

SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT TOWARDS IMPROVING STUDENTS
RETENTION IN COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOL
A CASE OF DODOMA MUNICIPALITY, TANZANIA**

By

Sekule Mhangwa

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts in Education at St. John's University of Tanzania.**

Supervisor: Dr. Joyce Nemes

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CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by St. John's University of Tanzania, a dissertation entitled Parental Involvement Towards Improving Students Retention, The Case of Selected Community Secondary Schools in Dodoma Municipality" in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education (MA.Ed) of the St. John's University of Tanzania.

Dr. Joyce Nemes

(SUPERVISOR)

DATE.....

DECLARATION

I, **Sekule, Mhangwa. J** declares to the Saint John University of Tanzania that, the dissertation entitled Parental Involvement towards Improving Students Retention, The Case of Selected Community Secondary Schools, in Dodoma Municipality is my own original work carried by the guidance of Dr. Joyce Nemes PhD. Doctor at the University of Dodoma. It has not been previously submitted for the award of any academic qualification.

Signature

Sekule, Mhangwa.J

Date_____

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my precious lovely mother Veneranda H. Higombeye and beloved daughter Getruda J. Sekule as well as my brother Mussa J. Sekule, my young brother Higombeye J. Sekule who laid the foundation for my education and they never ended to provide their support to me wherever I needed it financially, materially and morally to accomplish the study.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated parental involvement on improving students' retention in Community Secondary schools (CSS) in Dodoma Municipality, Tanzania. A total of 112 respondents were selected that included 60 students, 30 parents, 16 class teachers, 4 school heads (HoS) and 2 District Secondary Education Officer (DSEOs). Data were collected through questionnaires interview and documentary review then analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively with support of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

The study found that, provision of basic school requirements, restriction on peer groups, provision of basic needs and living peacefully at home were some ways for parental involvement for students' retentions in CSS. Furthermore, the study found that poor community support to CSSs, inadequate support from local government authority and poverty were some challenges facing CSSs. Finally, it was recommended that, intensive and sustainable co-operation among parents, teachers, community, government, private sector and individuals at large should work together on improvement of CSSs for quality education and life prosperity of future generations.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSS/CSSs	Community Secondary Schools
CSEE	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
CT	Class Teachers
DEO	District Education Officer
DSEOs	District Secondary Education Officer
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
ESR	Education for Self- Reliance
ETP	Education and Training Policy
GoT	Government of Tanzania
HoS	Head of School
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDP	Institute of Rural Development Planning
MED	Municipal Executive Director
MoEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STR	Student Teacher Ratio
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Background to the Study

Worldwide research studies indicated that child educational access and retentions are strongly determined by parent involvement (Lewin, 2007 and Craft, 2003). Specifically, children whose parents are more involved in their education have higher levels of being retained at school than children whose parents are involved to a lesser degree (*ibid*). It appears that students' high drop-out rate in secondary schools is due to lack of parental involvement in studies for their children (Henderson, *et al*, 2002). The lack of parental support, motivation and interest in the children's studies, leads to frustration and disregard of school work (Delta, 1984).

Influence of parents' involvement on child's retentions has not only been noted among researchers, but also among policy makers who have integrated efforts aimed at increasing parents' involvement into broader educational policy initiatives (Okpala, *et. al.*, 2001). Schools and law enforcement officials are getting tough by enforcing laws that mandate school retention and by holding parents responsible for their childrens' attendance (DeKalb, 1999; Rothman, 2001). For example, in the United States of America (USA), children are mandated by a complex system of state laws requiring attendance at either public schools or at some other acceptable learning environment (Eccles and Harold,

1993). When students' miss school, it hinders their learning and thus, compulsory attendance and retention laws are enacted for protection of children (Furger, 2013).

Similarly in China, it has been well documented that Chinese culture regards education as the most effective of all avenues to socio economic advancement and improvement of the person (Stevenson and Lee, 1996). In addition, it has been shown that the time parents spent helping their children with homework is related to academic performance and students' retention (Chen and Stevenson, 1996; Pezdek *et al.*, 2002). In China parents' involvement has been promoted and activated through use of home work, comprised of mainly drilling and practice, considered as a crucial tool for facilitating as well as consolidating learning and retention of their students (*ibid*). Thus is not surprising to find that Chinese parents in Hong Kong support their children through use of homework as a learning and retention strategy (Education Department and Committee on Home-School Cooperation, 1994). Homework involvement by parents is seen in clearly comparable ways, reflecting the wide range of strategies and behaviors parents employed in helping children in China (Frazier, 1997).

Furthermore, to support the importance of parents' involvement for their children's education, Chinese parents usually offer help to their children by providing tutorial assistance to their children's homework as well as monitoring process (Stevenson and Lee, 1996; Huntsinger, *et al.*, 1997). Such practice also serves to

highlight virtues of hard work and to reinforce the importance of effort put to their children on retention and academic performance (*ibid*).

