what female and male learners, pick up about their roles and what they see as possible as they grow to parenthood.

Nayaka and Mpofu (2004) mention that it can be acknowledged that the knowledge taught within the educational system is not neutral; since it can at times reflect some masculine traditions about the world. Thus, in some instances social context for teaching-learning can send messages that most of the notable accomplishments in education in general and science in particular are attributable to males (Bowman, 2007). For example, the image of predominant figures in society are mostly of males, making it difficult for rural female learners to picture themselves in that role. Thus, female learners are presented with little in the way of role models in those highly regarded spheres of the economy. Gordon (2013) mention that there is a negative feedback loop between social and cultural pressures and rural female learners' self-perceptions in relation to their progression in education. If the rural female learners enrolled at the school under investigation are exposed to such situations can they be confident to progress in education (Bowman, 2007).

2.5 Challenges faced by female learners' progression in education

The issues interrogated mostly in this section include poverty, economic meltdown, unemployment, home-school distance, country lockdown, and sex role socialization, religious and cultural beliefs. Piromruen and Keoyote (2003), argues that the challenges faced by female learners in education which may led dropout are generally grouped into six namely demographic, family, socio-economic status and school related, behavioral and psychological. This proves that the issue of school dropout is not enshrined in one factor but many different factors.

Mzuza et al (2013) noted that school distance is an important determinant of school dropout for female. Juneja (2007) observes that if school distance is considered too far from home, young girls tend to drop out more due to for the vulnerability to sexual harassment. Ainsworth et al (2005) found that the likelihood of attending secondary school for girls decreases with the greater the distance compared to the nearer secondary schools. A large number of studies in African regions report that school distance can discourage girls from being educated for two major problems (Boyle et al., 2002). One of them is the length of time and energy needed to cover the distance

for children with empty stomachs. Another is parental anxiety about sexual safeguard of their daughters. Maluwa-Banda (2004) noted that school distance gives the motivation to girls to stay in school.

School level factors also play a role in increasing pressures to dropout such as teacher absenteeism, school location and poor quality educational provision (Alexander, 2008). The system of educational provision at the school level generates conditions that can ultimately have an impact on the likelihood of children dropping out from school. Petrie (2001), postulates that education facilities are linked to quality in terms of human resources and in-school resources. Availability of resources such as textbooks, desks and blackboards has been found to influence dropout (Molteno et al., 2000), as have various aspects of teaching and learning processes.

According to Fosters (2005), poverty is one of the factor affecting children in rural schools who had to walk long distance bare footed and hungry to school, which leads to school dropout. Stevens et al (2012), alluded that, poverty is associated with the high rates of academic failure and the higher occurrences of dropout. Shumba (2015), also propounds that, more than forty-seven thousands form four and six learners either dropped out school or failed to register for public examinations country wide in 2015 due to poverty. Colclough et al (2000) add that societies which are poverty stricken are the ones whose children have to quit school and start working at a tender age to supplement family incomes or get married (child marriages).

Furthermore poverty affects both the boy and girl child; however, there is evidence in most African countries that the first dollar is set for the boy child which causes the girl child to be severely disadvantaged (UNGEI, 2009). A study by Okumu (2015) based on girl education in Nairobi, reports that the girl child may drop out from school for a certain period of time and then join later after the brother has completed or when the parents are economically stable. This has caused the girl child opt for marriage and never to return to the education system. Empowering women can also be achieved through education. There is great concern that it difficult for women to be empowered with financial resources when they are not educated. Education is an important avenue whereby women can be emancipate from the vicious cycle of poverty (Mzuza et al., 2013).

According to Badza (2020) high rise here in Zimbabwe of teenage pregnancy has been reported since the start of lockdown. Since the lockdown started teachers has been raising the issue on how teenage pregnancy are becoming high daily. However, in Manicaland Province there was need to intensify guidance and counselling in schools while urging parents to give their girl children second chance (Mzuza et al., 2013). A lot of rural children did not have much activities due to poor network in most rural areas and also a lot of them cannot afford electrical gadgets (Miles 2000). Since the education policy was amended to allow pregnant girls to continue attending schools, encouraging education institutions especially secondary schools to accommodate these girls and create an environment which is conducive for their continued learning because in most cases, these girls are stigmatised (Badza, 2020).

