

Investigation On The Factors Contributing To Girls Dropout Of School.

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Abstract: Malawi, a southern African country, faces different problems. One of the problems faced is that of girls dropping out of school. It has been noted that most girls who start primary school in Malawi drop out of school. This is a problem as lack of education among the females may lead to delayed development. The following objectives guides this research: To finding the factors contributing to girls dropping out of school. To identify the personal factors which influence girls to drop out of school. To find opportunity and scope for girls to redo their studies. To create an awareness among the public to encourage girl child with her education. In this research both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The secondary data came from literature of different authors while the primary data was collected using a questionnaire, a schedule. This research was conducted as a case study of Steven village T/A Chimwala in Mangochi district. The sample size was 50 respondents which were selected using a convenient method as one of non-probability sampling method. The data analysis was through the use of graphs, tables and pie charts. The findings of the research were the following factors: Cultural factors, School related factors, Economic factors, Family related factors. To address this problem, the Government, NGO's ,other stakeholders and parent or guardians need to work together to readmit school drop outs back to school, developing bylaws to punish those not sending their children to school.

Keywords: dropout rate, factors for dropping out, girl child, implications of dropout, Educational Attainment.

1. Introduction

Malawi, a southern African country, faces different problems. One of the problems faced is that of girls dropping out of school. With the introduction of free primary education in 1994 by the Malawi government, a large number of students were seen only to discover that a few years later the number dropped. A large percentage of girls are seen dropping out of primary school mainly in the senior classes.

In order to implement equality in the access of education Malawi in 1994 implemented free primary school education in order to increase the ratio of the number of children to access education, (Ministry of education, 1998). From this time more children have been continuing to assess the Primary Education but few continue up to Secondary School.

The 2017 constitutional amendment raising the age of marriage to 18, for both boys and girls, was a significant milestone. However, many cases of girls' dropout persist despite the interventions by the Malawi government and Non-government Organizations. About 46 percent of girls are married before the age of 18, and 9 percent before the age of 15. The main drivers of child marriage are poverty, culture, religious and peer pressure. Adolescents are sometimes exposed to sexual activity at initiation ceremonies, which can lead to sex with peers and early pregnancy resulting in school dropouts. Malawi girls face educational barriers that are both culture and practical (Graome Robert, 2014). Educating girls are not only beneficial to the individual but also to the community, family, nation and economy.

Education is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty, give people opportunity to improve their lives and

raise their voice, promotes harmonious co-existence, improve health, productivity and foster participation in civil society (United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2005). Mac-William and Kwamena-Poh (1975) echoes that the main purpose of education whether formal or informal is to produce people who will be useful members of society. Hence, educational attainment has long been at the forefront of development policies (Westberg, 2010)

2. LITERATURE SURVEY.

Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa with population density of 105 persons per square kilometer and estimated population of 12.8 million in 2006 and about 17 million in 2016. Women constitute more than half the population and are disproportionately represented amongst the poor and ultra-poor. Dropout is an issue in educational systems that have stimulated the interest of many professional academicians and the public in general. Most of the countries in the world are experiencing this phenomenon of dropout more of it is developing countries. Major factors affecting girls' education which result dropouts from school child marriage, early pregnancy and long distance from home to school, responsibilities, peer pressure, sexual exploitation and poverty.

In a study done by Lana Chikhungu, Esme Kadzamira, Lizzie Chiwawula and Elizabeth Meke titled Tackling girls dropping out of school in Malawi they come up with some factors that were also found in a research done by Grace C. Gondwe St.Cloud State University titled Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Drop Out from Primary Schools, in Nkhata-Bay South District, Malawi .

3. PROBLEM DEFINITION.

Malawi is one of the developing countries in Africa. For development to accelerate, there is need to put much emphasis on girl education. As a country, it faces different challenges pertaining to girl education. It has been noted that more girls are dropping out of school. This research therefore will try to bring a better understanding on why more girls drop out of school. Again this research will also provide ways of how to reduce or even stop girls from dropping out of school.

4. METHODOLOGY.

In this section we will be looking on the plan outlined as well as the methods used. We will be considering the population of the study, sample size, sources of data and sampling area.

5. POPULATION OF THE STUDY.

All items in any field of inquiry constitute a 'Universe' or 'Population.' C.R Kothari, research methodology revised edition. In this study the universe will be all the people from Steven and Chiwawula villages. The sampling unit are the people of Steven village and the teacher working in the surrounding primary and secondary schools. This area has a population of 11902 people. (Taken from Asalaam Clinic data of 2018). Out of this population only 50 people will be selected since it is too large for the study. This research targets parents, guardians, teachers and students especially those in the senior classes in primary school.

6. SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sampling procedure is the name or other identification of the specific process by which the units of the sample have been selected. In this study, the samples will be those parents and guardians teachers and students. There are different sampling procedures and in this study we are going to use the following:

6.1 INCIDENTAL SAMPLING METHOD

The term incidental or accidental sampling is applied to those samples that are taken because they are most frequently available, i.e. this refers to groups which are used as samples of a population because they are readily available or because the researcher is unable to employ more acceptable sampling methods (Yogesh Kumar Singh, Fundamentals of Research Methodology and Statistics). During this study, respondents will be found and used according to their availability.

