

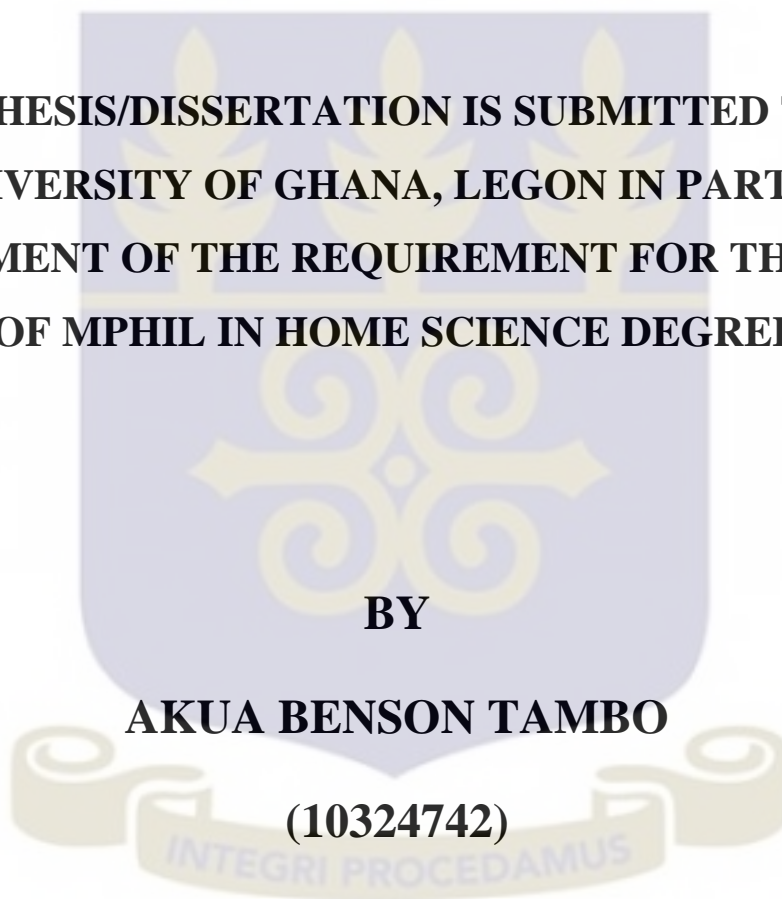
**LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE
BASIC SCHOOL DROPOUTS:
A SOCIAL CAPITAL PERSPECTIVE**

**THIS THESIS/DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD
OF MPhil IN HOME SCIENCE DEGREE**

BY

AKUA BENSON TAMBO

(10324742)



NOVEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

I, Akua Benson Tambo, hereby declare that this research was carried out under the supervision of Dr. Justice Owusu-Bempah and Dr. Cynthia Gadegbeku. With the exception of references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged, this thesis was done entirely by me. I further affirm that this work has never been submitted either in whole or part for any other degree in this University or elsewhere.

.....
Akua Benson Tambo (10324742)

.....
Date

.....
**Dr. Justice Owusu-Bempah
(Supervisor)**

.....
Date

.....
**Dr. Cynthia Gadegbeku
(Supervisor)**

.....
Date

ABSTRACT

The undesirable impact of female school dropout has attracted attention from governments, stakeholders, national as well as multinational institutions to look at the phenomenon from various perspectives. This study was conducted to gain insight into the causes of basic school dropout behaviour among females in the Narhman community, Accra, within a social capital framework. A cross sectional design with a qualitative approach was used to interview eighteen respondents using the face-to-face interview method. Data was analyzed along three predetermined themes and emerging sub-themes were extracted using the Grounded Theory approach. The findings showed that child maltreatment, parental poverty, illness, peer teasing and parental death were some of the factors that made respondents drop out of school. The findings again showed respondents had negative forms of social capital reflecting in their stories and this influenced their decision to drop out of school. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Ghana Education Service introduces the concept of Social Capital as a topic in Social Studies in basic schools. These findings of the study would add up to existing knowledge that could form the basis for developing interventions to curb the incidence of females dropping out of school.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Study Background	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Aim of the Study	3
1.4 Specific Objectives	3
1.5 Research Questions	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	4
1.7 Operational Definition of Terms	4
CHAPTER TWO	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Evolution of the Social Capital Theory	6
2.2.1 Concepts in the Social Capital Theory	12
2.3 Dropout Theories	18
2.4 Relationship between the dropout theories and social capital dropout research	20
2.5 Peculiar Factors Affecting Female School Dropout	22
2.6 Summary	26
CHAPTER THREE	28
METHODOLOGY	28
3.1 Introduction	28
3.2 Research design	28
3.3 Study location	29
3.4 Target population	30

3.5 Study sample.....	30
3.6 Sampling procedure	31
3.7 Data collection tool	32
3.8 Pre-test.....	33
3.9 Data Collection Procedure.....	33
3.10 Data analysis and interpretation using Grounded Theory method of analysis.....	34
3.10.1 <i>Data Analysis Matrix</i>	36
3.11 Validity and Reliability	37
3.12 Ethical considerations	40
3.13 Limitations of the study	40
3.14 Conclusion.....	40
CHAPTER FOUR.....	41
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	41
4.1 Introduction.....	41
4.2 Demographic Characteristics	41
4.3 Pre-determined themes	46
4.3.1 <i>Decision to stay in or drop out of school</i>	46
4.3.2 <i>Dimensions of social capital mentioned in respondents' stories</i>	56
4.3.3 <i>Lived experiences after dropping out of school</i>	61
4.4 Relationships Existing Among Themes	64
CHAPTER FIVE	66
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	66
5.1 Introduction	66
5.2. Summary	66
5.3 Conclusion.....	67
5.4 Recommendations	67
REFERENCES.....	69
APPENDIX 1: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE TO ASSESS THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE BASIC SCHOOL DROPOUTS.....	78

LIST OF FIGURES

CONTENTS	PAGE
Figure 3.1. Map of Greater Accra Region showing Ga East, the study location.....	30
Figure 3.2 Data analysis matrix	36
Figure 4.1 Predetermined theme 1 and subthemes.....	47
Figure 4.2 Lived experiences after dropping out of school	61
Figure 4.3 Relationships among predetermined themes	64

LIST OF TABLES

CONTENTS	PAGE
Table 3.1 Stages of Data Analysis	35
Table 3.2 Quantitative Constructs versus Qualitative Constructs	39
Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	42

APPENDIX

CONTENTS	PAGE
Appendix 1: An Interview Guide to Assess the Lived Experiences of Female Basic School Dropouts.....	78

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BECE	- Basic Education Certificate Examination
CAMFED	- Campaign for Female Education
EFA	- Education for All
JHS	- Junior High School
MSLC	- Middle School Leaving Certificate
ILO	- International Labour Organization
WHO	- World Health Organization
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	- United Nations Children's Fund

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work is a product of grace. I am forever grateful to the Lord God Almighty whose abundant grace saw me through. I really appreciate my supervisors, Dr. Cynthia Gadegbeku, and Dr. Justice Owusu-Bempah and all Senior Members of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, who selflessly devoted their expertise, time and energy to supervise this work. I am especially appreciative of the constructive criticisms and patience, encouragement and tolerance they exhibited towards me. These virtues urged me on to gain knowledge and understanding of social sciences research and family resource management which culminated in the production of this thesis. I am also grateful to my friends Janet, Auntie Bene, Belinda and Adelaide of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences for their support in diverse ways. I am highly indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Kwapong and their daughter Dr. Nana Afranaa Kwapong whose inspirational words motivated me to brave all odds to undertake this graduate programme. I am exceedingly grateful to my mentor, Dr. Francis Osei whose godly counsel and support urged me on to bring this work to fruition. I appreciate the encouragement of my children Masemola, Mpo, Mpoyana and Acheampomah. I am especially grateful to my siblings Paa Yaw, Yaw Emma and Nana Kwame whose inspirational words urged me on to complete my studies.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Background

Education is a tool for the development of every society. This is because the development of talents and the acquisition of knowledge and skills critical for personal and national development are done through education. Therefore, dropping out of school could have serious negative implications for the development of individuals and societies. Literature (Ananga, 2011; Dubow et al., 2006) indicates that school dropouts experience unfavourable employment and other life outcomes in adulthood. For instance, it has been argued that when individuals drop out of basic and high school, they do not acquire the basic literacy and numeracy skills and the necessary credentials to enable them function well and fully in today's technologically oriented society and work environment (Alexander et al., 2008; Huesmann et al., 2006).

The dropout problem with the attendant negative life outcomes can be costly to societies in terms of loss of revenue and welfare support (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). This could possibly be the basis for declaring education as a right for children by the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. The Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2010) indicates that despite the rise in enrolment rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, many children who enter primary schools drop out before completing a full primary education. Studies by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have shown that around 28 million pupils drop out of school yearly worldwide, with females forming the highest percentage (UNESCO, 2012). UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2011) reports that in 47 countries, girls are less likely than boys to complete primary education. Almost one-half of these countries are situated in sub-Saharan Africa. Kosovo

Population and Housing Census (2011) shows that in America, female school retention is lower than males. In West Asia, 20% of adolescent girls of lower secondary school age are out of school compared to 13% of boys (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016). Recognizing the positive impact of female education and the undesirable impact of dropout behaviour, many non-governmental institutions such as Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) give scholarships to girls to increase female school retention and graduation levels in order to reduce gender differences in education in Ghana and other African countries (CAMFED, 2015). Though such efforts are commendable, it has not been able to close the gender gap regarding dropout rates.

Various studies (Adam et al., 2016; Ananga, 2011; Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009) have looked at the dropout phenomenon from various perspectives. However, some researchers (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996; Croninger & Lee, 2001; Israel & Beaulieu, 2004; Drewry, 2007; Plagens 2011) have argued that these studies on dropouts tended to focus on the tangible aspects of dropout behaviour, neglecting the intangible aspects, that is, relationships and interrelationships between the individual with the dropout tendency and his/her immediate environment. Coleman (1988) was therefore of the view that to be able to develop a workable model to mitigate the dropout behaviour, researchers need to look at students with the tendency to drop out of school and their interactions with and among their network of people around them, that is, their family, school, and community. This is the main focus of the social capital theory (Coleman, 1988, Smith et al., 1992; Croninger 1991; Drewry, 2007). Social capital rests on the premise that social networks have value.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The phenomenon of female school dropouts has been given much attention in Ghana and in most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Several quantitative studies have been conducted generally on the patterns, causes, prevention and policies regarding school dropouts. The qualitative components of previous research which could throw more light on the root causes of dropout behaviour have been lacking. Also, there have been several studies on the general impact of school dropouts in Ghana. However, not many studies have been done on the experiences of female school dropouts from a social capital perspective. This study, therefore, sought to fill this gap.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study was to document and analyze the experiences of females who dropped out of basic school level from a social capital perspective.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Ascertain the factors which influenced the female school dropouts' decision to stay in or drop out of school.
2. Determine the aspects of social capital as defined in this study that appeared in dropout stories.
3. Investigate the stories that female basic school dropouts tell about their lived experiences after dropping out of school.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What factors influenced the female school dropouts' decision to stay in or drop out of school?
2. What dimensions of social capital as operationalized in this research appear in dropout stories?
3. What stories do female basic school dropouts tell about their lived experiences after dropping out of school?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Findings of this study would add to existing knowledge on school dropouts in Ghana. Positive and negative aspects of social capital would be identified and this would enable policy makers and other relevant stakeholders such as civil society organizations, families, schools, churches and communities to better comprehend the dropout issue and design interventions to curb it. In addition, the findings would be a basis for further research in academia.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Lived Experiences: This refers to self-reporting accounts of the females who dropped out of basic school.

Dropout: In the context of this study, a school dropout is a person who stopped attending basic school before writing the Middle School Leaving Certificate Examination (MSLC) or Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

Basic School: in the context of this study basic school refers to education level from primary class 1 to middle school form 4 or junior high school (JHS) form 3.

Social Capital: This study adopted James Coleman (1988) definition of social capital. Coleman (1988) defined social capital as the sum total of trust and obligations that result from interactions among a network of people. Coleman argued that categories of social factors that led to a student's tendency to drop out of high school may be associated with the amount of social capital available in a student's family, school, or community.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature examined in this chapter focused on the lived experiences of female basic school dropouts with reference to the social capital theory. The chapter is organized into five sections. The first and second sections discuss the social capital theory and dropout theories respectively. The third section establishes the relationship between the dropout theories and social capital dropout research while the fourth section discusses the factors that contribute to female dropout behaviour. The last section discusses the linkages among all concepts and theories that were discussed in the previous sections and presents a summary of the discussions.

2.2 Evolution of the Social Capital Theory

There has been disagreement among researchers on the exact date for which social capital as a concept was first used. Whereas Putnam (2000) believes that the first usage of the concept was by Hanifan in 1916, Farr (2004) and Plagens (2011) strongly disagree and rather believe that John Dewey had previously used the concept thrice earlier in 1900, 1909 and 1915 before Hanifan used it in 1916. Dewey's conception of social capital was clearly articulated in his speech "The Elementary School Teacher" (Dewey, 1902). In this speech, Dewey expressed the view that in addition to its function of providing intellectual material to children's minds, the school must also serve as a social center where children will be instructed on how to interact and develop relationships with community members in order to improve societal life.

Dewey believed that pressing political issues could not be resolved by policies and legislations but by “*common sympathies and common understanding*” (Dewey, 1902). Hanifan (1916) supported Dewey by expressing the view that social capital is a tool that is used to enhance community relationships which then leads to the development of the entire community (Hanifan, 1916). In the view of Hanifan (1916), when communities use social capital as a tool, relationships would be improved and people would care for one another. Literally, each would be “their brother’s keeper”. This kind of bond has an added advantage where each individual would want to make the community safer by being vigilant, clean or put in as much effort that would improve the general livelihood of his/her neighbour. In so doing, developmental needs of the community would be achieved.

Thus, implicit in Hanifan’s (1916) argument is the idea that once people are connected and have good relationships, everybody would want to do something for the common good of the other person. Therefore, as they relied on each other, together, they are able to lift up the community collectively. This implies that when communities tap into and make use of their interconnectedness (social capital), relationships are improved and at the end, the entire community benefits in its development (Hanifan, 1916).

Comparing Dewey’s (1902) propositions with Hanifan’s (1916), it can be deduced that the key foundation of social capital is interconnectedness in human relationships and how such can be exploited for the common good of individuals and societies as a whole. Reviewing the ideas of Dewey and Hanifan in the 1900’s, it could be concluded that they both conceptualized social capital as the interconnections and interrelations that exist among people. They both believed that

no single individual could be functional in isolation and thus, recognized social capital as an interconnectedness tool that is used to improve human relationships. Other theorists have used the term social capital in various contexts after Dewey and Hanifan without changing the underlying meanings. Jacobs (1961) used the social capital concept in the 1960's in her study of urban environments. Loury (1977) used the concept of social capital to study disparities in the earnings between black women and their white counterparts. Loury (1977) used social capital in conjunction with the social exchange theory to show that relationship decisions are motivated by rewards and costs.

