

AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT-KUMASI

FACTORS INFLUENCING FEMALE PUPILS' DROPOUT FROM PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN THE BUILSA SOUTH DISTRICT OF THE UPPER EAST REGION, GHANA.



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Leadership) degree**

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DECLARATION

STUDENTS' DECLARATION

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

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development.

NAME: REV. FR. DR. FRANCIS K. SAM

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....

DEDICATION

To my mother, wife and all my family members who have in diverse ways supported me through this journey of life.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	6
1.3 The purpose of the study	7
1.3.1 Objectives of the study	8
1.4 Research Questions	8
1.5 Significance of the Study	8
1.6 Limitations of the Study	10
1.7 Delimitations of the study	10
1.8 Organization of Chapters	11
1.9 Definition of Terms	11
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.0 Introduction	12
2.1 Conceptual and Contextual Review	12
2.1.1 Female Pupils' Dropout of Primary School	12
2.1.2 Factors Influencing Female Pupils' Primary School Dropout	15



2.1.3 Consequences/Effects of Girls' Primary School Dropout	21
2.2 Theoretical Review	23
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	27
3.1 Introduction	27
3.2 Research Design	27
3.3 Study Area	28
3.4 Population of the Study	31
3.5 Sample Size and Justification	31
3.6 Sampling Procedure	32
3.7 Data Collection Instruments	34
3.8 Ethical considerations	35
3.9 Data Analysis	35
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	37
4.0 Introduction	37
4.1 Research Question One	37
4.1.1 Access to education structured on gender lines	38
4.2 Low self-esteem	69
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	70
5.0 Introduction	70
5.1 Summary of findings	70
5.2 Conclusion	74
5.3 Recommendations	75

5.4 Areas for Further Research	76
REFERENCES	78
APPENDICES	83



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Map of the Builsa South District

30



ABSTRACT

The primary intent of the study was to investigate factors influencing female pupils' dropout from primary school in the Builsa South District. Examine the views of participants on female education, ascertain the school factors that influence dropout among females are some of the objectives of the study. The study was conducted using case study research design; hence, qualitative method was used to gain an insight into the perceptions and feelings of the participants. The population of the study comprised of 20 school dropout girls, 5 parents and 5 key informants (one headteacher, one teacher, one Gender Desk Officer in GES, one Circuit Supervisor and one Assembly Member). Semi-structured interview guide was used in collecting data from participants. The results of the study were subjected to thematic analysis as the data collected was mainly qualitative. It was found that participants view that access to education is built on gender lines where males are given extra considerations as compared to females. Moreover, others are also of the view that girls are only good for marriage. On how the school itself contributed to dropout among females, tension in the school such as the use of corporal punishments influenced females to be dropouts. It was concluded that there is still strong belief among persons that the education of girls does not have same importance as boys. Customs and traditions have played their part in influencing some members of the community on these lines. Based on the findings and conclusions, some recommendations included, information and awareness creation campaigns should target community members, school dropouts, parents and encourage them to attach equal importance and investment in girl-child education. Also, the government and non-governmental organizations can establish scholarship and other support schemes to promote girl-child education so as enable them stay and learn in school for a brighter future.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally a number of declarations, conventions, frameworks and protocols have been ratified by countries to ensure that all children are enrolled and retained in school. These conventions, declarations and frameworks include but not limited to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1946 (article 26), Council of Europe - Protocol 1 to the European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1952 (article 2), United Nations (UN) Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959, (article 2), International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 (article 13), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (article 7, 28), Committee of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: General Comments (Comment 13) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention against Discrimination in Education 1960 (article 1) (Right to Education Project, 2014).

In Africa, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights 1981 (article 17), African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1990 (11), Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa 2003 (article 12), the African Youth Charter 2006 (article 13) and the Dakar Framework for Action (Education for All). All these have sought to give prominence to the education of children in the continent (Right to Education Project, 2014).

Ghana is one of the signatories and has ratified most of these conventions, declarations, treaties and frameworks. For instance, Ghana has ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1946 (article 26), the African Charter of Human and Peoples Rights, the Dakar Framework for Action (Education for All) and the

Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, 2013). The Ghana National Commission for UNESCO (2013) has also noted that as of 2013, Ghana was in the process of ratifying the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. The Ghana National Commission of UNESCO had submitted the Convention to the Ministry of Education and for onward submission to cabinet and parliament for study and action (UNESCO,2013).

UNESCO (2005) has noted that in response to the UN declarations, conventions, treaties and frameworks, the world has seen new forms of international cooperation forming around the pledge for Education for All (EFA) within the last two to three decades. The EFA is a global initiative that was first launched in the World Conference on EFA by a number of UN organizations such as UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF). During the launch, participants endorsed a universal access to primary education with the view to massively reduce illiteracy by the end of the decade. With many countries, particularly in developing countries far from reaching the goals of the EFA by the 10th year, governments, civil society organizations and agencies met in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 to reaffirm the EFA commitments by 2015.

The EFA Global Monitoring Report (see UNESCO, 2005) stated that the EFA has six goals in number. These goals are to 1) –expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; (b) ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality; (c) ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to

appropriate learning and life-skills programmes; (d) achieve a 50% improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults; (e) eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality; and (f) improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure the excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills,”(p.82).

The primary aim of the EFA is to ensure that all children have access to basic education so they could better their lives. The goal five (5) in particular aims at removing all barriers that create disparities between males and females in accessing education and to ensure that there is gender equality in accessing primary education by 2015. The goal further seeks to ensure that girls especially have access to not only education but quality education as well. The last goal specifically targets providing quality in all aspects of education such that learning outcomes can be measured.

Aside the above efforts made by the country in ensuring primary education for all is achieved, the government of Ghana over the years have made considerable efforts in ensuring that every Ghanaian child has access to basic education. For instance, the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana makes provision for the education of every child in the country. Specifically, Article 25 (1) states categorically clear that every Ghanaian should have equal educational opportunities as well as facilities for the realization of their right as citizens. Section (a) particularly stipulates that primary or basic education should be free, compulsory and be made available to all.

The government of Ghana in 2008 also formulated the Ghana Education Act (Act 778). Some of the underpinnings of the Act are that any child who attains school-

going-age should be granted the opportunity to attend a course of instruction as deemed by the Minister of education. The Act also stipulates that education should be free and compulsory for every child at the age of going to school in the country. Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDA's are to provide the needed infrastructure and facilities for their population to have access to education and in the event where a child of school going age does not comply to the dictates of the Act, parents of the that child shall appear before a Social Welfare Committee of the DMMA concerned. In a situation where a parent cannot educate a child, the DMMA concerned may have to take up that oversight responsibility of taking care of the education of that child (Ghana National Commission of UNESCO, 2013).

Beside the above two efforts of the government of Ghana in ensuring that all children are in school, the government of Ghana also formulated the Children's Act, 1998. Section 3 of the Act stated unequivocally that no person should discriminate against a child based on religion, race, gender, ethnic origin, disability, rural or urban background, colour or religion. The section 6 (2) of the Act stated every child has the right to life, dignity, liberty, leisure, etc from his or her parents. Section 8 (1) of the Act stipulated that no person shall deprive a child from education, healthcare, etc which will enable the child to realize his or her full potentials (Ghana National Commission of UNESCO, 2013).

In 2001, the government of Ghana established the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The major oversight responsibility of the Ministry is to formulate policies toward the mainstreaming of gender issues in all facets of life in the country with the sole purpose of achieving gender equality or parity in Ghana. This the Ministry does through ensuring that policies geared toward gender parity are recognized and enforced by the institutions mandated to do so. The Ministry was also

to ensure that children and women participated in the development processes of the country with the view to have their voices heard.

According to Ghana National Commission of UNESCO (2013), in the educational sector, the government of Ghana also formulated an Education Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2020. The plan sought to be the pivot within which educational policies for the development of the education sector is situated. Among other things, the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2020 aimed at providing equitable access to and the participation of all stakeholders in the provision of quality education in the country. It also sought to bridge the gap in access to education and improve access to education for persons with disabilities.

Despite all these novel efforts by government to ensure that all children have access to education at school going age, Arko (2013) notes that in Ghana, males are given the opportunity and encouragement to attend school than their female counterparts. The author notes that of all enrolments at the basic level, about two-thirds of girls dropout of school before the reach primary four. That is to say that there are high female education dropout than male. Imoro (2009) noted that the dropout rate for boys in primary school is about 20% while that of girls is 30%. These rates are even higher in rural areas such as Asutifi District and far worst for rural areas in the five Northern Regions.

According to Magwa and Ngara (2015) the issue of girl school dropout has reached an alarming proportion. Thus, in view of government's efforts in enrolling and retaining girls in school, a study is needed in rural northern Ghana to investigate the multi-dimensional factors surrounding girls' school dropout. This study thus, examines the factors that cause the dropout of girls in primary school in rural Upper East Region (Bulsa South District) with the view to guide and give direction to the numerous

policies and programmes designed by government to have every child in school in Ghana.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Ananga (2011), education is seen as an empowering tool for individuals and for economic growth. Education also translates into individuals living a healthy life and is a key determinant for the thriving of democracy in every country. Access to education is therefore, a panacea to poverty reduction and it is always in the development agenda of every country especially in Africa and Ghana in particular. With the advent of the UN declarations of Universal Human Rights and the EFA agenda, there has been a remarkable progress to get all children to school in Ghana.

In Ghana, parents have also recognized and acknowledged the importance of education on the lives of their children (Awedoba, Yoder, Fair & Goin (2003); Imoro, 2009); Braimah & Oduro-Ofori, 2005). This is shown in the annual ritual drudgery parents go through in order to get their wards into primary, Junior High, Senior High, Colleges, Technical Universities and mainstream universities in Ghana. This is a clear manifestation of the level of awareness of the value of education parents have for their wards in the country. As Yokozeki (1996) observed earlier, education can be so powerful a tool that can be used to empower the disadvantaged in developing areas such as in Northern Ghana.

However, UNESCO (2007b) and the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2010) indicated that while there are rising numbers in terms of enrolments, many children enter primary school not to complete before they dropout. Thus, there is a problem shift from getting children into school to children dropping out of school before completing a primary school cycle. Children who enrol into primary schools and do not complete

the cycle of primary education do not realize their full potential in Ghana and this is a complete waste of the country's scarce resources.

Yokozeke (1996) has also noted as above earlier that primary dropout rates over the years have assumed an alarming proportion. The Amman report (Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All) stated that primary school —.drop-out continues to be a major problem in all developing regions, especially sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and South Asia, where less than four-fifths of all children who start Grade 1 reach Grade 4.”

Further to the above issue of child dropout of school is the dichotomy between the dropout rates between boys and girls. Disproportionately, more girls than boys dropout of primary in Ghana. Arko (2013) stated that the dropout rate for girls in Ghana is 30% while that of boys is 20%. Imoro (2009) further went on to add that the dropout rate is even more acute for girls in rural Ghana particularly in the five Northern Regions. The dropout of girls in primary school in Ghana and for that matter Northern Ghana is not just an event but an encompassing process that is least understood. Thus, the focus of this study underpins that until the primary dropout of girls is understood and appreciated, intervention measures will only remain a mirage. This study therefore examines the factors that influence the female pupils' dropout from primary schools in the Builsa South District of the Upper East Region of Ghana.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing school rate dropout among female pupils' in primary schools in the Builsa South District of the Upper East Region, Ghana.

1.3.1 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives.

1. To examine the views of participants on female education in Builsa South District
2. To ascertain the school factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District
3. To identify the home factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District
4. To find out the personal factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were guided by the objectives of the study.

1. What are the views of participants on female education in Builsa South District?
2. What are the school factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
3. What are the home factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
4. What are the personal factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Examining and appreciating the perceptions, opinions and voices of the dropout of girls in primary schools in the Builsa South District will provide fresh insights and

perspectives of understanding the pupils' aspirations. This will mark a complete departure of appreciating the ramifications thereafter in relation to their schooling. With this contextual and empirical understanding of the research objectives this study seeks to achieve, efforts will begin to be put together to find answers which will lead to solutions rather than simply relying on reactions and or actions emanating from compulsory legislations in relation to the education of female pupils. Gathering data particularly from school attendance books will make the picture clearer for intervention measures to be meaningful.

Aside the above, this study will attempt to fill the gap in the literature on the understanding of how female pupils' dropout of school particularly in rural and deprived areas such as the Builsa South District. It is hoped therefore that the findings of this study will lead to the design and implementation of case specific interventions that will address female primary school dropout issues in the district and other similar districts in Ghana. This will help achieve the aims of the EFA and universal basic education goals targeted to promote children's education in Ghana.

