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The influence of polygamy on the academic achievements of pupils in Bubi District

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APPROVAL FORM

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The influence of polygamy on the academic achievements of pupils in Bubi district- Zimbabwe.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my only daughter Lorna Tanatswa Gabisile for having to endure long lonely days without motherly care.

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My gratitude goes to the Faculty of Education at the Midlands State University for imparting the priceless knowledge onto me. I am also grateful to my supervisor Mrs. N Shoko for herpatience, love and guidance during this learning phase of my studies. I am very grateful to all individuals who contributed to my studies and research; your help is dearly valued and appreciated.

May God bless you in all your endeavors.

ABSTRACT

This research sought to find out the extent to which polygamy influences the pupils in their academic achievement in Bubi District. The researcher employed the descriptive survey design method. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires for pupils and for teachers and an interview schedule for School Heads and senior teachers. The population was made up of five secondary schools in Bubi district. The sample comprised of thirty pupils, (six pupils from each school), twenty five teachers, (five teachers from each school) as well as the school heads and senior teachers. Snowballing and random sampling were used as the sampling techniques. The study established that polygamy does influence pupils' academic achievement to some extent. The elements of what could negatively or positively influence the academic achievements of pupils but it was found out that negative influences of polygamy were more than positive influences. Family relationships, financial position of the family, availability and non-availability of school resources, academic level of parents and family size are among the factors that influenced the academic achievement of pupils from polygamous families. The study recommends that teachers should have a good knowledge of pupils' background so as to address pupils according to their needs. In addition to that, school heads should make school policies and put binding measures to parents who do not attend consultation days. Pupils constantly need to be counseled so as not to lose focus due to family issues and therefore placement of qualified counselors in schools is recommended. In areas where cash flow is seasonal, heads of schools and SDC, should capitalize on the season when the cash flow will be high and make parents pay the yearly fees and buy all the school requirements for the year. Parents and the school heads should work together so as to help the children achieve their academic goals.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

Bubidistrict in Matabeleland North is among the districts that have low pass rates in the country. Teachers and school heads have always been blamed for the failure of students. Nothing or a little has been said about the child's background as a contributing factor to high failure rate. The people of Bubi community still believe in and practice polygamy. The high rate of polygamy in the area has led the researcher to try to find out whether the polygamous home set up has any contribution in the performance of pupils in the district. This chapter will provide an introduction to the study. It outlines the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study, research questions, assumptions of the study as well as delimitations and limitations of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Many studies have identified study habits, students' self-concept, teachers' qualifications, teaching methods, school environment, family size and government as factors influencing students' academic performance (Edwa2002, Zsolnai 2002, Gonzalez & Piedad 2002, Arumu & Sokan 2003, Asikhia (2010). The influence of polygamy on students' academic performance has not been given adequate attention in research. The present study sought to answer the question: Does polygamy influence the academic performance of pupils in Bubi district?

Studies carried out in Oromia by Feda (2008) established that family size, family type and birth order are among many household characteristics considered both in developing and developed countries as determinants of child schooling performance. Feda (2008) asserts that the early empirical findings from developed countries consistently confirmed the trade-off between family size and child educational achievement. This confirms that big family size and family type exert a negative effect on children's schooling due to the dilution effect in developing countries. There is clear consensus on the effects of family size and family type on children's academic achievement, although a good deal of literature suggests a positive relationship, while others have argued that there is an ambiguous effect (Parfait and Williams 2005). In my point of view, family size can be determined by family type. Big family sizes are generally linked to polygamy today.

The primary environment of the student is the home and it stands to exert a tremendous impact on students' achievement (Hoover-Dempsey 2005, Redding 2006). Moreover, the home is the primary agent of education in the child (Nyarko 2010). Akolomolafe (2011) shares the view that the type of family system the child is exposed to could influence his or her academic achievements in school. Kellaghan (2003) cited in Akolomolafe (2011) affirms that the academic success of a child depends on what parents do at home. He further observed that parent – child interactions are forces that lead to better academic performance.

In a study conducted on the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigeria university students, Uwaifo (2008) found significant differences between the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent family structures. Uwaifo (2008) also noted that the school is responsible for the experiences that make up the individual's life during school periods. Indeed parental involvement and an individual's experiences at home play a tremendous role in building the personality of the child and making the child what he is.

Family types like nuclear family, extended family and compound family invariably affects the academic performance of a pupil. Whitaker (2006), citing Nwezeh (1988) suggests that parents affect their children's performance, aspirations, expectations and maturity. The family set up contributes in the motivation and de-motivation of the child to learn. Parents in monogamous marriages have interest in their children's education and they are interested in the number of children they can cater for. Salami (2007) is of the idea that monogamous families are always eager to see their children progressing in their education, they do everything possible to encourage them to learn, and one wonders whether it is the same with the polygamous set up. On the other hand, Whitaker (2008) states that the characteristics in a polygamous family influence the type of children that come from that family, especially if the family mothers are jealous of each other and are always quarreling.

A study carried out in Argentina by Anertt (2007) established that the influence of parents and the parental relationships is a main source of children's downfall in academic performance in Argentina. It is stated that the influence of parents and parental relationship is a main source of children's academic problems in Argentina. Having a less than satisfactory relationship with the mother or the father matched increased levels of either emotional or behavioral problems including low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, antisocial behavior and substance use. In general, parental relationships are passed on to the children. In most cases children are a reflection of the family they come from. This assertion can be a true reflection of some polygamous families where violence is the order of the day. Anertt (2007) states that the problematic relationship with the parents, either with the mother or the father was equally damaging to the child's performance. In this research, concern is directed at the influence of polygamy on the children's academic achievement.

The education in a home environment is carried out in an informal and unstructured manner, (Olopoenia, 2004). No syllabi and timetables are being followed. It is, therefore necessary that the

home sends the child to school to receive formal education. Furthermore, many students have been hindered from reaching their optimum level in academic pursuit due to negative issues emanating from home. These include lack of parental encouragement, lack of a conducive environment, poor finance and housing, poor feeding, ill health and lack of interest on the part of the students. Based on the above, increasing evidence that parental involvement is beneficial for a child's success in school. This study, therefore sought to find out the influence of polygamy on students' academic achievements in Bubi district. Available studies have examined the effects of polygamy on students' academic performance in Ondo states in Nigeria. No such study has evidently been carried out in Zimbabwe and more so in Bubi district. Filling this gap necessitated the present study.

1.3 Statement of the problem.

In an increasingly demanding and challenging world, pupils' success in academic achievement is an important aspect of their overall development because it prepares them for the challenges which they are likely to face in their future in general and in their occupations in particular. The search for potential factors affecting the academic achievements of pupils has long been a search theme because of its theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically the identification of these factors would shed light on pupils' behavior in schools and practically. These factors will assist schools to reduce both the academic and persistent risk for potential pupils by focusing on key areas for development intervention. Research shows that both cognitive and non-cognitive factors predict the academic performance of pupils at different levels of education. While considerable research has been done internationally to examine the potential factors accounting for academic achievements of pupils, owing to bad results in Bubi district almost every year, the researcher wanted to out find whether polygamy, that is prevalent in the district, is one of the contributing factors to the appalling results or not.

1.4 Research questions

1.4.1 Guiding question

How are children from polygamous families affected academically by the state of their families?

1.4.2 Sub questions

- Which conditions from polygamous families contribute to poor academic performance of their children?
- What learning problems are associated with children from polygamous families?

1.5 Significance of the study

Studies on the influence of polygamy to academic achievements are not only significant to teachers but also relevant to parents, government and pupils.

Since there is paucity of empirical studies of this nature in Zimbabwe, it is believed that the findings and implications of this study will help teachers improve their instructional delivery. Understanding the factors that affect pupils' academic achievement in schools will enable teachers to develop strategies and techniques for intervention to maximize pupils' academic success. The teachers may advice parents about aspects of the home which influence positively or negatively the pupils' academic achievements.

The findings of this study will have implications for theories in the field of socialization to understand the parenting style predominantly practiced in Bubi, which will expand our knowledge of the socialization of adolescents in our cultural context. Parents would realize that they are not by standers

in the education of their children. It is further hoped that the findings and implications would help identify their roles in the education of their children.

It is hoped that the findings and implications of this study will contribute to debate concerning the different types of parenting styles and their effects on children's academic achievement in different cultural context. It is thought that the findings and implications of the current study will be important to build and extend previous research in the area and fill the gap in empirical work since studies in this area mainly focus on Asian and some western countries and only a few African countries excluding Zimbabwe. It is hoped that the government will come up with policies of improving home environment to be conducive for good education. Finally the results of this study will ascertain directions for future researchers in this area.

It is also believed that the findings and implications of this study will benefit pupils highly, as teachers improve their understanding of the effect of home environment on performance. With this knowledge teachers are likely to improve on instructional delivery and their strategies on lesson delivery. Parents having noted the importance of home on academic achievement, it is hoped that they would strive to improve home conditions for good education to prevail. It is thought that all these improvements would be to the benefit of the child. Fullard (2005) maintains that the knowledge of the families' influences can help parents to assist their children by improving the home as an education enhancing environment

1.6 Delimitations to the study

The study was carried out in Matabeleland North's Bubi district. There were sixteen secondary schools and seventy-one primary schools including annexes. Only 5 selected secondary schools participated in

the research because of the distance involved between the schools. Data was collected from Form One, Four and Five in each school so as to limit the time to be taken in collecting data. At Form One and Five reference was also be made to their previous year's public examination performance.

The study looked into the influence of polygamy on academic achievement at selected levels in participating schools. The family background was looked at as consisting of parent's encouragement, care, facilities, parent's educational level, parent relationship and conditions at home. The pupils' academic performance was conceptualized as at current year's marks.

The area under study was characterized by gold panning activities as the source of income and assumed to fuel polygamy in the area. The area was of mixed cultural beliefs, African tradition and the vapistoli sector who view polygamy as a sign of prestige, wealth and source of labor.

1.7 Limitations

In carrying out research work of this nature, constraints were very likely to be encountered. These include, time, transport problems, cooperation of the school authority and the parents and pupils' attitudes when completing the questionnaires. Pupils might not sincerely respond to the questionnaires.

Generalisation of results to other regions such as urban and farming setups was difficult because the study was carried out in a rural mining area and it only involved a few selected schools and participants. The questionnaire, interviews and document analysis were the instruments used for this research. Use of these three was limited to teachers and pupils. The research was only limited to pupils and teachers. In future research, the researcher will employ other methods to gather as much

information as possible. Parents will also be involved so as to get detailed background information of the child.

1.8 Definition of terms

Polygamy: the custom of having more than one husband or wife at the same time. Al-krenawi (2002) defines polygamy as the relationship between either one husbands multiple wives (polygyny) or one wife multiple husbands (polyandry). Today polygamy almost exclusively takes the form of polygyny. For the sake of this research, polygamy referred to a situation whereby a man has more than one wife.

Monogamy: refers to a situation of having one partner. It was used in this research; to refer to a situation whereby a man is married to one wife.