Bourdieu (1986) contributed to the development of social capital theory. In the view of Bourdieu (1986), social capital is *“made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility”* (Bourdieu, 1986). Thus, Bourdieu believes that in every society, there exists social obligations and these obligations result from connections existing among people in society. For instance, fathers play their role as fathers because of the connection between them and their children.

Bourdieu (1986) further posits that such connections are convertible, that is, they can be converted into economic capital as people combine their strength, knowledge and money together into a business *“institution”* which in Bourdieu's view is noble or has a sense of nobility. Bourdieu's definition of social capital reflects his sociological interest in the reproduction of society and how the dominant classes perpetuate themselves in power. In effect, Bourdieu (1986) believes that the misapplication of social capital, that is, connections could be a basis for the creation of social inequality. Probably, Bourdieu (1986) thinks that once individuals stand by themselves and alone,

it is more difficult to get things done compared to when they are in the company of other people. This also means that once people do not take advantage of connections they might not be able to or will take a long time and effort to be able to do something noble, therefore, creating inequality in society. In 1988, James Coleman undertook the first major study that linked the social capital theory to educational attainment. Using social capital to study school dropouts, Coleman (1988) states that social capital is a resource but an intangible one. Coleman (1988) contends that interconnections (intangible resource) can be used as a tool by the family, the school and the community to elicit interest in school-age children to always want to be in school than to drop out.

Thus, if this intangible resource called interconnections could be applied by the family, the school and the community to form bonds between them and school-going children, there is a higher likelihood that all aspects of children's educational needs could be monitored and deficiencies corrected to keep them in school than they dropping out. Coleman (1988) established an association between dropping out of school and the social capital available to children. Thus, those with higher social capital, i.e. interconnections are more likely to stay in school than those with relatively lower social capital. In the 1990's, social capital as a concept was applied in studying different settings including education (Smith et al., 1992) and labour markets growth (Granovetter, 1995).

Smith et al. (1992) were of the view that social capital has two components of social networks and social interactions. Like Coleman (1988), they argued that when these two components are used or on display in the lives of children of school-going age, they are able to build trust in others and would want to prove their own trustworthiness by remaining in school and not dropping out. On the other hand, children who have very little or no social networks and social interactions are likely

to drop out of school. Granovetter (1995) conceptualized social capital within an economic framework. He demonstrated the extent to which social networks could influence the labour market. In his book, “Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers”, Granovetter (1995) studied how 282 people got their jobs in the United States. He argued that in a job search, a person who possesses many social connections whom he termed “the social man” has an advantage over “the economic man” who has qualities best suited for the job but does not have such social connections. Lin (1999) argued that people could mobilize the inherent resources in social capital to enhance the attainment of socioeconomic statuses.

Several studies relied on social capital as a concept in the 2000’s. For instance, Putnam (2000) defined social capital in the light of civic engagements. In his book, “Bowling Alone: America’s declining social capital culture and politics”, Putnam (2000) illustrated the decline of social capital among Americans. He bemoaned the reduction of interactions within American families, friendship networks, among neighbours and even in democratic participation. Putnam (2000) described bonding and bridging as two basic concepts in social capital. Bonding strengthens existing relationships within homogenous groups while bridging creates relationships among heterogeneous groups.

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (2000) explained social capital in the light of organizational growth. They attributed the advantages that some organizations have over others in market shares to the high levels of social capital enjoyed by those organizations. Fukuyama (2001) used social capital to study groups and organizations. Fukuyama (2001) believed that social capital as a concept could be used to facilitate team building and team work if networks and interconnectedness are

encouraged among people within organizational settings. Thus, Fukuyama (2001) believes that social capital can create an environment where people can work together to achieve organizational goals. Embedded in Fukuyama's argument is the idea that if organizational leaders and managers could adopt social capital in their work places, they would be able to forge cooperation even among individuals with strong and varied opinions, ideologies and backgrounds for organizational achievement.

Looking at all the various conceptions of social capital over the years by various researchers, it could be deduced that the main implications of the concept remains the same from the 1900s to the 2000s. However, researchers differ in the context in which they applied the concept. In the main they all conceptualized social capital as a resource which emerges through human relationships and interrelationships which could be used for human development if channeled positively. In the context of education and social development, Dewey (1902) argued that positive social capital could be used as a tool to improve school children's civic orientation and make the community and the whole society better and thus form the basis of democracy.

With reference to education, Dewey (1902) was supported by Coleman (1988) who also contended that if parents, teachers and community members could form bonds with children, giving them encouragement and develop special relationships with them, such relationships could enhance children's educational attainment. The absence of such bonding could highly predispose children to dropping out of school. Like Dewey (1902) and Hanifan in the early 1900s, Putnam (2000) placed emphasis on the role of social capital in creating goodwill and enhancing community spirit. All these writers argued that the bonds created among community members through interactions improves living conditions of the individual and the community as a whole. They were of the

view that both the individual and society would be worse off without the interconnectedness among societal members. Bourdieu (1986), Loury (1977), Granovetter (1995) and Lin (1999) agreed that social capital influences the development of social structure. They argued that the relationships people establish with others open doors for them and even had the potential to improve people's social status.

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (2000), supported by Fukuyama (2001) associated the concept with organizational growth. They contended among other things that social capital enhances teamwork and also increases an organization's market share. Of special interest to this study is the application of social capital within the educational setting. Social capital and educational researchers (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Croninger & Lee, 2001; Crowder & South, 2003; Drewry, 2007) all used social capital to assess how the concept as a tool could be used to avoid school dropout.

2.2.1 Concepts in the Social Capital Theory

As discussed earlier, various researchers (e.g. Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996:1997, Crowder & South, 2003) have used the social capital concept to study dropout and have made significant contributions to how school-age children are likely to drop out of school because of little or no social capital. These studies conclude that within social capital are three essential areas that can be exploited and that if used concurrently, the incidence of school dropout would be minimized completely if not eliminated totally. These three essential areas include: The Family, The School and The Community.

The Family

The family has attracted several definitions and descriptions by various researchers. In the study of family sciences, description of the family has evolved through research and in response to changes that have occurred in society. The family is described by Burgess & Locke (1945) as “*a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption; constituting a single household; interacting and communicating with each other in their respective social roles; and creating and maintaining a common culture.*” The elements of interaction and communication mentioned in this definition are core concepts in the social capital theory, therefore this definition implies that social capital is very fundamental to the existence of every family and for that matter society as a whole since the family is regarded as the social unit of society. Nukunya (2003) sees the family as “*a group of individuals related to each other by ties of consanguinity, marriage or adoption and the adult members of this union are responsible for the upbringing of children.*”

The family is further seen as “*an economic or otherwise practical unit that cares for any children or other dependents*” (Lamanna & Reidmann, 2012). All the above descriptions of the family buttress the need for care, interconnectedness and cooperation implied by Burgess & Locke (1945). The only variation in these definitions is the fact that Burgess & Locke (1945) ‘locks’ the family in the ‘household box’ while others imply that a family may not necessarily be constituted of a single household. Regardless of the living arrangements of the family, there are certain specific functions which are expected of the family which all researchers involved in family studies agree on. For instance, families are expected to care for, provide for, maintain, protect, and support members (Burgess & Locke, 1945; Nukunya, 2003; Lamanna & Reidman, 2012).

Again, in performing these roles and responsibilities, families maintain a strong bond which is made possible through communication, networking, constant and continual interactions. It is from this point that the social capital theorists (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1997; Drewry, 2007) have argued that these connections, networks and interactions are tools which can be used to elicit children's interest and desire to remain in school. By constantly talking, showing interest, helping, supporting and listening to children, parents, guardians and other members of the family are able to build trust in and bond with their children and can identify concerns their children might have and put things in place to help remove any challenges identified.

Again, once parents adopt social capital, there would be free flow of information, positive interactions and boldness on the part of the children to speak out issues that border them (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996; Croninger & Lee, 2001; Drewry, 2007). Such connections and interactions create confidence in children that their parents and guardians are available and ready to come to their aid. Such environment eliminates fear on the part of the children. Though such connections and interactions are an intangible resource, it is so powerful to encourage children to stay in school and not drop out (Coleman, 1988).

Probably the children would not want to break the trust their parents have shown in them. On the other hand, where such connections and interactions are weak or non-existent, there is always distrust, fear, lack of bonding among others. Such an environment constitutes negative social capital which according to social capital theorists predisposes children of school going age in such families to dropout tendencies (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996; Israel & Beaulieu, 2004).

The School

The school is a formalized institution at specific locations where pupils/student are brought together to study and obtain levels of education. The school plays important functions which includes cultural socialization of children, imparting of knowledge and skills to children, citizenship training and inculcating social responsibility and life values in children. The functions of the school are geared towards creating an environment for personal development of individuals brought to school. Analyzing these functions, it is evident that various elements come together to play various functions. For instance, the school management is expected to see to the provision of an environment where teaching and learning can take place (Chugh, 2011; Adam et al., 2016). These include but not limited to classroom spaces, play areas, lighting, water, washrooms, offices and logistics among others (Chugh, 2011) to help staff, pupils and students. The staff, the second element are expected to be knowledgeable, exhibit professionalism, teach, support and show interest in the students, provide leadership in their respective areas of operation and be role models to their colleagues, pupils and students.

The pupils and students are expected to play their role as well by attending classes, abiding by school rules and regulations and meeting expectations placed on them at the school (Ream & Rumberger, 2008; Imoro, 2009). It must however, be noted that these elements within the school system do not stand and work in isolation. The school environment must foster connections and interactions in a reciprocal manner if the ultimate aim of the school as a system is to be achieved (Coleman, 1988).

Croninger & Lee (2001) explained that school social capital is the attempt by the school administration to assist and direct students in both school and personal issues. Research associates increase in school social capital with a rise in student achievement and a reduction in dropout rates

(Bryk & Thum, 1989; Israel & Beaulieu, 2004). Thus, management, teachers, staff and students must connect and interact with one another. Where these connections and interactions are free, fair and open, it ensures free and trusting communications among the elements.

Crosnoe (2004) found that students who attend schools where the bond between teachers and students is strong perform better academically. In such an environment, if something unpleasant (such as dropout tendencies) looms, it could be easily identified and mitigated immediately (Coleman, 1988). This is the whole basis of the argument of the social capital proponents. On the other hand, if the connections and interactions are weak and non-existent, then issues like dropout will emerge strongly (Coleman, 1988; Croninger & Lee, 2001).

The Community

Theodori (2005) “*defines a community as a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life*”. Social interaction is the substantive element of the community (Theodori, 2005). This implies that a community is created by social interactions and relationships and not only by geographical location. From this perspective, community occurs in places and is place oriented, but the place itself, per se, is not the community. The place serves as the setting in which social interactions which defines the community occur.

Research indicates that community social capital is an intangible resource inherent in relationships which is produced through interpersonal interactions between friends and neighbours to facilitate certain actions such as educational achievement in communities (Coleman 1990; Smith et al., 1995; Crowder & South, 2003). According to Coleman (1988), such intangible resources include trust and reciprocity. If the elderly in the community interacts with the youth and children about

their school work, and future prospects, the younger generation will feel appreciated and would talk to the adults about issues which might predispose them to drop out of school, which could then be dealt with. Again, if community members illustrate care, as for instance caring for orphans in the community, social capital would be enhanced and children would feel loved by all. This feeling of love and care according to Coleman (1988) would propel children in the community to attain higher education laurels.

Research indicates that belonging to a church and participating in church and community organizational activities increase community social capital available to students (Smith et al., 1992). Members of the same church or organization interact and establish relationships which enable them to receive social capital from one another. Such relationships enable parents to know their children's friends and the parents of their children's friends. Such a network of relationships is known as intergenerational closure (Coleman, 1988; Carbonaro, 1998). The existence of intergenerational closures in a community enables parents to know what their children do with their friends. Parents are therefore able to know and take measures to mitigate issues which might predispose children to dropping out of school (Coleman, 1988).

Parents and community members' participation in school activities (Smith et al. 1992; Yan 1999) and involvement in issues that promote education (such as the establishment of libraries, volunteering in school projects and educating teenage girls about teenage pregnancy) assure children of the support from the adults in the community (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). These actions of the community members establish the environment for educational achievement which boosts children's moral and confidence and make them want to strive to achieve higher educational laurels.

Coleman (1988) concluded that the success of private schools depends not so much on classroom work or the endowment of individual children but rather to a larger extent on the high levels of involvement of parents and community members in school activities (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993). In such an environment, the children would do all they could to justify the confidence that the elderly have reposed in them. The presence of role models and mentors (White & Wehlage, 1995) such as graduates and the existence of positive interactions in the community encourage pupils and students to stay in school (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992). However, if there are many dropouts and deviants in the community, it is likely that children will affiliate with them, a situation which will predispose them to exhibit dropout behaviour (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000).

2.3 Dropout Theories

Dropout has been an issue globally and has attracted lots of attention from various stakeholders: national, international and multinational. Likewise, several studies have been conducted to come up with explanations and probably better ways to mitigate dropout (Coleman, 1988; Colclough et al., 2003; Hunt, 2008; Ananga, 2011), but Battin-Pearson et al. (2000) believe that no single study or theory has been able to explain this complex phenomenon. For instance, theories such as the academic mediation theory, general deviance theory, deviant affiliation theory, poor family socialization theory and structural strains theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) all of which contain aspects of social capital have been propounded to explain dropout behaviours from different perspectives. The Academic Mediation Theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) explains how poor academic achievement interacts with and affects the relationship between school dropout and other factors. This theory examines the mediation effect of poor academic achievement on other factors, such as deviant affiliation, personal deviance, family socialization and structural strains associated

with school dropout. The theory posits that a student whose academic performance is low is likely to drop out of school. The tendency to drop out of school is heightened if the student is deviant, associates with deviant peers, receives less or no encouragement from the parents or if the parents are uneducated and comes from a low socio-economic background.

General deviance theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) examines the association between deviant behaviour and dropout. The theory states that a student who engages in deviant behaviours such as drug use, delinquency and early pregnancy is highly predisposed to drop out of school. Deviant affiliation theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) describes the effect of bonding with antisocial peers on dropout tendencies. The theory posits that a student is more likely to drop out if he/she associates with deviant friends, lacks school social bonding and parental expectation, has uneducated parents and is an African American male of low socioeconomic status (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000), in spite of how well that student may be doing academically.