Furthermore, this study will provide the foundation that will cushion female pupils who were at the verge of dropping out of school to stay. It will also serve as the basis to support female pupils who have returned to school and those striving to return to school and those who are yet to make efforts to return to school.

The research findings will enable the Builsa South District Assembly and the Education Directorate design or strengthen measures that enroll and retain female pupils in primary schools in the district. It will also provide fresh insights for school heads and teachers to adopt approaches that encourage and motivate female pupils to stay in school till they complete their primary education cycle.

And finally, the study will provide other researchers in the field of children's education baseline information that will support further research in the field. Thus, other researchers can use the findings of this study as their reference point in further research in the area of female pupils' dropout in primary schools in the Upper East Region and the Builsa South District in particular.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The research was only limited to the Builsa South District and Fumbisi specifically. Also, records for the study was a difficulty since most offices in the district do not have proper record keeping mechanisms especially in the case of girls that drop out of school. This affected the study because the researcher may not get the right information that is needed to get the right respondents for the study. However, this challenge was mitigated by meeting the Gender Officer at the education directorate as well as teachers who had enough information on female dropouts. Hence, this made it easy to meet the right female dropout participants who provided the relevant information towards the success of the data collection exercise.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The research is carried out only in the Builsa South District of the Upper East Region of Ghana and its focus is on the factors that influence the dropout of female pupils' from primary schools in the district. The research focusses on the views of female pupils' dropout from primary schools, teachers, headteachers and circuit supervisors and Assemble members who are directly involved in providing education for all children in the Builsa South District.

1.8 Organization of Chapters

The Chapter One constitutes the introduction and background of the study. The Chapter Two reviews relevant literature directly or indirectly related to female pupils' dropout of primary school. Chapter three constitutes the research methodology while the Chapter Four is the results and discussions thereof. Chapter Five presents the summaries, conclusions, and recommendations of the findings of the study.

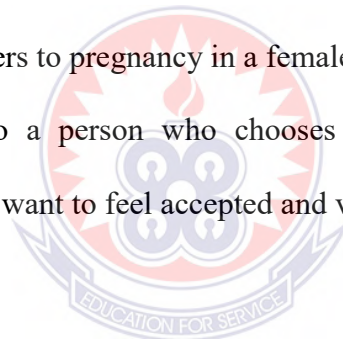
1.9 Definition of Terms

Dropout—refers to a person who has abandoned a course of study.

Early Marriage—refers to both formal marriages and informal unions in which a girl lives with a partner as married before the age of 18.

Teenage Pregnancy—refers to pregnancy in a female adolescent under the age of 20.

Peer Influence- refers to a person who chooses to do something you wouldn't otherwise do, because you want to feel accepted and valued by your friends.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

According to Skills for Learning (2018), a literature review involves a comprehensive review of the literature. It summarizes analyses and evaluates the literature with explanations of what has already been done in the area of the research to be undertaken. Literature is important because it allows the research to know what has already been done in the research area. It allows the researcher to highlight areas or gaps in the literature and hence a justification for the current research to be undertaken.

The literature review also enables the researcher to review theories and concepts that underpin the current research to be undertaken. It allows for the explanation of concepts and terminologies relating to the current research for easy understanding. In this study, literature will be reviewed on female pupils' dropout in primary schools, the types of female pupils' dropout, the factors influencing the dropout of female pupils and the consequences of their dropout. It will also review theories or frameworks that relate to female pupils' dropout of school.

2.1 Conceptual and Contextual Review

2.1.1 Female Pupils' Dropout of Primary School

Perprem and Yiridomoh (2020) have argued that several studies on basic school dropout have often been geared towards some particular directions such as the social and economic background, geographical area, age cohort and more importantly gender. The authors went further to indicate that dropout rates in basic schools have more girls dropping out than boys globally. Perprem and Yiridomoh (2020) opinionated that girls dropping out of school earlier than their male counterparts is as a result of some

cultural ties that force girls to go into early marriage. This is because the benefits that girls complete their education that will be accrued in rural settings is small in nature. Kasente (2004) also contends that girl's dropout at the basic level is also as a result of the fact that parents see the early marriage of the girl child as an escape route to their poverty and so their delay in school is a delay in the parents escape from poverty. According to Magwa and Ngara (2015), also realizes that the issue of girl dropout is a global phenomenon. The authors further noted that this issue is not only alarming but also it is a very disturbing issue.

The definition for "dropout" remains one of the most controversial and thorny issues in the current development literature. This is because what constitutes dropout and how to measure dropout rates are difficult solve. However, Brown (2004) defines girl school dropout as girls who exit primary school before the completion of the study cycle for which she is registered. Similarly, Adala (2016) defines a girl dropout as a person or understudy who pulls back before finishing the study of a course or curricular in school, a college or any other similar school environments. According to Awedoba., Yoder, Fair & Gorin(2003) dropout refers to "a pupil's permanent withdrawal from School," (p.45). Brimer & Pauli (1971) define dropout to mean a girl who leaves school before the end of the final year. The communality in these definitions is that a girl who is enrolled in a primary school is not able to finish and continue to the next level. In this study, a girl dropout is a person who leaves school before the completion year and hence is not able to progress to the next stage of the educational ladder.

Ananga (2011) gave five typologies of dropouts especially girls dropping out of school. These typologies include event dropout, sporadic dropout, long term dropout, settled dropout and unsettled dropout. By event dropout, the author meant that a girl dropout of school because of one or two critical events such the death of a parent, petty

squabbles with school authorities or sickness. Sporadic dropout means that a girl's dropouts of school for a term or two and on temporary bases as a result of economic needs. Long term dropout refers to the situation where a girl dropout out of school from one to three terms with the possibility of returning to school but not to join her original cohort group or mates. Settled dropout is when a girl permanently leaves school but she is engage in a vocation or economic activity while unsettled dropout refers to the situation in which a girl dropouts out of school permanently without engaging in a vocation or income generating activity.

Steward (2004) notes earlier in line with Magwa and Ngara (2015) and others that there is still a really serious challenge in enrolling and retaining girls in school. Only fewer girls survive through the education process. In the Zimbabwean situation, Nziramasanga (1999) also observed similar to the above that the prevalence rate of girls' dropouts of school is highest than boys.

In Ghana, Imoro (2009) stated that while more boys get into school every year in primary schools, more girls rather dropout of school every year. His study which was conducted in the Asutifi District of the Ashanti Region on Dimensions of Basic School Dropouts in Rural Ghana: The Case of Asutifi District concluded that the phenomenon of girl school dropout in primary school in the study district remains a daunting task for educational authorities in Ghana.

Ziyaba (2015) noted that despite the teaming and considerable attempts made by the government of Ghana to have more girls in school in the Upper East Region, especially in the Bolgatanga Municipality, girls continue to lag behind in terms of their education at the basic, secondary and tertiary level as compared to boys. For instance, she observed the government of Ghana failed to meet the Millennium Development Goal 2 by 2015 in the Municipality because many pupils especially girls at the basic

level dropped out of school. Many children of school going age in the Municipality are not also in school.

Similar to Imoro (2009) and Ziyaba (2015), Arko (2013) found in his study in the Kassena-Nankana West District of the Upper East Region that the enrolment of girls in primary schools in the area continues to remain low and more worrisome is the fact that the numbers enrolled keep reducing as the girls progressed in their learning process. Thus, Arko (2013) concluded that there are more dropout rates for girls in primary schools than boys in the Kassena-Nankana West District.

Research by Subrahmanyam (2016) indicates the literature on girls' school dropout of primary school has received little attention and has tended to concentrate only on access to education with the focus on enrolments rather than retention in schools till completion is attained. Given this caveat, the author captures succinctly that despite that globally, regionally and in Ghana enrolments have increased for girls in basic schools, attention or premium has not been centred on reducing the rate at which they dropout before completing their primary or basic education. The author went further to stated that premium has to be given to girls' retention in schools because girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school. This is especially the case for disadvantage girls in rural settings. Girls in rural settings such as the Builsa South District tend to have the least educational attainments and hence the need to place more emphasis on their retention more especially in primary school.

2.1.2 Factors Influencing Female Pupils' Primary School Dropout

According to Subrahmanyam (2016), the factors or barriers female pupils face in enrolling or remaining in school in much of the developing world can be subsumed

into issues, policies or practices that spring from the individual or household level, school or community level and system or policy level.

At the individual or household level, the author noted that poverty with its attendant lack of perceived benefits of girls' education, economic or income turbulence, the illness or death of parents of a girl, parents inability to support the education of their girls, social exclusions and ethnicities, traditional/cultural practices such as early marriages, teenage pregnancies and a general lack of interest in education remains a bane in the enrolment and retention of girls in primary school till completion.

Adala (2016) found in the Sudanese cultural settings that poverty (lack of income) is a major cause of primary school dropout for girls. In the Sudanese situation, a girl is seen as a means of increasing family wealth or income through marriage. The families receive cattle and money as the bride price of the girl. In other jurisdictions, where schooling a girl in primary school goes with a cost such as the payment of school fees, buying uniforms, books, school bag among others, some parents do not see the need to send their girls to school. Preference in many cases are given to boys. This keeps most girls unable to realize their potentials in the long round to contribute their quota to national development.

Ali Yassin (2020) also found that cultural, community and family misconceptions/stereotyping, especially as regarding to girls' early or forced marriage, insulting and beating up of girls, rape and the general insecurity surrounding girls makes it difficult for girls to enroll and complete primary school.

Ali Yassin (2020) further observed that in poor households where parents are not able to cater for the education of their girl child and where such parents demand the labour of the girl, the girl cannot comfortably attend school and hence, her dropout in the process. In another dimension, the parents are even reluctant in sending the girl to

school. Imoro (2009) also found poverty as a factor influencing the dropout of girls out of primary school in his study in the Asutifi District. Imoro's (2009) findings indicated that all the girl dropouts in his study indicated that poverty was their main reason for dropping out of school. Similar to Imoro (2009), in the Asunafo South District in the Brong Ahafo Region, Adam, Adom and Bediako (2016) also found poverty as a factor which forced girls out of school in the district. About 32.3% of the girl dropouts the researchers interviewed that they left school because of the poverty situations of their families.

Iddrisu, Amuzu and Ankalibazuk (2017) also found chronic poverty as a pull-out factor influencing the dropout of girls in primary schools in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana. The authors are of the view that when parents are unable to pay the school fees for their girls, the girls' dropout of school. In other circumstances, when parents are faced with the dilemma of choosing between paying and catering for the education for their boys and girls, often times, the girls lose out to the boys. The researchers went further to state that girls who drop out of school are often not living with their biological parents. They are in many cases victims of divorced parents and once staying with other guardians, they are assigned with more responsibilities at home which leads to their dropout in school. Gondwe (2016) is also of the opinion that poverty is a plausible factor pulling girls out of school. The researcher stated that both statistical and empirical data suggest that richer households have a higher propensity to keep their girls in schools than poor households. Thus, poor households have a limited demand for schooling than richer households.

With regards to the early or forced marriage at the individual or household level, Adala (2016) stated that in a household survey, marriage is often organized in the dictates of a father, uncle or male relative's discretion. And this is often the cause of a

girl child dropping out of school. This is because the girls are often taken out of their villages or homes to another place in a new environment to live with people. She begins to take up new roles and responsibilities in the new environment as a wife. The psychological trauma associated with this, catalysis her exit from school since she is no longer free to do what she wants to do. Garant (2013) and Gondwe (2016) are unanimous with Adala (2016) that early marriage is a major barrier to the educational attainments of girls. They argued that early or forced marriages as intimated by Iddrisyu, Amuzu and Ankalibazuk (2017) in the Tamale Metropolis are common occurrences in Africa to which Ghana is not an exception.

Similar to Adala (2016) and Gondwe (2016), Iddrisyu, Amuzu and Ankalibazuk (2017) also observed in the Tamale situation that early or forced marriages exit girls from school prematurely. The authors argued that in many rural settings such as in the case of Northern Ghana, parents do not consider the education of girls beneficial as they soon get married and leave their parental homes.

Subrahmanyam (2016) further observed that at the school or community level, corruption, with its attendant high cost in schooling, farness of schools from communities, school or community gender-based violence, lack of or inadequate gender sensitive facilities for girls, unfavourable learning environments, inadequate or lack of female teacher-related role models and language barrier in the instructional process deter girls from staying in school till they complete the cycle. Imoro (2009) in his study also found in line with the above that school environment unattractiveness posed as a factor which exited girls in basic schools in the Asutifi District. The author noted with concern that most of the schools that had poor and dilapidated structures had more female dropout. He noted that the school that had a good infrastructure and

with a conducive environment had no dropout and its enrolment had a comparatively higher number.