Holcamp (2009), discovered that rural areas are well versed with cultural believes they consider girls' schooling as of no benefit they will leave their own family after getting married and their schooling will benefit the other family. Mansory (2007) also states that early marriage is the main cause for early school dropout of girls in Afghanistan. According to Molteno et al (2008), many studies have indicated that when girls reach puberty, parents consider it is time for them to be married and tend to arrange the marriage instead of continue schooling. In the same vein, Mutenga (2012), states that, the number of girls dropping out from school after completion of their primary education has reached alarming levels and there is need for the government to develop mechanisms that would effectively control this trend. Looking at this, there is a clear indication that girl dropouts due to factors like early unwanted pregnancies.

According to Mutengi (2012) cultural norms and beliefs constrain girls' education especially in many developing parts of the world. In these societies, traditional values and some religious beliefs constrain girls from making their own decisions and expressing their own opinions. Chege and Sifuna (2006) examined claim that many cultures favor education for boys more than girls. Kapakasa (1992) studied girls' persistence in school and found that initiation ceremonies (religious ceremony) have significant effect on girls' dropout rate when parents have more propensity to pay for the expenses of the ceremony than their daughters' education. Abena (1991); Atayi (2008) observe that in Africa parents were more concerned about the role for girls at home as in this role, girls do not need education since they are supposed to take care

of the children and prepare meals. Falkingham and Baschieri (2006) observed that in Tajikistan many girls attend only religious classes which provide relevant skills for future married life as skilled wives. Sawada and Lokshin (2009) found that purdah (ideal) or seclusion of women was a factor for girls' dropout. However, traditional values can be different from location to location and in this respect, UNESCO (2010) indicate that traditional values are stronger in rural areas in developing countries compared to urban areas.

2.6 Chapter summary

Chapter two underlined the theoretical base on which the study took reference. The topic provided for the researcher to explore the factors influencing female learners' progression in education in a selected rural secondary school and was used to set the stage for the development of tools to generate the required information to provide answers to the research questions. This chapter also looked at females' socialization in a patriarchal society, and how it influences their progression in education. The following chapter looks at the research methodology used in gathering the much needed information to provide answers to the formulated research questions.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was centred on identifying the gaps in the consulted literature that the current study intends to fill. Chapter three focused on the research methodology which was used when the data was collected. The focus will be on the research design (research paradigm and approach), sample and sampling procedure, data generation procedure, data presentation and analysis procedure, research integrity and chapter summary.

3.2 Research design

In this study research design refers to a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the trustworthiness of the findings (Burns & Grooves, 2003). This can be supported by Polit et al (2001), who postulated that also research design outlines the researcher's overall strategy for answering the research questions. It is in this context that the researcher proposes a research design comprised of the interpretivist research paradigm and qualitative approach.

3.2.1 Research paradigm

Weaver and Olson (2006) mention that research paradigm is a principal model that is based on beliefs and practices that regulate inquiry within a discipline by providing an outline, lenses and processes in which a research study is accomplished. The study adopted the interpretivist paradigm as the paradigm to study the factors leading to dropout among female students in secondary school. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) interpretivist paradigm believes that reality is multi-layered and complex and a single phenomenon can have multiple interpretations. The advantage of using interpretivist paradigm is that the responses are valid and close to the truth (Kothari, 2004). With the individual mattering they give a good reflection of how people are truly feeling often providing an accurate picture and measuring what the researcher set out to measure.