Poor family socialization theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) focuses on the relationship between a student's family origin and dropout behaviour. The theory posits that a student whose parents are not educated parents and who does not receive encouragement or parental expectations about his/her education from the parents is highly predisposed to drop out of school. Structural strains theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) investigates the relationship which exists between demographic factors like gender, ethnic and socioeconomic background and the tendency to drop out of school. The theory posits that boys are more likely to drop out than girls and that dropouts are most likely to come from a family with a low socioeconomic background.

2.4 Relationship between the dropout theories and social capital dropout research

Vitaro et al. (2001) supports the view on deviant behaviour by stating that affiliation with deviant/dropout friends did predict dropout behaviour. Other studies (Carbonaro 1998; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000) also concluded that having friends who have dropped out of school increases a student's tendency to drop out of school. As regards school social bonding, students who are tied to others who believe in the value and legitimacy of school will be less likely to drop out (Lamborn et al., 1992). Some studies, however, express divergent views on the African American male of low socioeconomic status mentioned in the deviant affiliation theory. It has been proven (U.S. Census Bureau 2005) that U.S Latinos have the highest dropout rate of all the major racial/ethnic groups, and youths of Mexican descent are especially susceptible to not completing school (Valencia 2002). Kao and Tienda (1998) further stress that socioeconomic disadvantage has also been shown to diminish educational aspirations among U.S. Latino adolescents.

In another development, in a study of basic school dropout in the Amansie West District of Ghana, Braimah and Oduro-Ofori (2005) found that causes of dropout in basic schools were mainly related to poverty which describes low socioeconomic status. Braimah and Oduro-Ofori (2005) indicated that poor families are usually not able to provide for their children's educational needs adequately. Children from poor households usually have inadequate educational materials such as text books and school uniforms. They are often sent out of school for non-payment of educational bills. These challenges predispose children from poor families to drop out because they tend to lose interest in school and develop poor academic performance.

However, Imoro (2009) refutes the claim made by Braimah & Oduro-Ofori (2005). In his research on dropout dimensions of basic school dropout in Asutifi District of rural Ghana, Imoro (2009) submits that although many parents attribute dropout behaviour to poverty, teachers, educational authorities and opinion leaders who know about livelihood patterns and attitudes of parents to education often doubt this assertion. They claim that *parents, especially in high incidence areas, have priorities other than the education of their children*” (Imoro, 2009).

The poor family socialization theory explains dropout behaviour with reference to parental educational level and its implications on their children’s educational attainment. Björklund and Salvanes (2011) found a positive correlation between the education of parents and that of their children. Chevalier et al. (2013) studied the causal effect of parental education on children, allowing for the separate effects of maternal and paternal education; and for the causal effect of household income, controlling for education. They submitted that parental education levels and paternal income are positively associated with good child outcomes. With reference to parental expectation and interactions, the poor family socialization theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) concurs earlier studies (Coleman, 1988; Rumberger et al., 1990) who discussed that dropouts are more likely to come from families in which they (the dropouts) have to make their own decisions because there is little or no connection or interactions with parents in all aspects of their lives, including education.

Research does not support the claim made by the structural strains theory that dropout rates for boys are higher than that of girls. Holmes (2003) observed that girls achieve less education than boys and also tend to drop out earlier than boys. UNESCO (2012) report also indicate that globally, females tend to drop out more than males.

2.5 Peculiar Factors Affecting Female School Dropout

Regardless of the explanations or descriptions given to dropouts, some peculiar factors contribute to female dropout behaviour. Research indicates that globally, females tend to drop out more than males (Holmes, 2003; UNESCO, 2010; UNESCO, 2012). Factors that are peculiar to females dropping out of school which include but not limited to child marriage, early parenthood, parental investment practices, household work, feminine facilities in schools, presence of female teacher in school, teachers' attitude to the girl child and school distance, have been discussed below.

Child Marriage

Holcomp (2009) argues that some socio-cultural factors highly influence girls' dropout behaviour. Cultures world over practice child marriage (Ackers et al., 2001; Mansory, 2007), a harmful traditional practice which deprives girls of their education as they are forced to drop out of school to marry. Child marriage is prevalent among some ethnic groups in the three Northern Regions of Ghana and the Ewes. Amongst Ewes predominantly found in the Volta Region, girls are given as virgin wives to Trokosi shrines (Amoah, 2007; Botchway, 2008).

Early parenthood

Teenage pregnancy is a major factor which causes girls to drop out of school (Boyle et al., 2002). Tyler & Lofstrom (2009) assert that early adult responsibilities such as parenthood predicts higher likelihood of not graduating. When a school girl gets pregnant, she is forced to drop out of school in most cases. Though some countries permit girls after getting pregnant to return to school, the rate is very low (Dunne & Leach, 2005). In most cases returning to school after pregnancy depends

on issues such as getting a caregiver for their child (Grant & Hallman, 2006). Some girls do not return to school after having a child partly due to teasing from their peers.

Parental investment practices

Parental investment practices towards children's development impact girls' dropout behaviour. It has been argued (Glick & Sahn, 2006; Kingdon, 2005; Shahidul & Karim, 2015) that parents are prone to be pro-male biased in their investment towards the development of their children, thereby, investing more in boys' education than girls. Literature indicates that pro-male bias investment mainly occurs when parents have limited or lower economic resources, thereby pushing girls out of school earlier than boys (Fuller & Laing, 1999). This contention is concurred by Grant & Hallman (2006) who found that a girl child's tendency to drop out of school in South Africa had a close association with the financial strength of the family.

Household Work

A growing body of literature indicates that the amount of work that a child undertakes in the house influences their educational outcome. Girls tend to begin work earlier than boys and they also do more household chores than boys. Parents tend to assign more domestic chores to girls than boys due to traditions and negative perceptions about educating girls. Domestic chores take a chunk of girls' time and they are often not able to do homework and other academic-relevant activities. One household work which girls do is sibling care (Brock & Cammish, 1997). Older siblings often take care of younger siblings across cultures especially when the mother works and earns income outside the home (Weisner, 1982; Fuller & Liang, 1999). Studies into sibling care indicate that the "pseudo-parenting role" could lead to the acquisition of adult-like behaviours including

smoking as well as negative life outcomes such as dropping out of school on the part of the older young caregiver (Burton, 2007; Cooper, Denner, & Lopez, 1999). It is further argued that girls are more likely to sacrifice their self- aspirations for that of their family and therefore may be more vulnerable to absenteeism, low educational aspirations and be less involved in school (Gilligan, 1982; Kroska, 2003; Saldaña et al., 1999).

Feminine Facilities in Schools

Inadequate sanitation facilities such as water, hygienic and separate places of conveniences in the school influence girls' school attendance. Lizettee (2000) states that lack of sanitary facilities and poor hygiene affect girls more than boys. Girls need safe and separate sanitation facilities in school, especially during menstruation. Lack of water and places of convenience often discourage girls from going to school, especially during menstruation, a behaviour which produces low academic achievement and culminates in dropping out of school (Ngales, 2005; Grant & Mensch, 2013). Birdsall et al. (2005) contends that girls' privacy issue is a major factor which pushes girls out of school. UNICEF (2009) recommends separate hygienic facilities for boys and girls in the design of school facilities.

Female Teachers in Schools

Several studies that investigated the effect of female teachers on the educational achievement of female students established a positive relationship between the two variables (Carrell et al., 2010; Hoffman & Philip, 2009; Rothstein, 1995; Nixon & Robinson, 1999). Female teachers act as role models for girls in school. Saha et al., (2007) found the lack of female teachers as a constraint to girls' education in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The lack of female teachers in these societies is a

cycle which rises from the religious belief that girls should not be taught by male teachers. Due to the lack of female teachers, parents remove their teenage daughters from school before they also become literate enough to teach other girls.

Teachers' Attitude

The impact of teachers' attitudes towards female students with reference to dropout behaviour has been examined by research. Teaching practices and the attitude of teachers are important in retaining girls in school. Research literature indicates that teachers tend to view boys more positively than girls because they expect girls to stop schooling early (Colclough et al., 2000; Fawe, 2001). Njau & Wamahu (1994) found that in Sub-Saharan Africa, teachers' attitude was the major reason why girls dropped out of school. Nekatibeb (2002) also contends that both female and male teachers in several Sub-Saharan African countries paid more attention to boys than girls and considered boys to be better than girls academically.

School Distance

Distance to school ranks high as a determinant of dropout behaviour of girls. Parents are apprehensive for the safety of their children if the distance from home to school is considered to be too long. Parents are particularly apprehensive about their daughters' safety with respect to long distance between home and school due to their vulnerability to sexual harassment (Colclough et al., 2000; Nekatibeb, 2002). Ainsworth et al. (2005) found that girls are highly motivated to stay in school when the distance between home and school is short.

2.6 Summary

Several explanations have been put forth by researchers as discussed earlier regarding what can make a school-going child drop out of school. Whereas the proponents of social capital (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Teachman et al., 1997; Drewry 2007) believe that interconnectedness, networks and interactions are intangible tools which are the main ingredients in the family, school and community to keep children in school, these interconnectedness and networks if not exploited and used could lead a child to drop out of school.

Other researchers (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) believed that dropping out of school goes beyond just exploiting and using connections and interconnections but academics, deviancy and deviant affiliations as well poor family socialization and structural strains influence dropout behaviour. Thus, if children are not academically good or they put up deviant behaviours or associate themselves with other deviant children, they are likely to drop out of school (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000).

The structural strains and poor family socialization perspective however shifts focus to the family characteristics of the individual and how that can negatively influence the child to drop out. For instance, parental poverty, i.e. parents' inability to provide for the educational needs of children, parental educational level, lack of parental expectations for the child's education (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) which have a direct correlation with a child's educational attainment have all been suggested. What these studies did not pay much attention to is the lived experiences of the dropouts to ascertain which aspects of the theories feature in those stories and the aspects that have not been captured by them and what would be done or the mitigating steps put in place to prevent other

children from dropping out of school, especially from the developing world. It is this gap that this study sought to fill. To be able to accurately chronicle or capture the experiences of dropouts from their own perspectives without the researcher imposing his/her personal opinion, the use of face-to-face interviews whereby dropouts' own statements could be captured from their own views and follow-up questions asked for clarification was employed in this study. This method, used for this study has been addressed in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design employed to investigate the lived experiences of females who dropped out of basic school within a social capital context. The discussion in this chapter begins with the research design, location, and proceeds to discuss the target population, study sample and then the procedure for sample selection for the study. The chapter further discusses the data collection tools utilized, how the collected data were analyzed and presented, issues of ethical consideration and limitation of the study.

3.2 Research design

A research design is “a plan that describes how, when and where data are collected and analyzed” Cresswell *et al.* (2003). In the words of Vishnevsky & Beanlands (2004), a research design is “the researcher’s overall plan for answering the research question or testing the research hypothesis”. The research design used in this study was a cross sectional design with a qualitative approach. With a cross sectional research design, either the entire population or a subset is selected and data are collected at one point in time from these individuals (Olsen & St George, 2004; Bernard 2012; Cresswell *et al.*, 2003; Neuman, 2006). Data are collected over a short period of time, with the objective of obtaining a descriptive “snapshot” or picture of a group (Bourque *et al.*, 2011; Levin, 2006). The data hypothetically can represent individuals, groups, institutions, behaviours, or some other unit of analysis (Bourque *et al.*, 2011; Levin, 2006).

A cross-sectional design has the advantage of being relatively inexpensive in terms of research budget (Levin, 2006). The choice of a qualitative study approach was informed by its value for describing behaviours and then explaining them in terms of what the participants believe, perceive or value. A qualitative research seeks to understand some aspects of social life. Its methods in general, generates words rather than numbers, as data for analysis (Patton & Cochran, 2002; Van Manen, 2006). Qualitative methods generally aim to answer questions about the ‘what’, ‘how’ or ‘why’ of a phenomenon rather than ‘how many’ or ‘how much’ which are answered by quantitative methods (Maxwell et al., 2008; Patton & Cochran, 2002; Van Manen, 2006).

3.3 Study location

The study was conducted at Narhman, in the Ga East Municipal Assembly of the Greater Accra Region. Narhman is near the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission. Figure 3.1 (<http://https://upload.wikimedia.org>) is a map of the Greater Accra Region showing Ga East as the study location. This location was chosen using the purposive sampling technique because the researcher who works with an NGO that offers humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people is resident in this community and is aware that there are a good number of school dropouts, especially females, in the community. This location was also selected because of cost, time and proximity.

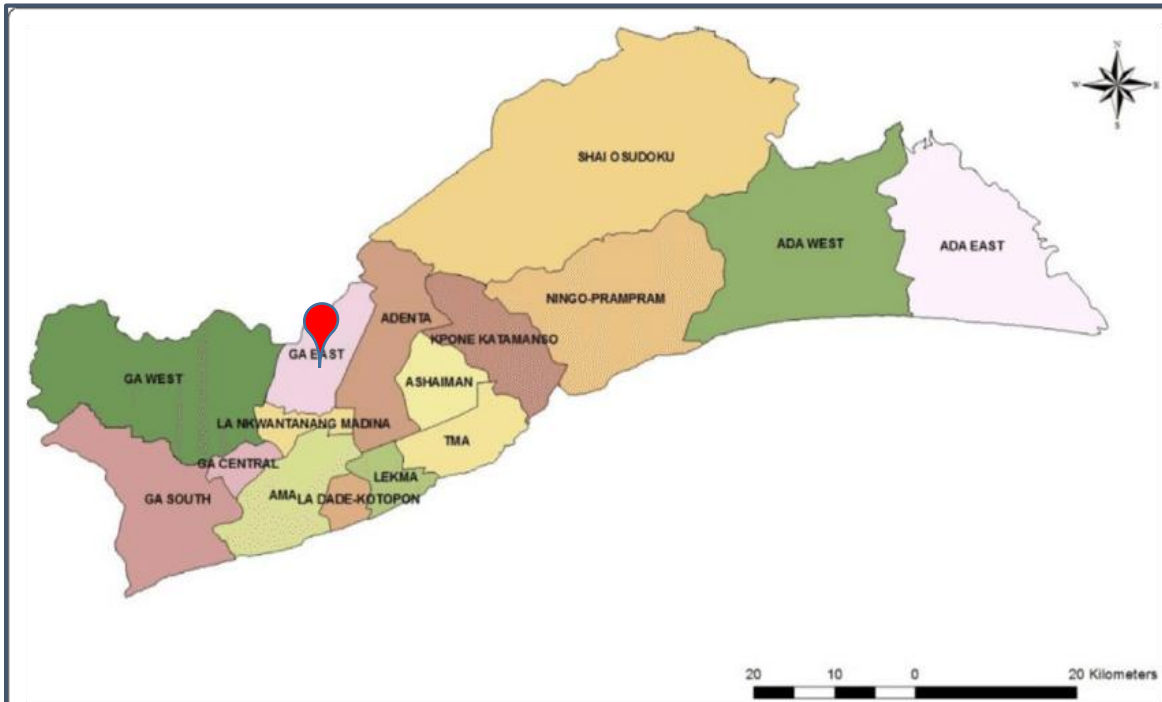


Figure 3.1. Map of Greater Accra Region showing Ga East, the study location
(Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/91/Greater_Accra_districts.jpg)

3.4 Target population

The target population is the entire set of units for which data is used to make inferences (Lavrakas, 2008). The target population in this study was all females who had dropped out of basic school in the Narhman community and were aged twenty years or more.