Iddrisu, Amuzu and Ankalibazu (2017) found that a study in Afghanistan indicated that inadequate or lack of female teacher-related role models posed as a threat to girls enrolling and staying in school. The authors realized that in Afghan, girls are not supposed to be taught by male teachers. Thus, in the event where there are not female teachers in some schools, girls turn to lose out in school. A similar case is presented in Pakistan where girls dropout of school as a result of lack of female teachers in their schools. The authors concluded the presences of female teachers in school is a strong tool in promoting the educational outcomes of female pupils.

Adala (2016) also observed that a myriad of research works leans tangentially to the argument that an unfavourable school environment has a positive correlation with girls' dropout of school. The researcher intimated clearly that a school's climate serves as a motivational factor for the pupils to learn. Pupils who feel they are well protected and with the necessary guidance excel and complete school. Iddrisu, Amuzu and Ankalibazu (2017) are also of the view similar with Adala (2016) that the lack of or inadequate gender sensitive facilities for girls in schools lead to their dropout. In their study, they noted that in the area of extra-curricular activities, facilities for boys were readily available but for those of girls, there were either non-existent or they were minimally existent. This poses as a factor for girls to leave school.

In the area of the fairness of a school to a community, it is observed that the farther a school is to a community, the less likely that girls will attend school. More so, parents are often not interested in sending their girl child to schools which are far from home because they consider the girls as a weaker sex than boys. Thus, girls are not able to expend energy walking long distances to and from school. Parents also nurture the

thoughts their daughters may be harassed sexually to and from school if they are placed in long distance schools (Gondwe, 2016). Mzuza (2013) argued that because of walking long distances to school, girls often attend school lately than boys and hence their reach of puberty age before the complete primary school. The author argued that upon reaching the age of puberty, they drop out of school.

Gomdwe (2016) has argued strongly that teenage pregnancy also poses as a factor that pushes girls out of school. They explained that reproductive health education is a phenomenon that is poorly taught in basic schools before girls become sexually active. As a result, the girls are not able to make well-informed decisions about their sexual lives. This makes the girls to become vulnerable and often get pregnant because they lack the needed information that will help them to make good decisions. Despite the fact that in Ghana pregnant girls can stay in school till they give birth and return to school after weaning the child, most girls have not taken advantage of it. In most cases, girls who get pregnant and leave school never return to continue especially in rural Ghana.

At the system or policy level, the existence of weak or inadequate policies that are poorly enforced on access, enrolment and retention have negative consequences on girls. Poorly enforced legislations on school-based gender violence or corporal punishments for girls, as well as poorly implemented legislation on outmoded or harmful cultural/traditional practices keep girls out of school (Subrahmanyam, 2016).

Quite different from the above factors, Imoro (2009) found that inadequate teachers in schools posed as a factor that pushes girls out of school. The researcher realized in his study of the Asutifi District that in most of the schools that participated in his research, most of them did not have adequate teachers. In many cases, most of the girls dropout of school.

Traditionally and culturally, Adala (2016) noted that girls in most jurisdictions are seen to be only wives and mothers. Thus, girls are socialized to see themselves in that way. Their future is crafted by their parents, uncles and aunts. Girls are hardly involved in the decision-making processes of their families and are only to be seen as obedient to the wishes of their parents and other relatives and in some peculiar cases, they are used as a token to solve some community issues. These traditional and cultural practices seldom permit girls to stay in school till the complete.

Iddrisu, Amuzu and Ankalibazuk (2017) found that girls begin to do household chores at a tender age than boys. In cases where their mothers are involved in paid work outside the home, the girls are more likely to assume more responsibilities to offset the work done by their mothers at home. In many cases, these household chores or responsibilities become so overwhelming that the girls will have to drop out of school to take full responsibility.

Teachers' attitude and practices pose as factors that deter girls from staying in school till completion. Iddrisu, Amuzu and Ankalibazuk (2017) found that in most cases, girls' dropout of school because teachers (both male and female) nurture the believe that academically, boys are more intelligent than girls and hence tend to concentrate their attention to the boys to the neglect of the girls. Teachers also often tend to use bias language in the class which favours boys than girls. Some teachers also perceive girls as kitchen administrators and hence favour boys academically than girls.

2.1.3 Consequences/Effects of Girls' Primary School Dropout

According to Magwa and sNgara (2015) the issue of girls dropping out of school poses as a threat to the development of Ghana. The consequences or effects of girls' dropping out of school have so many ramifications. The girls themselves, their

parents, communities, teachers and the entire nation are affected. Adala (2016) observed that when a girl drops out of school, in the first place, she is denied the opportunity to realize her full potential. She lacks the capacity (skills, knowledge and support) to transit into an independent, influential as well as an economic contributor to her family, community and the country as a whole in the long round. Girls who dropout as a result of marriage are expected immediately to have many children when there is the likelihood that she can suffer some complications in time of child birth. Sometimes, these complications lead to the death of the child and the mother.

Adala (2016) indicated further that as a result of the community pressures that immediately push girls to go into marriage can serve as a trigger for girls to want to escape from such situations and hence become street children at the end of the day with little or no support for them on the streets. In many cases, these girls become victims used for prostitution by bigger prostitutes on the streets. At the end of the line, these girls contract sexually transmitted diseases which they spread among their peers.

Girls that dropout of school too become less productive to contribute to the human resource base of the country. Their contribution to the economic and development of the country becomes minimal because they lack the needy skills and knowledge that will make them more productive at work. At best, they become cleaners, messengers, head porters, among others. They also find themselves in part-time or self-employed situations that does not rake home enough income for them. They thus participate minimally in the labour market. As a result of their lack of skills, they cannot compete favourably with their male counterparts and further widen the disparities between men and women in the country (Adala, 2016). Subrahmanyam (2016) agrees with Adala (2016) that girl's dropout of school can create a situation of

unequal power structures where there is the existence of continues discriminatory gender norms and attitudes in the society.

Subrahmanyam (2016) has also argued that girls who drop out of school as a result of marriage experience more gender-based violence from their husbands. This is because they are not able to accumulate more assets that can enable them to be respected by their husbands. The gender-based violence they experience affects their lives as some experience dizziness, difficulty in walking and some contemplate to have abortions when they are pregnant. Some are more likely to acquire sexually transmitted diseases such as Human Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). They may also suffer memory loss and are not able to carry out their daily activities effectively.

Aside the above, girls' low educational outcomes the country's agenda of achieving EFA agenda in Ghana. This is because girls who drop out of school engage in low wage employment opportunities where they are not able to support their husbands at home to educate their children very well. Research has shown that in cases where there is a dual contribution in the education of children, they are more likely to stay in school till their completion (Subrahmanyam, 2016). Thus, women who are not able to support their husbands in this regard ruin the chances of the government of Ghana in providing education for all person of school going age in Ghana.

2.2 Theoretical Review

In the development literature on female pupils' dropout of primary school, studies such as Max-Neef's (1991); Rwechungura (2014ss); Magwa & Ngara (2015) are theoretically tangential on human needs theories. Thus, in this study, Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Basic Needs Theory was adopted and used. According to Max-

Neef (1991), human beings have some needs which need to be satisfied. Rwechungura (2014) asserts in line with Max-Neef (1991) that these needs necessarily have to be satisfied if that person must function well in the society.

Cunningham (2008); Magwa and Ngara (2015) have mentioned that Maslow's (1943) theory of needs which was developed in the 1940s stipulates that there are five sets of human needs that have to be satisfied. These five sets of needs are physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization. Maslow's needs are arranged in their order of prepotency. The theory begins with the proposition that threatening some basic human needs amounts to a physiological threat which has the ability to make a person incapable of functioning to the fullest in the society. When these needs are not met some reverse consequences can emerge.

Physiological needs therefore comprise of those needs such as food, shelter, air, sleep, warmth, and sex. These needs constitute the most basic human motivator. These are the most sought after needs that a person craves for in life (Cunningham, 2008; Rwechungura, 2014; Magwa & Ngara, 2015).

Not only does a person require physiological needs to be met but safety needs as well. Thus, if the physiological needs are met, the next needs that need to be met are safety needs. Maslow's safety needs include protection, security, law, order, limits, stability, among others. These needs show that an individual needs to be protected and secured. Among some of the practical needs that the persons desires to be secure here are financial security, physical security, protection from all forms of harm as well as all the materials that are needed for the proper survival of the person (Magwa & Ngara, 2015).

Next on Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the belonging and love needs. These needs include family, relationships, works group, associations, etc. These needs are

necessary because they motivate and inspire the behaviour of the person (Cunningham, 2008).

Maslow also identified some needs that must be met. These needs are the esteem needs. The esteem needs are status, achievement, responsibility, reputation, recognition, among others. These needs involve the respect and admirations for others. Magwa and Ngara (2015) have observed that at the school level, boys and teachers have little respect for the girls especially when it comes to their sexual maturation which affects the self-esteem of the girls. Magwa (2006) has therefore, stated that “...as a result girl become less confident even in academic circles. This will then lead to some girls eventually dropping out of school,” (p.37). Cunningham (2008) has argued that persons that meet their self-esteem needs are highly productive and are well adjusted in life. Moreover, in situations of financial constraints where the education of boys is preferred to girls makes girls to lose their self-esteem.

The last of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the self-actualization needs. These needs include a person's personal growth and self-fulfillment. This need refers to the state in which a person can be all that he or she wants to be in life. Maslow stated that what a man (and thus woman) can be, he or she must be (Magwa and Ngara, 2015).

Maslow's theory has several underpinnings and correlations with girls dropping out of school. In the first instance, some girls are denied the right to education where there is a case for preference between boys' and girls' education. Girls also face a myriad of challenges such as negative cultural or traditional practices, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, unfavourable school environments and facilities, household chores and responsibilities, society's preference for boys' education, etc which make girls often lose out of school. Both at the household and school environments motivation is needed for girls to be active participants. Girls also need to be safety through constant

protection both at home and in school for them to attain educational success. Long distances resulting from fear of being attacked by wild animals and rapists often make parents relaxant in sending their girls to far away schools. If girls are not shown love by their parents, relatives and peers, they tend to drop out of school. Forcing a girl to married early puts her permanent psychological state which takes attention completely off schooling, and when girls lack money to buy sanitary pads, they will not attend school because of fear of soiling themselves and they will be mocked by their peers especially the boys. Lastly, if parents do not pay for the necessary needs of girls, they get demoralized and lose out of school. Also, if girls are nor respected, recognized and admired for the good things they are doing, they will become discouraged and dropout of school. In short, if girls' needs are not met, they will drop out of school.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology used in the study. It describes the research design, the population from which the sample was drawn. Furthermore, the chapter provides sampling procedures used to generate the data in the study and data collection techniques. It also explained how data was analysed.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher to conduct a study. The design allows researchers to sharpen the research methods suitable for the subject matter and set up their studies for success. Arko (2013) explains that a research design is the logic that connects the data to be collected and the conclusions that will be drawn based on the research questions posed in the study. In this study, the phenomenological design was used in this research. A phenomenological study is a qualitative research approach that seeks to understand and describe the universal essence of a phenomenon. The approach investigates the everyday experiences of human beings while suspending the researchers' preconceived assumptions about the phenomenon. In other words, phenomenological research studies lived experiences to gain deeper insights into how people understand those experiences. It allows the researcher to delve into people's perceptions or meanings, attitudes and beliefs, emotions and feelings (Denscombe, 2010). According to the Denscombe (2010), adopting a phenomenological design is essential in understanding human experiences. Husserl acknowledged that the source of knowledge from the original experiences of study participants assist a researcher to grasp the essence of a

phenomenon (Dowling, 2007). This description consists of –what” they experienced and –how” they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). This design will help the researcher to understand the factors that led to the dropout of primary school and how that has impacted their lives.

3.3 Study Area

The study area is the Builsa South District of the Upper East Region where there is prevalence of girls dropping out of primary school. The Builsa South District has its capital as Fumbisi. The District was carved out of the Builsa North Municipality in 2012. It was established by the legislative instrument, 2012. According to the Composite Budget 2020, the Assembly is comprised of 31 members out of which 20 are elected members while nine (9) are government appointees. The District Chief Executive (DCE) and Member of Parliament are also members of the Assembly (Composite Budget, 2020).

According to the Composite Budget 2020, the District has an area of land of about 1,208 km² which represents 13.7% of the total land area of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The area experiences a tropical climate of wet season which stretches from May to October every year. The district is bordered to the north with Builsa North Municipal, to the south with North East Region, to the West with Sissala East District of the Upper West Region and to the East with the West Mamprusi District. The district has a single constituency with about 20 electoral areas with a total of 75 rural communities.