Performance: an action or achievement considered in relation to how successful it is.

1.9 Summary

This chapters' main objective was to give a comprehensive background to the research problem. After the statement of the problem, research questions were formulated to give direction and focus to the study. This chapter went on to state the significance to the study to pupils, teachers, heads, and parents. Delimitations and limitations to its implementation were discussed. Definition of terms from the research topic followed. It was from this chapter that the actual research programme was to be conducted. The subsequent chapter focuses on the literature review which reveals the systematic exploration of issues related to how polygamy influence children's academic performance.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to conduct a literature review of this research. This is done through searching the existing literature in order to describe and analyze the similarities, differences, inconsistencies and issues within the research topic. The literature presented in this chapter deals with prior research on the influence of background to academic achievement in general and factors affecting the performance of children. The researcher looks at the influence of polygamy on the academic achievement of children in Bubi district.

2.1 Conditions that influence academic achievement of pupils.

2.1.1 Self - esteem

One argument against polygamy is that it is more likely to present harmful effects, especially towards children, than monogamy (Slonim-Nevo and Al-Krenawi: 2006). If the children are affected their performance is likely to go down. Children from polygamous families are most likely to lack confidence in them as there is no one who encourages them as they grow up. Women and children in polygamous families are at higher risk of low self-esteem, as well as depression, than women and children in non-polygamous relationships (Al-Krenawi: 2002). Children need to be constantly

encouraged and praised to gain self-confidence. The size and type of polygamy put children at risk of low self-esteem.

2.1.2 School requirements

Orphans do not usually get all the school requirements. This is so because no one is fully committed to them especially at the death of the mother in a polygamous set up. Women in a polygamous marriage have also been found to be at a greater risk of sexual diseases; including AIDS. Women are at a greater risk from men with three or more wives both as their wives and as extramarital sexual partners than from men with one wife (Mitsunanga et al, 2005). This can lead to mothers dying of AIDS. Children being orphans, no one among the remaining mothers will fend for them the way their mother used to do. With this condition at home children lack parental care and encouragement from the parents to do well and better at school.

2.1.3 Home environment

Elbe dour, Onwuegbuzie, Caridine& Abu-Saad (2002) are of the idea that children from polygamous families experience a high incidence of marital conflict, high violence, and family disruptions than do children of monogamous families. Their exposure to such environments tends to affect them psychologically. The psychological state of the mind plays a role in the child's performance in class. In view of the above Llyod& Gage-Brandon (2007) stressed that environmental conditions and the nature of social interaction that goes in the family may have some positive or negative influence on the academic achievement of a child.

At home the child is nurtured to a complete being. The environment shapes the social, physiological and psychological being of a child. Adesehimwa and Aremu (2010:263) posit that "... the family,

being a powerful influence on the child and its importance as a primary agent of socialization could in no doubt enhance or hinder the academic achievement of the child depending on the social climate in the family.” On the other, hand Ajiboye and Omolade (2005) have it that a home is bedrock of learning. If the family environment is not favoring education the child is likely to face challenges in his performance. Adika (1987) noted that conflicts are relatively easier to solve in monogamous than in polygamous families. Moreover, less psychological disturbance is envisaged in the former than the latter.

2.2 Learning problems associated with children from polygamous families

2.2.1 Children’s attitude and behavior

Problems children face at home are more likely to disturb them academically. This is because psychological problems are potential sources of trouble with learning. Elbe dour (2003), postulates that children from polygamous marriages are at a greater risk of both behavioral and developmental problems. One’s attitude or behavior has a bearing on his academic performance. As eluded to, in the study carried in Nigeria, one’s attitude and behavior has a bearing on his achievements. If the family set up molds the child to be a hooligan that same behavior will influence his performance.

2.2.2 Parental involvement

The first school the children have is the home they come from. The nature of informal education they are given at home as the bedrock of schooling will reflect in their academic performances. Parental involvement in their children’s work is reflected in their children’s performance. Studies carried out in Argentina by Arnett (2007) reveal that the influence of parents and the parental relationship is a main

source of children academic problems in Argentina. The study also revealed that the percentage of educated mothers and fathers from polygamous families is as low as 18%. In the scenario above the parental involvement in the child's academic work become low as well.

A research carried out in Ghana by Abdallah, Fuseini, Abudu, Nuhu in 2014 indicates that high level of parental involvement in children's education positively affects their learning potentials. It was discovered that parents that are very much involved in the educational activities that is engagement in homework and attending parent-teacher association meetings of their children enable them to have good academic performance. In this regard, it is pointed out that the poor academic performance of children emanates from lack of proper supervision of their children's homework. The situation at home spells doom for the child since parental involvement is critical to academic performance.

2.2.3 Educational background of parents

Argentina and Nigerian studies have revealed that polygamy is associated with parents of uneducated background, if the parents are uneducated what educational influence do they have on their children? Some children from uneducated parent background might have the urge to change the trends in their families. This will be influenced by the personal attitude towards his school work. Most of the parents in Bubi district are gold paners. This is so not because of the socio economic conditions prevailing but because they are not educated. They value money than education. The teachings they impart on their children is that 'gold' is more valuable than education, this leads to children not concentrating on their studies and rush to have the money through gold panning which somehow shapes their performance. Kellaghan (1993) affirmed that academic success of a child depends on what parents do at home. On the other hand, Stephen & Ceci (2001) observed that parent-child interactions are forces that lead to better academic performance.

Studies carried out in Ghana revealed that parental education is considered a major determinant of a child's academic performance as it influences the pupils' learning attitude. In the case of some studies they found that parents' education can affect the achievement drive of their children in their academic endeavors. More so in a study of five pupils in Nigeria, it came to light that parental level of education influenced academic performance. This means that parents with less or no education are likely to have their wards performing poorly academically. Nonetheless, some people with illiterate parents have excelled academically which challenges these findings (Akanle, 2007).

2.2.4 Home environment

Adenika (2013) posits that a negative influence on a child's emotions and psychology will consequently affect his or her academic achievement. Therefore violent trends at home tend to affect the emotions of the child. The child can develop rude behavior such that he would even love to stay at home to protect his /her mother or in protest of the prevailing situation. Absenteeism affects the general performance of the child. The conditions at home force the child to behave in a certain manner that can affect his academic performance. Uwaifo (2008) in his studies on the effects of family structure concluded that parental involvement and an individual's experiences at home play a tremendous role in building the personality of a child and making the child what he is.

Aremu (2000) is of the idea that early childhood problem may have negative impact on later life development. Children may develop negative attitude towards their school work. They might be affected by their past, which will be haunting them. Adebule (2004) asserts that emotional stability of students is a pre requisite to academic achievement. He goes on to say that psychological problems are potential sources of troubles with learning. It is therefore, against this that the study sought to determine the relationship between polygamy and the academic achievements of students from

polygamous homes. The objectives of the study were to ascertain if there is any relation between academic achievement and polygamy background.

Another home environmental factor that influences educational performance is income level of the family. For instance it was discovered that students' academic performance correlate with locality of residence and household income (Collins, 2007). Similar studies found that parents' education and household income are moderate to strong predictors of academic achievement. Parental economic status was yet discovered as a significant factor that influences a child's academic performance. This implies that pupils whose parents were poor had poor academic performance as they are unable to create a good learning environment for their wards (Egunsola, 2014). However, it is not always the case that lower income is associated with polygamy and negative learning environment for pupils as some pupils rise above the odds to succeed (Agyemang, 1993).

2.2.5 Polygamy and performance

Khasawneh (2011) feels that polygamy does not negatively affect children but affects them positively. He asserts that when the needs of children are all met in a polygamous home, children are not affected emotionally in their homes. Children from a polygamous home can assist each other in their school work. This can only happen if the environment at home made them develop a sisterhood attitude towards each other. The children will be sharing the burden of household chores therefore getting enough time to do their school work while at home. Elbedour et al (2002) state that polygamy is practiced in 850 societies across the globe, several theoretical papers have been generated particularly concerning the effects of this form of marital structure on behavior, emotional and academic adjustments of children. However, to date, no researcher has provided a summary of exact literature.

Children raised in polygamous families' exhibit development dysfunction, as reflected in many outcomes including poor performance, poor mental health status, low self-esteem, poor social adjustment, rivalry between full and half siblings (Adenike 2013). The stressors lead to distress, disagreement and marital tension, which challenge parent's ability to care for their children. When the family breaks down in this way, the children bear the greatest burden and often become the target of their parents' frustrations. The distress, hostility and pre occupation that arises from marital difficulties is transferred into parenting behavior, resulting in dysfunctional parenting and impaired outcomes for the children. A child who is exposed to stress and violence in the family setting tends to express more hostility and use more violent coping methods. Petit (2008) concurs with these sentiments when he asserts that a chronic pattern of family violence leads to elevated levels of anger, aggression and violence in children and academic performance of a child could be traced to the kind of home he comes from. Kigore, Snyder & Lentz (2010), claim that the family environment is the most powerful influence in determining a child's academic achievement. It is obvious that families have substantial influence on a child's academic performance.

Some researchers challenge the fundamental concept that polygamy has a deleterious effect on children contending that despite the multiplicity of stressors in the polygamous family unit, it does not have a negative impact on children. Mustapha (2010) contends that a polygamous family structure provides benefits for children, including more secure psychological basis for dealing with stress. Orhungu (2009) points out that, far from having a negative effect in many parts of the world, polygamy is practiced by all social groups and is an expression of a way of life which is deeply embedded in religious and cultural obligations. For example in Africa, polygamy is considered to be a most distinctive feature of an African marriage. Thus it is likely that the prevalence of parent –child conflict in polygamous families may vary as a function of the surrounding culture and its values.

Jouriles (2011) found out that children have the ability to differentiate between conflicts that are child related and other type of family conflict. The development of children within a polygamous marital structure may be best described as a culturally bound phenomenon and we must take cultural values into consideration for they may alter the direction of our hypothesis. It is on this stand point that the researcher wishes to establish the effects of polygamy on children.

At home, before the child goes to school, parents are expected to have taught her/him some general life skills. For example, the parents teach their children how to play well with others. In a case where the family is polygamous and there is no harmony, it is very difficult to teach that as the parents would be at a competition with each other. Kim (2008:34) suggests that ‘...family structure affects children’s school outcome from preschool to college.’

Time is another resource parents should invest in their children. Parents that are involved in their children’s work yield better results. Looking at a polygamous setting, it is very rare to find a wife with less than three children. Given the number of children that are there, it is very difficult for a parent to allocate equal time to all children of different levels in their school work. This leads to a situation where by parents show little or no concern at all to their children’s work as a way of trying to show equality. Kim (2008) is of the idea that the solution to improving educational outcomes begins at home, by strengthening marriage and promoting stable family formation and parental involvement.