3.5 Study sample

Sampling entails selecting some part of a population in order to estimate or learn something from the population (Tailor, 2005). The sample size typically refers to the number of units that are chosen from which data is gathered (Lavrakas, 2008). It is essential that a suitable sample size

and technique be employed in the selection of respondents for the study. The sample size for this study was determined based on the research design, objectives of the study and planned analysis (Bernard, 2012). The purpose of a qualitative study approach is to understand phenomenon as it is perceived by those who experience it.

Unlike quantitative study, the sample in a qualitative study is not meant to be representative of the entire population, therefore, findings cannot be generalized about the whole population. Adler & Adler (1987) recommends a sample of between 12 and 60, with 30 being the mean for a qualitative research. Creswell (2011) emphasizes the small numbers of sample or cases in qualitative study. This, according to Ritchie & Lewis (2003), is because of the richness and the in-depth nature of information needed. Eighteen (18) females who had dropped out of basic school and were aged twenty years and more were purposively selected as the sample for the study. These study respondents were easily accessible and satisfied the criteria for the study of being females who dropped out of basic school and were willing to volunteer information for the study (Patton, 2002).

3.6 Sampling procedure

The nature of information required to answer the objectives of this study required specific samples with specific characteristics (Patton, 2002; Palinkas et al., 2011). Therefore, female school dropouts were purposively sampled because of their characteristics and the aim of the study (Patton, 2002). At the study site, women selling or sewing in small shops or on the streets were approached and engaged in a conversation. As the conversation proceeded, the objectives of the study were made known, and when a woman indicated she dropped out of school and was willing to volunteer information (Cresswell et al., 2011), she was selected as a respondent. Informed consent was sought and her rights were outlined as well as anonymity and the security of the information she

provided. They were assured that every information given would be analyzed in such a way that nobody would trace back to them. After that the selected respondents disclosed their residential addresses for follow-up visits and further interviews.

3.7 Data collection tool

An interview guide was used to interview respondents. An interview provides an avenue to understand the experiences of other people and the meanings they attach to those experiences” (Seidman, 2006). An interview also provides an opportunity to probe further into issues that are sensitive in nature (Patton & Cochran, 2002). The semi-structured nature of depth interviewing allows the interviews to be organized around a group of open-ended ideas (Miller & Crabtree, 2004; Drewry, 2007). The interview guide had four main prompts to guide the conversation. These prompts were:

1. Respondents to introduce themselves.
2. Respondents to recall their basic school experiences they could remember, both the good ones, regrettable ones and bad ones, memorable ones among others.
3. Respondents to explain what they believe led to them dropping out of school.
4. Respondents to share their experiences after dropping out, good, bad, regrettable, memorable among others.

The first prompt was used to develop a rapport with the respondent (Drewry, 2007). According to Fontana & Frey (2003), “developing a relationship with the subject by asking biographical

questions allows the researcher to fully engage the subject in the interview”. The establishment of rapport enhances the respondents’ ability to produce the knowledge in their possession. Prompts two to four were written with reference to the aim of extracting components or elements of social capital in the stories being told to help. These three prompts were employed to extract relevant information which would answer the research questions.

3.8 Pre-test

The researcher pre-tested the data collection tool (structured interview guide) used in this study on two (2) female school dropouts in the Madina Municipality. This was done to first have an idea of possible expectations from study respondents and the kinds of follow-up questions to ask the respondents in the main study. The pre-test helped reveal inadequacies in the data collection tool. These were addressed before actual data collection.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

In consultation with each selected study sample, convenient days, time and venues for the interview sessions were scheduled. On the agreed day and time, informed consent was again sought to be sure if respondents were still interested in continuing with the interview. The respondent’s permission was sought to record the conversations. Then the interviews began in Twi, a Ghanaian local dialect. As a result of the nature of trade the respondents were involved in, the data collection took over five months (December, 2017 to May, 2018). In most instances, respondents had to be excused to attend to either a customer or personal pressing issues while at other times the interview had to be rescheduled for another day and time. The researcher conducted

further interviews (many follow-ups) in the course of this study (Tackie-Ofosu, 2012) to ensure that respondents had not changed what they said during interviews. This helped to ensure credibility (internal validity) and dependability (reliability) for the study.

3.10 Data analysis and interpretation using Grounded Theory method of analysis

The data collected from interviews and follow-ups were analyzed adapting Strauss & Corbin's (1990) Grounded Theory approach. The data analysis procedure is presented in Table 3.1. This entailed a comparison of ideas from the interviews in order to classify 'themes' that emerged across cases (Tackie Ofosu, 2012). This approach of data analysis involved a manual and systematic procedure in which data were dissected, conceptualized and rearranged in new ways to make meaning of the initially collected data based on each research question of the study (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The approach had a four-step coding procedure involving open, axial, selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and theory (Tackie Ofosu, 2012). The first coding procedure, the open coding, entailed working through each transcribed sentence and conceptualizing the section of data that answered each question (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this study, this procedure was repeated until all responses for each research question were exhausted under the various pre-determined themes for the study (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The second coding method, the axial coding, entailed arranging data in a relational form. Thus, the already categorized data at the open coding stage for each research question were merged in new ways by making connections between the categories (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

During the axial coding in this study, sub-themes emerged under the various pre-determined themes and new relations were formed out of these themes. The last coding method, the selective coding, entailed refining and developing interrelationships among themes and sub-categories (Martin & Barnard, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Thus, in this study, the themes were super-imposing on complementary themes and their sub-categories in a systematic manner (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Hence, a clearer understanding of the relationships existing among the themes became evident. The stages of data analysis are outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Stages of Data Analysis

Item	Stage	Procedure	Purpose
1	Open	Data were transcribed and manually coded into themes that answered each research question (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	To be aware of key issues. To identify anchors that allowed key points of the data to be gathered.
2	Axial	Merged already categorized data in new ways by making connections between the categories for each research question (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	To collect codes of similar content for grouping data
3	Selective	Revealed interrelationships amongst themes and subcategories were refined and developed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	To integrated codes
4	Framework	Compared and Identified theoretical codes (Tackie-Ofosu, 2012)	To gather explanations which answered the research questions.

(Source: Adapted from Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Tackie-Ofosu, 2012)

3.10.1 Data Analysis Matrix

Figure 3.2 (data analysis matrix) was created as a complement to the analytical process captured in Table 3.1 to enhance data management (Tackie-Ofosu, 2012).

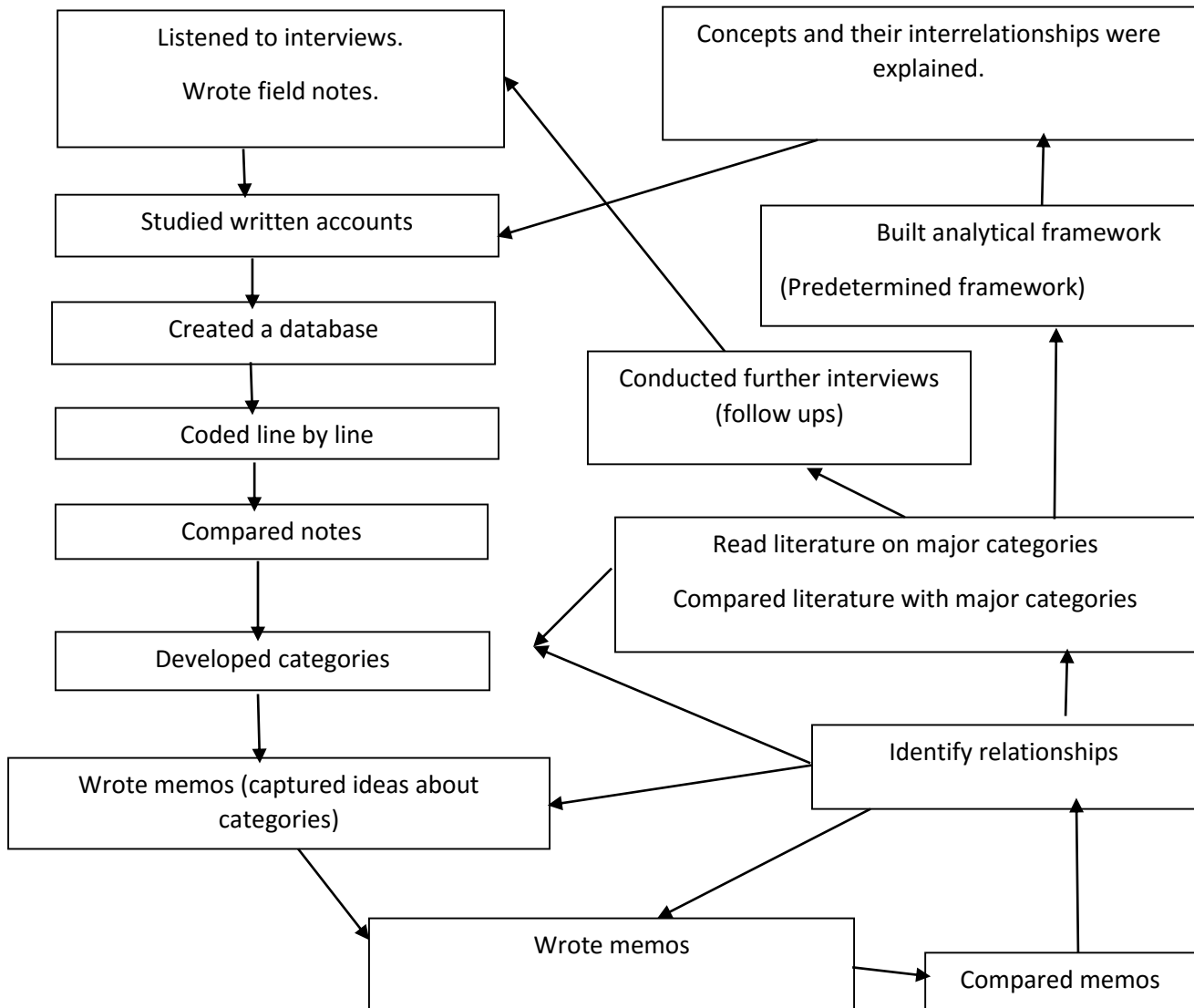


Figure 3.2: Data Analysis Matrix (Source: Adapted from Tackie-Ofosu, 2012)

The matrix served as an additional tool that helped check and cross check data. The analysis involved circular and linear processes which produced a logical systematic analysis and enhanced introspection and rumination” (Tackie-Ofosu, 2012). The process involved line by line coding and taking of notes, back and forth comparison of notes and development of categories from the data.

To enhance analytical framework, the overall pattern in each dropout story was examined in relation to the research questions. The matrix enhanced recognition and articulation of patterns, themes and explanations that emerged. This analytical process known as data display allows the summary and presentation of a large amount of information (Krohn et al., 1997; Tackie-Ofosu, 2012). Krohn et al., (1997) observed that it is important for the researcher to be fair in putting forth the arguments and in consideration of evidence that would answer the research questions.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

This study made use of an interview tool, taking of notes, recording of interviews and follow-up interviews. Patton (2002) stated that employing multiple sources or instruments improves conformability. Using multiple sources of evidence also ensures construct validity. Construct validity allows the study to actually investigate the concepts it sought to study. This study made use of an interview guide to conduct personal interviews to gather information on lived experiences of females who dropped out of basic school within a social capital framework coupled with a number of follow-up interviews to ensure that the concepts of interest are indeed being studied. Establishing internal validity which in such an exploratory study meant that certain factors informed dropout behaviour was critical in this study. Using multiple pieces of evidence from

different sources was done as this ensures internal validity (Tackie-Oforu, 2012). As a result of the follow-up visits to the respondents, several chains and pieces of evidences were extracted and put together to unveil convergent lines of the investigation (Tackie-Oforu, 2012) being conducted. The study took cognizance of negative information which referred to ideas and information which the researcher did not intend to explore from the onset of the study but which emerged during data collection.

In this study, such information was that of child maltreatment which respondents claimed played a major role in their dropout behaviour. To further ensure validity, use was made of anecdotal quotes in the results and discussion chapter (Chapter 4), which gave vivid accounts of dropouts' experiences within a social capital framework as reported by the respondents. In addition, to ensure rigour, the epistemological position of this study has been declared earlier under research design by stating that this study employed a qualitative approach (Chapter 3, Section 3.2).

Although the reliability aspect discussed earlier is not a major issue in qualitative studies, the detailed procedural and research tools indicated in this study constitutes the transferability characteristic that may enhance the repetition of this study elsewhere by any interested researcher. With reference to the above discussions, the researcher admits that validity and reliability are considered elements of quantitative rather than qualitative research. The criteria stated in Table 3.2 was adapted to judge the differences between the concepts of validity and reliability in quantitative and qualitative research as mentioned in Tackie-Oforu (2012).

Table 3.2: Quantitative constructs versus Qualitative constructs

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

(Source: Adapted from Tackie-Ofosu, 2012)

To establish credibility (trustworthiness) of this study, several steps were taken. For example, during follow-up interviews, respondents were requested to confirm that responses given earlier were actually provided by them during interviews (Tackie-Ofosu, 2012). This was to ensure the credibility of the responses given. Although transferability was not a major concern of this study, the context description and detailed procedural outline provided makes it possible to use this research strategy in a similar context to obtain similar results (Tackie-Ofosu, 2012).

Reliability refers to the extent to which this research can be replicated or repeated in different settings. This implies that if someone were to conduct the same interview twice (in a different setting) the same responses would be obtained. However, considering the uniqueness of human beings and contextual meaning of human interactions, it is possible that responses to the same interview will differ. In order to ensure confirmability, respondents were consulted with regards to the themes that emerged from the data. Participants agreed that they shared those views during the interview.

3.12 Ethical considerations

The informed consent form was explained to participants. Respondents were assured that participation was voluntary, with their reserved rights to opt out anytime they wanted. Respondents were told about the purpose of the study, assured of anonymity and confidentiality of responses. They were further assured that they would not be publicly associated with their responses and that the research would not cause any harm to them.

3.13 Limitations of the study

One of the main limitations of this study was the breaks in the data collection process. The personal circumstances of some of the study respondents caused breaks in the interview process. The need of some respondents to attend to their babies and others to sell to customers or attend to family issues halted interview which had to be re-scheduled. These breaks prolonged the duration of the study. However, these instances were not enough to negate the valuable contributions this study has made to knowledge.

