

**FACTORS INFLUENCING DROPOUT IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
KABWE DISTRICT, ZAMBIA**

BY

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

2017

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA IN
COLLABORATION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COUNSELLING**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA/ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

LUSAKA

2017

DECLARATION

I Isaac Kaluba Chisulo declare that although I may have conversed with others in preparing this dissertation and drawn upon a range of sources cited in it, it is exclusively my own innovative work and has not been submitted to any other university for a similar or any other degree award.

Signature of Student.....Date.....

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is first and foremost dedicated to the Almighty God. Secondly, I dedicate it to my beloved wife Lydia Mutale Chisulo, my own daughters Taonga Chisulo and Patience Chisulo, my brothers, sisters and entire family for the support and encouragement during the course of study. I also dedicate it to my late son, late parents and sister.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Isaac Kaluba Chisulo is approved as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Science in Counseling by the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

Signed: Date.....

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Signed: Date.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my very sincere gratitude to Dr. Daniel Ndhlovu my supervisor for his invaluable guidance, assistance and encouragement in the putting together of this dissertation. I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Joseph Mwape Mandyata my course Coordinator and all the University of Zambia-IDE lecturers who gave me a clearer insight during the study of my course like Dr. Rose Chikopela, Mrs Gondwe G.C and Mrs Ntabo M.H; In the same vein I wish to recognize the input of lecturers from Zimbabwe Open University who provided study materials which has enriched my scholarly experience. My other thanks go to the Provincial Education Officer-Central Province Mrs Jennipher Chishimba Banda, Mr F. Musankula, Mr Sikazunda Evaristo, Mr Mukayi Elias, Mrs Mwewa M.M.M for their insight advice; Mrs Faith Namonje Mutongo, Mrs Mutale C. and Mrs Mazila J.H for the material and moral support; the IDE staff are also recognized and Mr Lata Cephas for helping in data collection, Ms Florence M Lubeya for proof reading the work and finally indeed all the participants who provided me with invaluable information which enabled me to put this work together.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the causes of learner school dropouts in selected secondary schools in Kabwe. It was noticed that despite the effort of the government of Zambia putting up drastic measures to mitigate the issue of drop out, the learner have continued dropping out. In order to address the issue, the study was guided by the following specific objectives: to explore causes of dropping out of school by learners; to determine the measures of free primary education, provision of educational materials and infrastructure development on school dropout.

The study used a descriptive survey research design in which qualitative method of information collecting was used. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers while focus group discussions were used on learners from the three schools. Interview guide was used to collect data from parents and the head teachers. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis while statistical data was analysed using Excel.

The study revealed that the following findings in selected secondary school of Kabwe district as leading causes of school dropout; financial challenges, teenage pregnancies, broken homes, lack of accommodation for those who came from far places, lack of role models in families, inadequate teaching and learning materials, poor school infrastructure, peer pressure, drug abuse, sickness, responsibility to look after relatives suffering from terminal diseases such as HIV and AIDS, in adequate school and parental guidance and counselling, loss of parents and lack of exposure to early education.

With the information generated on the causes of school dropout, signs skewed by learners about to dropout and the measures to mitigate the issue of dropout in urban area of Kabwe district, the guidance and counselling is schools will be able to design guidance programmes with interventions which will be able to address the needs of learners, schools, community and the nation at large.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BESSIP	Basic Education Sub-sector
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Education Access, Transitions and Equity
EFA	Education for All
FBE	Free Basic Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDE	Institute of Distance Learning
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOGE	Ministry of General Education
UNZA	University of Zambia
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USA	United States of America
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, study questions, study site, limitation of the study, definitions of the terms used in the study, theoretical framework, organisation of the study and summary of the chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is regarded as one of the keys to success and development of individuals as well as nations. This implies that children need to be educated for them to live a better life in future. However, in developing countries, there are many current existing problems experienced in the world of education for example, lack of education necessities mainly, inadequate of infrastructures like school blocks, inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of motivation by teachers, school dropout and many more.

Amongst many challenges that education was facing was school dropout which was major focus of this study. The researcher was committed to finding out the factors that lead to drop out by learners around urban areas despite availability of both primary and secondary schools within their locality. Around urban parts of the province, the school dropout still exist though the government of Zambia introduced the free primary school education in 2001 as one of the measures to deal with the issue of dropout. School dropout has been one of the biggest problems that the education system in Zambia and other sub-Sahara African countries like Malawi, Kenya and South Africa are facing.

In Zambia, the problem is almost in every district and it was against this background that the researcher attempted to find out the causative factors in order to fight against it squarely, it also looked at the measures of free education, provisional of educational materials and infrastructure on learners dropping out of school.

School dropout is a highly visible sign of a society that had failed to prepare its youth for successful transition into adulthood. Large numbers of dropouts weaken the economy because they were unprepared to work and they place a burden on unemployment and welfare services, as well as the criminal justice system. Dropouts run the risks of becoming drains on society rather than productive. Dropping out also means higher mortality rates, higher suicide rates, and higher rates of admission to mental health programmes in hospitals. Recently it had been estimated that there were over half a million children - approximately 5 percent of school-age children - who were not attending school in the Southern part of Africa (Modisaotsile, 2012).

This was a critical issue given that the republic of Zambia was committed to providing equal and appropriate Education for All. Policy analysts and politicians had most often attributed to the numbers of children who were out of school to an undersupply of schools and classrooms, particularly in the urban districts.

While school dropouts constitute only a sub-set of those who were out of school, the problem of dropout was recognized to be an issue which should not be oversimplified nor disengaged from its social context. Previous research by Gordon et al, as cited in Riddell (2003) had shown that, in Africa specifically, economic factors related to poverty and the need to earn, traditional family role expectations, and

problems related to the perceived irrelevance of the school curriculum, were few of the factors that had been found to be related to dropout.

This study was therefore an attempt to make a detailed exploration of the factors influencing school dropout in the selected schools of Kabwe district

1. 2 Statement of the Problem

A number of initiatives have been introduced by the government to mitigate the problem of school drop as introduction of free primary education, provision of free educational materials and embarking on infrastructure development. Despite the effort by the government of Zambia initiating free primary education, providing educational materials and embarking on infrastructure development, there were still learners dropping out of school (Central Province Educational Automated Statistical System Tool Kit, 2013, 2014 and 2015). Why were there drop outs in selected schools of Kabwe district?

1. 3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the causes of learner dropout in selected secondary schools of Kabwe district.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following two objectives:

- i. To explore causes of dropping out of school by learners.
- ii. To determine how the measures of free primary education, provision of educational materials and infrastructure development had mitigated on school dropout issue.

1.5 Questions of the Study

The study was guided by the following questions;

- i. What were the causes leading to school dropouts?
- ii. How relevant was free primary education, provision of educational materials and infrastructural development to the retention of learners.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The rationale of the study was aimed at investigating the causes of school dropout in the selected schools in Kabwe district. It was anticipated that this study would generate data which the policy makers and implementers in the Ministry of General Education at all levels would use to address the problem of school dropout. Society and learners would also benefit as staying in school had the potential to improve their lives and that of the community as they would be equipped with skills for self-sustenance and service to the community.

1.7 Study Site

The study was confined to the three schools in Kabwe district of Central province namely Broadway, Mine and Mukobeko Secondary Schools. These schools were chosen because they had high dropouts in the district. It was rain season of the year and towards the close of the term and also some schools had already engaged in the end of term tests. Therefore finding them in one place at a particular time was not easy. Hence, the research is limiting the areas of study to three urban schools.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The small size of the sample would limit the representation of the research findings, as it only focused on a small part of the dropout population, namely learners from an urban area.

1.9 Definitions of Terms used in the Study

There was a lack of a common, accepted definition of a dropout. However, there had been several attempts to identify and define major types of dropouts:

School dropout- In this study refers to a child who was once enrolled in school but has since left school for various reasons other than completion.

Pushouts - undesirable individuals the schools actively try to force out of school;

Disaffiliated - learners who neither bond to school nor to people in it and who did not want to continue to be in contact with the school;

Educational mortalities meaning those who were incapable of completing the programme before they age out of it usually slow learners or those in special education;

Capable dropouts - individuals who possess the skills for graduation but who were not socialized to school demands or to the value of a diploma; and

School experiences - In this study, the term school experiences shall refer to the time that the children spent in school and what happened to them specifically in relation to what led up to their dropping out.

Guardian - will mean all parents with children learning at schools under study.

1.10 Theoretical Framework.

This study was guided by Human Needs theory by Abraham Maslow and Social Learning theory by Levy Vygotsky. According to Maslow's theory of Human Needs and his concept of self-actualization, significant for learners is the need for achievement. Maslow (1964) identifies deficiency and growth needs as crucial for learners to stay in school. Deficiency needs encompass physical essentials such as food, clothing, and materials while growth needs take prominence once the deficiency needs have been satisfied.

However, Vygotsky in his theory of Social Learning considers child development system aspect as crucial. His argument is that for the child to develop more systematic, logical and rational concepts there is need to have dialogue with skilled helper. The theory expounds that culture, significant others and language play key roles in a child's cognitive development (Crawford, 1996). Therefore, this suggests that the behaviour and attitude of learners are in a way influenced by the environment around them.

These theories suggest that a person is not an island and as such cannot be dealt with as in isolation. Preconditions that necessitate class retention in schools for learners are very important and these two theories are addressing some of them. A variety of social or learned sources of motivation and the need for affiliation and achievement are particularly significant for mitigation of learners' school dropouts as they provide the impetus to be focused. The needs of the learners have to be met physically and psychologically for them to stay in school. The people at home, parents, teachers, fellow learners and community at large have role in mitigating the issue of school dropout as they offer a platform through interactions informs the thinking and subsequently the behaviour. The theories were very helpful to this

study as they created the basis for the enabling conducive environment at both home and school which could prevent learners from dropping out.

1.11 Organisation of the Study

Chapter one, presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and limitations of the study, theoretical framework and definitions of terms used in the dissertation.

Chapter two focuses on review of literature. This chapter provides a review of related literature to the problem under study that was: ‘factors contributing to learners dropping out of school in selected schools of Kabwe district. It includes identification of knowledge gap in the reviewed literature which this study sought to fill.