Like U.S.A and China, in Africa parental involvement has been noted as the key factor for students' retention in their enrolled school. For example in South Africa, parents have been given the mandate through the South African School's Act 84 of 1996 to be involved in their children's education (South African Act, 1996). Section 6.1 of the Act provides that parents should take an active role in their children's schoolwork and make it possible for children to complete assigned homework. Parental involvement increases goodwill of students' attendance as well as retention and help to develop a sense of achievement to students (Epstein, 1995).

Parents must supervise their children at home and outside the school (*ibid*). Epstein, (1995) strongly supports that when parents pay more attention to their children's schooling, they will become more motivated and students' achievement levels and retention will tend to increase. One way of involving parents in their children's education is to involve them in development of their children's literacy (*ibid*). Hornby (2011) argued that collaborative working relationship between educators and parents is one of key factors that contribute positively towards development of children's retention and literacy. It is important for parents to be involved with, and supportive of, their children's education (*ibid*). Children feel encouraged when their parents are informed about their progress in school.

Sometimes they also need their parents' support and assistance (A Report on Education in South African Rural Communities, 2005).

In Nigeria the term parent involvement includes several different forms of participation in education and with schools. Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations like parent-teacher conferences (Olatoye, 2009). They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork and retention by providing encouragement, arranging for appropriate study time and space, modeling desired behavior (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework and actively tutoring their children at home (*ibid*). Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school (Oluwatelure, *et. al.*, 2010).

In Kenya, parental involvement towards their children's attendance, academic performance and retention occupies a high profile in secondary school development where by parental involvement has been classified into two categories. The categories are school-centred parent involvement and home-centred parent involvement. School-centred parent involvement includes activities such as participation in classroom, social and service events, attending meetings as well as participating in school board meetings (Sheldon, 2012).

Home-centred parent involvement is where parents do activities directly with their child,-/children such as helping with homework, providing good nutrition and healthcare to the child, and attending one-on-one meetings with their teachers (Sheldon, 2012). Such direct involvement created clear understanding among

education stakeholders in Kenya especially teachers and parents (Sheldon, 2012).

Like other African countries, Tanzania also has seen that parental involvement as crucial factor for students retention in their schools. For example, The Education Act of 1978, Section 35 (3) an ammendment of 1995 states that, “every pupil enrolled at any school shall regularly attend the school at which he is enrolled until he or she completes the period of instruction specified in respect of the level of education for the attainment of which he or she is enrolled in that school” (URT, 1978).

The idea of students retention has also been empasized in the Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995. Furthermore, the government of Tanzania (GoT) has embarked on large programmes such as Secondary Education Development Plan SEDP I (2004-2009) and on-going SEDP II (2010-2014) among its specific objectives is to increase proportion of relative age group completing secondary education and to improve learning outcomes of secondary school students by improving students' attendance and their retention at school.

Besides such government efforts to ensure presence of a large number of students in secondary education especially in community secondary schools still community secondary school have faced with poor retention of students which leads to high dro-pout of student from schools. For example, in 2010, a total number of 8,696 form one, 2,077 form two, 21,790 form three and 14,598 form

four drop-out due to various reasons including poor parental involvement towards their students' education (BEST, 2007-2011). Hence if the problem is left unsolved the education sector may encounter various problems such as wastage of country resources and poverty which may lead to increase in dependence ratio and hence underdevelopment. Therefore these factors and others inspired the researcher to conduct a study on parental involvement towards improving students' retention at community secondary school in Dodoma Municipality.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Since independence, Tanzania has made various measures or steps ahead to ensure that there is an increase in enrollment of students and equity in provision of secondary education. The Government of Tanzania (GoT) declared that each ward should have a secondary school as a strategy to ensure that every pupil who completed primary education and with qualification joins as well as access secondary school education. In connection to this, the GoT reduced school fees for day students. Furthermore, the GoT through its program of Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP I) and (SEDP II) set-up a very important strategy of introducing capitation fund with strong participation of parents where by each student who study in community secondary school have an access to be given capitation fund of not less than 20,000 Tanzanian shillings (Tsh.), which is half of school fees and the other half is paid by his or her parents (URT, 2003).

Despite Government of Tanzania (GoT) efforts still Tanzanian secondary schools experiences high rate of students' drop-out from their registered schools. For example, in Dodoma Municipality, the number of students who enrolled for Form One was 3,538 in 2011 but only 3,391 managed to continue in Form Two class in 2012 (Dodoma Regional Education Office, 2013). It means that a total of 3.9% students dropped in transition. Also in 2011, Form Three class had 3,886 students but only 3,720 managed to continue in Form Four class such that a total of 4.2% students dropped out and failed to reach Form Four (Dodoma Regional Education Office, 2013). Poor students' retention in community secondary schools results into high dependence ratio and poverty for future generations.

However, little has been done to examine the manner, into which parents are involved in improving students' retention in community secondary schools. For example available studies such as by Nyang'anyi (2010) focused on parental involvement in primary education in Kahama District and Rwambali (2013) examined school drop-out in community secondary schools in Mwanza Tanzania. This study examined the extent of parents' involvement in improving students' retention in community secondary schools in Dodoma Municipality.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to assess the manner parents were involvement in the improvement of students' retention in community secondary schools in Dodoma Municipality, Tanzania.