Children develop through a number of ways. Parents can develop their children through doing arts and crafts, reading to them, teaching them how to write words and using a more complicated vocabulary around them. This can also be done by siblings to other siblings. Therefore in a polygamous setup, siblings can help each other develop. Chaleby (2009) has it that, sensitive warm and responsive type of parenting and engaging in play activities with young children boosts their social and emotional

development, communication skills and ability to focus. Nwezeh (2010) postulates that, home environment in which children are raised plays a role in the schooling outcome. For example, elementary students whose parents offer mathematics and science learning material showed greater indication towards an interest in mathematics and science activities. Thus students who receive sensitive, supportive parenting from their mothers during kindergarten tend to perform better in school. Children of parents who frequently praise and show affection to them are less likely to require classroom attention for behavior and socio emotional issues.

During adolescence, parental monitoring, the extent to which parents know their children's activities outside home and school plays a crucial role in adolescent outcome particularly when children and adolescent perceive care from their parents. Parental monitoring is associated with fewer school problems, less substance use and reduce delinquency. Moreover, parental monitoring is positively linked to social development, school grades, and school engagement, such as paying attention in class and being motivated to do well in school. Parental involvement may also vary because of parental education.

2.3 Summary

A variety of sources in the literature review indicate that polygamy has influence in the academic achievement of pupils. Some of the sources reviewed put much emphasis on the size of the family, family relationships, parents' involvement, absenteeism income and resources as the major factors that influence the academic achievement of pupils from polygamous families. The next chapter focused on the research methods and instruments that were used to gather data for the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction.

In this chapter, the researcher focuses on the methods used in gathering information for the research. This chapter covers the research design, population, the sample, and sampling techniques employed. The instruments that were used in data collection are also identified and explained as well as the data collection procedures and data presentation and analysis techniques employed.

3.1 Research design

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) have it that research design describes the practicalities of the research that provide answers to the research questions. On the other hand Fraenkel and Wallen state that a research design is a way of data collection with a view of answering the research question. In this view, it can be conceived as the methods and procedures that are resorted to in conducting a scientific research. A research design operationalises the research.

Cohen et al (2011) postulates that there are various research designs at the researcher's disposal. The researcher used the descriptive survey design for data collection. This method allowed the researcher to use a combination of instruments. It also allowed the researcher to collect data in a natural environment. It is designed in a way that allowed the researcher to obtain data concerning participants. The instruments used were questionnaires, interviews and document analysis for the purposes of this study.

3.2 Population

A population is the group to which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalized (Cohen 2011). Chiromo (2009:9) defines population as “all the individuals, units, objects or events that will be considered in the research project”. Gay & Airasion (2010) also define population as the group that attracts the researcher’s interests to the group to which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalized. Thus, population refers to the objects or elements about which the researcher seeks to obtain specific information. It is emphasized in the definitions that after drawing conclusions, it is to the population that the findings are generalized.

The target population of this study comprised of pupils from five secondary schools in Bubi district. Form One, Four and Five pupils participated as the population. Thirty pupils from polygamous families, twenty teachers, five senior teachers and five school heads at secondary schools in Bubi district were used as the sample.

3.3 Sample

Sparse distribution of population is a limiting factor in research studies. Therefore, it is not feasible to study all the elements. For this reason a sample was selected from which the study was carried out. Cohen et al (2011) define a sample as a smaller group or subset of the total population. A sample is simply a subset of the population. The concept of a sample arises from the inability of the researcher to test all individuals in a given population. This indicates that a sample is an extract from the population to be studied, the result from which will be generalized to the larger group which is the population.

In this study, two pupils per level per school were selected to represent the population. One teacher per level per school was selected. The heads and senior teachers were interviewed. The total number of

pupils who participated was thirty and twenty five teachers as only five out of sixteen schools participated in the study.

3.3.1 Sampling procedure

Sampling is the process by which inference is made to the whole by examining a part, (Bogdon&Bicklen,2007). Frankel & Wallen (2008) view sampling as the selection of groups rather than individuals. The subjects in a particular group are then studied. For the purpose of this study the researcher employed snowball sampling in conjunction with simple random sampling to select respondents in selected schools in Bubi district.

The researcher went to selected schools and used snowball technique to identify one pupil from a polygamous family. The selected pupil assisted in identifying other pupils from similar background. When the pupils were identified the researcher grouped the pupils according to their grades, for example, form one, form four, and form five, from each group the researcher employed simple random technique to select two participants per level. The researcher selected teachers who will be having students as participants.

3.4 Research instruments

These are the tools used to collect data for the research. The research instruments that were used in this study are questionnaire, interviews and document analysis.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Burton & Bastlst (2009) define a questionnaire as a list of questions that respondents can answer. It is seen as a set of questions for elicit information. For Burke and Christensen (2012), a questionnaire is a

self-report data-collection instruments that each participant fills in as part of a research study. Researchers use questionnaires to obtain information about the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personalities and behavioral intentions of research participants, that is, they measure many different kinds of characteristics using questionnaires. Chiromo (2009 p.24), asserts that a questionnaire is a form of enquiry which consist of systematically compiled and organized series of questions that are sent to the population sample. A special questionnaire was developed known as influence of polygamy schedule. It had items categorized into components namely family influence, polygamous family conditions and learning problems associated with children from polygamous families. The use of the questionnaire was appropriate as stated by Leedy (2009) who says that a questionnaire can be an instrument for collecting data beyond the physical reach of the observer. The researcher used open ended questions, which are simple, straight forward and easy for the pupils. They were easy to administer as pupils were in a classroom and generally pupils did not have the time to consult others. This helped to minimize pupils' deliberate lies, hence achieved a fair validity.

3.4.2 Interviews

Interview is defined by Cohen, Manion & Morriison (2011:409), as “an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest...for knowledge production”. The researcher used the interview to get more information. Docherry & Sandelowski (2011), state that children have been regarded as the best source of information about themselves. To extract the information from the pupils who have difficulties in English the researcher translated to Ndebele. The interview can be used as a way of understanding answers from the questionnaire. The interviewee is given the platform to explain him /herself on issues that are complex. Nonverbal cues are detected in an interview; they are a source of information to the researcher in case of sensitive issue to the respondent. Interviews are time consuming, and at times lead the respondents to the direction. They are open to researcher bias. The

researcher will assure all the respondents that information obtained will be treated with confidentiality and solely used for the study purposes.

3.4.3 Document analysis

To collect more data, other than data from the questionnaires and interviews the researcher analyzed the class registers, progress books and child study record books. Barker (1986) argues that records of work are essential for the assessment of students' performance. The register was used to check for the regular attendance of pupils and absenteeism. The progress record was used to check for academic performance in class tests and exercises. To check academic background of parents and the social, physical and psychological background of pupils under study, a child study was used. Through document analysis, the researcher was able to make conclusions on general performance, attendance and family background.

3.5 Data collection procedures.

The researcher first obtained a letter of approval from the department in order to go to the ministry for permission to get into the field. The researcher then used the letter to get approval to go to schools from the Provincial Education Director of Matabeleland North province. With the letter of approval the researcher went to schools where the permission was sought from the school heads.

After getting permission from the school heads, form one, four and five teachers were approached. The pupils were selected and put into one classroom and the questionnaire was administered. The pupils were requested to answer all the questions. About 10 minutes was used to complete the questionnaire schedule. Meanwhile the teachers were completing their questionnaires. After teachers and pupils had finished, the researcher interviewed the heads and senior teachers who were present.

Consent of all the participants was obtained from the provincial education director, Matabeleland North province, from the respective heads of schools, from the teachers and pupils. The participants were given detailed information about the study. They were informed of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time if they so wished and also to withdraw their information. The participants were also assured of the respect of person, guaranteed that anonymity and confidentiality in respect to their name and information were to be professionally observed.

3.6 Data analysis plan.

Yin (1994) stated that data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating and otherwise re-combining evidence to address the initial proposition of the study. Creswell (2009) alludes that data analysis is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions and writing memos throughout the study. It is done concurrently with gathering data, making interpretations and writing reports. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) view data analysis as a process that involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data. This means making sense of data in terms of participants' definition of the situation, noting patterns, themes and categories. The responses from questionnaires were analyzed per question, with the researcher developing analysis from the information supplied by the participants. Responses from interviews were coded from one to eight. After recording the interviews the researcher transcribed the interviews. The researcher identified and described patterns from the points of view of respondents and grouped them into themes which then presented and explained these patterns using tables and graphs. The researcher used different methods to present data which is both statistical and descriptive. It is through data analysis that conclusions were drawn and recommendations made.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

3.7.1 Validity

Cohen et al (2011) defines validity as the extent to which a data collection instrument measures what it meant to measure. One aspect of validity that the researcher sought to attain was external validity. This according to Frankel and Wallen (2003) is the degree to which the result can be generalized to the whole population. Validity insures that the findings are true representation of the population. Validity exists in two forms, that is, external and internal validity. Internal validity refers to whether the researcher is measuring what ought to be measured. The researcher was aware of a number of factors that could affect internal validity. Such factors included maturation, sample selection and experimental mortality. To counter the adverse effects of these in this researcher carried out interviews in the morning to counter maturation problems. By sticking to a sample of teachers, senior teachers, head and pupils the researcher sought to address the selection factor as an internal issue. The researcher sought to target 55 respondents but cater for experimental mortality, 47 questionnaires were distributed.

External validity refers to where the research results can be generalized to respondents outside the sample. The researcher sought to ensure external validity through sample respondent selection from a population. Rather than to stick to pupils in general, a deliberate attempt was made to include only those pupils from polygamous families. The sample selected was representative of the group to which the results were generalized. In that way the results of the study could be generalized to the population.

3.7.2 Reliability

To try to ensure that the data collected in this study was reliable, the researcher used data collection triangulation in order to offset and complement the weaknesses and strengths of the different methods. The researcher sought to obtain independent, objective results and analysis that reflected reality, results that were repeatable in the event of another study on the same topic. The choice of sample and use of documentary data were meant to enhance the reliability of the study's findings.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Before the study was conducted research participants were approached, the purpose of the study was explained to them and consent to participate was sought from them. The researcher assured them that the information sought was not to be shared with anyone other than those from the Midlands State University who were directly involved in the conduct of the research. This was meant to ensure that subjects' confidentiality would not be breached and that the information gathered was not to be used improperly or used in a way that would cause harm to respondents. They were also advised that they were at liberty to access research once completed. The researcher made sure that those completing questionnaires remained anonymous and the questionnaire were drafted in such a way that did not directly violate the rights of the respondents. Anonymity ensured that the source of the information was not disclosed. Throughout the data collection period, the researcher ensured that all appointments made in advance were respected and never at any one time to invade the privacy of respondents or behave in a way that caused respondents' discomfort or anxiety.

3.9 Data management

Mason cited by Pauline and Miriam (2002) contends that computers permit more efficient data management and, importantly, keeps records and dates of various file transactions. Data management is a theoretical task as well as an administrative one since it involves theoretical decisions on what counts as data in a particular project. The researcher relied heavily on the computer as storage and sorting facility. Flash was used as backup in case the computer was corrupted. The researcher e-mailed the data to the supervisor as a way of keeping the data safe. A hard copy of the data was also kept. Different files were opened on the computer to capture returns as they were received during data collection period (completed questionnaires, interview transcripts and documentary evidence).