6.2 SNOW BALL SAMPLING METHOD

In snowball sampling, you begin by identifying someone who meets the criteria for inclusion in your study. You then ask them to recommend others who they may know who also meet the criteria. Although this method would hardly lead to representative samples, there are times when it may be the best method available. Snowball sampling is especially useful when you are trying to reach populations that are inaccessible or hard to find.

7. SAMPLE SIZE

In this study a sample of 50 respondents will be selected from Steven village and the surrounding villages and schools.. For this purpose, the participants of the study will be students, teachers, parents, principals, parent-teacher

association members, supervisors. Twenty primary school students (10 boys and 10 girls), ten school teachers (including school directors) and twenty parents will interviewed for the study. That made the total research participants fifty-five.

8. SOURCES OF DATA

The data in this research will be collected from parents, guardians students and teachers from the surrounding villages and schools. Some of the data will come from articles written by other researchers and writers.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS.

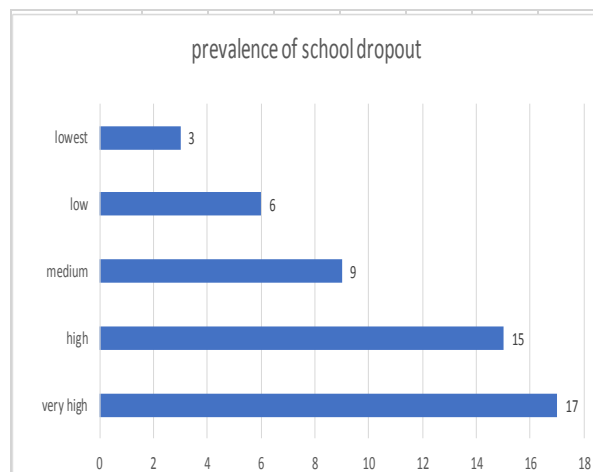


FIGURE 1 CLASSIFICATION OF DATA BASED ON PREVALENCE OF DROPOUT.

The above figure illustrates that there is high prevalence of girls dropping out of school. As seen in the figure above about 17 respondents indicated very high, 15 of them they indicated high. With this indeed it tells us that the problem is high in this area. by looking at those figures one can easily say that Chimwala area has a problem of girl's school drop-out.

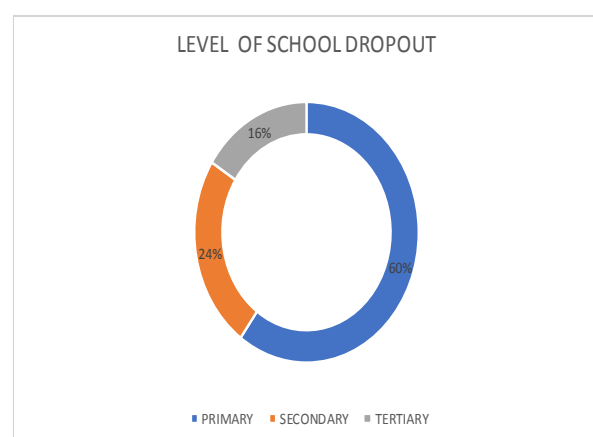


Figure 2: CLASSIFICATION OF DATA BASED ON PREVALENCE OF SCHOOL DROPOUT.

Looking at the level at which most girls are likely to drop out of school, the above figure indicates that 60% of the respondents said that most girls drop out in primary school, 24% say that they drop in secondary school and lastly 16% said that they drop out of school in tertiary education. There are some factors that contribute for those in primary to

dropout more than other levels like distance to school, house hold chores and other factors

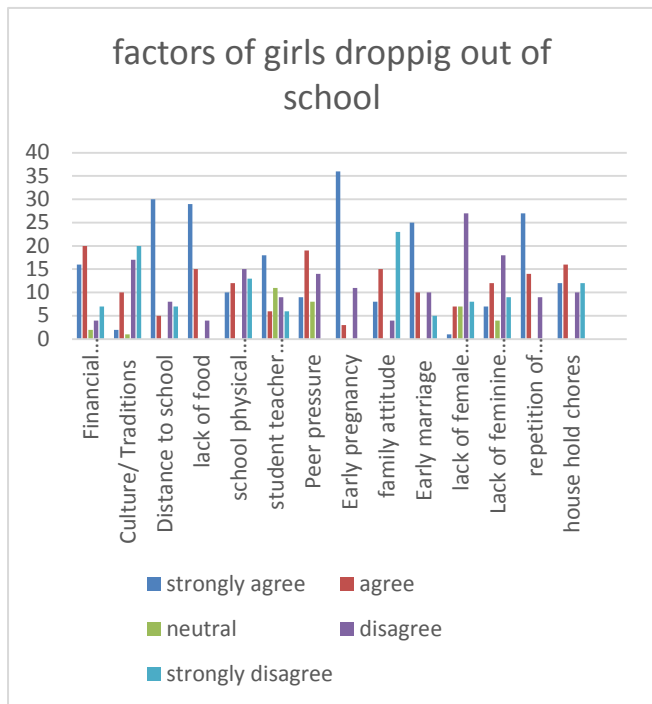


FIGURE 3 CLASSIFICATION OF DATA BASED ON FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO GIRLS DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL.