1.3 Specific Objectives

The study had the following specific objectives:-

- (i) To examine ways in which parents are involved in improving students' retention in community secondary school in Dodoma Municipality:-
- (ii) To identify challenges facing community secondary school towards parents involvement in improving students retention; and
- (iii) To identify instituted strategies to ensure that parents are involved in improving students' retention.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- (i) In what ways are parents involved in improving students retention in community secondary schools?
- (ii) What are challenges facing community secondary schools towards parents involvement in improving students retention?
- (iii) What are strategies taken to ensure parents involvement in improving students retention?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study will benefit key educational stakeholders in Tanzania especially parents, teachers and the government by bringing them together so as to make deliberations on parental involvement in improving students' retention in CSS. On the other hand, the study will help policy makers to review CSS by facilitating

policy interventions and strategies in improving students' retention in CSS. Also the study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted at community secondary school in Dodoma Municipality in Dodoma region. Other secondary schools such as public, private and religion secondary schools were excluded in the study.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Poor co-operation from respondents were the first barrier encountered by the researcher where by some respondents demanded for payment from the researcher. Others provided unsatisfactory responses to questions during data collection. Furthermore, it was not easy to get all parents in their respective homes during the day time, most of them were in their daily activities such as farming and business thereby researcher was required to spend extra time so as to meet them.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Secondary School: Refers to schools that provide full programme of secondary education in accordance with the Government approved curricular and availed to students who will have completed primary school education.

Community Secondary School: Refers to a secondary school owned by community and controlled by local government authority.

Students: The term student refers to a person enrolled and studies in a secondary school.

Parents: Refers to adult persons who share responsibility involvement for their child's education.

Retention: Refers to an act of maintaining students who registered in community secondary school from form one to form four.

1.9 Summary and Overview of the Chapter

This chapter has begin with brief background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of study and the research questions and finally ends up with significant of the study, scope of the study and definitions of key terms and concept. Chapter Two presents Literature Review, Chapter Three provides Research Methodology, Chapter Four presents Research Findings, Chapter Five presents analysis and discussion of findings and Chapter Six presents summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is about Literature Review related to the study. The Chapter begins with theoretical review, reviews from developed countries followed by review from developing countries and finally, it present synthesis and research gap.

2.1 Theoretical Review

A theory is a contemplative and rational type of abstract or generalizing thinking or results of such thinking (Allen and Santrock, 1993). There are various psychological theories that can be applied in educational research concerning student's retention. For the purpose of this study two psychological theories guided the study. The theories include the Field Theory by Lewin (1956) and that of Psychodynamic Theory on parenting proposed by Freud (1953).

2.1.1 The Field Theory

The Field Theory was proposed by Lewin (1956). In this theory, he postulated that adolescence is really a "no man's land". The adolescent is neither a child nor an adult but an individual caught up in the field of overlapping forces and expectation. In this theory, adolescent was seen by Lewin (1956) as a "marginal person" striving to live a less privilege area that is, childhood to a more privilege one that is adulthood. Lewin's (1956) Field Theory explains and describes the

dynamics of behaviour of the individual adolescent without generalizing about adolescent as a group.

Lewin (1956) maintained that general psychological concepts laws and principles derived from the basis of frequency can create a dilemma since laws are derived from many individuals and are true in terms of probability only. Such laws may or may not apply to specific individuals (*ibid*). This makes Lewin's Theory unique. One of Lewin's (1956) major contributions is the law that Behaviour (B) is a Function (F) of the Person (P) and of his or her Environment (E), and stated that $B = F(P, E)$ and the P and E are interdependent variables. Lewin (1956) asserted that how a child perceives his or her environment depends upon the stage of his or her development, his/her personality and his/her knowledge and that an unstable psychological environment during childhood brings about instability in an individual. Therefore to understand a child's behaviour, Lewin (1956) believed that one has to consider him/her and his/her environment as interdependent factors.

According to Lewin (1956), the sum of all environmental and personal factors in interaction is called the Life Space or the Psychological Space. Life space is the total of the non physical factors and an individual's needs motivations as well as other psychological factors that determine behavior (*ibid*). Field theory was adopted in this study because it put much emphasis between learner and their environment. In this study parents are the centre and responsible in their children's environment. Parents' involvement in their child's education is definitely

important. It creates a big difference in their child's performance and retention. Parents are known to be role models for children. Children also look after their parents as a guide, a source and an important advisor (Birch and Ladd, 1997).

2.1.2 The Psychodynamic Theory on Parenting

The psychodynamic theory tries to study emotions and other internal forces of the individual. Psychologists under this assume that personality develops as psychological conflicts are resolved typically during childhood (Freud, 1990). A giant of this approach is Sigmund Freud (1917). As a neurologist by training, (Freud, 1990) noticed that many of his patients' nervous ailments appeared to be psychological rather than physiological in origin.

