

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND STUDENTS DROPOUT IN SELECTED
SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF GAKENKE DISTRICT-RWANDA**

A Thesis

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Postgraduate Studies and Research

Kampala International University

Kampala, Uganda

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree

Master of Educational Management and

Administration

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November, 2010

DECLARATION A

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a Degree or any other academic award in any University or Institution of Learning.



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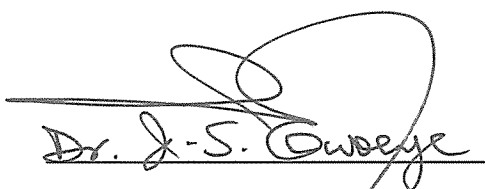
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DECLARATION B

I confirm that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out by the candidate under my supervision.

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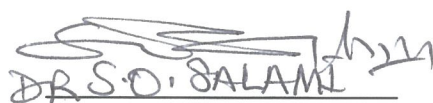
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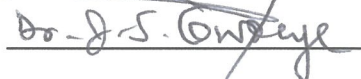
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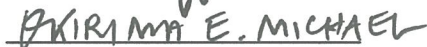
This thesis entitled "Socio-Economic Status and Students' Dropout in Selected Secondary Schools of Gakenke District-Rwanda "prepared and submitted by Emmanuel Twagirayezu in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Educational Management and Administration has been examined and approved by the panel on oral examination with a grade of PASSED.


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DEDICATION

For

My father

My mother

My brothers and sister

My late sister Daria who paid the first school fees for me

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CVI: Content Validity Index

DV: Dependent Variable

EAV: Ecole D'Agronomie et Veterinaire, meaning in English School of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry.

ECCO: Episodic Communication Channels in Organization

EDPRS: Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy

EFA: Education for All

FAWE: Forum of African Women Education

GETF: Girls Education Task Force

HIV: Human Immune Deficiency Virus

IDV: Independent Variable

LDCs: Less Developed Countries

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

MIGEPROF: Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion

MINEDUC: Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Scientific Research

NCES: National Center for Education Statistics

NCLB: No Child Left Behind

SES: Socio Economic Status

SES: Socio Economic Status.

UNDAF: United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

US: United States

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

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The journey on this road has been long and God has been my major source of inspiration, courage and energy. May he be thanked for that!

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May those who, from near or far have contributed to the success of this study, find in these words the sincere expression of my deepest gratitude.

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ABSRTACT

This study arose from the popular assumption that the economy of Rwanda in Gakenke district is collapsing and it has relationship with students' dropout. Thus the study attempted to solve the problem due to socio-economic status and students' dropout in selected secondary schools of Gakenke district-Rwanda. The research was guided by three research questions which intended to know if there was relationship between parents' level of education, attitudes, and income and school dropout in Gakenke district of Rwanda. The researcher used survey research design to conduct the study. To carry out this research, 6 out of 46 schools were chosen and a sample of 400 respondents were selected. About research instruments, questionnaires and interviews were mainly used. In analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive analysis, and Pearson Product Moment correlation technique. The researcher found that there was a strong significant correlation between the three research variables and students' dropout in Gakenke district showing that the findings could be generalized. It was recommended that government should increase opportunities and access to schooling, provide a contextualized curriculum, introduce plans to provide guidance to students and enhance community involvement in view to promote high access on education. It was recommended that future researchers should consider the areas like access on education, educational infrastructure and the control of school attendance in view to overcome the problems of students' dropout in Rwanda and more especially in Gakenke district.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

Introduction

This study provides an analysis on dropout from school, and focuses on children who have gained access, but fail to complete secondary cycle in Gakenke district. The main discussion is how children dropout from school. Here, dropout is not presented as a distinct event, but rather a process where a range of supply-demand factors interact to influence schooling access. Our research is then about socio –economic status and students’ dropout in selected secondary schools of Gakenke-Rwanda.

Background of the study

The role of socio economic background (or class position or occupation of parents) is one of the best known factors leading to students’ dropout. Inadequacy of financial resources is globally considered to be one of the critical reasons for the desperate state of education in developing countries .It is generally believed that family investments in education are still simple and governments finance nearly the whole of educational investments in developing countries. But in actual practice, families and governments may complement each other in their respective efforts to improve educational investments, as long as the total investment in education is below the optimum level.

At this level, the income of parents and their occupation that cannot bring much economy is the base of students’ dropout all over the world. If this is prevailing in Africa it is also prevailing in Rwanda and in Gakenke district in particular where this study has been conducted.

Arnové et al, (1992) add: "Privatization, including an increase in the number of private schools and colleges and a general increase in user charges, may not only solve the financial crisis in education, but also might create new serious problems, both in terms of equity and efficiency. Governments in countries like India that aim at equity in social and economic sectors will have to continue to bear increasingly more responsibility for education and continue their search for more efficient and equitable measures of generating additional resources for education".

On this problem prevailing as the correlate of students' dropout in Rwanda, there is also another one of parents' level of education which highly correlates with students' dropout. In the poor society like Rwandan society, almost everyone is engaged in subsistence agriculture.

"As the local economy grows and becomes more differentiated, creating a variety of new job openings, and in the absence of traditional dominant class which can exploit all of the opportunities, formal education becomes a predominant influence of the level of job acquired, and significant numbers of even very poor children use education to obtain access to positions in the modern economy" (Op. Cit; 1992:119)

About the different attitudes of parents, it may be debatable whether the class issue is important in less developed countries. Hardly anybody questions the fact that inequalities based on sex are much graver in African countries including Rwanda. On this the UNESCO report adds that "A number of factors conspire to create or stabilize the disadvantage of women, many of them entirely absent from more modern economies." This background helped the researcher to assess the problem of students' drop out and because it was and still prevails in Gakenke district the researcher chose to study it in Gakenke district of Rwanda.

Statement of the Problem

The problem in this study is that there has been worldwide, at the level of Africa particularly in Rwanda the high rate of students' dropout. The indicators of this problem are that there has been an overwhelming rate of children's dropout in spite of efforts

made by the government to sensitize parents and the whole community on the importance of keeping children in schools. The consequence of this dropout which has been to lose people who had to serve the country in coming days .One wonders if dropout was not due to socioeconomic status attitudes of parents on the education of their children .The study therefore, attempted to investigate the effect of socioeconomic status and dropout of secondary schools students in selected secondary schools of Gakenke-Rwanda.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to highlight the socio economic status and students dropout in Gakenke district and find out solutions to this problem for the community which is encountering the problem.

Research Objectives

The core research objectives in this study were:

1. To establish relationship between parents' level of education and students dropout in Gakenke district.
2. To establish relationship between parental attitudes towards children education and students dropout of school in Gakenke district.
3. To establish relationship between parents' occupation, income and students dropout in Gakenke district.

Research Questions

This study was guided by three major research questions:

1. What is the relationship between parents' level of education and students dropout in Gakenke district?

2. What is the relationship between parents' attitudes and students' dropout of school in Gakenke district?
3. What is the relationship between parents' occupation, their income and students dropout in Gakenke district?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is a significant relationship between parents' level of education and students' dropout in Gakenke district.
2. There is a significant relationship between parental attitudes and students' dropout of school in Gakenke district.
3. There is a significant relationship between parents' occupation and income and students' dropout in Gakenke district.

Scope

Gakenke district concerned by this study is located in the northern region of Rwanda towards the border of Uganda called Cyanika border. It is not very remote like other regions like Musanze district which reaches the border. The scope about the content is dropout, related ideas and factors related to it. This study has focused above all on Gakenke district. The central issue finding out is why there is many children's dropout in rural Rwanda and more particularly in Gakenke district.

Significance of the Study

Rwanda is a society recovering from war that can probably be the cause of dropout. It was expected that the study contribute to the knowledge about implementation of educational policies and reform in a climate of uncertainty, so as to inform educators, teachers and curriculum developers as prior to children education. As a result of

informing authorities of outcomes, it is hoped that the results may be used in re-aligning the objectives of curriculum programs and teacher education programs to ones that are more relevant and suited to the needs for Rwandan society. The study provides data on the numerous and complex indicators that account for the current status of education drop out in the district of Gakenke. Moreover, teachers and parents are equipped with the knowledge that will help them to assist the girl and the boy, all learners, in the school of rural Rwanda. We can hope that the findings of this study will be taken into consideration by the government and the advantage will be drawn by all stakeholders in formulating policies pertaining the control of all learners' dropout from schools.

Operational Definition of Key Terms

Keys terms have been operationalized as follow:

Dropout: Leaving school without completing a given academic level.

Socio Economic Status: It is an individual standing in terms of income.

Stereotypes: The negative thoughts that an individual has vis-à-vis another or other persons or a group of people.

Discrimination: It is the act of treating some persons differently from others.

Income problems: Getting an amount of assets unable to satisfy ones' needs.

Pregnancy: A state in which an individual is in, between conception and giving birth.

Disability: The state in which an individual is unable to accomplish some tasks.

Special educational needs: The need of having special care in an academic field.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter aims at reviewing literature related to students' dropout and this will be done in respect with the three research questions that have been set by the researcher as predictions of the study.

Parents' Level of Education

Illiteracy of parents and sometimes their level of education have been correlated to students drop out in Rwanda. The overall figure deserves careful consideration. Many dropouts tend to casually respond that they have been forced out of school because of a lack of financial support. But the authorities should not be content with this excuse.

The government's free education program should cover all students who want to go to school. If more and more students decide to drop out of school and cite a lack of financial resources as the reason, then the free education program should be subject to review because it is evidently failing to achieve its goal of keeping all children in school throughout the mandatory period. The program is seemingly not working.

"Parents play a big part in a child's school attendance. If parents do not believe in the importance of education, then it is hard to keep children in school. The students who drop out often have parents with a poor educational background or low social-economic status. These parents have low expectations of education and they don't see the need to support their children at the highest level of education they can. This is often due to their level of education" (Todaro, 1995)

Schools and communities thus must play a part in showing to parents the necessity of sending their children to school, at least for the mandatory period. Inspirational stories of people who have been successful in life, thanks to education, should be promoted to highlight the importance of attending school.

Family problems are the second most common reason given by students who decided to quit school. This issue should be looked at thoroughly. Indeed, many students quit school because of a multitude of family problems. The study of dropouts should look into the real causes. For instance, have students left school because their families think that education is not useful for the child's future? Or have they faced abuse problems at home? Do they suffer a dysfunctional home life?

In addition, schools need to provide a curriculum and environment that give students a desire to go to school. The statistics do not provide details of students who might have quit simply out of boredom. Instead of simply accepting the reasons given for dropout, the schools and agencies in charge must try to prevent students leaving prematurely.

According to Todaro (Op .cit) "The students show early signs of dropping out, starting with irregular attendance. Some begin to show a lack of motivation. Some perform poorly or show signs of stress. Some face too much peer pressure or are bullied. Early detection of these problems is one of the best ways to discourage students from leaving. The Education Ministry must provide resources for counseling to help students with such problems."

The dropout rate is not only a problem for students but for all involved, including the school, the community, parents, and society in general. Educational reform will not be realized if such a high number of students continue every year to forgo their education and quit school.

According to UNESCO report on education (1991) an example of America can be relevant to the case of students drop out. Now, American law states that when students reach the age of sixteen years they may drop out of school if they please. Thousands of

students a year execute this right and make the choice of discontinuing their education. This leaves these students at a major disadvantage at only the ninth or tenth grade level. This level of education is not usually sufficient to get these students even mediocre employment in the future. There are some exceptions far and in between, of people who actually become successful in some other way. Most of the time this does not occur, statistics from the Board of Education show that high school dropouts make 42% less money in the workplace than do graduates.

It is irresponsible for society as a whole to accept giving such young students this major decision at such a young age. Just, many dropout because they are unable to succeed. There is a whole other side to this story. Many feel that students who are dropping out of school are not as bad off. There is some truth to this thought because there are those few who become very successful in life without education. There are also those who feel that dropouts are better off not being in the learning facility because they may cause more trouble due to the fact that they are there against their will. This is in part due to the level of education of many parents.

Parents' Attitudes and Students' Dropout.

Many parents, educated or uneducated, can be an obstacle to their children education in one way or another. If education is perceived as "a process by which one generation unconsciously and consciously transmits culture to the young ,to the adults, and to the old for the recipients 'social ,cultural ,political economic and general benefits and for the benefit of the whole society"(Maicibi,2005) .Many parents can be the be the obstacle to this process. Many parents do not allow reading and revising lessons at evening for their children. They tell them to go and graze the cattle or bring grasses for their cows. They tell me that many people who are rich did not go through education. They are not pleased with that because they want to have a brilliant future through education. In this perspective Caldwell (1979) reinforces the understanding of these attitudes and says that educated mothers use their greater autonomy to treat sons and daughters more inequitably. However, in Africa, Maicibi(Op. Cit) adds that "Rural women as well as

educated urban women have more differential in treatment between the male and female children.”

Many parents have an attitude of not letting their children read and revise their notes during evenings and urge them to go for cows grazing but some educated parents allow their children to revise their notes even though their number is still very low.

Whatever the education offered, it functions differently in terms of capabilities and interests of different groups in society and their feeling of what is relevant to them. That is why many parents want to develop some negative attitudes towards their children education more particularly against girls.

Taking parents in a larger Context, the UNESCO reports (1981) say: “Formal integration, without the necessary changes in value structures, justifies claims for segregated social techniques needed to minimize exploitation in organizational and institutional settings”.