Chapter three provides a comprehensive look into the research methodology used in the dissertation: which include research design; target population; sample size; sampling procedure; research instruments; data collection; data analysis.

Chapter four presents the research findings of the study. All the research questions have been addressed in this chapter. Thereby filling up the knowledge gaps identified in chapter two

Chapter Five covers the discussion of the findings. In this chapter, the findings are discussed under the headings drawn from the objectives of the research.

Chapter Six concludes the study and also makes recommendations based on the major findings of the study.

1.12 Summary

The chapter presented an introduction to the study, factors influencing learners dropping out of school in selected secondary schools of Kabwe district. The major features included the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and delimitation of the study, limitations to the study, theoretical framework and the definitions of terms. The chapter which follows focuses on literature review highlighting the relevant literature to the problem under discussion.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview.

This chapter reviews the related literature on how other researchers found out and recommended measures to be done in order to address the issue. This research was motivated to look at what had not been done in Kabwe district to address the issue of school dropout. In order to be systematic the chapter would be presented into sections. The first section would present background to dropping out of school, global situation of school dropout, school dropout situation in Africa, school dropout situation in Zambia.

2.1 Background to Drop out of school

Education brings many benefits to both individuals and societies. Education was viewed as being so fundamental to the development of individuals and as such, the right to primary education was legally guaranteed in most countries of the world (UNESCO, 2005). According to Article 28 of the International Human Right Convention, governments have the responsibility of making primary education compulsory and available for free to all but in Zambia primary education was free but not compulsory. Education is recognised as crucial not only to human development and to the eradication of poverty but also to enable all people to live in dignity (Wils et al., 2006). The Education for All (EFA) movement and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have resulted in more attention being paid to issues of both participation and completion in education. Universal primary education was goal number two of both EFA reaffirmed in Dakar, 2000 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and was adopted by UN Member States in 2000 (UNESCO, 2005).

Following the ascension of the New Deal government of Dr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa in 2001, Zambia introduced Free Primary education for all in order to deal with the problem of dropout, since the government thought that many learners dropped out of school due to lack of school fees (MoE, 2002). In 2000, there were approximately 5,300 basic schools in Zambia; in 2014 this number has increased to more than 8,783 basic schools according to the 2014 Education Statistical bulletin. Similarly, the school population had, suddenly rose to the current state. In order to staff the schools, the government of the republic of Zambia recruited about 5000 teacher every year as a way of reducing teacher-pupil ratio and increasing the contact hours.

However, the right to Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education for All (EFA) had been under serious threat due to continued high numbers of school dropouts, making school retention hard to maintain over the past several years (UNESCO, 2005, 2012; Wils et al 2006).

2.2 Global Situation of School Dropout

UNESCO (2012) Global Report on education stated that there was an urgent need to address the high numbers of children leaving school before completing primary education. The findings by UNESCO (2011) on the global picture towards attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) indicated that about 31.2 million primary learners in 2010 dropped out of school globally and may never return. The findings of UNESCO (2006) study on global gains made towards attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) indicated that many countries have relatively high initial enrolment figures but poor primary school completion rates. This was due to continued dropping out of school making attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) difficult in several countries of the world like Bangladesh,

Pakistan, Bolivia to name a few. Completion rates provide a much stronger test of UPE than enrolment rate alone.

Lloyd , Mete and Grant, (2009) studied in rural Pakistan on primary completion rates found that though Pakistan had a national enrolment of 83% its completion rate was only 48% as a result of high dropout rate. Cameron (2005) conducted studies on dropout rates in the United States of America (USA) and Canada. He found that USA national dropout rate in 2011 stood at 25% with some places like Mississippi having a dropout rate of as high as 38%. On the contrary, in Canada dropout rate has declined from 1990-1991 (16.6%) to 2011-2012 (7.8%). steadily since the academic year 1990- 1991, reaching a low of 7.8% in 2011-2012. Dropout rates for girls were consistently lower than for boys. The decline in dropout rate in Canada was most evident in the Atlantic Provinces where dropout rates fell by more than 50% (Cameron, 2005).

Although studies had been conducted on learners' reasons for staying in school, the study by Alexander (2008) in the United Kingdom on reasons why learners remain in school found the following list of school interventions that had been developed based on a synthesis of information from a variety of studies: Interaction with and the involvement of committed, concerned educators and other adults, Development of perseverance and optimism, improved attitude towards school and increased motivation to obtain a certificate, Positive, respectful relationships between staff and learners, Satisfaction with the learning experience (e.g., social climate, instructional climate, school course offerings, and school rules), Relevance of curriculum and Fair discipline policies. It was the reason why the researcher wants to find out that could it be the same causes that were leading to school dropout.

2.3 School Dropout Situation in Africa

Policies to improve school progression and reduce the numbers of children dropping out of school were critical if UPE was to be achieved. In Africa evidence indicate that children were starting primary school in greater numbers than ever before but dropout rates were significant in many countries. For, example, the study by Sabates et al (2010), on primary school completion rates indicated low primary school completion rate in 2005 for countries like Benin and Democratic Republic of Congo, due to high dropout rate. As a result of substantial rates of drop out and non-completion of primary school, many children are leaving school without acquiring the most needed basic skills. The same study by Sabates et al. (2010), found that failure to complete a basic cycle of primary school not only limits future opportunities for children but also represents a significant drain on the limited resources that countries have for the provision of primary education. They cited the World Bank (2007) report on the Government of Malawi for example, which allocated 4.2 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) towards public educational expenditure in 2007, which represented around 195 million dollars. Of this, 55 percent was allocated towards primary school. With a primary school dropout rate of 65 percent in 2007, it was estimated that children, who fail to complete primary school, took up nearly half a million-school places. In monetary terms, this broadly represented an annual expenditure of 60 million dollars, 1.3 percent of GDP in 2007, on the education of children who probably left schooling without any basic skills. A study by Hadley (2010) on primary school dropout rates of Sub-Saharan Africa region found that the region had the highest dropout rate, which rose from 40% to 42% between 1999 and 2009. This meant that more than two in five children who start school might not reach the last grade of primary education. Dropout rates were highest in Chad (72%), Uganda (68%) and Angola (68%), where more than two out of three children starting primary school were expected to

leave before reaching the last grade. In contrast, dropout rates were lowest in Mauritius (2%) and Botswana (7%).

A study carried out in Kenya in Nyandarua District by Kinuthia, (1995) on factors leading to secondary school drop-out in Nyandarua district identified school factors such as poor teaching, teacher resource, discipline, school type and category, poor pupil-teacher relationship, dilapidated school infrastructure, mockery, lack of guidance and counselling programmes in secondary schools, poor administration and transfer of teachers as some of the factors that led to secondary school drop-out.

In South Africa a study by Modisaotsile (2012) on failing standards of basic education in South Africa found that dropout rate was very high, triggered by low levels of literacy and numeracy skills. In her study she found other challenges associated with dropping out of school to include: poor teacher training; unskilled teachers; lack of commitment to teaching by teachers; poor support for learners at home; and a shortage of resources in education. The same study also found that almost 20 per cent of teachers were absent on Mondays and Fridays. Absentee rates increase to one-third at month end. Teachers in black schools (schools that were designated for blacks Africans during apartheid era) teach an average of 3.5 hours a day, compared with about 6.5 hours a day in former white schools. The other teacher behaviour that contributed dropouts at school was teachers' sexual involvement with learners. Some shocking reports indicated that sexual harassment of female learners was a serious problem in many South African schools. More than 30 percent of girls were raped at school. It was not clear whether the same causes apply in Zambia and Kabwe district. As a result of this, the researcher would also want to find out what the causes of dropout were in selected schools of Kabwe.

According to UNESCO, (2010), report, Ghana has had a steady decline in the proportion of children dropping out of primary school since it launched its major education reforms in 1987. Ghana had introduced programmes such as capitation grant scheme and school feeding programme at basic school level. These programmes helped reduce the overall rates of dropout. “Capitation was a fee-free policy providing direct funding to all public basic schools based on enrolment.” What it had achieved was to remove the cost burden to parents of enrolling their children in school and attracted many children to enroll, including those who previously dropped out because of fees. In 2005, when capitation was introduced enrolment across primary to junior high school increased by about 17 per cent (UNESCO, 2010). The Ghanaian experience shows that research based evidence and strategies are critical towards combating problems associated with school dropouts. The study into school factors contributing to school dropout was essential in dealing with problems of school dropouts associated with school factors.

In another related study conducted in Ghana by Ananga, (2010) on understanding the push and pull factors in school dropout, found that, there was some evidence that when teachers take a more proactive approach to the problem of drop out, the situation was able to improve. For example, the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) work in southern Ghana had revealed that a few teachers in some schools sensitive to the problem of dropout were able to intervene to prevent drop out and encourage ‘drop-in’. This was achieved through identifying children at risk of dropping out and attended to the factors that contribute to their chances of dropping out. Other schools organized teachers to visit truant children and their parents and encouraged these children to attend classes. These measures were indicative of what schools can do if sensitized about their role in reducing drop out.

A study on achievements in primary education in Tanzania by Hakielimu (2007) found that Tanzania had an unusual profile of high enrolment, relatively low drop out and some 24.3 percent of students over age but remaining in primary school. According to available statistics in the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT, 2009), the dropout rate had declined significantly since the implementation of UPE in 2002 though with a slight upward trend in 2008-9 of 3.70%, up from 3.20% in 2006-7. Several factors contributed towards this. Firstly, there was a political and budgetary focus on UPE and completion rates with compulsory enrolment of all children from 7 upwards including over age children not yet enrolled. Secondly, education was devolved to the regions with a community approach to education from the village upwards. Thirdly, learning was made more beneficial to young children in the classroom, and finally, alternative forms of education exist for out-of-school and over age students. Tanzania was a typical example of how government will was critical in combating the problem of school dropouts. It was interesting to note that as other countries were struggling to reduce the high dropout rates Tanzania had managed to reduce. This gave the researcher the impetus to find out the causes of dropouts in Zambia, Kabwe district in particular and also how to maintain more learners in school.

