Challenges Faced by Girls who Dropout from Senior High School: the Voices of Sixty Dropout Girls in the Upper West Region of Ghana

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Abstract

There is literature on why and how girls drop out of school. However, very little focus is placed on how the dropout girl is coping with life. The formal training that girls obtain in school today has multiple positive consequences for society tomorrow. The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of girls who drop out of school. The goal of the study is to empower young girls to make informed decisions about their education. The study adopted descriptive study, and purposive sampling was used to pick participants for the study. An interview guide was used to gather information from sixty (60) girls, who dropped out of school in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Data was analyzed using descriptive analysis. The results show that, a majority of the participants regretted dropping out of school and called on the government for a re-enrollment policy.

Keywords: Adolescence, Culture, Dropout, Education, Girls, Performance, School, Teachers

Introduction

There is enough literature to indicate that, girls find their way out of school for various reasons (Anastasia & Teklemariam, 2011). Again, research has it that we can put in place measures to keep our girls in school that will prevent them from dropping out (Danjuma et al., 2011). The various steps outlined by Danjuma et al. (2011) can be applicable to similar situations in any country. For example, investing more in girl's education will alleviate the issue of poverty that pushes girls out of school. Globally, students dropping out of school are increasingly alarming (Alika, & Egbochuku, 2009). On May 5, 2009 CNN reported that, nearly 6.2 million students dropped out of school in the United States (CNN, 2009, May 5). According to the report, most of the cases were as a result of the cutbacks in funding, and some of the students were waiting for an opportunity to re-enroll. It is possible that, the opportunities will arrive when it is late for them to continue their education. Some of the reasons high school students present for dropping out of school may be peculiar to their environment alone. For example, a girl said she dropped out because of a shooting incident that occurred in their school; such scenarios are rear in the Ghanaian environment. The crucial issue is that, a drop out of school is a drop out no matter the reasons or circumstances, and the consequences are similar.

According to Smith, Stone, & Kahando (2012) researchers have invested a lot of efforts to find solutions to the phenomenon of girls dropping out of school. More girls are abandoning their education for various reasons (Smith, Stone, & Kahando, 2012). We need to ask why the situation persists. Smith, et al. (2012) suggested that, we widen access to higher education, for girls in particular. They added that, a woman's education is crucial to her family well-being, community and country. In other words, the education of women and girls can have a great impact on a community and other key areas such as health, agriculture, mining, and industry. An educated girl has more choices available to her which can be translated to mean a better life. In addition, Maithly & Saxena (2008) reported that, high school period coincides with the period of adolescence where the students are not only opened up to opportunities but also too risky behavior. Whatever decisions they make during this time can have life-long consequences on their health and education (Maithly, & Saxena, 2008). They advised teachers to provide information, and counseling to students to prevent them from making risky choices.

When teachers can analyze the educational status of adolescents, and the reasons for which they drop out of the school they can develop effective strategies to improve the situation (Maithly, & Saxena, 2008). The common perception is that, if we neglect the education of girls we will be doing a great disservice to national development. Danjuma et al. (2011) made a suggested that, we can fix the problem of girls dropping out of school, by using the experience of girls who dropped out as guide. Some of the issues raised by researchers on why girls drop out of school are culture, and gender issues against women. Women go into early marriages at the expense of their education because culture suggests that they must marry at that age (Alika, & Egbochuku, 2009). The common perception is that, no matter how educated a woman is your place is in the kitchen and to serve your husband on demand. The family thinks that, they should not invest in the education of the girl to end up in the kitchen of another family. Women helping their husbands and cooking for them is a cultural demand. Failure to fulfill that responsibility will lead to severe sanctions from the community (Alika, & Egbochuku, 2009).

