

**INVESTIGATING THE CAUSES OF LEARNER DROPOUT AT SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN JOHANNESBURG SOUTH, GAUTENG**

by

MNGUNI INNOCENT BONGANI

submitted in accordance with the requirements for

the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR REGIS CHIRESHE

NOVEMBER 2014

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the causes of learner dropout in secondary schools around Johannesburg South, Gauteng Province. Twenty-seven participants from three secondary schools in Orange Farm area were purposively sampled for the study. A qualitative design was used. In-depth interviews were conducted to collect data to allow the researcher a platform to ask open-response questions and to explore the participants' perspectives about the causes of learner dropout. The data was analysed thematically by carefully identifying and describing significant themes that emerged from educators, learners, parents, SGB chairpersons and principal's responses to interview questions. The study revealed that teenage pregnancy, lack of parental involvement, substance abuse and peer pressure, among others, were the causes of learner dropout. The study recommends that schools put more efforts on abstinence programs, sex education and the use of contraceptives such as condoms, pills and injectables; training of educators on the management of drugs and pregnancy, and resuscitation of extra-mural activities. Recommendations for further research were made.

Key terms: Learner dropout; Teenage pregnancy; Parental involvement; Substance abuse; Peer pressure; at-risk learners; Learner; Attitudes; Strategies.

DECLARATION

Student number: 32033850

I declare that the dissertation of limited scope entitled **Investigating the causes of learner dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South, Gauteng** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

I.B. Mnguni

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first of all like to express my gratitude to Almighty God for his protection and guidance throughout this study.

I also wish to put on record my profound appreciation and sincere thanks to all those who gave their time and assistance towards the completion of this study.

Special thanks to my supervisor Professor Regis Chireshe for his untiring support, constructive criticism, patience and ongoing advice towards the success of this study.

I sincerely thank and pass words of appreciation to my editor Barbara Shaw for a job well done.

Special thanks to my beloved wife Zandile Glenrose Mnguni for being always by my side through thick and thin.

Special thanks must go to the Gauteng Department of Education and the Johannesburg South District of Education for giving me permission to conduct this study.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all principals, learners, educators, parents and chairpersons of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) of Vulcanindlela Secondary School, Sakhisizwe Secondary School and Qalabotjha Secondary School for participating in this study.

Lastly, but not least, special thanks to my children Sizakele, Thabo and Sikhulile and my late parents Johannes and Beatrice Mnguni. Thank you so much for the love and support you have always given me. It is well appreciated!

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my late mother Beatrice Qgibantu Mnguni, without whom I would not have made it to this educational level because of her support and encouragement. I also dedicate it to my lover and wife for her support and motivation towards the completion of this study under very difficult circumstances.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------------|
| ABSTRACT | i |
| DECLARATION | ii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iii |
| DEDICATION | iv |
| CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY | 1 |
| 1.1 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY | 1 |
| 1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM | 5 |
| 1.4 SUB-QUESTIONS..... | 6 |
| 1.5 OBJECTIVES | 6 |
| 1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY..... | 6 |
| 1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK | 7 |
| 1.8 LIMITATIONS..... | 8 |
| 1.8.1 Overcoming the limitations..... | 8 |
| 1.9 DELIMITATIONS | 8 |
| 1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS | 8 |
| 1.11 CONCLUSION..... | 10 |
| CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW | 11 |
| 2.1 INTRODUCTION | 11 |
| 2.2 TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND LEARNER DROPOUT | 11 |
| 2.3 PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND LEARNER DROPOUT | 14 |
| 2.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND LEARNER DROPOUT..... | 17 |
| 2.5 PEER PRESSURE AND LEARNER DROP OUT | 20 |
| 2.6 CONCLUSION..... | 21 |
| CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 22 |
| 3.1 INTRODUCTION | 22 |
| 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN | 22 |
| 3.3 POPULATION | 23 |
| 3.4 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE | 24 |
| 3.4.1 Sampling..... | 24 |
| 3.4.2 Sampling procedure | 24 |
| 3.4.2.1 <i>Non-probability</i> | 24 |
| 3.4.2.2 <i>Purposeful sampling</i> | 25 |
| 3.5 INSTRUMENTATION..... | 25 |
| 3.5.1 In-depth interviews | 25 |
| 3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY | 27 |
| 3.6.1 Reliability of the instrument..... | 27 |
| 3.6.2 Validity of the instrument | 27 |
| 3.6.3 Trustworthiness..... | 27 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE | 27 |
| 3.8 DATA ANALYSIS | 28 |
| 3.9 ETHICAL ISSUES | 28 |
| 3.9.1 Permission | 29 |
| 3.9.2 Informed consent | 29 |
| 3.9.3 Confidentiality | 29 |
| 3.9.4 Anonymity | 29 |
| 3.9.5 Harm to respondents | 30 |
| 3.9.6 Ensuring privacy | 30 |
| 3.10 CONCLUSION | 30 |
| CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION | 31 |
| 4.1 INTRODUCTION | 31 |
| 4.2 TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND LEARNER DROPOUT | 31 |
| 4.2.1 The effect of teenage pregnancy on learner dropout | 31 |
| 4.2.1.1 <i>Reasons for pregnant and mothering learners dropping out of school</i> | 32 |
| 4.2.1.2 <i>Daily attendance of pregnant learners and school dropout</i> | 33 |
| 4.2.1.3 <i>Pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers' level of support and school dropout</i> | 33 |
| 4.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND LEARNER DROPOUT | 34 |
| 4.3.1 Family involvement in children's education and school dropout | 34 |
| 4.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND SCHOOL DROPOUT | 36 |
| 4.4.1 Learner attendance and substance abuse | 36 |
| 4.4.2 Effects of drug abuse on academic achievement and learner drop out | 38 |
| 4.5 PEER PRESSURE AND SCHOOL DROPOUT | 38 |
| 4.5.1 Peer pressure and learner attendance | 38 |
| 4.5.2 Peer relationships and school drop out | 40 |
| 4.6 OTHER CAUSES OF LEARNER DROPOUT | 40 |
| 4.7 STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME LEARNER DROPOUT | 41 |
| 4.7.1 Prevention of teenage pregnancy | 41 |
| 4.7.2 How to improve parental involvement in school | 42 |
| 4.7.3 Management of drug abuse in schools | 43 |
| 4.7.4 Prevention of peer pressure influence on school dropout | 45 |
| 4.8 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS | 46 |
| 4.8.1 Sub-research question 1: To what extent does teenage pregnancy contribute to learner dropout? | 46 |
| 4.8.2 Sub-research question 2: How does parental involvement in education affect learner dropout? | 48 |
| 4.8.3 Sub-research question 3: To what extent does substance abuse contribute to learner dropout? | 50 |
| 4.8.4 Sub-research question 4: How does peer pressure influence learner dropout? | 52 |
| 4.8.5 Other causes of learner dropout | 53 |
| 4.8.6 Strategies to overcome learner dropout in schools | 53 |
| 4.8.6.1 <i>Teenage pregnancy and learner dropout</i> | 53 |
| 4.8.6.2 <i>Parental involvement in education and school dropout</i> | 54 |
| 4.8.6.3 <i>Substance abuse and learner dropout</i> | 56 |
| 4.8.6.4 <i>Peer pressure and learner dropout</i> | 57 |
| 4.9 CONCLUSION | 57 |
| CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 58 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 5.1 INTRODUCTION | 58 |
| 5.2 SUMMARY | 58 |
| 5.2.1 The effect of teenage pregnancy on learner dropout | 58 |
| 5.2.2 Poor parental involvement in children’s education..... | 59 |
| 5.2.3 Effects of substance abuse and learner dropout..... | 59 |
| 5.2.4 Peer relationships and school dropout | 59 |
| 5.2.5 Other causes | 60 |
| 5.2.6 Strategies to overcome learner dropout | 60 |
| 5.2.6.1 <i>Prevention of teenage pregnancy</i> | 60 |
| 5.2.6.2 <i>Improving parental involvement in secondary schools</i> | 60 |
| 5.2.6.3 <i>Management of drug abuse in schools</i> | 60 |
| 5.2.6.4 <i>Prevention of peer pressure influence on school dropout</i> | 61 |
| 5.3 CONCLUSIONS | 61 |
| 5.3.1 Causes of learner dropout..... | 61 |
| 5.3.2 Strategies to overcome learner dropout in schools | 62 |
| 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS | 62 |
| 5.4.1 Teenage pregnancy and learner dropout | 62 |
| 5.4.2 Parental involvement in the education and learner dropout..... | 63 |
| 5.4.3 Substance abuse and learner dropout | 63 |
| 5.4.4 Recommendations for further research..... | 64 |
| REFERENCES | 65 |
| APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ALL THE PARTICIPANTS | 87 |
| APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH..... | 91 |
| APPENDIX C: APPROVAL OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH | 92 |
| APPENDIX D:EXAMPLE OF LETTERS TO SCHOOLS | 94 |
| APPENDIX E: PERMISSION GRANTED..... | 95 |

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to investigate the causes of learner dropout in Johannesburg South secondary schools. This chapter discusses the background to the study, statement of the problem, sub-questions, objectives and significance of the study, the theoretical framework, study limitations and delimitations, and presents the definitions of terms.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

South Africa observed the dawn of a democratic government in 1994. The country has made significant changes to improve access to education for all learners since then. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that all children have a right to basic education and specifies the period of compulsory schooling which is from grade one to nine (South Africa, 1996a:29; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:304). More children are being educated than ever before and schools are required to teach and educate learners from various different social, cultural and language backgrounds (McWhitter, McWhitter & McWhitter, 2007:6). Despite this, learners dropping out of school has, according to South African media reports, become a major problem in South Africa and the rest of Africa, particularly after grade nine (Inglis, 2009:2).

Lagana (2004:212) states that less than 50% of learners in the world complete their education. According to the American Psychological Association Center (1996), the dropout rate in USA schools was 8, 5% for males and 7, 5% for females. The United States of America Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (1998) reported that, in 1993, the national dropout rate for students aged 16 to 24 was 11% and, in the 1970s, it was at 14.6%. UNESCO (2002:30) reported that one in five children in the Southern hemisphere does not attend primary school. According to the research conducted by National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) in 2003, there were 3.2 million Americans aged 18 to 24 (12%) considered to be school

dropouts. Males were more likely to have dropped out than females and the dropout rate was higher among Hispanics (28%) than among American Indians or Alaskan natives (14%), blacks (10%), whites (8%) or Asians (2%). The NSDUH (2003) study also indicated that the dropout rate among persons aged 18 to 20 and those aged 21 to 24, was similar.

The dropout rate of indigenous Australians it is 46% and for non-indigenous Australians it is 20% (Csereklye, 2008:2). For every 100 children who enter primary school in Nicaragua, only 55% reach grade 5 (UNESCO, 2002). The primary school dropout rate in Bangladesh was 47% (IRIN, 2007a). Trinidad and Tobago dropout rates in primary schools are 1.0% and, for secondary schools, it is 5.4% (UNICEF, 2008:4). According to a 2002 national survey in Peru (Inter Press Service, 2012), 26% of 12 to 17 year old teenage girls from rural areas dropout of school, while the dropout rate for boys stands at 18%. In China, the dropout rate in some rural areas is as high as 40%. The Official Ministry of Education in China estimated a dropout rate of 5 percent for urban areas and 11 percent for rural areas (Inter Press Service, 2010).

Thirty percent of Tanzanian children enrolled in schools fail to complete primary education, while, in secondary schools, the dropout rate is 20% (IRIN, 2007b). According to News from Africa (2002), Malawi had one of the highest dropout rates in sub-Saharan Africa, with 15% of girls (three in every 20 girls), and 12% of boys (three in every 25 boys), dropping out of school between grades five and eight. The dropout rate for 16 and 17 year-olds in Niger and Madagascar is 30% (Akyeampong, Hunt, Sabates & Wesbrook, 2010:10). Ethiopia had a dropout rate of 13,3% for primary schools and 14,3% for secondary schools in 1996, and those figures rose to 14,7% for primary schools and 15,4% for secondary schools in 2000 (Kassahun, 2004:1). On average, the dropout rate for Zimbabwe between 1980 and 2004 was 26% (Zengeya, 2004:1). Hunt (2008:2) stated that, in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, and Mozambique, more than 80% of rural children dropped out of primary school. In Malawi and Uganda, in 2003, 24% and 23% of grade one cohorts dropped out of

school, respectively. Malawi, Mozambique, and Rwanda all had over 20% of the grade five cohorts dropping out in 2003. According to UNESCO's "Education for all 2000 Assessment", a high percentage of children dropped out of Botswana primary schools in 1997, made up of 58.4% of boys and 41.6% of girls.

South Africa is no exception to high dropout rates in schools (Monyela, 2011:71; Karrin & Lee, 2012:3; Clacherty, Donald, Matsai, Mdiya, Pelo, Porteus & Qwabe, 2000:8; Brown, 2010:8; Marie-Smith, 2011:8). High dropout rates in South Africa are also affirmed by Van Zyl (2013:581); Branson, Hofmeyr and Lam (2013:10); Schuster (2011:40); Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2013:31), and Ranjiah (2012:15). Dropout affects all grade levels, from grade R to grade 12, in the South African school system (South Africa, 2007). About 60% of children in South Africa, after grade 1; dropout before completing high school (South Africa, 2003). Statistics South Africa (2004) as cited in Francis and Rimmensburger (2008:603) revealed that 6 percent of 14 year olds; 8,7 percent of 15 year olds and 29,3 percent of 18 year olds were not attending school in South Africa. Between 1984 and 1990, the rate of school dropout in grade 1 averaged about 16% per annum, which totalled around 1,300,000 learners during that period (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:304). The dropout rate in South Africa's rural areas was 19,1% of children between 6 and 14 years of age compared to 11,4% in urban areas (Beard & Schindler, 2001:137). According to the South African Treasury Report (Govender, 2005:1), on average, for every 100 children in grade 1, only 52 reach grade 12. From grade 9 upwards, dropout figures reach almost 12% in both grades 10 and 11. In total, 10% of learners who had been enrolled in grades 9 to 11 dropped out of school between 2007 and 2008 (South Africa, 2011). Dropout rate in South Africa's primary schools ranges from 0,5 percent to 2,7 percent; and in General Education and Training (GET) phase it spikes to 6,5 percent and in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase from 12 percent and 13 percent for grade 10 and 11 respectively (Ment-Gibert, 2012:3).

Dropout rates rise sharply after grade 8 in South Africa and reach an average of 18% in grade 11 (Ebrahim,2004:7). The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) says that of the total 1,444,018 pupils who enrolled in grade 1 in 1998, only 38% wrote matric in 2009 (City Press, 2010). The highest dropout rates are experienced from ages 16 to 18 years, roughly corresponding with grades 10 to 12 (HSRC, 2008). There is a high dropout rate in grade 1 of 21% (Ebrahim, 2004). The UNESCO report of 2007 revealed that South Africa had a dropout rate of 21% in 2003 (South Africa, 2007). Between 11% and 15% of children leave school each year after grade 9 (Mail & Guardian, 2008); About 15% of black learners entering primary school in South Africa drop out after first year and 10% in the second year (Baine& Mwamwenda, 1994:119). According to Meny-Gibert, Russell and Strasburg (2010:31) Male coloureds youths aged 16-18 are more likely to be out of school than Black, White or Indian youth. Hunter and May (2002:20) revealed that girls were more likely to dropout of school than boys in South Africa, with 18% girls as opposed to 14 % boys, more over about 19% of Africans as opposed to 9% of coloureds and Indians, and 8% of Whites.

It also changes from province to province. In the Free State Province, about 15,000 learners dropout of school before they reach grade 12, while only half of the 80,000 learners who start grade one in the Cape Town schools reach grade 12 (Masitsa, 2006:168). Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard and King (2010:246) reported that Cape Town has high rate of droout of 54, 9%. In the Eastern Cape Province, only about a quarter of those in grades one will matriculate (Zuzile, 2003:1). Dichaba (2013:89) states that there is a high rate of dropout in the Northwest Province. The Gauteng primary schools dropout rate increased by 3% in the 2009/10 school year, with the dropout rate in grade 1 at 3.8% and in grade 7 at 2.7% (News24, 2011) and 47% grade 10 learners leave school in Gauteng (News24,2014). Johannesburg schools have a high dropout rate of 14% (Independent online News, 2012). The high rate of learner dropout the world over, and in SouthAfrica as demonstrated by the statistics in the above paragraphs, has prompted the researcher to investigate its causes. To the

knowledge of the researcher, no study on the causes of learner dropout has been carried out in Johannesburg South schools.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The learner dropout phenomenon appears to be a local, provincial, national and international problem. Many studies cited in the background to this study indicate that there is a high rate of learner drop out throughout the world, including in South Africa (American Psychological Association Center, 1996; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:304; Csereklye, 2008:2; IRIN, 2007b; News from Africa, 2002; Burton, 2010; NSDUH, 2003; Akyeampong, Hunt, Sabates & Westbrook, 2010; UNESCO, 2002; Kassahun, 2004:1; Mail & Guardian, 2008; Zengeya, 2004:1; Beard & Schildler, 2001:137; Govender, 2005:1; Zuzile, 2003:1; Lagana, 2004:212; Baine & Mwamwenda, 1994:119; Masitsa, 2006:168; Gauteng Department of Education, 2011; South Africa, 2003, 2004,2005,2006, 2007,2011; Flisher et al, 2004; City Press, 2010; HSRC, 2008; Ebrahim, 2004:7; Agus (2010:5); Hunt, 2008:2; UNESCO, 2002; Inter Press Service, 2010, 2012; UNICEF, 2008:4; UNESCO, 2002:30; Francis & Rimmensburger, 2008:603; Ment-Gibert, 2012:3; Meny-Gibert, Russell & Strasburg, 2010:31; Hunter & May, 2002:20; Monyela, 2011:71; Karrin & Lee, 2012:3; Clacherty, Donald, Matsai, Mdiya, Pelo, Porteus & Qwabe, 2000:8; Brown, 2010:8; Marie-Smith, 2011:8; Van Zyl, 2013:581; Branson, Hofmeyr & Lam, 2013:10; Schuster, 2011:40; Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2013:31; Ranjiah, 2012:1; Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2010:246; Dichaba, 2013:89; News24, 2014; IOL News, 2012). Most studies, internationally and nationally, identified teenage pregnancy, a lack of parental involvement, substance abuse and peer pressure as the main factors causing learner dropouts. Therefore, although other factors are acknowledged, these factors were determined as major influences to be investigated in this study.