The Builsa South District is blessed with a number of resources. The district is said to contain gold, chromites, rutile jasper tale, lime, feldspars, nepheline, syenite and various types of useful clay deposits. The district is also said to have granitic rocks in

communities such as Dogninga and Bachonsa which border on the Sissala East District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. There are also forest reserves in the district such as the pogi forest reserve among others (Composite Budget, 2020).

There are five major fields of occupations carried out by the people in the district of which agricultural related activities constitute about 67.4%. These occupational activities include sales work, production and processing, services and professional and technical work (Composite Budget, 2020).

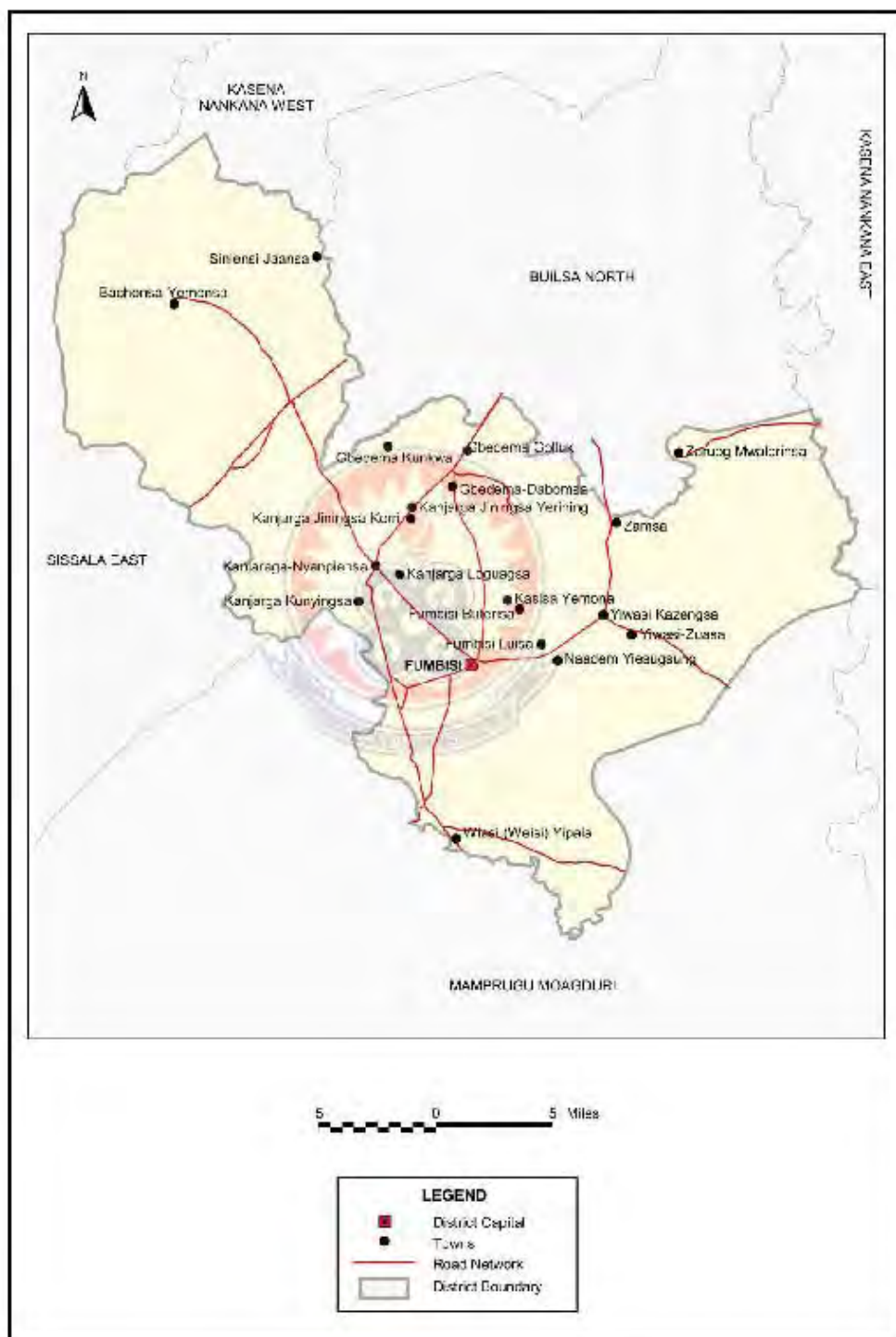
According to the Composite Budget (2020), currently, the Builsa South District has 38 Kindergarten schools, 32 primary public schools and three (3) private schools. There are 18 Junior High Schools in Fumbisi the capital. The district is blessed with about 375 trained teachers and 156 untrained teachers.

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the Builsa South District has a total population of 36,514. The males constitute 49.6 percent while females constitute 50.4 percent of the entire population of the district. About 48.2 percent of the females and 51.8 percent of the males aged 12 years and older in the Builsa South District are currently married. The proportion of the males who have never married (41.7%) is higher than that of the females (27.6%). The proportion separated is slightly higher among males (1.5 percent) than the females (1.3 percent).

There are about 15,974 non-literates in the Builsa South District, with 65 years and over age group having the highest number (2,146) of non-literates. Of those who are literates, 75.0 percent are literate in English only and 21.3 percent English and Ghanaian language only. Male literates are more (4,427) than their female (261) counterparts. The proportion of females (78.8%) is higher than that of the males (71.2%) who are literate in English only. It is also clear that 24.5 percent of the males

are literate in English and Ghanaian languages as compared with 18.1 percent of the females (GSS, 2014b). Figure 3.1 shows the map of the Builsa South District.

Figure 3.1 Map of the Builsa South District



3.4 Population of the Study

A research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common, binding characteristic or trait. The target population for this study comprised of females who dropped out of primary school in the Builsa South District in the Upper East Region where the was conducted. Some key informants were also interviewed. This constituted one school head, one teacher, parents of dropouts, one Gender Desk Officer in the GES office, one Circuit Supervisor and one Assemble Member.

3.5 Sample Size and Justification

Sample size is a group of subjects that are selected from the general population and is considered a representative of the real population for that specific study. Qualitative research suggests that sample size follows the concept of saturation. Saturation is a term that often comes up when we are interested in qualitative methodology and in particular qualitative interviews. The concept of saturation is related to the number of interviews to be conducted in qualitative research. In other words, it occurs when new data does not necessarily add any more insight to the phenomenon being explored. Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon.

Hence, a total sample size for the study was 30 participants, comprising five (5) key informants, 20 dropout girls and five (5) parents of those dropout girls. Primarily, the study comprised two (2) category of participants, thus informants for a special data collection exercise and participants for an interview session. Twenty-five (25) participants comprising 20 dropout girls and 5 parents who are parents to dropout girls

were considered for an interview session. Thus, a sample size of 20 female dropouts in public primary schools were recruited for the study. The sample size for the female dropouts was relatively high as compared to the other participants because they were the main focus of the study on which much empirical findings was going to be built.

The inclusion of the parents of the female dropouts was to solicit the views and experiences of these parents which could enrich the overall findings of the study. The views of the parents were primarily meant to compliment the views of their children (female dropouts).

Five (5) key informants were recruited (one school head, one Gender Desk Officer in the Ghana Education Service office, one Circuit Supervisor, one teacher and one Assembly member). These respondents who are experienced in the research area and have lived with girl dropouts in their community were able to provide the researcher with accurate empirical data.

3.6 Sampling Procedure

Two non-probability sampling technique were used: these were purposive sampling technique and snowball sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was also used in selecting the five key informants for the study. According to Agyedu, Donkor & Obeng (2011), purposive sampling is a procedure in which a researcher seeks to learn or understand the central phenomenon. This sampling technique offered a good advantage as it helped to select the needed key informants for the study.

The snowball sampling technique was the used to draw 20 female pupils who dropped out of primary school in the Builsa South District. According to Arko (2013), a snowball technique is used when the population under study is hard to locate. The

researcher then collected information on the few that could be reached and then sought information needed to be able to locate the others.

On the selection of female dropouts, the gender desk officer at the Builsa South Education Directorate, referred the researcher to eight (8) female dropouts in the district and its surrounding communities. On meeting these dropouts, they offered to talk to their friends who have also become dropouts. Upon their admission to be part of the data collection process, arrangement was made to meet them. At the end, 20 female dropouts were part of the study.

The same snowball technique was used to sample 5 parents of dropout female students. The dropouts led the researcher to their parents while using purposive sampling (based on the researcher judgement on the relevance of particular participants, 5 parents were then identified and selected.

The five (5) key informants comprised a school head, the Gender Desk Officer in the GES office, a Circuit Supervisor, a teacher and an Assemble Member in Fumbisi in the district. These participants formed an informant group which was built based on the special qualities they possess towards the collection of the needed data for the study. The informants were selected using the purposive sampling technique. A headteacher and a teacher from a school in the district with the highest female dropout rate were first selected to be part of the informant group. This was based on their exposure to reasons and experiences of these dropouts on their dropout of school. The gender desk officer was selected because she was prone to issues that affected mainly females in school, hence, with her rich knowledge she was expected to provide very useful information. The circuit supervisor visits schools in the district and as such are confronted with issues of class attendance and dropout in schools. The Assemble member is mostly concerned with the happenings in their communities. The Assemble

member was identified as included in the informant group because there were reportedly more dropout females in his jurisdiction.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The following section provides an in-depth discussion of the data collection instruments. As indicated earlier, semi structured interview guides and Key Informant Interviews (KII) were used as means for generating the empirical data from the participants. Tape recorder and a jotter were used to record information from the respondents during the data collection.

Semi structured interview guide was used as a way of generating data for this study as they would allow the researcher to be flexible over the questions that were asked. Marvasti (2004) intimates that semi-structured interview guides are useful when one is working with an interpretive research approach, in which one will assume that reality is socially constructed and therefore, may rely on the reality of the participants in the setting of their interest.

Since this study is interested in understanding the factors that influence female pupils' dropout of primary school, semi-structured interviews will prove to be very useful. This is because the dropouts will be given the opportunity to express their feelings without being limited by a set of questions. Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon.

According to Chambers (1992), key informant interviews enable a researcher to get specialized information from one or group of persons about a community because the Informants have a specialized knowledge on the issue under study. Similarly,

Chambers (1992) stipulates that key informant interviews involve enquiring who the experts are and seeking to obtain the desired information from them.

In this study, five (5) key informant interviews were conducted. One KII was conducted with the GES Gender Desk Officer, one with an assembly member, one with a school head, one with a teacher, and one with a Circuit Supervisor who are deemed to have in-depth knowledge on the factors that drive female pupils out of school in the area. Each of them was called on phone and the purpose of the study explained in detail to them. The interview date was scheduled individually with them. A consent form was given to those who could read to indicate their interest by signing. Those who are not able to read, the study was explained to.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are important aspects of research and careful consideration of the participants' feelings and sense of personal space would be taken into consideration. The researcher was careful not to infringe on the rights of the participants and to take on the study in a way that does not do any harm to them and their lifestyles.

3.9 Data Analysis

The main goal of data analysis is to reduce data to a manageable number of pages that address the evidence and the goal of the study (Robson, 1993). Data analysis helps in examining and categorizing of data, with the purpose of getting rid of extra and irrelevant information. Data was analysed manually using thematic data analysis. This strategy requires the researcher to organize data, immerse oneself in and transcribe the data, generate themes and code the data and describe them (Kusi, 2012).

The researcher employed phenomenological data analysis. The researcher first of all set aside personal experience of understanding of the phenomena under study. Moustakas (1994), talked about epoche (or bracketing) in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination. The data was collected through audio recording writing. Once the data is collected, they will be organized, bearing in mind confidentiality and anonymity of informants and the dropouts.

Data transcription according to Creswell (2012), is the process of converting audio tape recordings or field notes into text data. The researcher then familiarized with the data by reading through the transcribed data over and over to make more sense and then carefully reduce the data for analysis. The researcher then highlights significant statements, sentences or quotes that provided an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) calls this step horizontalization.

Themes or “meaning of units” (Creswell, 2007) was generated from the significant statements during the data analysis and coded. Coding process is to make sense out of text data, divide it into text or image segments, label the segments with codes, examine codes for overlap and redundancy, and collapse these codes into broad themes (Creswell, 2012). The coding of themes was built upon in relation to the research questions and also for answering the research questions. Participant’s direct quotes was used in both structural and textural descriptions to complete the process of analysis. Inferences were drawn from the respondents by comparing and contrasting with reviewed literature, as well as information gathered from the key informants.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing dropout among females in primary schools in the Builsa South District. Specifically, females in public primary schools in the Builsa South District were selected. This chapter presents the results gathered and provides the discussions. Based on this, the following research questions were set to guide the course of the study:

1. What are the views of participants on girl-child education in Builsa South District?
2. What are the school factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
3. What are the home factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
4. What are the personal factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?