3.10 Summary

This chapter has explained the various options available for the execution of a research project and the logic for the selection of a particular approach, strategy and methods. In summing up, one can conclude that overall methodology used in the study was based on a phenomenological philosophy though certain proportions of positivism were employed. It was apparent that there would be a dominance of subjectivity rather than objectivity (having a high involvement by the researcher) in this study on the influence of polygamy to academic achievement of children in Bubi district.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the research on the influence of polygamy on academic achievement of pupils are presented, analyzed and discussed. The data presented were obtained from five schools in Bubi district. The data relating to teachers' perceptions on influence of polygamy to pupils' performance, the issues that arise in polygamy, the family size in polygamous families, level of income, school attendance, fees, and family living conditions are presented, analyzed and discussed in line with the objectives of the study in Chapter 1 and in the context of the literature reviewed. Qualitative data were gathered and used in the study. The responses from both the questionnaires and the interviews were categorized, presented and analysis was carried out in a way that attempted to answer the research questions.

4.1 Demographic data of respondents

4.1.1 Sex of respondents

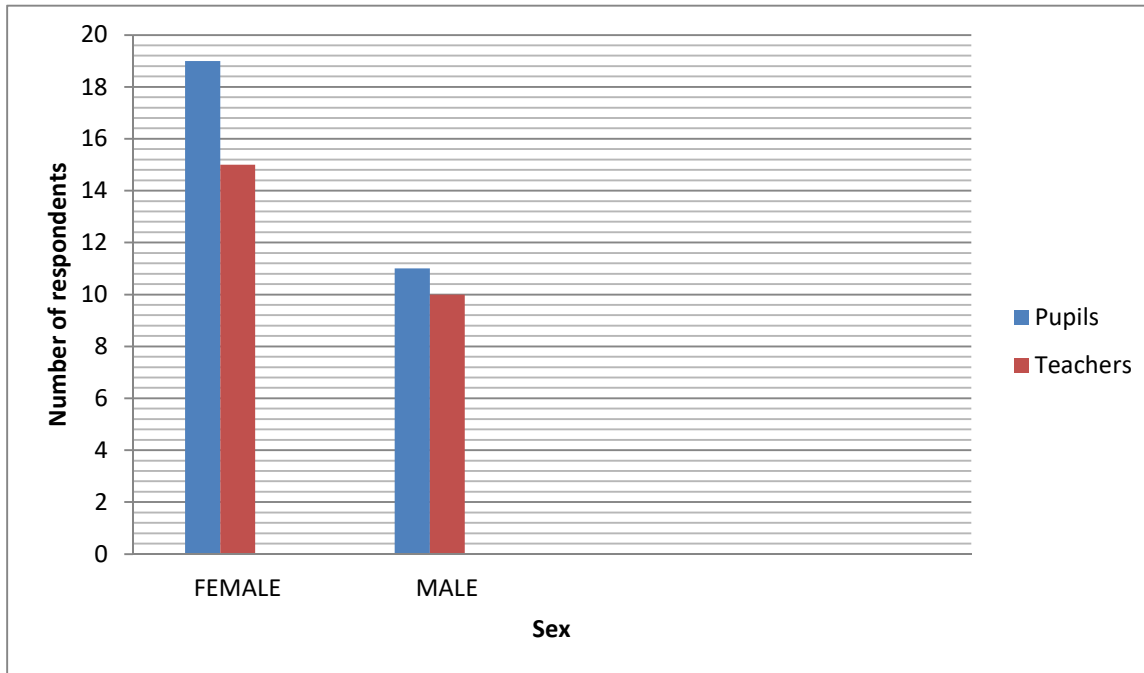


Fig 4.1: Distribution of respondents according to sex

Fig 4.1 shows the sex distribution of respondents, both teachers and pupils according to sex. The graph shows that generally males and females participated in the study though there were more females than males. Nineteen female pupils, 15 female teachers, 11 male pupils and 10 male teachers participated in the study. The graph shows that there were more females than males in the population sample. Sixty two percent of the sample were females whereas males constituted 38% of the population sample. This implies that there were more females than males in the population sample who participated in the study.

4.1.2 Ages of participants

Table 4.1: Age distribution

AGE RANGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
11-13	3	10
14-16	18	60
17-20	9	30
TOTAL	30	100

Table 4.1 shows the ages of the respondents. Ages of the participants ranged from 11 years to 20 years. Only three pupils within the age range of 11-13 were in Form One and they were females. 14-16 was the age range with most participants. In this range most were in Form One and some in Form Four. Some of the pupils in the age range of 17-20 were in Form Four. The chronological age of some of the participants was no longer consistent with their level of education, contrary to the general expectation. Interviewee X4 stated that most pupils drop school to join gold panning and come back when the gold levels are low which could be the reason for discrepancies in ages.

4.1.3 Educational level of pupils as respondents

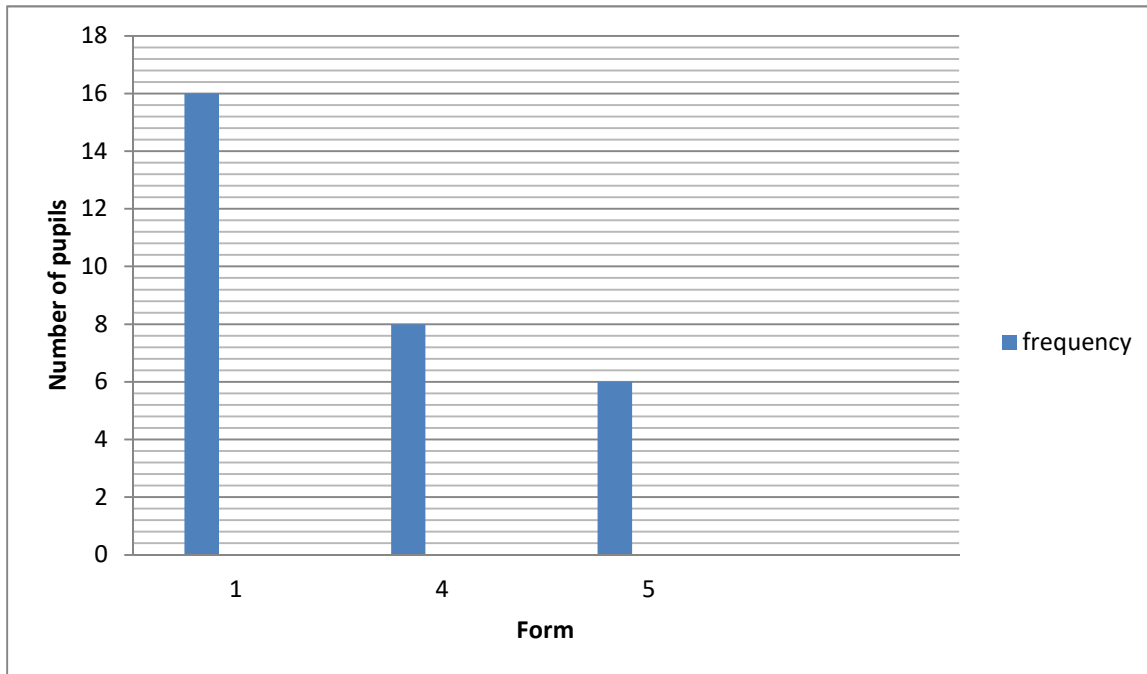


Fig 4.2 Educational level of pupils as respondents

Fig 4.2 shows the educational level of pupils who participated in the study. Most participants were in Form One. This was so because a few of Form Four and Five children came from the polygamous families. In Form One, 16 pupils participated, in Form Four, 8 pupils participated and in Form Five only 6 pupils participated.

4.1.4 Academic qualification of teachers

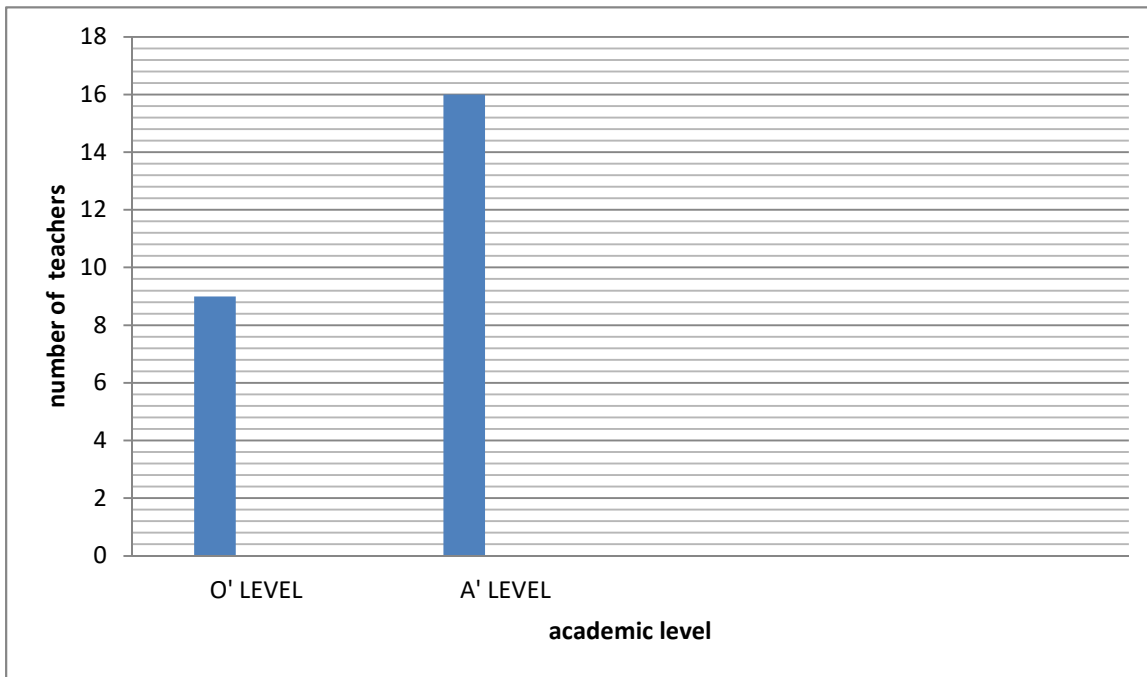


Fig 4.3 Academic qualification of teachers

Teachers who participated in the study mostly did their A levels. Fig 4.5 shows details of the exact numbers. Only 8 teachers trained to be secondary school teachers from O level, while 16 teachers trained after doing their A Levels.