The study set out to investigate the causes of high dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South. Specifically, the study intended to find an answer to the main

research question: What are the causes of learner dropout in Johannesburg South secondary schools?

1.4 SUB-QUESTIONS

The following sub research questions were addressed in order to answer the main question of the study:

1.4.1. To what extent does teenage pregnancy contribute to learner dropout?

1.4.2. How does parental involvement in education affect learner dropout?

1.4.3. To what extent does substance abuse contribute to learner dropout?

1.4.4. How does peer pressure influence learner dropout?

1.5 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to:

1.5.1. establish the effects of teenage pregnancy on learner dropout;

1.5.2. investigate how parental involvement in education affects learner dropout;

1.5.3. investigate how substance abuse contributes to learner dropout;

1.5.4. Investigate how peer pressure influences learner dropout.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study may help School Governing Bodies (SGBs), School Management Teams (SMTs) and educators to learn and understand learner dropout phenomenon and to be able to identify learners who are at risk of dropping out. The SGBs and SMTs will be able to use the data collected in this study to develop systems that can reduce and prevent learner dropout in South African secondary schools. Policy makers will benefit from the study by using its findings to develop policies that take into cognisance the context and situation of individuals, schools and communities with an intent to address the challenges and causes of learner dropout.

The study will benefit researchers, especially those focusing on the causes of the drop out phenomenon as they will use this study to inform further research studies and other educational stake holders who are dealing with mechanisms and strategies to address learner dropout. Learners at risk of dropping out will ultimately benefit from the study since some schools and educational stakeholders might apply some of the findings and the recommendations made in this study.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to reveal the causes of learner drop out in Johannesburg South secondary schools, an interpretive theoretical framework was chosen for this study. Interpretive theory uncovers how participants construct their experiences through the processes of their actions, intentions, beliefs, and feelings (Smith, Harre & Van Langenhove, 2005:30). These are then interpreted within the parameters of a specific context that is based on the unique demographics of the participants.

Interpretive theory relies on knowledge claimed from the “inside” (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:20) which gives a participant’s subjective experiences of the external world. This philosophical position is interpretive in nature due to its concern with the social world and how it is experienced, interpreted and understood (Cresswell, 2003:9; Marshall & Rossman, 1999:2). Individuals construct and interpret social reality and act on the meaning that it has for them (Esterberg, 2002:15).

Interpretive theory (Mason, 2009:56) allows the researcher to establish the participant’s social reasoning, interpretation and understanding of the learner dropout phenomenon. It provides a clear perspective for this study because it explores the participants’ feelings, actions, intentions, experiences and their views with regard to the causes of learner drop out in South African secondary schools (Smith, Harre, & Van Langenhove, 2005:30). The research is grounded on the direct or indirect experiences of participants who were provided with the freedom to express themselves to describe

and share their experiences of the dropout phenomenon at their schools (Cresswell, 2003:9).

1.8 LIMITATIONS

Because of limited time and financial constraints, only a small sample was involved. Therefore, the data collected may not be generalisable in any way.

1.8.1 Overcoming the limitations

The researcher conducted interviews during the afternoons and at weekends, and received sponsorship for transport to interview venues from the “Effective Education Programme”, an NGO based at Weiler’s Farm in the south of Johannesburg.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS

The study was conducted in Orange Farm, Johannesburg South, Gauteng Province. Three public secondary schools were chosen for this study which included educators, parents, principals, SGB chairpersons and learners who had dropped out from those schools. The study focused on establishing the causes of learner dropout.

1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.10.1 Attitudes

An attitude is a relatively stable and enduring predisposition to behave or react in a certain way towards persons, objects, institutions or issues (Mwamwenda, 2004:480). Attitude, in this study, means the subjective response of educators and parents towards learners at risk of dropping out.

1.10.2 Learner dropout

Learner dropout can be defined as learners who leave school before completing a programme of study (McWhitter et al, 2007:127). In this study, the term “learner drop out” refers to learners who leave school before matriculating or passing grade 12.

1.10.3 At-risk learners

At-risk learners include those who are in danger of developing significant learning and behavioural problems and are likely to fail in school or in life (Frymier & Gansneder, 1989). They have difficulty learning basic skills, exhibit unacceptable behaviour and cannot keep up with their peers (Pierce, 1994:37). In this study, these are learners who have barriers to learning that emanate from their behaviour such as teenage pregnancy and substance abuse.

1.10.4 Parental involvement

It is the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities which may be educational or non-educational. It extends from supporting and upholding the school ethos to supervising children's homework at home. Parent involvement implies mutual cooperation, sharing and support (Squelch & Lemmer, 1994:93). In this study, parental involvement means parents' engagement in school activities of their children.

1.10.5 Teenage pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy is when an underage girl between the ages of 13 and 19 becomes pregnant (Nzama, 2004:1601). In this study, teenage pregnancy means girls who become pregnant and dropout of school before they complete school or pass grade 12.

1.10.6. Peer pressure

Peer pressure is when peers influence each other's attitude and behaviour to conform to the group's identity (Borsari & Carey, 2001:391). In this study, peer pressure means that learners are being pressured and influenced by their peers to drop out of school.

1.10.7 Substance abuse

Substance abuse refers to maladaptive pattern of substance use (Sadock& Sadock, 2003:1287). For this study, substance abuse refers to the use of drugs by learners who eventually dropout of school.

1.10.8 Learner

It refers to any person receiving education (South Africa, 1996b). In this study, it refers to school-going children from grade 1 to grade 12.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the orientation to the study, which covers the background to the study, the statement of the problem, sub-questions, objectives, the significance of the study, the theoretical framework, limitations to the study, delimitations to the study and the definition of terms.

The next chapter will review the literature related to the causes of learner dropout in secondary schools.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to investigate the causes of learner drop out in Johannesburg South secondary schools. A multitude of research studies have been conducted on learner drop out. The review of related literature is presented under sub headings derived from the study's sub questions which are: teenage pregnancy and learner dropout, parental involvement and learner dropout, substance abuse and learner dropout, and peer pressure and learner dropout. The gaps to be filled by the present study are highlighted.

2.2 TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND LEARNER DROPOUT

Teenage mother-hood has been an important phenomenon of study in terms of progress toward the achievement of the "Millenium Development Goals", because it is closely linked to early school dropout among teenage girls (UNICEF, 2007:2; Ameida, Aquino & de Barros, 2006:1400; Chen, 2008:8; Brooks-Gunn, Furstenburg & Guo, 1993:289; Klepinger, Lundberg & Plotnick, 1995:27). According to Chalasani (2012:2) pregnant learners normally experience complications that result in absenteeism and permanently leaving school; they do not attend school regularly since they miss one or two school terms and are less likely to return to school than their counterparts who drop out for other reasons.

The study by Achoka, Judith, Sarah, Njeru, Frida and Muthoni (2012:887) revealed that in Kenya girls leave school every year due to pregnancy, stigmatization and discrimination by teachers, parents, schoolmates and the society. Kost et, al (2010) cited in Njambatwa (2013:10) contends that there is a strong link between teenage pregnancy and dropout as a result of the stigma that is associated with early parenting, lack of family support, and particularly if the pregnant teenager is isolated by peers. Mpanza (2012:14) maintains that some educators stigmatize pregnant learners and still believe that they should leave school. The poor physical health of teenage mothers

after they have given birth makes them to not want to go back to school (Sodi, 2009:21). The current study sought to establish whether the above is applicable to Johannesburg South secondary schools.

According to Makundi (2010:8) and Bangser (2010:3), pregnancy was one of the major reasons for school dropout among teenage girls in the Mtwara region, Tanzania. “The Centre for Studies of Adolescence (CSA)” conducted a research study called “Counting the costs of teenage pregnancy and school dropout in Kenya” in 2008. The study findings of Kenya indicated that there was a high dropout rate among girls especially in upper primary and secondary levels in certain parts of Kenya, consequently due to teenage pregnancy (CSA, 2008:8). Teenage pregnancy is the leading cause of girls dropping out of school particularly in the Central African Republic, Mozambique, and South Africa (Eloundou-Enyegue, 2004:511), and in Botswana (Molosiwa & Moswela, 2012:270). The present study attempted to establish learners’, parents’ and educators’ views on the causes of learner dropout in Johannesburg South, South Africa.

Most studies about teenage pregnancy and dropout in South Africa have reported that Teenage pregnancy was a huge challenge and result to school dropout (Mngoma, 2010) cited in Ramulumo and Pitsoe (2013:756), Kyei (2012:134), Mchunu, Peltzer and Tutshana (2012:246), Grant and Hallman (2006:2). According to UNICEF (2008:21), South Africa has a 74% dropout rate of pregnant girls between the ages of 14 and 19 years in secondary schools. The study conducted by Martelelo, Lam and Ranchood (2008:10) revealed that coloured women in South Africa were likely to drop out of school after pregnancy. Grant and Hallman (2006:9) discovered in their study called “Pregnancy-related school dropout and prior school performance” that, in South Africa pregnant teenagers withdraw from school during the year in which they become pregnant or fail that grade. The study by Dekezela-Tsomo (2012:81) revealed that children drop out of school in King Williams Town among others as a result of pregnancy. Karra and Lee (2012:1) maintain that most teen mothers in the Western Cape do not graduate or finish high school. The study by Mahlomaholo (2011:312)

reported that teenage pregnancy was a cause for girls to leave school early in North West Province, South Africa. The present study sought to establish whether the above also takes place in Johannesburg South schools.

Malahlela and Chireshe (2013:137) contend that teenage pregnancy has a negative or detrimental effect on school attendance. Child bearing, for girls, is often associated with an end of schooling because of the difficulty of doing school work and parenthood together (Kaufman, De Wet & Stadler, 2001:158). Hupfeld (2010:2) states that some participants in the “Resiliency skills and dropout prevention” study in America contended that pregnancy was the reason for dropping out of school. Cairns, Cairns and Neckerman (1989:1449) stated that dropping out of school is associated with being a parent for both teenage males and females. According to the study conducted by Social Surveys Africa (2010:1), care givers and youth out of school identified pregnancy as the number one reason for the dropout from school of girl learners. These findings are similar to earlier ones by Chigona and Rajendra (2007:1, 2008:261) who reported that teen mothers in Cape Town were receiving insufficient physical and emotional support and the consequence is that many drop out of school or do not succeed academically. In the same breathe the poor financial situation of teen mothers serve as the yard stick in dertemining whether the young mother can continue with schooling since she will need money to pay care givers and also to take care of the child’s other needs (Willan, 2013:37). The present study sought to establish whether or not educators, parents and learners share the above view of the causes of dropout phenomenon.

According to Meekers and Ahmed (1999:196), girls are discriminated against at home by parents who mostly prefer to support boys than girls, for instance in Botswana, more girls go to school than boys but dropout due to pregnancy in secondary schools and only 23% of them returned to school (Meekers & Ahmed, 1999:197). The Center for the Study of Adolescence (2008:40), Fobih (1987:231) cited learner dropout as a consequence of pregnancy. In Kenya, it explained, when family finances are limited

and a girl becomes pregnant, parents shift the focus to the boys in the family and the girl therefore does not return to school. The present study sought to establish if the above is also applicable in South Africa.

Loundou-Enyegue (2004:525), states that a reduction in the incidence of pregnancy-related school dropouts would reduce and possibly close the gender gap in the numbers of boys and girls completing secondary school. According to Macleod and Tracey (2009:iii), about one third to one and a half of pregnant learners consider returning to school after the birth of their children. The study conducted by Martelelo, Lam and Ranchood (2008:1) discovered that half of pregnant african (black) woman get back to school in the following year after giving birth. Willan (2013:1), and Bali and Maluli (2014:82), indicated that pregnant girls who get family support are psychologically more prepared to continue with school. In the same vein Grant and Hallman (2008) as cited in Willan (2013:37) postulated that girls who conceive or give birth when doing grade 12 tend to complete schooling. According to Mensch, Clark, Lloyd and Erulkar (1999:3), pregnancy is not the primary reason that girls leave school early in Kenya. Tan, Tohid, Su, Tan, Azimah and Khairani (2012:14) revealed that the majority of pregnant adolescents were school dropout and a third of them left school even before being pregnant, subsequently due to weak academic performances, low academic aspirations and poor involvement in school activities. The present study endeavoured to look into educators', parents' and learners' views about the causes of school dropout.

2.3 PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND LEARNER DROPOUT

The study by Nojaja (2009:6) suggested that positive parent involvement, co-operation and partnership with schools were a prerequisite of effective schooling. Mmotlane, Winnaar and Wa Kivilu (2009), as cited in Mbajjorgu, Maake, Kayoka and Masafu (2012:3) reported that there has been low parental involvement in South African black schools in recent years. The National Centre for Education Statistics (1998:28) maintain

that children stay at school longer when parents are involved in their learning; they even earn higher grades in their tests scores. Dropouts are more likely to come from families in which they have to make decisions because their parents are less involved in their education (Rumberger et al, 1990:283). The present study sought to establish from parents, learners and educators whether that is also applicable to South African schools.

The qualitative study conducted by Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013:34) revealed that girls enrolment rate is too low and dropout rates is very high in the rural areas of Nigeria because of traditional systems and belief pattern of gender disparity and high incidence of early marriage of young girls based on value system. Buchmann (2000:1371) maintains that parents in Kenya prefer to send boys rather than girls to school to ascertain economic security in the future. Parent's expectations about the performance as well as academic achievement impacts on learner work ethics, commitment and dropout. Alexander, Entwisle and Carrie (1997:87) noted in their study that young people whose parents had low expectations for their educational attainment at the beginning of their schooling, were more likely to dropout. Fobih (1987:231) postulated that dropping out of school was also linked to parents' non-supportive attitudes towards the education of their children. Hale (2004:3) maintains that parents of dropouts are more likely to view school negatively, to have minimal involvement with the school, to place little value on school attendance and achievement. Ensminger and Slusarcick (1992:97) stated that dropping out is associated with parents' negative values and attitudes towards education. The current study sought to establish whether parents, learners and educators share the above views about school dropout.

Masitsa (2006:175) cited inadequate parental support as a frequent cause of learner dropouts in South Africa. Makwinja-Morara (2007) as cited in Munsaka (2009:73) indicated that parents of dropouts showed little involvement in the academic and/or non-academic affairs of their children. A study by Hess and Copeland (2001:399) cited

parents' non-interaction with their children about their education as a prediction for dropping out. In South African rural areas, parental support to schools is minimal because education is viewed as irrelevant to the current life situation (Baine & Mwamwennda, 1994:120). This has an impact on learners dropping out of school. Singh, Mobokodi and Msila (2004) as cited in Felixin, Dornbrock and Scheckle (2008:100) revealed that parent's involvement in education was crucial. Similarly, Carter (2002:1) affirms the importance of parents and family assistance, particularly with homework. The present study sought to establish whether that is applicable to Johannesburg South schools.

According to Osiki (2003:276), parental lack of interest in education was a responsible factor for school dropout. Hendricks (2007:9) state that teachers complain that few parents attend meetings, get involved in school matters or check the homework of their children. Parents academic support, supervision and expectations for their children impacts on the school dropout phenomenon (Rumberger, 1995:616). Parent's perception about education is an important factor in determining whether or not their child will attend school (Regina & Stella, 2010:367). The present study attempted to establish whether that is also applicable to South African learners.

A study conducted by National Education Association (NEA) in 2008 cited parent-family-community involvement as key to addressing learner dropout crises in America and noted that strong school-family-community partnerships foster higher educational aspirations and more motivated students. In the same breathe parental involvement in the education of their children at an early stage of their education helps children to perform better and keeps them in school (Entwisle & Hayduk, 1988:158). When parents assist learners with homework, attend parent's class meetings and volunteering; learner performance enhances and that keep the child in school (Khajehpour & Ghazvini, 2011:1208).

The study by Bhengu (2003:xiii) revealed that parents influences the mental growth of a child in the early years; consequently, contact between home and school should be maintained from primary school in order for the child to succeed in formal education. The active involvement of family members in the educational activities of learners provides stability and consistency of expectations, and behaviours which a school cannot offer (Reglin, 1993:11). Learners with parents who are involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school (Rumberger, 1995, as cited in Lamb et al, 2011:285). According to Stone (2006:518) communication between the parents, the children and the schools about the learners' education reduces learner dropout. Thus, when parents frequently speak to their children about school related matters, learners develop a positive perception about the school and become engaged and motivated to stay at school (Fall & Roberts, 2012:796). The study by Globler and Mestry (2007:176) revealed that the input from parent community was crucial in learner performance, homework supervision, and arts and culture programmes of the school. The present study sought to investigate the causes of learner dropout in Johannesburg South secondary schools.

2.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND LEARNER DROPOUT

Studies on substance abuse reveal that most learners who use drugs are at risk of dropping out of school (Kogan, Luo, Brody & Murry, 2005:36; Rumberger & Sun, 2008:1). This is supported by "The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)"(2003:1) who reported that in 2002, approximately 3.2 million Americans aged 18 to 24 years-old were considered to be dropouts due to substance abuse. The study by NSDUH (2003:2) discovered that substance abuse and the related dropout rates vary according to ethnicity in America. Similarly, Science Daily (2010) reported that the University of California (UC) Davis School of Medicine found that, among students who engaged in substance abuse including alcohol and other drugs, teens that smoked cigarettes were more at risk of dropping out of school in America. The

present study sought to establish if the above is also taking place in Johannesburg South secondary schools.