In the presentation in this chapter to help participants remain anonymous as expected, pseudonyms have been used to represent the identity of the actual participants. In this regard, FD -female dropout, KI – Key informant, P -parent.

4.1 Research Question One

The first research question sought to investigate the general views among females on girl-child education in the Builsa South District, hence, the question was posed as –“What are the views of participants on girl-child education in Builsa South District?” The intent of this question was to establish the perceptions of female

students on educating the girl-child. The findings from the analysis of the data were based on the following themes below, were used to answer research question one.

4.1.1 Access to education structured on gender lines

It was identified from the findings that there is general view that most of the participants considered that there was much premium on male education as compared to female education. Respondents expressed the perception on the importance of males instead of females. The response from a parent showed that males are revered than females in terms of who goes to school. This point was buttressed by a parent (P-4)

After sacrificing to see my daughter through her primary education, why must I waste extra money on training her further at the expense of my male child who in future will become the breadwinner of the family be staying at home? The best I can do is to sponsor her junior high school education so that in future she can read and write, that is all [Field interview data, 2022]

Another view from KI-5 was expressed as:

The parents here attach much attention to the schooling of their male children than their females. They are of the view the girls will be married off one day and that her wealth and belongings go to her husband's family but the males bring their wealth to their home. For this reason, they prefer to train the boys than the girls. This is a serious concern [Field interview data, 2022]

A female dropout FD-6 commented that:

My father always tells me at home that educating girls to a higher level is a waste of resources because she will eventually be married off and it is the husband who will benefit most from the fruit of her education. Both parents

don't see why a girl should be educated to the highest level, it is a complete success to spend money to see my brothers through to that high level of education. I have come to understand that it may be true [Field interview data, 2022]

The finding conforms with Action AID (2005) which identified that most parents in the northern part of Ghana see their daughters as being more useful doing their traditionally assigned task than have time to study. Also, according to UNESCO (2003), access to education is structured on gender lines. Who is to be sent to school depends on male/female lines in some societies in Ghana? The report found that most people from such community do not really see the relevance of girl-child education to their lives as parents. According to Apakyine (2004), boys are expected to be the future breadwinners. Boys are commonly regarded as an asset and investment for parents when they are old. This is why boys get preferential treatment in many aspects of life, including education.

This indicates that it is not a national statement to say that boys are more important than girls, it is only a mere perception. If issues concerning the girl-child are carefully looked at as education is concerned, they can also be made the future asset of a nation if not the whole world.

The makes it clear that boys were better to most parent to receive education than girls. Throughout this research the preference for male education to female education among most inhabitants in the Builsa South District has been presented.

View that girls are good for marriage

The responses from participants outdoored the finding that females were better off giving out for marriage, a situation that may consequently result in dropout among females in basic schools in the Builsa South District. The issue of giving the girl child out for marriage was brought up. Commenting on this issue, a dropout student who has been a victim indicated this was done but against her wish. This in anyway present the idea that the society and some of its cultural norms had a part to play in promoting girl-child education in the Builsa South District. A parent(P-3) shared that:

Sometimes we do not feel like giving them out but our husbands won't agree. My daughter who was given to a businessman at age 15 run home one time and complained bitterly about how her husband beat her mercilessly when she refused to have sex with him. She showed me the bruises on her to confirm what she was saying. I felt very sad about this and told my husband and to my utmost dismay he said it was the stubbornness of my daughter and that if I support my daughter, he would throw me and my daughter out of the house. I had to keep quiet after that since I had no other place to go [Field interview data, 2022]

Another view on the issue of female early marriage was male by a key informant (KI-3):

For financial reasons some parents give their children out for marriage. This is true and a major reason why they give their children out. It sometimes surprising some parents look rich men to marry their daughters and for some they thank people by given their daughters to marry when they wish to come for them. Poverty is very high among several families in Builsa South District and for this some 'sell' their daughters in order to help solve some of the family problems through their husbands [Field interview data, 2022].

The majority of the respondents opting early marriage as a factor contending with girls' education shows how serious the problem is. The finding is in conformity with study by Balton (2012) in the Chuchuliga an area in the Builsa North District in the Upper East Region part of Ghana and of similar characteristics with the area of study. Balton (2012) found that the major factor affecting continuity in girl's education is early marriage. Criticizing early marriage Afankwa (2013) remarked that children are the future of every nation hence the need to attach extra attention to their upbringing. The good practices instilled in them will become the very foundation they build their lives or future on. Pushing children especially girls to marry very early means limiting them from realizing what they were to achieve as children to usher them to peaceful and responsible adulthood.

It was also found by Action AID (2005), in some societies especially in Northern Ghana, parents do not see the need to send a girl to school because it is believed a girl will marry in the near future and there is no reason spending resource on her. Mohammed (2011) reported that the practice of early betrothal/early marriage of girls has been identified as a major factor which impinges on female participation in education in many societies. The results from the study showed that early betrothal of girls/early marriage has direct relationship with their participation in the Builsa South District. The study found that early betrothal of girls/early marriage is a customary practice because the people who live in the Builsa South District countenance the practice. Findings from Mohammed (2011) shows that some parents betrothed/married their girls at ages between 12 -15 years even when they are schooling. These girls stopped school and were taken to stay with their husbands in nearby villages. This practice has resulted in lower participation of girls in education at the JHS level.

As the Peace Corps (2008), observed, many still regard girls merely as persons who should get married, with the family benefiting from the dowry paid by the husband's family. Early marriage initiation rights and exclusionary practices may also contribute to parents' decisions to keep girls out of school.

Perceived high cost of Girl Child education

A section of the participants mentioned that some parents had built in an idea that it was relatively expensive in training girls in schools as compared to training males.

A parent (P-3) mentioned that:

I don't think it is necessary to spend much on my daughter's education to continue to senior high school. That money I will pay will be in vain because after completing Junior high school, she will be learning a trade so that she can assist me to cater for her elder brothers' Senior high school education [Field interview data, 2022]

As mentioned by the CYP (2001), that for many families, the direct and opportunity costs for girls attending school are often so high that parents cannot afford to send them. Instead the girls are needed to do labour in the householder work as petty traders or Kayayoos. Poorer and more rural families are least likely to be able to afford the direct opportunity costs incurred in educating their girl-children (GYP 2001).

A variety of socio-cultural factors prevents girls from going to and staying in the school. For instance, it may be culturally unacceptable for girls to have long distance alone to school. Early marriage, institution rites, and exclusionary practices may also contribute to parent's decision to keep girls out of school. Unfortunately, harassment of girls by school peers and staff is an important factor contributing to girls' early withdrawal from school in some countries. Other actions that hinder girls'

access to education include denying pregnant girls or married women access to schools, or scheduling classes at times when girls are unable to attend due to their household chores. This is particularly the case in those countries that lack a comprehensive strategy for increasing girls' education. Girls also receive little encouragement in the fields of Mathematics and science, and for this reason their rates of enrolment are far lower than male peers in these subjects (Peace Corps, 2008)

Girls are only good in helping with family mainstay

Some participants commented on the fact that some girls are compelled to be working to support their homes, a situation that influenced some females to eventually dropout of school. Two parents came out clearly on the point that they made their daughters work while schooling to assist them take proper care of her and her other siblings. They proved their point on how difficult life is or would be without their daughters supplementing family income. A parent mentioned that:

I see nothing wrong with my daughter assisting me in my petty trading. If she should always be in the classroom, who will work and provide for the family?

She too, sometimes, has to stay at home to assist me to generate some income to provide for the family [Field interview data, 2022]

Another parent commented that:

I am a widower. I lost my wife three years ago. I have nobody to assist me cater for the educational and other needs of my six children. As a carpenter, my income is nothing to enable me see her to Senior High School and beyond. For that reason, I decided that my daughter must learn a trade which will be of short duration in order to assist me cater for the educational and other needs of her siblings [Field interview data, 2022]

This support Action AID (2005) observed that, girls are more useful as house helps such as fetching water, collecting fire wood, farm labor, cooking and child mending. Facts from the study have proven clear on how parents involve their girls in services and businesses which in turn affect participation in schooling. In the Builsa South District, most of the parents are subsistence farmers and petty traders. According to Oppong and Abu (2011) these kinds of economic ventures usually yield low returns. Therefore, parents tend to engage the services of their children especially daughters because girls are reckoned as ‘soft’ people who accept stipends as remuneration for services they render. The early and regular involvement of girls in these ventures have created in them a strong desire to practice them regularly on their own as a means of raising money while in school but this affects their participation in school and drive for further schooling (Ankomah, 1998).

In the Builsa South District, it has been realised that parents regularly involve girls in their family businesses like trading because they were reckoned as reliable, trustworthy and skilful people whose participation in their ventures attracts many customers to purchase their wares rapidly contributing to increased sales or turn over. The role girls play in their parents’ businesses contributes to the loss of much of their time for studies and this is something which tends to affect their academic performance. The finding in the Builsa South District conform to earlier studies by Aryeetey (2000) that due to the economic contributions of girls to their families, female education is a low priority in poor families and communities in most developing countries.

Contributing on attitude of parents that affect girl’s education, a report by Mohamed (2011) within the Builsa South District indicates that most girls at JHS spend much of their time to engage in activities not related to their education. Usually,

girls do petty trading in confectioneries or watch video at certain centres late into the night so that they do not study in the evenings. The indulgence of girls in these acts has contributed to the poor academic performance of females at school thereby affecting their participation.

Research question two

The second research question sought to establish the inherent factors within the school that influenced dropout among females in primary schools in the Builsa South District. Hence, the question was posed as “What are the school factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?” The results are presented below.

Tension in school

The responses also showed that tension in the school such as the use of corporal punishments influenced females to be dropouts. The result gathered indicates that regular use of corporal punishments influenced some female students to be absent from school. Commenting on discipline in the school environment and how it influenced female students to be absent from school, it was mentioned by a key informant (KI-4) that:

Our school has rules and regulations as compulsory early arrival of students, neat dressing, respect to teachers and authority, adhering to all rules, not running away from school before time. When a student goes contrary to any of these rules, severe punishment is meted on the victim by canning, giving him/her a portion to weed or kneeling, or cleaning the toilet and urinal. This discourages some female students from coming to school. [Field interview data, 2022]

It was also affirmed by students that the displeasure associated with the nature of punishment instituted in the school for ensuring discipline has in several ways contributed to absenteeism. A female dropout (FD-7) described that:

Some students even run out of morning assembly to their various homes because they were late for school. In our school, caning has been the common means of ensuring discipline although it has negative impact on school attendance. The teachers say without the canes they cannot manage students, we are very troublesome; it is the cane which has been helping them to maintain a calm atmosphere. Without the cane students don't see the presence of a teacher or the existence of any regulation. Somehow, caning is good for us in this school but it also keeps students from coming to school [Field interview data, 2022].

Another female dropout (FD-4) expressed her observation that:

Here, at least students are canned everyday throughout the week looking at the recurrence of the offences that warrant the use of the cane. The offences include lateness, theft, refusing to submit assignment in due date and time, fighting and other forms of indiscipline towards school authorities as heads, teachers and prefects. These offences occur almost every day so it depends. The canning can be severe which may cause students to lose interest in coming to school regularly [Field interview data, 2022]

With regards punishment and or threats of punishments from teachers contributed to dropout. The result shows punishment and or threats of punishments from teachers put some level of fear in students which contributed to absenteeism. Expressing her view on how teachers contributed to female dropout, this was said by a female student:

Teachers are interested in punishment than concentrating on teaching and learning in the school. I am not debunking the idea that punishments help to shape the behavior of students but when it is used excessively, it makes students lose interest in their subjects which make students stay out school [Field interview data, 2022]

The finding from female students indicated that the use of corporal punishment is the strongest factor that contributes to girl-child dropout or absenteeism among students. This shows that the fear and the pain inflicted in students as a way of instilling discipline in the school system influenced some female students to stay away from school. The result conforms to Sampson (2013) that learning environment plays an important role in teaching and learning process. He notes that environment should be relaxed if it is going to encourage effective learning. He maintained that the crucial supportive automatic learning process will not be switched on if there is tension. He emphasized that the teacher has to make special efforts to create a relaxed learning environment that will suit everybody. The nature of the school-student relationship emerged as a salient factor in the decision to be dropout. The results brought out that some female dropout perceived the school as not caring about them and not providing them sufficient assistance in their educational endeavour. Helma (2016) identified that in the absence of care, concern, encouragement and understanding from the school community most students especially tend to dropout.