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter gave an overview of the methodology used in this study. The study adopted a cross sectional design with a qualitative approach to answer the study's research questions. The study location was the Narhman community in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana with the target population as all females who had dropped out of basic school. The method of investigation for data collection was personal interviews with the use of an interview guide as a tool for data collection. Data were analyzed manually by employing a grounded theory approach where four stages of coding of occurring themes were utilized.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results, its interpretation and the discussion associated with data. The results are organized around the following pre-determined themes: socio-demographic background, lived experiences in basic school, influences on decision to drop out of school and lived experiences after dropping out of school in the light of the Social Capital Theory (Coleman 1988). The chapter begins with the background characteristics of the respondents. The chapter then proceeds to present and discuss the themes used in this study and concludes with the summary of the findings.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of respondents is presented under the following headings: age, ethnic background, marital status, occupation, number of siblings, religious affiliation, dropout status among respondent's siblings, basic school level at which respondent dropped out of school and respondent's parental educational level. These characteristics are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency
Age (years)	
20 - 30	5
31 - 40	6
41 - 50	6
51 - 60	1
Total	18
Ethnic Background	
Akan	8
Ewe	4
Guan	3
Grushie	2
Ga	1
Total	18
Marital Status	
Married	9
Cohabiting	6
Single	2
Divorced	1
Total	18
Occupation	
Petty Trading	12
Catering	3
Farming	2
Dressmaking	1
Total	18

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (continued)

Characteristics	Frequency
Number of siblings	
1	1
2	4
3	3
4	4
5	2
6	1
9	2
12	1
Total	18
Respondents with siblings who dropped out of basic school	10
Basic school level at which respondent dropped out	
Primary	13
Middle School	1
Junior High School	4
Total	18
Respondents Parental Education	
Respondents with parents who had formal education from basic or higher	7
Respondents with parents who had no formal education	7
Respondents who had no idea of parents' educational level	4
Total	18

(Source: Field data, December, 2017 to May, 2018)

The respondents in this study were aged between twenty-six and fifty-two years with the average age being thirty-six and a half years. This age range of the respondents gives a different mix of experience after dropping out of school which makes the respondents suitable in providing the needed information to answer the objectives of this study. With regards to ethnicity, eight were Akans, four were Ewes, three were Guans, two were Grushies and one was a Ga. The respondents having varied ethnic background is worth-noting. This is because in Ghana, certain ethnic tribes are seen as practicing early female marriage and hence, dropping out of school. For instance, child

marriage is prevalent among some ethnic groups such as Ewes and Dangmes in southern Ghana and in some ethnic groups in the three Northern Regions of Ghana. The Ewes and Dangmes give virgin girls as wives/slaves to Trokosi shrines to atone for the misdeeds perpetrated by their family members (Amoah, 2007; Botchway, 2008). However, in this study, only one respondent belonging to the Grushie ethnic group in Northern Ghana dropped out of primary class 5 because she was forced into marriage.

At the time of the study, one respondent said she was not married, six were co-habiting, nine were married and one was divorced. Regarding the trade respondents were involved in, one of the eighteen respondents was a dressmaker, twelve engaged in petty trading, three were providing catering services and two were farm labourers. Occupation of respondents was relevant in this study because literature indicates that dropping out of school has an unfavourable bearing on the dropout's future employment prospects and life outcomes (Dubow et al., 2006; Ananga, 2011). In this study, respondents reported that though they were engaged in various economic activities, they all lamented however that they did not receive enough income as they had wished because they did not have the skills required by prospective employers in reputable organizations they would have desired to work in.

With reference to religious affiliation, all the eighteen respondents said they were Christians attending church regularly and participating in church activities. Respondents reported having between one and twelve siblings. With regards to the number of siblings, literature indicates that the number of siblings a child has relates to his or her chances of graduation, thus the more the number of siblings, the higher the likelihood a child would drop out of school. Arguing from a social capital perspective, Coleman (1988) is of the view that a higher number of siblings of a child reduces the level of contact between a child and a parent and thus, the chances of dropping out of

school increases with each additional child. Ten respondents in this study reported that they had siblings who dropped out of basic school probably due to reduced parent-child contact as argued by Coleman (1988). Teachman et al. (1997) argued that students who had siblings who dropped out of school exhibited a greater tendency to drop out as well. Maybe, as other siblings drop out of school without any immediate repercussion or consequences, the other siblings in school might believe that dropping out of school is alright as they observe their siblings “enjoy” their new found freedom. This might explain why ten respondents in this study whose siblings dropped out of basic school level also dropped out. This illusion might explain Teachman (1996) and his colleagues’ assertion.

Parental education, especially, that of the mother, is known to reduce a child’s tendency to drop out of school (Israel & Beaulieu, 2004). Thus, if a mother has a relatively higher education, she has the tendency to encourage, motivate and support or force her children into main line education (Israel & Beaulieu, 2004). However, there have been instances where a parent may not have had any formal education but will do anything to ensure their children get higher levels of education in order for them to get better in life than the parent. In this study, seven respondents each said their parents had up to basic level education or higher. Four respondents said that they did not know their parents’ educational background, while seven of them said that their parents had no formal education.

With reference to those respondents who did not know their parents educational background, some possible explanations can be given. First, either their parents passed before they matured to ask them or they did not have the opportunity to live with their parents while growing up. It could also be possible that they were living with their parents but their parents were always busy with finding ways and means to care for them by involving themselves in different kinds of income

generating activities and therefore had no time left to sit and talk about their own experiences to their children or probably the parents might be talking to the respondents but their own educational level might not be of interest. Looking at all these arguments, there were interactions in the families, but the interactions were not directed towards academic achievement.

It is therefore not surprising that those respondents whose parents had no formal education also dropped out of school because research (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Carbonaro, 1998; Israel & Beaulieu 2004;) has established a direct link between parental educational level and that of children. Battin-Pearson et al. (2000) argued that parents who had no formal education in most instances would not push their children to attain higher levels, neither would they bother to encourage them to go back to school when they decide to drop out. This might explain why seven respondents whose parents had no formal education dropped out of school.

4.3 Pre-determined themes

This section presents the pre-determined themes used for this study. The pre-determined themes which were: decision to stay in or drop out of school; aspects of social capital that appear in dropout stories and lived experiences after dropping out of school, are discussed below:

4.3.1 Decision to stay in or drop out of school

The first pre-determined theme was to assess the factors that contributed to the respondents dropping out of school. Five main sub-themes that emerged from the responses are presented in Figure 4.1.

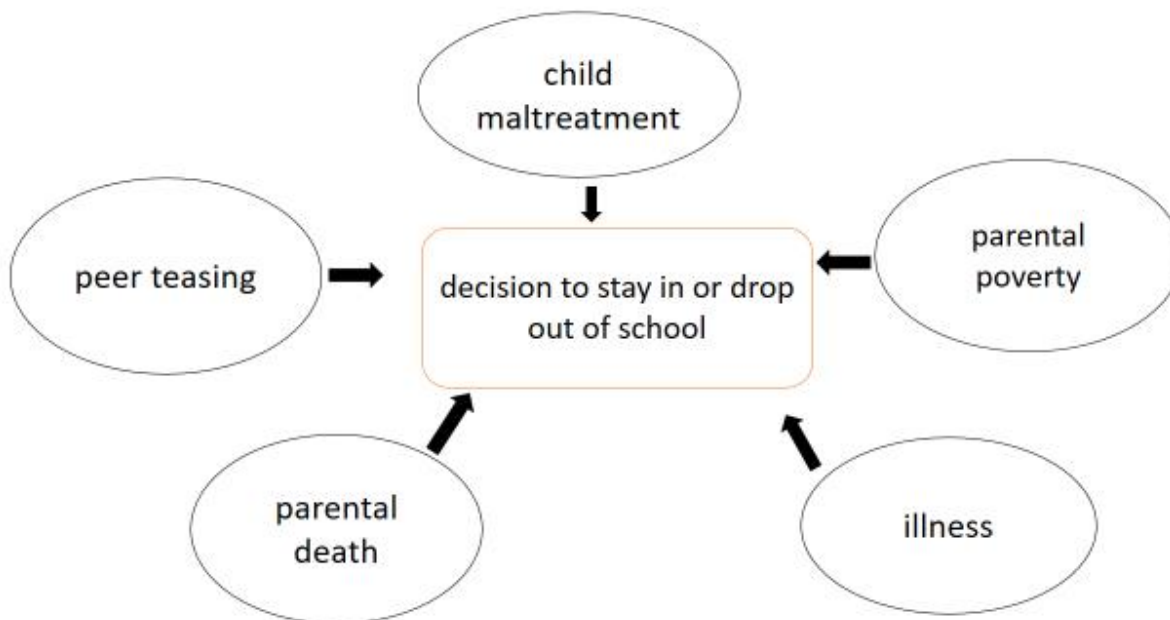


Figure 4.1: Pre-determined theme 1 and sub-themes
(Source: field data, December, 2017 to May, 2018)

Figure 4.1 shows that out of the pre-determined theme; decision to stay in or drop out of school, five sub-themes emerged. These themes include:

1. Child maltreatment
2. Parental poverty
3. Illness
4. Parental Death
5. Peer Teasing

According to the respondents, one of the above or multiples of them were key to their decision to drop out of school. The explanation given by the respondents was that because they faced the above challenges during their school going period, they were: habitually late to school, frequently absent from school or performed poorly academically. Some of them could not pay fees at all or

on time and so they were often sent back home from school and also did not have educational materials which made them lose interest completely in their educational pursuit.

Child Maltreatment

This challenge seemed prevalent among most of the respondents in this study as thirteen of them mentioned it as being key to their dropping out of school. Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect experienced by children below eighteen years of age which includes but not limited to sexual abuse, neglect, physical ill-treatment, child labour (World Health Organization Fact Sheet, 2016). The thirteen respondents reported that they were maltreated by their guardians and parents in their childhood. Aspects of child maltreatment that the respondents believed they received as children include forced labour, neglect, physical and emotional abuse. Anecdotal quotes in the discussion were translated from the dialect used in data collection (Twi) to English. Some of the respondents said:

*“I used to skip school because I was staying with my guardian who maltreated me.”
(Respondent 11:26th January, 2017).*

“My stepmother maltreated me very much. She made me do a lot of house chores in the morning so I was late for school most of the time. I did not have time to study after school because she made me do a lot of work at home.” (Respondent No. 5:19th December, 2017)

From these statements, it can be deduced that once a child goes through these abuses their academic performance was negatively affected. For instance, a child who is subjected to child labour was likely to be late for school and be absent from school most of the time. A neglected child lacks care and educational materials. Physical abuse in the life of a child was likely to create fear, distrust or hatred which can strain relationships and therefore break connections. The breaks

in connections and interactions constitute negative social capital which could lead to school dropout (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992). Thus, even though the respondents had social capital, it was in a negative form. These results are consistent with the findings of Israel & Beaulieu (2004) who concluded that negative family social capital may “hinder academic achievement and correlate with higher dropout rates.” The findings also support the World Health Organization (WHO, 2016) report that child maltreatment is associated with delayed cognitive development, poor school performance and dropout.

From the respondents’ perspective, one of the main maltreatment they believed they received from their parents/guardians was child labour. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012) refers to child labour as “work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work”. Child labour deprives children of childhood experiences such as play which aids psychosocial and educational development. Child workers develop health problems because they are not able to protect themselves against occupational hazards as adults would do. They are also prone to develop psychological problems as they observe their fellow children play and go to school while they work. For instance, some of the respondents said:

“I helped my guardian bake and sell bread before going to school every morning. I was always late for school and my academic performance was poor. I became frustrated and dropped out of School. (Respondent No. 6: 2nd January, 2018)

“I used to skip school because I was staying with my guardian who maltreated me. She forced me to work on her farm instead of going to school. The maximum number of times I went to school in a week was 3 and even that, I went to the farm before going to school.

Due to this, my academic performance was poor so I had no desire to stay in school.” (Respondent No. 11: 26th January, 2018)

“I stayed with my Auntie whose main interest in me was to work for her. I went out to sell immediately I close from school every day. If I was not able to raise the expected amount, she would beat me. Because I was selling, I skipped school a lot and my academic performance was very poor.” (Respondent No. 8: 9th January, 2017)

From respondents’ foregoing responses, they were habitually late to school and were absent from school a lot of times. They missed out on class exercises which took place while they were not in class. They did not have time to study at home or do their homework. All these could adversely affect their academic performance. Probably, this could be the main reason why they dropped out of school. Findings concur Adam, Adom & Bediako (2016) whose study on the major factors that contribute to school dropout in the Asunafo District of Ghana isolated child labour as a major factor for dropout behaviour. Findings also confirm Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy document (2003), that some children who dropped out of school cited the need to work as the reason for leaving school.

Another type of maltreatment that respondents mentioned they received in their childhood days that led to their dropping out of school was neglect. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines child neglect to include “both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or other family member to provide for the development and well-being of the child – where the parent is in a position to do so in one or more areas of health, education, emotional development; nutrition; shelter and safe living conditions” (WHO, 2016). WHO further states that “parents of neglected children are not necessarily poor; they may equally be financially well-off.” From this definition, it could be deduced that child neglect could happen to both rich and poor children. There was evidence of child neglect in the way that parents, relatives and

guardians attended to respondents' education, emotional, nutrition and other needs. From the respondents some of the effects of them being neglected was feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, non-payment of fees, complete lack or insufficient upkeep money and inadequate educational materials. For example, some respondents recounted:

“My father did not provide for me. He was not interested in whatever happened to me. I was often sent home for non-payment of my school fees. I lost classes and my academic performance became low. One day, I decided not to return to school after I had been sent home to collect school fees” (Respondent 4: 19th December, 2017).

“My stepmother did not allow my father to provide for my needs. Even my father had to hide things which he bought for me and said my mother sent them to me.” (Respondent No. 5:19th December, 2017)

When children are neglected, they are likely to be unhappy, especially if they see their friends being cared and provided for. This could likely affect their self-esteem or confidence and likely create a break in bonding between the child and parent/guardian. Several reasons could be given for this. The child might feel that the parent is intentionally refusing to provide them with these necessities. For instance, when the child realizes that the parent has misplaced priorities as when they spend money on other family members or (in our part of the world) purchase funeral and other occasional clothes instead of paying their school fees. In such cases, the child may believe that the parents dislike them or they might have done something bad to the parent. This could adversely affect the interactions in their relationships and hence, their connectedness. Teachman et al. (1996) found that lack of parental interactions has a close association with dropout behaviour. Findings support World Health Organization (WHO, 2016) report that child maltreatment is associated with delayed cognitive development, poor school performance and dropout behaviour.