Another attitudinal aspect is that parents also show a level of inequality in terms of children’s education. This may be measured in different ways: Typical educational measures may be equal opportunity for access to some stage of education, or allocation of equal amounts of educational resources devoted to each child in the family. In more general social terms, Kandel, in his economics of education (1989) asserts that: Equality may be measured by the level of income, or by some status ranking of positions in society.

This is understandable in the extent that parents try to stratify the members of the family in terms of gender and favor more boys than girls when all children had to benefits equally from the richness of the family. These attitudes continue showing that many parents generally in Africa do not know that schooling is a source of social solidarity and preparation for adult roles (functionalism) and they ignore the role of schooling in transmitting norms and values. All these determinants are the bases and they are related to students’ dropout.

Scholars like Emile Durkheim schooling participate in the societal transformation and help in overcoming the societal problems, for more effective socialization .In this perspective, instead of favorizing students drop out Robert Arnove et Al (1992), stipulates that:

People should keep in mind the following hints for the better development of nations and consequently try to keep children at school. By here, he urges people to consider schooling in different angles:

1. Schooling as a social control: this is the functionalist approach which views schooling as a "positive" force, keeping society working smoothly.
2. Schooling as a modernizing force: Schooling can contribute to economic development and social modernization.
3. Schooling as a status group competition: The functionalist and social control and social control arguments assume that schooling exists solely to socialize children.

Referring to Arnove's ideas, it is seen that attendance is to be compulsory in schools and education is a right not a privilege for children. If Europe is developed because of mass education, dropouts must be counteracted and this can be done through mass education.

Parents' Income and their Occupation

Many parents in Africa and specifically in Rwanda do not have the income that can allow them to pay school fees for their children. Many children dropout, more particularly from private schools, because the cost of education including school fees is very high. In addition to that, many of them do not have an occupation that can allow them to earn a good salary which can allow the effective and efficient payment of the school fees for the students. Then, it remains true that, if the principle objective of educational policies is equity rather than efficiency the obvious entry point is not enrolment ratios in the various levels of educational system but the methods adopted to

subsidize education.(UNESCO., 1991:88) But the typical pattern in The Third world ,Rwanda included ,is to provide free primary education ,and sometimes not even that ,free secondary paying ,private secondary schools ,and finally free residential higher education at which point students also receive free room, free board and even small cash with leaving allowances.

About socio-economic status Maicibi(2005) says that better educated mothers marry similarly advantaged (educated)men. More generally they may attract husbands who earn more, a factor that appears to operate in most African societies where men have recently begun to recognize the desirability of having an educated wife. Educated mothers normally get well paying jobs and thus contribute towards the family's economic resources. A problem is that this last situation is not extant in Rwanda where so many girls drop out after finishing secondary education to go to marry.

Rwanda has progressed in education, gender equality and democratic governance, but a concentration of wealth within the top income bracket is affecting overall poverty reduction efforts. (United Nations report 2006:56). It goes ahead saying that: "Soaring inequality is threatening poverty reduction and economic growth," Again, the National Human Development Report 2007 noted, adding that Rwanda's high growth rates have hidden large and growing inequalities between social classes, geographic regions and gender. According to the report, Rwanda's recent growth has bypassed the rural poor leading to a concentration of wealth at the top of the income distribution bracket - a situation that could lead the country to exhaust its ability to reduce poverty rates through economic growth alone.

At the same time, Rwanda has been finalizing the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS).The strategy estimates that total investment of approximately US\$140 per capita per year is needed for MDG-related interventions. With the extent of poverty and the small size of the private sector, the bulk of these investments would have to come from the public sector.

According to official statistics (Rwanda Institute of Statistics), life expectancy in Rwanda now stands at 51 years, partly because of efforts to reduce HIV/AIDS related deaths; while the number of people relying on agriculture is projected to drop from 90 percent to 50 percent by 2020.

"In some sectors progress has been recorded but the target is still to be met," the minister added. Referring to the situation above it is not possible to maintain all students at school because of the low economic status of many households in Rwanda mainly in Gakenke district.

(Source: <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=73483>)

In this perspective, there are so many strategies intended to overcome initial or economic disadvantages. In many LDCs(Less Developed Countries) like Rwanda the main obstacle to school attendance is essentially economic. The most obvious strategy is free education. This can also alleviate students' drop out even though the cost of education is increasing instead of decreasing in Rwanda.

Countries can also put into consideration the economic development in link with their level of education.

This is the necessary condition improving quality of life .Education assists in economic development of an individual and the whole society. Education increases the level of income because educated people get high paid jobs. With more money one is able to have a better living standard because one can afford basic necessities of life. Atkinson (1983) points out that:

Between any two groups of individuals of the same age and sex, the group with more education of whatever kind will have higher average earnings from employments than the groups with less, even if the two groups are employed in the same occupational category in the same industry.

From this Maicibi (2005) advises that "Developing countries' education systems should be structured in such a way that they encourage citizens to attain high levels of education"

In Rwanda for instance ,and particularly in Gakenke district ,attempts have been managed towards this ,by allowing costs sharing in Rwandan higher and secondary education .Weekend and distance learning came also to enhance this capacity due to citizens' education.

This is also affirmed by Schluts ,(1961) who said that the duration an individual takes to obtain education, contributes to his/her human capital.

This shows that students' drop out can increase if parents are not prioritizing education Parents' level of education can foster their children's education. Then, it is worth noting that increased awareness, caused in education, can lead to the reduction of students' drop out of schools. If children are healthy, dropouts will also decrease.

Okurut,(2002) focused on this aspect in saying that "Educated people have acquired valuable productive attributes through their schooling and those attributes are recognized and rewarded in the labor market by employers"

Under this angle, parents should know that education is a major step in the process of development formation. Many parents in LDCs or Less developed Countries do not have a human technical know-how necessary to foster economic development. Without such manpower, students' dropouts are likely to go ahead growing up because the availability of facilities used in Rwanda's education will depend on the strength of economy. Unfortunately, that is not the case in Rwanda. The inability of economy to support education made the government to liberalize and privatize education.

Concepts, Ideas, Opinions from Authors/Experts

Many authors and experts like Boggarr, Taylor and Domina focalized their attention to the relationship between socioeconomic status and educational outcomes in places of the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) which is in one way or another related to school dropout. They dealt with United States and other countries where a rate of school dropout is increasing. This is to present some ideas and views of experts and authors who asserted things about educational dropout.

Areas of concern center around funding, affluent schools versus high poverty schools, and high dropout rates have been taken into consideration. In order to address the inequalities in our education system they needed to look at the current state of education within all socioeconomic classes.

As a citizen of a country that is built on the principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness it is easy to assume that these rights give us free and guaranteed equal education. The fact is that there is not a right to an education nor is there guarantee that it is equal. The relationship between drop out and educational inequity is complex, historically understood and multifaceted. The United States government was fashioned to aid those who own property, have money and possess power.

About dropout rates statistics it is good to provide an example that can illustrate the case in United States of America. In the United States the dropout rate is 10.9% (Christle, et al., 2007, p. 325). There are many factors that contribute to dropout rates; however socioeconomic status is one of the main factors. Christle, et Al., p.326, (Op.Cit) explain that there is a strong relationship between socioeconomic status and the dropout rate, "with students from low income families being 2.4 times more likely to drop out of high school than middle-income students". Students of low socioeconomic status frequently attend schools with a high dropout rate, which increases the chances that they will dropout as well. According to the United States Census Bureau, in 2005 the dropout rate of students from low income families was 8.9 percent, as compared to affluent families where the dropout rate was a mere 1.5 percent. "The overall dropout rate defined as 16 to 24 year olds who, regardless of when they left school, have not completed high school or a general educational development (GED) program, has decreased from approximately 15% in 1971 to approximately 11% in 1999 (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2000). However, these overall percentages mask important racial/ethnic group differences." (Van Dorn, Bowen, Blau 2006 p 1) Van Dorn et. al also suggest that it is not just those who live in urban areas from low income households that are at high risk to dropout, but also those who live in rural areas that are from low socioeconomic status. "Prior academic achievement" (Dorn, Bowen, Blau

2006 p. 3) and family patterns have an effect on the dropout rate. This means that if a student struggles and earns poor grades early in their academic career they will have more of a chance of dropping out in high school. Furthermore, if a student has a sibling who has dropped out of high school, they are then at an increased risk of dropping out. School characteristics, as pointed out before, contribute to dropout rates. If a school is smaller, students are more likely to have better learning experiences. Van Dorn et, al. states, "Research on high schools has shown school size to impact educational outcomes; smaller schools often between 600 and 900 students-provide a better context for learning .(Taylor and Vinjevold, 1999)

Parental Involvement in Children's Education

Low socioeconomic status not only affects dropout rates but it affects parental involvement in a student's education. Parental involvement can be "defined as parental participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children"(Jeynes ,2007, p .83)

If there is little parental involvement in a child's education, there is more of a likelihood that the student will not succeed. When a parent is not involved or interested in his or her child's education, there is a greater chance that the child will not be interested in his or her own education. This directly affects whether or not the student will finish school. It is not uncommon to see little parental involvement in the education of children from low income households. This, in turn, leads to an increase in behavioral problems. Domina states that "Parental involvement does not independently improve children's learning, but some involvement activities do prevent behavioral problems. Interaction analysis suggests that the involvement of parents with low socioeconomic status may be more effective than that of parents with high socioeconomic status"(Domina 2005, p. 233). Parental involvement, as Domina suggests, means not only helping with homework but also becoming involved and active in other aspects of a child's education.(Domina 2005 p. 240). Academic achievement requires both student and parent involvement.

The initiative, No Child Left Behind, (NCLB) was intended to improve the education of all students in the United States. It was also thought that NCLB would provide quality education for those who attended urban high schools. Even before NCLB was established many schools in urban areas, like New York City and Chicago, sought to restructure their programs. Hammond suggests that NCLB has sought school reform, "the complicated rules mandated by NCLB have unintentionally made it more difficult for many heroic schools in low income neighborhoods to do their work well and to keep the neediest students in school and moving toward productive features"(2006 p. 647). One of "the complicated rules mandated by NCLB" (Hammond 2006 p. 647) is that all teachers be highly qualified. The teacher turnover rate is so high in urban high schools that experienced and highly qualified teachers are not in a position to help those students who need it most. In order to produce teachers that are highly qualified, meaning teachers must have their teaching certification and have passed all of the appropriate tests, "alternative certification pathways" (Hammond 2006 p. 248), have been created. These alternatives are often inadequate because new teachers are not getting the experience they need. Furthermore, "many highly well-prepared and highly successful teachers are deemed not to be highly qualified because they teach in multiple subject areas and have not majored or passed tests in all of them. The interdisciplinary teaching that is so central to many successfully redesigned high schools—as well as to small schools in many rural and urban areas—is jeopardized by the current administration of the law" (Hammond 2006 p 648) If well qualified teachers that aren't considered to be highly qualified by NCLB then these teachers cannot go where their help is most needed. Students are not getting proper instruction and therefore falling behind and dropping out.

To sum up this point, the capitalist economy in United States has created a system of institutional classism. Education has become the strongest determinant of social promotion. Children of all socioeconomic statuses experience unique psychosocial and educational stressors. But the educational challenges that children of low socioeconomic status face are the most serious and the most prevalent. Poverty is a violation of human

rights. It is systematic and predestines children of low socioeconomic status for academic failure. Poverty represents blatant neglect of a whole population of citizens oppressed by a capitalist economy. Inequalities in the United States education system are inherent and cyclical. In order to correct the damage that has been done by these inequalities, the country, needs to revisit the core principles of education from the bottom up. As citizens, we must take back the power of education policy and reform that governmental agencies and corporations currently possess. Systemic forces are inevitable, but ignoring glaring issues will only perpetuate this disparity.

Theoretical Perspectives

The theory that has suited well this study is the system theory. The relevancy of this theory to the researcher's topic is that education is a system with sub-systems which work in harmony. The government is supposed to work together with the ministry of education. The last is also supposed to work with all districts and schools but all these elements work with UNESCO. From this, the system theory has been found relevant by the researcher.

System Theory

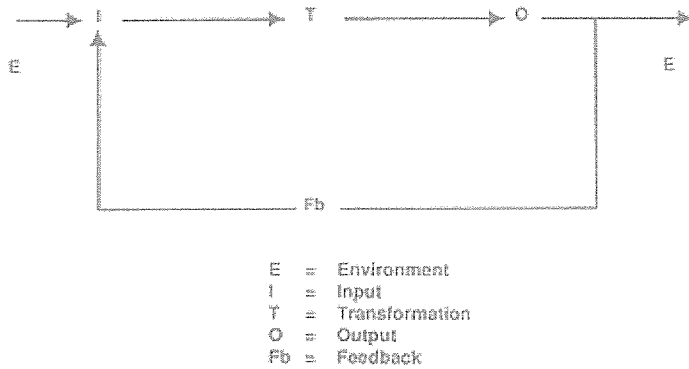
Hegel developed in the 19th century a theory to explain historical development as a dynamic process. Marx and Darwin used this theory in their work. System theory (as we know it) was used by Bertalanffy, a biologist, as the basis for the field of study known as 'general system theory', a multidisciplinary field (1968). Some influences from the contingency approach can be found in system theory.