Distance to school

It was mentioned that most of the villages within the Builsa South District were satellite ones and not closer to communities which had schools. As such students had to

trek long distances to school in order to access education. It was mentioned by a victim dropout that:

I felt terribly tired whenever I got to school in the morning and as such could concentrate less in class. I was often sleeping when lessons were in session. At a point I felt I was wasting my time while I could be engaging myself in productive activities that could earn me some money. *[Field interview data, 2022]*

In another view shared by a female dropout (FD-1), it was commented that: My village is very far from our school; hence, I walk very long distance before I get to school. Before I dropped out, I use to go to school thrice a week, it reduced to twice a week and I finally had to quit schooling. There was no means of transport except to walk such a very long distance to school which bitterly discouraged me from staying in school. *[Field interview data, 2022]*

It can be deduced from the responses of the participants that long distance to school and no means of transport to cover such long distances to school discouraged some females to be out of school or dropouts. Mensah (2016) similarly identified that females in some communities in mostly rural settings in the northern regions missed school because they got fed up with consistently enduring walking long distances to school.

Unattractive school conditions

Unattractive school conditions accounted for dropout among females in Builsa South District. The result indicates that unattractive school conditions such as dusty environments, crowded classrooms, warm classrooms others accounted for dropout among female students. Data from the interviews revealed that the nature of the classroom arrangement of furniture was not conducive for their movement and comfort

in the class. This assertion was made as voiced out by female dropout (FD-9) in the following statement:

Sir, the classroom is too small to contain all of us, so we sometimes find it very difficult moving around especially when it is time for break. The arrangement of the table and chairs are not good for our movement at all [Field interview data, 2022]

It was also revealed that the problem occurred due to the small nature of the classroom as revealed by a key informant (KI-5) who said:

It is due to the increasing number of children enrolled in the school, since provisions were not made for the future.

Another key informant (KI-2) confirmed this by saying:

It is true, what the boy is saying and we the teachers always complain about it. Sometimes moving around to check on their exercises and other things becomes very difficult, pushing tables and chairs around to enable us move freely. Field interview data, 2022]

A third response from a key informant (KI-4) indicated that:

This is not the number of children who are supposed to be in a class of special needs, but circumstances have created it. As a school there should have been a criterion but as it is we are managing with what we have, hmmm!!, it is not easy at all [Field interview data, 2022].

When asked how it affected them in their learning, female dropout (FD-3) retorted:

The classroom is also too dark even coupled with the warmth does not make us enjoy lessons at all.

Asked whether the room had no ventilation, key informant (KI-5) mention that:

There is but it was made of balusters which has tiny air passages that does not allow more air to enter the room especially as we are in the warm season. And looking at the problems that these children have, sometimes they talk about their movement [Field interview data, 2022].

The finding relates with Kunateh (2010) who similarly found that unattractive school conditions contributed to dropout among some females. Kunateh (2010) intimates that educational institutions require huge invest in terms of infrastructure and equipment. He continues that every educational institution thrives on adequate and well-furnished buildings and other infrastructural facilities. Similarly, Mohammed (2011) maintains that schools need resources that promote teaching and learning in the institutions. They need classrooms with adequate and good tables, chairs and cupboards. They also require libraries stocked with assorted books including supplementary readings to support academic programmes of the schools. Schools that offer science and its related courses require well-resourced laboratories to ensure efficient handling of those courses. These facilities are pre-requisite for running educational institutions in this our post-modern world. These facilities do not only fascinate clientele for schools but also enhance effective teaching and learning. This was indicated to be the opposite in some schools in the Builsa South District which influenced some females to be out of school.

Commenting on the class size, this was what key informant (KI-1) said:

When pupils are many, they feel uncomfortable in class. Sometimes, three or four pupils have to share a desk which makes teaching and learning a bit tedious. We have been complaining to our head teacher about this situation, but all to no avail [Field interview data, 2022]

The small nature of the classroom according to responses from the participants was a problem caused by increased number of pupils. While the number of pupils increases, facilities are the same without putting up new structures to absorb the excess. Personal observation of the schools under study showed that comfort living in the classrooms is not the best as was shown in Dadzie's (2003) study in some basic schools in Cape Coast Metropolis. Implicitly, very large class size is one of the unfavourable conditions that hamper the performance of teachers in most Ghanaian schools. With the inception of the Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP, 2005), school enrolment has increased tremendously. In some cases, over 90 pupils in a class are handled by one teacher. This increase in class size deductively brings in its trail problems of ineffective class management, poor supervision of assignments, ineffective teaching, and pupil-teacher contacts. This eventually affects all aspects of school time (academic learning time, engaged time, allocated time and instructional time).

Studies have indicated that schools with smaller class sizes perform better academically than schools with larger class sizes. Kraft's (1994) study –The ideal class size and its effects on effective teaching and learning in Ghana” concluded that, class sizes above 40 have negative effects on teachers' classroom management and use of instructional time. Asiedu-Akrofi (2002) indicated that since pupils and teachers have differences in motivation, interests, and abilities, and also differ in health, personal and social adjustment, and creativity, good teaching is generally best done in classes with smaller numbers that allow for individual attention.

Insults from teachers contributed to absenteeism.

The result is indicative that insults from teachers reduced the interest some students had in school which in turn contributed to dropout among females.

Low encouragement or motivation

Low encouragement or motivation from my teacher contributed to dropout among females. The result shows the extent of encouragement or motivation from teachers is a strong factor that may influence a student to be present or absent from school. The result shows that the extent and nature of interest and care from teachers for students contributed to absenteeism.

Interest and care from teachers were affirmed as one of the factors that contribute to absenteeism. It was agreed by students that low interest and care from teachers and school administrators contribute to absenteeism. Hayford (2008) addressed that developing personal interest in students for the purpose of ensuring that they succeed in their educational endeavor's is an important factor in raising students' interest in school. While they are under the teacher's care. This perception of an effective teacher could be extended to mean that if a teacher "loves" his or her students and his or her subject, he or she will not want to compromise the students' education. Consequently, those who play this role could also be described as academic mentors who systematically nurture the intellectual and moral development of their students.

From the results gathered, it has been seen that low encouragement or motivation from teachers to female students eventually discourage them from school and as such leads to drop out of female students in the Builsa South District. It was also made evident from the findings that when female students are ignored and not given hope, care, concern and encouragement from their teachers this affect them.

Difficulty in understanding concepts taught at school

Difficulty in understanding concepts taught at school influenced some females to be dropouts. The result shows the methodologies used by used by teachers in

teaching was sometime faulty which affected the understanding of female students which in turn contributed to absenteeism of female students.

It was agreed that students found it difficult to understand what the teacher taught them in class. Students accepted that poor teaching skills and uninteresting lessons contribute to absenteeism among students. This implies that teacher ability and preparation is a reason why students stay out of school. This is justified by Stanton-Salaza (2007) that among the teachers-motivated cause of absenteeism are poor lesson delivery, reading from handout, inability of teachers to attend classes and teachers' attitude to classroom control.

Similarly, Stanton-Salaza (1997) found out that, support from teacher and other adults at school becomes more important for the academic success of students from single parents and both parent homes, racial and ethnic minority backgrounds. The effectiveness and quality of the teacher as observed by Shafrits, Kurt, and Philips cited in Hayford (1998), is that some experienced teachers have characterized effective teachers as those who "love" their subjects and their students.

The result is indicative that the ability of teachers to make their lesson interesting influenced their students to be absent from school. These results show that teacher's attitude towards students has strong influence on students' desire to be regular absentees.

Poor teacher-students relationship

Poor teacher-students relationship contributed to dropout among some females. The result shows teacher-students relationship affected the interest some students had in their teachers which contributed to absence from school. In a statement from a students, it was made evident that her teacher dislikes her because he expressed interest

in having sexual relationship with her and she declined. This was described in the statement below. A female dropout (FD-5) mentioned:

My class teacher shocked me one day by inviting me to his house and tried to sleep with me. I became angry, shouted and run out of his house. He felt very ashamed and since then I have experienced clear dislike and maltreatment from him. This situation doesn't make me happy at school especially on days he has lessons with us. I often do not come to school on days we have lessons with him. That has been my reason for absenting myself from school Field interview data, 2022]

The data is consistent to Davis (1996) who pointed that teachers' attitude to students drive children out of school. Presenting evidence to this situation, Agyemang (2006) found that that teachers of Edwenease Rehabilitation Training Centre in Kumasi was arrested for sexually abusing a sixteen-year-old girl. Such conditions in a school drive or put fear in the students. They therefore see it as a threat and decide to get away from school.

Teacher punctuality

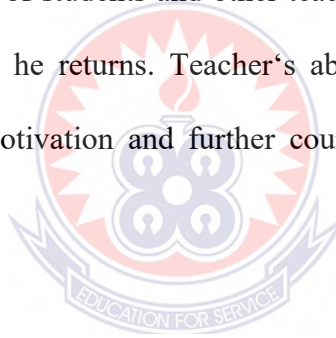
The result shows that some students are observant of their teachers' punctuality and arrival time to school or class and this influenced their absent from school. A female dropout (FD-11) briefly mentioned that:

Just as students report to school late, some of the teachers are also of the habit of not coming to school regularly or even when they come to school, they come very late and leave school early before closing. Some of the students absent themselves from school citing these teachers as examples. This has also been a

common factor contributing to absenteeism among female students [Field interview data, 2022]

Dankwah (2002), found that some students absent themselves from school or become truant when they realized that, they are not liked or wanted by teachers and school authorities. The extent of punishment by some teachers in the school is indeed a determinant factor to students' absenteeism.

Dankwah (2002) identified that non-attendance of teachers to class is also a matter of concern, since absenteeism of teachers has been increasing nationally. It has brought all sorts of educational hardship including loss of instructional periods, inability to complete syllabus, diversion of headmaster's time towards seeking substitute teachers distress of students and other teachers who often must cover up for the absence teachers until he returns. Teacher's absenteeism has been attributed to factors such as lack of motivation and further course in higher institutions (Asibu-Yartey, 2010).



Uncomfortable conditions at school

Large class size

Class sizes have also been identified as another determinant and causal factor for female dropout. It was agreed by participants that large class size affected them in the efficient utilization of instructional time. Concerning large class size, key informant (KI-3) commented that:

As the class size increases, the work of the teacher as well increases. This makes teaching difficult, especially in terms of class management, supervision of assignments, and pupil-teacher contacts. This situation eventually affects their concern for students [Field interview data, 2022].

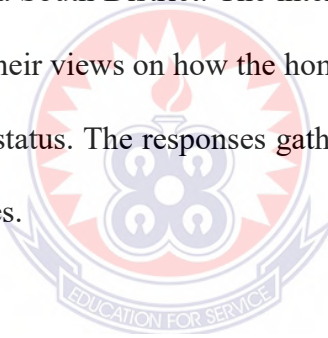
Key informant (KI-1) also said:

A teacher (whether professional or not) who has to work with too large a class size would undoubtedly have his/her performance hindered and this will have a negative or spillover effect on pupils [Field interview data, 2022].

In line with these findings, challenges pupils face in connection with their classroom barriers, two major issues came up. These were small nature of classrooms and poor ventilation of classrooms. This was substantiated by a response from a teacher.

Research question three

The third research question focused on home factors that contribute to female school dropout in the Builsa South District. The intent of this research question was to explore from participants, their views on how the home environment of female students contribute to their dropout status. The responses gathered on this research question has been categorised into themes.



Parental involvement

The responses clearly show that parental involvement in pupils' education in the Builsa South District influenced the education of females; a situation which contributed to female dropout of school. The response from key informant (KI-5) indicated that:

Some parents here have low concerns for their female children's education and leave them to do whatever they like at any point in time. They hardly observe whether their children are punctual to school. Of course, there are a lot of needs to be met, but when children are left to their fate, it does not bring the best results and also have no regard for school attendance [Field interview data, 2022].

Confirming the statement, key informant (KI-4) remarked that:

I feel very surprised at how some parents act when it comes to matters of education. It is very clear they do not see the value of education. As late as 9:00 am, some pupils report to school while their parents look on. On several occasions at PTA meetings, teachers have commented on this situation but from all indications this information has not gone down well with parents hence, they don't comply [Field interview data, 2022].

The statements from the participants show that some parents were uninvolved in their children's education. The research findings intuitively concur with Kafui (2005) regarding the minimal participation of parents in their children's education and home environment. Pupils who need assistance from their parents and in the situation where they lack parental involvement results in pupils staying out of school. This may also contribute to eventual dropout of these female students

Godwin and King (2002) proved that strong parental involvement and home environment in pupils' education are essential to their responses to school attendance, time use, and overall success. They are essential factors in the females' educational processes and outcomes.