Parental poverty

This study identified parental poverty as a factor that influenced the dropout behaviour of some respondents. Three respondents indicated that the problem they identified in deciding to stay or drop out of school was parental poverty. Poverty is a relative term, but generally, it describes a condition where people have less income than that which is considered sufficient to provide basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter within the context of the economy in which they live. This implies that a person described as poor in one economy may be the richest in another. The World Bank (2001) defines poverty to include *“the lack of shelter and clothing and being illiterate and not schooled.”*

Generally parents who are poor would not be able to provide for their children’s basic and educational needs. Some respondents in this study recounted that their parents could not provide for their basic and educational needs when they were children. For instance, some respondents commented:

“I lost interest in school because my parents did not have money to pay my school fees and buy books, school uniform, shoes and bags for me. I was often sent home to collect school fees. This affected me so badly that I dropped out of school.” (Respondent No. 10, 10th January, 2018).

We were many and my parents did not have money to take care of us. I was distracted because I had to sell and make money to support my family. I decided to stop schooling and concentrate on selling” (Respondent No. 12: 17th January, 2018).

The lack of educational materials or its inadequacy represents a serious setback for school children as they are not able to concentrate on their studies. This could lead to poor academic performance and loss of self-esteem among others which could culminate in dropout behaviour as it happened to respondents in this study. Findings support Glick & Sahn (2006) who found that a girl child’s tendency to drop out of school had a close association with the financial strength of the family.

Findings also agree with Braimah & Oduro-Ofori (2005) who assessed the causes of basic school dropout in the Amansie West District of Ghana and found that the causes of dropout in basic schools were mainly related to poverty. Findings further confirm Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy document (2003), that some children who dropped out of school cited the need to work as the reason while others cited the cost of schooling as the reason for leaving school.

Illness

Ill health was a challenge that informed the decision of some respondents in this study to drop out of school. Illness could have grave negative impacts on the academic, social and psychological behaviour of a school child. In the first place, illness results in lateness to school, absenteeism and lack of concentration in class. Again, when school children get sick they are not able to participate in extra curricula activities such as games which enhance social capital among them and their peers. Illness creates anxiety, sadness and low self-esteem in sick children as they observe their friends do well in school and in other aspects of development.

Some respondents recounted their experiences:

“I was not interested in school because the migraine prevented me from learning and I had bad marks in exams. I was always sad so I stopped going to school.” (Respondent 2, 13/12/2017)

I suffered from severe nose-bleeding so I could not go to school always and could not concentrate in class. Due to this, I dropped out of school when I was in class six.” (Respondent 13, 09/05/2018)

Two respondents said that they dropped out of school due to illness. They recounted that their parents and teachers encouraged them to stay in school till completion but the stress from their ailments forced them to drop out of school because they were absent from school most of the time

due to illness and could not pay attention in class. As a result, they became poor academically and eventually dropped out of school. Findings support the assertion in the literature that formal education is affected by medical conditions in some circumstances (Pollitt, 1994). Findings also concur Adam, Adom & Bediako (2016) who found that sickness was among the factors that influenced school dropout in the Asunafo District of Ghana.

Parental Death

The issue of parental death is not accounted for in theories that explain dropout behaviour but it could possibly lead to neglect. Two respondents in this study dropped out of school when they lost their parents because their guardians neglected their educational needs. With the extended family system practiced in Ghana, one would have expected that extended family members within the community would have taken charge of them upon the death of their parents. However, this did not happen in this study. By extension, these respondents felt neglected as a result of the passing of their parents. This sentiment was expressed by one respondent as:

“The reason why I dropped out of school was the death of my parents. My late parents’ successors did not take care of me. I had no one to cater for my education so I just decided to drop out of school abruptly.” (Respondent 3: 13th December, 2017)

According to Smith et al. (1992), in a community where there is interconnectedness, community members take care of children. If there was bonding in the communities of these respondents, the community members would have taken care of them in the absence of their parents. Since this did not happen in case of these respondents they dropped out of school.

Peer Teasing

Several theories have been propounded to explain the dropout phenomenon. For example, the Deviant Association Theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) states that children who associate themselves with deviant peers are pre-disposed to drop out of school. However, one issue that emerged in this study was peer teasing which none of the dropout theories highlighted. Other researchers (Glick & Sahn, 2000; Braimah & Oduro-Ofori, 2005) have mentioned poverty among others as causing dropout behaviour, but peer teasing is a serious issue that needs to be addressed in schools. Peer teasing is a form of negative social capital which provokes the victim and often results in fighting among friends. It also produces feelings of sadness and low self-esteem in the victim and could predispose them to exhibit dropout behaviour.

Three respondents in this study reported that their peers in school used to tease them about their low academic performance, tattered clothing and lack of books and other educational materials. They stated that teasing by their peers made them lose interest in school. These sentiments are captured in the statements below:

My friends in school teased me because I did not have books and other school items. This made me sad.” (Respondent 17: 13th May, 2018).

“School was not interesting when my peers teased me about my poor academic achievement. I believe that if my father had taken the issue of teasing up with my teachers, they would have got the children to stop teasing me and I would have remained in school.” (Respondent 4: 19th December, 2017).

If there were free flow of information among the teachers, parents and the pupils, they could have reported to the teachers and the issue of peer teasing would have been dealt with and would not have led to these respondents dropping out of school. Croninger et al. (2001) found that social

capital that results from teachers' support and guidance is a resource that helps at-risk students to remain in school. In this study, it could be that the connection between teachers and pupils were probably not available, that was why they lost their education to peer teasing.

4.3.2 Dimensions of social capital mentioned in respondents' stories

From the foregone discussions, it is realized that the family, the school and the community were all held accountable when it comes to the respondents dropping out of school. These issues that emerged from the foregone discussions are discussed below.

Family social capital

In performing their various roles and responsibilities, members of the family maintain a strong bond which is made possible through communication, networking, constant and continual interactions. It is from this point that the social capital theorists (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996; Drewry, 2007), have argued that these connections, networks and interactions are tools which can be used to elicit children's interest and desire to remain in school. By constantly talking, showing interest, helping, supporting and listening to children, parents are able to build trust in and bond with their children and can identify concerns which their children might have and put things in place to help remove any challenges identified. Again, once parents adopt social capital, there would be free flow of information, positive interaction and boldness on the part of the children to speak out issues that border them (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996; Drewry, 2007). Such connections and interactions create confidence in children that their parents and guardians are

available and ready to come to their aid. Such environment eliminates fear on the part of the children.

Though such connections and interactions are an intangible resource (Coleman, 1988), it is so powerful to encourage children to stay in school and not drop out. Probably the children would not want to break the trust their parents have shown in them. On the other hand, where such connections and interactions are weak or non-existent, there is always distrust, fear and lack of bonding and children of school going age in such families are likely to have dropout tendencies (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 1992; Teachman et al., 1996; Drewry, 2007).

In this study, respondents reported that they were maltreated by their parents and guardians when they were children. They indicated that issues like child labour, neglect, emotional and physical abuse created problems such as absenteeism, lateness to school and poor academic performance which eventually caused them to drop out of school. Some respondents expressed the following sentiments:

“I used to skip school because I was staying with my guardian who maltreated me. She forced me to work on her farm instead of going to school. The maximum number of times I went to school in a week was 3 and even that, I went to the farm before going to school. Due to this, my academic performance was poor so I had no desire to stay in school” (Respondent No. 11: 26th January, 2018).

“My father did not provide for me. He was not interested in whatever happened to me. I was often sent home for non-payment of my school fees. I lost classes and my academic performance became low. One day, I decided not to return to school after I had been sent home to collect school fees” (Respondent 4: 19th December, 2017).

The resultant effect of all these issues is that it negatively affects connections and inter relations which are the core issues in social capital. Because all these issues emerged and impact so heavily on connections and interconnections, they probably created an environment where there was mistrust, no free flow of information and lack of friendliness between the children and their parents

or guardians. It is probable that at a point, they could not bond, they could not interact and form any meaningful relationships. Where all these are not available then technically, social capital as a tool cannot be used, therefore it is not surprising that the respondents dropped out of school. Findings concur with Israel & Beaulieu (2004) who argued that the absence of positive family social capital may impede academic achievement and associate with higher dropout. Findings also support the poor family socialization theory (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000) which states that lack of parental interactions predisposes children to drop out of school.

School Social Capital

One of the key roles that the school played in this study was in the area of peer teasing which could have been easily dealt with. The school environment must foster connections and interactions in a reciprocal manner if the ultimate aim of the school as a system is to be achieved (Coleman, 1988). Thus, management, staff and students must connect and interact with one another. Where these connections and interactions are free, fair and open, it ensures free and trusting communications among the school community members. In such an environment, if something unpleasant (such as dropout tendencies) looms, it could be easily identified and mitigated immediately (Coleman, 1988). This is the whole basis of the argument of the social capital theory. On the other hand, if the connections and interactions are weak or non-existent, then issues like dropout will emerge strongly (Coleman, 1988). Some respondents in this study reported that their peers teased them about their poor academic performance and lack of school materials such as text books and school uniforms. The teasing behaviour by their peers made these respondents feel ashamed, they developed low-self-esteem, lost interest in school and eventually dropped out of school. One respondent who dropped out of school because her family forced her into child

marriage said she believed that her teacher could have prevented her family from forcing her to marry if she had told the teacher. The respondents recounted:

My friends in school teased me because I did not have books and other school items. This made me sad.” (Respondent 17: 13th May, 2018).

“School was not interesting when my peers teased me about my poor academic achievement. I believe that if my father had taken the issue of teasing up with my teachers, they would have got the children to stop teasing me and I would have remained in school.” (Respondent 4: 19th December, 2017).

If the teachers had friendly relationships with the pupils, the pupils could have easily approached the teachers and talk to them about anything. However, in this case, though respondents did not say that they were able to report the issue of peer teasing to the teachers, it could be argued that if that bonding was there, it would have been so easy for the respondents to go and talk to the teachers and report those culprits to them. The teachers could then put measures in place to deal with the issue of peer teasing. Once the respondents could not do these things, it is an indication that the bonding was not strong between the teachers and the pupils and therefore the social capital component was not exploited. Just as the proponents of social capital (Croninger & Lee, 2001) have said once there are connections and relationships between teachers and students they can easily identify an emerging issue and mitigate. Nothing of that nature happened in this study, therefore the respondents dropped out of school.

Community Social Capital

Research indicates that social capital is an intangible resource inherent in relationships which is produced through interpersonal interactions to facilitate certain actions such as educational achievement (Coleman 1990; Smith et al., 1995; Crowder & South, 2003). According to Coleman (1988), such intangible resources include trust and reciprocity. If the elderly in the community

interact with the youth and children about their school work and future aspirations, the younger generation feel loved and appreciated and would likely talk to the adults about issues which might predispose them to drop out of school, which could then be dealt with. Again, if community members illustrate care, as for instance caring for orphans in the community, social capital would be enhanced and children would feel loved by all. This feeling of love and care according to Coleman (1988) would propel children in the community to attain higher education laurels.

Two issues that came up in this study were child maltreatment and parental death. In our part of the world, we believe in the extended family system so it was expected that members in the community would have protected these children against the abuses. Also it was expected that when the parents died the community members of the extended family and even friends around would come in and help the children to stay in school. That is where the proponents of social capital (Crowder & South, 2003) have argued that relationships and interconnections should propel members of the community to care for one another. If community members were well bonded (Theodori, 2005) they could have used the bonding as a tool to protect the children from being abused and also take care of the children after the death of their parents. When death occurred one would have expected community members to pull resources together to take care of the children as the proponents of social capital have said (Smith et al., 1992). Respondents expressed these sentiments:

“My mother died when I was a little child. I was sent to stay with a teacher who sent me to school. She left the town and left me in the care of some else who did not send me to school. When I was about ten years, I pleaded with my relatives to send me back to school because I was academically good when I was in class one, but none of them headed my plea.” (Respondent 7: 2nd December, 2017).

“I believe that my guardian’s husband who was the chief of the village could have protected me from being abused. He knew that his wife was abusing me, but he did nothing to stop her.” Respondent No. 11: 26th January, 2018)

In case of these respondents, the parents died, the children felt left alone. Although the respondent quoted above pleaded to be sent to school, her plea was not headed. Of course, they could not afford anything including education so they had to drop out of school. In another instance, the chief of the village was aware that a child was being abused, yet he did not do anything to protect the child, although he had the power to do so as the head of the community. This tells that the community social capital was not strong. It was either minimal or non-existent and because of that the respondents could not take advantage of anything, just as the proponents of social capital have said. Findings support Coleman (1988) that the tendency for a student to drop out of school is related to the social capital available in the student’s family, school and community.

4.3.3 Lived experiences after dropping out of school

Respondents in this study stated that dropping out of school was having negative impacts on the economic and psychological aspects of their lives. Figure 4.2 illustrates these impacts.



Figure 4.2: Lived experiences after dropping out of school (Source: Research Data, December, 2017 to May, 2018)

Dropping out of school influences future life outcomes of dropouts (Ananga, 2011; Dubow et al., 2006). Respondents in this study recounted their lived experiences after dropping out of school. They believed that dropping out of school was having negative impacts on their life prospects.

Economic impact of dropping of school in the lives of respondents

Respondents in this study said they were engaged in petty trading and other menial jobs which did not fetch them enough income. They felt that if they had completed at least basic school, they would have acquired certificates and better employable skills which would have improved their employment and economic prospects. For instance respondents recounted:

“Now I go around hawking iced kenkey. Prospective employers request for JHS or SHS certificate and because I do not have, they decline to employ me. My economic life is negatively affected because my job as an iced kenkey seller does not fetch me much money”. (Respondent 4: 19th December, 2017).

In the main, respondents intimated that prospective employers were satisfied with their personal characteristics and would like to work with them as shop attendances and in other roles. However, because they could neither read nor write and keep basic records, employers declined to employ them. They said that they had no choice but to settle for menial jobs such as farm hands in vegetable gardens and petty trading which did not earn them much income. Findings support Rumberger (2003) who argued that dropouts are less likely to find and hold jobs that pay enough money and that even if they find a job, dropouts earn substantially less than high school graduates.

Tyler & Lofstrom (2009) also indicated that dropping out of school increased the likelihood of joblessness and lower earnings in adulthood. Findings also concur Dubow *et al.* (2006) who stated that when individuals drop out of basic and high school, they do not acquire the basic literacy and

numeracy skills and the necessary credentials to enable them function well and fully in today's technologically oriented society and work environment.

The psychological impact of dropping out of school

Stories told by dropouts revealed that dropping out of school was having adverse psychological effects in their lives. Some recounted experiencing low self-esteem due to the fact that they could not read or write. Others even said they felt ashamed when they met their classmates who completed school because they felt bad when they compared their life outcomes with that of those classmates. For example, respondents communicated:

“My social life is badly affected. I have low self-confidence” (Respondent 4: 19th December, 2017).