Core Assumptions and Statements in the System Theory

System theory is the interdisciplinary study of the abstract organization of phenomena, independent of their substance, type, or spatial or temporal scale of existence. It investigates both the principles common to all complex entities, and the models which

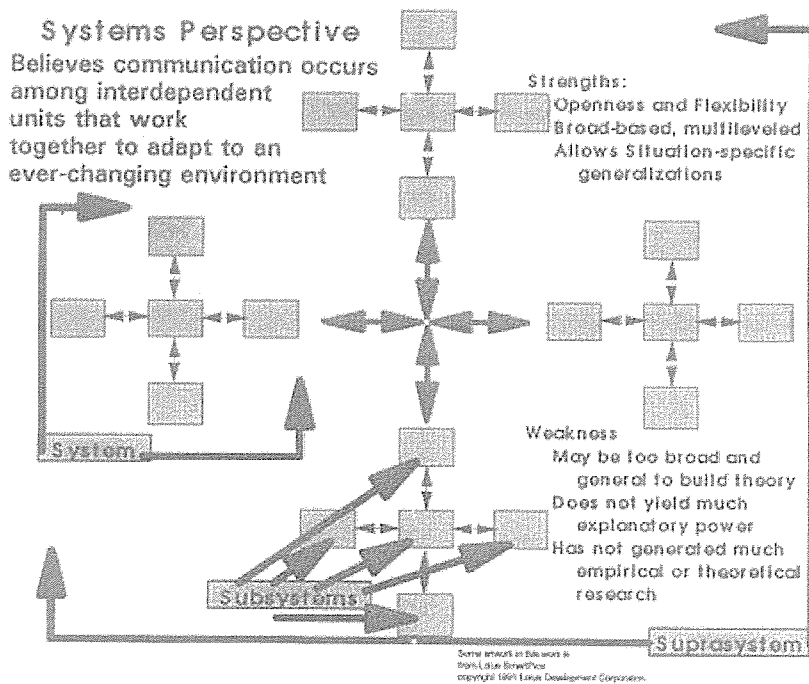
can be used to describe them. A system can be said to consist of four things. The first is objects – the parts, elements, or variables within the system. These may be physical or abstract or both, depending on the nature of the system. Second, a system consists of attributes – the qualities or properties of the system and its objects. Third, a system had internal relationships among its objects. Fourth, systems exist in an environment. A system, then, is a set of things that affect one another within an environment and form a larger pattern that is different from any of the parts. The fundamental systems-interactive paradigm of organizational analysis features the continual stages of input, throughput (processing), and output, which demonstrate the concept of openness/closedness. A closed system does not interact with its environment. It does not take in information and therefore is likely to atrophy, that is to vanish. An open system receives information, which it uses to interact dynamically with its environment. Openness increases its likelihood to survive and prosper. Several system characteristics are: wholeness and *interdependence* (the whole is more than the sum of all parts), correlations, perceiving causes, chain of influence, hierarchy, supra systems and subsystems, self-regulation and control, goal-oriented, interchange with the environment, inputs/outputs, the need for balance/homeostasis, change and adaptability (morphogenesis) and equifinality: there are various ways to achieve goals. Different types of networks are: line, commune, hierarchy and dictator networks. Communication in this perspective can be seen as an integrated process – not as an isolated event.

Conceptual Model of the System Theory



Simple System Model.

(Source: Littlejohn (1999))



Elaborated system perspective model.

(Source: Infante :1997)

Favorite Methods in the System Theory

Network analysis, ECCO analysis. ECCO, Episodic Communication Channels in Organization, analysis is a form of a data collection log-sheet. This method is specially designed to analyze and map communication networks and measure rates of flow, distortion of messages, and redundancy. The ECCO is used to monitor the progress of a specific piece of information through the organization.

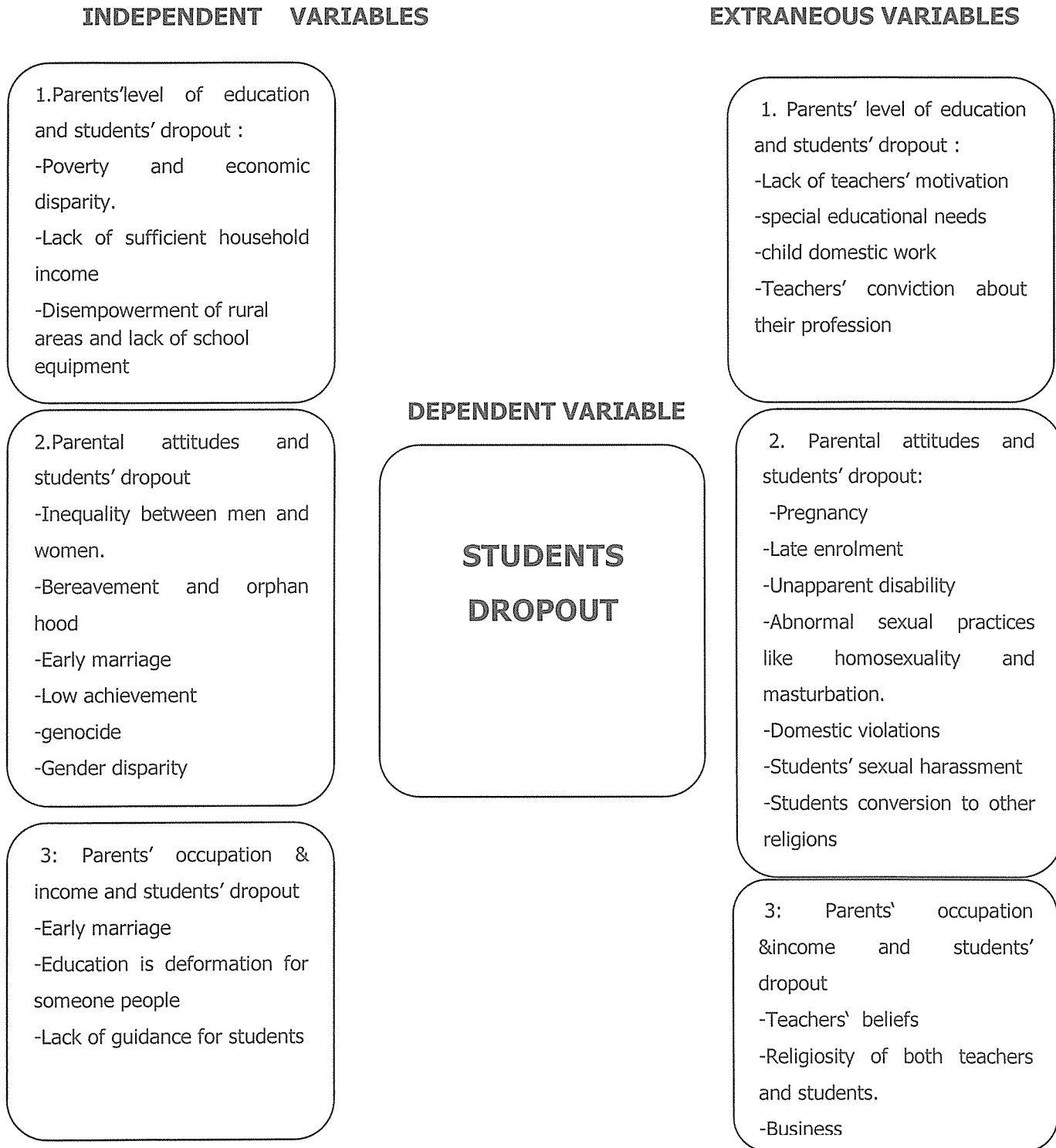
Conceptual Framework

This is a guiding scheme that clarifies variables that have been used in the study by the researcher.

In this part the researcher managed to identify main variables that have been guiding the study. Among them the researcher has identified the independent variables (predictors) that lead to school dropout, and the dependent variable (criterion) that was the cause of the independent variable.

Indeed, other variables have not been controlled by the researcher and these are extraneous variables.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



(Source: Primary data)

The above theoretical framework has been the back bone of the work in that it helped the researcher to know really what is there to measure as far as the work went ahead. In fact some variables could not be easily measured because when the researcher was investigating he met some students who reported that some girls dropped out when they were pregnant, but the boys at teenage age said that they did not realize that those girls were pregnant because they were advancing deceiving information.

The lack of motivation was not easily controlled because many students and teachers lied when they were asked about their motivation. In the same way children who tend to leave school because of domestic work tend to dissimulate that, because they get a little amount of money from that hard work. In fact, there are other variables which were not in the angular stone of the study but which helped to handle the topic like remoteness, HIV pandemic, and others. They are called extraneous variables.

Related Studies

Many educationalists and educational economists wrote about school dropout in their ways .They associated it with many determinants that are directly or indirectly correlated to it. It is in the same perspective that Maicibi (2005) examined education in general and tried also to focus on negative impact of education and that can be the cause of students' dropout for many students because of the failure of their elder brothers. Atkinson (1983) in his *economics of education* has also showed that if there is no efficiency and effectiveness in education parents will be disinterested and their children will be forced to dropout because education in Africa is linked with becoming rich and when the situation is the opposite, it becomes the fun of the public. Kisembo quoted by Maicibi(2005) has studied what is crime statistics in schools as indices of dropout in schools. Other scholars who had worked on school dropout had only insisted on the situation of girls but here the researcher wanted to extend the subject on girls and boys in general both from public and private schools.

In cities throughout the country, the impact of poverty on the school system has been overwhelming. Certainly in Los Angeles, "white-flight" as the movement was called, is

now the phenomenon of not only whites, but middle class Americans of all colors who have fled the inner cities. This separation has been so pervasive that schools are utterly segregated today far more so than they were thirty years ago when desegregation began in earnest.

Presently, in many districts, only lower socio-economic minority students attend public schools while everyone else attends private schools, or has moved far away from the vicinity to the middle and upper middle class public school suburbs. Those who are left behind know that the deck is stacked against. Most realize they are not up to par in reading, writing, math and technology. Most do not have a room of their own and live in overcrowded conditions. Many experience a free-floating anxiety and anger about life, often directed toward their parents, police, teachers, and anyone else in authority. Many feelings of frustration silently choke the residents in these neighborhoods.

Generally speaking, poverty brings with it a certain amount of shame and disgrace. A disapproving stigma is attached to those who fall within the poverty level in a country like Rwanda where the poor are typically viewed as deficient, morally corrupt, lazy, or stupid. More diplomatically put, poverty is sometimes perceived as the outcome of foolish personal choices; nevertheless, the poor are usually blamed for their circumstances (Atkinson, 1983)

Other researchers have noted that while high unemployment rates in inner cities run rampant, and although there are numerous anti violence measures, countless school programs, and self-help programs fail because there is rarely a job program attached to any of them. Actually, some of the few successful programs do indeed have job programs, which explain their positive achievements.

Poor neighborhoods are turbulent neighborhoods. They spawn girls and boys who turn to gangs and the gangs themselves take on a variety of forms in response to the two genders, (Kadzamira and Rose, 2003). Another unfortunate but authentic consequence of poverty is that parents themselves often encourage youths to go to work rather than

continue their education. The dynamics behind such advice are simple to comprehend though much maligned by the predominant middle-class society.

If a household is running on minimum wage salaries, a 16 year old son or daughter who can get a job at minimum wage adds significantly to total spendable income. When seen from this perspective a point of view the middle-class never even imagines, the poor parent is much more likely than the middle class parent to encourage a hopeless youth to drop out of school.

If that child is not doing well in school anyway, it makes sense to advise him/her to take a job, to get off the streets, and help build the nation .In contrast, middle class children who take jobs generally do so to support their cars or to buy stereo equipment; a few save money for college and others buy clothes and other "extras," but rarely must they contribute to the family grocery budget.

By the way, in the lower socioeconomic setting, teachers and schools are blamed to a large extent for the failures of families. Although some teachers and schools are indeed failing miserably in their charge, most are sincere, but thwarted by a deluded public. Teachers and schools are being asked to do entirely too much. As an institution, the school is not omnipotent. For the limited number of hours that a pupil is in the school, in places of parents, that institution cannot instill values when few, if any, are taught at home. "School as an institution cannot teach citizenship, morals, and values in high tech resolution if none of these is modeled or highly prized at home".(Goodlad.,1984)

Neither can the school motivate the youngster to stay in school, to study and succeed when the home itself shows a sign of lack of education, and when society at large promotes anti intellectualism. Fortunately, the majority of poor, uneducated parents instills values, ethics, and motivate their youngsters to acquire an education. Fortunately, too, most maintain a very strong work ethic indeed. Nevertheless, people who live in lower socio-economic neighborhoods, in "dysfunctional" environments as

Wilson has termed them, more readily fall prey to gangs, drugs, and crime than do their middle-class contemporaries (Wilson, 2006).

The task of educators has grown disproportionately as compared to the low expectations that the society has placed on parents. If they are ill-equipped to handle their off-spring, the school certainly cannot be viewed as a panacea, nor should it assume the role of "holding-tank" either. Schools do not have the kind of power that many journalists and critics of education appear to think they have. "To be absolutely frank, schools are often glad to see gang members drop by the wayside, because they are the people who typically cause most disruption both in and outside of the classroom.