McCaffrey et al, (2010:1) contend that substance abuse impairs memory, poor school motivation and poor school results which ultimately leads to school dropout. The use of drugs by adolescents can impair their cognitive development (understanding ability) and which; as a result, can lead to school dropout (McCluskey et al, 2002:933). The present study endeavoured to look at learners, parents and educators views about the causes of school dropout in Johannesburg South schools.

Wegner (2011:21) postulates that substance abuse in South Africa lead to school dropout. The Medical Research Council Research Brief (2009:1) study among high school learners in Cape Town discovered a strong association between binge drinking, school dropout and low academic aspiration. Townsend, Flisher and King (2007:295) and Townsend et al (2010:238) also found a consistent relationship between dropping out of school and substance use. These findings were also maintained by Parry and Phiddemann (2012:2), who discovered that the use of methamphetamine by high school learners in Cape Town led to children absenteeism and dropping out of school. Subsequently, Townsend, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard and King (2008:22) affirm that dropouts have been shown to have a greater use of alcohol and other illegal substances when compared to their peers who are still at school. The current study tried to establish whether parents, educators and learners share the above views about school dropout in Johannesburg South schools.

According to Aloise-Young, Cruickshank and Chavez (2002:497), adolescents' use of drugs increases the risk of low academic achievement and dropping out of school. Garnier, Stein and Jacobs (1997:414) contend that dropping out of school is a multiply-determined process with adolescent drug use being one of the predictors. The findings of the study by Mensch and Kandel (1988:95) linked the early initiation of cigarette, marijuana and illicit drugs to the increase in the probability of premature school

leaving. According to Ellickson, Bui, Bell and McGuigan (1998:357), frequent smoking of cigarette is a predictor for high school dropout. Substance abuse of drugs, alcohol and marijuana is therefore a challenge for learners who are at risk of dropping out of school (Jessor, 1991:598; Franklin, 1992:341; Chavez, Mba & Oetting, 1989:603). The study by Janosz, Le Blanc, Boulerie and Tremblay (2000:173) stated that drug usage was a good predictor of school dropout in Montreal, Canada. Most studies in the United States of America consistently reveal that drinking of alcohol by learners commonly lead to dropout (Brooks-Gunn et al, 1993:289; Mensch & Kandel, 1988:111; Ellickson et al, 1998, as cited in McCluskey, Krohn, Lizotte & Rodriguez, 2002:936), while Ensminger and Slusarcick (1992:97) connected early drinking of alcohol to school dropouts. The consumption of alcohol and the use of marijuana by learners significantly reduce the possibility of high school completion due to frequent intoxication (Yamada, Kendix & Yamada, 1996:77; Wichstrom, 1998:413; Swain, Beauvais, Chavez & Oetting, 1997:51). The present study attempted to find out whether this is also occurring in Johannesburg South secondary schools.

Similarly, Kogan, Luo, Brody and Murray (2005:46) maintain that USA youth who smokes marijuana at school were more likely to dropout and that increases the likelihood of their continued smoking throughout their lives. Brook, Bolku, and Whiteman (1999:1549) contend that the usage of marijuana in early adolescence increases the risk of not graduating from high school. The study by Roebuck, French and Dennis (2004:133) also discovered that the use of marijuana was associated with school dropout figures. Kaplan and Liu (1994), as cited in DuPont et al, (2013:19) contend that drug users were three times likely to drop out of school than non users but their study did not indicate drug use as a sufficient condition for dropping out. The present study sought to establish from educators, learners and parents whether the above is also taking place in Johannesburg South secondary schools. The following section will discuss peer pressure and learner dropout.

2.5 PEER PRESSURE AND LEARNER DROP OUT

Ellenbogen and Chamberland (1997:355) reported that, in Canada, students who were on the verge of dropping out were found to have had friends who were dropouts. Peer pressure can be a significant factor in the school dropout situation because it has been established that most learners dropout of school because their peers have suggested this (Dizon-Luna, 2013:85; Janosz, Blanc, Boulerice, & Tremblay, 1997; Lee & Miu-Ling, 2003:107). Deviant peers cluster together and encourage one another to support the idea of dropping out of school (Beauvais, Chavez, Oetting, Deffenbacher & Cornell, 1996:292) while Lagana (2004:213) on the contrary, indicated that school loving peers motivate young people to stay in school. The present study sought to establish whether the above is also applicable to Johannesburg South, Gauteng province.

The need for belonging and fitting in with the peer group may cause stress and anxiety for the learner which affects his/her participation in class or attendance at school (Dieltiens & Meny-Gilbert, 2009:48). Voelkl (1997:313), Smyth and Hattam (2001:410), Valerie and Burkam (2003:363), French and Conrad (2001:227), Hale(2004:3), Battin-Pearson et al (2000:579), Barclay and Doll (2001:366) and Hupfeld (2010:1) contends, that students who are rejected by their peers disengage themselves from school, do not socialise and do not get involved with school-based social activities. They cited isolation from their peers and poor relationships with other learners as causes of dropping out of school. On the contrary, Mukama (2005:46) maintains that learner attitudes towards school and their believe in teachers influence them towards school than their peers.

Peer pressure was one of the factors that influenced young people to drop out of school in Botswana (Makwinja-Morara (2007) as cited in Munsaka (2009:66), in the Great Accra region in Ghana (Fobih, 1987:231) and, in South African secondary schools (Masitsa, 2006:179). The current study sought to establish whether the above is also occurring in Johannesburg South secondary schools.

The findings of the study conducted by Jordan, Lara and McPartland (1996:62) in the United States of America indicated that influence of peers is the cause of school dropout because these children are dependent on their peer groups and adhere to the group's deviant norms (Janosz et al, 1997:752). This also applies to deviant behaviour in neighborhoods which impacts on the educational performance of children and the concomitant school discontinuation (South et al, 2003:30; Onya et al, 2012:1). The present study sought to establish from parents', educators' and learners' perspective whether the above is also taking place in Johannesburg, South Africa.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the review of related literature on the causes of learner dropout. The literature was discussed under the following sub headings: teenage pregnancy and learner dropout, parent involvement and learner dropout, substance abuse and learner dropout, and peer pressure and learner dropout. How the literature is related to the present study was discussed. The next chapter shall focus on research methodology.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The study sought to investigate the causes of learner dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South. This chapter discusses the research methodology. The following aspects are discussed: research design, sampling and sampling procedure, instrumentation, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical issues.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:22), a research design is a general plan that describes how the research study will be conducted. May (2011:98) and Royce, Singleton and Straits (2010:108) assert that a research design is a complete strategy for data collection while Kumar (2005:84) explains that a research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to a research question or problem. The research design for this study therefore enabled the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be, so as to collect and analyse data about learner dropout in Johannesburg South secondary schools.

A qualitative research design was followed in this study. Qualitative research takes place in the natural world, interactive, context focused, humanistic, emergent and basically interpretative (Marshall & Rossman, 2011:3). It is expressed in words, pictures and objects (Neuman, 1997:7). The qualitative research design is used where the researcher seeks to describe and analyse individual and collective social activities, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions, then interpret the phenomena in terms of the meaning that participants attach to it (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:315; Guthrie, 2010:157; Henning, 2004:5). Since the present study sought to establish the causes of learner dropout from the perspective of parents, learners, educators, SGB chairpersons and principals, the qualitative design was seen as appropriate.

The researcher recognises both historical dimensions of human behaviour and the subjective aspects of human experience (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987:287). Qualitative research is based on human experience (Marshall & Rossman, 2011:91), hence the present study intended to establish the experiences of learners, teachers and parents about the phenomenon of learners who drop out of school. It also sought to engage individuals that have been affected by learner dropout.

A qualitative research design allows participants in the study to take part in open-ended interviews during which the researcher can establish the causes as well as the solutions to the research problem (Henning, 2004:5). The qualitative research design proved relevant to the present study because the participants were able to express themselves in face-to-face interviews conducted in their own languages to relate what they thought were the causes of learner dropout.

3.3 POPULATION

Population refers to the aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of specifications (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987:180). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:119), the concept of “population” is a group of individuals, events or objects that conform to a certain criteria which make them the focus of a study (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000: 84) in which the researcher intends to determine some characteristics (Royce, Singleton & Straits, 2010:154). It is a predetermined number of convenient cases that the researcher assumes to be the sample which corresponds to the population of interest. This is what the researcher intends to use to generalise the results of the research. The target population for this study consisted of all parents, principals, learners, school governing body chairpersons and educators in Orange Farm, Johannesburg South. The composition of the sample was heterogeneous, and included both males and females, different age groups and various levels of educational attainment.

3.4 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

3.4.1 Sampling

According to May (2011:98), a sample refers to a portion or a subset of a larger group to be studied. Sampling is when the researcher uses a partial or subset of the whole population to conduct the research (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987:180). According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:84), a sample is investigated to reveal characteristics which can be generalised for the entire population. The advantages of sampling are that the gathering of data is less time consuming than using the whole population, and the research is cost efficient and practical. The sample for the current study consisted of 27 participants (9 parents, 3 principals, 9 learners, 3 school governing body chairpersons and 3 educators). The study was composed of 5 male and 4 female parents; 1 female and 2 male principals; 5 girls and 4 boys; 1 female and 2 male SGB chairpersons; and 2 female and 1 male educators from three purposefully selected secondary schools in Orange Farm, Johannesburg South. These schools were selected because they were situated in the informal settlement and easily accessible to the researcher.

The participants were selected based on their experience with the dropout phenomenon for instance parents were selected because they had children who were dropouts; learners that had dropped out and returned to school; principals as school managers, SGB's as policy makers at school level and Educators who were teaching the Life Orientation subject and are members of the School Based Support Teams (SBST).

3.4.2 Sampling procedure

3.4.2.1 Non-probability

This study employed non-probability sampling. According to Royce (2010:172), non-probability sampling is based on case selection rather than random selection of the population. Bailey (1994:94) and Huysamen (1994:37) describe it as being uncomplicated, convenient and inexpensive and can be done on the spur of the

moment to take advantage of the available or anticipated participants. It is impossible to include each element of the population but the sample can be regarded as adequate for a homogeneous population (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:86). A weakness of non-probability sampling is that it does not control for investigation bias in the selection of units. Examples of non-probability sampling are convenience sampling, purposeful sampling and quota sampling (Royce, 2010:172). In this study purposeful sampling was used which is described below.

3.4.2.2 Purposeful sampling

The present study employed purposeful or judgmental sampling which is the selection of information-rich cases to study in depth. These are knowledgeable participants who reflect most of the characteristics, experience, representative or typical attributes of the population (Patton, 1990:169; David & Sutton, 2011:232; Descombe, 2007:17; Sarantakos, 1997:152; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:319; May, 2011:100; Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:92; Neuman, 1997:206; Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987:185; Royce, 2010:173; Huysamen, 1994:44; Babbie, 1992:230). In this regard, all participants in this study were individuals who had direct or indirect experience and knowledge about the school dropout phenomenon and therefore were regarded as examples of purposeful sampling. As already mentioned under sampling, the participants were drawn from schools that were situated in the informal settlements and easily accessible to the researcher.

3.5 INSTRUMENTATION

3.5.1 In-depth interviews

Interviews are methods of maintaining and generating conversations with people on a specific topic or range of topics to enable social researchers to interpret the resultant data (May, 2011:131). They involve direct personal contact with the participants who are asked to answer questions relating to the research problem (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:104).

The current study used qualitative in-depth interviews which take place in a setting whereby two or more individuals discuss a “theme of interest” (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009, as cited in Marshall & Rosman, 2011:142) and are particularly useful for exploring a topic in detail (Esterberg, 2002:87). Since this study sought to uncover participants’ perspectives and experiences with regard to school dropouts, the in-depth interview was found to be the most appropriate format.

The interviews for the present study were semi-structured to allow for open-ended answers and therefore the interviewer was flexible in terms of the order of the topics and the interviewees were at liberty to elaborate the points of interest on their own terms (Denscombe, 2007:176; May, 2011:135). There were a few closed-ended questions but the interviews mainly consisted of open-ended questions (see Appendix A). Each participant was asked similar questions which were organised according to the objectives of the study but were not necessarily asked in that order depending on the progress of the interview (Bailey, 1987: 190; 2007:100).

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews enabled the researcher to compare the responses from interviewees as there was a variation in the quality of information that was generated from each interview (May, 2011:135; Guthrie, 2010:120). The researcher, with the help of IsiZulu, IsiXhosa and Sesotho home language experts translated the questions into the home languages of the parents, the learners and the SGB chairpersons who did not understand English. The translation was done during the interview process. The researcher encouraged the participants to express themselves in their own words as recommended by Kumar (2005:124). Through these interviews, the dropout phenomenon was explored and the interviewees expressed their opinions and ideas in their own words.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.6.1 Reliability of the instrument

The instrument was pilot tested at a secondary school in Johannesburg South, Gauteng Province. The researcher interviewed one male educator, one female parent, two learners (one male and one female), one male principal and one female SGB chairperson. The researcher wanted to check on any possible weaknesses, inadequacies and ambiguities in the interview instrument as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2013:197) and Sarantakos (1997:293). The school that took part in the pilot study did not take part in the main study.

3.6.2 Validity of the instrument

Criterion jury validity means seeking advice and help from professionals on the instrument to be used on the area under investigation (Seale, 2012:529). The criterion jury opinion involves an expert commenting on the appropriateness of the instruments to be used in the study (Goods & Hatt in Karuppanan, 2003:11, as cited by Chireshe, 2006:114). The supervisor as an expert in the area checked on the appropriateness of the items. The researcher also used personal judgment to check the validity of the questions to measure if they indeed covered and addressed the causes of dropout phenomenon as recommended by Royce et al, (2010:138).

3.6.3 Trustworthiness

After indepth interviews the participants were asked whether what had been captured was a true reflection of what they had given in line with (Creswell, 2014:201) who advocates for establishing trustworthiness in this way.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Potential participants were approached by the researcher through the school management team (SMT) and the school governing body (SGB). A meeting to discuss the interview process with them was held during which it was explained that the

interviews were semi-structured and would be done by the researcher at accessible and convenient venues. They were told that the interviews would be conducted in home languages for those who did not understand English and that they would be tape recorded to avoid manipulation of information. The researcher used three home languages experts to conduct interviews in IsiZulu, Isixhosa and Sesotho respectively.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic/content analysis was used to provide a thick description about the participant's views, perceptions and experiences about learner dropout. The researcher together with the experts in Isizulu, Isixhosa and Sesotho verbatimly translated the tape recorded interviews

The researcher analyzed each and every recorded transcript by carefully reading and noting the interesting or significant themes. The response patterns from the informants' direct quotes were listed in order to look for any relationship between them.

The connected patterns were combined and categorized, for instance, responses that fitted under specific theme or response pattern that emerged from the informants exploration of the main causes of learner dropout were identified, put together with the corresponding patterns to form sub-themes and those that were similar were grouped together thematically to comprehend their collective experience. The researcher had to establish how different ideas fit together in a meaningful way when linked together. Basically, the researcher intended to end up with key themes that describe the essence of the study (McMillan & Schumacher; 2006:363).

3.9 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical issues require that the researcher conforms to the accepted professional practices of research (Bailey, 1994:454). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:142), ethics are considered to deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong,

proper or improper, good or bad. Resnik (1998, cited in Royce et al 2010:47) states that the researcher must act in a moral and responsible way, that she or he should conduct the research with care, be truthful in report findings and open to criticism and new ideas. In order to do that, the researcher conducted the interviews in such a way that they elicited cooperation, trust, openness and acceptance with participants as recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:384).

The following ethical issues were considered:

3.9.1 Permission

The researcher asked for permission from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to conduct the research because the study involved teachers and learners (see Appendix B).

3.9.2 Informed consent

Participants were informed about the study and also received a description on the intended use of data that was to be collected. The time required for participation and the role of the researcher as non-interfering and non-judgmental was explained. Each participant was asked to sign a consent form and parents of minors were asked to sign for their children.

3.9.3 Confidentiality

The researcher tried by all means to protect the confidentiality of the participants from other people in the study and from the general public. Participants were assured that the information that they provided would be treated as confidential.

3.9.4 Anonymity

Participants were asked to use code names and the location of the interviews was not divulged. The purpose was to ensure that they were not identifiable in the tape recorder and in print.

3.9.5 Harm to respondents

The researcher made sure that he avoided the humiliation of participants and that he protected their self-esteem from any harm that might lead to mistrust.

3.9.6 Ensuring privacy

The individual had a right to decide when, where, to whom, and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour were to be used (Royce et al, 2010:60). The participant's rights were not violated by the unauthorised use of one way mirrors, microphones and cameras.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the research methodology followed by the current study. In this respect, the research design has been explained. Sampling, together with instruments used, is given. The methods of data analysis and ethical issues have been outlined. The next chapter presents the analysis of the data collected and discusses the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to investigate the causes of learner dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South, Gauteng Province. This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected and discusses the findings of the study.

The data is presented under the objectives of the study which includes establishing the views of parents, principals, SGB chairpersons, learners and educators about the effects of teenage pregnancy on learner dropout, parental involvement on learner dropout, substance abuse on learner dropout and peer pressure on learner dropout.

4.2 TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND LEARNER DROPOUT

The following general themes or pre-determined descriptive categories have emerged from the interview schedule and are substantiated by verbal quotes from the interview transcripts to verify their authenticity and validity. The sub-themes were derived from the data after thorough reading of the interview transcripts.

4.2.1 The effect of teenage pregnancy on learner dropout

Principals, learners and parents in this study revealed that teenage pregnancy resulted in learner dropout. The pregnant learners experienced sickness, a change of body appearance and the stigmas associated with teenage pregnancy and, as a result, dropped out of school.

The following verbal quotes reflect the above sentiments:

The pregnant learners are stigmatised by the community, other learners and even teachers. As a result of this, they drop out of school (Parent participant 7).