Rani (2011) was concerned that, the low levels of literacy among women in India have a dramatic negative impact on socio-economic development of the nation. Rani (2011) blamed this on the lack of adequate budget allocation for children, and advised that dropouts should be the biggest focus of government because; the benefits of a literate population are multidimensional (Rani, 2011). In a related study, Patrick & Ugwu (2013) narrated instances where cultural practices work against women participation in education. The Ogoni ethnic group in Nigeria encourages young women to lead promiscuous lifestyles (Patrick & Ugwu, 2013). Once the girls are engaged in promiscuous lifestyles, they spend their schooling period to engage in the act that results in pregnancy. A cultural atmosphere like that creates uncertainty among girls about their future, and they see themselves as sex objects for pleasure. Similarly, Smith, et al. (2012) also reported how early marriages affect girls. According to them, the girls lack union experience and resources to take care of their children. The husband becomes the sole breadwinner, and the amount of pressure on him increases as the family expands. The results are agitation within the family, leading to battery and divorce (Smith, et al., 2012). As a contribution to eliminating the dropping out of girls from school Smith et al. (2012) designed a model of women's educational factors aimed at delaying girls' marriage. They stressed the need for education for mothers. They believed an educated mother, will have a positive influence on her children's education. Patrick & Ugwu (2013) supported Smith et al. (2012) when they stated that, women have little self-confidence on how to deal with issues around them. They rely so much on the male counterparts to solve their problems, but with an education they can be independent and self-sufficient.

Skjortnes & Zachariassen (2010) pointed out that, even with higher education women are still suffering from discrimination. They believe that, discrimination against women is both at home and in the school. Whiles culture plays a significant role at home in the area of discrimination against girls and women, and some school curriculums are not favorable for the girls. At the school level, girls are made to believe that, some fields of study are for boys alone (Skjortnes & Zachariassen, 2010). At home, women and girls carry out the household chaos whereas the boys study or do a few tasks. Society knows women contributions are crucial to national development, yet they relegate the support they need to push them through education to the background. It is against this background, Danjuma et al. (2011) stated that we need more investment in girls' education. The statement was made in connection with their experience on how skill acquisition, capacity building, and women economic empowerment impact on women education in Birnin Kebbi. They believe the eradication of gender barriers; will boost the confidence of women and girls alike to take meaningful positions in society (Danjuma et al., 2011).

Revilla (1998, May) revealed that, gender bias in schools is one of the reasons why girls drop out of school. The study cited instances where male and female teachers enact sexist views about the girl child, and enforce stereotypes in the classroom that reduces girls' self-esteem, and widens the confidence gap between males and females. From the discussions, it is clear that cultural practices influence girls negatively. If we can enhance cultural practices to reflect the needs of society, it will indirectly affect the education of girls positively. The men dominated society will not do that; women by themselves should meet the challenges and come out of them. Those who have higher education must build confidence to face the challenges that go with it.

Anastasia & Teklemariam (2011) researched into how the socio-cultural and economic factors affect girls' primary education among the Maasai girls in Loitokitok District of Kenya. They identified the lack of parental interest in education and poverty; prolong drought, and early marriages as factors that affect girls' education negatively. When there is poverty in a family, children cannot pay their fees and for that matter may stop schooling.

Girls are the most affected because parents prefer to sponsor a boy in the face of limited resources than the girl (Anastasia & Teklemariam, 2011). To be able to bring about a change in a long rooted cultural perception requires a holistic but tactful approach. We need to educate the people on the negative influence of culture on the education of the girl, and its effects on society and future generations. We need to emphasize more on the role of parents towards the education of their female children through counseling and guidance (Jones, 2011). To support this claim, Oplatka & Lapidot (2012) indicated that the family, educational institution, society, and the individual self-efficacy determine whether girls will stay in school. The personal attitude towards schooling can determine their success in school. Women must build a positive attitude towards that direction to serve as the basis for success. Challenges will come their way, and overcoming these challenges should come from self-motivation and determination. Whiles we emphasize on the role of parents in sustaining their girls in school.