3.2.2 Research approach

In this study a research approach is regarded as a conceptual structure within, which an investigation is conducted (Leedy & Ormond, 2010). Moreover, a research approach serves to plan, structure and execute the research and to maximize the validity of its findings (Kothari, 2004). According to Creswell (2007) the research approach is an effective strategy to increase the validity of social research. The researcher used the qualitative approach in order to bring out and present the causes and the strategies that can be used to on reducing the challenges of school dropout among learners at Gambiza Secondary School. Maxwell (2003) defines qualitative approach as the activities of generating and analysing data, developing and modifying theory, elaborating or refocusing the research question and identifying and dealing with validity threats are usually going on more or less simultaneously each influencing all of the others. In addition, the researcher may need to reconsider or modify any design decision during the study in response to new developments or to changes in some other aspect of the design. A qualitative approach draws information from personal and social perspectives (Davies, 2000). According to Burns and Groove (2005), qualitative approach provides answers to who, where, what and how questions in other words it helps in answering the research questions the researcher opt for this approach as it offers first-hand information from the learners.

3.3 Methods

Karemba (2014) states that research methods are the tools that the researcher uses in data generation. Hence for this study the researcher will be chief data generation tool aided by document analysis and interviews.

3.3.1 Document analysis

Karemba (2014) defined document analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Maree (2005) also mention documents analysis means centering on all kinds of written materials, which can aid the researcher in finding trends, themes and patterns of an issue under investigation. In this study this method offers the researcher the opportunity to revisit the sources numerous times resulting in a better understanding of the contents.

3.3.2 Personal interview

In generating relevant data that the researcher later on analysed and interpreted to provide answers to the research questions in chapter one, personal interviews came in convenient for this study (Hatch 2002). The researcher adopted the semi-structured interviews leave it open to the participants to share their experiences and understanding in depth. According to Mack (2018) semi-structured interviews allows participants to express in their own way and pace. The individual interview is important because it allows the respondent to speak freely and potentially sparks more thoughts on the same idea of discussion, while maintaining more confidentiality than group methods. In this study the interview guide was centred on the following: policies that promote rural female learners' progression in education; sex role socialisation influence rural female learners' progression in education; challenges that rural female learners encounter in their progression in secondary education; and strategies can be implemented to overcome these challenges. Thus, through these interviews the researcher captured rural female learners' experiences pertaining their progression in education.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedure

A sample is a smaller group of members of a population selected to represent the population (Mack, 2018). Studies guided by the qualitative approach, tend to use non-probability techniques in selecting the participants. Thus, the researcher deliberately selects a small number of participants who will be used in data generation (Kothari, 2004). Sampling technique according to Maree (2005) is the process of studying the population by gathering information and analysis those data. In this study 25 female learners and 6 class teachers were purposively sampled to be the source of data need to provide answers the research questions in chapter one. Thus, in this study class teachers were included in the study with the view to triangulate the data generated from the rural female learners. In sampling these participants, the researcher assumed that they had experiences in the issue under investigation. Hence there was a lot the researcher could draw from their experiences in relation to providing possible answers to the issue under investigation (Kenton, 2019; Yin, 2003). According to Trevers, et al (2002) purposive sampling enables the study to gather a lot of information out of the data that they have collected. It also enabled the researcher to select a sample based on the purpose of the study and knowledge of a population.

3.5 Data generation procedure

On the data generation procedure the researcher obtained an introductory letter from Bindura University of Science Education, from the Faculty of Education. The introductory letter enables the researcher to seek permission to carry out the study on the selected school from the school. The researcher also sought for permission from the school where the data was collected and the school head granted their permission. The participants were selected purposively and the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. The researcher orally explained the requirements of the questionnaires and the purpose of carrying out the study to the respondents. Finally, the research questions were collected from the respondents by the researcher personally.

3.6 Data analysis procedure

Stevens (2021) defines data analysis as the process of collecting, modelling, and analysing raw data to extract meaningful insights that support decision-making. Creswell (2013) contend that data generation and data analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research. However, Schilling (2006) claimed that qualitative data analysis primary entails classifying things, persons and events and the properties which characterize them. Creswell (2014) further reported that such ethnographers seek to identify and describe patterns and themes from the perspective of the participant(s), then attempt to understand and explain these patterns and themes. Data analysis usually involves reducing accumulated data to a manageable size developing summaries, looking for patterns and applies statistical techniques (Stevens, 2021). More so, the themes were identified after going carefully through descriptive responses to each question in order to come up with broad themes. The data on each theme was presented in the form of short quotations from the participants followed by an analysis of the responses retrieved from the participants of the sample. Calzon (2021) mentioned that on data analysis there are several methods that can be used to process the generated data depending on the aim of the study. Hence, for this study the researcher, analysed the generated data a rigorous according to emerging themes (Stevens, 2021).