The above table and figure give a picture of the causes of girls dropping out of school. Taking a closer look on them we will see that most of the respondents responded positively towards the following factors. Financial challenges, Distance to school, Lack of food Student teacher relationship, Peer pressure, Early pregnancies, Early marriages, Repetition of classes and lastly house hold chores.

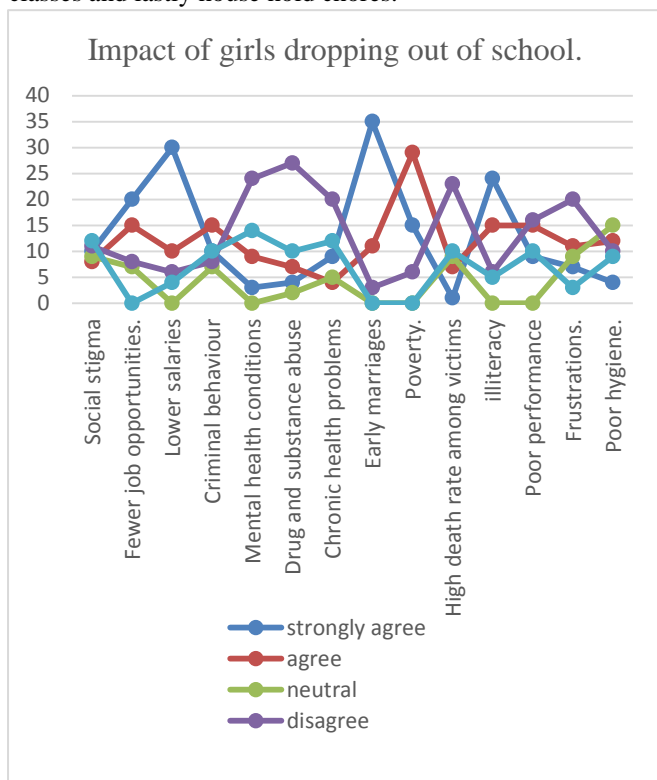


FIGURE 3. CLASSIFICATION OF DATA BASED ON THE IMPACT OF GIRLS DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL.

The figure above is trying to show the impact of girls dropping out of school. This figure explains that those girls that drop out of school are prone to fewer job opportunities, lower salaries, early marriages, poverty and illiteracy.

9. FACTORS FOUND.

1. Financial challenges.

Most girls dropout of school because of lack of resources. They may be lacking school fees, uniform, writing materials and other things necessary. With the limited resources the family may have they prefer to educate male child. Due to financial challenges some girls may drop-out just to get employed as domestic worker with an aim of helping their families.

2. Distance to school.

This also plays a role in girls dropout of school. Looking at this area we will see that secondary schools are far from the reach of most girls. Most of them walk long distances and get to school tired or late. This affects their performance leading to drop-out.

3. Lack of food.

Mostly Malawian girls take motherly role. most of the time they may abandon school just to follow their mother in search for food since most men around lake Malombe like to be eating from restaurants and tea rooms forgetting about their families.

4. Student teacher relationship.

Most teachers around this area have negative attitude towards girls as they think that they are less intelligent and again that they are just passing time so that they can get married.

5. Peer pressure.

It has been noted that some girls imitate what others are doing in order that they can socialize with that group. As such girls dropout of school and get married or start working as domestic workers.

6. Early pregnancies.

In this area most girls loose hope when they become pregnant. They don't see any future as a result they abandon school and concentrate on solving the issue at hand. Even though this area has a program that re-introduces girls into school, they show no interest and continue living as dropouts.

This research went on to find out what impact can this bring to the girls. Some of the impact found are as follows: Fewer job opportunities, lower salaries, early marriages, poverty and illiteracy. This is coming because they will become illiterate leading them to be unskilled laborers

10. CONCLUSION.

This research was conducted to investigate the factors contributing to girls dropping out of school. It has been noted that most girls drop out of school than boys. Hence the need to investigate the factors that contribute to their dropout. The factors found were, Financial challenges, Distance to school, Lack of food, Student teacher relationship, Peer pressure,

Early pregnancies, Early marriages, Repetition of classes and lastly house hold chores. It has also been noted that with school dropout has some impacts. Some of the impacts found were Fewer job opportunities, lower salaries, early marriages, poverty and illiteracy. The Malawi government, Non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders must work together to solve the challenges that these girls face for them to drop out of school. When this is done we will be able to see a lot of girls being retained in school and again it can be easy to re- introduce them back to school. This can reduce the numbers of illiterates in Malawi.

Author Profile



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