Learners indeed do dropout because they begin to feel very inferior as their bodies change the shape and they receive a lot of unnecessary attention from other learners and educators (Principal participant 2).

Yes, learners do talk about you when you are pregnant and you are always not feeling well, that stigma lead to insecurity and that can force you to stay at home (Learner participant 5).

4.2.1.1 Reasons for pregnant and mothering learners dropping out of school

Some parents, SGB chairpersons, educators and learners indicated that the causes of pregnant and mothering teenagers dropping out of school are, among others, the pressure that goes with mothering and school work, they think they are too old for school, falling ill due to HIV/AIDS pandemic, breastfeeding, illnesses of the infants, cohabitation, child-headed families or that their parents force them into marriage for lobola.

The following verbal quotes support the above statements:

Pregnant learners normally go to stay at boy friend's house and behave like wives; you cannot be a child and a wife at the same time (SGB participant 3).

If pregnant learners have HIV/AIDS and infect their children with the virus, the infant will get sick as well as the mother after giving birth and [they] dropout of school for a year (Parent participant 5).

Teenage mothers dropout of school because they have to breastfeed their infants (Learner participant 9).

Another challenge is that some teachers are inhumane; they harass and scorn pregnant teenagers (Parent participant 7).

Some parents force their pregnant learners into marriage because they want lobola (dowry) (Parent participant 4).

Yes, pregnant learners think that now they are old because they are pregnant and have a right to do what they want including leaving school (Educator participant 3).

4.2.1.2 Daily attendance of pregnant learners and school dropout

Principals, SGB chairpersons, parents, educators and learners revealed that pregnant learners do not attend school regularly because they have appointments to go to clinics for antenatal care, they frequently get sick due to pregnancy and it makes them unwilling to do anything, including going to school.

The following verbal quotes concur with the issues raised above:

No, they are on and off due to sickness related to pregnancy (Principal participant 3).

No, because they go for treatment at the clinic on scheduled days for antenatal care (SGB participant 1).

These kids are not the same, some becomes very lazy when pregnant and going to school is something they begin to hate due to swing moods caused by pregnancy (Educator participant 3).

No, they are always sick, go to the clinic for checkups and hate school sometimes due to pregnancy (Parent participant 6).

We are inconsistent with school attendance; we go to sleep feeling well but wake up sick sometimes (Learner participant 2).

4.2.1.3 Pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers' level of support and school dropout

The parents, SGB chairpersons and learners revealed that the lack of support for pregnant teenage girls leads to new school uniforms as their bodies' change, feelings of insecurity, job seeking, cohabitation and eventually dropping out of school.

The following quotes support the above statements:

Lack of support from parents, family and school forces the mothering teenager to leave home and live at boyfriend's place or go to look for jobs to support the infant, obviously drop out of school (Parent participant 8).

Yes, pregnancy makes learners feel insecure and if [they are] not emotionally supported by teachers and parents; she will drop out of school (Learner participant 9).

The uniform and other clothes become small for pregnant learners and if [we are] not supported we definitely drop out (Learner participant 4).

Parents force their pregnant children to stay at home as a form of punishment for falling pregnant at teenage stage (SGB participant 1).

4.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND LEARNER DROPOUT

4.3.1 Family involvement in children's education and school dropout

The learners, educators, SGB chairpersons and principals in the study revealed that a lack of parental involvement and support in the child's education, such as going to school meetings and assisting learners with homework, causes learners to drop out. Learners become demotivated and discouraged, they do not finish school or they do badly academically and they do not attend school regularly.

The following verbal quotes support the above issues:

Insufficient educational support by parents demotivates and discourages learners to continue with school and [they] drop out (Learner participant 1).

Lack of parental involvement in the child's education such as not attending school meetings and assisting with home work (SGB participant 2).

Learners with parents who are not involved in their education perform badly academically and their school attendance becomes irregular (Principal participant 3).

Parents think that children are old when at high school particularly in grade 10 hence providing minimal academic support, eventually learners drop out (Educator participant 2).

The unsupportive attitude by parents demotivates learners and leads to negative attitude towards school, later drop out (Learner participant 7).

Some parents, principals, SGB chairpersons and learners indicated that learners with parents that are involved and care about their education would want to impress their parents and family members; they tend to avoid any behavioural conduct that can embarrass their parents, including dropping out of school. Parental involvement in school structures inspires learners to finish school.

The following verbal quotes support the above remarks:

It is good to have parents or family members in school structures. It inspires learners to stay longer and finish school (Learner participant 8).

Parental involvement brings discipline to the learner. The learner will avoid embarrassing the parents by staying absent and dropping out of school (Principal participant 3).

Where there is love, care, support and role models to look up to, the learner cannot drop out of school (Parent participant 6).

When parents are involved, learners will do well in their subjects and will not drop out of school because they want to impress their parents and family (SGB participant 1).

4.4 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND SCHOOL DROPOUT

4.4.1 Learner attendance and substance abuse

The principals, educators and learners in the study revealed that the attendance records of learners who use drugs are irregular because they are often intoxicated or seeking money, drugs and suppliers. They ultimately become addicted and drop out of school.

The following verbal quotes reflect the above sentiments:

Drug users do not attend school regularly, they roam around looking for money to buy drugs and will not go to school, later drop out (Learner participant 7).

They drop out because they are always on the street looking for drugs from friends and suppliers; they have no time for the books and school (Educator participant 1).

They do not think properly, their brain is intoxicated with drugs. They eventually become addicted and dropout of school (Principal participant 2).

Some parents, learners and SGB chairpersons also revealed that drug abusers may drop out of school permanently because they become unstable due to drug addictions, the stigma attached to drugs or they are expelled from school for bad behaviour. They also may steal to get money for drugs which eventually lead to their arrest, beatings, and hospitalisation or even to their death.

The following verbal quotes reflect the above sentiments:

Substance abusers steal and break houses to get money for drugs, when caught they die, hospitalised or get jailed, automatically drop out (SGB participant 2).

Learners can drop out of school permanently due to stigma and name calling by teachers, for an example....."ja nyaope" (Learner participant 5).

They permanently leave school because of addiction which leads to insanity (Learner participant 3).

Drug abusers get expelled from school due to misdemeanour and bad behaviour such as fighting with teachers and learners (Parent participant 7).

Some principals and SGB chairpersons revealed that learners dropout of school because they may start using drugs at the age of 13 and become addicted when they are at secondary school, particularly in grade 10. Drugs that cause school dropouts are firstly cigarettes and alcohol which lead to marijuana and nyaope because they are easily accessible, common and cheap.

The following verbal quotes support the above statements:

Learners start using drugs at 13 years and become addicted when at secondary particularly in grade 10, then drop out of school (Principal participant 2).

They drop out of school; these learners normally begin with cigarette and alcohol and then graduate to nyaope and marijuana (SGB participant 3).

The drugs of choice for substance abusers are cigarette, alcohol, marijuana and nyaope, since they are easily accessible, cheap and common (Principal participant 1).

Some parents, SGB chairpersons and learners felt that the use of marijuana by learners does not necessarily cause learner dropout and they indicated that they know individuals who use marijuana and who managed to get to tertiary institutions and are doing well in their lives. They also believed that it makes some learners very clever and achieve higher grades in their subjects.

The following quotes support the above sentiments:

I know people who became educated and are doing well in their lives and careers and are still smoking dagga even today (Parent participant 5).

Not really, some learners who uses marijuana becomes clever and excel in education and finish school (Learner participant 9).

There are many smoking adults who are prominent in society and very educated having started smoking marijuana whilst were still at school (SGB participant 3).

4.4.2 Effects of drug abuse on academic achievement and learner drop out

The parents, educators and learners revealed that drug abuse causes learner dropout since it affects the brain and derails academic achievement. Abusers are often absent from school or may be arrested or hospitalised due to sickness or injury. Even if they are attending school, they are not able to focus because most of them are hallucinating or intoxicated. Learners who use drugs should attend rehabilitation classes which may affect their education and can lead to school dropout.

The following verbal quotes support the above sentiments:

Drug users normally leave school to steal for drugs and get arrested which derails academic achievement (Parent participant 4).

Yes, they do drop out because education need sober and rational mind in order to face its demands (Educator participant 3).

They perform badly academically since intoxicated, they develop poor concentration span and eventually drop out of school (Principal participant 3).

I started hallucinating and had to go to the clinic and could not go to school because I also had to join rehabilitation classes (Learner participant 1).

4.5 PEER PRESSURE AND SCHOOL DROPOUT

4.5.1 Peer pressure and learner attendance

The learners, educators, SGB chairpersons, principals and parents in the study revealed that learners are influenced by their peers to be absent or leave school permanently. Learners with friends who are school dropouts are likely to drop out too especially those with friends who are anti-social and rejected by the community. This is more common in child-headed families and children who are struggling academically.

The following verbal quotes support the above sentiments:

Yes, they drop out due to friends influence especially if the friend is using drugs and the learner is scared of being bullied by the friend (Parent participant 5).

Learners do miss classes and stay absent because the friend have suggested that (Learner participant 6).

Fancy clothes and money that learners see in their friends make them to want that kind of lifestyle and join dropout peers (Learner participant 9).

Orphans and learners from child headed families are influenced by their peers to drop out of school since there is no guidance at home (Principal participant 2).

It is easy for the child to be influenced to stay absent even dropping out of school if he/she struggles academically (Educator participant 2).

Having anti-social peers absolutely makes a learner to drop out of school (Parent participant 9).

Most of them get influenced by friends if they come from families where there is not much value on education (Learner participant 6).

These learners have bad friends and they perform poorly at school, and then decide as friends to leave school (SGB participant 1).

Yes, learners drop out of school if they are rejected by peers (Learner participant 2).

Some principals and educators indicated that they believed that peers cannot influence each other to drop out of school. They said that some friends have good and supportive influences.

The following quotes support the above sentiments:

Not common, not all friends are bad, some like to push their friends to do well in school and not to be like them if they have dropped out (Principal participant 3).

No, children choose friends who behave like them, so they cannot drop out due to positive influence they receive from peers (Educator participant 2).

4.5.2 Peer relationships and school drop out

Parents, SGB chairpersons and learners indicated that learners with school-loving peers do well at school and do not drop out, but those that are rejected and do not get along with other learners may not finish school. Some develop stress symptoms and anxiety due to failure to fit into a certain group of learners which leads to dropping out.

The following verbal quotes support the above issues:

Of course, having a loving friend is very encouraging and motivational because learners share common dream about the future and compete with each other (Learner participant 7).

Yes, learners can drop out of school due to rejection by other learners (Parent participant 8).

Yes, definitely one needs to belong and be part of a group and if not accepted that can lead to drop out (Learner participant 3).

A certain group of teenagers influences, put pressure and anxiety to other children to leave school who cannot afford expensive clothes (SGB participant 2).

4.6 OTHER CAUSES OF LEARNER DROPOUT

SGB chairpersons, educators, parents, principals and learners stated that school dropout is also caused by other factors such as bullying, poverty, lack of recreational facilities, being an orphan or child-headed families, parent's labour migration, grade repetition and lack of role models.

The following quotes support the above statement:

School dropout emanates from poverty and being an orphan (Principal participant 1).

Learners drop out of school if bullied by other learners (Educator participant 3).

Lack of recreational facilities in black communities leads to school dropout (Educator participant 2).

Bad role models have negative influence on school completion (Parent participant 4).

Learners drop out of school because of grade repetition (Learner participant 6).

The main challenge is child headed families, parents staying at work and [who] come home once a month (SGB participant 2).

Dropping out of school is due to poverty and high rate of unemployment (Learner participant 9).

4.7 STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME LEARNER DROPOUT

4.7.1 Prevention of teenage pregnancy

The parents, principals, SGB chairpersons, educators and learners highlighted the following factors to overcome learner drop out due to pregnancy: collaboration amongst all educational stakeholders, revival of sport and cultural activities, school child care centres, abstinence programs, sex education and the use of contraceptives such as condoms, pills and injectables.

The following verbal quotes reflect the above ideas:

The school should reintroduce the sporting Wednesdays and other extra curriculum activities such as choral music, soccer etc (Parent participant 5).

Each school must develop a child care in its premises to ensure that mothering learners come to school every day and to avoid dropping out (Learner participant 2).

There should be sex education in the school curriculum (Parent participant 7).

Departments of Health and Education should supply secondary schools with condoms, pills and injectables (Principal participant 3).

Communities and schools should speak openly to learners about sexuality and the consequences of teenage pregnancy (SGB participant 2).

Learners need to be taught the importance of abstinence (Educator participant 1).

4.7.2 How to improve parental involvement in school

The SGB chairpersons, educators, principals and learners in the study indicated that communication between parents, learners and teachers should be regular through continuous meetings and other forms of communication such as SMSs, letters, signing of home work, parents meetings and advocacy for parental involvement in homework programmes.

The following verbal quotes reflect the above issues:

Parents need to attend meetings because that's where information with regard to learner performance is discussed (SGB participant 1).

Communication is important to address learner barriers and the good performance of the child as well as developments in education (Principal participant 2).

Regular communication between schools and parents through SMS, media, letters and regular parents reduces drop out (Principal participant 1).

There should be parental involvement advocacy in schools (Educator participant 1).

Parents ought to help and sign learner homework (Learner participant 8).

4.7.3 Management of drug abuse in schools

SGB chairpersons, educators and learners felt that it was proper to suspend a child who uses drugs as a corrective measure but disagreed with expulsion because they felt that this would escalate crime. They suggested rehabilitation as an option to help these children.

The following verbal quotes support the above sentiments:

No, they should not be expelled but should be helped like taking them to rehabilitation centre and still receive education there (Learner participant 2).

No, it is not right to expel but they can be suspended maybe they can realise that drugs are destroying their education and life (SGB participant 3).

Drug users will commit crime if expelled hence schools should find ways to rehabilitate the child (Educator participant 2).

A few learners, parents and principals indicated that they believe that substance abusers should be separated from other learners at school because they misbehave, are noisy and can influence other learners to take drugs.

The following verbal quotes support the above sentiments:

Drug users make a lot of noise and behave badly (Learner participant 4).

Schools must bring health personnel to do drug advocacy for the entire school and community (Principal participant 2).

One rotten potato spoils the whole bag; they should have their own class because they can influence other learners to use drugs (Parent participant 3).

Some educators, parents, principals and learners felt that drug abusers should be in one class but acknowledged that is against the law in public schools so as to avoid discrimination and segregation. Segregation, they felt, might lead to an abuse of power

that can be used by drug dealers. In addition, it is felt that they learn good behaviour by being exposed to their classmates.

The following verbal quotes support the above issues:

It is against the law to discriminate and segregate learners (Learner participant 8).

There are no rules that say learners should be separated based on the use of drugs and bad behaviour (Principal participant 1).

If separated substance abusers will see themselves as kings and victors even drug dealers will use them to influence the whole school (Parent participant 6).

Drug users can learn good behaviour from other classmates (Educator participant 3).

Most educators, principals, parents, learners and SGB chairpersons indicated that drug abuse in schools can also be managed by inviting former drug addicts to speak to learners about drug use and its consequences, by searching of all learners at the school gates every morning, by resuscitating extra-mural activities, by collaborations between schools, the community and the police, by drugs advocacy programmes and by the establishment of peer educators to identify drug users and keep registers and drug detectors.

The following verbal quotes reflect the above issues:

Schools should invite former drug addicts to speak to learners about the dangers of using drugs and its consequences (Parent participant 9).

Learners should be searched at the gate every morning when they come to school (Learner participant 6).

Schools should engage on drugs advocacy programmes (Educator participant 1).

Involve all learners in extra-mural activities to shift their mindset from drugs through community and school collaborations (Principal participant 3).

Establish community, police and schools partnerships through the police visibility and random searches of learners at schools and on the street (Educator participant 2).

Establish "Peer Educators" whereby learners themselves identify the substance abusers (Educator participant 3).

The Department of Basic Education should supplier schools with drug detector machines (SGB participant 1).

4.7.4 Prevention of peer pressure influence on school dropout

The educators and parents indicated that schools should involve the community and other stakeholders in addressing the influence of peer pressure in the school dropout phenomenon; they should involve all learners in extra-mural activities and establish school counsellors for at-risk of dropout learners.

The following verbal quotes support the above issues:

There should be all community involvement in addressing peer pressure (Parent participant 8).

Involve children in extra-mural activities such as isicathamiya, choral choirs and all sporting codes (Parent participant 4).

Schools ought to establish school counselors to help children who are about to drop out of school due to bad peers (Educator participant 3).

4.8 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.8.1 Sub-research question 1: To what extent does teenage pregnancy contribute to learner dropout?

The study revealed that teenage pregnancy resulted in learner dropout. These findings are confirmed by Mngoma (2010) cited in Ramulumo and Pitsoe (2013:756), Kyei (2012:134), UNICEF (2007:2), Ameida, Aquino and de Barros (2006:1400), Alike and Egbochuku (2009:135), Chen (2008:8), Mchunu, Peltzer, Tutshana and Seutlwadi (2012:246), Grant and Hallman (2006:2), Brooks-Gunn, Furstenburg and Guo (1993:289), Fobih (1987:231), Eloundou-Enyegue (2004:511), UNICEF (2008:21) and Klepinger, Lundberg and Plotnick (1995:27), who maintains that teenage pregnancy is a risk factor for dropping out of school. Similar findings were established by Mahlomaholo (2011:312) who revealed that teenage pregnancy caused girls to leave school early in North West Province, South Africa. Martelelo et al, (2008:) also discovered that coloured women in South Africa were likely to drop out of school after becoming pregnant. Karra and Lee (2012:1) also postulated that most teen mothers in the Western Cape do not graduate or finish high school. The study by Dekezela-Tsomo (2012:81) contends that children drop out of school in King Williams Town as a result of pregnancy. Malahlela and Chireshe (2013:137) also maintain that teenage pregnancy has a negative or detrimental effect on school attendance. Related findings were also established by “The Centre for Studies of Adolescence (CSA)” in Kenya. The study indicated that there was a high dropout rate among girls especially in upper primary and secondary levels in certain parts of Kenya (CSA, 2008:8). Makundi (2010:8) and Bangser (2010:3), contends that pregnancy was one of the major reasons for school dropout among teenage girls in Mtwara region, Tanzania.