Jones (2011) in his article, on how women's empowerment framework influence girls' secondary education in Uganda was quick to point out how educational policies intended to achieve gender equity in education is failing. There are procedures in place to impact on the educational experience of girls in school, but very little have been achieved so far (Jones, 2011). We continue to call for a review of educational policies both locally and internationally over the years, but still the phenomenon persist (Dewey, 1938). However, it is still clear that we need new policies that must address the challenges of girls dropping out of school. It should come from both the conservative forces in the community and from the girls themselves (Baum, Yedidya, Schwartz, & Aran, 2014). Let us not resort to the thinking that, girls who attain higher education will despise their religion or undermine their culture and role in society (Baum et al., 2014). Instead, we should see it as helping women and girls to make informed decisions.

Our educational institutions have a role to play in enabling society accept it is crucial for girls to complete their education. The educational system needs to bridge the rate at which girls' dropout of school by improving their guidance and counseling services. The aim of the study is to provide information to serve as a guide for girls in Senior High Schools in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study will provide real life stories to girls in school to enable them make informed decisions when it comes to dropping out of school, and the consequences associated with dropping out of school. The rippling effect is that, women will contribute better to social development. The future of the country will be bright because the future leaders of the nation are entrusted in the hands of knowledgeable and well-cultivated women. The reviewed literature has helped to strengthen, clarify, direct, guide and focus my attention on critical issues concerning girls' education. It provided the background and context for restructuring the research problem to make it more useful, and relevant to the needs of girls in school. However, the gap still exists on what we have done as individuals or as a nation to listen to the story of the dropped out of school girl.

Theoretical Framework

The role of theory in a descriptive study is to produce explanations that are grounded in the subjective experiences of people (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). Since a theory is an integral part of every research process, it is the hope of the researcher that, the theory will guide which aspects of the problem are relevant to the study. The theoretical framework guiding this study takes its inspiration from the Maslow theory of needs which is cited by (McLeod, 2007). The basic needs of girls play a significant role in determining whether they will stay in school or drop out of school. For example, a girl who is hungry may find a way of satisfying that hunger before thinking about their education. Concentration on studies will be weak which will affect performance as well. Likewise, a girl who gets little support from home for her education will feel insecure about herself, and her dreams of finishing her education will be in shambles. It will not be surprising if the study discovers that, the primary challenges of girls who drop out are how to meet their basic needs.

Statement of the Problem

There is a significant gap between what cause girls to drop out of school and how they feel when they drop out. Education is a fundamental right, and should be enjoyed by all, but what are we doing to ensure that girls participate fully in education. We need to educate the girls on the realities of life so that they can make informed decisions. The researcher wants to tap the experiences of girls who drop out of school, with the aim of using those experiences as guidelines for girls who are contemplating on dropping out of school. Therefore, the aim of the research is to identify the challenges faced by girls who drop out of senior high school through the voices of sixty dropout girls in the upper west region of Ghana.

Research Questions

The primary objective of the study is to gather the experiences of girls who drop out from school. The following four research questions are set to guide the study to collect data to achieve the objective of the research.

1. What are the current occupations of girls who drop out of school?
2. What caused the girls to drop out of school?
3. Could there have been another way instead of dropping out of school?
4. Are there any experiences to share after dropping out?

Significance of the Study

The study is a step in the right direction because literature has it that, formal education shifts women upward on the social mobility ladder Naji (2012). The study will benefit girls in Senior High School, their parents, the educational institutions, and the community they belong. Girls who are victims want their voices heard which will serve as a platform for girls to express their experiences, and views (Peppin, 2013).

Ethical Issues Concerning the Study

The most perpetrators of women and girls rights come from religious leaders. They believe education for women, takes them away from home where they should be. They are likely to resist change or modification, so they hold onto the belief that secular education is not enough for girls and their members believe in the idea. On the other hand, parents and guardians are most likely to embrace the change that education is good for girls. They want to see their girls rise in society, just like other girls in different communities. The change will not come easy but can be achieved with perseverance (Golde, 2006). Thus, we must learn to measure up to our responsibilities by dialoging with the religious leaders, and all stakeholders involved in the issue of girls and women education.