3.7 Research integrity

In this study research integrity was grounded on trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations that are discussed in detail below:

3.7.1 Trustworthiness of the study

According to Rule and John (2011), trustworthiness in a study is achieved by giving attention to the study's transferability, credibility, dependability and conformability. Thus, this study ensure trustworthiness of its findings through providing a multidimensional comprehension of the issues relating to the implementation of the policies which protect the girl child in secondary schools. In addition, the researcher triangulated document analysis, personal interviews and focus groups discussion, with the view to extract valuable information on the implementation of girl child policy guidelines at the selected school and to minimise the issue of bias. Thus, trustworthiness was rooted in considering whether or not the findings answer the sub-research questions and ultimately the main research questions through reflecting on the credibility of the original data shared by the participants. For this reason, trustworthiness was assumed to be achieved through a thorough triangulation of narrations and interpretations of data from multiple sources of evidence (Stake, 2005). In this setting, triangulation emphasises the need to trim down the influence of bias in data analysis and elucidation (Gunawan, 2015). This brought to light convergence within data, which makes it possible to robustly look at a study from perspectives centred on the integrity of the findings (Yin, 2006).

3.7.2 Ethical considerations

The participants were informed not to write their names on the questionnaires to secure the anonymity of the participants. The respondents were also assured of the confidentiality of their responses and that their responses were going to be used by the researcher to complete the study. They were also given permission to withdraw from the study whenever they feel like, they were free.

3.8 Chapter summary

The chapter focuses on methodology that was centred on the following: research paradigm, research approach, methods, sampling procedure, data generation procedure, data analysis procedure, research integrity and chapter summary. In the next chapter generated data will be presented, analysed and interpreted according to the identified themes.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the strategy for data generation, presentation and analysis. With the current chapter focusing on the actual data presentation, analysis and discussion of the data generated through interviews and focus group discussions. The findings are presented descriptively according to the emerging themes.

4.2 Characteristics of the participants

Thus, analysis for the generated data was done through a thematic approach where data was grouped according to the sub-questions. Momentous comprehensions emerged from the analysis of the data generated over and done with diverse methods. This section centres on the demographic characteristics of the participants namely: rural female learners and class teachers.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the rural female learners (n=25)

Sex	Females	25
	Males	0
Age Range (Years)	13 – 15	4
	16 – 18	11
	Above 18	10
Level of Education	Form 3	10
	Form 4	15

Firstly it was noted that the purposively selected 25 participants were all female learners with ages ranging from 13 - 18 years, and doing Ordinary Level at the selected school. Further it was noted that these participants were enrolled in according with the demands of the Education Act (Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and UNICEF, 2000). Through an analysis of the enrolment records the researcher noted that the participants were from different cultural backgrounds i.e. religious, traditional, amongst other. Therefore acted as fruitful basis for the exploration of the issue under investigation, since it enabled the researcher to capture the participants'

experience from different perspectives. This enabled the researcher through the analysis of the generated data to have a clear understanding of the factors influencing rural learners' progression in education from the female learners' perspective. With the view to triangulate the data generated from the key informants (female learners), 5 class teachers were purposively included in this study. This was based on the reason that they are the ones who deal with learners directly when it comes to challenges they encounter in their day-to-day interaction at school.

Table 4.2: Demographic characteristics of selected class teachers (n=6)

Sex	Females	3
	Males	3
Professional Qualification(s)	Certificate in Education	1
	Diploma in Education	2
	Degree in Education	3
Teaching Experience (Years)	3 – 8	2
	9 – 14	2
	15 – 20	1
	21 – 25	1
	Above 25	0

A close look at the staff records of the selected teachers it the researcher noted that their professional qualifications ranged from certificate in education up to degree in education. In addition, their teaching experience ranges from 3 - 25 years. However, amongst the selected class teachers none of them had a guidance and counselling qualification. This concurs with Chidarikire, et al (2021) who highlighted that 'teacher-counsellors' followed a paraprofessional model as most of them were neither 'qualified counsellors' nor were they registered with any professional council to do with psycho-social support or counselling. The fact that most of these selected class

teachers had more years of teaching experiences ranging from 3 - 25 years; this made the researcher to assume that they are a credible and dependable source of data for the issue under discussion.