2.4 School Dropout Situation in Zambia

In the year 2010 Zambia's basic school dropout rate stood at 2.0% (MoE, 2010) Zambia in 2007 had 2.22% children of school going age who were never enrolled in school, with 11.80% primary school dropouts, 26.70% of learners in school were over age, hence at risk of dropping out. In the same year the country recorded a 1.50% primary school completion rate but this was still low in comparison to other countries that had achieved

higher completion rates much earlier than 2007 like Nigeria and Ghana which in 2003 recorded primary completion rates of 83.66% and 79% respectively, (UNESCO, 2010).

Several factors contributed to school dropouts in Zambia among them school related factors. The Minister of Education in his address to the first conference for head teachers cited some school related problems contributing to pupil dropout such as bad elements among teachers and bad school administration. For example, the Minister indicated that 27 teachers were dismissed in 2012, 25 for cases of impregnating learners and 2 for drinking on duty. However, the Minister reiterated governments' commitment to the creation of stimulating learning environments in schools necessary for avoiding learners from dropping out of school, (Ministry of Education, Science, and Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013).

A research was conducted in Solwezi district, the provincial capital of North-Western province of Zambia by Katolo (2013), whose study was aimed at establishing factors in schools that contribute to learners dropping out of primary school and the signals transmitted by aspects school environment influence dropping out. A lot has indeed been done to assess the factors leading but there was very little which had been done in Zambia on establishing the ways of reducing school dropout, assess the influence of the dropout on the society and suggest measures that can address the school dropout rates in Kabwe district of Central province. The study was prompted because there was little known about dropouts in Kabwe.

Another study by Munsaka (2009) on dropouts in Southern Zambia observed some causes of school dropout. He said the intervention measures should be aimed at making school matter in the life of pupil's vital if the education system to ensure that learners continued stay in school. Most learners drop out because they didn't see the significance of school in their

lives. It was vital that learners had future clear goals early in life if they had to value school ensure their continued stay in school to completion and the support structures which were functional like the guidance and counselling department in all schools.

The question still remained what were the causes of school dropout in Kabwe schools? For Solwezi and the Southern part of Zambia causes have been known but for Kabwe it was still not known.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter explains on the methodology used to undertake the study. It includes; research design, target population, sample size, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, data processing and data analysis instruments and ethical considerations. This chapter is very important because it clearly states how the investigations, data collection, from where and whom, what instruments and how the data will be analysed and interpreted. Kasonde-N'gandu (2013) refers the research methodology as a design of the study or research procedure.

3.1 Study Area Location and Description

Kabwe is a town found in Central, Zambia. It is located 14.45⁰ latitude and 28.45⁰ longitudes and it is situated at elevation 1191 meters above sea level. Kabwe has a population estimated at 202,914 at the 2010 census, making it the biggest town in Central. Named Broken Hill until 1966, it was founded when lead and zinc deposits were discovered in 1902. Kabwe also has a claim to being the birthplace of Zambian politics as it was an important political Centre during the colonial period. It is an important transportation and mining Centre.

The district is home of sixteen (16) secondary schools namely Angelina Tembo Girls, Bwacha, Caritas Girls, Danford, Jasmine, Chindwin, Chindwin 'A', Broadway, Kalonga, Kabwe, Highride, Mine, Shitima, Raphael Kombe, Mukobeko and Steven Luwisha. Among these secondary schools the researcher carried out the study at Mukobeko, Broadway and Mine Secondary Schools. The three schools were settled on because from Central Province

Automated Statistical Tool Kit for 2013 to 2015 they had significant high numbers of drop outs as compared to the other schools. Hence the reason for them to be chosen for this study

3.2 Research Design

Ngoma, (2006) in Kasonde- Ngandu (2013) states that a research design is the set of logical steps taken by a researcher to answer the research questions raised, determines the methods to be used to engage the participants, collection of data, analyse the data and interpret the results. In order to provide accurate account of the situation concerning the factors that have led to the continuation of learners dropping out in urban areas, this research will adopt a descriptive survey which is under qualitative method. A descriptive survey design was employed so that, the researcher had to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon. The research approach was helpful in getting a detailed insight of children dropping out of school and their views through description of variations, explaining relationships and describing individual experiences.

Furthermore this design was also helpful in understanding perspectives of children dropping out of school (Kothari, 2004). This study used a descriptive survey research design because the study intended to present school factors leading to drop out, as they existed (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). The qualitative method of information collecting was used mainly. As indicated above this design was best ideal for this research because it involved purposefully selecting participants representing the population who can give information on certain behaviours and attitudes by interviews, discussions or administering questionnaires with them.

3.3 Target Population

The target population of this study comprised all Head teachers, Teachers, parents, learners within school in Kabwe District, Central Province of Zambia. According to Oso and Onen (2009) in Kasonde-Ng'andu (2013) who stated that target population refers to the total environment of interest to the one carrying out research.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample comprised sixty (60) participants consisting of twenty-four (24) in school learners, twenty-seven (27) teachers, three (3) head teachers and six (6) parents. Since the learners and teachers were the key informants, their sample sizes adequate. In terms of qualitative sample size Bertaux (1981) guides that all qualitative studies may have a minimum of fifteen as their sample size. Further Creswell (1998) guided that in all phenomenological studies five to twenty-five sample sizes may be adequate. This is based on the principle of saturation which says there is a point of diminishing return to a qualitative sample.

3.5 Sample technique

The study used purposive sampling to select schools, teachers (head of department (HOD), guidance teachers and grade teachers), head teachers and parents. The HODs were selected because they are previewed with the information from the teachers as they report to them. As for the guidance teachers and grade teachers they interact with the learners on a daily basis while the parents are those in PTA because they interact with the school on a regular basis. The class representatives were selected to participate in FGD because it is assumed that they know their friends and these came from grade 8 to 11 as at the time of collecting the data most grade 12 learners were writing end of term tests. The Kombo and Tromp (2006) state

that, “the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting participants who will provide the richest information for in-depth analysis related to the central issue being studied while simple random sampling provides an equal chance of inclusion in the sample (Kothari, 2004)

3.6 Data collection instrument

The research data were collected using questionnaires, interview guides and focussed group discussions. A recorder was used during FGD to ensure capturing everything.

Questionnaire schedule was used because it provides an opportunity for the researcher to explain the purpose of the study to the participants and can rephrase questions in order to help the participants give the most appropriate response (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). The researcher administered a questionnaire to teachers because they were able to read and write with fewer difficulties on their own.

Semi-Structured Interviews was used in which a researcher set of questions with fixed phrasing or wording prepared in advance before interviewing the participants. This approach was used because it enabled the researcher to make a more objective comparison of the responses given by different participants (Creswell, 1994) and it was conducted to the head teachers and parents.

Focus group discussion guide on the other hand was used to discuss on the possible factors influencing learners dropping out in Kabwe district. The researcher led the discussion by asking the participants open ended questions and took detailed notes on the discussions. The researcher met one group from each school of 8 learners per group as guided by Kasonde-Ng’andu (2013) that a FGD usually comprises six to eight individuals who share certain characteristics which are relevant for the study.

3.7 Data Collection procedure and timeline

The Ethical Clearance Letter from the University of Zambia was sought. Then permission was sought from the Provincial Education Officer- Central province to conduct the study in the named schools. For the learners, their parents' consent was sought for them to participate and all other participants also got their consent to participate. The Interview Guides, Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussions were used to collect data. Interview guides was used on parents and head teachers. The questionnaire was administered on the teachers and FGD was conducted with school learners. These were suitable tools for purposefully collecting data from different kinds of informants and which was a form of data triangulation; to contrast the data and 'validate' the data if it yielded similar findings (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). The period for data collection was from December, 2016 to April 2017.

3.8 Data Analysis Instruments

The Word Processor was used to analyze the data which included Microsoft Word and Excel (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). Exploratory method was used because it discovers what the data seemed to have said using simple arithmetic which made easy the drawing of pictures to summarize the qualitative data.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were highly considered in this study. Permission was sought from the Ministry of General Education, the Provincial Education Office in Kabwe and the District Education Board Secretary Office in Kabwe to use the schools for the study. At the same time, the Head teachers, teachers and teachers gave consent to participate and as for learners their parents gave permission for those under 18 years but for those above 18 years they consented by themselves. The aim of the study was clearly explained to the participants before

commencement of the study. Clearance was sought from the University of Zambia Ethics Committee. High excellence of ethical issues was observed such as the participants respect, dignity, autonomy was adhered to and ensuring their safety (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). All data will be used for academic purpose and no participants' names would be mentioned in the report.

3.10 Summary

The study used descriptive survey design. The target population was learners, teachers, parents and head teachers in secondary schools of Kabwe district in Central Province of Zambia. The study involved sixty (60) participants comprising 27 teachers, 3 head teachers, 24 in school learners and 6 parents. The study used purposive sampling procedures to select the participants to participate in the study. The instruments used to collect data included interview guides, focused group discussion guide and a questionnaire. Data was analyzed using qualitative methods.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the factors influencing dropout rates in selected secondary schools in Kabwe District. The presentations of the findings were presented in line with the objectives determined by the study. The objectives were: To explore causes of dropping out of school by learners; to determine the measure of provision of free education, educational materials and infrastructure development on school dropout.

Worthy to note is that the findings are presented in two categories: the first category is generalized while the second category ties the findings to individual participants. For the sake of privacy, the teacher participants were not mentioned by name but instead they were given codes, R1 to R27 to represent all the twenty seven participants who participated in the research. The researcher was careful not to exchange these codes and give attributes that belonged to one participant to the other and the schools were code also for ethical reasons as A1, A2 and A3. The names of the learners, parents and head teachers have not been disclosed for the same sake of ethical reasons.

4.1.0 Causes of learner dropouts

This section presents the causes of learner school dropouts in with the views of the teachers, learners, parents and head teachers.

4.1.1. Views of teachers on causes of learner school dropouts

The 27 participants cited a number of factors contributing to learner dropouts. 27 teachers said learner dropouts was caused by financial challenges; 25 said loss of interest in school by

the pupil; 23 said was due to pregnancies, broken homes, early marriages; 20 said lack of accommodation for those who come from far places; 18 said lack of role models in families; 21 said inadequate teaching and learning materials; 24 said growing number of child headed homes; 22 said poor school infrastructure, peer pressure, drug abuse and 12 said sickness. In addition, 18 said responsibility to look after relatives suffering from diseases such as HIV/AIDS, breakdown of extended families ties, parents who do not treasure education. While 20 said lack of food as some learners rent their own accommodation; 17 said lack of motivation from school, locality of the school, indiscipline by some learners, over aged and repeating grades; 20 said lack of exposure to early education and 26 said ineffective guidance and counselling services.