Indeed, rude students and their associates, while still in school, usually sit together, and then insult others. They heckle, defy authority, and laugh mockingly until fellow classmates and even teachers are drawn into confrontations. They challenge and ridicule any passers-by including parents and other visitors to the school. They are generally hostile and impertinent. They try to intimidate anyone perceived as weaker. They shout obscenities, wave crude gestures, and joke with one another at everyone else's expense certainly at the expense of any learning taking place in classrooms. The pay-off for them is in the tumult they create and the attention they crave so voraciously (Atkinson, 1983).

On the other hand, teachers are demoralized because of bad salaries. Unsure about what parents and society want from them, education is faced with difficult considerations nowadays. For example, should lockers be searched for weapons or do students have a right to carry them (as some argue) for their own protection? Does this add to motivational atmosphere of inner city public schools, or does it matter anymore on school grounds that have become utterly unsafe for young people? "What about the students' civil rights?"

In Gakenke, most teachers are sincerely trying to reach the students and educate them. Sometimes they actually make a difference in someone's life. But in a society where

many people promote anti- intellectualism, the teacher, the school, and the intervention program that fosters education may be out of touch with reality.

Children go to public school to lose their time without studying and they are often popular as a result of their predecessors. It is not good to study hard for tests, to do homework, to be a head of others. Those who go to public schools and try to learn often have to camouflage their efforts so as not to appear genuinely interested in the curricula lest they become the objects of ridicule among their peers.

On the other hand, those who cause trouble are applauded by their peers. Intervention programs and lists of solutions often include in-service training for teachers and pre-professional training, so that everyone at the school might be sensitive to and fully aware of the issues that impacts on young people's lives the violence, poverty, the media representation, etc. In the current investigation, the majority of the teachers interviewed were already amply aware of these issues. Perhaps we need no longer blame the teacher for insensitivity, much of which may be occurring at home. It may be that the parents need in-service training. (Russell, 2002:38).

In the same poverty stricken neighborhoods, a good many parents of non-gang affiliated youths are quick to blame the parents of wayward youths for their predicaments. Many have simply dropped up. Many parents in the current investigation asked, "What should I do with this kid?" A number of teachers at the various sites visited reported having been asked the same question by despairing parents who could no longer manage their off-spring.

On another level in this all too complex problem, there is indeed a good deal of "miseducation" in the public schools. Clearly, many teachers are bothered, what they see as youths who are uninterested in learning, but who must be kept from harming other pupils or from causing a general disruption. Many teachers in this nebulous, have lost all incentive to teach the students anything they are merely "... drawing a paycheck and accumulating years toward retirement," as one school staff member put it. Two

teachers in the area admitted in the current investigation that their objective is simply "...to keep the kids from rampaging up and down the halls disturbing others." Vis a vis this *laissez-faire* situation there is a risk of school dropout. Teachers who spend the entire class period disciplining, are unable to conduct a lesson. When pupils have no standards and no motivation, learning cannot take place.

Personal classroom visitation is an eye-opener for anyone who wants to put in the time to do it. Unfortunately, a good many critics of the schools and of social forces in general have not set foot in a public school classroom since their own school days. Public schools in urban settings are pure and simply a disaster.

Ironically, most schools discourage visitation in a number of subtle ways. The current investigation was greatly assisted by credential candidates and former student-teachers who invited the principal investigator to their classrooms and subsequently to their schools to the lunch areas, the corridors between periods, and to the grounds where other teachers and administrators could be observed at work." Quite honestly, administrators do not welcome visitors, especially research people. On the other hand, public schools are tax-payer supported entities, receiving largely local and state generated funds with some federally funded programs".(Goodlad,1984)

In all fairness to thousands of diligent teachers everywhere, classroom visitation does leave the visitor with the impression that many teens really do not want to be in school. They are there because it is required by law. They are there to disrupt, for the amusement of their peers. Teachers who want to instruct and who make elaborate lesson plans find themselves acting like master sergeants half of the day attempting to keep the rowdy students quiet long enough to instruct the others. Unfortunately, those students who are seriously eager to learn are being grievously short-changed. (Todaro, 1992:pp34-45).

Two kinds of schools for young people might serve the community better than what we currently have: one secondary school "mess around" providing fun activities, games. These would be virtual holding tanks, conceivably attempting to offer some vocational education for those young people who awaken during this experience; and another kind of school for youngsters who want to learn academic subject and who want to become a part of mainstream society. As the situation stands right now, the rude students destroy the learning environment for everyone.

It may not be too surprising that decreasing levels of school commitment are associated with increasing rates of school crime, misconduct and non attendance. Granted that the evolution of gang violence is at once complex, enigmatic and multi-faceted, clearly poverty, unemployment, dysfunctional families and lack of education are to blame. (Russel, 2002:38) In this admixture, gangs customarily develop and thrive. Neighboring schools have become prolific recruiting grounds. With uncanny perceptivity, gangs respond to troubled youth's needs for family and approval. With plenty of walls and fences just waiting for taggers, schools are targeted for vandalism as well (Boyle, 1992). All these related studies carried out by different authors show that the field of education and more particularly, the school dropout must be expanded and the researcher was placed in that perspective of resoundingly go deeper in the subject in Gakenke district of Rwanda. Other studies concerned Parenting practices and students' dropout as published in the report called *family therapy* (Blondal et al in 2002). The report says that adolescents' perceptions of parenting style and parental involvement in their education were examined longitudinally and related to school dropout among Icelandic youth (N = 427). Results indicated that adolescents who, at age 14, characterized their parents as authoritative (showing acceptance and supervision) were more likely to have completed upper secondary school by age 22 than adolescents from non-authoritative families, controlling for adolescents' gender, socioeconomic status (SES), temperament, and parental involvement. Parenting style seems to more strongly predict school dropout than parental involvement. Further, parenting style may moderate the relationship between parental involvement and dropout, but not in all

groups; only in authoritative families does parental involvement decrease the likelihood of school dropout. Furthermore, even after controlling for previous academic achievement, adolescents from authoritative families were less likely to drop out than adolescents from authoritarian and neglectful families. These findings emphasize the importance of encouraging quality parent-child relationships in order to reduce the likelihood of school dropout.

When adolescents drop out of school, the results are psychosocially and economically costly, for both the individual and society. As our modern knowledge-based societies increasingly rely on a highly skilled labor force, young people without upper secondary education are more vulnerable than ever before. They have fewer work opportunities, and are less likely to return to education and training later in life, compared to those who finish school. They also face a higher risk of various negative outcomes; they may be unemployed, live in poverty, have health problems, and engage in antisocial behavior (Rumberger and Thomas, 2000) quoted by Hunt,(2008)

In recent years the problem of school dropout has received increased attention. The European Union has proposed a common benchmark for the member states: by the year 2010, the early school-leaving rate should be no more than 10% in any given country (Council of the European Union, 2004). In the U.S. this problem has also been addressed nationally as one of the National Educational Goals adopted in 1990 (U. S. Department of Education, 1990). Moreover, in the federal reform plan, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, all states are required to incorporate graduation rates into their accountability systems for high schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). In Iceland, where this study was conducted, the dropout problem is also of concern; currently the Icelandic government is presenting educational reforms that aim to reduce dropout (Upper Secondary School Act No. 92/2008).

The family has been recognized as one of the primary contributors to children's success at school (Rumberger, 1995). Studies of the family's influence on school dropout, however, have at least four important shortcomings. First, such studies tend to focus

too strongly on structural characteristics, such as parents' socioeconomic status (SES). Second, studies examining parental influence on school success have mainly focused on the relationship between parental involvement in their child's education and academic achievement but seldom on school dropout. Third, findings about the relationship between parental involvement and school success have been inconsistent, and fourth, most studies on school dropout are cross-sectional. The purpose of this study was to explore more general aspects of parenting in relation to school dropout; we examine the relationship of both parental involvement and parenting style with school dropout. Moreover, we use a longitudinal design.

On the side of the family and educational outcomes, research on family influences has been criticized for focusing on such structural characteristics as parents' socioeconomic status to explain children's school success and failure (Alexander et al., 1997). Findings consistently show that students in higher SES groups are academically more successful and less likely to drop out of school than students in lower SES groups (see McNeal, 1999; Rosenthal, 1998). These studies, however, provide little insight into what is occurring in family life that helps the students succeed at school (Davis-Kean, 2005). Studies in this area have also been criticized for using a narrow definition of parental support (Jeynes, 2007)

About the parental involvement, Studies on the influence of parenting on school outcomes have mainly focused on specific parental practices such as involvement in their child's education, mostly in relation to academic achievement and rarely in relation to school dropout (McNeal, 1999; Rumberger, 1995). Common indicators of parental involvement include contacts between parents and school, parental involvement in school activities, parent-child communication about school, parental supervision involving homework, and parents' educational aspirations for their child (Fan & Chen, 2001; McNeal, 1999). Despite the many studies on parents' involvement and children's academic achievement, the nature of the relationship remains unclear (Jeynes, 2007; McNeal, 1999). In their meta-analysis, Fan and Chen (2001) concluded that the association between parental involvement and students' academic achievement was

weaker than expected. Moreover, the findings of these studies have been inconsistent. In some, parental involvement seems to relate positively to children's achievement (Hoge , et al. 1997); other studies indicate no association, or even a negative one. For example, McNeal, 1999) found that adolescents whose parents participated in the parent-teacher association got lower grades than their peers.

In one of the few studies in the area of school dropout, Alexander and his colleagues (1997) found that young people whose parents had low expectations for their educational attainment at the beginning of their schooling were more likely to drop out. Other studies indicate that parental involvement in parent-teacher organization activities and parental supervision of adolescents' homework also reduces the risk of dropping out (McNeal, 1999; Rumberger, 1995). However, McNeal's findings (1999) suggest that the association between parental involvement and school success varies depending on the indicator used for success. For example, parent-child communication about school was positively associated with higher grades but did not seem to reduce the risk of dropout.

On parenting style, the literature outlined above suggests that to better understand parenting in relation to school dropout it might be more useful to look at parenting style as an indicator of the general quality of the parent-adolescent relationship, instead of focusing solely on specific parental behaviors such as participation in their children's education. Accordingly, such an approach might help parents better understand how to motivate and encourage their children's educational aspirations and support their success at school.

The prototypes of the parenting styles are authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful. Authoritative parents are accepting, warm, and encouraging toward their children but at the same time firm; they impart clear standards for their children's behavior, enforcing developmentally appropriate expectations without being intrusive or restrictive. Authoritarian parents are demanding and controlling, but not responsive or warm. They have clear rules that their children are not supposed to question. Indulgent

parents are responsive and warm. They allow considerable self-regulation, but are lenient and avoid confrontation. (<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-214101780.html> accessed September, 2010)

Other studies related on Bad experiences underlying pregnancy related dropout in South Africa by Grant and Hallman, (2006). In most African countries, when a girl gets pregnant or married, she also leaves school. Many people assume that most young women who drop out of school following a pregnancy or marriage would otherwise have remained in school.

Despite the contrasting societal contexts in the two studies in which girls' opportunities with regard to pregnancy are quite different--the researchers found similarities in the schooling outcomes. The studies showed that negative early schooling experiences, such as repeating a grade and being older than other students in the same grade, are significantly correlated both with the risk of getting married or pregnant and with the risk of dropout. In South Africa, girls who become pregnant are more likely to leave school entirely if they have had these negative experiences. In francophone Africa, negative school experiences represent a bigger challenge to school completion than do child marriage and adolescent pregnancy. These findings have important policy implications.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology of research was described. First of all the research designs have showed the plan of action adopted for the study. Then the objectives of the study and research questions were elaborated. The selection of the sample and the nature of the sample were elaborated too. Specific tools adopted for data analysis, significance of the study and limitations have been parts of this chapter.

The chapter presents the methods, techniques and approaches that have been applied in data collection and described the area of the study, the study of the population, the sample as well as the problems that a researcher has encountered. The study has only relied on primary and secondary data. Parents, the ministry of education, teachers and students of public and secondary schools have been contacted in terms of interview and questionnaire answering. Gakenke district has a number of schools but few of them were selected randomly. The researcher mainly has used two approaches the descriptive approach that will facilitate the respondents to deal with social stereotypes and poverty and its general impact on education in Rwanda today.

Secondly the analytical approach looked into many angles in which students drop out can affect the economy of Rwanda. This has been reached in using documents relevantly analyzed basing on data collected through questionnaires. Finally quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to interpret and analyze data that were collected from the field

Research Design

In this study, the researcher has used the correlation design.

Correlation research is sometimes treated as a type of descriptive research, primarily because it does describe an existing condition. However the condition it describes is distinctly different from conditions typically described in self –report or observational studies .A correlation study describes in quantitative terms the degree to which variables are related. (Amin, 2005:218).

Correlation method involves collecting data in order to determine whether and to what degree a relationship exists between two or more variables. The degree of relationship is expressed as a correlation coefficient. Correlation studies provide an estimate of just how related two variables are. The more related two variables are, the more accurate the predictions based on their relationship. There are many types of correlation but here the researcher has used the simple correlation studies to measure correlation between two variables. As far as the variables in this research were concerned, the researcher correlated the parents' level of education and school dropout 'the parents' attitudes towards education and school dropout and finally the correlation between parents' income, their occupation and school dropout in Gakenke district.

Research Population

The researcher has worked on 6 schools out of 46 schools which are Nyarutovu secondary school, Nemba secondary school, Nganzo nine Year basic education y school secondary school ,Karuganda nine year basic education secondary school and Nemba I nine year basic education secondary school .