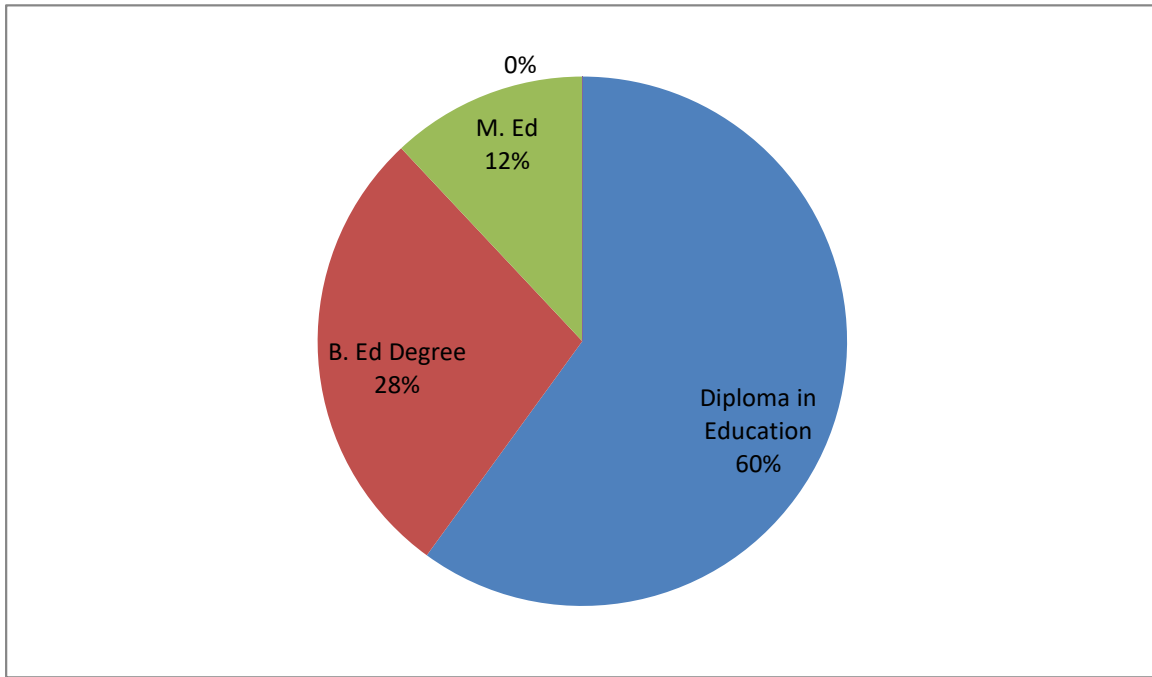


Fig 4.4 Teachers' professional qualifications

The professional qualification of teachers who participated in the study are shown in fig 4.3. Diploma holders constituted 60% of the sample. Those with general degrees of various subjects were second on the list, constituting 28%. Teachers with masters degree were only a few and had 12%. Most of them were either a Head or a senior teacher at the school. Teachers' professional qualifications helped the researcher to do away with those who were not qualified teachers. The researcher wanted to deal with teachers who were qualified for this profession and knew the ethics when dealing with pupils.

4.1.5 Family sizes

Table4.2. Number of family members of pupil respondents

NUMBER IN A FAMILY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
0-5	1	3.33
6-10	4	13.33
11-15	7	23.33
16-20	10	33.33
21-25	6	18.18
26+	2	6.66
Total	30	100

Table 4.2 shows the family sizes of respondents. Only 1 pupil came from a family with up to five members this constituted 3.33% of the sample. 13.33% were participants whose their families were in the range of 6-10 were only four. Seven pupils had their family members in the range of 11-15 they constituted 23.33% of the sample. The range 16-20 was the dominating range. Ten of the participants came from families with at least 16 members and 20 at most, they had the highest percentage which is

33.33., only 6 pupils came from families with 21- 25 members and only 2 participants came from families with 26 and above members. One of the participants came from a family of 4. These figures included siblings from other mothers and their mothers and the family head.

4.2 Number of mothers per home

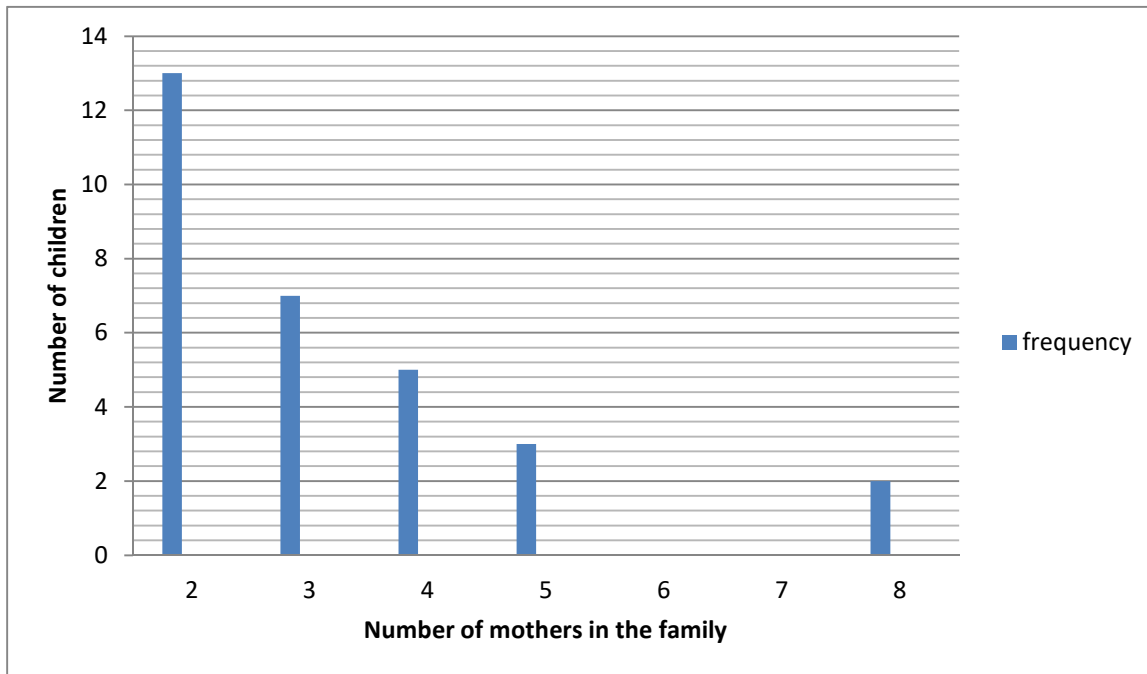


Fig 4.5 Number of mothers in polygamous families.

Fig 4.6 shows the number of mothers for the participants. Pupil participants who had 2 mothers in their families were 13. It was the most common group. Those who had 3 mothers were 7. They were the second highest group. The number of pupil participants with 4 mothers in their families was 5. Three pupils had their families with 5 mothers while there was no pupil who had 6& 7 mothers in their families. Only 2 pupils had their families having 8 mothers.

4.3 Parents' occupations

4.3.1 Fathers' occupation

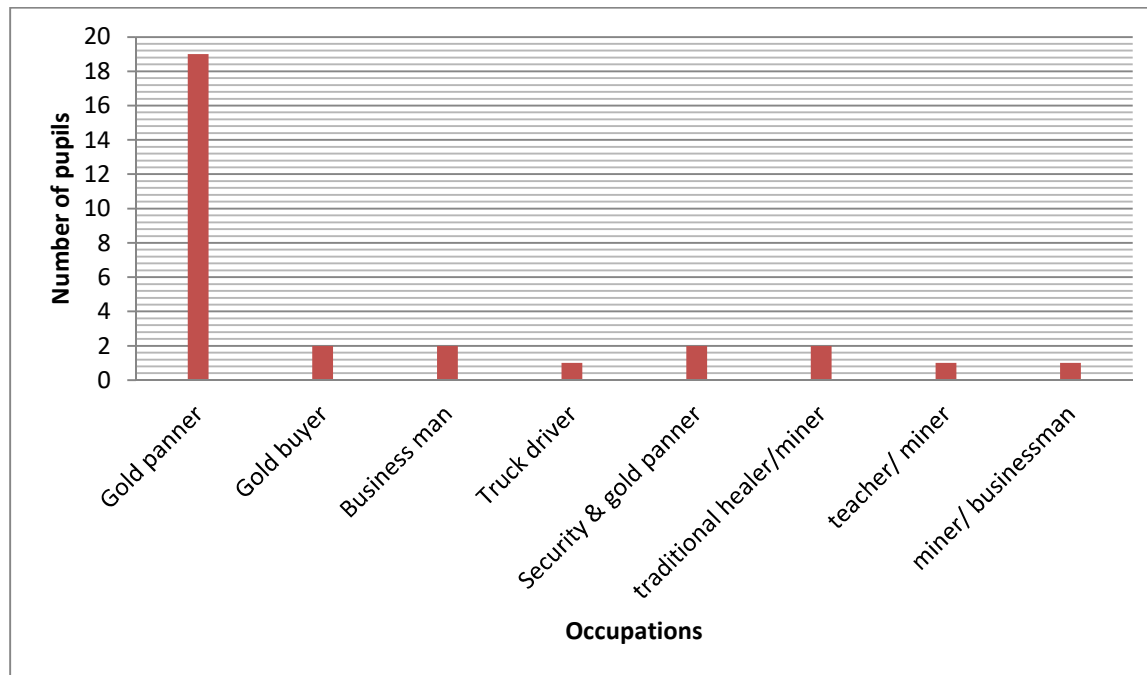


Fig 4.6 Fathers' occupation

Figure 4. 6 shows the occupations of respondents' fathers. Most pupils had their fathers as gold paners, they often refer to them as miners. Eighteen of the respondents' fathers relied on gold panning as a source of income. Two pupils had their fathers as gold buyers and 2 pupils also had their parents as business men. They owned shops in the community. Only one pupil had his father being a truck driver. The father drove the stamp mills' trucks which ferry the ore from the mines to the stamp mills for processing. There were 2 pupils who had their fathers being a security guards at the mine and at the same time being gold paners. Children who had their fathers being traditional healers and miners were two. Their parents owned registered mines while practicing as traditional healers. Only 1 pupil had his/her father being a teacher and a miner. The teacher had a mine in the area and was teaching in the same

area. The researcher looked into the occupation of a parent so as to use it as a lens to see how parents view the education of their children.

4.3.2 Mothers' occupations

Table 4.3 Mothers' occupations

OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF PUPILS WITH MOTHERS IN THE OCCUPATION
Vendor	6
Storekeeper	2
Teacher	2
Housewife	20
Total	30

Table 4.3 shows the occupations of pupils' mothers. Most pupils had their mothers as housewives. Twenty pupils out of 30 had their mothers in that category. 6 pupils had their mothers as vendors. Two pupils had their mothers as teachers and two as storekeepers. Table 4.3 reveals that only two pupils had professionally qualified mothers, while 28 pupils had their mothers with no professional qualifications. Mothers spend most of their times with children at home and their influences has an impact on the life of the child.