4.1.2 Views of leaners on causes of learner school dropouts

In a focus group discussion with twenty four learners, selected from A1 Secondary School, A2 Secondary School and A3Secondary School said that the leading causes of learner dropouts included teen pregnancies, lack of financial support, drug abuse, failing examinations especially at grade nine levels, sexual and physical harassment by both male teachers and learners, and lack of effective parental and school guidance system.

4.1.3 Views of parents on causes of learner school dropouts

On the leading causes of learner dropout five out six parents said,

Learners fear some teachers and as such they decide to leave school on their own. Lack of enough teachers is a factor causing children to drop out. When they go to school for some time and continuously find that their class has no teacher they become bored and stop going to school.

Four out of six parents said,

Some children dropouts of school because of bullying while others, especially, girls dropout is due to pregnancies. Sexual harassment of girls by male teachers and poor toilets to meet their needs pushes them out of school. Long distances to schools and lack of models in families and poverty are responsible for dropouts.

4.1.4 Views of head teachers on causes of learner school dropouts

The researcher interviewed three head teachers to assess their view on the leading causes of learner drop outs. This study discovered that though examinations were a good practice to assess the progress of learners' performance in class and during examinations were a major source of learner drop out. Two out of three head teachers (2017) said:

The main cause of learner drop outs was examinations especially the grade nine examinations. For example the whole Kabwe only 42.5% passed the examination. We do not know whether the other 57.5% have repeated or have dropped out of school but I can tell you majority are not in school. The school system does not have a provision to follow up those who have dropped out of school due to examinations because it is assumed there are not enough places in grade ten.

Three head teachers (2017) said:

Teenage pregnancies have been the leading cause of learners, especially girls, dropping out of school. The most vulnerable are those girls who come from far places and rent small houses in compounds

4.2 Signs shown by a learner who is about to drop out of school

This section reveals indicators exhibited by learner who was about to dropout from school.

4.2.1. Views of 27 teachers on signs shown by a learner who is about to dropouts out school

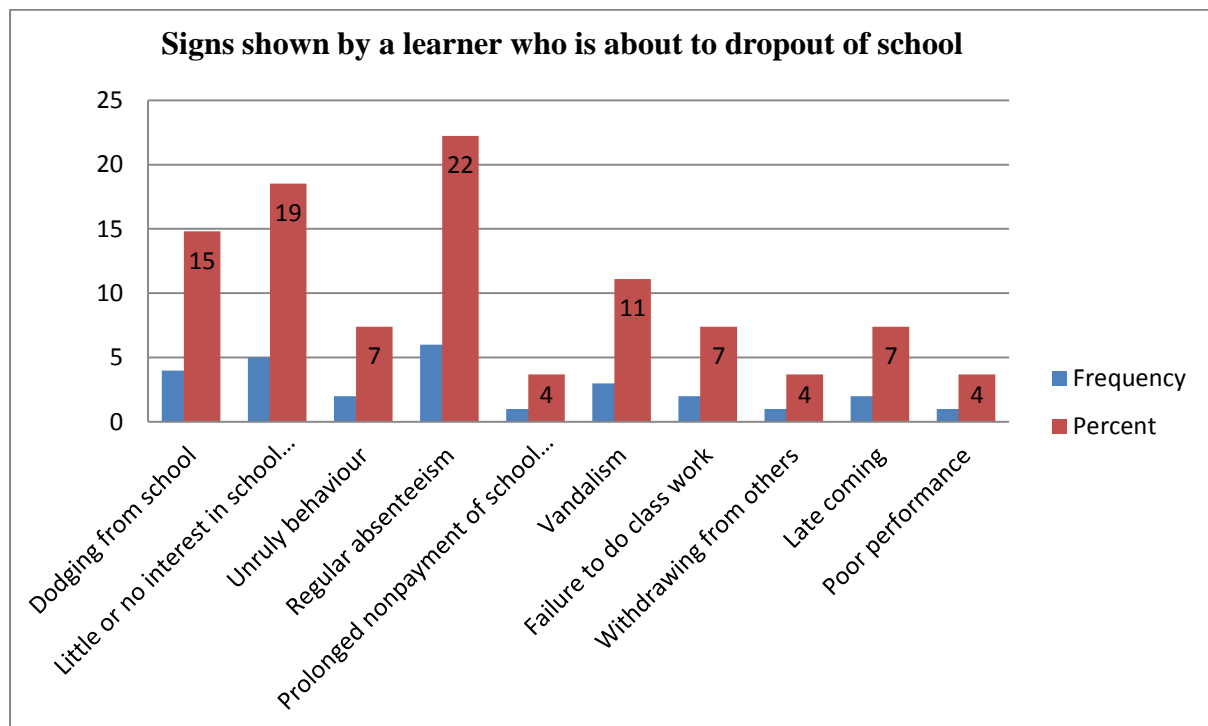


Figure 1 signs of dropout

Regarding the signs shown by a learner who is about to drop out of school figure 1 shows that 15% of the participants cited dodging from school, 19% said little or no interest in school activities, 7% said unruly behaviour, 22% cited regular absenteeism, 4% cited non - payment of school fees. 11% others cited vandalism as sign, 4% said failure to do class work, 4% cited withdrawing from others, 7% said late coming and 4% mentioned poor performance.

Based on the responses to the causes and signs of learner dropouts the participants were asked to state the leading causes of learner dropouts and why. The responses varied from

school to schools. From A1 Secondary School, 9 out of 9 teachers said pregnancies and early marriages which were due to lack of parental control and guidance; 6 out of 9 said peer pressure due to what they observed from their friends; 7 out of 9 said over enrolment due to the catchment area; poor funding from government; 8 out of 9 said learners were not motivated to come to school and they did not know why they come to school; 5 out of 9 said lack lesson by teacher which caused learners not to get engaging learning activity; 7 out of 9 said negative attitude towards school due to group influence.

Teacher responses from A2 Secondary School were 7 out of 9 teachers cited poverty because the learners came from the impoverished compound where residents and families experienced difficulties finding money; 8 out of 9 lack of knowledge and guidance from parents; 5 out of 9 children headed homes which made learners vulnerable.

Those from A3 Secondary School, 8 out of 9 teachers most parents of learners who were not educated and saw no need to encourage their children on the importance of education were responsible for school dropouts; 9 out of 9 said early marriages was the cause; 7 out of 9 said unemployment; 4 out of 9 said lack of interest on the part of the learners; drug and substance abuse; 5 out of 9 poor academic performance; poor state of ablutions and low moral values were signs for dropping out.

4.2.2. Views of learners on signs shown by a learner who is about to drop out of school

When the learners were interviewed about the possible signs shown by the learners who are about to drop out 12 out of 24 said absconding, 19 out of 24 identified rudeness to teachers, 15 out of 24 said lack of interest in school, 10 out of 24 mentioned joining bad groups and 13 out of 24 said late coming to school as signs shown.

4.2.3. Views of parents on signs shown by a learner who is about to drop out of school

Five out of six parents said that they were noticed by lack of interest in school work, absenteeism and usually found in town with those who have stopped or completed secondary education while three out of six parents said learners become rude and exhibit truant behaviours.

4.2.4. Views of head teachers on signs shown by a learner who is about to dropouts out in school

The views of the head teachers were similar to those of teachers and learners with the following additions. Two head teachers said girls intend to like material things so much and for some boys start substance and alcohol abuses and while all the three said their performance in class goes down.

4.3 Measures taken to retain learners in school

This section presents the views of teachers, learners, parents and head teachers on the measures taken in terms of provision of free education, education materials and development of school infrastructure on school dropout.

4.3.1 Provision of Free Education as a measure

This subsection presents the views of the participants on how the free education impacts on school dropout.

4.3.1.1 Views of the teachers on the measures taken to retain learners school

On how the provision of free primary education has helped learners to stay in schools 20 out of 27 teachers said it has helped learners not to worry about school fees and so they remain in school; 19 out of 27 said schools no longer send learners away for non-payment of school

fees but were asked to go home to remind their parents to pay PTA funds; 21 out of 27 teachers said it has helped learners to stay in school, 15 out of 27 assumed that the learners no longer spend time looking for piece works and miss lessons or absconding; 11 out of 27 said parents are no longer worried about the pressure of school fees and they encouraged their children to take up the opportunity of free primary education; 22 out of 27 said most learners from low class families have managed to complete their primary education.

However 17 teachers said free education had not helped the learners much because of the object poverty most of them were living in which could not make them afford basic needs such as food. They wrote,

Free education has not helped the learners to be in school because the provision of free education is just on paper and not being practiced.

The teacher participants further submitted the following on provision of free education in reducing school dropouts according to schools:

Participants from A1Secondary School made the following comments:

- i. Free education must be accompanied with free feeding program for it significantly impact learner dropouts;
- ii. Free education should be encouraged as it is the motivation standard for learners and the parents do not struggle much to look for money to pay for their children;
- iii. Many learners are not denied the privilege to achieve their dreams and education as right is made possible.

- iv. Free education is helping children to become literate (i. e. able to count and write).

Participants from A2 Secondary School made the following comments:

- i. Free education was a positive step to give opportunity to the less privileged to acquire the basic education.
- ii. Free education gives an opportunity to the poor children to acquire the basic education.
- iii. More support from the government should be given and encouraged in the light of provisional free education. It is a good measure to reduce school dropout.
- iv. Free education has a minimal effect (no significant) as learners will only be interested in learning activities when their basic needs have been met.

The participants from A3 Secondary School said:

- i. The free primary education intervention had helped but there was need to have updated materials for learners to use in order for them to spend more time in school.
- ii. Free primary education had helped parents who could not manage school fees take their children to school though others think when something was free, it had low value.
- iii. Free education could only help if it was extended to secondary and tertiary education.