Freud (1917) argued that personality develops in a series of critical stages during the first few years of life. He emphasized the importance of providing positive emotional environmental conditions for the child who needs to believe that the world is a safe and good place and that parents can be trusted to be kind and consistent. Freud viewed that although individuals who have suffered enormously in childhood can make dramatic, positive changes later in life, it is best if parents can help children to succeed in their academic pursuit from the very beginning by adopting the best and most suitable parenting strategies (Freud, 1917).

Psychodynamic theory on parenting is assumed to be positive in this study because it reveals the problem of psychology in children, which, in turn, results in

solving the problem of students' attendance and retention. The theory emphasizes on parents to be responsible in creating a conducive and very safe environment for students. When parents sacrifice their time and energy to support their children, it helps them realize the importance of education. Learning does not take place in a vacuum it requires a caring, warm, home learning environment (Esho, 2013).

2.2 Reviews of Literature from Developed Countries

Recent educational developments in many countries have shown a growing importance of the concept of parental involvement. Thus, the impact of parental involvement and their child's school retention has been of great concern to many researchers especially in the field of education. For instance, the study done in USA by Mishra (2012) on parental involvement in early childhood care education used survey approach through self-administered questionnaires, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the hypotheses.

Findings indicated that, parental involvement through emotional care and support has a very big influence on early childhood education, particularly the child's academic performance and school retention. More so, it was observed that the extent of parental educational attainment has a significant influence on sustainability, which leads to child retention at school (Mishra, 2012).

This implies that the extent or level of parents' education attainment and exposure determines the retention at which the child is being enrolled to school.

Furthermore, parental involvement is very essential in early childhood education and helps to broaden the child's horizon, enhance social relationships, and promotes sense of child attendance as well as retention.

Similarly, Stelmack (2001) conducted a study on parental involvement in U.S.A and argued that, parental involvement at home seems to have a more significant impact on children's attendance and retention than parental involvement in school activities. Parental involvement can have an impact on students' learning throughout all grades. On top of that, the study recommended that, culture, socioeconomic background, and family characteristics influence the degree of parental involvement on children's retention at school, and ultimately the impact it has on student achievement. (Stelmack, 2001).

In China parental involvement is a significant part of students' learning experience across educational systems within their success. For example Tam and Chan (2009), in the study of parental involvement in primary school pupils' homework in China, using homework diaries and questionnaires in data collection administered to 1,309 pairs of students and parents spanning all six primary grade levels in 36 primary schools in China.

Results showed that, variation in parental involvement was found to relate to the child's attendance and retention well as the parent's educational attainment. The cultural and economic resources invested by the parents were significantly associated with children's attendance and school retention (Chan, 2009).

However, social capital nurtured by parental involvement appeared to be more important, especially home-based involvement and encouraged students to complete their studies (Ho, 1997).

Like USA and China, in Malaysia, contribution of parental involvement and investment to children's education were a major topic in current educational reform around the country. For example, a study was conducted by Vellymalay (2012) on the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on parental involvement at home and students' retention at school. It involved a sample of 10 students from year two, 10 students from year three, 10 students from year four and 10 students from year five. Result from the study indicated that most parents were from a higher socio-economic background and they showed a high degree of involvement in most strategies at home to ensure their children's success in education in terms of attendance and retention at schools. Moreover, economic and academic capital among the middle-class parents served to enhance their understanding and knowledge on actual values needed to be placed on their children's education (Vellymalay, 2012).

As a result, children gained in terms of good skills, behaviour and values, all of which are crucial to their academic success, school attendance and retention. In addition the study recommended that, schools had to adopt a comprehensive model where parents' involvement had to extend from home-based learning activities into school-based instructional activities increased their children's attendance and retention (*ibid*).

Furthermore the study conducted by Alzeydeen (2011) in Malaysia focused on investigation of teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement and students' retention, combined 200 participants in-service teachers.

Findings indicated that in-service teachers' had positive attitudes toward parental involvement to their children's attendance and retention (Alzeydeen, 2011). In addition, the study revealed that, there were statistically significant correlations between teachers' attitudes toward parental involvement and their contribution on encouraging their children to complete their course in school they registered (*ibid*). More relevant data are shown in table 2.1 which provides lower students drop-out rate in Malaysia decreasing from 1995 to 2013.

Table 2.1 The Drop-out Rate in Malaysia Spinning Back to 1995

YEAR	GDP PER CAPITAL (RM)	DROP RATE PERCENTAGE
		SECONDARY
1995	13672	5.52
2005	12776	2.53
2010	17717	2.65
2012	27925	1.93
2013	33545	1.96

Source: Adapted from Educational Planning and Research. Revision (EPRD) Malaysia Ministry of Education (MOE) and World Bank.

Table 2.1 above shows the highly decrease of student's drop-out rate from 5% in 1995 to 1.96% in 2013 in Malaysia, compared to table 3.1 where by the drop-out rate of students consisted of 9.6% for form one and form three in the year of 2011-2013 in Dodoma Municipality only.