Sample Size

In selecting the sample the researcher has used many sampling methods because a number of categories of people have been targeted by this research. In total a researcher has had a population of 2875 elements and to select the sample from that population a researcher has resorted to Slovin's formula that is :

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(A)^2}$$

Where:

N=Population

n=sample

A=error that equals 0.05.

This process of selecting elements from the population in such a way that the sample elements selected have represented a population has been used by a researcher.

There are so many sampling methods but the researcher has adopted the purposive sampling or judgmental sampling .Here the researcher has used his own judgment or common sense regarding the participant whom information have been collected. The researcher has selected a sample based on his own experience of knowledge of the group to be sampled.

If this sampling has been a main sampling technique, there are others which secondarily helped the researcher to reach his objectives and verify his hypotheses: Quota or proportional sampling has also helped us because it has been used when it is not possible to list all the investigated people. Snowball sampling called network sampling has also been for resounding importance because it helped the researcher to contact other people who are aware of the topic that has been being investigated.

Convenience or accidental or haphazard sampling has also helped us because when a researcher met respondents on the street, he could ask them about the topic being investigated. That is why Amin (2005) named it *man-in-the -street sample*.

Apart from that non probability sampling, a researcher also used the probability sampling more specifically in computing the sample namely stratified sampling, and systematic sampling

Sampling Procedure.

There are many schools in Gakenke District, private and public. However, few of them were included in the researcher's sample and this was due to financial constraints and time limit that have not enabled the researcher to include all of them.

Purposive sampling has been used by the researcher and six secondary schools were selected. Simple random and purposive sampling was used to choose the respondents.

In total, as the researcher has mentioned it, 2875 respondents including students, parents, teachers, government officials, have been investigated and a sample has been chosen.

Research Instruments

Many techniques have been resorted to in the data collection on factors that lead to students' dropout in Gakenke district.

Library Research

Secondary data were collected from published books, journals, newspapers, reports from several libraries, ministry of education, institutions of higher learning, World Bank, UNESCO reports on Rwanda and electronic documents .

Questionnaires

Questionnaires are one of the most popular methods of conducting scholarly research and they have been resoundingly helping us as they have constituted the major instrument for the researcher. They provide a convenient way of gathering information from a target population. Questionnaires are easy to analyze, and most statistical analysis software can easily process them. They are cost effective when compared to face-to-face interviews, mostly because of the costs associated with travel time (Bryman, 2004)

This is especially true for studies involving large sample sizes and large geographic areas. Written questionnaires become even more cost effective as the number of research questions increases. Questionnaires are familiar to most people. (Bryman, 2004) Early everyone has had some experience completing questionnaires and they generally do not make people apprehensive. They are less intrusive than telephone or face-to-face surveys. When respondents receive a questionnaire in the mail, they are free to complete it on their own time-table. Unlike other research methods, the respondent is not interrupted by the research instrument. On the other hand, questionnaires are simply not suited for some people. For example, a written survey to a group of poorly educated people might not work because of reading skill problems. More frequently, some people are turned off by written questionnaires because of misuse. Written questionnaires have reduced interviewer *bias* because there is uniform question presentation. Unlike in-person interviewing, there are no verbal or visual clues to influence a respondent to answer in a particular way. Many investigators have reported that interviewer voice inflections and mannerisms can bias responses (Amin,2005) Written surveys are not subject to this bias because there is no interviewer. On the other hand, the lack of an interviewer limits the researcher's ability to probe responses. Structured questionnaires often lose the "flavor of the response", because respondents often want to qualify their answers (Amin, 2005). By allowing frequent space for comments, the researcher can partially overcome this disadvantage.

The Length of a Questionnaire has also been taken into consideration .As a general rule; long questionnaires get less response than short questionnaires (Brown, 1965; Leslie, 1970) However, some studies have shown that the length of a questionnaire does not necessarily affect response (Amin ,2005) "Seemingly more important than length is question content." (Anderson, 1995, p. 53) A subject is more likely to respond if they are involved and interested in the research topic. Questions should be meaningful and interesting to the respondent and here we managed to relate this idea to the situation is drop out from school day after day even though we are leading to

EFA goals and their implementation in Rwanda. The questionnaire was formulated according to the research questions and hypotheses.

Interviews

For head teachers, district officials and the purposes of people who could not read and write, interviews have been conducted. An interviewer needed to have the skills of a detective. Our respondents have been also possible partners who with their information helped solve a shared problem, or at least help to better understand why there is school dropout in Rwandan education .To turn an informant into a partner, a researcher had to invest in the relationship. First of all, he had to be clear to the informant about the purpose of the interview and the study. Enough information should be given to raise the interest of informants and to enable them to judge whether they would like to participate or not. Consent has to be obtained before the interview. On the other hand, not too many details should be given about what will be asked and why. Otherwise, the researcher would have run the risk informants become selective in what they tell, and conceal information in order to 'help' or please.

When sensitive topics as ours are being explored anonymity had to be ensured, for example, by not including a name in the interview notes. If a second interview would be useful, one may ask a name and address, but make sure this will never appear in the report. Further, before the research starts, the possibility of involving informants in the discussion of the results and recommendations have been considered and discussed with informants. Feedback sessions with informants have been usually rewarding for both informants and researchers. When it was impossible to organize such sessions for all participants, an interviewer summarized the main results of the interview at the end and check if this is what the informant meant to say. The informant reacted, elaborated on the responses already given, or sometimes withdrew a statement when it seemed to be personal. Partnership between interviewer and informant implied that the interviewer tried to minimize the social distance between himself and the informant. A researcher tried to blend in the environment. In order to do so: Clothing of interviewers

have been culturally acceptable and as simple as possible (no funny dresses, high heels or tight jeans in rural areas).

Sitting arrangements for interviewer(s) and informant(s) have preferably been at the same height (no straight chair when the informant was sitting on a mat on the floor) and beside each other, forming an angle of 90 degrees, rather than opposite each other. Gender relations have been respected. When interviewer and informant were of opposite sex, more physical distance has usually been required than when he (the researcher) were of the same sex as the respondent. The interviewer should never show any disapproval of the information received during the interview. Otherwise the informant will close up. The interviewer has not only tried to listen and understand why students dropout from school. Only after the interview or after the research was finished, the interviewer tried to address problems identified through the interviews. The environment has also been supportive of the interview situation.

Observations

This technique was used all along the study and we have been examining the interaction between the respondents and their environment.

Data Processing

In processing we have used editing, coding and tabulation as we advanced in the study.

Editing

Editing is the process of selecting and preparing language, images, sound, video, or film through processes of correction, condensation, organization, and other modifications in various media. People who edit are called editors (Wikipedia). Then these errors in questionnaires that have been identified have been eliminated manually. Accuracy has been checked in responses.

Coding

Broad category technique has been used to analyze and interpret responses from all respondents quoted above. Much social science research involves capturing and analyzing data. Normally, data have been placed in a machine readable file via an application such as Excel, Word etc. Data may be directly input into a digital form or first placed on a paper form and later input. The nature of coding varies with the sort of data that a researcher has. Interval ratio data typically is the easiest because number is entered as they are, i.e. an age value of 64 is entered as 64. Nominal and ordinal values require more thought.

Coding has involved two decisions in this study, such as designing a form with variables in appropriate columns and deciding on the tags to be used to represent the values. Traditionally, computers manipulated numeric values more quickly than alphabetical ones [string values] so numbers will be often used to represent values. However, this means that you need to be careful not to forget that 1 for female is a label and not a real number. Using alphabetical values prevented the erroneous use of nominal data and most contemporary statistical software packages handled them with ease.

Tabulations

Mere percentages have been used and the researcher has not forgotten to use tables to show the number of occurrences of responses to particular questions.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

In this part a researcher has made sure that the instruments are measuring what they are intended to measure. That is validity and the extent to which the instrument has measured what it was intended to measure and that is reliability. The researcher has used various ways or instruments and the appropriateness was taken into consideration and by that validity was ensured. We had also to see the extent to which the instruments had to measure what they were intended to measure to mean their

reliability. We have used so many instruments because normally one instrument could not be sufficient in our measurement.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher went systematically in gathering the data because questionnaires had first to be distributed. In using other sampling methods; a researcher has managed to collect data for example through interviews, and other verbal questions.

Data Analysis

All information found from the respondents has been analyzed scientifically to mean a researcher could not analyze without following the footsteps of people who did research well before. Tabulation, graphs and other statistical methods have been of a golden importance. Because we had to compare schools correlation technique has also been of a golden importance.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher, in conducting this study has bore in mind ethical considerations and it is noted that in research, "Ethical standards support the virtues of honesty, compassion, and loyalty.[...].Such standards are acceptable standards of ethics because they are supported by consistent and well-founded reasons" (Bailey, 1998). A researcher has been careful while interviewing the terminally ill people because they are some teachers who are HIV positive and these had to provide sufficient information about school dropout. Another category of students are handicap for example because various atrocities happened in Rwanda like genocide. Then in interviewing them ethical considerations had to be highly observed. Sometimes a researcher had to investigate close to pregnant women and it happens that they suffer so much while waiting for a baby. A researcher had to be very careful on that.

Limitation of the Study

A researcher could not fathom all hearts of people but he assumed that the information given orally or by writing must be analyzed and treated seriously in view to avoid bias that could even be generated by the researcher in poorly handling issues raised by the respondents.

It is however noted that despite positive contributions of education to shaping country's economy, it is also true that education can negatively shape the learner in the manner that he/she is forced to drop out. Some of those variables are not controllable by the researcher because, in spite of much money put in education by donors and other humanitarian organizations that are aware of the needy persons like poor students, absolute poverty is chronic and pervasive. Economic disparities between rich and poor widen each passing year. Unemployment and underemployment have reached staggering proportions, with the educated increasingly swelling the rank of those without jobs. The acquisition of school certificates in Gakenke is not necessarily associated with improved ability to undertake productive work and while thinking about this situation many students do not want to remain at school as they see their elder brothers disappointed in their school outcomes.

It is necessary that the researcher outlines some of the major limitations in the current study. It is clear that qualitative research as a social process should be viewed as a negotiated activity between the researcher, the researched and the methods involved in the study. When a piece of research has reached its end, it does not imply that there were no impediments in the process of arriving at the completion of the study. The limitations may and indeed have assisted the researcher to identify alternative approaches of investigating topics of interests. There were a number of limitations which I faced during the conduct of the current study. These limitations do not suggest that this study was a failure but rather that this study's success should be seen within the contexts of its limitations.

The process of data collection in the study faced some hurdles. Data collection using observations and semi-structured interviews were sometimes subjected to the

perceptions of the researcher. To minimize researcher subjectivity, the researcher asked some participants to check data for any inconsistencies.

Many students, mainly from private schools were not able to understand English and many parents and other respondents did not manage to understand why the research was to lead to life improvements.

Reliability Tests for the Questionnaire

The reliability of a research instrument concerns the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials. Although unreliability is always present to a certain extent, there will generally be a good deal of consistency in the results of a quality instrument gathered at different times. The tendency toward consistency found in repeated measurements is referred to as reliability (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Whereas Validity can be defined as the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. There are three basic approaches to the validity of tests and measures as shown by Mason and Bramble (1989). These are content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity. The researcher has used the content validity which measures the degree to which the test items represent the domain or universe of the trait or property being measured. In testing validity and reliability of the questionnaire the researcher used the relevant formula. (Pearson Product moment). More especially the reliability showed via SPSS revealed that the questionnaire was reliable and it avoids bias and this is tested in tables testing the hypotheses embodying characteristics to measure.

(http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FSL/is_n6_v66/ai_20157980/ accessed on 10th September, 2010.)

The Intended Number of Respondents in all Schools from the Calculated Sample

The number of respondents in all schools was 2875. Using this number and the sample the researcher was able to compute number of respondents in all schools respectively in Nganzo Nine year basic education ,Nemba I nine year basic education ,Nemba secondary school,EAV Rushashi ,Karuganda secondary school, and Nyarutovu secondary school.

Table 1: The Intended Number of Respondents in all Schools from the Calculated Sample:

Names of Schools	Number of respondents
Nganzo nine year basic education	50
Nemba I nine year basic education	60
Nemba Secondary School	60
EAV Rushashi	73
Karuganda Secondary school	69
Nyarutovu Secondary school	91
TOTAL	400

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents the description of respondents, descriptive statistics of variables about the socio-economic status and school dropout in selected secondary schools of Gakenke district-Rwanda. It also provides an analysis and discussion of research findings from qualitative and quantitative materials collected from students in relation to their experiences about dropout. The study measures independent variables and relates them with the dependent variable that is school dropout in Gakenke district.

Measurement of the Dependent Variable: School Dropout

The dependent variable (DV) in this study was school dropout in Gakenke district. In view to do this the researcher used the major instrument which is the questionnaire and the last showed the indicators of all variables as they appear through the objectives of the study. The measurement was carried out using the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). According to Victoria L. Bernhartz (1998:2) "In education, we have a history of adopting one innovation after another as they are introduced. very few of us take the time to understand the needs of the children we serve, the impact of what our current processes have on children, the root causes of recurring problems, the solutions to alleviate the problems in the long run, and how to measure and analyze impacts after implementing new approaches; the use of data can make an enormous difference in school by improving school processes and student learning."