4.3.1.2 Views of the learners on the free education measure to retain learners in school

Findings from the learners suggested that the provision of free primary education has greatly influenced the rate of school dropouts. The learners (2017) interviewed in a focus group discussion revealed:

The parents were able to save money for their children in readiness for secondary education while others are able to engage in business to raise money in preparation for secondary school fees. This created interest in school for the learners who otherwise thought would never reach secondary school because of lack of funds.

Three of the parents interviewed said,

Free education has helped learners from primary to get ready for secondary education by making learners acquire relevant knowledge on the importance of schooling and parents have adequate time to prepare for their secondary education.

Considerable findings from this research show that the provision of free primary education would greatly reduce the rate of school dropout if:

Free education was extended to secondary school and was improved upon to include the provision of teaching/learning materials for both learners and teachers such as books, pens, shoes, uniforms, building more classrooms to avoid overcrowding of learners, computers and laboratories which are well stocked, two head teachers said.

4.3.1.3 Views of the parents on the free education measure to retain learners in school

Five parents said,

Guardians are asked to pay PTA funds of which some parents and guardian are not even managing

4.3.1.4 Views of the head teachers on the free education measure to retain learners school

All the three head teachers said provision of educational materials was critical in motivating the learners to stay in school and educational materials also provided a level playground for all learners especially those from vulnerable families do not feel out of place.

Two head teachers made it clear that,

the government support for free education was little and in some quarters of the year it never even came at all.

4.3.2 Provision of Educational Materials

This subsection presents the views on the provision of educational materials as a measure of reducing learner school dropout by teachers, learners, parents and head teachers

4.3.2.1 Views of the teachers on the educational materials measure taken to retain learners school

On the availability of educational materials to help learners stay in school the teachers gave the following responses as shown in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Availability of education materials to help learners stay in school by teachers out of 27

Responses from participants	Frequency	Percentage
Materials were not adequate and some were not even available especially material under the newly revised curriculum.	14	51.9
Outdoor materials adequate to keep learners busy.	19	70.4
Schools had limited internet	21	77.8
Schools libraries were not there if it was there had outdated books	23	85.2
Computer laboratories were there with few working computers and difficulty to be access them	15	55.6
Educational materials were generally adequate though had no bearing on school dropout.	10	37.0
Educational materials play an important role in determining the quality of education but not in preventing of learners dropping out of school.	25	92.6

Table 1 indicates that 14 (51.9%) Materials were not adequate and some were not even available especially material under the newly revised curriculum. 19 (70.4) Outdoor materials adequate to keep learners busy 21 (77.8%) Schools had limited internet. 23 (85.2%) Schools libraries were not there if it was there had outdated books. 15 (55.6%) Computer laboratories were there with few working computers and difficulty to be access them. 10 (37.0%) Educational materials were generally adequate though had no bearing on school dropout and 25 (92.6%) Educational materials play an important role in determining the quality of education but not in preventing of learners dropping out of school.

The teachers said schools had adequate materials however educational materials like computer kept learners busy. One of the teachers (2017) said,

Schools with adequate educational materials made them feel a sense of belonging as they were sharing materials in school

The teachers further said the following educational materials were very helpful:

- i. Teaching and learning materials and aids such as text books, rulers, pens and pencils, laboratory materials for natural sciences, computer studies materials, maps and mathematical instruments.
- ii. Materials for extracurricular activities like monopoly, snakes and ladders, scrabble, and chess. Others include balls for different types of ball games.
- iii. The internet as a useful tool used to research even seemingly challenging tasks.
- iv. Furniture like desks could make learners to develop interest as such materials enhances learners' capabilities in reading and not only reading but even other subjects such as sciences if the apparatus are readily available.

4.3.2.2 Views of the learners on the educational materials measure taken to retain learners school

12 out of 24 learners (2017) said:

Educational materials such as mathematical instruments, industrial arts, home economics, art and design, computers and sports equipment motivated learners to be in school be the learners were involved wholly

Additional findings on provision of educational material revealed that the schools could make learners stay in school if they provided transport to learners who were vulnerable and came from far places. 16 out of the 24 learners said;

School should use the busses to ferry learners staying far like private schools do. Those vulnerable can be ferried for free while those learners who are able to pay could be charged a minimal fare. Schools have enough resources and can manage this.

4.3.2.3 Views of the parents on the educational materials measure taken to retain.

Four out of six parents said that,

The provision of relevant teaching and learning materials help learners to pay more attention in class which makes them to pass the examinations and continue with school without dropping out due to failing examinations

Further two out of six parents said,

Educational materials have also improved some performance of learners since they have reference materials and are able to compete.

4.3.2.4 Views of the head teachers on the educational materials measure taken to retain learners school

The three head teachers said adequate and up to date educational materials motivates the learners to study hard and reduces on the pressure on some of the learners who fails to buy personal materials.

One head teacher said:

Educational materials give equal chances for all learners regardless of the socio-economic background of the learner. It creates equal platform with those who could not buy their own personal materials

4.3.3 School infrastructure Development

This section presents the views on the measure of school infrastructure development on retaining learners in school by teachers, learners, parents and head teachers.

4.3.3.1 Views of the teachers on the School infrastructure Development measure taken to retain learners school

The 27 participants mentioned a number of reasons school infrastructure was measure to making learners stay in school. The responses are presented in the figure 2 below.

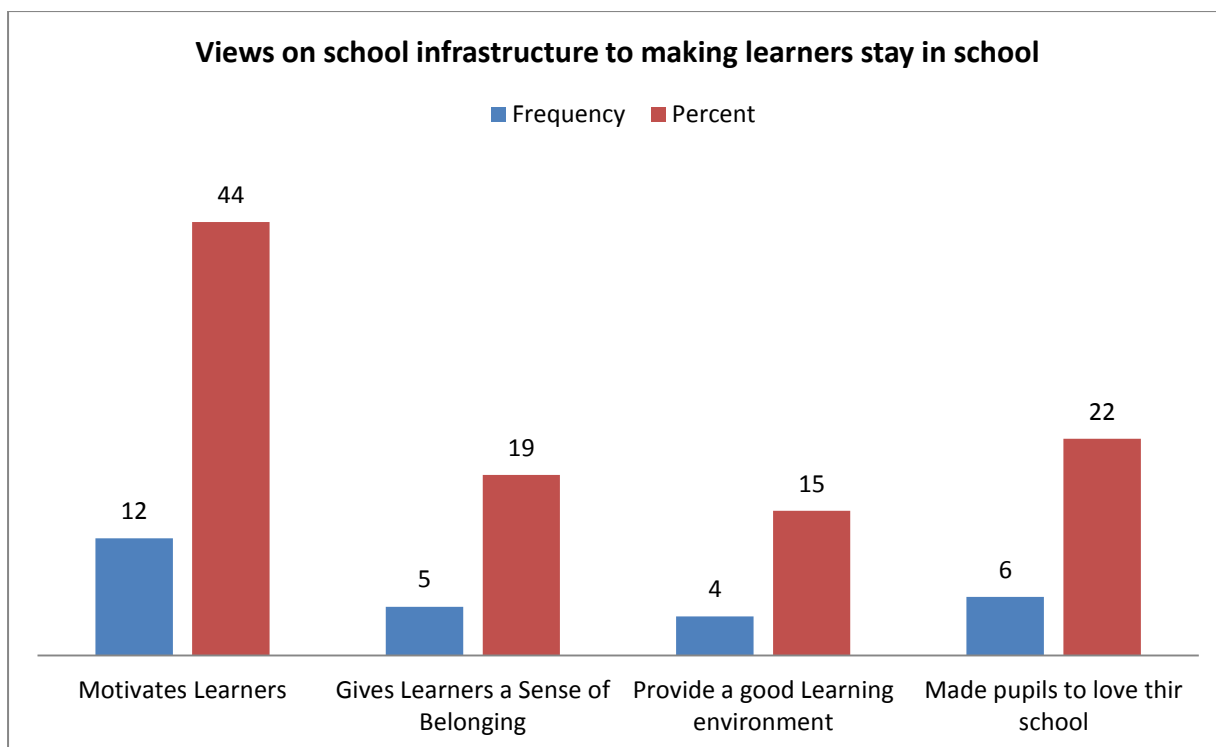


Figure 2 Views on school infrastructure as a measure

The figure above shows that while forty four percent of the participants said relevant infrastructure motivated the learners to stay in school, nineteen percent said it gave them a sense of belonging. Additionally, fifteen percent said relevant infrastructure provided learners a good learning environment and twenty two percent said relevant infrastructure made learners to love their school.

On how the school environment contributed to the learners staying in school, 16 out of 27 teachers said school environment, made learners to stay and study in school than going home; 13 out of 27 teachers said quality teaching made learners to look forward to coming to school; 11 out of 27 teachers said made interactions with peers from different homes with different background and learnt new ideas; 17 out of 27 teachers said makes learners access much of the expected facilities in school that would interest them according to their different abilities and provides necessary conditions for the learners to stay on.

The teachers further postulated the type of environment that would have contributed to the learners continues with school as follows in the figure 3.