In Canada, the study carried out by Rogers (2009) on parental involvement and children's school retention and academic achievement for mediating processes used a sample of 110 fifth-grade (47 boys, 63 girls) and 121 sixth-grade (63 boys, 58 girls) children sampled from four elementary schools in a small Canadian city. The findings suggested that the school that focused parental involvement in the home was associated with children's school retention and academic achievement (*ibid*). The study further recommended that parental involvement seemed to influence children's retention through mediation role of the child's academic competence, consistent with the assumptions of the family-school relationships model (Rogers, 2009).

In this study it is interesting and discovered that, in developed countries parent's educational level and attainment, social economic backgrounds and cultural values that invested by parents are significantly associated with children's attendance and their retention at school.

2.3 Reviews of literature from Developing Countries

In Africa a variety of strategies have been instituted to address and improve students' retention statistics. They include issues such as reviewing enrollment policies, providing relevant subjects to students as well as provision of researchers' opportunities towards improving education in developing countries. For example, in South Africa a study done by Besbas (2011) on parental participation and meaningful access in South African schools revealed that

school-going in South Africa was highly valued and enteredelated with the socio-economic status that would be used as initiatives for involvement in their schools' children.

Another study was conducted by Mestry and Grobler (2007) on collaboration and communication as effective strategies for parents' involvement in public schools in South Africa. The study involved 400 participants and revealed that, collaboration and communication determined parents' commitment to their children's education and retention. The research affirmed the view that input from the parent was crucial in both co-curricular and extra-curricular programmes to make their children retain themselves at school. On other hand parents' own education levels may influence their involvement on their children's attendance and retention at school (*ibid*).

Furthermore, Ramadikela (2012) conducted a study on management of parents' involvement in historically disadvantaged secondary schools in Tshwane West district, Gauteng in South Africa. A total of 12 participants were involved in the study. Result from the study indicated that, when parents are involved in schools they are tempted to remain faithful in their endeavor to cooperate with school managers and teachers so as to improve retention and academic success of their children. In addition they will attempt to improve their involvement level so that schools may progress towards excellence (Ramadikela, 2012).

In Ibadan Nigeria Aremu (2007) conducted a study of relationship among emotional intelligence, parental involvement and secondary school students' academic achievement. The participants ranged in age between 14 and 18 years. Results from the study showed that both emotional intelligence and parental involvement could predict attendance and retention of students at school (*ibid*).

The extent or level of parental involvement and exposure determines the retention at which the child is being enrolled to school. It was also discovered that, residential setting of parents (respondents) has nothing to do with educational performance and school retention of the child but the whole parental involvement is very essential in childhood education and school retention. The study recommended that parental involvement is more than providing children with essential requirements for better performance and student retention at school. Furthermore, friendly acquaintance with teachers, and an obligation to participate in area of development of educational policies and curriculum issues were essential to realize the same goal for their children's education achievement and retention at schools (Aremu, 2007).

Like South Africa and Nigeria in Namibia, parental involvement was revealed to be an important factor for students' attendance and retention at school they enrolled. For example, the study done by Erlendsdóttir (2010) on effects of parental involvement in education revealed that parents had high expectations towards their children's education and their future when they believed that their children had good attendance and retention at schools they enrolled. All parents

wanted to know how their children spends their time outside school and with whom they spent their time. Most parents considered themselves to have a good relationship with their children's teachers and schools. So such pattern could create conducive environment to their children to attend at school daily (*ibid*).

In Namibian rural secondary schools, it was revealed that parental guidance, support, and supervision were significantly related to attendance and retention of the child. The analysis also revealed that parental guidance, support and supervision might play a major role in discouraging and delaying their children from becoming truant (Niitembu, 2006). Children who were supported, cared, and guided by their parents had greater expectation of school completion (*ibid*).

In Kenya a study conducted by Makewa (1997) on parental factors affecting academic achievement of grade six pupils in Kisumu city Kenya involved four hundred (400) pupils of grade six and 400 parents. Findings from the study revealed those parents' socio-economic, parents education level, family size, family type and parental involvement affect students' academic performance attendance and retention at school. Furthermore the study commended that attendance and retention of the student at school have a direct relationship to the child's academic performance (*ibid*).

Like other African countries in Tanzania various studies have been done towards improving students retention in secondary school for example a study by Rwambali (2013) on school drop-out in community secondary schools at Mwanza

Tanzania revealed that, drop-out rate was largely contributed by respondents' characteristics, poor academic performance, language of instruction, long walking distance as well as poor parental involvement towards their students school attendance as well as retention. The major aspects of parental involvement on provision of secondary education included encouraging children to better school attendance, retention attainment, modeling acceptable behavior to children, giving them all basic needs for school, paying school fees for children, attending parent-teachers' meetings, and monitoring completion of children's homework (*ibid*).

Another was study conducted by Nyang'anyi (2010) on parental involvement in primary education in Kahama District, Tanzania: Aspect and Expectation. The study revealed that parents in rural areas minimally maintained completion of their children and accounted for about 32 percent compared to parents in urban areas of about 54.4 percent. When asked to provide reasons for such situation, majority of parents who responded to such question pointed out that low education level as well as illiteracy among parents and community members, in general contributed to the pattern (*ibid*).