4.4 Family relationships

4.4.1 Relationships amongst mothers

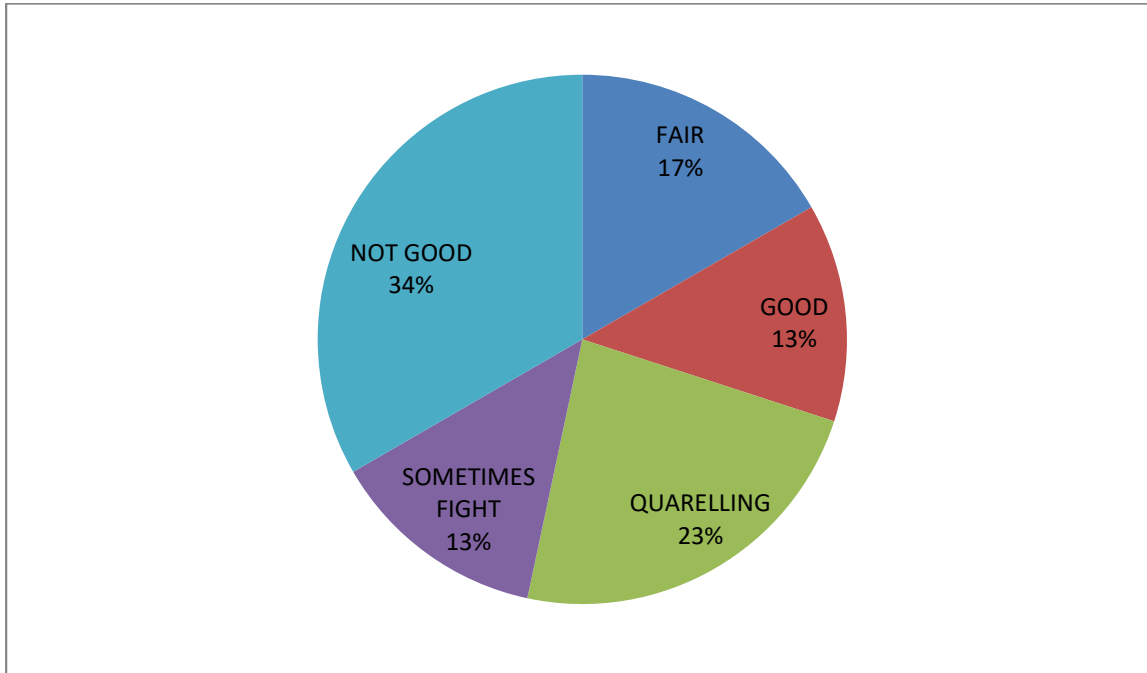


Fig 4.7 Relationship among mothers

Fig 4.7 shows the relationship among mothers of respondents. 34% of pupils indicated that their mothers' relationship is not good. 13% of them stated that their mothers sometimes fought. 23% indicated that their mothers quarreled. Besides the bad relationships that existed in other families there are other pupils who came from families with mothers who related well. 17% indicated that their mothers related fairly while 13% indicated that their mothers' relationship was good.

4.4.2 Relationship among siblings

TABLE 4.4 Siblings relationships

RELATIONSHIP	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
GOOD	7	23.33
FAIR	14	46.67
BAD	9	30
TOTAL	30	100

Table 4.4 shows the relationships amongst siblings. Seven pupils indicated that they related very well with their sibling from other mothers. They indicated that the relationship was good. The pupils stated that the relationship was that the elderly children were given respect regardless of the mothers' position in the family. Fourteen pupils indicated that their relationship was fair. They indicated that without parental involvement they related well. Nine pupils cited bad relationships. Children cited parental interference as the reason for bad relationships. Interviewee X6 stated that pupils related well if the parents' relationship was good. The pupils emulated what they saw or heard from their parents.

4.5 Academic level of parents

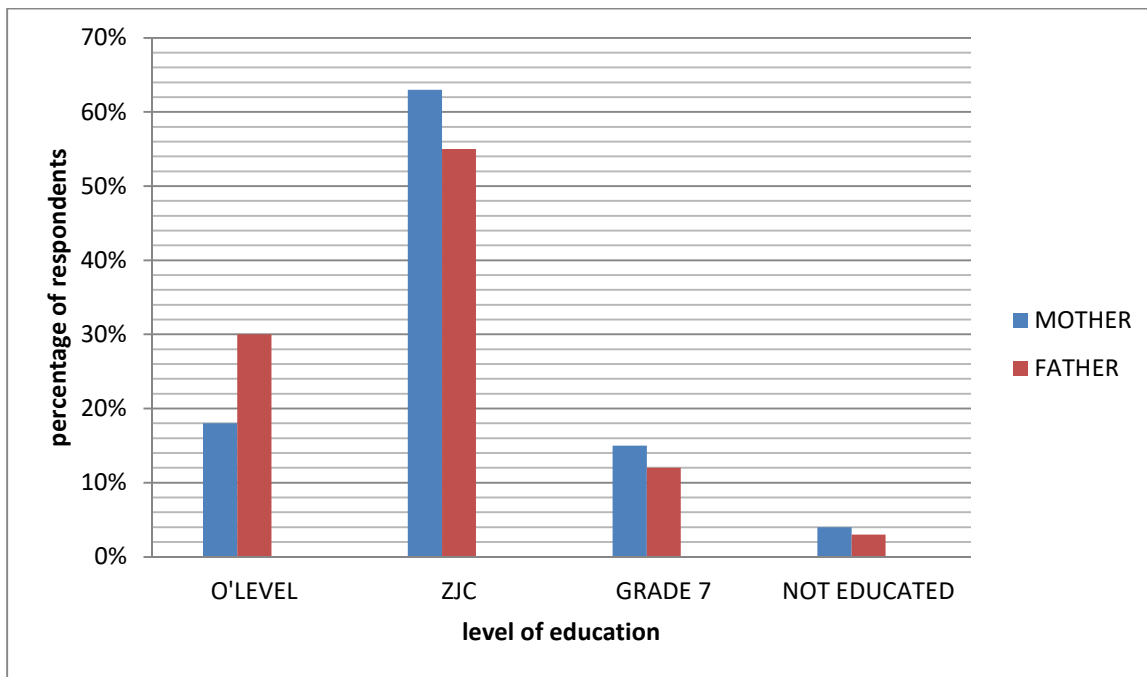


Fig 4.8 Level of education of parents

Fig 4.8 analysis indicates that, most parents ended in ZJC. And that only a few did not go up to grade 7. 96% of pupils indicated that their mothers went to school. 18% of them went up to form four, 63% went to secondary school but did not finish O level. 15% went as far primary level. While the remaining 4% indicated that their mothers did not go to school. 12 % indicated that their fathers ended in grade 7 and did not proceed to secondary education. 85% went up to secondary school, but only 30% completed their O levels, while 55% ended before O level which was indicated in the table as ZJC. Only 3% did not go to school.

4.6 Treatment by other mothers

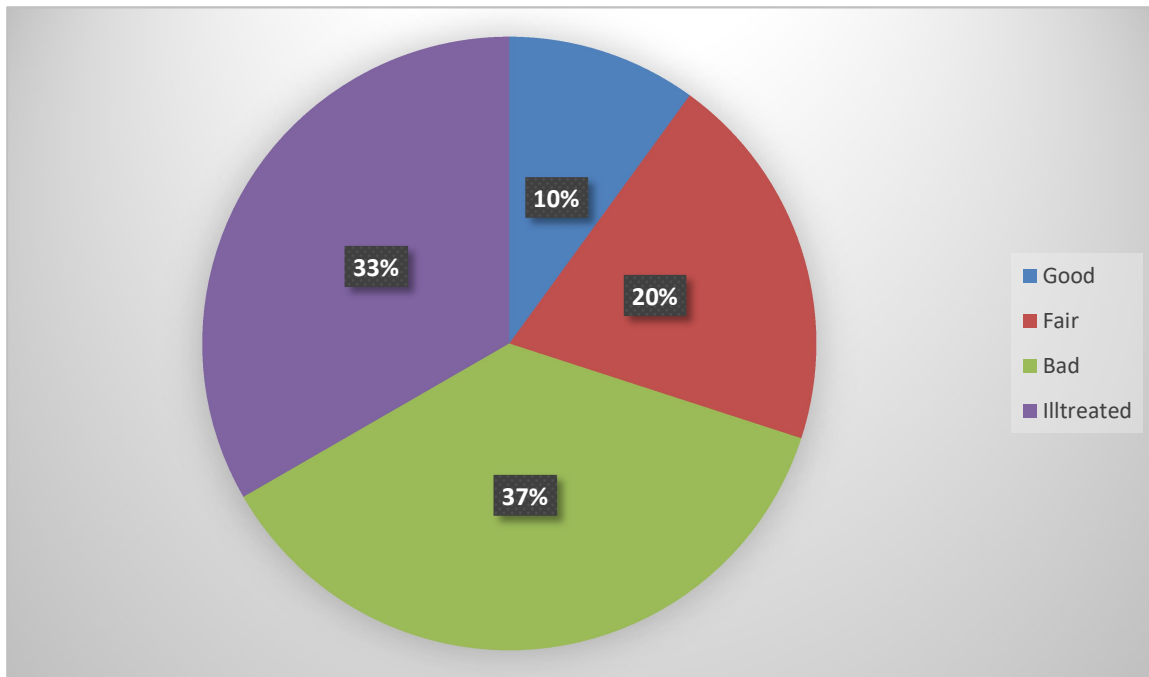


Fig 4.9 Respondents' perceptions to treatment by their other mothers.

In general pupils expressed that in most cases their treatment is not fair in the absence of their mother. Pupils indicated that they are not given attention when their mother is not there. 30% of the pupils showed fair to good response. However there are some pupils that indicated abused, beaten up, not given food in the absence of their mothers. This came from 70% of the pupils from the sample. This has a psychological and emotional effect on the child.