Methodology

A research design outlines the basic structure of a study (Creswell, 2009). The best research design for the study is a descriptive survey design. A descriptive study design is compatible with the narration or description of events in a natural setting (Fowler, 1984). A descriptive survey design is also suitable for the study because it focus on the participants' point of view by describing their experiences (Sarantakos, 1998). The population comprises of all girls who drop out of school at the Senior High School level in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The approximate location of girls, who dropped out of school each year in the chosen locality, is not well documented. It is, therefore, not feasible to do a random sampling of the study group. Purposive sampling is used to draw sixty (60) Senior High School girls who dropped out of school in the Upper West Region. The goal of the research is not to generalize the results, but to focus on the particular characteristics of the population that are of interest to the study (Patton, 2002). It can be difficult to defend the representativeness of the sample, or convince the reader that the judgment used to select the units of the study was not biased. Purposeful sampling is also suitable because we were able to contact girls who dropped out of school where available (Dawidowicz, 2010). The other reason for using purposeful sampling is to ensure that, we pick a wide variety of opinions from across the breadth and length of the region (Creswell, 2009). The research objectives suggest that, the most appropriate data collection method for the study is an interview (Kaufman, et. al., 2003). Interviews were useful for getting the experiences of the participants. It gave the researcher an opportunity to acquire in-depth information on the topic (Creswell, 2013). Ten opened questions were used to elicit responses from the participants. During the interview interactions, follow-up questions were asked which were all adequately recorded for analysis. Data analyses from the participants focused on the objectives of the study (Creswell, 2013). Five weeks were used to collect data from the participants. The researcher and other trained personnel in the research field collected the data from the participants (Creswell, 2009). Data is qualitatively analyzed using descriptive analysis. Each item on the interview guide is explained according to commonalities or shared views. Some of the data were organized for an easy explanation using frequencies and percentages.

Results and Discussion

The study analyzed the ten questions presented to the participants by looking out for opinions, and emerging commonalities of views. The results are also organized to answer the four research questions set to guide the study.

What are the Current Occupations of Girls who Drop out of School?

Item (1) seeks to find out how long the girls have been out of school. The number of years is to establish how long the girls were out of school. Even though it is not part of the objectives, it clearly indicated that the number of girls dropping out of school at the Senior High School level is on the increasing side. Table 1 shows that, fourteen (14) years back we had just one dropout girl per the results as compared to a year back where we have eleven (11) dropout girls. The information confirms what Alika, & Egbochuku (2009) said that, globally the rate at which girls are dropping out from school is increasing at an alarming rate.

Table 2 clearly indicates that, a majority of the girls (61.7%) dropped out in their second year of secondary education. (35%) dropped out whiles they were in their first year, and only (3.3%) dropped out during year three. Policymakers can use this as a guideline for curbing school dropouts. The implication is that; they should focus more on those in 2nd and 1st years because they are most vulnerable.

The results from item (3) reports on what the girls have been doing since they are out of school. The results shows that, they are in a number of activities ranging from tailor work, waitresses in drinking bars, housewives, traders, hairdressers, and farmers. Quite a large number (36.7%) of them are doing nothing. The results are displayed in Table 3.

What Caused the Girls to Drop out of School?

Item (4) seeks to find out why the girls dropout of school. They presented various reasons why they drop out from school, some of which are opinions shared by many of the girls. To make the discussion less cumbersome, the researcher avoided repetition of views but presented the shared views as one common view. Twenty-seven (27) girls indicated that, they drop out due to financial problems. They were not able to pay their fees and because of that they were sacked from school. They made a suggestion that, government and philanthropist individuals should sponsor needy girls' education. Twenty-five (25) girls said they drop out from school when they became pregnant. The reasons for the pregnancy are varied. For some, their families abandon them, and they had to rely on men who promise to take care of them but rather ended up getting them pregnant. This reason goes to confirm what Anastasia & Teklemariam (2011) said that, societal pressure was one of the many factors causing girls to stop schooling. However, these reasons go contrary to what Patrick & Ugwu (2013) said about girls getting pregnant whiles they are in school.