Nzyungu (2013) conducted a study on community perspectives of parental involvement at secondary education level in Sumbawanga Municipality Tanzania. A total of 76 respondents were involved in the study and data were gathered through interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions. Result from the study revealed that major aspects of parental involvement in provision of

secondary education in Sumbawanga Municipality included: encouraging children to better school attainment; attending parent-teachers' meetings; and monitoring the completion of children's homework (*ibid*).

Furthermore, the study conducted by Ramadhan (2013) on community involvement in management of ward secondary school in Dodoma Region, a total of 163 respondents from six selected wards of whom 120 were parents and 43 were officials.

Findings from the study revealed that community involvement in terms of parents and other stakeholders in management of ward secondary school in Chamwino District was in effective. That was seen as the major factor that contributed to high drop-out of students from their schools, which led to poor students' retention.

2.4 Synthesis and Research Gap

Theories that guided this study are presented in regard to their relationship by insisting both on interaction of learners with their environment in terms of their parents and making them experience new knowledge. For example, the field theory puts emphasis on parents as the centre and responsible in their child's environment. Psychodynamic theory of parenting emphasized as the aspect that parents should be responsible in creating a conducive and very safe environment for students to realize the importance of education.

Studies from developing countries such as that by Mishra (2012); Stelmack (2001); Vellymalay (2012); and Alzeydeen (2011) have focused on influence of

parental involvement on improving academic performance in secondary education. Studies by Rogers (2009) and Ho (1997) revealed that participation between parents and schools in improving students' attendance and academic performance was important for children's academic performance and retention at schools.

On the other hand, in developing countries various studies such as that by Besbas (2011); Grobler (2007); and Ramadhan (2013) focused directly on parental participation, collaboration, communication and community involvement in management of ward secondary schools. Nyanganyi (2010) and Rwambali (2013) focused on parental and community involvement towards students' drop-out from their secondary schools.

Most of these reviews have focused much to find out the relationship between parental involvement and poor performance of students at school, but little has been done specifically to study on parental involvement towards improving students' retention in community secondary schools. Therefore, this study sought to assess how parents were involved in improving students' retention in community secondary schools.

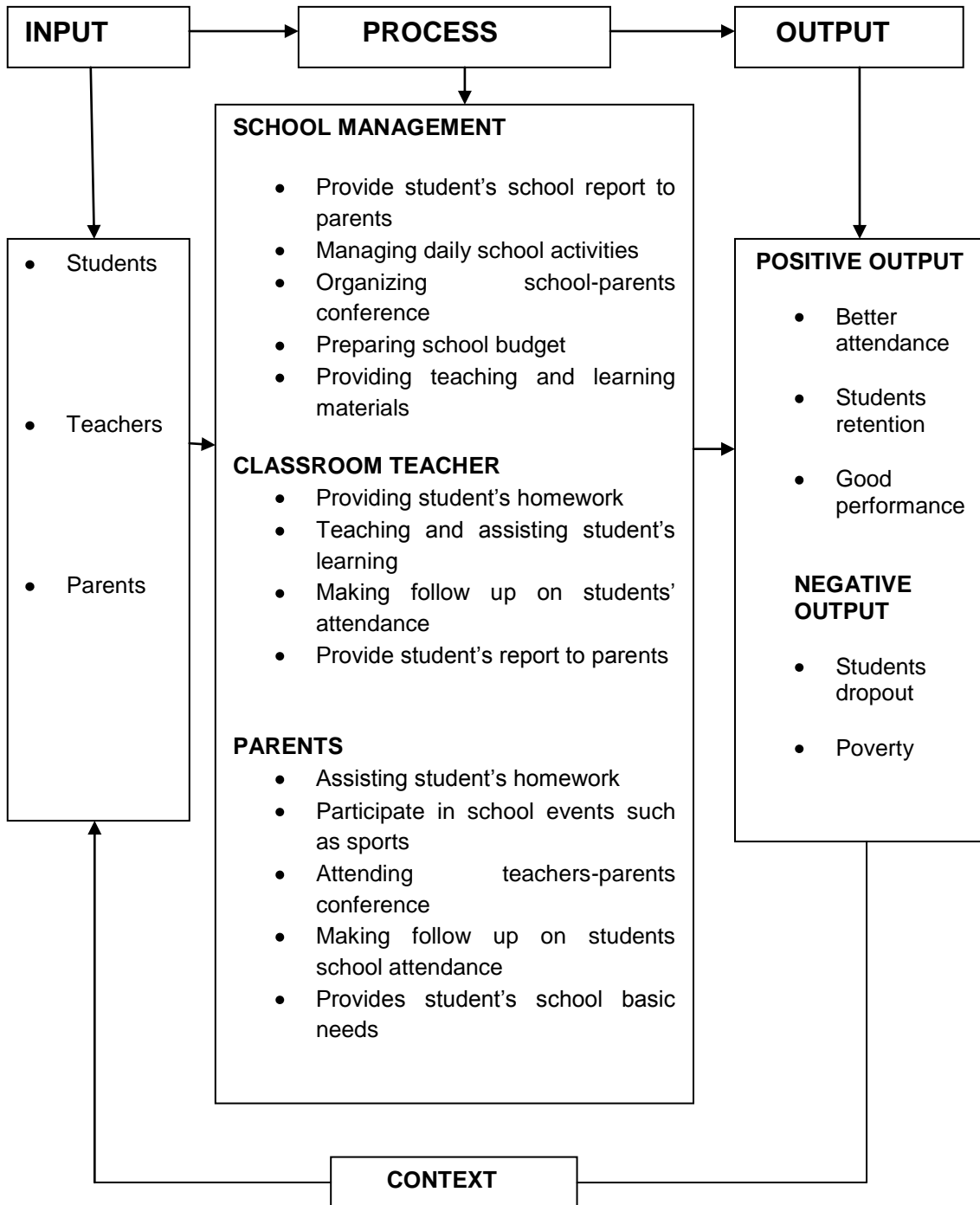
2.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The model adapted the Stufflebeam's *et al.*, (2000) which has arranging of CIPP consist of input which contain of students, teachers and parents while the process involves the ongoing activities at school and it embraces the general interaction