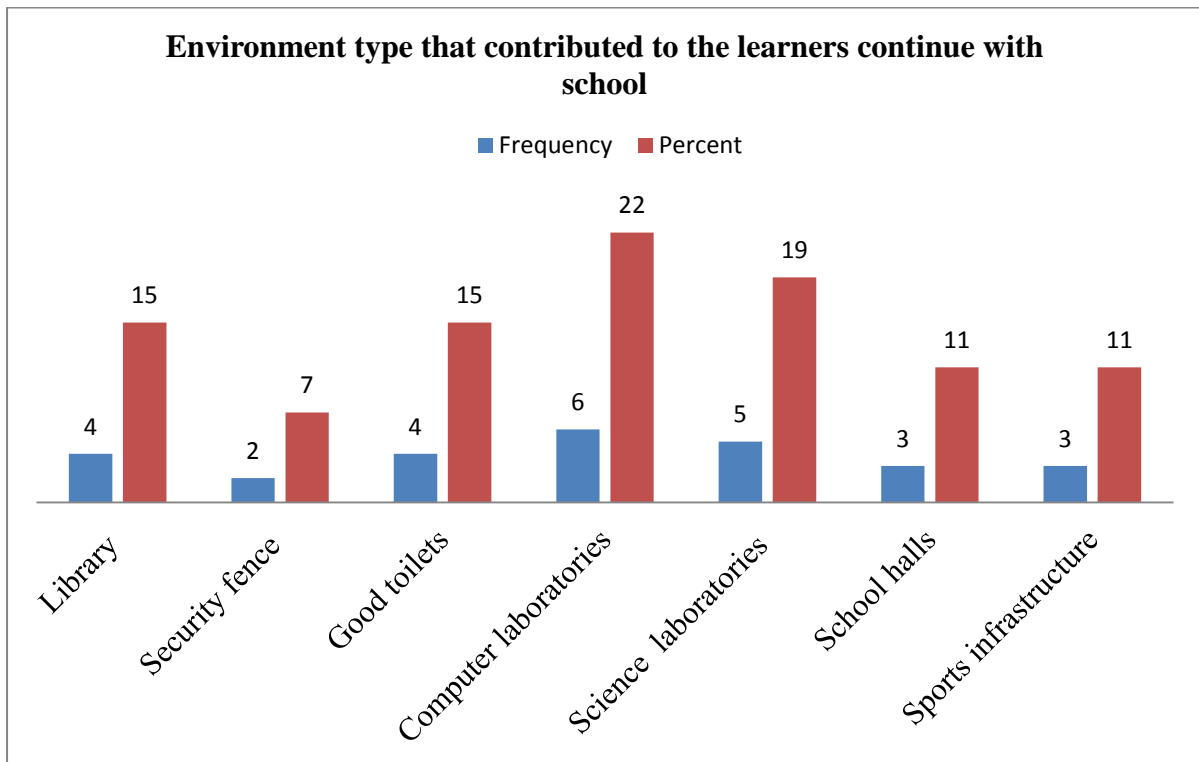


Figure 3: Environment type that contribute to learners continue with school

Figure 3 shows that fifteen percent of the participants said the type of environment that would have contributed to the learners continuing with school were environments with a school library, seven percent said it was school environments with a security fence, fifteen percent mentioned school environments with good toilets. Majority of the participants represented by twenty two percent cited school environments with computer laboratories, others representing nineteen percent mentioned science laboratories. Those who cited school halls and sports infrastructure were eleven percent apiece.

The following was said about school infrastructure contributing to learners continuing with school:

- i. The library would provide learner with a variety of study books
- ii. The science laboratory would help learners to conduct experiments and prove some scientific concepts which they had learnt in class
- iii. The sports infrastructure allowed learners that were not academically oriented to have activities which could help them develop their skills and the keep them in the school.
- iv. The security fence would enable learners to be confined in one place and discipline would be enhanced.

4.3.3.2 Views of the learners on the School infrastructure Development measure taken to retain learners school

The study further considered the relevance of school infrastructure in reducing learner drop outs. The study established that relevance of school infrastructure could influence learner drop outs. 18 out of 24 learners (2017) indicated that:

Building boarding houses can reduce the distances some learners covered to attend school on a daily basis. This would encourage them to stay in school. Furthermore play fields with necessary sporting equipment can help learners to stay in school.

15 out of 24 learners (2017) said that:

Schools should try to keep the school environment clean to avoid diseases. Beautiful schools with beautiful uniforms and toilets attract learners

4.3.3.3 Views of the parents on the School infrastructure Development measure taken to retain learners in school

On the relevance of school infrastructure two parents out of six (2017) said,

Relevant and adequate school infrastructure has helped increase access though they said that other basic needs also has infect on access.

Three parents out of six (2017) said,

Infrastructure affects the differently abled students more than the other learners. Non relevant infrastructure makes the differently abled learners to drop out of school.

4.3.3.4 Views of the head teachers on the School infrastructure Development measure taken to retain learners school.

The table below indicates the responses of the head teachers on

Table 2 Strategies to reduce school dropouts

Responses	Frequency
Provide free Education up to Secondary School	3
Available , adequate and update educational materials	3
Good infrastructure with toilets and enough clean water	2
School managed boarding houses for learners from far places	1
Good teacher – pupil relationship	3

Support OVC and introduction of feeding program	3
Enhance effective school guidance and counselling services	3
Strong school- community partnership	2

Table 2 indicates responses of the three head teachers; 3 said, providing free education up to Secondary School; 3 said availability, adequate and up to date educational materials; 2 said Good infrastructure with toilets and enough clean water; 1 said School managing boarding houses for learners from far places; 3 said Good teacher – pupil relationship; 3 said Support OVC and introduction of feeding program; 3 said enhance effective school guidance and counselling services and 2 said Building strong school - community partnership.

4.4 Summary

This chapter looked at the findings of the study. Learner dropout was caused by a number of factor including teen pregnancies, lack of financial support, drug abuse, failing examinations especially at grade nine levels, sexual and physical harassment and lack of parental and school guidance.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

This chapter endeavors to discuss the stated objectives by interpreting the findings of this research in line with study questions. Keeping in view the findings of the research, it was imperative to discuss their theoretical view point so that these might leave useful effects for the stakeholders. The objectives of the study were stated as follows:

1. To explore causes of dropping out of school by learners.
2. To determine how the measures of free primary education, provision of educational materials and infrastructure development had mitigated on school dropout issue

5.1 Causes of dropping out of school by learners

Education plays a very important part in developing human beings. Sigei and Tikoko (2014) assert that education was the cornerstone of economic growth and socio-development and a principle means of improving the welfare of an individual. As a result, it increases the productive capabilities of the societies and the political, economic and scientific institutions. It also helps to reduce poverty by increasing the value and efficiency of labour offered by the poor and mitigating the population, health and nutritional consequence of poverty. Learner drop out therefore represent a decrease in the productive capabilities of the societies. Through a questionnaire to the teachers, a focus group discussion with learners and an interview with parents and head teachers the study found the following as the causes of learner dropouts in schools.

The teachers said learners dropped out of school because of financial challenges, loss of interest in school by the learners, teenage pregnancies, broken homes, early marriages, lack of accommodation for those who came from far places, lack of role models in many families, inadequate teaching and learning materials, growing number of child headed homes, poor school infrastructure, peer pressure, drug abuse, sickness, responsibility to look after relatives suffering from terminal diseases such as HIV/AIDS, breakdown of extended families ties, parents who do not treasure education encouraged learners to drop and seek marriage, lack of food by some learners who rented their own accommodation, lack of motivation from school, location of some school, loss of parents, indiscipline in learners and poor education background where a pupil was not exposed to early education. As elucidated by UNESCO (2005) most learners drop out of school due to lack of some needs like enough food, clothing, lack of school materials and many more were in line with what the teachers identified as causes of school dropout.

Added to these factors the learners mentioned failing examinations especially at grade nine levels, poor teacher-pupil relationship, sexual and physical harassment and lack of parental and school guidance as causes of school dropout and until these were addressed, the problem of drop out was afraid it might continue in line with what Munsanka (2009) also found although the aspect of feeding program was not mentioned as one the remedies to school dropout in his study. Furthermore on examination as a cause of learner drop out head teachers explained that the school system did not have a provision to follow up those who had dropped out of school due to failure in examinations because it was assumed there were not enough places in grade ten though there was Directorate of Open and Distance Education in the Ministry of General Education which should provide alternative learning and it was not. Lack of this follow-up has made the school dropout really.

All the participants reported that lack of financial support coerced some learners to drop out of school because they could not afford to pay examination fees, PTA funds, User-fees, buy school uniforms and other school requirements. Learners and teachers alike indicated that financial constraints especially after the death of bread winner forced the children out of school because there was no one to meet their school requirements. Similar, sentiments were given by some parents who claimed the major contributor for dropping out of school was non-payment of school and examination fees which one head teacher said when some were asked to go and remind their parents about school the fees they went and did not come back. The above findings are in line with Bacolod and Ranjan (2005) who found that lack of finances to be significant constraint on education and hence the reason of stopping school by most learners. UNICEF (2002) also reported that the gains made by Zambia towards the attainment of universal primary education were lost with introduction of cost sharing in education which pushed upwards the cost for education and consequently made some parents fail to send their children to school. In the same view one parent lamented that some overzealous head teachers chased learners whose parents failed to pay PTA fund away watering down the effort of the government to provide free education and consequently increase the school dropout rates.

The other significant cause mentioned was teenage pregnancies. All the participants' categories that were head teachers, teachers, Parents and learners acknowledged that pregnancies were a major factor influencing learner drop outs. These finding were in line with Katolo (2013) who found that pre-marital sex resulting in teenage pregnancy was a major single factor contributing to learners dropping out of school especially among female learners. In fact at one of the schools visited they had already recorded 12 pregnancies by April the number which was alarming. It entailed that Comprehensive Sexuality Education

and guidance and counselling was not effective in the school as well as at home. In line with Katolo (ibid) two out of twenty boys dropout of school because they had impregnated a schoolgirl, the visited recorded twenty-eight boys were on paternity leaves for three months in line with Re-entry guidelines. Mwansa (2004) alluded to causes of pregnancies as being both home based factor as well as a school factor of which the researcher agrees with his findings. Also Katolo (2013) and Sigei and Tikoko (2014) stated that if both homes and schools places did not handle adequately issues of reproductive health sufficiently, teen pregnancies were bound and this was noted by teachers. The study also found that as a result not adequately handling the subject with breakdown of African family systems, most learners did not have adequate knowledge on reproductive healthy as such easily fell pregnant. The Ministry of General Education was provoked to intensify the Comprehensive Sexuality Education in schools so that the learners could be aware about their sexual and reproductive health rights with the view to reduce on these pregnancies. In addition guidance and counselling in such matters was serious tool which could see the reduction both at home and in school. However for the school guidance and counselling to be effective it called for establishment of the department in schools with officers trained with necessary skills to offer the guidance services.

Another factor mentioned which significantly contributed to learner drop out was overaged learners, repeating grades, poor methods of instruction by teachers and poor teacher-pupil relationship which was in with Sabates et al (2010) who stated that over age children were more likely to drop out of school than children who were in the appropriate age for their grade. As children grow, the opportunity cost to them of remaining in school increases, especially if they were from poor households. Although the pressure towards child labour and taking up household responsibilities exceed the desire for schooling lack of interest also

contributes. In addition, overcrowded classrooms together with poor quality of teaching make the schooling less attractive and acts to push children at risk of dropping out (for example over age children) to eventually drop out which . It is in that view that some participants said good infrastructure was factor on retaining learners in school.