According to the findings, culture played a significant role in the dropout of school by the girl child. The current study depicts that, culture is not an important factor for the girl child dropping out of school. The primary factors are poverty, and ignorance that leads them to pregnancy. Some of the girls stated it was as a result of peer influence, whereby their friends lured them into having relationships with men that end up in pregnancy. While for some of the girls, it was their school teachers who got them pregnant. Most of the girls, who got pregnant, ended up in early marriages. Smith, et al. (2012) reported on how early marriages affect girls education. One of the girls stated she was engaged before she went to Senior High School and got pregnant by her husband before she could complete her secondary education. Two (2) of the girls said they dropped out of school out of nothing; they were ignorant of the consequences of their action. There were other reasons such as poor academic performance, losing parents, sickness, and spiritual attacks. Previous research has indicated most of these reasons. Thus, it makes no significant difference from the previous research. It is interesting to note that, while the CNN 2009, May 5 report indicated that most of the cases of dropout were as a result of the cutbacks in funding; this research shows that pregnancy is the primary cause for girls dropping out of school in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Could there have been another way Instead of Dropping out of School?

Item (5) seeks to find out if the girls could have solved their problems in a different way instead of dropping out of school. Twenty-one (21) participants said there was no way they could have continued because they could not identify other options. According to them, their parents were not supportive and at the same time ignorant about the importance of education. In some instances, people refuse to respond to their calls because they are annoyed with them. Nine (9) girls think they should have looked for help from other people in the society. It could have been an appeal for funds from a philanthropist, and other organizations. Seven (7) considered abortion but could not carry it out because they were afraid to die in the process. Additionally, they just did not want to commit abortion on religious grounds. In a related case, three (3) of the participants said they wanted to commit abortion but their parents forbade them to do so but rather encouraged them to keep the pregnancies.

Item (6) seeks to find out whether the girls informed someone either in the school or outside the school about the situation prompting them to drop out of school. The results on Table 5 shows a clear majority of the girls 48 (80%) informed someone about their situation while 12 (20%) did not see the need to tell anyone. Some of the persons that the girls reported their challenges to are their parents, teachers, friends, and religious leaders. Twenty-six (26) informed their family members who could not help them because the pregnancies were in advanced stages. They were angry with them and left them to their faith. Fifteen (15) informed the school authorities. In some cases, the school authorities got to know about the pregnancies before they could inform them. The best decision from the school was to sack them. However, there were instances they were asked to come back and continue their schooling after delivery of their babies. Sixteen (16) informed their friends who either advised them to abort the pregnancy or leave school before the school authorities found out. One (1) told a priest who promised to pray for her. Twelve (12) did not inform any person because they did not want people to know and left the school premises quietly.

There was a corresponding item (7) to find out what the people they told did to help them. There were varied responses as well as shared ones. The girls with financial problem were not assisted to overcome their financial burdens hence they took to flirting with the opposite sex for assistance. The consequences of their choices for survival were the pregnancies. This scenario goes to confirm what CNN, on May 5 2009 said concerning how financial burden has been a major issue for students dropping out of schools including girls. According to the CNN report, most of the cases of dropouts were as a result of cutbacks in funding for students. As the students were out there at home, their hope was for an opportunity to re-enroll.

Some of the girls were asked to learn a trade instead and abandon their schooling. These statements were made because their families thought they could not continue their schooling. Some expressed profoundly the disappointment they brought to their parents, and families. In cases of sicknesses, the girls were asked to come back and continue their education after recovery which they never did. All of the girls did not receive any professional counseling prior to their departure from school. It goes to show how weak the guidance and counseling services are in Senior High Schools, with particular reference to the Upper West Region of Ghana. Most of these girls could have managed the situation better if they had professional support from the schools they were attending. Instead, they were sacked by the same authorities who should have assisted them to manage the situations.

Are there any Regrets after Dropping Out?

Item (8) was to find out if they have any regrets of dropping out of school. The results on Table 6 shows that, almost all of the girls 53 (88.3%) have regretted dropping out of school. While 7 (11.7%) said, they did not regret dropping out because there was no way they could have survived the situation while in school. Thus, dropping out offered them another opportunity to pick up the remaining pieces of their life and make the best out of it.