between students, teachers and parents who participate in continuous teaching and learning process at school and it includes all activities and the responsibility of the school management, all the activities to be accomplished by classroom teacher and the responsibility of the parents towards their students and the school particularly. The product presents good academic performance, better attendance and student's retention at school.

2.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Stufflebeam's *et al.*, (2000) and Modified by the Researcher

The conceptual framework has the inputs, process and outputs. Inputs are formed of teachers, students and parents who are the main facilitators of the process to stimulate the student retention in community secondary school. In a process of retention there are school management, classroom teachers and parents. The school management plays key functions in the retention of students by providing student's school report to parents, managing daily school activities, organising school parents conference, preparing school budget and providing teaching and learning materials. Classroom teachers also provide student's homework, teaching and assisting students in learning, providing students report to parent on time and making followup on students' attendance. Parents play the role of assisting students' home work, participate in school events such as sports, attending teachers parents conference and making followup on students school attendance and providing students' school basic needs. Then, output consists of positive output and negative output. It is believed that if the process is well implemented positive output such as better attendance, students' retention and good performance are expected. However, if the process is not well implemented negative output such as students' drop out from schools and poverty with a society are expected.

2.7 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter presents reviews from developed countries, developing countries its synthesis or gap concern this study, conceptual framework and ends with summary of the chapter. The next chapter is a description of methods and procedures that will be used to conduct this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents Research Methodology. The chapter has the following Sections: research design, study area, study population and sampling procedures. Other Section includes the following: data collection method; validity and reliability; data analysis plan; and ethical.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to a conceptual structure or plan for collecting, measuring, analyzing and utilizing data so that desired information can be obtained (Kothari, 2008). In this study a cross sectional design was employed for data collection. This research design has been selected because it enables the researcher to gain insight into the perception and opinions of parents, teachers and students in Dodoma Municipality about parental involvement towards improving student's retention.

3.2 Research Approach

This research used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, and qualitative research approach was used as the main approach for this study. Qualitative research refers to an inquiry that is grounded in the assumption that

individuals construct social reality in form of meanings and interpretations and that these constructions are transitory and situational (Bryman, 1988). Qualitative approach was selected because a lot of data were being collected in verbal form or through talking or conversation between the researcher and respondents. On other hand quantitative research approach refers to generation of data in quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion (Kothari, 2004). Quantitative research approach was employed so as to compute frequencies of respondents' information and analyzed quantitative data such as numbers of student's dropout, retention as well as number of parents and teachers of sampled community secondary schools in Dodoma Municipality.

3.3 Study Area

The study was conducted in Dodoma Municipality. The Municipal is one of the six administrative districts in Dodoma Region. Other districts include: Kondoa, Mpwapwa, Chemba, Kongwa, Chamwino and Bahi. This study was conducted in Dodoma Municipality due to high dropout of students in secondary schools and poor parental involvement towards improving students' retention in community secondary school as in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Form One to Three Students' Drop-out for the Period of 2011 to 2013 in Community Secondary School in Dodoma Municipality

Year	No. of Students for Form One – Three	No. of Students Drop Out	Percent (%)
2011 - 2012	12,574	591	4.7
2012 - 2013	13,152	653	4.9

Source: District Secondary Education Office (2014)

3.4 Study population

The study consisted class teachers, students, parents, District Secondary Education Officer and four school heads from four community secondary schools in Dodoma Municipality.

3.5 Sample and Sample size

Kombo and Tromp (2006) define population as an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. A sample is defined as a subset of population group of people, objects or items that are taken from a larger population for measurement (Kothari, 2009). The targeted population for this study comprised four categories namely, District Secondary Education Officer (DSEOs), secondary school teachers, secondary school students and parents from Dodoma Municipality.

3.6 Sampling Procedures

A sample is defined as a subset of your population by which you select to be participants in your study or a sample is defined as a group of people, objects, or items that are taken from a larger population for measurement (Kothari, 2009). Two types of sampling were used namely purposive and random sampling procedures.