Parental discipline

Parental discipline is a vital variable when it comes to matters of female school attendance. The results from the study showed that, participants agreed that parental discipline declined female student's attendance to school. There is a common adage that "charity begins at home." It may be on this premise that teachers believe discipline given to pupils at home will influence dropout situation.

Views from respondents were supported by key informant (KI-2) who commented that:

The home of a pupil has great impact on their use of time. Some parents themselves have no regard for time and their children gradually pick it up. It is often reported by the pupils that their parents either sent them or travelled with them knowing very well their children should be in school by 7:00 am hence, their absenteeism/lateness to school [Field interview data, 2022].

However, key informant (KI-1) was also of the view that:

The level of discipline at home also contributes immensely to pupils' response to and use of time. Some parents train their children in a wonderful way that one becomes amazed how some Ghanaians respect and use time. It is often seen in the school that some parents even come to find out when their children got to school as to ensure they have to arrive on time. In my school, the level of discipline in a pupil's home always counts in his/her early arrival to school and response to school attendance [Field interview data, 2022].

These findings agree with research work from Aremu (2000) which showed that the nature of parental discipline has impact on female school dropout situations in schools. Similarly, Oluwole (2001) found that female students from permissive homes are too complacent, unmotivated, and lack personal will to attend school whereas democratic style of parenting appears to be very helpful in pupils' school attendance. Here, these female students receive punishments that commensurate with the offence committed. Such female students are strong-willed and ready to respond to school attendance.

Financial status of parents

It was seen from the results from the study that respondents affirmed that financial status of parents of females contributed to their dropout status. This is often seen in parents not being able to provide basic needs of their children and this may negatively influence their school attendance. Financial hardship from the view of the respondents is a strong reason why most female children become dropouts. This was supported by views from the participants. This position was advanced by a parent (P-4) as follows:

Life in this town it is very difficult to be financially sustained here. Although education is free, it is not totally free in that sense. Sometimes students go to school on empty stomachs; when asked, they say they haven't eaten. Their parents are not able to give the money for school. For most of them the best way to end their suffering is to stay at home and join their parents to farm or go elsewhere they think help might come from. As this continues for some time, it becomes part and parcel of them and they dropout finally. [Field interview data, 2022].

Another female dropout (FD-3) shared that:

I am not given money for school and I find it very difficult to cope especially when it is break time and I feel very hungry. I have to beg my friends to help me out when they buy food. This is happening as a result of my parent's inability to raise enough money to take care of us. We are ten in number [Field interview data, 2022].

The result confirms studies which indicated that poverty is a major contributing factor to dropout rates among females. For instance, studies by Brown and Park (2002); Dachi and Garrett (2003), Hunter and May (2003), highlighted the link between

poverty and female dropout status. Hunter and May (2003) explained that poverty is the most common primary and contributory reason for students to be out of school, whilst Dachi and Garrett (2003) emphasized poverty as a plausible explanation of school disruption. On their part, Brown and Park (2002) found that in Tanzania, the family's main barrier to sending children to school was financial and their inability to pay school fees.

In a comment by key informant (KI-5):

For some parents the financial situation at home influence their female children engage in economic activities before going to school. By the time these pupils return from selling, they are either weak and have to relax or stay out of school. As this continues for a while it becomes a lifestyle where eventually dropout of school [Field interview data, 2022].

Key informant (KI-1) was also of the view that:

It is common with some parents allowing their female children to engage in domestic chores or hawking before they get upkeep money for school and this eventually affects their concentration and academic achievements [Field interview data, 2022].

Akanle (2007) studied socio-economic factors confronting female pupils in Nigeria. The study revealed that insufficient parental income negatively affects female pupils' school characteristics such as attendance and dropping out of school. The data supports Mokgaetsi's (2009) views that female students from families of lower socio-economic status are more likely to be victims of absenteeism and dropout of school. According to Asikhia (2010), pupils from poor homes are forced out of school and made to engage in economic activities so as to save money for their school expenses. Most of the time, they cannot afford learning resources or materials and are always at

the mercy of examiners during examination period. The persistence of this in the life of an individual pupil may hamper school attendance. Tracy and Walter (1998), cited in Asikhia (2010), corroborated this when they submitted that pupils at the lowest economic level attend school late and are often the least well-served by the school system.

Parental motivation

These findings show that with motivation from parents, there could be possibility that female students would respond positively to schooling. Motivation can be in the form of ensuring that students go to bed on time, wake up early, and leave for school on time or help them in their preparation for school. Responses relating to motivation were also contained in the interview data.

Key informant (KI-1) remarked that:

I am of the strongest belief that motivation and encouragement from parents will positively affect students' response to schooling which will in turn keep them in school. In this way, teachers will not suffer that much because pupils have been made to understand the essence of schooling from home [Field interview data, 2022].

In his contribution, key informant (KI-3) clarified the home background of the child has a major role to play in helping teachers efficiently utilize instructional time. He recounted that:

The home or family background has a major role to play in a stay in school for continuous education. Parents' words of motivation to pupils alone put them on track and help to adjust their behaviour. With the little effort from

teachers greater heights are reached. If parents should help their children by motivating them to respond to schooling [Field interview data, 2022].

The findings from the study show that if parents motivate their children to be serious with their schooling, which helps to avoid low interest in schooling and eventual dropout among females. Arriving early at school will help teachers commence their lessons on time. Research by Fleming and Gottfried (1994) has shown a clear link among parental motivation, and females stay in school. Their study demonstrated that there is a positive linkage between parental motivation and females stay in school.

Educational level of parents

It has been described by many that the educational level of parents can certainly influence dropout situation among females. The responses or comments from the participants were given credence to by key informant (KI-2) that:

Parents' educational level plays a functional role in pupils' education. Pupils whose parents have achieved high educational level tend to do well in school. However, some parents (whether educated or not) do not show concern in their own children's schooling. They allow their children to sleep late at night and do not assist them with their homework. In short, children are left to their fate. [Field interview data, 2022].

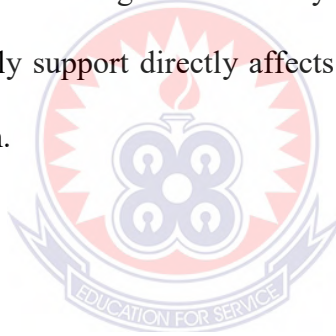
Key informant (KI-5) commented that:

Even some parents order their children to help them in the household chores whiles they are doing their homework. These pupils always come to school either feeling sleepy or may choose not to be present at all [Field interview data, 2022].

The above statements were supported by key informant (KI-1) that:

Some parents do not have time helping their own children to do their assignment because they are well educated. This shows that pupils whose parents are not educated are not pushed so hard to respond positively to learning which may reduce their interest in schooling. Some parents also lack the knowledge of being co-educators to the teachers [Field interview data, 2022].

These findings are in line with Castro and Perez's (2007), cited in Mokgaetsi (2009), that among family factors, the greatest influence is the educational level of parents. They further explained that pupils whose parents have attained high educational level tend to perform high academically since the parents encourage them. Pupils' perception of family support directly affects their performance, especially the mother's level of education.



Family structure

It was agreed that the family structure of a pupil contributed to regular schooling among females. This is concerned with whether the pupil a teacher teaches comes from an intact or a single parent home. This implies that, teachers had observed the difference with respect to time as regards how female students from intact homes and those from broken homes respond to schooling. Emphasizing on family structure, A parent (P-5) submitted that:

In families, especially where the fathers are absent because of divorce, death, or travel, some pupils may not be serious with their education unlike intact families where both parents get involved in educating their children. It has been

observed that pupils whose both parents are with them get serious with school attendance [Field interview data, 2022].

A supporting was presented by key informant KI-5) which indicated that:

Pupils from intact homes, all things being equal are very serious with their schooling unlike pupils from single parent homes. I am saying this based on what I have observed as a teacher in this community [Field interview data, 2022].

Another view from key informant (KI-3) added to the contributions that:

It is very rare to find serious pupils from single parent homes. It is sometimes difficult for such parents to take care of their children, especially when that single parent is a woman and unemployed. Their response to school time is not the best as well as the academic learning time [Field interview data, 2022].

These findings agree with Henslin (2004), cited in Mokgaetsi (2009), that divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave the roles in the hands of a single parent. Single parenthood may arise when either the male or female decides to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock. Saiduddin (2002), cited in Mokgaetsi (2009), posited that domestic quarrels by parents result in child neglect. Saiduddin also believed that all these unpredictable home factors, when not handled well may lead to children being truants or not serious with schooling.

Family size

The results of the respondents agreed that family size was a determining factor in female school dropout situations. This may be true as in large family's attention is shared among more siblings, hence, parents may not be able to help their children with

all their needs to enable them be in school. This sentiment was shared by key informant (KI-2) that:

I have observed one thing for some time now that family size here in this community is large. It is possible to find more than 7 school-going aged children in one family. Usually, the larger the family size, the difficulty in getting them ready for school. In some cases, pupils are left to their fate to fend for themselves due to parents' inability to meet their needs. This seriously confronts their response to school attendance [Field interview data, 2022]

In a submission from key informant (KI-1), he said:

I personally don't see how the family size should be a factor that negatively affects pupils' response to time if one has the means. It may be other factors but certainly not the family size [Field interview data, 2022].

Key informant (KI-1) added that:

When pupils are many in the family, it is difficult to meet their needs and this certainly confronts school time" [Field interview data, 2022].

The number of siblings that a pupil has is assumed to have an influence on his/her response to instructional time. The larger the family size the less the attention and devotion from parents and the more the difficulties encountered by such parents in meeting the needs of their children both physically and emotionally, particularly in this austerity period where the prices of foods and commodities have skyrocketed (Asikhia, 2010). An increase number of children in the family can lead to less favourable child outcome. Pupils from larger families have been found to have less favourable home environments and lower levels of verbal facility (Parcel & Menagham, 2014) as well as highest rates of behavioural problems and lower levels of educational achievements (Downey, 2015).

Parents are mainly responsible for the educational and career development of their children. Any laxity on the part of the parents in assisting and guiding the child may result in academic backwardness and development of unwholesome behaviours such as absenteeism or lateness to school. These directly affect teachers' use of time. The foundation of what a pupil becomes in the society is laid in the home and at the initial stage of life. Parents therefore have important roles to play in seeing to it that their children acquire the appropriate social, psychological, moral, and academic developments.

Research question four

The last and fourth research question focused on the personal or individual factors of female students that influence dropout status among them. The fourth research question was posed as –What are the personal factors that influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?”

Among the personal or individual factors that influenced dropout among female students, teenage pregnancy was the prominent issue that surfaced.

One social factor raised a teacher was teenage pregnancy or unplanned pregnancies. This was supported by another parent and a female dropout. A parent (KI-4) mentioned that:

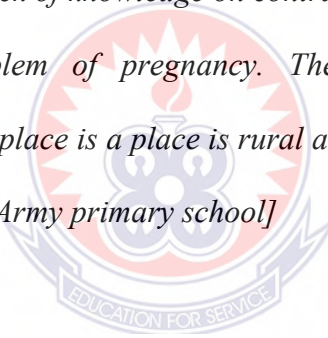
Most of the girls here do not have any information on the use of the female condom and their boyfriends do not know how to use it either so they don't use it at all whenever they have intercourse.

Female dropout (FD-5) said that:

Girls here don't know of any medicine which can help prevent pregnancy. They are totally not known to medicines to prevent pregnancy so sometimes the harm is caused before solution is looked for.

This revelation was supported by the teachers as the all commented on the issue of contraception. They all indicated it was uncommon for teenagers in the community to use to contraception. Different views were shared on why they didn't use contraception. The last teacher talked about inadequate sex education in the community and the use of contraceptives as a major factor for causing teenage pregnancy. This is what a key informant (KI-5) said:

The teenagers for lack of knowledge on contraception always had sex and faced the resultant problem of pregnancy. They don't know anything about contraceptives. The place is a place is rural and illiteracy rate here is very high [teacher, Salvation Army primary school]



Key informant (KI-1) identified that:

Most of the boys can't afford the price of contraceptives although the prices are comparatively cheaper. For some of them affording three square meals is an issue let alone use their money to buy contraceptive for sex. [teacher]

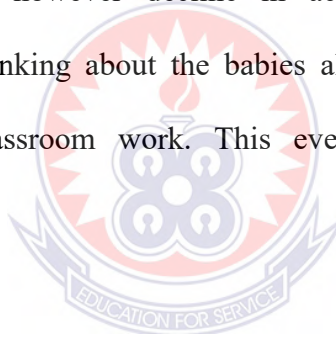
On the issue of teenage pregnancy 100% of the teachers and 99% of the students agreed or strongly agreed teenage pregnancy cannot be left out on the socio-cultural factors affecting girls' education. The issue of teenage pregnancy has become very common in the Ghanaian society, especially among youth who are at the Primary and Junior High School (JHS) levels of education (Kunateh, 2009). In a similar

findings by Kunateh(2009) during the 2009 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), twenty teenage pregnant mothers were among candidates were opted out of writing the examination in the District. The pupils had no choice than to take their pregnancies to the examination centres to write their final examinations. One of the victims was 13 years and the other 15, and they were all determined to write and pass the examinations (Kunateh, 2009). Similarly, during the, 2017 academic year 89 cases of teenage pregnancies occurred among final year female students at the JHS level compared 102 cases the previous academic year in the Builsa South District (Builsa South Educational Directorate, 2015). These students could not write their BECE examination due to their condition. These facts make the issue of early marriage a serious problem that need critical attention.