There are indeed many factors contributing to learners dropping out of school. As argued out by Mindy (2003) that there were many factors associated with drop out, some of which belonged to the individual, such as poor health or malnutrition and motivation, while others emerged from children's household situations such as child labour and poverty and school level factors also play a role in increasing pressures to drop out such as teacher's absenteeism, school location and poor quality educational provision all this hinges on finances. This was in line with Maslow's theory of need that a child can only move when their physiological needs were attended to and it is the researcher's view that of introduction of feeding programmes can mitigate the issue of school dropout. Also Vygotsky in his theory of 'Social Learning' with the concept of significant others the role they play in the development of the child was cardinal and hence the need for the learners to have health relationships. The people around have the bearing on the issue of drop out hence the concept of school- community partnership would play a vital role in combatting the drop out issue.

5.2 The Provision of free primary education, provision of educational materials and infrastructure development on school dropout

This section presents the discussions on the provision of free education, educational materials and infrastructure development on school dropout

5.2.1 Provision of Free primary education

Free primary education has helped learners to stay in schools because learners needed not to worry about school fees and so they remained in school and schools did not send any child from school for non-payment of school fees. Furthermore the study went on to find that the parents were able to save money for their children in readiness for secondary education this revelation was not found by these others studies the researcher came across. The opportunity some learners experienced at primary education created interest in school to the extent that they didn't want to drop out and especially that their parents were able to plan for their secondary education. Indeed, the provision of free primary education increased enrolment thereby reduced the dropout rate in most schools. However, to the contrary the study found that free education had not helped much as some learners were living in abject poverty such that even if they were paid for they still needed other basic needs like food. Therefore, there should be deliberate support vulnerable households in order to mitigate other factors which make learners drop out due to lack of some basic needs in line with Maslow's needs of hierarchy. In view of the same, twenty teachers said,

Free education has not helped the learners to be in school because the provision of free education is just on paper and not being practiced. While four of the six parents said: Guardians are asked to pay a PTA funds of which some parents and guardian are not even managing. Further the government support for free education was little and in some quarters of the year it never even came at all, lamented head teacher.

In line with Beyani (2013) who reported that the introduction of free basic education (FBE) in Zambia in 2002 during the Basic Educational Sub-sector Investment Programme (BESSIP)

significantly improved access to primary education, especially after declining enrolments in the 1990s. He however noted that while there was increased access for children at primary school level, an insufficient budget was allocated to the sector, which undermined delivery and quality of education. There has also been a shortage of teachers, teaching and learning materials; general school infrastructure was inadequate. This state of affairs has had a negative impact on the effectiveness of delivering services at primary and secondary levels in the education sector. The internal system is very inefficient and characterized by poor transition rates and poor reading and arithmetic competency skills at mid-primary level and generally unsatisfactory examination performance at both primary and secondary levels (Beyani, 2013).

The study also found that the provision of free primary education would greatly reduce the rate of school dropout if free education was extended to secondary school and was improved upon to include the provision of basic needs in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs like food because some went to school on empty stomachs while teaching/learning materials for both learners and teachers such as books, pens, shoes, uniforms were also necessary to make learners stay in school. Building of more classrooms to avoid overcrowding of learners, computers and laboratories which were well stocked were also cited as means to mitigate the school dropout issue and the researcher ascribes to such findings.

5.2.2 Provision of educational materials in making learners to stay in school

The study found that a classroom with adequate educational materials encouraged learners to stay in school and those educational materials such as mathematical instruments, industrial arts, home economics, art and design, computers and sports equipment motivated learners to be in school. Dianda, (2008) proposed that in order to prevent learner dropouts in high

schools, education providers needed to make sure educators had the training and resources they need to prevent students from dropping out, including professional development focused on the needs of diverse students and students who were at risk of dropping out; up to date textbooks, materials, computers, and information technology; and safe and modern schools including internet facilities. The study further revealed that educational materials kept learners busy and gave them a sense of belonging by sharing materials in school in line with what Dianda (2008) postulated.

As Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece (2017) reported that there were many reasons why students dropped out of school. The study also found there were indeed numerous factors to dropout which include those at high risk of failure and had serious deficits in reading, writing, mathematical, reasoning and learning skills. Aside from these problems, however, most students who dropped out of school found school boring and showed little excitement about school learning. This was because the conditions in many classrooms did little to rise situational interest, coupled with poor teaching methods and teacher-pupil relationships as this was consistent with the findings in South Africa (Modisaotsile, 2012). Such interest would not be increased when teachers predominantly used poor teaching methods such as lecture, gave students few choices in topics to study or research, and made little attempt to link the material to relevant issues in everyday life. Educational materials provided learners with the impetus to explore the world and created interest in learning and were a motivation for them to stay in school.

This study further found that educational materials such as mathematical instruments, industrial arts, home economics, art and design, computers and sports equipment motivated learners to be in school. Dianda, (2008) proposed that in order to prevent learner dropouts in high schools, education providers needed to make sure that educators had the training and

resources they need to prevent students from dropping out, including professional development focused initiatives on the needs of diverse students and students who were at risk of dropping out; up to date textbooks, materials, computers, and information technology; and safe and modern schools including internet facilities. The study had also revealed that educational materials kept learners busy and gave them a sense of belonging by sharing materials in school in line with what Dianda (2008) had alleged.

In addition to academic materials, co-curriculum materials and equipment also facilitated them to stay in school. With the revised curriculum which talks about vocational career pathways and realizing individual differences, some children who were supposed to drop out might not because they would be interested in those activities.

5.2.3 Provision of school infrastructure in making learners to stay in school

The study found that relevant school infrastructure encouraged learners to stay in school and learners had this to say:

“good school infrastructure motivated them to have the zeal of going to school every day; it was an incentive and gave a sense of belonging to the school; made them love their school and did not make them miss home as it provided a conducive environment to desire to learn and study for a longer time”.

Additionally the participants said relevant infrastructure determined quality teaching which made learners to look forward to going to school; made learners to interact with their peer from different homes with different background and learnt new ideas in line with Schneider (2002) who asserted that school infrastructure affected learning and learners' interest. Spatial configurations, noise, heat, cold, light, and air quality obviously bear on students' and teachers' ability to perform and this was backed by empirical studies by Sabates et al (2010)

who had continued to focus on fine-tuning the acceptable ranges of these variables for optimal academic outcomes. This was further alluded to by Maslow's Human Needs of hierarchy in support of the study findings. The learners' basic needs when they were met, the child would concentrate in school but if not met the contrary was true. For example a hungry person no matter how attractive the school and uniform would be, cannot concentrate in class and eventually they would drop out. In line with the finding, the researcher agreed with participants that the feeding programme should be introduced especially to those who cannot afford at least three decent meals a day. It was also true that a boarding house can be built and school fees paid for but if they don't have what to eat and dress they would still engage in illicit activities that would make them drop out of school like being involved transactional sex and drug abuse. One of the concerns which the female participants alluded to was the issue of clean water and enough toilets too as cardinal in mitigating school dropout. They said the availability these would make girl child comfortable during their menstrual periods and the researcher agrees with those sentiments because they were push factors.

On the other hand one important infrastructure which all the participants acknowledged as a must have by schools was a library with latest stocks of books. They said that would keep them in school researching academic work and their performance would greatly improve.

5.3 Summary

The study revealed the factors that cause learner dropout in selected secondary schools in Kabwe district. Provision of free secondary education, education materials and relevant school infrastructure could mitigate the learner dropout rate in secondary schools.

The next chapter looks at the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

Chapter six presents conclusion and recommendations based on the findings on factors influencing dropout rates in selected secondary schools in Kabwe district.

6.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following summary can be made: the leading causes of learner dropouts in selected secondary school of Kabwe have been varied and include financial challenges, loss of interest in school by the learners, teenage pregnancies, broken homes, early marriages, lack of accommodation for those who came from far places, lack of role models in many families, inadequate teaching and learning materials, growing number of child headed homes, poor school infrastructure, peer pressure, drug abuse, sickness, responsibility to look after relatives suffering from terminal diseases such as HIV/AIDS, breakdown of extended families ties, parents who do not treasure education encouraged learners to drop and seek marriage, lack of food by some learners who rented their own accommodation, lack of motivation from school, location of some school, loss of parents, indiscipline in learners and poor education background where a pupil was not exposed to early education. Added to these factors the learners mentioned failing examinations especially at grade nine levels, sexual and physical harassment and lack of parental guidance.

It was found that free primary education had helped learners to stay in schools because learners needed not to worry about school fees and so they remained in school and schools did not send any child from school for non-payment of school fees but PTA posed a

challenge to some parents and over-zealous head teachers sent away some learners defeating the purpose of FPE. Further the study found that the parents were able to save money for their children in readiness for secondary education while others engaged into business and planned for their children properly as they navigate through primary education. This created interest in school for the learners who otherwise thought would never reach secondary school because of lack of funds where very much able to reach.

On educational materials such as mathematical instruments, industrial arts, home economics, art and design, computers and sports equipment the research found that such materials motivated learners to be in school be the learners were involved wholly, kept learners busy and gave them a sense of belonging.

The study revealed that relevant school infrastructure encouraged learners to stay in school motivated the learners to have zeal of going to school every day; was an incentive and gave a sense of belonging to learners; made learners love their school and did not make them miss home; provided a conducive environment for learners to desire to learn and study for a longer time. The girls specifically, good ablution block with enough water enabled them stay in school longer.