Data have helped the researcher in this study:

To correlate research hypotheses with the indicators of students' dropout in Gakenke.

To identify the root causes of problems due to students' dropout so we can solve the problem and fathom the symptom.

To assess needs of students in view to target school services.

To answer the question for the community

To continuously improve all aspects of the learning organization in view to correlate school dropout in Gakenke and the dependent variable.

Presentation of the Area of Study

Gakenke district has 14319 students, 6819 boys and 7500 girls .The population that has been chosen by the researcher is made of Nganzo primary school with 136 boys and 146 girls=282,Nemba ^{1st} nine year basic education with 171 boys and 191 girls=362, Nemba secondary school with 376 boys and 399 girls=775 ,EAV Rushashi with 249 boys and 204 girls =453,Karuganda secondary school with 262 boys and 163 girls =425 ,Nyarutovu secondary school with 360 men and 221 girls=571 .

Calculation of the Sample

The total amount of the students of the schools that constituted the researcher's population is 2868. The researcher targeted other respondents like district officials, head teachers and these were 20.If we add this number to 2868 we will find 2888.In using Slovin's formula we have found the sample from our population that underwent questionnaires ,interviews and other ways of presentation.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(A)^2}$$

N=Population

n=sample

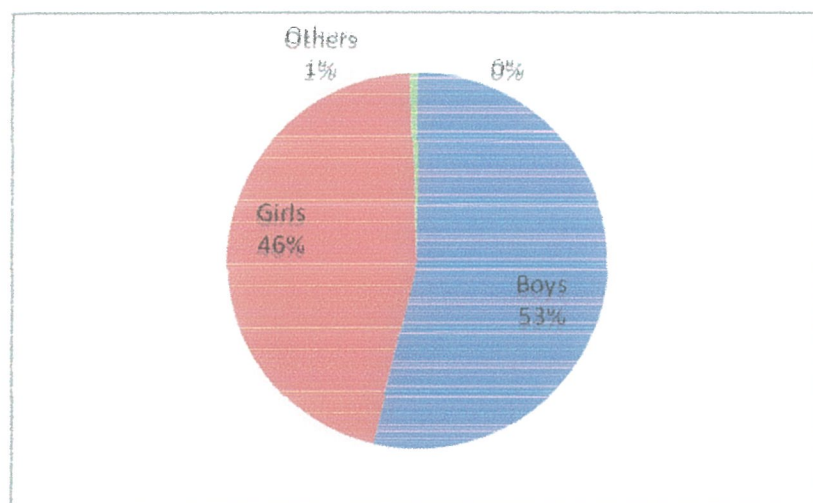
A=error that equals 0.05.

$$n = \frac{3888}{1 + 2888(0.005)^2} = 400$$

A total of 400 respondents were questioned but unfortunately only 380 respondents brought back the questionnaires.

If we stratify the summation of girls and boys we will use the following figure in Gakenke schools:

Figure 2: Pie Chart Showing the Respondents Percentages



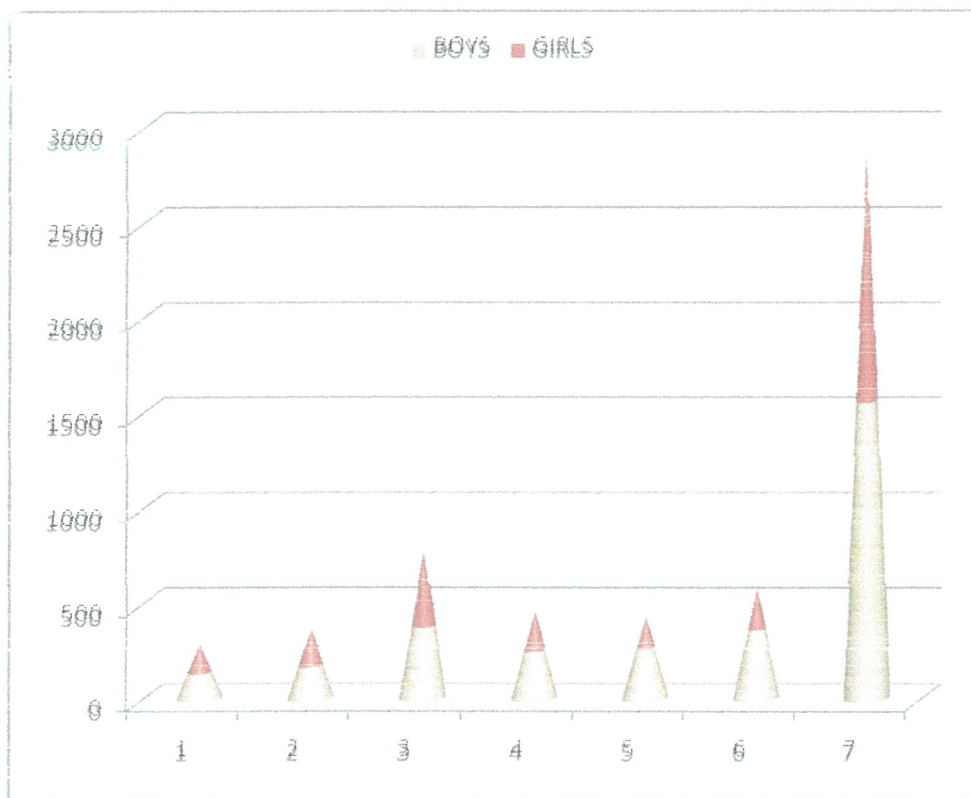
This pie chart implies that the majority of the respondents of the researcher were male and female students. We have also to note that the researcher addressed parents, educational officials, district leaders, headmasters. All this small number is represented by 1% on the pie chart because they represent a very limited but important number of the researcher's respondents.

Table 2: Sex of Respondents from Schools

Schools	Boys	Girls	Total
Nganzo	136	146	282
Nemba I	171	191	382
Nemba sec.sch	376	399	570
EAV Rushashi	249	204	453
Karuganda	262	163	425
E.S Nyarutovu	360	221	581
Total	1554	1324	2878

(Source: Field data)

Figure 3: Diagram Representing Sex of Respondents from Selected Schools



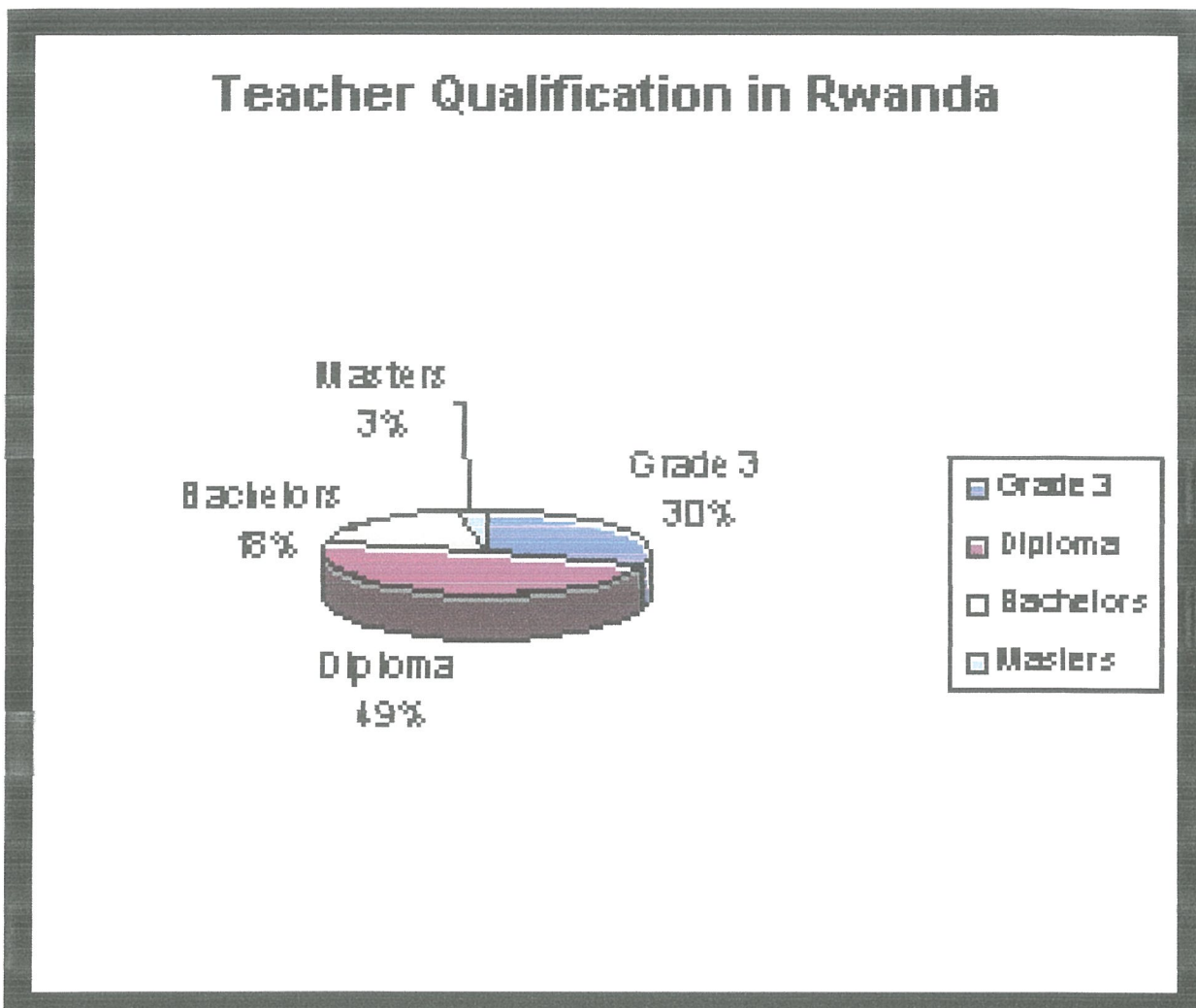
As the table shows and the above figure boys are so many more than girls and the last have the great chance to drop out from school because of the impediments that are so many in their lifetime.

Table 3: The Total of Drop out in Gakenke District

Boys	Girls	Total
287	261	548

(Source: Directorate of education)

Figure 4: Teacher Qualification in Rwanda



(Source: Annual Conference Report on Educational Research, Australia, 2008)

It is important that young students in these transitional societies display a shared sense of the need for change. Change has to be brought about in the education system, but this change has to fit reality. There is a need for huge manpower resources and skills in Rwandan education sector. It is important to put education into context, think about the out of school youth and the rural poor. The new curriculum should put education into

context and must be progressive because the problem of drop out is not a thing to be taken for granted.

What can be noticed in those data provided by schools and educational officials is that all children dropout and the situation is related to child work, illness and other indicators. The secretaries of the schools who delivered educational reports did not do the research before producing the report because a fact becomes a research when it is perceived by the researcher as a problem that need an answer. For them they did not realize that this is a crucial problem that need an in-depth investigation and eventually find an answer. In this framework the researcher did not stop by the apparent relations with drop out that were given by heads of schools and educational officials. The researcher went ahead in investigating the role of parents (here perceived under various angles as teachers, traders, leaders etc.) as stated in hypotheses, research questions and objectives of the study.

The only three variables have been correlated with the school dropout through the research instruments that the researcher has used. A series of extraneous variables has not been neglected. But all went around the research variables as the "Building blocks" of the study. That is why, different correlations have been carried out as far as the research instruments and the research hypotheses were concerned.

Dropout rates

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations on how Respondents Rated Dropout in their Schools

Indicators of school dropout	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Girls' drop out	808	2.13	1.289
Boys' dropout	1163	3.06	1.108
Dropout of orphaned students	501	1.32	0.568
Dropout of students from Poor families	862	2.27	0.643
Dropout of students from rich families	1150	3.03	0.307
Dropout of students whose parents are not well educated	1315	3.46	0.540
Dropout of students whose parents are well educated	1664	4.38	0.938
Dropout of students from private schools	1219	3.21	0.413
Drop out of refugees	693	1.83	1.079
Dropout of students whose parents are married	983	2.59	0.650
Dropout of students whose parents are divorced	1147	3.02	0.717
Dropout of students whose parents are employed	1351	3.56	0.576
Mean index	1052	2.77	0.2745

What is proved here up(See table 5), is that the average of dropout is increasing and as the standard deviation is very low (No where it reaches 5),the findings must be

generalizable and say that there is school dropout which is neither high nor low as the respondents rated them .

Table 5: Means and Standard Deviations on how Respondents rated Parents' Level of Education

Indicators of parents' level of education	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Most parents in Gakenke district are illiterate	485	1.28	0.524
Most parents in Gakenke district are primary graduates	829	2.18	0.455
Most parents in Gakenke district are secondary graduates	1278	3.36	0.524
Most parents in Gakenke district are certificate graduates	1554	4.09	0.574
Most parents in Gakenke district are diploma graduates	1404	3.69	0.540
Most parents in Gakenke district have degrees	540	1.42	0.816
There are many parents with masters degrees	834	2.19	0.397
Mean index	989	2.60	0.364

The general Standard deviation is not high which means that the findings are to be generalizable in confirming that the indicators of parents' level of education are highly related to school dropout in Gakenke district.(See table 6). The correlation also exists and it shows that the relationship we have been talking about in the hypotheses statements do exist. The respondents rated the parents' level of education as High in relationship with school dropout in Gakenke district.