4.7 School fees and school requirements.

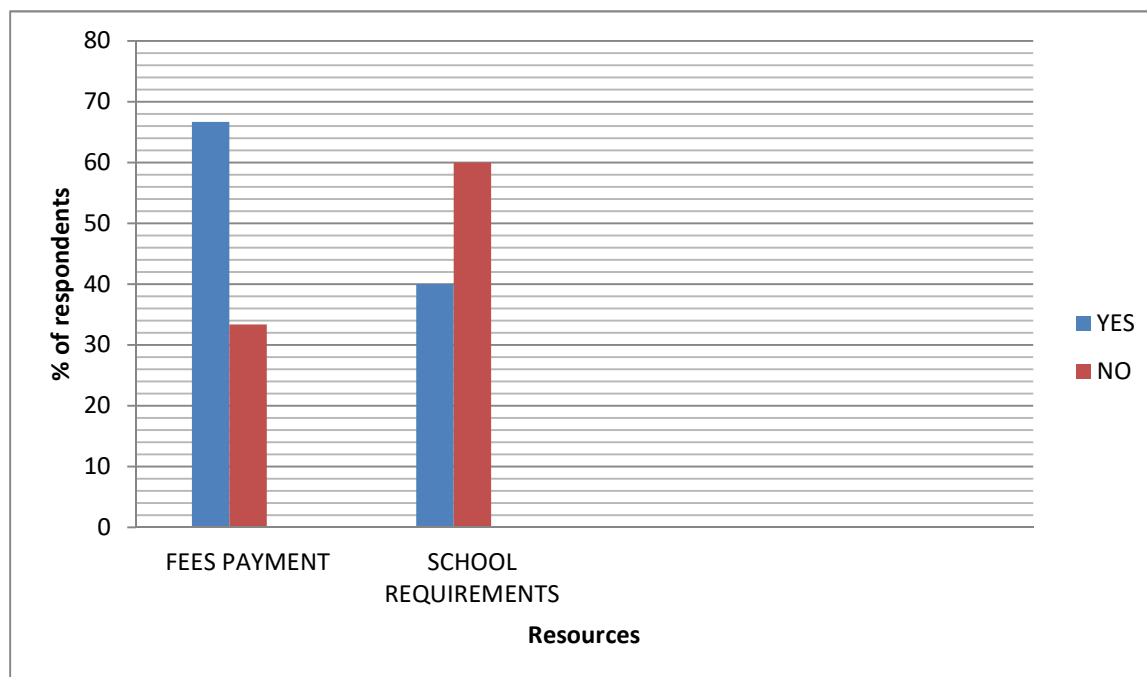


Fig 4.9 Fees and school requirements

Question 15 and 16 on the questionnaire asked pupils whether they got all their requirements and had their fees paid on time. Sixty six comma sixty six percent of the pupils indicated that their fees were paid on time. Thirty three comma thirty three percent said at times it was paid on time but in most cases it is not paid on time. Pupils indicated that school requirements like stationery, uniforms and other necessities were not of priority to their parents as only 40% indicated that they got all the school requirements on time while 60% of the pupils indicated that they did not get all the school requirements.

4.8 Attendance

Pupils' attendance ranged from fair to good. From what most pupils indicated, many indicated that they were sometimes absent due to varying reasons. Teachers through their questionnaires also

indicated that pupils from polygamous families were sometimes absent from school citing varying reasons. The graph below shows responses from both teachers and pupils when asked whether they went to school daily. The responses include pupils', teachers, and interviewees.

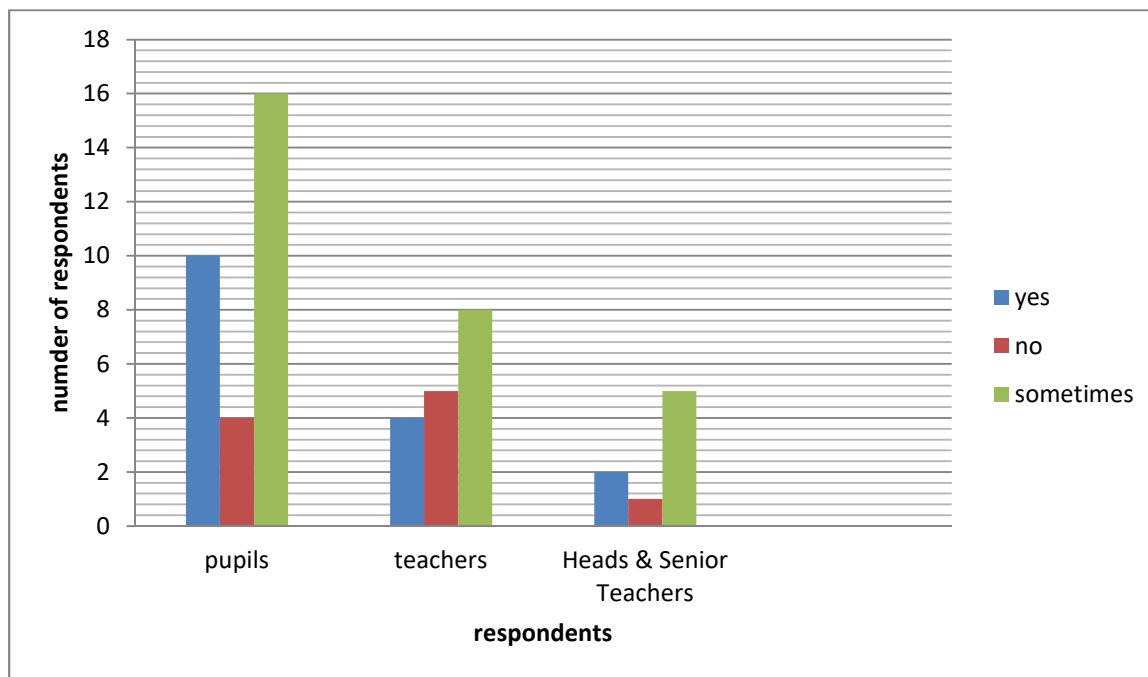


Fig 4.10 Pupils daily attendance

Question number 7 on the interview guide and question number 8 of the questionnaire for teachers sought to establish the attendance trends of pupils from polygamous families. Fig 4.10 shows the responses by pupil, teachers and those who were interviewed on the attendance of pupils from polygamous families. Ten pupils, four teachers and two interviewees indicated that pupils from polygamous families were usually absent from school. Those who responded by saying no were four pupils, five teachers and one interviewee. Whereas those who said pupils from polygamous families were sometimes absent were sixteen pupils, eight teachers and five interviewees stated that they were sometimes absent. From information gathered from document analysis there was a trend of absenteeism amongst pupils and it was not only peculiar to pupils from polygamous families.

4.9 Reasons for absenteeism

Reasons given for absenteeism by pupils, teachers and interviewees varied. Most pupils stated that they were asked to look after their siblings whenever their parents went to the stamp mills. Helping in the mines, late payment of fees, herding cattle, family issues, no school requirements, no provision food and lack of encouragement from home were some of the reasons given for absenteeism.

4.10 General performance of children from polygamous homes

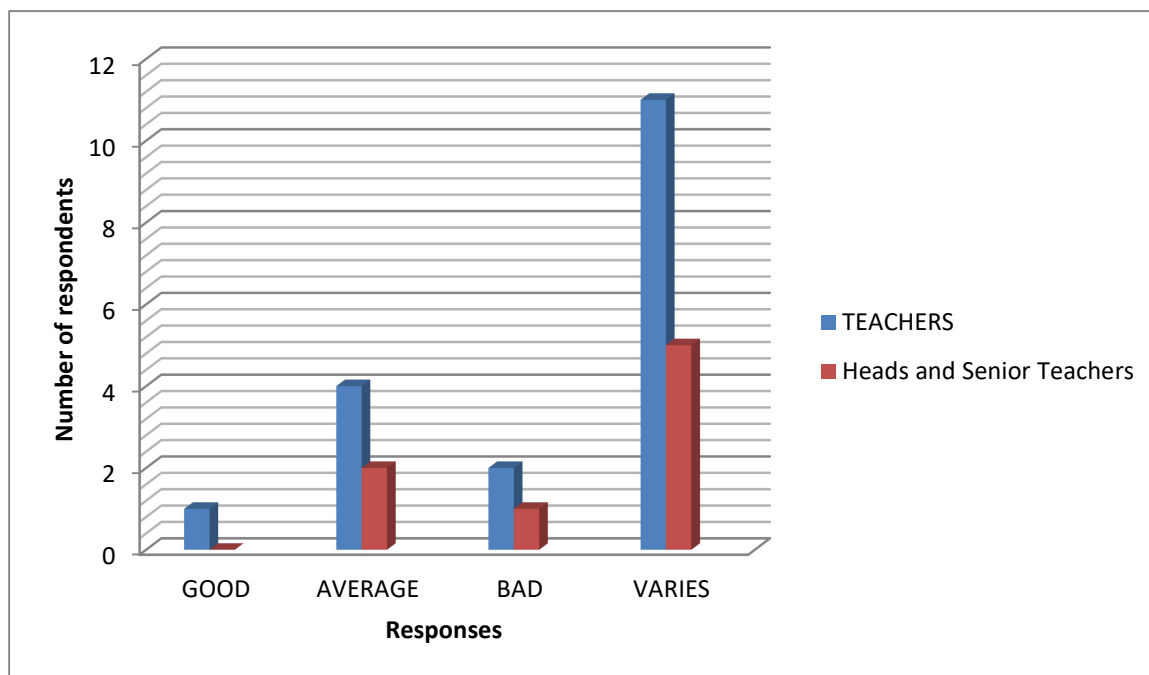


Fig 4.11 Performance of children from polygamous families

Fig 4.10 shows the responses from teachers and interviewees about the general performance of pupils from polygamous families. One teacher indicated that the performance was generally good. Four teachers and 2 interviewees indicated that the performance was generally average. On the bad part, 2 teachers and 1 interviewee were of that idea. Eleven teachers and 5 interviewees indicated that pupils' performance varied from one child to another. An analysis of progress records revealed that the

performance of pupils from polygamous families was not at all pleasing. There were some whose performance was average who showed that they could perform well than what they were currently doing.

4.11 School heads and senior teachers' perspectives on poor performance

TABLE 4.5 Perspectives for poor performance

REASONS FOR POOR PERFORMANCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Absenteeism	4
Poor motivation	7
Lack of learning resources	6
Social issues	8
Total	30

Table 4.12 shows the most popular reasons teachers and interviewees gave for poor performance of pupils. Social issues topped the list with eight respondents cited social issues, like family set ups relationships at home, as the major issues for poor performance. This came as a response to questions number 5 and 7 of the teachers' questionnaire and questions number 2 and 3 of the interview guide for senior teachers and heads of school. Interviewee X8 had this to say

Most pupils have the potential to perform above average but the issues at home come in to play and hinder them from achieving their goal. Psychologically pupils are disturbed by the state of the affairs at home as proven by the deteriorating performance.

Interviewee X2 had a different view from X7. She had this to say:

Some pupils have the zeal to change what is at hand and thereby working hard to achieve better result. These pupils are performing better than those from monogamous families. Pupils from polygamous families need to be motivated to overcome their social situation.

4.12DISCUSSION

4.12.1Challenges faced by pupils from Polygamous Families.

Teachers, senior teachers and school heads cited inadequate finance, social issues, psychological issues, environmental issues, lack of parental support in doing their school work as the major challenges faced by pupils from polygamous families. Interviewee X7, when asked about these challenges had this to say,

“Most pupils from polygamous homes are affected financially due to the huge families they come from. Mam you will find out that from one family there will be 11 pupils of school going age and they all need fees and other resources but it won't be easy especially during the first and third term as the gold level will be very low”.

This is in line with what was said by Abdallah et al (2014), when they said that another home environmental that influences educational performance is the income level of the family. They went on to state that parental economic status was yet another significant factor that influences a child's academic performance. From the responses, financial issues were cited as one of the contributing factors to pupils' poor performance.

4.12.2 Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in pupils work was also stated as the major contributing factors to poor performance. Interviewee X5: when asked how parents' noninvolvement in their children's school work was influencing their performance had to say:

“Supervision ensures that pupils do their work. When parents come for consultation days they actually see where their pupils lack and they have a one to one chat with the teacher, but in this area most parents from these polygamous families are not even bothered to come on the consultation days or let alone encourage their pupils to do their work. At times this is due to the number of pupils they will be having at the school, unpaid levies and lack of school requirements that make them to dodge the consultation days. In such cases pupils do as they wish knowing that their parents won't come to consult”.