According to the study conducted by Social Surveys Africa (2010:1), care givers and youths out of school identified pregnancy as number one reason for the dropping out of female learners. Meekers and Ahmed (1999:196) revealed that, in Botswana, more

girls go to school than boys but many girls dropout due to pregnancy in secondary schools.

It emerged from the study that pregnant learners experience sickness, changes of body appearance and stigmas associated with the pregnancy and, as a result, they drop out of school. The study findings affirm Achoka, Judith, Sarah, Njeru, Frida and Muthoni (2012:887), who revealed that Kenyan girls leave school every year due to pregnancy, stigmatization and discrimination by teachers, parents, schoolmates and the society. Sodi (2009:21) confirm that physical health of teenage mothers after they have given birth makes them to not want to go back to school. Similarly, Kost et, al (2010) cited in Njambatwa (2013:10) contends that there is a strong link between teenage pregnancy and dropout as a result of the stigma that is associated with early parenting, particularly if the pregnant teenager is isolated by peers and lack of family support. Mpanza (2012:14) maintains that some educators stigmatize pregnant learners and still believe that they should leave school.

The study revealed that teenage mothers lack emotional and physical support from their parents, the father of the child and the school and that compels them to drop out. The findings on lack of emotional and physical support confirms Chigona and Rajendra (2007:1) who revealed that teenage mothers in Cape Town received insufficient physical and emotional support and consequently many of them dropped out of school or did not succeed academically. Many teen mothers do not succeed with schooling due to lack of support to avoid disruptions to school attendance (Chigona & Chetty, 2008:261). In the same breathe Willan (2013:37) revealed that poor financial situation of teen mothers serve as the yard stick in dertemining whether the young mother can continue with schooling since she will need money to pay care givers and also to take care of the child's other needs. On the contrary, Willan (2013:1), Bali and Maluli (2014:82), indicated that pregnant girls who get family support are psychologically prepared to continue with school.

The study revealed that it was very difficult for teenage mothers to find a balance between parenting and schooling. This confirms the studies by Kaufman et al (2001:158) and Meekers and Ahmed (1999:195) that found that child bearing for teenage girls was often associated with an end to schooling because returning to school after giving birth was complicated by combining the roles of both learner and parent. The study by Chalasani (2012:2) affirms that pregnant learners do not attend school regularly since they miss one or two school terms and was less likely to return to school than their counterparts who drop out for other reasons.

The present study revealed that pregnant and mothering teenagers were very eager to go back to school to finish their studies after giving birth. This was confirmed by Macleod and Tracey (2009: iii) who stated that between a third and a half of pregnant learners considered returning to school after the birth of their children. Grant and Hallman (2008) as cited in Willan (2013:37) postulated that girls who conceive or give birth when doing grade 12 tend to complete schooling, suggesting that they recognize the importance of completing secondary education at this stage.

4.8.2 Sub-research question 2: How does parental involvement in education affect learner dropout?

This study revealed that the lack of parental involvement in the education of children causes' school dropout in South Africa as confirmed by Masitsa (2006:175) and Mmotlane, Winnaar and Wa Kivilu (2009), as cited in Mbajiorgu, Maake, Kayoka and Masafu (2012:3). The study by Baine and Mwamwennda (1994:120) revealed that parental support in the rural areas of South Africa was minimal because education, for these people, was viewed as irrelevant during the apartheid regime and contributed to learners dropping out of school. The study conducted by the National Education Association (NEA) in 2008 cited parent-family-community involvement as key to addressing the learner dropout crises in America and noted that strong school-family-community partnerships foster higher educational aspirations and more motivated students.

Makwinja-Morara (2007) as cited in Munsaka (2009:73) revealed that parents of dropouts showed little involvement in the academic and/or non-academic affairs of their children while the study by Rumberger (1995, as cited in Lamb et al, 2011:285) and supported by Janosz et al, (2000:184) established that learners with parents who were involved in their schooling, were less likely to drop out of school. Singh, Mobokodi and Msila (2004) cited in Felixin, Dornbrock and Scheckle (2008:100) revealed that parent's involvement in education was crucial. Similarly, Carter (2002:1) affirms the importance of parents and family assistance, particularly with homework. Rumberger et al, (1990:283) revealed that dropout learners were more likely to come from families in which they have to make decisions because their parents were less involved in their education and Entwisle and Hayduk (1988:158) state that parental involvement in the education of their children at an early stage of their education helps them to perform better and keeps them in school.

This study also revealed that the active involvement of family members in the education of a child and in school activities provides stability in the learner's education hence the child becomes motivated by their presence and that manifests in better behaviour (Eglin, 1993:11). Similar sentiments were shared by Nojaja (2009:6) who suggested that positive parent involvement, co-operation and partnership with schools were a prerequisite of effective schooling. The failure of parents to attend parents' meetings and to help their children with homework was a concern. Hendricks (2007:9) argued that teachers complain that few parents attend meetings, get involved in school matters or check their children's homework. Khajehpour and Ghazvini (2011:1208) revealed that when parents assist learners with homework, attend parent's class meetings and volunteering; learner performance enhances and that keep the child in school. Hess and Copeland (2001:402) affirm that interaction between the family and the learner was a prediction for school completion.

The present study also revealed that unsupportive attitude of parents towards education causes school dropout. This is confirmed by Fobih (1987:231), Hale (2004:3),

Osiki (2003:276) and Ensminger and Slusarcick (1992:97) who all agree that dropping out of school is associated with the parents' values and attitudes towards education. Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013:34) contend that girls enrolment rate is too low and dropout rates is very high in the rural areas of Nigeria because of traditional systems and belief pattern of gender disparity and high incidence of early marriage of young girls based on value system. Buchmann (2000:1371) maintains that parents in Kenya prefer to send boys rather than girls to school to ascertain economic security in the future

4.8.3 Sub-research question 3: To what extent does substance abuse contribute to learner dropout?

The study revealed that substance abuse was one of the causes of school dropout. Wegner (2011:21) affirms that substance abuse in South Africa lead to school dropout. These findings are consistent with the views of Franklin (1992:341), Chavez et al (1989:603), Janosz et al, (2000:173) and Kogan et al (2005:36) who cite substance abuse as a prospective predictor of school dropouts. Kaplan and Liu (1994), as cited in DuPont et al, (2013:19) contend that drug users were three times likely to drop out of school than non users but their study did not indicate drug use as a sufficient condition for dropping out.

The National Survey on Drugs and Health (2003:1), reported that, in 2002, approximately 3.2 million Americans aged 18 to 24 were considered to be dropouts due to substance abuse. Studies by NSDUH (2003:2) and Rumberger and Sun (2008:1) also reported that there is a high rate of dropouts amongst learners who abuse substances while Garnier et al (1997:414) explained that dropping out of school was a multiply-determined process with adolescent drug use being one of the predictors.

This study also revealed that learners who use drugs do not perform well academically and may eventually drop out of school. These findings are related to McCaffrey et al, (2010:1) observation that substance abuse impaires memory, poor school motivation and poor school results which ultimately leads to school dropout. The Medical

Research Council (2009:1) disclosed that it found a strong association between binge drinking, school dropout and low academic aspirations among Cape Town high school learners and McCluskey et al (2002:933) revealed that the use of drugs by adolescents can impair cognitive development and functioning that, as a result, can lead to dropping out of school.

This study also revealed that the daily attendance of learners who use drugs was irregular and ultimately may lead to them dropping out of school. An early study by Parry and Phiddemann (2012:2) revealed that the use of methamphetamine by high school learners in Cape Town led to children absenteeism and dropping out of school.

The findings of this study revealed that the use of drugs such as nyaope and alcohol served as a predictor of school dropouts. These findings were also established by Yamada et al (1996:77) who explained that the consumption of alcohol, liquor, wine and the use of marijuana significantly reduces the possibility of high school completion. Brooks-Gunn et al (1993: 289), Townsend et al (2007:238), Wichstrom (1998:413), Mensch and Kandel (1988:111), Ellickson et al (as cited in McCluskey et al (2002:936)), Townsend et al (2008:22) and Swain et al (1997:51) also found a consistent relationship between dropping out of school and substance abuse.

It also emerged from this study that the use of cigarettes by learners was also a predictor for school dropouts. The study discovered that learners who started smoking cigarettes early in life graduated to more serious drugs such as nyaope, alcohol and marijuana before dropping out of school. Ellickson et al (1998:357) maintains that frequent use of cigarettes is a prediction for high school dropouts. These findings confirm those of Science Daily (2010) which reported that the University Of California Davis School Of Medicine found that, among learners who engaged in substance abuse including alcohol and other drugs, teens who smoked cigarettes were more at risk of dropping out of school in America. The findings of the study by Mensch and Kandel

(1988:95) also revealed that an early initiation to cigarettes, marijuana and illicit drugs increases the chances of premature school leaving.

4.8.4 Sub-research question 4: How does peer pressure influence learner dropout?

The present study revealed that peer pressure influences learner dropout. These findings are confirmed by Ellenbogen and Chamberland (1997:355) who reported that, in Canada, students who were on the verge of dropping out were found to have had friends who were dropouts. The fact that peer pressure influenced learner dropout was confirmed by Makwinja-Morara (2007) as cited in Munsaka (2009:66) in Botswana and Fobih (1987:231) in Great Accra region in Ghana. Peer pressure can be a significant factor in the school dropout situation (Janosz et al, 1997 as cited in Brown, 2004:32). Peer pressure causes half of the dropouts from schools (Masitsa, 2006:172) and Beauvais et al (1996:292); Battin-Pearson et al (2000:579); Jordan, Lara and McPartland (1996:62), Osiki (2003:276); Janosz et al (1997:752) and South, Baumer and Lutz(2003:30) all confirm that peers cluster together and encourage one another to support the idea of dropping out of school. On the contrary, this study also revealed that learners with loving peers do not drop out of school. Lagana (2004:213) concurs that school loving peers motivate young people to stay in school. Mukama (2005:46) maintains that learners' attitudes towards school and their believe in teachers influence them towards school than their peers.

The study also revealed that learners who are rejected by their peers are at risk of not finishing school. These findings are confirmed by Voelkl (1997:313), Smyth and Hattam (2001:410), Valerie and Burkam (2003:363), Hupfeld (2010:1), Hale (2004:3), Barclay and Doll (2001:366) and French and Conrad (2001:227) who maintained that students who are rejected by their peers do not look forward to going to school; they disengage themselves from school and do not get involved in school-based social activities.

The study also revealed that peers influence each other to be absent from school. Their school attendance is irregular and eventually they drop out of school. These

findings are confirmed by Dizon-Luna (2013:85), and Lee and Miu-Ling (2003:107) who postulated that most learners dropout of school because their peers have suggested it. Dieltiens and Meny-Gilbert (2009:48) maintain that the need for belonging and to fit in with the peer group may cause stress and anxiety for learners which affects participation in class or attendance at school.

4.8.5 Other causes of learner dropout

This study revealed that, in South Africa, poverty is one of the causes of school dropout. This is confirmed by Chavez et al (1989:595), Ensminger and Slusarcick (1992:95), Dieltien and Meny-Giberts (2008/2009:46) and Cairns et al (1989:437) who maintained that the socio-economic status of learners was the determining factor for school dropout.

It also emerged from the study that grade retention was one of the causes of learner dropout. This is confirmed by Rumberger and Lim (2008:2) and Rumberger (2012:583) and Mahlomoholo (2011:12) who revealed that grade retention was the single most affective predictor of learner dropout.

The study findings revealed that bullying was one of the causes of learner dropout. Cornell, Gregory, Huang and Fan (2012:1) postulated that the prevalence of teasing and bullying was a predictor of high school dropout. These findings are confirmed by the Office of the Education Ombudsman's Special Report (2008:1) that showed that victims of bullying are frequently absent or drop out of school early and, in Cape Town, girls were more likely to drop out of school for this reason (Townsend et al, 2008:21).

4.8.6 Strategies to overcome learner dropout in schools

4.8.6.1 Teenage pregnancy and learner dropout

Participants in this study suggested that there should be programs to educate teenagers on the importance of abstinence and the use of contraceptives such as condoms, injectables and pills. The use of prophylactics can reduce the incidence of

pregnancy among adolescent girls (Chalasanani et al, 2013:3) but Solomon-Fear (2013:8) recommended that schools and communities develop abstinence programs.

It was also suggested that it was important for parents to talk to their children about sexuality openly (Meyers, 2004:2). The Center for Mental Health in Schools (2008) established that teenage pregnancy can be reduced by schools and community partnerships that promote sex education and encourage teenagers to abstain from sex.

It was also found from the present study that schools should establish child care facilities on their premises as recommended by the United Nations (2010:4).

Participants also suggested that schools should encourage sports and other extramural activities in order to keep learners from deviant behaviours such as sex and substance abuse. Brown and Evans (2002:49) maintain that learners who participated in extracurricular activities had a greater level of school connectivity and McNeal Jr (1995) confirms that participation in certain extramural curricular activities significantly reduces a student's likelihood of dropping out of school.

4.8.6.2 Parental involvement in education and school dropout

It was suggested from the present study that parental and community involvement in the school and education of the child motivate and keep the child at school. These recommendations are made by the study that was conducted by National Education Association (NEA) in (2008) that cited parent-family-community involvement as a key to addressing learner dropout crises in America and noted that strong school-family-community partnerships foster higher educational aspirations and more motivated students. Reglin (1993:11) explained that the active involvement of family members in the educational activities of students, provide stability and consistency of expectations and behaviours which a school cannot offer. The study by Rumberger (1995, as cited in Lamb et al, 2011:285) revealed that learners with parents who are involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school as did Rumberger (1995:616) who cited

parental academic support, supervision and expectations for their children as having an impact on the school dropout rate. Entwisle and Hayduk, 1988:158) and Janosz et al (1997) maintain that parental involvement in the education of the child at an early stage helps the child to perform better and improves learner attendance.

It was suggested from the present study that parents ought to help learners with homework and sign it (Dwyer & Hecht, 1992:275). It was also suggested from the present study that communication between the school, the learners and the parents reduces school dropout and this is confirmed by Stone (2006:518) who maintains that communication between the parent, the child and the school about the learner's education reduces learner dropout. Fall and Roberts (2012:796) explain that, when parents frequently speak to their children about school related matters, the children develop a positive perception about the school, become engaged and motivated to stay at school. Parents who talk to their children about, or become involved in, their education conveys a message to the children about the importance of schooling and education (McNeal, 1999:121). Flay (2000:865) also said that parents' model behaviour, good attitude and clear communication of the expectations to their children, is a major influence on adolescents' behaviour.

It was also suggested that regular forms of communication, such as schools writing letters to parents, get parents involved in the education of their children (Erlendsdo'ttir, 2010:58). School and community support networks were regarded as very important in addressing learner dropouts. Terrion (2006:160) said that "The Families and Schools Together" (F&ST) models enhance family functioning by strengthening the parent-child relationship, reduce school failure by improving the child's behaviour and the families' affiliation with the school, prevent substance abuse through increasing awareness and access to resources and reduce family stress by developing an ongoing support network whereby schools serve as centres to develop school and community relationships and associations. Gasper De Matos et al

(2008:349) indicated that preventive intervention should be implemented at school, family and community levelsto lower school dropout rates.

4.8.6.3 Substance abuse and learner dropout

Participants in the present study suggested that schools ought to develop programmes intended to address substance abuse in schools. Hays and Ellickson (1996:291) confirm that schools should identify and develop programs aimed at both deviance and drug use to be delivered by peer leaders (Gottfredson& Wilson, 2003:27).

It was also suggested that learners need to be taught drug resistance skills. This is confirmed by Botvin (2000:887) and Adelman and Tailor (2003:337) who maintain that teachers should teach learners drug resistance skills, norm setting and general social skills.

Participants in the study suggested that collaborations among stakeholders can help to address drug abuse in schools. The findings of stakeholder collaborations are confirmed by the United Nations (2004:13) who suggested that drug prevention programmes need co-operation between staff, students, parents, related professionals, agencies and the police.

It was also suggested that there should be career guidance interventions, particularly for drug abusers. Chen (2008:10) suggests that schools should establish career guidance interventions that combine career education, guidance, counselling and other academic and personal guidance strategies that help to retain at-risk students, enhancing their future career wellbeing. Parry (1998:21) postulated that schools need to collaborate with drugs and substance abuse formations such as Drug Wise Counsellors and Narcotics Anonymous (NA). Aloise-Young et al (2002:497) cited increase awareness of educational attainment as significant to encourage adolescents to cease smoking.

4.8.6.4 Peer pressure and learner dropout

It was suggested in the present study that schools should involve other stakeholders (parents, community and social workers) in addressing learner dropout. Stakeholder involvement is confirmed by Chen (2008:14) who postulated that a joint and triadic reciprocal effort between the school, family, and students provides an optimal context for academic, career growth and positive change for at-risk students. The Chen findings also support earlier findings by Fobh (1987:239) who stated that school social workers and Life Orientation educators should work in cooperation with parents and teachers to identify and counsel potential dropouts.

It was also suggested that the involvement of learners in sports and art and cultural activities helps to keep them away from bad influences and focus on school. Mahoney and Cairns (1997, as cited in Conrad, 2001:240) established that involvement in extracurricular activities decreased the likelihood that at-risk students would drop out of school.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed data presentation and analysis. The discussion of findings was also presented. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to investigate the causes of learner dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South. This chapter summarises the findings of the study, provides conclusions about the causes of learner dropouts and makes recommendations on how to deal with or to prevent learner dropout.