4.3 Policies that promote female learners' progression in education

In this section data generated from the rural female learners and class teachers is presented, analyzed and interpreted with the view to provide an answer to research question 1 in chapter one. In line with the theme derive from the question, one of the participants exclaimed the following:

At our school I have never come across a document which guides our stay as girls
(Focus Group Discussion Participate 2)

In support one participant in an interview revealed that:

Since I have transferred to this school we have never conducted an assembly were the school head will address policies which protect us for progression in education. Like what we did on our previous school where every twice a week an assembly will be conducted and learners will be addressed on issues which affect the progression of learners in education. But since I came here none of this has never happened
(Interviewee 16)

In addition the following was also said by the class teacher:

At our school policy guideline from national, provincial and district level are kept in the head's office making it difficult for us as class teachers to have access to them
(Class teacher A)

From the above citation the researcher noted that the participants felt that they is more work to address about policies which protect the progression of female learners at school. And move away from thinking that learners know it. Laws and policies are drafted to be in favor of female learners' progression in education. The issue of education and training of women is also one of the key aspects of the national gender policy of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has introduced a quota system in the education sector to cater for women Nziramasanga Commission (1999). Thus, females with lower/less points were to be in tertiary education as way of bridging the existing gender disparities mostly in science related programmes in tertiary education (Chikuvadze & Matswetu, 2013). According to Mendez and Crawford (2002); Kerr, Vuyk and Rea (2012) women naturally do not have a mental capacity equal to men, who are presumed to having a fluid and fast motor processing cognition process. As a way of propelling female learners in different specialties, the Government of Zimbabwe

amendment the Education Act to include prohibiting school from banning pregnant learners from attending the teaching-learning activities school (Rodriguez 2020).

In addition from the data analysis in this study the government has introduced guiding and counseling in almost all the schools in Gweru District, just like what they did in most of the schools in Zimbabwe. More on, the government has also introduces some policies whereby the teachers are to attend workshop targeting female learners in schools. Also, the government of Zimbabwe has protested against gender inequality. Although the government tried to implement all these measure still the challenges remains. Some learners are still having challenges. The findings concurs with Zengeya (2014) who highlighted that the gendered related policies are crafted with the aim to reduce the number of rural female learners dropping out of school.

4.2 Sex role socialisation and its influence rural female learners' progression in education

The researcher in this section centres the analysis and discussion on the sex role socialisation and its influence on rural female learners' progression in education, with the view to provide answers to research question 2 in chapter 1. First and foremost, it is crucial to acknowledge that in Zimbabwean rural communities, interactions with regard to females and males are based on patriarchal expectations (Aluko, Adewusi & Kalejaiye, 2017), which can influence female learners' progression in education. In this context, this section investigates the influence of sex role socialisation on female learners' progression in education at the secondary under investigation. In one of the interviews conducted, a participant reported that:

I shouldn't lie about the sex role socialization that influence me and even other girls in this community to stop progressing in education. As for me I have a lot of house duties before I go to school since I am the only girl in the family and my mother is out for the country. I am the one who is supposed to cook, clean the house, wash clothes, and other stuff. If I ask for help my two brothers we say its girls' duty to do those work (Interviewee 12)

Similarly, another interviewee shared the following:

It is influencing me because both of my parents passed away so I am staying with my grandmother (my father's mother) so we are many grandmother's grandson and granddaughter. Our grandmother still have that mentality of thinking that to educate a girl child is wasting a lot of money. She tend to favour men over us to the extent that she first buy books, uniforms and school materials for them. On my part again she will say "mwana wemukwasha haasi wepano" (.....). Again at school most boys are doing well obtaining good results so I value myself less low than men (Interviewee 3)