Research indicates that high level of parental involvement in children's education positively affects their learning potentials (Nyako 2011). Abdulazziz et al (2006) echoed the same sentiments when they said that if parents are not involved in their children's work pupils have a tendency of lacking interest as well.

4.12.3 Home Environment

Teachers and interviewees cited home environment as one of the factors that contribute to the poor performance of pupils. Teachers stated that through their child study, they gathered information about pupils' home background, parental level of education and the family size. They indicated that parents who did not finish or do well in their O' levels found it difficult to assist their children with their school work. Teachers cited parents' level of education as one of the factors that influence pupils' academic performance. As cited in the literature review, studies carried out in Nigeria indicated that

parental level of education influenced pupils' academic performance. This means that parents with less or no education are likely to have their children performing badly academically.

Home environment includes family structure, socio economic status of parents and level of education of parents. Teachers indicated that family structure somehow affected pupils in their performance. Interviewee X3, after being asked to elaborate on how family structure influenced performance said:

“Respect is taught at home. Children are taught how to live amicably at home. Therefore some children who come from polygamous homes at times find it difficult to have good moral. Even when you are talking to her/him in general he/ she is quick to defend. Some of them are used to being beaten up at every blink of an eye, such pupils are psychologically and emotionally affected to an extent that they can't express themselves freely and clearly. This affected their self-esteem.

Pupils from polygamous families are exposed to different kinds of treatment at home which influence their academic achievement. As it has been alluded to under questions number 10, 11, 14, 16, 17 and 19 from the pupils' questionnaire, question number 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 in the questionnaire for teachers and question 6 of the interview guide, the responses exposed the conditions that pupils are exposed to at home. The teachers' views concur with findings in the study carried out in Wa Municipality in Ghana by Abdallah et al (2014) which discovered that pupils from two parent homes performed academically better than those from multi parent homes. They indicated that it was so because the two parent families provided a better learning environment for their children.

The findings from the study imply that pupils are grossly affected by their home environment. For a parent with 5 pupils in a school where all need attention after school, homework becomes a load to the parent who will also have spent the day doing house hold chores. If each child needs roughly 30 minutes of her time she has to spare roughly 2 hours 30 minutes with them doing their homework.

Family sizes come into play when it comes to the distribution of attention amongst children and household chores. Parents with more children in most times fail to give their children attention due to the size of the family. Feda (2008) echoes the same sentiments when he says that family size and birth order are among features of polygamous households' characteristics that are determinants of a child's schooling. Llyod and Gage-Brandon (2004) are of the same idea when they state that big family size exerts a negative effect on children's schooling due to the dilution effect. When discussing home environment, many issues come into play.

Family relationships also contribute to the home environment. If children are in good relationships with siblings from other mothers, they can help each other but if the relationships are sour as indicated by responses to question 11 on pupils' questionnaire. Caplan (2002) in Diaz (2004) stated that studies showed that the cohesion and family relationships proved to be the major influence in the academic achievement of pupils, since some pupils indicated that relationships at home are not all that good.

Generally most pupils came from families where the relationship between mothers was not very good. Family relationships play a major role in the grooming of children. Arem (2012) concurs with the researcher when he says that a family is a place where pupils live with their parents or guardians and is the place where they are groomed. If the family relationships are not very good as indicated by the researchers' findings the child will be groomed in a negative way and it has influence on his/her academic achievements. Collins (2007) supports the findings where he says, the family being a powerful influence on the child and its importance as a primary agent of socialization could in no doubt enhance or hinder the academic achievement of the child depending on the social climate in the family. As indicated by not good and quarreling in the chart above, pupils tend to develop emotional problems and they tend to influence their achievements. Adebile (2004), states that, psychological problems are potential source of trouble with learning. Ogbemudia and Aiassa (2013) concur with the

findings where they say, the family is the immediate surroundings in which the pupils find themselves. It is also referred to as the physical and psychological conditions that affect pupils

4.12.4 Absenteeism

Teachers and interviewees were of the idea that absenteeism influences performance. Interviewee X4 stated that pupils from polygamous families were on top of the least of being absent from school. He had this to say,

“Some of these pupils from polygamous families have the potential of performing better but they are always absent which makes them miss most lessons. Missing lessons affects their performances.”

Oleh et al (2011) citing Moore (2003) concur with interviewee X2 when they say that when attending class students will benefit more knowledge through direct contact with teachers’ review of notes, discussions, illustrations and demonstrations. Thus, this will help students to learn better and be able to get better grades during final examination. Regular attendance is related to students’ commitment of pursuing education at school. Richard and Wanga (2012) are in support of this view when they say that, student absenteeism affects academic performance and that the levels of students’ absenteeism mattered in academic performance.

Teachers indicated that pupils from polygamous families were being absent for reasons that were termed petty by interviewee x3. Looking after siblings was one of the major reasons that were given by both teachers and pupils. Pupils, who come from big families as seen from the registers and pupils’ questionnaires were the ones who were absent most. Parents, due to family sizes could not afford to hire maids there by absenting pupils to look after their siblings.

4.13 Summary

The chapter has presented data, analysed and discussed the findings on the influence of polygamy on the academic achievements of pupils. Findings on the effects of absenteeism, family structure, family income, family relationships and challenges faced by pupils were also presented, analysed and discussed. The next chapter presents conclusions and recommendations to be adopted so as to assist pupils from polygamous families.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher highlights the main conclusions drawn from the findings established by the study on the influence of polygamy on academic achievements of pupils. Recommendations and final remarks that are linked to the study are also stated in this chapter.

5.1 Summary

The study investigated into the influence of polygamy on academic performance of pupils. The researcher used the descriptive survey design. The instruments used to collect data were questionnaires, interviews and document analysis.

The target population of this research comprised of sixteen schools in Bubi district with over one hundred teachers and over one thousand pupils in those schools. The researcher used snow balling and random sampling to select pupils as she could not study all the pupils from polygamous families in all the sixteen schools due to the limited time and financial resources. The research was confined to five schools in Bubi district where a total of thirty pupils and twenty five teachers were selected

Data were collected using mainly questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. There were questionnaires for pupils. The questionnaires had closed questions which were backed up by open ended questions which altogether totaled nineteen questions including demographic data.

Questionnaires for teachers had thirteen questions. They had the same structure as the questionnaire for pupils. Interview guides for heads and senior teachers had five guiding questions and documents analysed were registers, child study and progress record books. From the class register the researcher looked at the general attendance of the pupils from polygamous families being guided by the child study. The same child study guided the researcher on whose records or marks to look at.

The literature review helped the researcher to have an insight into the influence of polygamy on pupils' performance. The influences are social, financial and psychological. When they are combined the child is affected positively or negatively in his/ her studies. Literature also helped in assisting the researcher with the aspect to look into when dealing with children from polygamous families.

5.2 Review of main findings

The findings from the study revealed that polygamy has factors that influence academic achievements of pupils. Listed below are the findings of the study.

5.2.1 Family relationships

Most pupils indicated that they came from families where mothers were not relating well. The relationship among siblings was not very good. Teachers also indicated that pupils did, to some extent, interact well with others but were quick to be defensive and were very emotional. This was seen as the result of home background and relationships at home.

5.2.2 Family size.

It emerged from the findings that many polygamous families have large families. The size of the family has a bearing on the interaction patterns. The family sizes revealed that pupils fail to get all

their requirements on time which led to absenteeism and loss of lessons. If the family was small since the earnings of parents were dependent on mining which is seasonal, the finances were going to be enough for the family and thereby catering for all their financial, emotional and social needs

5.2.3. Parental involvement

The research findings on the involvement of parents on their children's work showed that most parent from polygamous families were not involved in their children's school work. From the findings parents did not assist their children do their homework, and they were not attending consultation days as a way of follow up to their children's work. Pupils lacked parental motivation to do better.

5.2.4 Absenteeism

Pupils from polygamous families were seen as among those who were not regular attendees of lessons. The teachers revealed to the researcher that pupils were being forced to look after their siblings and to herd cattle as their parents went to the gold panning areas. Pupils missed lessons due to absenteeism.

5.2.5 Family income

Pupils who come from polygamous families faced financial problems when it comes to fees payments and acquiring of basic requirements. The research findings revealed that most parents who were not highly educated were relying on gold panning as a source of income while mothers were mostly house wives. This has a bearing on the child if the family income is not constant. Pupils fail to pay their fees on time because their parents won't be having the money to pay.

5.2.6 School requirements

Findings revealed that most children from polygamous families did not have all the school requirements. This was due to low family income, family size and occupation of parents. Pupils without uniforms, books and other school needs felt out of place which made them hate schooling.

5.3 Conclusions

Basing on the findings of the study, the following conclusions on the influence of polygamy on academic achievement of pupils were drawn.

Polygamy as a cultural practice does not affect a child but it has factors that are in it that affect and influence the child's academic achievement. Family size affect the child as they lack the need attention and guidance when doing their school work.

The level of family cohesion and family relationships that exists in families are capable of influencing pupils' academic achievement. In most polygamous families, where relationships among mothers and among siblings are not good, negatively influence the child's academic achievement. The home influences the child at the most earliest possible time of his or her life at a time when his mind is most receptive. The pupils are psychologically, socially and emotionally affected by the bad relationships that exist in polygamous home and thereby performing badly in their exams.

The financial position of the polygamous families influences the academic achievement of the pupils. The little resources that are stretched by the demands of the polygamous family. This affects the child in getting the fees paid on time, getting all the school requirements on time and hiring domestic workers to avoid absenting the pupils.

The academic level of parents is seen as one of the major contributing factor of a child's academic performance. It affects the achievement drive of their children's learning endeavors. Parents with low academic achievements fail to assist their children with their school work.

Not all polygamous set ups influence the pupils' academic achievement in a negative way. Some parents from polygamous families afford to provide conducive environment, relate well and financially cover their children's needs.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study, the research would be incomplete without making some recommendations. In connection with the above findings the following recommendations are made with the hope that they will help in improving academic achievements of pupils from polygamous families:

- ❖ Teachers should have adequate knowledge of the background of the child in the child study so as to counsel them when need arise.
- ❖ Knowing the child fully helps the teacher create a rapport with that child that will make him or her to focus and have interest in his/ her school work.
- ❖ Qualified counselors and psychological services to be found in schools so as to assist children immediately.
- ❖ Consultation should be made compulsory for all parents. The ministry to make it a national policy that every parent to attend consultation so that the teacher and the parent work together in helping the child academically.

- ❖ Adult education and night schools to be established in mining area so as to give those parents the chance to enrich themselves academically. Parents to be educated on how family structure affects pupils' academic achievements.

5.5 Directions for future research

The researcher does not claim the research to be exhaustive, thus future research can be carried out in order to establish more or even more different factors that are embedded in polygamy that influence the academic achievements of pupils.

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APPENDICES