To reduce learner dropouts there was need the community engagement, convenient location of school with relevant infrastructure, availability of exceptionally trained teachers, context specific learning opportunity and supply of education materials and relevant guidance and counselling services.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

- i. The government should extend free education to secondary level if access to education for all was to be actualized.
- ii. The Provincial Education Officer should ensure that the Head teachers adhere to the policy of allocating 30% of user fees to procure educational materials and improve school infrastructure
- iii. The schools to put learners from poor households and child headed homes on feeding programme for them to concentrate on learning
- iv. Poverty alleviation measures should be strengthened to all vulnerable families by Community and Social Welfare departments so that they can support their children.
- v. Ministry of General Education to hasten establishing the position of School Guidance and counselling teachers so that they would help to mitigate the dropout issue.
- vi. Future research can be conduct to find out if qualifications of teachers and their ages contribute to school drop outs

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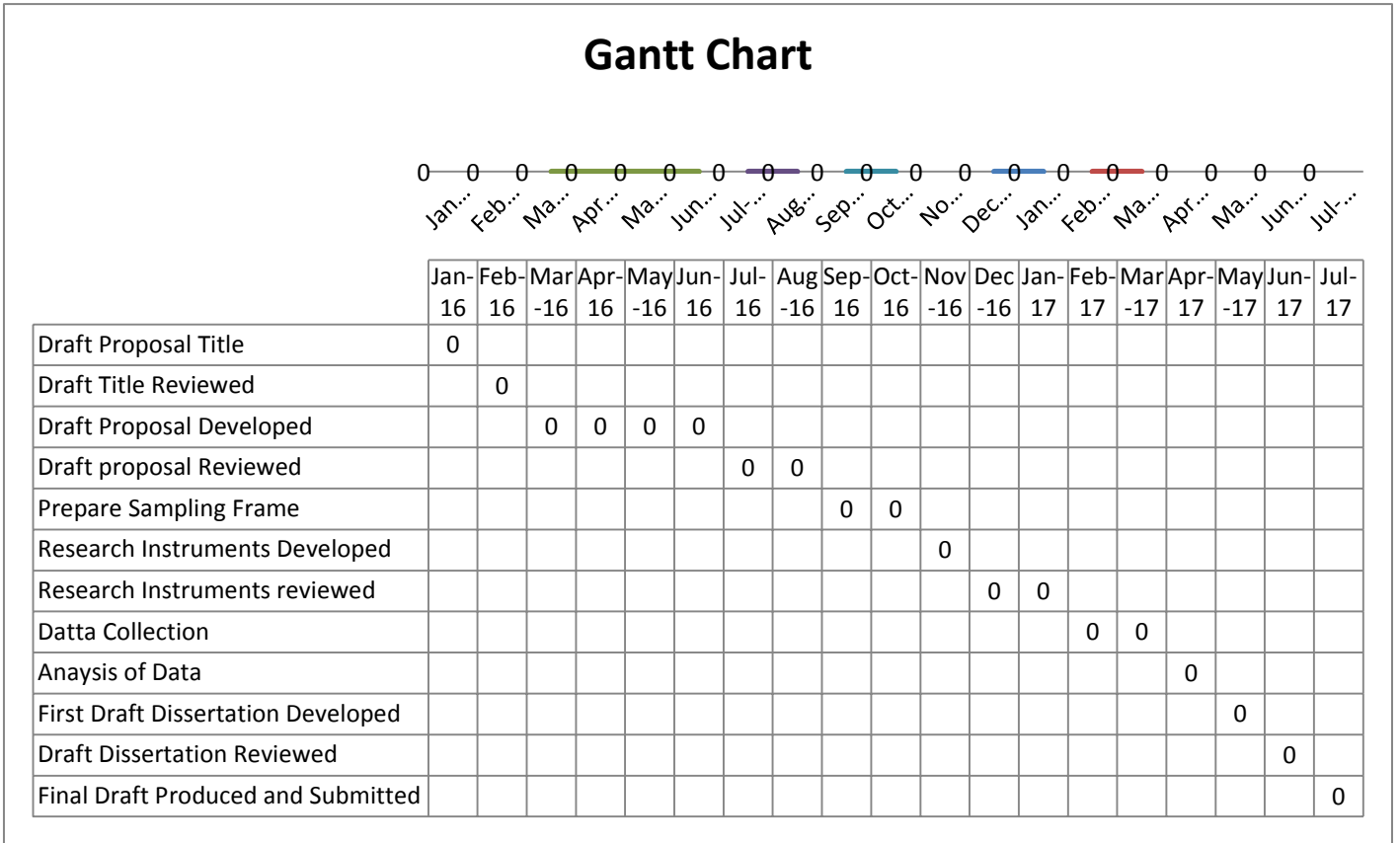
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Gantt Chart



Appendix B: Consent Form

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

IN COLLABORATION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

I have read the consent form and I have had time to consider whether or not to take part in the study. I have been informed that my participation in the study is voluntary and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time.

I understand that as part of the research, audio recordings of my participation will be made, though my name and information during these recordings will be treated in confidentiality and used specifically for academic purpose.

Name of participant (in block letters): _____

Name of parent/guardian (for children below 18 years)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

THANK YOU

Appendix C: Questionnaire for Teachers

It is my great pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to take part in this study to establish the factors influencing the causes of school dropout in Kabwe district. This research is for academic purposes for obtaining a Master of Science in Counselling degree at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

You are required to give relevant and objective information and you are requested to be as honest as possible. The information obtained from you is solely for the purpose of research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. You need not to give details of your identity

Section A.

1. Indicate your gender _____
2. Indicate your position _____
3. Circle your age range (20-30), (31-40),(41-50), (Above 50)
4. Name of school _____
5. Professional Qualification _____

Section B: Causes of School Drop Out

6. What are the causes of school learner dropout in this school?

7. What are the signs shown by a learner who is about to drop out?

8. From your answers in 5 and 6, what do you think are the leading causes and why?

9. In your opinion explain how school dropout can be reduced?

Section C. Provision of Free Primary Education

10. How has the provision of free primary education helped learners to stay in school?

11. What is your comment on the provision of free education in reducing school dropout?

Section D. Provision of Educational Materials

12. Were the available educational materials adequate to help learners stay in school?

13. If yes, explain how they helped learners to stay in school?

14. In your opinion, what materials could be very helpful and why?

Section E: Provision of Infrastructural Development

15. How relevant is the school infrastructure to making learners stay in school?

16. How has the school environment contributed to the learners staying in school?

17. What type of school infrastructure that would have contributed to the learners continues with school?

18. Explain how the identified school infrastructure contributed to learners continuing with school?

THANK YOU.

Appendix D: Interview Guide for Parents

It is my great pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to take part in this study to establish the factors influencing the causes of school dropout in Kabwe district. This research is for academic purposes for obtaining a Master of Science in Counselling degree at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

You are required to give relevant and objective information and you are requested to be as honest as possible. The information obtained from you is solely for the purpose of research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. You need not to give details of your identity

Section A.

1. Indicate your gender _____
2. Circle your age range(20-30), (31-40),(41-50), (Above 50)
3. Level of education_____

Section B: Causes of School Drop Out

4. What are the causes of school learner dropout?

5. What are the signs shown by a child who is about to drop out?

6. In your opinion explain how school dropout can be reduced?

Section C. Provision of Free Primary Education

7. How has the provision of free primary education helped the learners to stay in school?

8. What is your experience of free education in reducing school dropout?

Section D. Provision of Educational Materials

9. How has the provision of education materials helped you to stay in school?

10. Explain which materials has been much of help to retain learners in school?

Section E. Provision of School Infrastructure

11. How has infrastructure of the school helped the learners to stay in school?

12. How has the school environment contributed to learners staying in school?

THANK YOU.

Appendix E: Focus Group Discussion Guide- In School Learners

It is my great pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to take part in this study to establish the factors influencing the causes of school dropout in Kabwe district. This research is for academic purposes for obtaining a Master of Science in Counselling degree at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

You are required to give relevant and objective information and you are requested to be as honest as possible. The information obtained from you is solely for the purpose of research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. You need not to give details of yourselves identity

Number	Main Question	Probe <i>To motivate discussion and clarify points</i>
1.1	What are the causes of school dropout in your school?	I. Who causes these? II. Which are the leading causes of school dropout in your school? III. Why are they the leading causes? IV. What can be done in your opinion to reduce school dropout? V. In your opinion what can you do to ensure that school dropout was reduced? VI. What signs are shown by a learner who is about to dropout? VII. What can be done by who stop a learner from dropping out?

2.1	How has the provision of free primary education helped to reduce school drop rates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Is free primary education relevant? II. Explain how it has helped you to stay on in school? III. Is there any reason why provision of free primary education should continue? IV. What materials have been very helpful to you and why?
3.1	How relevant has been the educational materials in making you stay in school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Are these materials helpful in retaining you in school? II. Which of these materials have been very helpful to you? III. What other materials would want to be provided to make you stay in school?
4.1	How relevant has been the school infrastructure in making you stay in school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. In your opinion the building of more schools has it helped learner stay in school? II. Has the school environment helped you to stay in school? III. How has the community helped you to stay in school? IV. How should the infrastructure be like to retain learners in school?

THANK YOU

Appendix F: Interview Guide for Head Teachers

It is my great pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to take part in this study to establish the factors influencing the causes of school dropout in Kabwe district. This research is for academic purposes for obtaining a Master of Science in Counselling degree at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

You are required to give relevant and objective information and you are requested to be as honest as possible. The information obtained from you is solely for the purpose of research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

You need not to give details of your identity

Section A.

1. Indicate your gender _____
2. Indicate your position _____
3. Circle your age range (20-30), (31-40),(41-50), (Above 50)
4. Name of school _____
5. Professional Qualification _____

Section B: Causes of School Drop Out

6. What are the causes of school learner dropout in this school?

7. What are the signs shown by a learner who is about to drop out?

8. From your answers in 5 and 6, what do you think are the leading causes school dropout and why?

9. In your opinion explain how school dropout can be reduced?

Section C. Provision of Free Primary Education

10. How has the provision of free primary education helped learners to stay in school?

11. What is your comment on the provision of free education in reducing school dropout?

Section D. Provision of Educational Materials

12. Were the available educational materials adequate to help learners stay in school?

13. If yes, explain how they helped learners to stay in school?

14. In your opinion, what materials could be very helpful and why?

Section E. Provision of Infrastructural Development

15. How relevant is the school infrastructure to making learners stay in school?

16. How has the school environment contributed to the learners staying in school?

17. What type of school infrastructure would have contributed to the learners continue with school?

18. Explain how the identified school infrastructure contributed to learners continuing with school?

THANK YOU