From the findings, the researcher noted the inflexibility of family and others around female learners at school, embedded in an environment where roles and career paths are ascribed in line with one's sex, influenced the participants' decision making in terms of progression in education. Typically feminine roles deter rural female learners from setting aside enough time to study, as Ordinary Level demand intense studying. Through the female learners' participation in these gendered roles, she learns to accept as natural the sexist oppression out of which the values acquired are used to mirror her in the context of aspirations and expectations from the society. Thus, one of the participants during the focus group discussion highlighted that:

The behavioural norm of the parents at home is the main cause that divides gender roles between males and females in schools, as well as society takes cleaning as a labour division that is associated with women. The girls have tried to live up to societal demands by colluding with their subordination (Focus Group Discussion Participant 5)

It was further revealed that:

Women should do household chores, and care for the family and children as a culture in other nations. This limits some of us from progression in education because they is no time for studying (Interviewee 21)

This corroborates contentions by Andersen and Taylor (2006), that in a patriarchal society, parents are seen as being interruptive of female learners' intense linkage with Ordinary Level. This limits the extent to which their aptitude to progress in Ordinary Level is developed, ultimately culminating in the exploitation of their dream of becoming valuable human capital who promotes the scientific and technological revolution (Kurebwa, 2014). Against this background, liberal feminists argue that the norms acquired through the socialisation process propagate females' inequality (Andersen & Taylor, 2006) in their progression in Education. Along the same line, radical feminists insist that the existing hierarchical societal interactions have propelled the dominance of males (Khattab, 2015) in spheres such as Ordinary Level, where rural females are reflected as being low achievers.

4.3 Challenges encountered by rural female learners in their progression in education

In this section, findings are anticipated to indicate challenges encountered by rural female learners in their progression in education. Firstly the researcher looked at how the female learners' progression in education is influenced by their family background. Thus, the researcher focuses on how family contributes to stereotypes and socialises girls into specific roles, which in one way or the other hinder or enable their progression in education. In some circumstances, the situation within the family acts as an obstacle for the female learners' progression in education. In this context one participant during a face-to-face interview highlighted that:

At home, most of the times I discuss my concerns with either my mother or elder sister who is married and stays close by. Our father spends of his time with the boys talking about family history, with limited attention to my concerns (Interviewee 25)

One participant gave this input:

I lost my father when I was in Form 1, so my mother has been the one running around selling tomatoes and other things in order to raise my school fees. I have a brother who is in university so my mother is focusing the limited resources on him, such that at times am chased away from school due to non-payment of fees (Focus Group Participant 15)

Social roles indeed are at the core of how societal hierarchies sustain particular roles in society. Females and males are brought up with different powers and perceived abilities (Mapfumo, et al., 2002). Therefore, long-established beliefs comprehensively influence their societal viewpoints, which alter how adolescents comprehend what is normally expected from them by society. This is most likely to have a negative influence on girls' aspirations in life in general and career path in particular. In addition, Chinyoka and Naidu (2013) highlighted that the economic crisis in Zimbabwe has not spared the school children as there are a number of them failing to pay their school obligations. Therefore, this results in rural female learners dropping out school (World Bank, 2003).

It was further noted that despite female learners receiving advice on whether or not to progress in education from their peers, the geographical location of the school in this study was also considered to be a key factor in their decision making. One participant during the focus discussion explained:

When I was doing my primary education the school was very close to village. However, the nearest secondary school is almost 10 - 12 kilometres away, so walking to and from or cycling would have been a challenge. Unlike for boys from our village, who can cycle to and from school daily (...) I find it difficult to attend school daily (Focus Group Discussion Participant 11)

In addition to the above issue, another participant revealed:

At home, after supper, mostly our grandmother tells us folk stories discourages us from walking long distances for fear of being stolen by men for ritual purposes (Interviewee 4)

From the above response, the researcher noted that ecological cues prompted a social identity threat to female learners' progression in education. This was as a result of the geographical location of the school, which made it difficult for the participant to progress in education (Ndirika & Agommouh, 2017). From echoed sentiments, the researcher noted that rural female learners continue to be socialised along the traditional expectations as seen in the difference in nurturing between girls and boys. From the above quotations, it can be assumed that the geographical setting may have an adverse influence on rural female learners' progression in education (Nyoni, Nyoni & Bonga, 2017).