Results from the study shows that the incidence of teenage pregnancy among school girls affects their participation in JHS education. The incidence of teenage pregnancy has prompted local NGOs, CAMFED (Campaign for Female Education) to be engaged in awareness creation about the dangers and consequences of teenage pregnancy through workshops, debates and drama on the dangers of HIV/AIDS menace and the need for people to abstain and/or protect themselves from its threat. Unfortunately, the time this study was carried-out, CAMFED was just about folding-up their activities in the Builsa South District. However, the activities of the NGOs have equipped girls with information on female reproductive health, relevance of female education and the need to practice chastity. This has contributed significantly to a change in the sexual behaviour of girls and a low incidence of teenage pregnancy in the district. For example, during the 2017 academic year 124 cases of teenage pregnancies occurred among final year female students at the JHS level compared 42 cases six years ago in the Builsa South District. These students could not write their BECE

examination due to their condition. The formation of ‘Virgins’ Clubs’ in schools is contributing to a significant behavioural change among female students to abstain from pre-marital sex or take precaution to avoid unwanted pregnancies as they endeavour to pursue their education.

It was gathered from the study that most of the teenage parents dropped out of school when they became pregnant or delivered. By virtue of the status as a pregnant teenager, some pregnant teenagers may be reluctant to go back to school. Most of these teenagers stay in the house to work to earn some income as well as going for antenatal. In the same vein, pregnant teenagers who are able to go back to school usually have poor academic performance. Some teen mothers are privileged to enroll in school after birth their performances however decline in academic work. Due to lack of concentration in class, thinking about the babies all day long, teenage mothers are disadvantaged in the classroom work. This eventually leads to low academic performance.



4.2 Low self-esteem

Low self-esteem was mentioned as a situation that discouraged some girls from coming to school. For some of the females they were teased of some typical situations or probably mistakes. This influenced some females to be out of school.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the recommendations and the final conclusion of the study based on the key findings. Appropriate recommendations have been made to address the factors that influence dropout among females in public basic schools in the Builsa South District in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Affect female participation in primary education based on the set objectives outlined in the study.sss

5.1 Summary of findings

The following are the major findings that emanated from the study:

1. The first research objective focused on the general views among females on girl-child education in the Builsa South District.

It was identified that access to education structured on gender lines where males were considered to be important as compared to females. There is much premium on male education as compared to female education.

It was also found that there was a view that girls are good for marriage, hence, females were better off being giving out for marriage, a situation that may consequently result in dropout among females in basic schools in the Builsa South District. In this regard there was an exposition that the society and some of its cultural norms had a part to play in early marriages hence affecting the education of the girl-child in the Builsa South District.

There was a seeming perception that there was high cost associated with girl-child education where a section of the participants mentioned that some parents had built in

an idea that it was relatively expensive in training girls in schools as compared to training males.

It was noted that girls were considered to be useful in raising finances in supporting family mainstay. Some participants commented on the fact that some girls are compelled to be working to support their homes, a situation that influenced some females to eventually dropout of school.

2. Based on the second research objective which sought to establish the inherent factors within the school that influenced dropout among females in basic schools in the Builsa South District. The following were captured.

Tensions in the school system influenced some females to be out of school. The result gathered indicated that regular use of corporal punishments influenced some female students to be absent from school. For the fear of enduring some extent of punishments, some females thought it wise to stay out of school.

The long distances to school discouraged some females to be out of school. As such students had to trek long distances to school in order to access education. Long distance to school and no means of transport to cover such long distances to school discouraged some females to be out of school or dropouts.

Unattractive conditions at school such as dusty environments, crowded classrooms, large class sizes, warm classrooms others accounted for absenteeism among students.

Majority of the respondents agreed parents engaged their children in household chores and family businesses. This was known to affect girl's participation in schooling as it affected their studies at home as well as kept some of them totally out of school.

Low encouragement or motivation from my teacher contributed to dropout among females. The result shows the extent of encouragement or motivation from

teachers is a strong factor that may influence a student to be present or absent from school.

Difficulty in understanding concepts taught at school influenced some females to be dropouts. The result shows the methodologies used by used by teachers in teaching was sometime faulty which affected the understanding of female students which in turn contributed to absenteeism of female students.

Poor teacher-students relationship contributed to dropout among some females. The result shows teacher-students relationship affected the interest some students had in their teachers which contributed to absence from school.

The result shows that some students are observant of their teachers' punctuality and arrival time to school or class and this influenced their absent from school.

3. As concerns the third research objective, it focused on home factors that contribute to female school dropout in the Builsa South District. The following findings were gathered.

The responses showed that parental involvement in female pupils' education in the Builsa South District was on the low side which in turn influenced the education of females; a situation which contributed to female dropout of school.

The results from the study showed that, participants agreed that parental discipline declined female student's attendance to school. There is a common adage that "charity begins at home." It may be on this premise that teachers believe discipline given to pupils at home will influence dropout situation.

It was seen from the results from the study that respondents affirmed that financial status of parents of females contributed to their dropout status. This is often seen in parents not being able to provide basic needs of their children and this may negatively

influence their school attendance. Financial hardship from the view of the respondents is a strong reason why most female children become dropouts.

Majority of the respondents agreed parents engaged their children in household chores and family businesses. This was known to affect girl's participation in schooling as it affected their studies at home as well as kept some of them totally out of school.

Majority of the respondents agreed parents engaged their children in household chores and family businesses. This was known to affect girl's participation in schooling as it affected their studies at home as well as kept some of them totally out of school.

These findings show that with motivation from parents, there could be possibility that female students would respond positively to schooling. Motivation can be in the form of ensuring that students go to bed on time, wake up early, and leave for school on time or help them in their preparation for school.

It has been described by many that the educational level of parents can certainly influence dropout situation among females.

It was agreed that the family structure of a pupil contributed to regular schooling among females. This is concerned with whether the pupil a teacher teaches comes from an intact or a single parent home.

The results of the respondents agreed that family size was a determining factor in female school dropout situations. This may be true as in large family's attention is shared among more siblings, hence, parents may not be able to help their children with all their needs to enable them be in school.

4. The last and fourth research objective focused on the personal or individual factors of female students that influence dropout status among them. The following were identified.

Teenage pregnancy which as a result taking care of their newly born babies had to forfeit schooling.

Low self-esteem which was associated with being teased of situation a female had probably found herself.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is worthy to note that circumstances differ from place to place and the social terrain being dynamic keeps changing from time to time just as the factors which precipitate events in the social milieu also change status from time to time.

The study has revealed that factors such as schooling based on gender lines and the use of girls' in family businesses such as farming in a concern that may hinder female participation in education. This turns out to negatively affect female participation in education and eventual dropout.

There is a seeming perception that female pupils in the Builsa South District perceive that schooling has little to offer them considering present circumstances of unemployment and economic hardship.

There was seeming weak parental concern among parents in the district which contributed to female dropout.

Parental attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about the roles and abilities of women, poverty, cost-sharing in education, poor female academic performance, low female participation in learning, girls' involvement in family business, government educational policies and weak institutional social support at the local level turned out as strong factors that conspire to restrict female access and participation at the primary level in the study areas.

These latter groups of factors have negatively affected female participation in education at the primary level and have contributed to the whole saga of low female participation in primary education in the Builsa south district. From the findings, it can be concluded that a combination of attitudinal, socio-cultural, economic, political, operational and institutional factors have conspired to restrict female participation in education at the primary level in the Builsa south district.

5.3 Recommendations

As a way forward, a number of recommendations have been made which if accepted and implemented by policy makers, policy implementing agencies, social support groups and parents as a whole would help to correct the lapses that have plagued female education at the primary level in the Builsa south district.

Based on the findings that most people in the communities revered male education more than female education, there should be regular engagement by government agencies such as National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Ministry of Gender and Childrens' affairs and local representative of Ghana Education Service on gender equality in matter. This will improve the response of parents in helping their female children.

On the finding of low female attendance, Ghana Education Service should enact a policy that will ensure gender quality in the admission of girls at the primary level. For instance, the government should introduce a quote system in the admission of students into primary.

On the finding that some female students dropped out of school for financial reasons local district Assembly and NGOs should provide loans from their poverty alleviation fund to needy parents to enable them improve upon their economic

activities and thus raise their incomes. This will make it easy for them to cater for their female student by providing them with their primary needs and paying for extra class tuition fee.

On the evidence that personal issues such as unwanted pregnancies and low self-esteem influenced dropout among females, primary schools should have clubs, associations and other social groups which seek girl's welfare and development and should regularly organised workshop for girls on their full involvement in educating themselves. When girls are engaged this way, it will help them to have self-confidence to discuss their problems with their parents.

Parents should be educated on the need for girl child education and the need for parents to exercise greater responsibility towards the welfare of their children especially girls. Parents should be made to understand that child marriage is a violation of human right, compromising the development of girls and resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation, with little education and poor vacation training reinforcing the gender nature of poverty.

Parents, especially mothers should often interact with their daughter to find out needs, interest and challenges at any time so that they can take immediate steps to solve any emerging problems their daughters may face in their education. On the part of the victims, it was realized that most of them suffered child-isolation or neglect because they neither had access to, nor the moral courage to discuss their problems with their parents.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

The current study covered only school girls in primary level in Builsa South District in the Upper East Region. A similar study could be carried out among junior

high school students and senior high school students in order to confirm or disprove the findings of this study or contribute further information on this subject. In order to generalize the results of the study, it is suggested that three or more similar studies should be carried out in other communities in the region.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FEMALE DROPOUTS

This study investigates factors influencing dropout among females in primary schools in the Builsa South District. Participants will be briefed on the primary intent of the study before proceeding further.

1. How old are you?
2. How long have been in this school?
3. What is your understanding on girl-child education?
(Prompt: help participants to understand the concept of girl-child education before proceeding)
4. What are your views on girl-child education in your community?
(Prompt: help participants to clearly express their personal sentiments on girl-child education in their community)
5. Please express your general views on the factors that you think may account for dropout among females in your community?
6. Express your views on how you think the school in itself has influenced dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
7. How is the home of female students contributing to dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
8. As a student, what are some personal factors that influenced you to drop out of school?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

This study investigates factors influencing dropout among females in primary schools in the Builsa South District. Participants will be briefed on the primary intent of the study before proceeding further.

1. What is your level of education?
2. What is your occupation?
3. How long have lived in this community?
4. Between educating your male and female children, which of them would be your priority?
(Prompt: help participants to explain their answer)
5. What is your understanding on girl-child education?
(Prompt: help participants to understand the concept of girl-child education before proceeding)
6. What are your views on girl-child education in your community?
(Prompt: help participants to clearly express their personal sentiments on girl-child education in their community)
7. Please express your general views on the reasons that you think may account for dropout among females in your community?
8. Express your views on how you think the school in itself has influenced dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
9. How is the home of female students contributing to dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
10. As a student, what are some personal factors you think can influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

This study investigates factors influencing dropout among females in primary schools in the Builsa South District. Participants will be briefed on the primary intent of the study before proceeding further.

1. What is your level of education?
2. What is your occupation?
3. How long have lived in this community?
4. Between educating your male and female children, which of them would be your priority?
(Prompt: help participants to explain their answer)
5. What is your understanding on girl-child education?
(Prompt: help participants to understand the concept of girl-child education before proceeding)
6. What are your views on girl-child education in your community?
(Prompt: help participants to clearly express their personal sentiments on girl-child education in their community)
7. Please express your general views on the reasons that you think may account for dropout among females in your community?
8. Express your views on how you think the school in itself has influenced dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
9. How is the home of female students contributing to dropout among females in the Builsa South District?
10. As a student, what are some personal factors you think can influence dropout among females in the Builsa South District?