Item (9) was a supporting question, asked to find out why they regret or did not regret dropping out from school. Some of the reasons they gave for regretting their actions were that, their colleagues are teachers, and nurses living better lives while they have no work doing. The work they find for themselves, cannot take proper care of their needs. They think if they had persisted in completing their education, they could have been employed and be able to take care of their families. They regret because they have lost their chances of gaining a reputable profession. Some are regretting because they have lost their parents trust, and all the money they invested in their education has gone wasted. Those who did not regret their action stated that, if they had attempted abortion they could have been dead. Those with financial problems said they did not want to become commercial sex workers because it was against their religion.

The last item (10) on the interview guide is aimed at giving the participants an opportunity to share any other experiences they want to make public. Their responses were in the form of advice to parents, government, and to other girls who are still in school and may find themselves in the same situations that they faced. They advised parents to be vigilant about their wards activities, and also take care of their wards needs to prevent them from relying on men for survival. They called on the government, to create awareness of the importance of girls' education to parents. According to them, some parents are ignorant about the importance of education to girls. Any least opportunity, parents are quick to withdraw their girls from school because they have a preconceived mind that girls education is a waste of time and financial resources.

The concern goes to emphasize on what Alika & Egbochuku (2009) said that, the common perception is that, no matter how educated a woman is their place is still in the kitchen, and to serve their husband on demand.

Thus, parents are not ready to sponsor the girl child education because it is a waste of resources. The girls also suggested that, the government should advocate the importance, and disadvantage of girls dropping out from school to girls at the Senior High School level. According to them, girls are very ignorant about the consequences until they are caught up in the web. It is also in line with what Rani (2011) said that, the government should focus more on dropouts in its implementing mechanisms because; the benefits of a literate population are multidimensional (Rani, 2011). Others suggested that, the government should disburse funds to needy students to enable them pay their fees. The suggestions confirm what Smith, et al. (2012) suggested that, we need not only widen access to higher education for girls but also put in efforts to sustain them in school. Below are the rest of the findings.

The results in Table 7 indicate that, twenty-six (26) of the participants think it's hard to cope with life situations since they are jobless. They wish they had another opportunity to go back to school, but as was indicated earlier in this report their parents have lost hope and unwilling to send them back to school. This finding is a real manifestation of what Maithly & Saxena (2008) indicated that, Senior High School is a period that coincides with the period of adolescence. During that time, girls and boys alike are opened up to risky behavior that can have life-long consequences on their health and education. Thus, guidance and counseling is crucial in the development of young adults in society. The suggestions are a reflection of what Danjuma et al. (2011) suggested that, we need to invest more in women and girls education to equip them with skills for nation building. In other words, education will empower women economically thereby eradicating gender barriers and boost the confidence of women and enable them to take meaningful positions in society (Danjuma et al., 2011).

Conclusion

My desire to carry out this project is to help girls to make informed decisions about their education while in school. The findings from the study have proofed that, indeed some girls dropout of school mainly due to pregnancies and poverty related cases. They had no way out of their predicaments because the schools, families, and society have not put measures in place to assist needy girls. The measures could be in the form of financial assistance for needy students, or guidance and counseling services for students. The majority of girls who dropped out of school are not in any stable business ventures because they lack the financial support to grow their businesses. They are also regretting a lot because they find it difficult to take care of themselves, their children and family. A study of this nature when brought to the attention of girls will enable them to gain new energy towards dreaming big, starting with their education. Women are the custodians of the children who make-up the future leaders of society. Any attempt by society to neglect the issue of girls dropping out of school is a recipe for disaster.

The issues raised in the literature review are similar to my research findings. The phenomena of girls dropping out of school exist in many societies. The research is a step in the right direction because it will contribute to knowledge. However, the results shifted away from entrenched cultural practices that feature as the primary cause of girls dropping out of school, to reflect modern styles of living. Families are moving towards the nuclear family system, at the expense of the extended family system whereby other relations used to support the family system. With the extended family system, every adult was a father or mother to every child in the society. Today the story is changing every family is becoming nuclear, and the responsibilities of the upkeep of the family lie with only the family members.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends that, we establish clubs in schools where students can engage in group discussions about their welfare. They will need resource persons, who will serve as role models for the students. A new report on high school dropouts in the United States calls for a national re-enrollment strategy that is a laudable idea. Schools conditions need to be made more girl-friendly like appointment of more female teachers and doing away with the physical punishment such as dismissals.