5.2 SUMMARY

The findings of this study revealed that teenage pregnancy, lack of parental involvement in the education of the learner, substance abuse and peer pressure were some of the causes of the learner dropout phenomenon. The following causes of learner dropout emerged from the participants' perceptions:

5.2.1 The effect of teenage pregnancy on learner dropout

Teenage pregnancy leads to school dropout. Learners, SGB chairpersons, parents, educators and principals revealed that pregnant learners experience sickness, change of body appearance and stigma associated with the pregnancy and, as a result, dropped out of school.

Participants indicated that the causes of pregnant and mothering teenagers dropping out of school, among other reasons, to be the pressure that goes with coping with mothering and school work, insufficient social grants, thinking that they are too old for school, falling ill due to HIV/AIDS pandemic, breastfeeding, illness of the infants, looking for jobs, parents forcing them to marry for lobola, living with boyfriends and child headed families.

Participants also revealed that pregnant learners do not attend school regularly because they had appointments to go to clinics for antenatal care, and frequently got sick due to pregnancy and, among other reasons; participants revealed that lack of support for pregnant teenage girls led to them becoming school dropouts.

5.2.2 Poor parental involvement in children's education

Learners dropped out of school because of lack of parental involvement. It emerged from the study that learners become demotivated and discouraged if there is a lack of parental involvement. It was also revealed in this study that learners perform badly academically, fail to attend school regularly and ultimately drop out due to a lack of parental support such as going to school meetings and assisting learners with homework.

5.2.3 Effects of substance abuse and learner dropout

Substance abuse was revealed as one of the causes of learner dropout. The participants revealed that daily attendance of learners who use drugs was irregular because they are often intoxicated, seeking money to buy drugs or looking for drugs from friends and suppliers. Ultimately, they become addicted to drugs or alcohol and drop out of school permanently. The study indicated that substance abusers dropped out of school because they become unstable due to drug addiction, expelled from school for bad conduct, incarcerated or even murdered.

It also emerged from the study that learners drop out of school because they start using drugs at the age of 13 and become addicted when at secondary school particularly in grade 10. Participants revealed that learners' drugs of choice were firstly, cigarettes and alcohol, and then they graduated to nyaope and marijuana because they are easily accessible and cheap drugs.

5.2.4 Peer relationships and school dropout

Peer pressure was seen as the other cause of learner dropout. The participants in the study revealed that learners are influenced by their peers to be absent and eventually leave school permanently. These learners want to please their friends by not going to school, especially those with friends who are anti-social and rejected by the community. This is more common among child-headed families as well as children who are struggling academically.

Participants also revealed that learners with school loving peers do well at school and do not drop out, but those who are rejected and do not get along with other learners, do not finish school. Some learners develop stress symptoms and anxiety due to a failure to fit into their peer group and ultimately dropout.

5.2.5 Other causes

The study also revealed that learner dropout was also caused by bullying, poverty, lack of recreational facilities, being an orphan or child-headed families, parents' working away from home, grade repetition and a lack of role models.

5.2.6 Strategies to overcome learner dropout

The following strategies were raised:

5.2.6.1 Prevention of teenage pregnancy

The participants highlighted the need to prevent teenage pregnancy. The teenage pregnancy could be reduced through a revival of sport and cultural activities, child care centres at schools, abstinence programs, sex education and the use of contraceptives such as condoms, pills and injectables.

5.2.6.2 Improving parental involvement in secondary schools

The study revealed that parents should be more involved in the education of their children. Communication was seen as key in parental involvement. The participants indicated that communication between parents, learners and teachers should be regular through continuous meetings and other forms of communication such as SMSs, letters, signing of homework, parents meetings at the schools and advocacy for parental involvement in homework programmes.

5.2.6.3 Management of drug abuse in schools

Participants felt that it was proper to refer substance abusers to rehabilitation centres and also to invite former drug addicts to speak to learners about drug use and its

consequences, searching of learners at the school gate every day in the morning, resuscitation of extra-mural activities, collaborations between schools, the community and the police, drugs advocacy programmes, the establishment of peer educators to identify drug users and keeping of registers and the introduction of drug detectors.

5.2.6.4 Prevention of peer pressure influence on school dropout

The participants indicated that schools should involve the community and other stakeholders in addressing the influence of peer pressure to curb the school dropout phenomenon, involve all learners in extra-mural activities, and establish school counsellors for at-risk dropout learners.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are drawn from the findings of this study:

5.3.1 Causes of learner dropout

Teenage pregnancy has a detrimental effect to the education and the future plans of pregnant learners or teenage mothers. This is because teenage mothers do not attend school regularly and they sometimes drop out school since they lack support and attend clinics for antenatal care. Some learners get sick due to pregnancy, change of body appearance, stigmatization, and failure to balance between school work and motherhood. Consequently, that has a negative effect on school completion.

Educators, parents and learners indicated in the study that lack of parental involvement in the education of their children, for instance, failing to assist learners with school work or homeworks and failing to attend parents meetings demotivates learners which leads to poor academic performance, irregular school attendance and ultimately school dropout.

It was revealed in this study that substance abuse such as alcohol; drugs, cigarettes, nyaope and marijuana have a negative effect on school completion. Learners who use drugs are often absent or intoxicated; sometimes expelled from school for bad

conduct; they get injured or incarcerated, subsequently failing to regularly attend school and drop out.

Educators, learners and parents in the study reported that learners who fail to fit into their peer group or rejected by their peers drop out of school. Some learners drop out in order to please their friends or their friends have suggested that to them.

5.3.2 Strategies to overcome learner dropout in schools

There are various ways of reducing or preventing learner dropout as suggested by parents, learners, SGBs, principals and educators. These include, among others, programs to educate teenagers on the importance of abstinence and the use of contraceptives such as condoms, injectables and pills. Parents ought to talk to children about sexuality openly and secondary schools should have day care facilities on the premises.

Participants also suggested that schools should activate sports and other extra-mural activities, foster collaboration between parents, communities and schools in addressing learner dropout, homework should be signed by parents and schools should establish open communication between schools, learners and parents through newsletters and SMSs. School stakeholders ought to develop programmes intended to address substance abuse in schools such as teaching learners drug resistance skills and career guidance interventions.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings that emerged from this study:

5.4.1 Teenage pregnancy and learner dropout

- Schools should put more efforts on abstinence programs, sex education and the use of contraceptives such as condoms, pills and injectables.

- Department of Health should assign mobile clinics to schools on certain days once per week to educate learners about the effects of teenage pregnancy.
- Secondary schools should have permanent daycare centres.
- National government should provide incentives such as free education at tertiary level to learners who complete basic education level/matric without becoming pregnant or becoming young parents.
- Educators, parents and learners should refrain from name calling and stigmatising pregnant learners.
- Educators should also be equipped with the skills to emotionally support pregnant learners on pre- and post-natal trauma, especially on how to deal with the balance between mothering and schooling.
- Educators should also be trained how to help children with applications for social grants in order to maintain regular attendance of pregnant learners.

5.4.2 Parental involvement in the education and learner dropout

- It may be regarded as a criminal offence when parents fail to support and be involved in their children's education.
- Parents should be constantly invited to grade meetings every month to interact with educators regarding the child's attendance, performance and the risk of school dropout.
- Schools should provide child care facilities during parents meetings to ensure maximum attendance and involvement of all parents including mothers with small children as suggested by Lemmer (2007:223). Parents will be motivated to attend knowing that their children will be properly looked after.

5.4.3 Substance abuse and learner dropout

- Schools should work with local police stations, patrollers and community policing forums to do random searches for drugs and other illegal substances and weapons at schools.

- There should be vibrant extra-mural activities in schools and communities to prevent learners from doing drugs.
- Educators should take part in training on managing drug abuse and discipline.
- Schools should involve former drug addicts to motivate learners and discourage the use of drugs. Schools should also be equipped with drugs detector instruments.
- Rehabilitation centres ought to be accessible to schools for referral purposes.
- Communities should be more involved in the education of their children to minimise the learners' contact with drug abusers and other dropouts, to prevent the reckless conduct of learners, to prevent pregnancy and eventual school dropout.
- Community members who are good role models should become active members of the school and society to discourage negative peer pressure influence on school attendance and dropout, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy.

5.4.4 Recommendations for further research

Further research on the causes of learner dropout should be conducted to determine the underlying causes of learner dropout as perceived by the learners who have dropped out of school. The present study was limited to three schools, each represented by one principal, one educator, one SGB, three learners and three parents to make twenty seven participants in Johannesburg South, Gauteng Province. It may be necessary to carry out wider research in Gauteng Province and South Africa in general since this is a multifaceted phenomenon.

REFERENCES

- Achoka, JS, & Njeru, FM. (2012). De-Stigmatizing Teenage Motherhood: Towards Achievement of Universal Basic Education in Kenya. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 3 (6):887-892.
- Agus, J. (2010). *High schools in the United States: National High Schools Center*. http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/HSInTheUS_1210.pdf. Retrieved 21/11/2013.
- Akyeampong, K, Hunt, F, Sabates, R & Westbrook, J. (2010). School dropout: Patterns, causes, changes and policies. Centre for International Education School of Education and Social Work, University of Sussex.
- Alexander, KL, Entwisle, DH & Carrie, S. (1997). From first grade forward: Early foundation of high school dropout. *Sociology of Education* 70(2):87–107.
- Alika, IH, & Egbochuku, EO. (2009). Dropout from School among Girls in EDO State: Implications for Counselling. *EDO Journal of Counselling* 2 (2):135-141.
- Allen, JP, Porter, MR, McFarland, FC, March, P & McElhany, KB. (2005). The two faces of adolescents' success with peers: Adolescent popularity, social adaptation, and Deviant behavior. *Child development* 76(3):747–760.
- Almeida, MC, Aquino, EML, & de Barros, P. (2006). School trajectory and teenage pregnancy in three Brazilian State Capitals. *Cad Saude Publica, Rio de Janeiro* 22 (7):1397-1409.
- Aloise-Young, PA, Cruickshank, C & Chavez, EL. (2002). Cigarette smoking and perceived health in school dropouts: A comparison of Mexican American and non-Hispanic white adolescents. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology* 27(6):497–507.
- American Psychological Association Center.(1996). www.apa.org. Retrieved 14/08/2012.
- Babbie, E. (2004). *The Practice of Social Research*. 10th edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth.

- Bailey, CA. (2007). *A Guide to Qualitative field Research*. 4th edition. California: Pine Forge Press.
- Bailey, KD. (1994). *Methods of Social Research*. 4th edition. New York: The Free Press.
- Baine, D & Mwamwenda, T. (1994). Education in South Africa: Current conditions and Future direction. *International review of education* 40(2):113–134.
- Bali, T & Maluli, F. (2014). Exploring Experiences of pregnant and mothering Secondary school students in Tanzania. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 4 (1):80-88.
- Bangser, M. (2010). "Falling Through the Cracks" Adolescent Girls in Tanzania: Insights from Mtwara. USAID/Tanzania. www.svri.org/adol.pdf. Retrieved 20/08/2014
- Barclay, JR & Doll, B. (2001). Early Prospective Studies of the High School Dropout. *School Psychology Quarterly* 16(4):357–369.
- Battin-Pearson, S, Newcomb, MD, Abbot, RD, Hill, KG, Catalano, RF & Hawkins, JD. (2000). Predictors of early high schools dropout: A test of five theories. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 92(3):568–582.
- Beard, S & Shindler, J. (2001). *A statistical overview of education in South Africa Forum*. Pinetown: Education Africa: 138–148.
- Beauvais, F, Chavez, EL, Oetting, ER, Deffenbacher, JL & Cornell, GR. (1996). Drug use, violence, and victimization among white American, Mexican American, and American Indian dropouts, students with academic problems, and students in academic standing. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 43(3):292–299.
- Berg, BL. (2009). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. 7th edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bhengu, TB. (2003). Accountable parental involvement in Primary schools. Dissertation, University of Zululand.
- Bledsoe, C. (1992). The cultural transformation of western education in Sierra Leone. *Africa*, 62(2):182–202.

- Bless, C & Higson-Smith, C. (2000). *Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective*. 3rd edition. Lansdowne: Juta.
- Borsari, B & Carey, KB. (2001). Peer influences on college drinking: A review of the research. *Journal of Substance Abuse* 13:391–424.
- Botvin, GJ. (2000). Preventing drug abuse in schools: Social and competence enhancement approaches targeting individual-level etiology factors. *Addictive Behaviors* 25(6):887–897.
- Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: a practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage.
- Brinkmann, S & Kvale, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Brook, JS, Bolku, EB & Whiteman, M. (1999). The risks for late adolescence of early adolescence marijuana use. *American Journal of Public Health* 89(10):1549–1554.
- Brooks-Gunn, J, Furstenburg (Jr), FF & Guo, G. (1993). Who drops out of and who continues beyond high school? A 20-year follow up of black urban youth. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 3(3):271–294.
- Brown, BA. (2010). Social hostility and the “dropout” syndrome: Leadership assisting youths’ re-entry into school? *Educational Review* 62(1):53–67.
- Brown, BB, Eicher, SA & Pertie, S. (1986). The importance of peer group (“crowd”) affiliation in adolescence. *Journal of Education* 9:73–96.
- Brown, MM. (2004). *Dropout from educational institutions in a select sample of Caricom countries*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of West Indies.
- Brown, R & Evans, WP. (2002). Extra curricular activity and ethnicity: Creating greater school connection among diverse student population. *Urban Education* 37(1):41-58.
- Buchmann, C. (2000). Family structure, parental perceptions, and child labor in Kenya: What factors determine who is enrolled in school? *Social Forces* 78 (4):1349.

- Burton, N. (2010). *Dropout rates for blacks in California high schools hits 37 percent*. <http://www.facebook.com/the.root>. Retrieved 28/10/2012.
- Cairns, RB, Cairns, BD & Neckerman, HJ. (1989). Early school dropout: Configurations and determinants. *Child Development* 60:1437–1452.
- Carter, S. (2002). The impact of parent/family involvement on student outcomes: An annotated Bibliography of Research from the past decade. <http://www.directionservice.org/cadre>. Retrieved 13/08/2014.
- Center for the Studies of Adolescence. (2008). Counting the cost of teenage pregnancy and school dropout in Kenya. Nairobi: UNHCR. http://www.csakenya.org/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&download=3:csa-pregnancy&id=1:csa-documents. Retrieved 14/11/2013
- Chasalani, S, Kelly, CA, Mensch, BS & Soler-Hampejsek, E. (2012). Adolescent pregnancy and education trajectories in Malawi. Population Council, New York.
- Chavez, EL, Mba, RE & Oetting, ER. (1989). Mexican American and white American school dropouts: Drug use, health status, and involvement in violence. *Public Health Reports* 104(4):594–604.
- Chen, CP. (2008). Career guidance for at-risk students via social learning. *Perspective in Education* 26(4):6–16.
- Chigona, A & Rajendra, C. (2007). Girls' education in South Africa: Special consideration to teen mothers as learners. *Journal of Education for International Development* 3(1):1-17.
- Chigona, A & Rajendra, R. (2008). Teen mothers and schooling: Lacunae and challenges. *South African Journal of Education* 28:11-281.
- Chireshe, R. 2006. The effectiveness of school guidance and counselling services in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Unpublished DEd thesis. UNISA, Pretoria.
- City Press. 2010. *School dropout mystery*. January, 17.

- Clacherty, G, Donald, D, Matsai, K, Mdiya, L, Pelo, J, Porteus, K & Qwabe, S. (2000). "Out of school" children in South Africa: An Analysis of causes in a group of marginalised urban 7-to 15- year olds. *Support for learning* 15(1):8-12.
- Cohen, L, Manion, L & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education* (5 ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cornell, D, Gregory, A, Huang, F & Fan, X. (2012). Perceived prevalence of teasing and bullying predicts high school dropout rates. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 10:1037.
- Cresswell, JW. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approach*. 2nd edition. California: Sage.
- Csereklye, E. (2008). Reasons for school failure among ethnic minority students. *Practice and Theory in systems of Education* 3(3-4):87-92.
- David, M & Sutton, C. (2011). *Social research: An introduction*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.
- Dekezela-Tsomo, NG. (2012). Factors contributing to the dropout rate of learners at selected high schools in King William's Town. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
- De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouche, CB & Delport, CSL. (2005). *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rd edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- De Vos, AS. (1998). *Conceptualization and operationalization: Research at grass roots*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Department of Education (2005). *New Educational report*, Pretoria: Government printer.

- Dichaba, M. (2013). School Drop-out and Success in the Trades: A Paradox or Reality of South Africa's Youth. *Journal of Social Science* 35 (2):89-96.
- Dieltiens, V & Meny-Gilbert, S. (2008/09). School drop-out, poverty and patterns of exclusion. http://ci.org.za/depts/ci/pubs/pdf/general/gauge2008/part_two/exclusion.pdf Retrieved 08/11/2012.
- Dizon-Luna, SRT. (2013). Failure to Stay in School: A Study of Female Adolescent dropout. *Journal of Arts, Science and Commerce IV* (2):81-86.
- Dornbrack, J, Felix, N & Scheckle, EC. (2008). Parents, homework and socio-economic class: Discourses of deficit and disadvantage in the "new" South Africa. *English Teaching: practice and critique* 7 (2):99-112. files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ832211.pdf. Retrieved 02/11/2014.
- Du Pont, RL, Caldeira, KM, Du Pont, HS, Vincent, KB, Shea, CL, Arria, AM. (2013). The unrecognized Connection to Adolescent Substance Use. Rockville, MD: Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc. www.ibhinc.org. www.preventTeenDrugUse.org. Retrieved 8/11/2014.
- Ebrahim, F. (2004). The case for schools of focused learning in the Gauteng Province. Proceedings of the fifth educationally speaking conference. Pretoria: Gauteng Department of Education.
- Educational Access in South Africa. Retrieved <http://www.create-kpc-org.net/new-focus/dev.deadline/index.asp>. Retrieved 20/02/2012.
- Ellenbogen, S & Chamberland, C. (1997). The peer relations of dropouts: A comparative study of at-risk and not at-risk youths. *Journal of Youth Studies* 6(1):89–10.
- Ellickson, P, Bui, K, Bell, R & McGuigan, KA. (1998). Does early drug use increase the risk of dropping out of high school? *Journal of Drug Issues* 28(2):357–380.
- Eloundou-Enyegue, PM. (2004). Pregnancy related dropouts and gender inequalities in education: A life-table approach and application to Cameroon. *Demography* 41(3):505–528.