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations on how Respondents Rated Parents' Attitude towards Children's Education

Indicators of parents' attitude	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Most parents like to send their children to school	1435	3.78	0.448
Most parents care about the education of their children	526	1.38	0.689
Most parents assist their children in reading their books	838	2.21	0.404
Most parents try to motivate their children to learn	1206	3.17	0.431
Parents always support their children's education	1111	2.92	0.432
Most parents are aware of the importance of their children's education	1356	3.57	0.761
Mean index	1079	2.84	0.183

The data show that the mean of the indicators of the participation of parents' attitudes towards children education is related to school dropout at nearly three (3) because the mean is 2, 84 as the mean index .As the standard deviation at the level of mean index is low the researcher generalized the finding saying that there is correlation or relationship between those indicators of parents' attitudes and school dropout in Gakenke district. The respondents rated parents' attitudes in relation with dropout as neither high nor low if we consider the Likert questionnaire that we have used.

Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations on how Respondents Rated Parents' Occupation and Income

Indicators of parents' occupation and income	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Most of parents are not employed in an income generating firm	797	2.10	0.834
Most of parents work for others and get little money	1057	2.79	0.409
Most of parents work to earn their lives only	1391	3.67	0.678
Most of parents are teachers of primary schools	1489	3.93	1.508
Some parents do not work and they are beggars	795	2.10	0.835
Most of parents work in mines	1071	2.83	0.467
Most parents have a government job	1363	3.60	0.744
Most of parents work for private institutions	1752	4.62	0.485
Mean index	1215	3.21	0.477

At this level (see table 8), the mean grows at 3.21 and shows that there is school dropout related to parents' occupation and their income. The very low mean absolute deviation allowed the researcher to generalize the findings and conclude that there is relationship between parents occupation, their income and school dropout in Gakenke district. The respondents rated the parents' occupation and income as neither high nor low in relation with dropout of school in Gakenke if we consider the Likert questionnaire that the researcher has used.

Significance of Correlations

The Relationship between Parents' Level of Education and Students Dropout in Gakenke District

Table 8: Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient Results Correlating Parents' Level of Education and Students' Dropout in Gakenke District

Variable (indices)	Sample	Mean	Std.Deviation	r value	Sig.
DROPOUT	380	2.7674	0.27448	0.57	0.000
EDUCATION	380	2.6030	0.36421		

As it is remarkable here, (See table 9) the Pearson r of the five 2 related factors (dropout and parents' education) have high degree of correlation (0.57). It means that there is significant relationship level of education. It is worth reminding that this is among crucial determinant that is highly related to school dropout as it is showed in that table above. As it is remarkable on the table above, correlation coefficient (r) has represented the linear relationship between students dropout and other independent variables. (Here it is the parents' level of education and school dropout) If the correlation coefficient is squared, then the resulting value (r^2 , the coefficient of determination) has represent the proportion of common variation in the two variables (i.e., the "strength" or "magnitude" of the relationship). In order to evaluate the correlation between variables, it has been important to know this "magnitude" or "strength" as well as the *significance* of the correlation.

Here, the researcher realized that there is a strong positive correlation .As the level of parents' education is low, the dropout increases.

The significance level calculated for each correlation was primary source of information about the reliability of the correlation. The significance of a correlation coefficient of a

particular magnitude depended on the size of the sample from which was computed=400 and reduced to 380 because of the data analyzed from different respondents. The test of significance is based on the assumption that the distribution of the values for the dependent variable follows the normal distribution, and that the variability of the values is the same for all values of the independent variable. For the first variable 1052 responses have covered a mean of 2.77 about students dropout but the deviation could go to 0.2745.If we square the $r=0.59$ we will find the magnitude of 0.3481 and the significance 0.000 is the highest. This means that the relationship between students' dropout and parents' level of education is very high. As the correlation coefficient is a number that summarizes the direction and degree (closeness) of linear relations between two variables, to mean that they are related, the researcher has also showed that the variables are closer. The researcher's predictions (hypotheses) have been verified.

Table 9: Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient Results Correlating Parents' Attitude Towards Children's Education and Students' Dropout in Gakenke District

Variable (indices)	Sample	Mean	Std.Deviation	r value	Sig.
DROPOUT	380	2.77	0.27448	-0.312	0.000
ATTITUDE	380	2.84	0.18274		

Here, there is a strong negative correlation between our variables because we have a very negative correlation .As results ,The weaker is the parents' attitudes towards children education the bigger is the dropout .The attitudes of parents and students towards schooling are here considered to be important indicators associated with students' dropout. To evaluate the extent to which attitudes influenced students' outcomes, it was important to have appropriate measures of attitudes. Up to date in Rwanda, parents and students' attitudes have generally been assessed by one item

asking how they felt about school. Previous research in Rwanda had supported the proposition that development and opportunity were important aspects that parents and young people valued and expected from education. Therefore, to measure attitudes towards children's education, a set of items which covered both development and opportunity aspects of education was designed. After the items were trialed, a final was compiled.

Table 10: Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient Results Correlating Parents' Occupation, Income and Students' Dropout in Gakenke District

Variable (indices)	Sample	Mean	Std.Deviation	r value	Sig.
DROPOUT	380	2.77	0.274	-0.303	0.000
OCUPATION	380	3.21	0.477		

In educational sciences, the basic reason for doing statistical analysis is to uncover trends, reveal relationships, and to make predictions. So, the, Mean, the standard deviation, were used to determine the rate of dropout and to test the significance of input and output variables, Pearson-r were used. Conclusions Based on the data gathered, the overall weighted mean of level of drop out was -303 and interpreted as "often". Occupation of parents had an average of 3.21. Here again ,the significance is the highest because when we compute 0.000 the significance is increasing and this finally means that there is a significant relationship between students drop out and parents' income and their occupation. There is a strong negative relationship, which means, that as the percentage of total dropout increases, the percentage of total income in families will decrease. The Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient or Pearson's Correlation Coefficient has allowed the researcher to express "the relationship between two different determinants. The result or 'r-value' is -0.303 and the Pearson's r is greater. Therefore, the null hypothesis does not exist, since there is enough evidence to say that the two variables are related; and because the coefficient is so strong, we

can say that in the population there is a significant relationship between the income of the families or parents in Gakenke and students' dropout .When the standard deviation is high(and it is not the researcher's case), we say that the findings cannot be generalized but in our case the standard deviation is low to mean that there is real relationship between measured variables , the income of the parents and the school dropout in Gakenke district.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter the researcher provides a discussion of findings on Socio-Economic Status and students' dropout in selected secondary Schools of Gakenke district-Rwanda. The findings that the researcher discusses were analyzed and interpreted in Chapter four.

Findings

Parents' Educational Level and Students' Dropout

In using the SPSS and correlation design, the research has proved that there is relationship between parents' level of education and students' dropout in schools of Gakenke district. 90% of investigated children reported to the researcher that their parents did not finish primary school and the majority of them are illiterate. The correlation coefficient (r) between parents' educational level and school dropout is of 0.57. When the situation is like this there is positive correlation between the two measured variables. This has come to mean that as the parents' level of education decreases, dropout rate increases.

This research has also demonstrated that all respondents averagely rated this correlation as "High" on the Likert scale questionnaire. School students perceived that teachers and parents had lower educational aspirations for them. In addition, parental support and their low levels are perceived barriers which are related to students' dropout in Gakenke district.

Parents' Attitudes and Students' Dropout.

Low socio-economic status and parents' level of education, not only affect dropout rates in Gakenke district but it affects parental involvement in a student's education. Parental attitudes have been seen here as can be as parental participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children. If there is little parental involvement in a child's education, there is more of a likelihood that the student will not succeed. When a parent is not involved or interested in his or her child's education, there is a greater chance that the child will not be interested in his or her own education. This directly affects whether or not the student will finish school. It is not uncommon to see little parental involvement in the education of children from low income households. This, in turn, leads to an increase in behavioral problems.

As the researcher questioned and investigated, these parents' attitudes the last have been an obstacle to education in general because many parents think as in the time when the European education was arising in Africa. For example, focusing on clothing many mothers are discouraging education saying that their daughters have gone to learn bad cultures and despise the original Rwandan culture. In this perspective, girls who are, undoubtedly, for those mothers, more vulnerable, tend to ask them to remain at home and send their sons at school above all when the household income is very low.

In fact, there were hypotheses that had to be verified and they helped the researcher to identify variables like independent, dependent and non controllable extraneous variables .It is in that framework that core variables in the study have been identified and they have been shown in the theoretical framework (See table 1). Parents' attitudes were then found to related to students' dropout in Gakenke district because there is a negative correlation (-0.312).The rule here says that $-50 \leq r \leq 0.25$ to mean that if we have a high value in X ,the value in Y will be low. This implies that as the attitudes of parents' are eroded the rate of dropout increases. The correlation is there even though it is strongly negative. In addition to that the respondents rated the

relationship between parents' attitudes on the Likert scale as neither High nor Low.

Parents' Occupation their Income and Students' Dropout

The Pearson correlation calculated through SPSS shows that there is correlation between the parents' occupation, their income and school dropout in Gakenke district. This has been proved by the fact that the Pearson correlation is -0.303. As the coefficient of correlation is strong, the researcher has been able to affirm that there is a correlation between the income of the parents in Gakenke and students' dropout. As the standard deviation is not high, findings have been generalized and there is a significant correlation between measured variables, the income of the parents and the students dropout in Gakenke district.

Findings from interviews

Even though interviews have been mainly focused on head teachers and educational officials, they also concerned road children and illiterate parents who could not read and write. They have been conducted in view to reinforce findings through the questionnaire. The findings on this point revealed that the parents' level of education plays a big role in causing students' dropout. One road child witnessed to the researcher:

"My parents told me that schooling is not necessary because the majority of the richest people in Gakenke did not go through schools. From the time, I kept it like that till when I went to secondary school. They forced to go to graze cows instead of reading in the night with a candle. But because you explain to me the benefits of education (He wanted to mean the researcher) like having a distinguished and better understanding of the world, I will go back there; even though I can succeed in class I do not know if my parents will allow me to go back there". (Researcher's translation from Kinyarwanda into English)

The researcher considered even geographical location of the parents because near the parents' settlement, there is no even primary school. The child dropped out from secondary school and he missed guidance of the environment which made him to quit school.

Even though many parents in Gakenke agree when they ask them about their interest of children's schooling, their practice is still far to be taken as reality. Many parents' related students' dropout with poverty, but when the researcher investigated their annual income, he found that there is a bad understanding of education as investment. One parent, after realizing that his elder son is not performing well after O' level he decided to stop paying for him and privileged the following child who was performing well at primary school and till now, he is still doing so in secondary school. The eldest was forced to dropout not because of the lack of money but because of the uncertain future he perceives for his son. Here is a problem of mentality.

About the first Independent Variable (IDV), Parents' level of education, head teachers rated it with dropout at 80% because children dropout because their parents are very poor but because they have a low understanding on education. Instead of paying for his sons a father spends all his money in pubs pretending that NGOs will pay for them. The district officials rated it at 70% because even children of leaders are threatened by the problem of their children's dropout.

Concerning the parents' attitudes towards education, the respondents pointed out the role of villagers who do not initiate their children in reading because of their high illiteracy rate. Either head teachers or district officials maintained that there is a need to sensitize parents to avoid negative ideas which can hinder children's education.

In correlating parents' income, their occupation and student's dropout and the respondents said that this has the high rate in relation with students' dropout. In the views of many school bursars, children, even those performing well in class, sometimes dropout of school because the occupation of their parents cannot withstand against a

huge school fee required by the school. If the Gross Domestic Product(GDP) of the family is below one dollar per day, the family cannot pay school fees for even one child in Rwanda. Lucky students are those who are paid by some sponsors who cannot be found for every poor Rwandan family. As now the parents must share the cost of education with the government, a situation which tends to total privatization of schools, Rwandan children, especially the poor will not be able to continue their studies.

CONCLUSIONS

Poverty is making education inaccessible in Rwanda. When countries are highly indebted, they make education very restricted and scholarships that were given to secondary leavers are lessened. Teachers are still getting a very low salary and some of them get discouraged because of the low salary and this impedes the advancement of learners. School materials are not sufficient because the families are in majority poor. When these conditions persist, very few women access schooling in Rwanda. When girls go through unsafe places they are sexually abused and they cannot go to study very far because they can be violated. All these elements are due directly or indirectly to the role of parents who have been the center of our research objectives.

Many girls want to get married before 18 and this is a great obstacle to the girls' development because they get disappointed with life at a low age. Many girls become then become mothers in the age of puberty. When girls get pregnant their education is impeded. This pregnancy may also result from rape, involvement with male parents called "sugar daddies", in Rwanda, men who provide money or gifts to establish sexual liaisons with little girls. Textbooks and Rwandan proverbs also reinforce gender disparities.

From theory perspective, the central questions about students' dropout were stated in view to know the following:

What was the relationship between parents' level of education and students dropout in Gakenke district?

What was the relationship between parents' attitudes and students' dropout of school in Gakenke district?

What was the relationship between parents' occupation, their income and students' dropout in Gakenke district?

These questions linked to hypotheses that were fixed by the researcher as predictions to the problems prevailing in the research. The findings were generated from data collected through, questionnaires, interviews, critical incident and classroom observations. The interviews that were conducted with heads of schools, educational officials etc offered additional data about experiences of schools and how students drop out from school. Documents provided secondary information on some of the issues in the research questions.