Female learners' progression and poor academic performance in education in specific with the walking distance which the learners travel to reach their school. For example Engelbrecht et al (2016) in a study which investigated the location of schools, revealed that distance travelled by learners from home to school correlated positively with the academic performance and progression of female learners. The researcher elaborates further that most of learners were affected by the distance which made them use most of their time on traveling than learning so it made female learners loss hope in progression in education.

4.4 Strategies that can be implemented to overcome the encountered challenges

Basing on the finding from the participants this section provides answers to the demands of research question 4 in chapter 1. The responses of the participants on the strategies that can be implemented were presented on as follows:

As a school we should empower learners' parents to avoid stereotyping the girl child. There should motivate female learners to progress in education for a better economic. So the most important strategies is to have at least two times meeting with parents every school term (Class Teacher C)

In addition to the above issue, another participants revealed

Both parents and the teachers must help us through educating us with knowing our rights as female learners. Guiding and counseling sessions must be conducted in schools giving guidance to the learners. Additionally assistance challenges that we as female learners are facing. Also legal action should be taken in order to reduce the issue of falling to progress in education (Focus Group Discussion Participant 10)

From the above response, the researcher noted that some parents especially those in rural areas do not take schooling seriously particularly those from the local community, hence some of the female learners turn to lack motivation from their own parents. Some rural female learners do not even know the importance of education and this can be due to the fact that the parents themselves do not know the importance of educating their children. This was revealed by one participant in an interview:

A lot of female learners stopped school because they parents were more concerned about the role for girls at home as in this role, girls do not need education since they are supposed to take care of the children and prepare meals (Interviewee 18)

At the end, some female learners end up falling to progression in education. This finding goes hand in hand with the finding of Mwangi (2010) who indicates that combination of backward cultural practices continued to deny the girl-child her right to education. One of class teacher as a remedy to the highlighted challenge in rural learners' progression education brought forward the strategy that:

The community do not value female learners' education. They view girls' education as something that does not continue long because they have to get married and will not contribute back to her family compared to education of the boy child which perceived as a contribution and development to the family. The only work female can do is to, be in the kitchen, to get married, to give birth and nothing else. These traditions parents believed have lowered the self-esteem of female learners. They will miss emotional support from the parents which finally resulted in her dropping out. This is the major challenge why support is not rendered to girls' education (Class Teacher D)

This concurs with Mwamwenda (2010) who confirmed a positive relationship of parental education with parental encouragement. It's further revealed that parental encouragement influenced cognitive development of their children. Whereas, Chenge et al (2017) found that parental encouragement significantly related with achievement motivation of the rural female learners.

4.5 Chapter summary

Chapter four presented, analyzed and interpreted data generated through document analysis and personal interviews. In addition chapter the researcher attempted to provide answers to the research questions raised in chapter 1. In the next chapter will provide the summary of the study, general conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter data was presented, analysed and interpreted. With this current chapter focusing on the following: summary of the project, conclusion, recommendations, areas for further study and chapter summary.

5.2 Summary of the project

In chapter 1, the researcher looked at the problem and its context where the focus was on the background of the study, statement of the problem, the research questions, and research objectives, assumption of the study and significance of the study, limitations and delimitations as well as definition of different term. With chapter 2 outlining the theoretical framework through which the gaps in the consult literature were interrogate. Chapter 3 highlighted the strategy for data generation, presentation, analysis and interpretation. Furthermore, on chapter 4, the researcher looked at the data presentation, data analysis and discussion. The finding of the research were presented and analyzed basing on the research questions. This chapter came up with the following major findings:

- Though, there are policies (constitution, National Gender Policy, Education Act among others), advocating for equal participation of learners (males and females) in education at the school under investigation learners have limited access to these documents.
- The way female learners are socialized has got an influence in their behavior at school. Ultimately this plays a critical roles to at female learners' progress or not.
- Rural female learners in their progression in education encounter challenges such as stereotyping, lack of role models (motivation), work load at home, home to school distance, etc.
- The participants proposed the following strategies in order to overcome the encountered challenges: empower rural female learners through workshops of gender equality and equity.