- Enough is enough: Lulas Rollies parents, communities to reverse dropout rates.
[http://www.hispanic.prwire.com/list media website](http://www.hispanic.prwire.com/list-media-website). Retrieved 18/02/2012.
- Ensminger, ME & Slusarcick, AL. (1992). Paths to high school graduation or drop out: A longitudinal study of a first-grade cohort. *Sociology of Education* 65:95–113.
- Entwisle, DR & Hayduk, LA. (1988). Lasting Effects of Elementary School. *Sociology of Education* 61(3):147–159.
- Epstein, JL. (2001). School, family and community partnership: Preparing educators and improving schools. Baltimore: Westview Press.
- Erlendsdo'ttir, G. (2010). Effects of parental involvement in education: A case study in Namibia. M.ED. Thesis, Faculty of Education Studies. University of Iceland, Reykjavik.http://skemman.is/stream/get/1946/6925/18121/1/MEd_thesis-Gu%C3%B0laug.pdf. Retrieved 21/11/2013.
- Esterberg, KG. (2002). *Qualitative methods in social research*. Boston: The McGraw-Hill.
- Fall, A & Roberts, G. (2012). High School Dropouts: Interactions between social context, self-perceptions, school engagement, and student dropout. *Journal of Adolescence* 35(4):787–798.
- Flay, BR. (2000). Approaches to substance use prevention utilization school curriculum plus social environment change. *Addictive Behavior* 25(6):861–885.
- Flisher, A, Townsend, L, Chikobvu, P, Lombard, C& King, G. (2004). *Substance use and high school dropout*. Presentation at the American Public Health Association 132nd annual meeting, WashingtonDC, November 6–10.
- Fobih, DK. (1987). Social-psychological factors associated with school dropout in the eastern region of Ghana. *Journal of Negro Education* 56(2):229–239.
- Franklin, C. (1992). Family and individual patterns in a group of middle-class dropout youths. *Social work* 34(4):388–344.
- French, DC & Conrad, J. (2001). School dropout as predicted by peer rejection and antisocial behavior. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 11(3):225–244.
- Fry, R. (2003). Hispanic youth dropping out of U.S. Schools: Measuring the challenge. www.pewhispanic.org. Retrieved 22/08/2012.

- Frymier, J & Gansneder, B. (1989). The study of students at risk. *Phi Delta Kappa Bulletin* 71:142–146.
- Garnier, HE, Stein, JA & Jacobs, JK. (1997). The process of dropping out of school: A 19-year perspective. *American Educational Research Journal* 34(2):395–419.
- Gasper de Matos, M, Gasper, T, Simon-Morton, B, Reis, M & Ramiro, L (2008). Communication and information about “SAFER SEX”: Intervention issues within communities of African migrants living in poorer neighborhoods in Portugal. *Journal of Poverty* 12(3):333–350.
- Gauteng Department of Education. (2011). *The Case for Schools of Focused Learning in the Gauteng Province*. Johannesburg: Gauteng Department of Education.
- Gottfredson, DC & Wilson, DB. (2003). Characteristics of effective school-based substance abuse prevention. *Prevention Science* 4:27–38.
- Govender, P. (2005). *School dropouts set off alarm bells*. Sunday Times 18 September:1.
- Grant, M & Hallman, K. (2006). Pregnancy-related school dropout and prior school performance in South Africa. New York: The Population Council, Inc.
- Guthrie, G. (2010). *Basic research methods: An entry to social science*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Hale, LF. (2004). *School dropout prevention information and strategies for parents*. Bartlesville, OK.
- Hays, RD & Elleckson, PL. (1996). Association between drug use and deviant behavior in teenagers. *Addictive Behaviors* 21(3):291–302.
- Henderson, A & Berla N. (1994). A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement. *School psychology review* 23(3):472–484.
- Hendricks, M. (2007). *Eastern Cape school-resourcing and inequalities*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University. Eprints.ru.ac.za/1399. Retrieved 12/10/2011.
- Henning, E, Van Rensburg, W & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Hess, RS & Copeland, EP. (2001). Students' stress, coping strategies, and school completion: A longitudinal perspective. *School Psychology Quarterly* 6(4):389–405.
- Higgs, P & Smith, J. (2002). *Rethinking truth*. Lansdowne: JUTA.
- <http://education.Stateuniversity.Com/pages/1631/united-states.secondary-education.html>. Retrieved 07/07/2012.
- <http://Learningtheories.com/identity-status-theory-marcia.html>. Retrieved 20/02/2012.
- <https://www.equaleducation.org.za/article/2014-01-07-equal-education-ee-statement-on-the-2013-matric-result-higher-pass-rate-but-drop-outs-poor-quality-passes-and-inequality-persists>. Retrieved 12/09/2014.
- Human Science Research Council. (2008). Teenage pregnancy in South Africa with a specific focus on school going learners.
<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/review/March-2008/drop-outs#sthash.HpMH3Peh.dpuf> Retrieved 14/11/2013.
- Hunter, N & May, J. (2002). Poverty shocks and school disruption Episodes among adolescents in South Africa: CSDS working paper no 35. ISBN no 1-86840-493-5.
- HSRC, see Human Science Research Council. (2008).
- Hunt, F. (2008). *Dropping out from school: A cross country review of literature. Create path ways to access*: Research Monograph no 16. University of Sussex Centre for International Education.
- Hupfeld, K. (2010). *A Review of Literature: Resiliency Skills and Dropout Prevention*.
http://scholarcentric.com/images/pdf/resiliency_skills/SC_Resiliency_WP_FNL.pdf. Retrieved 14/11/2013.
- Huysamen, GK. (1994). *Methodology for the social and behavioural sciences*. Cape Town: Southern.
- Inglis, D. (2009). *Exploring the Dropout Phenomenon in a Secondary School Situation in a High-Risk Community*. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University.

- Inter Press Service, June Sunday 24, 2012. www.ipsnews.net/2009/07/peru-going. Retrieved 04/07/2012.
- Inter Press Service, June Wednesday 30, 2010. www.ipsnews.net/2010/06/china-alarm. Retrieved 04/07/2012.
- IRIN. (2007a). www.irinnews.org/report175139/Bangladesh-primary-school-dropout. Retrieved 01/06/2012.
- IRIN. (2007b). Tanzania: Concern Over School Drop-out Rate. <http://www.irinnews.org/report/72628/tanzania-concern-over-school-drop-out-rate#sthash.Kgw7s3Y1.dpuf>. Retrieved 27/02/12.
- Janosz, M, Le Blanc, M, Boulerice, BT & Tremblay, RE. (1997). Disentangling the weight of school dropout predictors: A test on two longitudinal samples. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 26(6):733.
- Janosz, M, Le Blanc, M, Boulerie, B & Tremblay, RE. (2000). Predicting different types of school dropout: A typological approach with two longitudinal samples. *Journal of Education Psychology* 92(1):171–190.
- Jessor, R. (1991). Risk behavior in adolescence: A psychosocial framework for understanding and action. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 12:597–605.
- Johnson, MK, Robert, C, Glen, HE (Jr). (2001). Students attachments and academic engagement: The role of race and ethnicity. *Sociology of Education* 74 (4):318–340.
- Jordan, WJ, Lara, J & McPartland, JM.(1996). Exploring the causes of early dropout among race-ethnic and gender groups. *Youth & Society* 28(1):62–94.
- Kinuwa, A, & Yusuf, NBM.(2013). Students' Perspective on Female dropout in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Education and Review* 1 (2):29-37.
- Karra, M & Lee, M. (2012). Human Capital consequences of Teenage Child Bearing in South Africa. Population studies center. University of Michigan. www.prb.org/PublicationArticles/2012/poppov-teen-childbearing-southafrica.aspx. Retrieved 27/08/2014.

- Kassahun, A. (2004). *Correlates of school dropout in Ethiopia: Family and school factors*. paa2007.princeton.edu/20/06/20/abstracts/71007 Retrieved 20/06/2012.
- Kaufman, CE, De Wet, T & Stadler, J. (2001). Adolescent pregnancy and parenthood in South Africa. *Studies in Family Planning* 32(2):147–160.
- Khajehpour, M, & Ghazvini, SD. (2011). The Role of Parental Involvement Effect in Children’s Academic Performance. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 15:1204-1208.
- Klepinger, DH, Lundberg, S & Plotnick, RD. (1995). Adolescent fertility and the educational attainment of young woman. *Family Planning Perspective* 27 (1):23–28.
- Kogan, MS, Luo, Z, Brody, GH & Murry, VM. (2005). The influence of high school dropout on substance use among African American youth. *Journal of Ethnicity in Substance Abuse* 4(1):35–52.
- Kyei, KA. (2012). Teenage Fertility in Vhembe District in Limpopo Province, How high is that? *Journal of emerging Trends in Economies and Management Sciences* (JETEMS) 3 (2):134-140.
- Kumar, R. (2005). *Research methodology: Step-by-step guide for beginners*. 2nd edition. Australia: SAGE Publications.
- La Gaipa, JJ. (1979). A developmental study of meaning of friendship in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence* 2:213.
- Lagana, MT. 2004. Protective factors for inner city adolescents at risk of school dropout: Family factors and social support. *National association of social workers* 26 (4): 211–220.
- Lamb, S, Markussen, E, Teese, R, Sandberg, N & Polesel, J. (2011). *School dropout and completion: International and comparative studies in theory and policy*. New York: Springer.
- Langille, DB. (2007). Teenage pregnancy: Trends, contributing factors and the physician’s role. *Canadian Medical Association* 176(11):1601–1602.

- Le Roux, J. (1994). *The black child in crisis: A socio-educational perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Lee, FW & Miu-Ling, F. (2003). Young school dropouts: Levels of influence of different systems. *Journal of Youth Studies* 6(1): 89–110.
- Lomofsky, L, & Lazarus, S. (2001). South Africa:First steps in the development of an inclusive education system. *Cambridge Journal of Education* 31(3):303–317.
- Macleod, C & Tracy, T. (2009). Review of South African research and interventions in the development of a policy strategy on teen-aged pregnancy.Unpublished.Grahamstown: Rhodes eResearch Repository.<http://eprints.ru.ac.za/1647/>. Retrieved 21/11/2013.
- Mahlomaholo, SMG. (2011). Gender differentials and sustainable learning environments. *South African Journal of Education* 31(3):312–321.
- Mail & Guardian. 2008. The significant school dropout rate after grade nine. February 25. <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2008-02-25-pandor-significant-school-dropout-rate-after-grade-nine>. Retrieved 14/11/2013.
- Makundi, PE. (2010). Factors Contributing to High Rate of Teen Pregnancy in Mtwara Region, Tanzania.M.A. Dissertation, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences.
<http://ir.muhas.ac.tz:8080/jspui/bistream/123456789/1208/3/MAKUNDI.pdf>. Retrieved 17/08/2014.
- Makwinja-Morara, VM. (2007).Female dropouts in Botswana junior secondary schools: How much of crisis is it? Doctoral dissertation, College of Education of Ohio University, Athens OH.
- Malahlela, MK & Chireshe, R. (2013). Educators' Perceptions of the Effects on Teenage Pregnancy as the Behavior of Learners in South African Secondary Schools: Implications for Teacher Training. *Journal of social Science* 37 (2):137-148.
- Marshall, C & Rossman, GB.(2011). *Designing qualitative research*.5th edition.California: Sage.

- Martelelo, L, Lam, D & Ranchood, V. (2008). Sexual behavior, pregnancy and schooling among young people in urban South Africa. *Studies in Family Planning* 39(4):351–368.
- Masitsa, G. (2006). Dropout in township secondary schools: Education perspectives. *Acta Academic* 38(3):165–191.
- Mason, J. (2009). *Qualitative researching*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.
- May, T. (2011). *Social research: Issues, methods and process*. 4th edition. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Mbajiorgu, CA, Maake, MS, Kayoka, PN, & Masafu, MM. (2012). The role of learners' and parental socio-economic conditions in teaching and learning of science subjects at Mandlethu FET College. UNISA.
- McCaffrey, DF, Pacula, RL, Han, B & Elleckson, P. (2010). Marijuana use and High school Dropout. The Influence of Unobservables. *Health Eco* 19 (11):1281-1299.
- McCluskey, CP, Krohn, MD, Lizotte, AJ & Rodriguez, ML. (2002). Early substance use and school achievement: An examination of Latino, white and African American youth. *Journal of Drug Issues* 32(3):921–943.
- Mcmillan, JH & Schumacher S. (1997). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. New York: Longman.
- Mchunu, G, Peltzer, K, Tutshana, B & Setlwadi, L. (2002). Adolescent pregnancy and associated factors in South African youth. *Afr. Health Sci.* 12 (4):426-434.
- McMillan, JH & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in education: Evidence-based inquiry*. 6th edition. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- McNeal, RB (Jr). (1995). Extra curricular activities and high school dropouts. *Sociology of Education* 68:62–81.
- McNeal, RB (Jr). (1999). Parental involvement as a social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces* 78(1):117.

- McWhitter, JJ, McWhitter, BT, McWhitter, EH & McWhitter, RJ. (2007). *At risk youth*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Medical Research Council Research Brief. (2009). *Substance abuse and the young: Taking action*. www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/count. Retrieved 28/12/2012.
- Meekers, D & Ahmed, G. (1999). Pregnancy-related school dropout in Botswana. *Population Studies* 53(2):195–209.
- Mensch, BS, Clark, WH, Lloyd, CB, & Erulkar, AS. (1999). Premarital Sex and School Dropout in Kenya: Can Schools Make a Difference? <http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/wp/124.pdf>. Retrieved 18/08/2014.
- Meny-Gibert, S. (2012). Inefficiencies in the schooling system and possible responses: Public Affairs Research Institute. Short Essays/number 4.
- Mensch, BS & Kandel, DB. (1988). Dropping out of high school and drug involvement. *Sociology of Education* 61:95–113.
- Merriam, SB & Associates. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mpanza, ND. (2012). Experiences of Educators in dealing with Teenage pregnancy. Doctor of Education. University of Zululand.
- Molosiwa, S, & Moswela, B. (2012). Girl-Pupil Dropout in Secondary Schools in Botswana: Influencing Factors, Prevalence and Consequences. *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 3 (7):265-271.
- Monyela, MH. (2011). Prevalence, Distribution and Characteristics of Youth not enrolled in School: Evidence from the community Survey 2007, South Africa.
- Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your masters and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mouton, N, Louw, GP & Strydom, G. (2013). Critical challenges of the South African school system. *International Business & Economic Research Journal* 12 (1):31-43.

- Mukama, E. (2010). Peer Group Influence, Alcohol Consumption, and Secondary School Student's Attitudes towards School. Makerere University (Kampala). http://docs.mak.ac.ug/sites/default/files/Mukama_Evirist.pdf. Retrieved 14/08/2014.
- Munsaka, E. (2006). The influence of family and community on school dropout among rural adolescents in Zambia. Cape Town: Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town.
- Mwamwenda, TS. (2004). *Educational psychology: An African perspective*. South Africa: Lebone Publishing Service.
- Nachmias, D & Nachmias, C. (1987). *Research methods in the social sciences*. 3rd edition. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- National Centre for Education Statistics. (1998). Parent Involvement in Children's Education: Efforts by Public Elementary Schools. nces.ed.gov/pubs98/98032 Retrieved 10/08/2012.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2000). Dropout Rates in the United States. nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002114 Retrieved 27/04/2012.
- National Survey on Drug use and Health. (2003). The NSDUH Report: Substance Use Among School Dropouts. <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k3/dropouts/dropouts.pdf> Retrieved 21/11/2013.
- NCES, see National Centre for Education Statistics.
- Neuman, WL. (1997). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 3th edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Neuman, WL. (2006). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 6th edition. Boston: Pearson.
- News from Africa. (2002). *Free primary education backfires*. www.newsfromafrica.org-archive. Retrieved 26/05/2012.

- News24. (2011). School dropout rate a worry for Gauteng.
<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Gauteng-focusing-on-school-drop-outs-20120309>. Retrieved 11/05/2012
- Njambatwa, M. (2013). Teenage fathers as learners in a Butterworth Secondary school: Implications for sex education. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
- Nojaja, JM. (2009). A model for parent involvement in disadvantaged South African Schools. North-West University (Vaal Triangle Faculty).
- NSDUH, see National Survey on Drug use and Health (2003).
- Nutt, D, King, LA, Saulsbury, W, Blakemore, C. (2007). Development of national scale to assess the harm of drugs of potential misuse. *The Lancet* 369:1047–1053.
- Nzama, APL. (2004). The effects of teenage pregnancy on the school life of adolescent girls. University of KwaZulu-Natal.
<http://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/xmlui/handle/10413/3203>. Retrieved 15/11/2013.
- Obot, IS & Anthony, JC. (1999). Association of school dropout with recent and past injecting drug use among African American adults. *Addictive Behavior* 24(5):701–705.
- Office of the Education Ombudsman Special Report.(2008). *Harrasment/bullying in public schools*. www.waparentslearn.org. Retrieved 01/08/2013.
- Onya, H, Tessera, A, Myers, B & Flisher, A. (2012). Community influences on adolescents' use of home-brewed alcohol in Rural South Africa. *BMC Public Health* 12:642. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/12/642>. Retrieved 22/05/2014.
- Osiki, JO. (2003). Out of school youths in Ibadan: Its psychological implications and the way out. *IFE Psychologia* 11(1):46-60.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ifep.v11i1.23439>. Retrieved 21/11/2013.