HIV pandemic is at the considerable level to contribute to school dropout because children even negative, when they see their parents passing away, they despair and the major risk is to dropout from school.

Gender inequalities are yet the obstacle for girls because even if the government is encouraging girl's education, many mothers are showing the major interests in privileging boys than girls. A journey to gender parity must also be enhanced.

The main activity for the researcher was to establish relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. Apart from the extraneous variables that have been discussed in general, the relationship between parents' level of education ,the relationship between parents ' attitudes towards children occupation , income and school dropout had to be drawn and the study proved that there are relationship between those two variables. Hence, negative and positive and negative correlations were remarked in the work.

To sum up we can affirm undoubtedly that there is a significant relationship between the stated independent variables and students dropout in Gakenke district as the dependent variable. We hereby also say that researcher's hypotheses have been verified. Normally, the main hypotheses have been guiding the work but if parents have

been the main focus of discussion and investigation, it is because they have in their hands the whole children education .Their socio status can imply so many things like different extraneous variables that we have been talking about. Among them there are social stereotypes, discrimination, gender imbalances etc. Their economy will determine if the child can go to school or not .That is why social and economic determinants have been going hand in hand in this work to be related to students dropout. The economy of parents then is linked to many things like remoteness of households, the lack of school aids / materials, etc. About parents attitudes parents can enhance or hinder the children education and finally their attitudes is correlated to school dropout. The occupation of parents and their GDP(Gross National Product) can also determine the efficiency and effectiveness and that is why a number of respondents rated it "High" to mean that there is a proved relationship between parents' occupation and students dropout. The SPSS also proved that the questionnaire is valid because it has showed the exactly the extent to which the instrument measures what it has to measure. About reliability test of the questionnaire, the research proved that the questionnaire is reliable because it has showed a satisfactory level in measurement. A researcher's interpretation of a result was valid as it yielded accurate conclusions about the measured variables. Validity, therefore, has not been a characteristic of the research instrument itself, but also ways a researcher interpreted and used measured variables.

Recommendations for educational institutions

It is recommended that the government should:

1. Increase opportunities and access to primary and secondary education and this will lead to intensive flow to higher education.

Changing economic structure and employment patterns have affected Rwandan society. Unemployment, especially long term, is emerging as a major determinant of poverty and thus the increased demand for further education. Even after the efforts at

rehabilitation the dropout rates remain high and the prospects of access to secondary education remain limited in spite of the efforts of the Rwandan government. The challenge is meeting the need for secondary and higher education. It is a future challenge for any Rwanda if only a percentage of for example 20% of its primary school leavers are able to continue onwards to secondary education and the big number to discontinue while doing their secondary education.

2. Provide a contextualized curriculum of all courses

It is good that Rwanda is prioritizing education for all and science based education. But the time should be allocated to subjects like political science, history, philosophy because they change minds that can be barbaric and these drop outs are susceptible to occur if the minds of people who are not well brought up. The challenge lies in improving the quality of education in all subjects without forgetting technology so that the curriculum is presented in a relevant context. For example topics might include training in rural subsistence-based activities, mine awareness, health, water and sanitation, to equipping young people with a skill base applicable to modern and industrial technological contexts.

3. Provide a good living wage for teachers and opportunities for in-service training.

4. Provide a living wage for teachers and the means for professional development

Teachers form the backbone of the education system in Rwanda and it is important that they receive adequate training and motivation. The challenge in Rwanda is re-organizing teacher training structures, redefining teacher training programs, creating higher pedagogical institutes, increasing content knowledge of teachers, and improving remuneration and incentive packages. Indeed evidence from the study has shown that Rwandan teachers are not motivated enough to stay in the teaching field due to low wages and their poor economic conditions. It is important that the government in Rwanda acknowledges this and improve the conditions of teachers.

5. Introduce Plans to provide Systematic Guidance to the students who want to dropout from school

Each component of the system (the teachers, the Curriculum Development Centre, the Examinations Board and the Inspectorate) has responsibilities in education reform process and has their own challenge. This co-ordination between the teachers, the Curriculum Development Centre, the Examinations Board and the Inspectorate requires political commitment, organizational skills, long-term financial assistance and patience. As a result of funding from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Development Program, the Ministry of Education has developed plans, but these plans need to be evaluated annually or every alternate year in order to assess if targets and goals are being reached.

6. Discourage negative parents' attitudes which can lead to learners' dropout in Rwanda especially in parents?

7. Punish seriously the immature people who make female students pregnant including unethical teachers regarding their students.

8. Enhance economic development by all necessary means

9. Prevent school dropout and fathom all possible ways to counteract it.

10. Set flexible school hours

Many children, particularly those in rural, agricultural areas have pressures on them to work which often clash with traditional schooling timetables. Temporary withdrawals in harvest times and for migrating communities pull children away from school, often leading to more permanent removals. Flexible schooling timetables have been known to cut dropouts. For example, the daily program might take place at times that do not interfere with children's work duties, shift systems and evening classes might be in place; and the annual program may shift so those involved in seasonal tasks are not excluded.

11. Foster automatic promotion rather than repetition

Schools in many countries require students to successfully complete a grade before allowing them to gain access to the higher grade, meaning children who do not attain the required level often have to repeat. However there are links between repetition and drop out. Research indicates that in some contexts, automatic promotion might reduce dropout.

12. Provide financial support to children who are likely to drop out from school.

13. Ensure social safety net scholarships in reducing school drop outs.

14. Enhance community involvement in view to promote high access on education.

15. Promote literacy programs for uneducated mothers may help to increase school participation by their children.

16. Create educational, vocational, and economic opportunities in rural areas for both boys and girls in view to reduce dropouts and their effects.

17. Improve social status of citizens.

18. Render schooling more attractive so as to enable students to remain longer at school.

Recommendations for future researchers

Future scholars should put the following areas into consideration:

1. To put into practice the actions targeting the access, retention and quality of education for both boys and girls who readily drop out from school.

2. To reinforce the goals of EFA in Rwanda.

3. To reinforce educational infrastructure and all meanings that it covers in view to counteract school dropout in Gakenke and Rwanda in general.

4. To control school attendance.

5. To establish a strategic plan in view to counteract students' dropout.

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APENDICES

APPENDIX ONE TRANSMITTAL LETTER



KAMPALA
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INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Date: 17th September, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Letter of Introduction.

This is to introduce *Twagirayezu Emmanuel* Reg. No. *MED/10031/S1/Df* a student pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational Management and Administration of Kampala International University from *January 2009* in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning Programme. He is writing his research on '*Socio- Economic status and students Drop-out in selected Secondary Schools of Gakenke District- Rwanda*. He is at the data collection stage and your Institution/ Organization has been chosen for his research study.

It will be appreciated if you can accord him the necessary assistance.

Thank you;



J.S. Oweeye/Ph.D
Director-IODL

APPENDIX TWO

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Master of Educational

Management and Administration.

MED/10031/81/DF

Dear Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR RESPONDING TO QUESTIONNAIRE

In completing my university education at Kampala International University, I am carrying out a research on: "SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND STUDENTS DROPOUT IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF GAKENKE DISTRICT-RWANDA" I request your assistance with humility by responding to the questions in this questionnaire. The information that you will provide will be worked out confidentially.

Yours faithfully

Emmanuel Twagirayezu

I. Questionnaire for students

Remark for the respondent:

- Don't put your names on this paper.
- This questionnaire aims at pointing out the factors undermining the students' drop out in Gakenke.
- Answers are thoroughly confidential
- Read carefully the instructions before responding.
- Put the tick (✓) against the chosen response.

Section A: Questionnaire about parents' level of education

Please, tell the extent to which you agree with the following statements about parents' occupation. Your respective opinions are to range from 1=Very high; 2 = High; 3 = neither high nor low; 4 =Low; 5 = Very low

Indicators of parents' level of education						
1	Most parents in Gakenke district are illiterate	1	2	3	4	5
2	Most parents in Gakenke district are primary graduates	1	2	3	4	5
3	Most parents in Gakenke district are secondary graduates	1	2	3	4	5
4	Most parents in Gakenke district are certificate graduates	1	2	3	4	5
5	Most parents in Gakenke district are diploma graduates	1	2	3	4	5
6	Most parents in Gakenke district have degrees	1	2	3	4	5
7	There are many parents with masters degrees	1	2	3	4	5

Section B: Questionnaires about parents' attitude towards children education

Indicators of parents' attitude towards education of their children					
1	Most parents like to send their children to school	1	2	3	4 5
2	Most parents care about the education of their children	1	2	3	4 5
3	Most parents assist their children in reading their books	1	2	3	4 5
4	Most parents try to motivate their children to learn	1	2	3	4 5
5	Parents always support their children's education	1	2	3	4 5
6	Most parents are aware of the importance of their children's education	1	2	3	4 5

Section C: Questionnaire about parents' occupation.

Please, tell the extent to which you agree with the following statements about parents' occupation. Your respective opinions are to range from 1=Very high; 2 = High; 3 = neither high nor low; 4 =Low; 5 = Very low

Statements						
1	Most of parents are not employed in a income generating firm	1	2	3	4	5
2	Most of parents work for others and get little money	1	2	3	4	5
3	Most of parents work to earn their lives only	1	2	3	4	5
4	Most of parents are teachers of primary schools	1	2	3	4	5
5	Some parents do not work and they are beggars	1	2	3	4	5
6	Most of parents work in mines	1	2	3	4	5
7	Most parents have a government job	1	2	3	4	5
8	Most of parents work for private institutions	1	2	3	4	5

Section D: Questionnaire about school dropout

Please indicate the rate of school dropout in your school among the following categories of students. Your respective answers should range between; 1=Very high; 2 = High; 3 = neither high nor low; 4 =Low; 5 = Very low

Indicators of school dropout						
1	Girls' dropout	1	2	3	4	5
2	Boys' dropout	1	2	3	4	5
3	Dropout of orphaned students	1	2	3	4	5
4	Dropout of students from Poor families	1	2	3	4	5
5	Dropout of students from rich families	1	2	3	4	5
6	Dropout of students whose parents are not well educated	1	2	3	4	5
7	Dropout of students whose parents are well educated	1	2	3	4	5
8	Dropout of students from private schools	1	2	3	4	5
9	Drop out of refugees	1	2	3	4	5
10	Dropout of students whose parents are married	1	2	3	4	5
11	Dropout of students whose parents are divorced	1	2	3	4	5
12	Dropout of students whose parents are employed	1	2	3	4	5
13	Dropout of students whose parents are unemployed	1	2	3	4	5

II. Interview with the head teachers and educational officials

1. What problems do students face till they drop out from school?(Focus on:
Social and economic problems
2. How can these challenges be overcome?
3. What can you suggest to the Ministry of education?
4. What did you do to cope with school dropout in your institution?
5. What are the suggestions can you give to the parents whose children have dropped out from school?
6. What has been the role of local leaders?

III. Interview with district leaders

1. What is the nature of the students that drop out from school?
2. How can we help students so that they cannot drop out from school?
3. Do you think the number of students who drop out can decrease?
4. Why do children with special educational needs drop out more than the remaining children?
- 5.If you were aware of a high ranking rate of school drop out ,how did you manage to alleviate it?

APPENDIX THREE

RESEARCHER'S CURRICULUM VITAE

I. PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

Name: TWAGIRAYEZU

Surname: Emmanuel

Father's Name: HARERIMANA GONZARVE

Mother's Names: KABAZAYIRE FELICITÉ

Date of birth: 01 January, 1979

Place of Birth:

Sector: GAKENKE

District: GAKENKE

Province: NORTHERN PROVINCE

Marital Status: SINGLE

Nationality: RWANDESE

Email: twagira50@yahoo.fr

Telephone: +250788857595

II. EDUCATION

-Year 2009-2010: Master of Arts (Educational Management and Administration) at Kampala international University(K.I.U)

- Year 2002-2007: Bachelor's degree in Arts and Humanities at National University of Rwanda (NUR)

- Year 1999-2002: Secondary Education (A2 Level) at " Gatovu Secondary school in Arts.

- Year1999-2002 : O' Level Education at Minor Seminary of Nkumba

- Year 1993-1999: Primary Education at Nganzo Primary School.

III. WORK EXPERIENCE

2001: A teacher of English, History and political science at Nyarutovu Communal College.

2007-2010: Assistant lecturer at the Institute of Higher Learning of Ruhengeri (INES Ruhengeri), Economics& entrepreneurship teacher at Nemba Secondary School.

IV. SPOKEN LANGUAGES

-Kinyarwanda (Excellent)

-English (Excellent)

-French (excellent)

-Kiswahili (very good)

- Computer Skills : - MS WORD

- MS EXCEL

- MS ACCESS

- MS POWER POINT

-INTERNET EXPLORER

I certify that the information given here above is reliable and verifiable.

Emmanuel Twagirayezu

APPENDIX FOUR

Sample size (s) required for the given population size (N) by (Amin, 2005)

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	256	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	346
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	354
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	191	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	170	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	180	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	190	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	200	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	370
65	56	210	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	220	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	230	144	550	226	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	240	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380

85	70	250	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	260	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	254	2600	335	10000	384

Note: From R.V. Krejcie and D.W. Morgan (1970), Determining sample size for research activities, Educational and psychological measurement, 30, 608, Sage Publications.