Acknowledgement

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Table 1: How Many Years Since the Girls Drop out from School

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 Year	11	18.3	18.3	18.3
2 Year	10	16.7	16.7	35.0
3 Year	6	10.0	10.0	45.0
4 Year	5	8.3	8.3	53.3
5 Year	9	15.0	15.0	68.3
6 Year	2	3.3	3.3	71.7
7 Year	4	6.7	6.7	78.3
8 Year	3	5.0	5.0	83.3
9 Year	3	5.0	5.0	88.3
10 Year	2	3.3	3.3	91.7
12 year	1	1.7	1.7	93.3
13 Year	3	5.0	5.0	98.3
14 Year	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: at what Level did they Drop out of School

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Year 1	21	35.0	35.0	35.0
Year 2	37	61.7	61.7	96.7
Year 3	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: What is their Current Profession

Profession	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Tailor	8	13.3	13.3	13.3
Waitress	1	1.7	1.7	15.0
House Wife	6	10.0	10.0	25.0
Trader	7	11.7	11.7	36.7
Hairdresser	7	11.7	11.7	48.3
Farming	9	15.0	15.0	63.3
Doing Nothing	22	36.7	36.7	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Could you have Solve it another way Instead of Dropping Out

Responses	Freq
I should have gone back after the sickness	1
I Should have studied harder to improve upon my performance	1
If I had support I may have pulled through	3
I should have informed the head teacher	1
I should have gone back to school	4
I should have relied on men	1
Inform the school authorities to grant me maternity leave	2
Allow me to pay the fees by installments	1
Avoid getting pregnant	7

Table 5: Did you inform someone either in the School or Outside the School

Did you Inform Someone	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	80%
No	12	20%
Total	60	100%

Table 6: Do you Regret Dropping out from School?

Do you Regret Dropping Out	Tally/Frequency	Percentage
Yes	53	88.3%
No	7	11.7%
Total	60	100%

Table 7: Are there some other Things you will like to Share with me?

Responses	Frequency
Add education on pregnancy to curriculum	1
All girls should take their education serious because you might not be lucky to get a good spouse without education	1
There are certain things about life we cannot change	1
I wish I have a chance to go back to school	26
Help drop outs to go back to school	3
Head teachers should be advised to allow girls to continue their education	7
There should be support schemes for needy girls	2
Girls should be careful of the friends they follow in school	2
Education is the only way one can be happy	2
Parents should not devalue their children when they become pregnant	1

It is good to abstain from sex	3
Government should reduce school fees	1
NGOs should support needy girls in Senior High Schools	1
I will plead with those who have the opportunity now to take their studies serious	3
Avoid peer pressure	3
There are witches and wizards who can destroy peoples' lives	1
Girls who dropout should not give up	1
Discourage divorce	1

Appendix A

An Interview Guide for Girls Who Dropped Out from School at Senior High School Level

Instructions

Dear Madam, you are among other girls chosen for a study on the experience of girls who dropped out of school at the Senior High School level. Kindly co-operate by listening to the questions I ask, and respond to each item as objectively and independently as possible. The information that you provide is strictly confidential. Your participation in this study is to present information to girls in schools at the Senior High School level. Thank you for opting to be part of the study.

Are you ready? Let us get started:

1. How many years since you dropped out of school?
2. At what level did you drop out?
3. Current profession?
4. How will you describe what made you drop out?
5. Could you have solved it another way?
6. Did you inform someone either in the school or outside the school that you were dropping out of school?
7. What was their response?
8. Do you regret dropping out?
9. Why do you or do you not regret dropping out of school?
10. Are there some other things you will like to share with me?