- Parry, DH. (1998). *Substance abuse in South Africa: Country report focusing on young persons, mental health and substance abuse*. Tygerberg: Medical Research Council. www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/count. Retrieved 28/12/12.
- Parry, DH & Phiddemann, AC. (2012). Methamphetamine use and associated problems among adolescents in the Western Cape Province of South Africa: A need for focused intervention. Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit, medical research council (MRC).
- Patton, MQ. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research method*. 2nd edition. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Patton, MQ. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research method*. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pianta, RC & Walsh, DJ. (1996). High-risk children in school: Constructing sustaining relationships. New York & London: Routledge.
- Pierce, C. (1994). Importance of classroom climate for at risk learners. *Journal of education research* 88(1):37–42.
- Pregnant Teen Help.(2010). Pregnant Teen Dropout Rate.<http://www.socialsurveys.co.za/factsheets/TeenagePregnancyAndSchoolDrop-Out/22250e.pdf>. Retrieved 12/11/2013.
- Progress Report to Minister of Education.(2007). Ministerial Committee on Learner Retention in the South African Schooling System.
- Ramulumo, MR & Pitsoe, VJ. (2013). Teenage pregnancy in South African schools, Trends and Policy Issues. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4:755-760.
- Rangiah, J. (2012). The experiences of pregnant Teenagers about their pregnancy. Stellenbosch University.
- Reginah, NO, & Stella, OO.(2010). Perceived Factors Responsible for Dropout in Primary Schools in Delta Central Senatorial District, Nigeria. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 7 (5):365-370.

- Reglin, GL. (1993). At-risk "Parent and Family" school involvement: Strategies for low income families and African-American families of unmotivated and underachieving students. Springfield: Charles C Thomas.
- Roebuck, MC, French, MT & Dennis, ML. (2004). Adolescent marijuana use and school attendance. *Economics of Education Review* 23(2):145–153.
- Royce, A, Singleton, JR & Straits, BC. (2010). *Approaches to social research*. 5th edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rumberger, RG, Ghatak, R, Poulos, G, Ritter, PL & Dornsbusch, SM. (1990). Family influences on dropout behavior in one California high school. *Sociology of Education* 63(4):283–299.
- Rumberger, RW & Sun, AM. (2008). Why students drop out of school: A review of 25 years of research. <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/CSN/PDF/Flyer+-+Why+students+drop+out.pdf>. Retrieved 11/11/2013.
- Rumberger, RW & Larson, KA. (1998). Student mobility and increased risk of high school dropout. *American Journal of education* 107(1):1–35.
- Rumberger, RW. (1995). Dropping out of middle school: A multi-level analysis of students and schools. *American Educational Research journal* 32(3):583–625.
- Sadock, BJ & Sadock, VA. (2003). Kaplan & Sadock's synopsis of psychiatry: Behavioral science/clinical psychiatry. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Sarantakos, S. (1997). *Social research*. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave.
- Seale, C. (2012). *Researching society and culture*. 3rd edition. London: Sage.
- Science Daily (2010). ADHD, conduct disorder and smoking most strongly related to dropping out of high school. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/07/100727142413.htm>. Retrieved 21/11/2013.
- Schuster, J. (2011). The same Education for All? The South African School system 17 years after The End of Apartheid. KAS International Reports 7.
- Smyth, J & Hattam, R. (2001). Voiced research as a sociology for understanding: Dropping out of school. *British journal of sociology of education* 22(3):401–415.

- Social Surveys Africa. (2010). Teenage pregnancy and school drop-out in South Africa: Facts, figures and possible interventions. www.socialsurveys.co.za/factsheets/TeenagePregnancyAndSchoolDrop-Out/index.html. Retrieved 18/05/2012.
- Sodi, EE. (2009). Psychological Impact of Teenage Pregnancy on Pregnant Teenagers. Reaserch Dissertation in Clinical Psychology.University of Limpompo. <http://ul.netd.ac.za/bitstream/10386/325/1/Research%20Dessertation%20of%20Edzisani%20Egnes%20Sodi.pdf>. Retrieved 25/07/2014.
- South Africa. (1996a). Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.Bill of Rights. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- South Africa. (1996b). Schools act 1996.www.info.gov.za/acts/1996/a84-96.pdf. Retrieved 10/11/2013.
- South Africa. Department of Education.(2003). *Education statistics in South Africa at a glance in 2001*. Pretoria. South Africa: Department of Education.
- South Africa. Department of Education (2004).*Dropout and repetition rate, longitudinal study=Grades 8–12*. Pretoria: Government printer.
- South Africa. Department of Education. (2005). *New Educational report*. Pretoria: Government printer.
- South Africa. Department of Education. (2006). *Comprehensive systematic evaluation programme: Eastern Cape school and learner quantitative study*. Zwelitsha: Province of the Eastern Cape Department of Education.
- South Africa. Department of Education. (2007). *The ministerial committee on learner retention in South Africa*. Pretoria: Government printer.
- South Africa. Department of Education. (2011). Report on dropout and learner retention strategy to portfolio committee on education. Pretoria: Government printer.
- South, SJ, Baumer, EP & Lutz, A. (2003).Interpreting Community Effects on Youth Educational Attainment. *Youth & Society* 35(1):3–36.

- Squelch J & Lemmer, E. (1994). *Eight keys to effective school management in South Africa*. Durban: Southern Book Publishers.
- Stone, S. (2006). Correlates of change in student reported parent involvement in schooling: A new look at the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 76(4):518–530.
- Sudan Basic Education Program (SBEP). www.Care.Org/careswork/projects/sdn093.asp Retrieved 29/09/2012.
- Swain, RC, Beauvais, F, Chavez, E.L. & Oetting, E.R. (1997). The effect of school dropout rates on estimates of adolescent substance use among three racial/ethnic groups. *American Journal of Public Health* 87(1):51–55.
- Sweet 16 marriages cause controversy in Malawi. <http://www.ipsnews.Net/new-focus/dev.deadline/index.asp>. Retrieved 19/02/2012.
- Tan, PS, Tohid, H, Su, XW, Tan, KMT, Azimah, MM, & Khairani, O. (2012). A Study of Pregnant Adolescents Residing in a Government Home: Common Characteristics and Their Views on the Pregnancy. *Malaysian Family Physician* 7 (11):11-15.
- Terrion, JL. (2006). Building social capital in vulnerable families: Success markers of a school-based intervention program. *Youth and Society* 38(2):155-176.
- Townsend, L, Flisher, AJ & King, G. (2007). A systematic review of the relationship between high school dropout and substance use. *Clinical Child and Family of Psychology* 10(4):295–316.
- Townsend, L, Flisher, AJ, Chikobvu, P, Lombard, C & King, G. (2008). The relationship between bullying behaviours and high dropout in Cape Town, South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology* 38(1):21–32.
- Townsend, L, Flisher, AJ, Chikobvu, P, Lombard, CF & King, G. (2010). Substance use and psychosocial predictors of high school dropout in Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 20(1):237–255.
- UNESCO. (2002). High school dropout and repetition rates show quality to be a concern in Latin America education systems. <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php->

URL_ID=4824&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html. Retrieved 15/11/2013

UNESCO. (2002). Education for Sustainability from Rio to Johannesburg: Lesson Learnt from a decade of Commitment.

UNESCO. (2007). Summary Report: *Education for all global monitoring report 2007*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2009). Teenage pregnancy in South Africa: With specific focus on school-going learners. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2012). The African leg of the United Nations global monitoring report on education: Educating for all. News 24.com/Dstv Retrieved 16/10/2012).

UNICEF.(2008). Division of Policy and Practice, Statistics and Monitoring Section, www.childinfo.org. Retrieved 16/10/2012.

UNICEF.(2007). Teenage Motherhood in Latin America and the Caribbean Trends, Problems and Challenges. [http://www.unicef.org/lac/desafios_Nro4_eng_Final\(3\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/lac/desafios_Nro4_eng_Final(3).pdf). Retrieved 20/ 08/2014.

Valrie, LE & Burkam, DT. (2003). Dropping out of high school: The role of school organization and structure. *American Educational Research Journal* 40(2):353.

Van Wyk, N. (2001). Preparing South African educators for school-family community partnerships. *Educare* 30(142):115–139.

Van Zyl, AE. (2013). Drug Use among South African Youths: Reasons and Solutions. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4 (14):581-589.

Voelkl, K. (1997). Identification with school. *American Journal of Education* 105(3):294–318.

Wegner, L. (2011). Through the lens of a peer: Understanding leisure boredom and and risk behavior in adolescence. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy* 41 (1):18-24.

- Willan, S. (2013). A review of teenage pregnancy in South Africa: Experiences of schooling, and knowledge and access to sexual and reproductive health services. Partners in Sexual Health (PSH). <http://www.rmchsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Teenage-Pregnancy-in-South-Africa-2013>. Retrieved 27/08/2014.
- Wichstrom, L. (1998). Alcohol intoxication and school dropout. *Drug and Alcohol Review* 17(4):413–421.
- Yamada, T, Kendix, M & Yamada, T. (1996). The impact of alcohol consumption and marijuana use on high school graduation. *Health Economics* 5:77–92.
- Zengeya, MA. (2004). School dropout in Zimbabwe between 1980 and 2004: Implications for education and training policy twenty five years after independence. Harare: Zimbabwe Bulletin of Teacher Education, University of Zimbabwe: Staff Publication. <http://hdl.handle.net/10646/620>. Retrieved 17/07/2012.
- Zuzile, M. (2003). Quarter of Eastern Cape (EC) grade 1s make matric. *Daily Dispatch* 10 June:1.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ALL THE PARTICIPANTS

1 Interview questions

The following questions will be asked during the in-depth interview.

1.1 Teenage pregnancy and school attendance

- 1.1.1 Do you think sickness and other pregnancy effects such as feeling insecure about changing appearance, stigma, bullying or sexual harassment and insufficient support causes learner dropout? Explain your answer.
- 1.1.2 Do you think the lack of physical and emotional support for pregnant learners cause school dropout? Please explain your answer.
- 1.1.3 Do you think teenage mothers are most likely to return to school after giving birth? Please explain your answer.
- 1.1.4 Is teenage pregnancy the main cause of dropout in secondary schools around Orange Farm/ Johannesburg South? Give reasons for your answer.
- 1.1.5 How is the daily school attendance of pregnant teenagers in your school?
- 1.1.6 Why would pregnant and mothering teenagers most likely to drop out of school than those who never fell pregnant?
- 1.1.7 Which reasons or circumstances can force a pregnant or mothering teenager to leave school permanently?
- 1.1.8 Do you think the reduction on teenage pregnancy would decrease the rate of learner dropout? Please explain.
- 1.1.9 What would you suggest to be done to overcome learner dropout?

2.1 Parental involvement and school drop out

2.1.1 Do parents' involvement in school's structures such as "learner support teams" help to keep children at school? Explain your answer.

2.1.2 Does the lack of communication between parents, learners and the school cause learner drop out? Briefly explain your answer.

2.1.3 Do you think poor attendance of meetings and checking of homeworks by parents causes learner dropout? Give reasons for your answer.

2.1.4 Do you think parents for at risk dropout learners regard education as valuable and relevant to the needs of their children? Give reasons for your answer.

2.1.5 Does the involvement of parents in the education of their children help learners to earn higher grades and stay longer at school?

2.1.6 Do you think parent's preferential of a boy learner to complete school as a prospective breadwinner has effects on learner drop out? Explain your answer.

2.1.7 At what grade/phase do parents show lack of support to learners and what impact does that have on learner drop out? Briefly explain.

2.1.8 Do you think unsupportive attitude of parents towards the education of their children causes learner dropout? Give reasons for your answer.

2.1.9 Do you think learners with parents that are involved in their education are less likely to drop out? Explain your answer.

2.1.10 Do you think active involvement of family members in educational activities of the learner help reduce learner dropout? Explain your answer.

2.1.11 How would the school improve the parental involvement in the school and education of the children to overcome learner dropout?

3.1 Substance abuse and learner attendance

- 3.1.1 Are learners who abuses drugs frequently absent from the school? Explain your answer.
- 3.1.2 Do learners who uses drugs increases the risk of low academic achievement and dropping out of school? Give reasons for your answer.
- 3.1.3 Do the early uses of drugs by learners cause behavioral and cognitive factors that can lead to school dropout? Please explain your answer.
- 3.1.4 Why would drug users drop out of school more than those that do not use drugs? Explain your answer.
- 3.1.5 Is the use of drugs by learners the sufficient condition for dropping out of school? Explain your answer.
- 3.1.6 Is it proper for the school authorities to suspend or expel a learner who uses drugs? Explain your answer.
- 3.1.7 Which reasons or circumstances would force a learner that uses drugs to drop out of school permanently?
- 3.1.8 Is it conducive for drug users to attend the same classes with learners who do not use drugs? Explain your answer.
- 3.1.9 What do you think is the most common used drug by at risk dropout learners and why?
- 3.1.10 Does the use of marijuana increase the probability of loss of interest in school?
- 3.1.11 Is the frequent use of cigarette at senior phase by learners a prediction for dropout? Please explain.
- 3.1.12 Which age group or school phase are at risk dropout learners would take the drugs? Give reasons for your answer.
- 3.1.13 How would the school deal with the influence of drug abuse on at risk dropout learners? Explain your answer.

4.1 Peer pressure and learner attendance

- 4.1.1 Do you think learners are influenced by their peers to stay absent from school?
Give reasons for your answer.
- 4.1.2 Are learners with friends who have dropped out more likely to drop out of school? Please explain your answer.
- 4.1.3 Is peer pressure the leading cause of high school dropout among Johannesburg South black townships secondary schools? Give reasons for your answer.
- 4.1.4 Does having a school loving peer motivate young people to stay at school?
Explain your answer.
- 4.1.5 Do learners who are rejected by their peers look forward to going to school?
Give reasons for your answer.
- 4.1.6 Do learners who are not getting along with other students drop out of school?
Please explain your answer.
- 4.1.7 Do you think most learners drop out of school because their peers have suggested that? Explain your answer.
- 4.1.8 Do you think the need for belonging by learners to fit with peers causes stress and anxiety which affects class attendance?
- 4.1.9 Does having anti social peers increase the likelihood of dropping out of school?
Give reasons for your answer.
- 4.1.10 How would the influence of peer pressure on at risk dropout learners be prevented?

APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

09 BLOEMHOF STREET
SOUTH HILLS
2197
15 MARCH 2013

The Director of Knowledge Management and Research
Gauteng Department of Education
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street
Johannesburg

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN JOHANNESBURG SOUTH DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

I am a Master of Education student at UNISA. I request permission to conduct research in some selected secondary schools in Johannesburg South District as part of my Masters programme.

The topic for my research study is "Investigating the causes of learner dropout at Secondary Schools in Johannesburg South, Gauteng". The aim of the study is to uncover what causes learner dropout in the secondary schools of this district.

My study will involve Educators, Principals, SGB's chairpersons, Parents and dropout Learners. The study will not interfere with my work and the teaching times of the selected schools. I will ensure anonymity of the participants and all information will be treated with confidentiality.

I would love to start the research study as soon as possible and complete by May 2013. A copy of completed research report will be delivered to your office.

Your prompt response will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Mnguni, I.B.-----

Cell number- 0767379896

E-Mail address- mngunibongani@yahoo.co

APPENDIX C: APPROVAL OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no. D2013/330

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Date: | 20 March 2013 |
| Validity of Research Approval: | 20 March 2013 to 20 September 2013 |
| Name of Researcher: | Mnguni I.B. |
| Address of Researcher: | 9 Bloemhof Street |
| | South Hills |
| | 2197 |
| Telephone Number: | 076 737 9896 |
| Email address: | mngunibongani@yahoo |
| Research Topic: | Investigation the causes of learner dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South, Gauteng |
| Number and type of schools: | THREE Secondary Schools |
| District/s/HO | Johannesburg South |

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.qqa.gov.za

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

David Makhado

Dr David Makhado
Director: Knowledge Management and Research

DATE: 2013/03/22

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

APPENDIX D:EXAMPLE OF LETTERS TO SCHOOLS

09 BLOEMHOF STREET
SOUTH HILLS
2197
8TH MARCH 2013

The Principal
Vulanindlela Secondary school
Orange Farm

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ORANGE FARM SECONDARY SCHOOLS

I am the Masters Student with "UNISA". One of the requirements for the completion of my degree is to conduct a research study.

The topic for my research study is "Investigating the causes of learner dropout at secondary schools in Johannesburg South, Gauteng". The aim for the study is to uncover what causes learner dropout in this region and also to establish the preventative measures for this scourge. My supervisor is Professor Regis Chireshe, his e-mail address is chirer@unisa.ac.za.

I would like to have your permission to conduct the research study in your school. The study will involve educators, principals, SGB chairpersons, parents and dropout learners. The research study will not affect the teaching time of the school since it will be conducted after school and weekends.

The instrument for the study will be semi-structured interviews at convenient venues for the interviewees. Interviews will be done on one on one basis and the tape recorder will be used as well as code names to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Each participant will be asked to sign a consent form. Parents and learners will be at liberty to use home language during the interviews

Once I have completed the study I will provide feedback to your office.

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully

Mnguni, I.B (MR)

Cell Number: 0767379896/ e-mail mngunibongani@yahoo.com

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION GRANTED

VULANINDLELA SECONDARY SCHOOL

4896 EXT 2
ORANGE FARM
1841
P.O. Box 539
Orange Farm
1841



Tel: (011) 850-6305/
072 446 - 2785
FAX: (011) 8502736
Vulanindlela.secondaryschool1@gol.gov.za
vulanindlela@gmail.com

17 May 2013

Dear Sir

The above mentioned institution kindly wishes to let you know that your request to do research in this school on the Topic "Investigating the cause of learner drop out at Secondary Schools in the Johannesburg South, Gauteng" has been granted. We promise to give you support and cooperation during your interview session.

We wish you all the best.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L.D. Lekhakhau', is written over a horizontal line.

Mr L.D. Lekhakhau
[Principal]