Respondents explained that they felt bad when they were not able to read directions or complete application forms and other documents when they were required to do so. For instance, one respondent said that she felt ashamed when she was not able to write her child's name during school or National Health Insurance registration or when her husband who had tertiary education had to interpret directions and inscriptions such as “out of bounds” to her in public. Another respondent also said that she had refused to honour invitations to functions in her husband's organization for fear of not being able to communicate in the English Language and read at those functions. A situation which she said was affecting her matrimonial relationship.

Findings agree with Dubow et al. (2006) who stated that educational attainment has an association with psychological functioning such as self-esteem. Findings also support Brimer and Pauli (1971) who observed that drop out at the basic level is an undesirable situation because those who drop out are not likely to have strengthened their basic literacy skills so they easily relapse into illiteracy.

4.4 Relationships Existing Among Themes

Relationships that exist among the three predetermined themes that answered the research questions are illustrated in Figure 4.3.

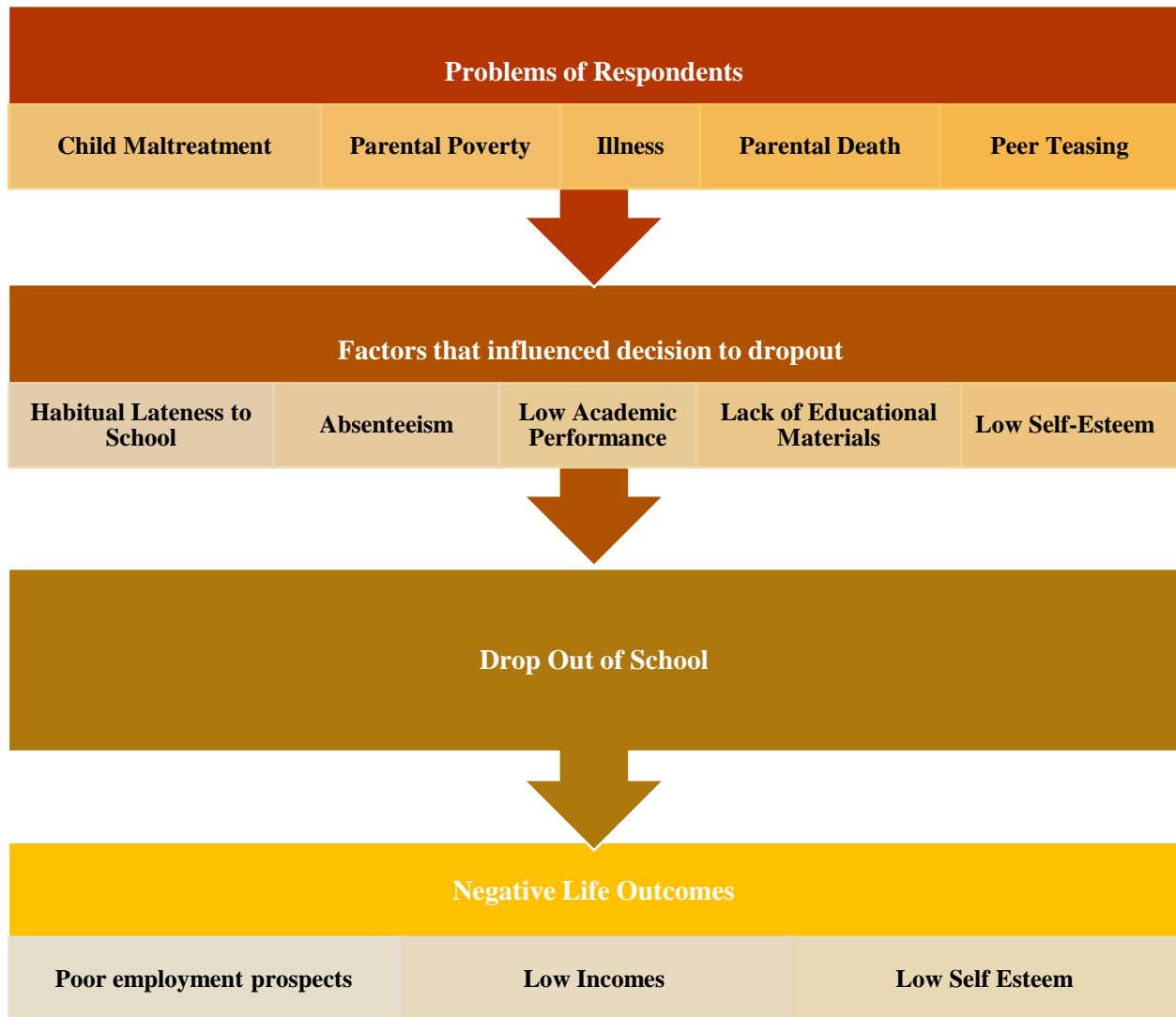


Figure 4.3: Relationships among predetermined themes. (Source: Research Data, December, 2017 to May, 2018)

From the previous discussion, some relationships have been identified as existing among the various themes and these are discussed below. From Figure 4.3, the respondents said that they faced certain challenges during their school-going ages such as child maltreatment, parental death,

parental poverty, peer teasing and illness. These challenges led to them having low, self-esteem, performing poorly academically believing that they did not match up with their peers and therefore they felt that the best decision was to drop out of school. However, when they dropped out of school they believed that their lives have been impacted negatively, both psychologically and economically.

Psychologically, (Dubow et al., 2006) respondents felt that their numeracy and reading skills were not developed which further reduced their self-esteem and confidence. Respondents were affected economically in the sense that they were barely subsisting (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009), thus just making something to cater for their basic needs. The respondents had the desire to work in reputable organizations, but they did not have the necessary qualifications that would make them employable there, therefore, they had to make do with anything that would help them to survive, though they would have liked to do something different.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, the conclusion and recommendations based on the findings.

5.2. Summary

This study was conducted to gain insight into the causes of basic school dropout behaviour among females in the Narhman community, Accra within a social capital framework. A cross-sectional design with a qualitative approach was used to interview eighteen respondents using the face-to-face interview method. Data was analyzed along three predetermined themes and emerging sub-themes were extracted using the Grounded Theory approach. The findings showed that child maltreatment, parental poverty, illness, peer teasing and parental death were some of the factors that made respondents drop out of school. The findings again showed that respondents had negative forms of social capital in their families, schools and communities and this influenced their decision to drop out of school. The study also found out that the respondents were engaged in various occupations such as dress making, petty trading and catering services. However, they felt limited in their quest to secure their desired employment and income. Thus, respondents felt that dropping out of school had blocked their chances of getting the right employment and income and also lowered their self-esteem and self-confidence. This study found that child maltreatment, parental poverty, illness, peer teasing and parental death were some of the factors that influenced the respondents' decision to drop out of school. It is worth noting that parental death and peer teasing which have not been accounted for in the theories that explain dropout behaviour were

mentioned in this study. Parental death could lead to neglect by other family members while peer teasing could result in low self-esteem in the victim. However, neglect and low self-esteem are among the factors known to impact negatively on school retention and/or completion.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, respondents' decision to drop out of school were influenced by some factors that were beyond their control. There were aspects of social capital that appeared in the lived experiences of the respondents, although these were mainly negative aspects of social capital. It was also realized that dropping out of school had a negative impact on respondents' aspirations in some aspects of their lives as well as their self-esteem and self-image. Respondents in this study thus rated their lived experiences after dropping out of school mainly as negative.

5.4 Recommendations

1. The study revealed that respondents were maltreated by their guardians and parents when they were children. Thus it is recommended that the Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Protection and Civil Society Organizations must step up efforts at child protection.
2. Respondents in this study recounted that they had negative family, school and community social capital and that they did not know how to exploit social capital to enable them stay in school till completion. It is therefore suggested that the Ghana Education Service introduce the Concept of Social Capital as a topic in Social Studies in Basic Schools. It is believed that the implementation of this recommendation will enable school children

(especially the girl – child) take advantage of positive social capital where it exists and seek help to deal with negative social capital.

3. In this study, respondents who stayed with guardians suffered higher levels of child maltreatment, especially child labour. It is recommended that parents endeavor to raise their own children no matter their living circumstances.
4. The study revealed that respondents did not have role models in their communities who could motivate them. It is therefore recommended that the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Legon could educate children during Extension programmes on the importance of Education and encourage them to complete school. Those children who have already dropped out of school could also be encouraged to re-enroll in school. This would increase the level of community social capital available to both children currently in school and those who have dropped out of school.

REFERENCES

- Ackers, J., Migoli, J., & Nzomo, J. (2001). Identifying and addressing the causes of declining participation rates in Kenyan primary schools. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 21(4), 361-374.
- Adam, S., Adom, D., & Bediako, A. B. (2016). The Major Factors That Influence Basic School Dropout in Rural Ghana: The Case of Asunafo South District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(28), 1-8.
- Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (1987). Membership Roles in Field Research (Vol. 6). Sage Research Methods. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412984973>
- Ainsworth, M., Beegle, K., & Koda, G. (2005). The impact of adult mortality and parental deaths on primary schooling in North-Western Tanzania. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 41(3), 412-439.
- Alexander, K., Bozick, R., & Entwisle, D. (2008). Warming up, cooling out, or holding steady? Persistence and change in educational expectations after high school. *Sociology of Education*, 81(4), 371-396.
- Amoah, J. (2007). The world on her shoulders: The rights of the girl-child in the context of culture and identity. *Essex Human Rights Review*, 4(2), 1-23.
- Ananga, E. D. (2011). Typology of school dropout: The dimensions and dynamics of dropout in Ghana. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 31(4), 374-381.
- Battin-Pearson, S., Newcomb, M. D., Abbott, R. D., Hill, K. G., Catalano, R. F., & Hawkins, J. D. (2000). Predictors of early high school dropout: A test of five theories. *Journal of educational psychology*, 92(3), 568.
- Bernard, H. R. (2012). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. AltaMira Press, UK.
- Birdsall, N., Levine, R., & Ibrahim, A. (2005). Towards universal primary education: investments, incentives, and institutions. *European Journal of Education*, 40(3), 337-349.
- Björklund, A., & Salvanes, K. G. (2011). Education and family background: Mechanisms and policies *Handbook of the Economics of Education* (Vol. 3, pp. 201-247): Elsevier.
- Botchway, A. N.-K. (2008). Abolished by Law—Maintained in Practice: The Trokosi as Practiced in Parts of the Republic of Ghana. *FIU Law Review*, 3(2), 369.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). R.(1974). *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*.

- Bourque, F., van der Ven, E., & Malla, A. (2011). A meta-analysis of the risk for psychotic disorders among first-and second-generation immigrants. *Psychological medicine*, 41(5), 897-910.
- Boyle, S., Brock, A., Mace, J., & Sibbons, M. (2002). *Reaching the Poor: The 'costs' of sending children to school: a six country comparative study, synthesis report*.
- Braimah, I., & Oduro-Ofori, E. (2005). Basic school dropout in Ghana: a case study of the Amansie West district. *Journal of Science and Technology (Ghana)*, 25(1), 67-76.
- Brimer, M. and Pauli, L. (1971). *Wastage in Education: A World Problem*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Brock, C., & Cammish, N. (1997). Factors Affecting Female Participation in Education in Seven Developing Countries. Education Research Paper.
- Bryk, A. S., & Thum, Y. M. (1989). The effects of high school organization on dropping out: An exploratory investigation. *American Educational Research Journal*, 26(3), 353-383.
- Burgess, E. W., & Locke, H. J. (1945). *The family: from institution to companionship*. Oxford, England: American Book Co.
- Burton, L. (2007). Childhood adultification in economically disadvantaged families: A conceptual model. *Family relations*, 56(4), 329-345.
- Camfed (2015). Why girls' education. Available at <https://camfed.org/why-girls-education/> Accessed on 15th September, 2017
- Carbonaro, W. J. (1998). A little help from my friend's parents: Intergenerational closure and educational outcomes. *Sociology of Education*, 295-313.
- Carrell, Scott E., Marianne E., Page & James, E. (2010). Sex and Science: How Professor Gender Perpetuates the Gender Gap? *Quarterly Journal of Economics* , 125 (3),1101-1144
- Chevalier, A., Harmon, C., O'Sullivan, V., & Walker, I. (2013). The impact of parental income and education on the schooling of their children. *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*, 2(1), 8.
- Chugh, S. (2011). Dropout in secondary education: A study of children living in slums of Delhi: National University of Educational Planning and Administration New Delhi.
- Colclough, C., Rose, P., & Tembon, M. (2000). Gender inequalities in primary schooling: The roles of poverty and adverse cultural practice 1. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 20(1), 5-27.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, S95-S120.

- Cooper, C. R., Denner, J., & Lopez, E. M. (1999). Cultural brokers: Helping Latino children on pathways toward success. *The future of children*, 51-57.
- Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L., & Hanson, W. E. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 209, 240.
- Croninger, R. G., & Lee, V. E. (2001). Social capital and dropping out of high school: Benefits to at-risk students of teachers' support and guidance. *Teachers College Record*, 103, 548-581.
- Crosnoe, R. (2004). Social capital and the interplay of families and schools. *Journal of marriage and family*, 66(2), 267-280.
- Crowder, K., & South, S. J. (2003). Neighborhood distress and school dropout: The variable significance of community context. *Social Science Research*, 32(4), 659-698.
- Dewey, J. (1902). The school as social center. *The Elementary School Teacher*, 3(2), 73-86.
- Drewry, J. A. (2007). *High school dropout experiences: A social capital perspective*. Virginia Tech.
- Dubow, E. F., Huesmann, L. R., Boxer, P., Pulkkinen, L., & Kokko, K. (2006). Middle childhood and adolescent contextual and personal predictors of adult educational and occupational outcomes: a mediational model in two countries. *Developmental psychology*, 42(5), 937.
- Dunne, M., Leach, F. E., Chilisa, B., Maundeni, T., Tabulawa, R., Kutor, N., Asamoah, A. (2005). *Gendered School Experiences: the impact on retention and achievement in Botswana and Ghana*: DfID London.
- Epstein, J. L., & Sheldon, S. B. (2002). Present and accounted for: Improving student attendance through family and community involvement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 95(5), 308-318.
- Farr, J. (2004). Social capital: A conceptual history. *Political theory*, 32 (1), 6-33.
- Fawe (2001). Gender responsive school management systems. Nairobi: Forum for African Forum African Women Educationalists.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2003). The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 61-106). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fukuyama, F. (2001). Social capital, civil society and development. *Third world quarterly*, 22(1), 7-20.
- Fuller, B., & Liang, X. (1999). Which girls stay in school. *The influence of family*.

- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Cambridge: Harvard UP.
- Glick, P., & Sahn, D. E. (2006). The demand for primary schooling in Madagascar: Price, quality, and the choice between public and private providers. *Journal of development economics*, 79(1), 118-145.
- Granovetter, M. (1995). *Getting a job: A study of contacts and careers*: University of Chicago press.
- Grant, M., & Hallman, K. (2006). Pregnancy-related school dropout and prior-school performance in South Africa: Policy research session working paper no. 212. *New York: Population Council*.
- Grant, M., Lloyd, C., & Mensch, B. (2013). Menstruation and school absenteeism: evidence from rural Malawi. *Comparative education review*, 57(2), 260-284.
- GPRS (2003). Ghana poverty reduction strategy. An agenda for growth and prosperity. Volume 1: Analysis and Strategy.
- Hanifan, L. J. (1916). The rural school community center. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 67(1), 130-138.
- Hoffmann, F., & Philip, O. (2009). A Professor Like Me: The Influence of Instructor Gender on College Achievement, *Journal of Human Resources*, 44 (2), 479-494.
- Holcamp, G. (2009). *Researching the girls' dropout rate in Malawi. Why girls dropout of primary schools and in what way this rate can be reduced*. Master Thesis Special Education.
- Holmes, J. (2003). Measuring the determinants of school completion in Pakistan: analysis of censoring and selection bias. *Economics of Education Review*, 22(3), 249-264.
- Huesmann, L. R., Dubow, E. F., Eron, L. D., & Boxer, P. (2006). Middle childhood family-contextual and personal factors as predictors of adult outcomes. *Developmental contexts in middle childhood: Bridges to adolescence and adulthood*, 62-86.
- Hunt, F. (2008). Dropping out from school: A cross country review of literature. CREATE Pathways to access, Research Monograph No. 16, May 2008.
- Imoro, B. (2009). Dimensions of basic school dropouts in rural Ghana: The case of Asutifi District. *Journal of Science and Technology (Ghana)*, 29(3).
- ILO Fact Sheet (2012). What is child labour? Available at www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang-en/index.htm. Accessed on 14th April, 2018.

- Israel, G. D., & Beaulieu, L. J. (2004). Investing in communities: Social capital's role in keeping youth in school. *Community Development, 34*(2), 35-57.
- Jacobs, J. (1961). *The death and life of American cities*. New York : Random House.
- Kao, G., & Tienda, M. (1998). Educational aspirations of minority youth. *American journal of education, 106*(3), 349-384.
- Kingdon, G. G. (2005). Where has all the bias gone? Detecting gender bias in the intrahousehold allocation of educational expenditure. *Economic Development and Cultural Change, 53*(2), 409-451.
- Kosovo population and housing census (2011). Quality reports. EUCEP census support project.
- Kroska, A. (2003). Investigating gender differences in the meaning of household chores and child care. *Journal of marriage and family, 65*(2), 456-473.
- Krohn, Marvin D., Alan J. Lizotte, and Cynthia M. Perez. (1997). "The Interrelationship Between Substance Use and Precocious Transitions to Adult Statuses." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 38:87-103.
- Lamanna, M.A. & Riedmann, A.C. (2012). *Marriages, families and relationships: Making choices in a diverse society* (11th ed.). Belmont. Ca: Wadsworth.
- Lamborn, S., Newmann, F., & Wehlage, G. (1992). The significance and sources of student engagement. *Student engagement and achievement in American secondary schools*, 11-39.
- Lavrakas, P. J. (2008). *Encyclopedia of survey research methods*: Sage Publications.
- Levin, K. A. (2006). Study design III: Cross-sectional studies. *Evidence-based dentistry, 7*(1), 24 - 25.
- Lin, N. (1999). Social networks and status attainment. *Annual review of sociology, 25*(1), 467-487.
- Lizettee, B. (2000). Background and rationale for school sanitation and hygiene education: UNICEF, New York.
- Loury, G. (1977). A dynamic theory of racial income differences. *Women, minorities, and employment discrimination, 153*, 86-153.
- Mansory, A. (2007). Dropout study in basic education level of schools in Afghanistan. *Kabul: Swedish Committee for Afghanistan*.

- Martin, P., & Barnard, A. (2013). *The experience of women in male-dominated occupations: A constructivist grounded theory inquiry*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v39i2.1099>. Accessed on 25th May, 2018
- Maxwell, S. E., Kelley, K., & Rausch, J. R. (2008). Sample size planning for statistical power and accuracy in parameter estimation. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 59.
- Miller, W. L., & Crabtree, B. F. (2004). Depth interviewing. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Approaches to qualitative research* (pp. 185-202). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Nahapiet, J., & Ghoshal, S. (2000). Social capital, intellectual capital, and the organizational advantage *Knowledge and social capital* (pp. 119-157): Elsevier.
- Nekatibeb, T. (2002). *Low participation of female students in primary education: A case study of dropouts from the Amhara and Oromia regional states in Ethiopia*: UNESCO International Institute [sic] for Capacity Building in Africa.
- Neuman, W. (2006). Qualitative and quantitative research designs. *Social Research Methods*, 6th edn. Pearson, Toronto, 149-178.
- Ngales, M. (2005). School girls: towards health, dignity and well being. *Report Document for Water Aid Ethiopia*.
- Njau, R., & Wamahiu, S. (1994). *School Dropout and Adolescent Pregnancy*. Paper presented at the Nairobi: Forum for African Women Educationalists.
- Nixon, L. A., & Robinson, M. D. (1999). The Educational Attainment of Young Women: Role Model Effects of Female High School Faculty. *Demography*, (36)2, 185-194.
- Nukunya, G. K. (2003). *Tradition and change in Ghana: An introduction to sociology*: Ghana Universities Press.
- Olsen, C., & St George, D. (2004). Cross-sectional study design and data analysis. *College entrance examination board*, 26(03), 2006.
- Palinkas, L.A., Aarons, G.A., Horwitz S.M., Chamberlain, P. Hurlburt, M., Landsverk J. (2011). Mixed method designs in implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*. 38:44–53.
- Patton, M. & Cochran, M. (2002) A guide to using qualitative research methodology. *Medecins sans frontieres*, Paris. Available at [http:// evaluation.msf.org/sites/evaluation/files/a_guide_using-qualitative_research_methodolog.pdf](http://evaluation.msf.org/sites/evaluation/files/a_guide_using-qualitative_research_methodolog.pdf).

- Patton, M. (2002) *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. 3rd Sage Publications; Thousand Oaks, CA Retrieved from [http://fieldresearch.msf.org/msf/bitstream/10144/84230/1/ qualitative %20research%20 methodology.pdf](http://fieldresearch.msf.org/msf/bitstream/10144/84230/1/qualitative%20research%20methodology.pdf) Accessed on 29th May, 2018.
- Plagens, G. K. (2011). Social capital and education: Implications for student and school performance. *Education and Culture*, 27(1), 40-64.
- Pollitt, E. (1994). Poverty and child development: relevance of research in developing countries to the United States. *Child Dev*, 65(2 Spec No), 283-295.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital *Culture and politics* (pp. 223-234): Springer.
- Ream, R. K., & Rumberger, R. W. (2008). Student engagement, peer social capital, and school dropout among Mexican American and non-Latino white students. *Sociology of Education*, 81(2), 109-139.
- Ritchie, J. and Lewis. J. (eds.) (2003) *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications, London (336 pages)
- Rothstein, D. S. (1995). Do female faculty influence female students' educational and labor market attainments? *ILR Review*, 48(3), 515-530.
- Rumberger, R. W., Ghatak, R., Poulos, G., Ritter, P. L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1990). Family influences on dropout behavior in one California high school. *Sociology of Education*, 283-299.
- Saha, S., Solotaroff, R., Oster, A., & Bindman, A. B. (2007). Are preventable hospitalizations sensitive to changes in access to primary care? The case of the Oregon Health Plan. *Medical care*, 712-719.
- Saldaña, D. H., Dassori, A. M., & Miller, A. L. (1999). When is caregiving a burden? Listening to Mexican American women. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 21(3), 283-301.
- Seidman, I. E. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College.
- Shahidul, S., & Karim, Z. (2015). Factors contributing to school dropout among the girls: A review of literature. *European Journal of research and reflection in educational sciences*, 3(2): 25 - 36.
- Smith, M. H., Beaulieu, L. J., & Israel, G. D. (1992). Effects of human capital and social capital on dropping out of high school in the south [Electronic version]. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 8(1), 75-87.

- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. California: Sage Publications Inc.
- Tackie-Ofori, V. (2012). *Love and Guilt: HIV-Positive Mothers Parenting Their Toddler Children Living with HIV and AIDS*. Paper presented at the 5th IFHE-AFRICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE.
- Taylor, G. R. (Ed.). (2005). *Integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in research*. Maryland: University Press of America Inc.
- Teachman, J. D., Paasch, K., & Carver, K. (1996). Social capital and dropping out of school early. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58:773-783.
- Teachman, J. D., Paasch, K., & Carver, K. (1997). Social capital and the generation of human capital. *Social forces*, 75(4), 1343-1359.
- Theodori, G. L. (2005). Community and community development in resource-based areas: Operational definitions rooted in an interactional perspective. *Society and Natural Resources*, 18(7), 661-669.
- Tyler, J. H., & Lofstrom, M. (2009). Finishing high school: Alternative pathways and dropout recovery. *The future of children*, 77-103.
- UNESCO EFA Global monitoring report (2010). *Reaching the marginalized*. UNESCO publishing, France
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2011). *Global Education Digest 2011: Comparing Education Statistics Across the World*: UNESCO Paris, France.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, C. (2012). *Youth and skills: putting education to work*: Unesco New York.
- Unicef (2009). *UNICEF Water, Sanitation and hygiene annual report 2009*. UNICEF, New York
- UNESCO (2016). Policy Paper 27 / Fact Sheet 37. *Leaving no one behind: How far on the way to universal primary and secondary education* UNESCO ED/GEMR/MRT/2016/PP/27
- U.S. Census Bureau (2005). *Income, poverty and health insurance coverage in the United States*. U.S. Census Bureau, United States
- Valencia, R. R. (2002). " Mexican Americans don't value education!" On the basis of the myth, mythmaking, and debunking. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 1(2), 81-103.

- Van Manen, M. (2006). Writing qualitatively, or the demands of writing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 16(5), 713–722. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1049732306286911>
- Vishnevsky, T., & Beanlands, H. (2004). Qualitative research. *Nephrology Nursing Journal*, 31(2), 234 - 238.
- Vitaro, F., Larocque, D., Janosz, M., & Tremblay, R. E. (2001). Negative social experiences and dropping out of school. *Educational psychology*, 21(4), 401-415.
- Weisner, T. S. (1982). Sibling interdependence and child caretaking: A cross-cultural view. *Sibling relationships: Their nature and significance across the lifespan*, 305-327.
- White, J. A., & Wehlage, G. (1995). Community collaboration: If it is such a good idea, why is it so hard to do? *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 17(1), 23-38.
- “World Bank. 2001. World Development Report 2000/2001 : Attacking Poverty. World Development Report;. New York: Oxford University Press. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/11856> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.”
- WHO (2016). Child Maltreatment. Available at www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment. Accessed on 19th April, 2018.
- Yan, W. (1999). Successful African American students: The role of parental involvement. *Journal of Negro Education*, 68 (1), 5-22.

APPENDIX 1: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE TO ASSESS THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE BASIC SCHOOL DROPOUTS

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences of the University of Ghana, Legon conducting a study on “The lived experiences of female dropouts of Basic school.” As a volunteer, I would like you to answer some few questions to help me gain understanding of the issue being studied. All information provided will be treated as confidential and anonymity of respondents is assured.

Thank you.

CODE: DATE OF INTERVIEW.....

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Please tell me about yourself:

- a. Age.....
- b. Ethnic Background.....
- c. Marital Status: i. Single [] ii. Married [] iii. Separated []
iv. Divorced [] v. Cohabiting []
- d. Occupation:
- e. Religious affiliation: i. Christian [] ii. Moslem []. Iii. Traditional Religion [] Others.....
- f. Number of siblings:
- g. Number of Children:
- h. Educational Level attained
- i. Highest level of education attained by parents:
Mother.....
Father:
- j. Did any of your siblings drop out of school?

SECTION B: EXPERIENCES IN BASIC SCHOOL

2. Please tell me about your basic school experience:
 - a. Skipping school or classes
 - b. Participation in any type of illegal activity during basic school, ie. Illegal drug use or dealing, alcohol use, or gang membership
 - c. Effect of illegal activity on desire to go to school
 - d. Job while in school
 - e. Educational ability
 - f. Desire to stay in school
 - g. Number of times moved from your community while in school
 - h. Reasons for moving from your community while in school
 - i. Participation in extracurricular activities
 - j. Interaction with parents while in school
 - k. Parental expectations for education
 - l. Student feelings of expectations
 - m. Parental knowledge of student's friends and friends' parents
 - n. Parental discussions with teachers or any other people in school
 - o. Parental knowledge of academic progress
 - p. Parental knowledge of behavior
3. Please share some stories about how you used the support systems that existed in your school: Relationship with:
 - a. School counselor:
 - b. Other adults in school interested in student's education
 - c. Description of exhibition of adult interest
 - d. Reasonableness of rules established at high school
 - e. Opinions of basic/high school
 - f. Positive aspects of school
 - g. Negative aspects of school
 - h. Adequacy of facilities
 - i. Skill of teachers at teaching
 - j. Description of favourite teacher
 - k. Hindrances to access to supports

SECTION C: REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

4. Could you please describe the factors which led to your dropping out of school?
 - a. Financial problems?
 - b. Poor academic performance?
 - c. Lack of interest in studying?
 - d. Difficult lessons?
 - e. The relationship with your school friends or teachers?
 - f. Walking long distances to school?
 - g. Was it your parents' decision?
5. How long did it take you to decide to drop out of school?
6. Did you inform someone in your family, school or community that you were dropping out of school? Please describe their response.
7. Did some people in your family, school and community try to talk you into remaining in school?
 - a. Kindly and briefly recount what advice you received from them.
 - b. Please why did you not take their advice?
8. How did your parents, teachers, friends and other members of your community react when they noticed you had dropped out of school?
9. Describe anything which you think the school, your family or community could have done to persuade you from dropping out of school.

SECTION D: LIVED EXPERIENCES AFTER DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

10. Could you please describe situations in your family life or business life which you have faced or are facing which in your view would have been different if your educational level was relatively higher than what it is now?

11. Could you please describe situations you have faced or are facing which in your view you are faring better regardless of your current educational level?
12. Kindly describe any regrets you have about dropping out of school with regards to:
 - a. Living conditions
 - b. Social relationships
 - c. Marriage
 - d. Business
13. Given the chance, what would you do differently now? Would you enroll in adult education?
14. What strategies do you adopt to fill the gap created by your inability to complete school?
15. Based on your experiences what advice will you give to those girls who might be considering dropping out of school now?
16. What do you suggest that families, schools, churches and other religious bodies, community members, traditional leaders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the government could do to minimize girls dropping out of school?
17. Do you have other information you would like to share with me?

THANK YOU