5.3 Conclusion

From the generated, analyzed data and interpreted data, the researcher reached the conclusion that the continued dropping out of education by rural female learners was due to multiple factors such as social, economic and among others. This is so despite the existence of policies targeting the protection, and empowerment of female learners in general and rural female learners in particular.

5.4 Recommendations

The researcher proposes the following recommendations to improve female learner participation in the education:

- Parents or guardians should work towards changing their mind-sets pertaining to the promotion of the rural female learners' progression in education.
- Former female learners (Gambiza Secondary School) should be invited to the school such that they can share their experiences.
- Interested stakeholders to conduct workshop targeting disadvantaged female rural learners with the view to empower them as well as transforming their mindset.

5.5 Areas for further research

As the study was only limited to one school in Gweru District, it will be necessary to carry a wider study on the district or province as a whole. This will enable the stakeholders to have a clear picture of the situation at bigger magnitude.

5.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the previous chapters were summarized, conclusion was articulated, recommendations made and area for study was identified.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR FEMALE LEARNERS

Introduction: Welcome and thank you for coming forward to take part in this discussion. You have been requested to play a part as your point of view is important. This discussion is designed to gain insight into your current thoughts and feelings about your experiences as female learners progressing in education at this particular school.

Ground rules

- Only one participant speaks at a time (there may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished)
- There are no wrong or right answers
- You do not have to speak in any particular order
- When you do have something to say, please indicate by lifting your hand slightly
- You do not have to agree with the views of other participants in the group
- OK, let's begin

Introductory Question

I will give you couple of minutes to think about factors influencing female learners to drop out of school before completing they course of study.

Guiding Questions

1. What policies are in place to protect learners' progression in education?
2. How does sex role socialisation influence rural female learners' progression in education?
3. What challenges do rural female learners encounter in their progression in secondary education?
4. What strategies can be implemented to overcome these challenges?

Concluding question

Of all the issues we have discussed here, what would you say are the most important ones?

Conclusion

- Thank you for taking part. This has been a very fruitful conversation
- Your sentiments will be an appreciated in this study
- We wish once again to let you know that any remarks featuring in this study will remain anonymous

APPENDIX 2: PERSONAL INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FEMALE LEARNERS

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. This study focuses particularly on factors influencing female learners' progression in education, we believe you can make a significant contribution with regard to gaining insight into the issue under investigation. I am going to ask some questions; which you are free to elaborate in ways you consider fit. In case you do not feel like answering the question, you are at liberty to say so. I would like to let you know from the start that your personal and school details will not be included in the final report.

1. What do you think about living school before completing your final course of study?
2. How do your progression in education?
3. What do you like most in school environment?
4. What do you dislike about school environment?
5. What factors are causing you to consider leaving school?
6. What are the main problems?
7. How is the relationship with your teachers in relation to progression in education?
8. How is the relationship with your parents in to progression in education?
9. How does sex role socialisation influence rural female learners' progression in education?
10. Thank you for your participation in this interview

APPENDIX 3: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CLASS TEACHER

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. This study focuses particularly on factors influencing female learners' progression in education, I believe you can make a significant contribution with regard to gaining insight into the issue under investigation. I am going to ask you some questions which you are free to elaborate in ways you consider fit. In case you do not feel like answering the question, you are at liberty to say so. I would like to let you know from the start that your personal and school details will not be included in the final report.

1. Briefly tell me something about yourself (with specific reference to professional qualifications, teaching experience in general).
2. How do you describe your relationship with female learners?
3. Are there any policies that promote the retention of female learners? (Highlight them)
4. What are the some of the reasons that force female learners out of school?
5. What challenges does the school (class teacher) encounter when dealing with issues to do with female learners' progression in education?
6. What strategies did you employ to try to prevent them from dropping out?
7. Thank you for participating in this interview