Purposive sampling procedure refers to a non-probability sampling procedure in which decisions concerning individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher (Kothari, 2009). The undertaking is based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research (*ibid*). In this study purposive sampling procedure was used to select 2 DSEO and 4 Heads of Community Secondary Schools.

Simple random sampling procedure refers to probability sampling where each and every item in the population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample and each one of the possible samples, in case of a finite universe, has the same probability of being selected (Kothari, 2009). A sample of 15 students from each sampled CSS was obtained from their attendance books and written in a piece of paper. Pieces of paper were with names of all students put into a box and mixed clearly (shaken) and then drew 15 pieces of paper containing names of form four students as a sample one after another without replacement. In so doing, the researcher was assured that, in successive drawings each of the

remaining piece of paper of the population had the same chance of being selected.

The study used a sample size of 112 participants, that included 16 class teachers, 60 students, 30 parents, 2 District Secondary Education Officer and four school heads from four community secondary schools in Dodoma Municipality.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Research instruments refers to devices for gathering and measuring information relevant to the research study (Birmingham and Wilkinson, 2003; Creswell, 2004). This study used interview, questionnaire as well as documentary review as tools for data collection.

3.7.1 Interview Method

An interview is a data collection method that involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and replies in terms of oral-verbal responses (Silverman, D1998). In this study face-to-face interview through semi-structured question was used to get data from sampled Heads of Schools (HoS) of CSSs and District Secondary Education Officer (DSEOs).

An interview consists of various advantages when used in a research study. They include the following: there is high rate of responses and due to the fact that,

people are more willing to talk than write it gives first hand information through direct responses from the resource persons and it gives an opportunity for the researcher to ask questions depending on responses of his or her participants (Travers, 2001). Also interviews has disadvantages if used as a research instrument for data collection as follows; Susceptible to interview bias; time consuming and expensive compared to other data collection methods and may seem intrusive to the respondent (Shamoo *at el.*, 2003).

3.7.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire refers to a set of interrogative questions designed and asked to respondents, to extract specific information or is a research instrument consisting of series of question and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Birmingham and Wilkinson, 2003). In this study, the questionnaire was applied to collect data from students. The questionnaires were consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The merits of using questionnaire include the following: questionnaires can be designed and used to collect vast quantities of data from a variety of respondents there are benefits over other forms of data collection: they are usually inexpensive to administer; very little training is needed to develop them; and they can be easily as well as quickly analyzed once completed (Birmingham and Wilkinson, 2003).

3.7.3 Documentary Review

Documentary review refers to the method that involves deriving information by careful studying of written documents (Enon, 1998). In this study documentary review was used to access information that would be difficult to gather through the use of interview and questionnaires in case some respondents might not be in a position or willing to participate in the study. Through using this documentary review the researcher can manage to eliminate some of the negative impacts that might have on a person or situation when carrying out the research. In this study the following document will be reviewed; students' attendance reports, school statistics on students' enrollment as well as completion and statistics of students' drop-out rate for each class level.

3.8 Research Instruments and Administration

The study employed questionnaires (open and close ended), interview (structured and semi-structured) and documentary reviews. The instruments were tested to some few selected community secondary schools. The actual administration of the tool to the respective respondents, the researcher ensured the suitability of this instrument by conducting a pilot study.

The pilot study for the present study involved the group of 24 form four Students from Mkonze Secondary School. The students were divided into three groups of eight students each, and took the three tools according to the set conditions of

the study. Each group had four girls and boys, randomly selected. The pilot study was intended to check the suitability of content and complexity levels of the tools. The results of the respondents were discussed and scrutinized in measurements for validation of the tool. Some questions which did not suit to the purpose were either eliminated or modified while those which were declared fit for the purpose were retained. Upon the experience from the pilot study, the tested instrument was modified ensuring enhanced validity and reliability. The researcher conducted back translation of instruments which were prepared in English but administered in Kiswahili and later translated in English. Moreover in this study, the researcher used some quotations from the informants. This was done to ensure that the conclusion made out of this study truly reflected the reality.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument or procedure measures what it is supposed to measure (Sethosa, 2001). In this research validity was maintained through seeking opinions from the supervisor, senior researchers and colleagues. In addition a pilot study was conducted in the study area to test whether the instrument to be used in the study are valid. Reliability refers to the degree of consistency which the instrument or procedure measures whatever it is supposed to measure (Sethosa, 2001). This study used triangulation of data collection methods where by different data collection methods such as interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data.

3.10 Ethical Issues

The researcher sought permission from Saint. John's University of Tanzania (SJUT), Regional Education Officer of Dodoma region (REO); District Commissioner; District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO) from Dodoma municipality and heads of sampled community secondary schools. Furthermore, no one was forced into participation. Participants were required to take part voluntarily and the option to withdraw at any time during the study was required to be communicated conveniently if such pattern had to arise. In addition, confidentiality was observed and unauthorized persons did not have an opportunity to access the collected data.

3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a body of methods that help to describe facts, detect patterns, develop explanations, and test hypotheses, condense and recap, and evaluate data (Anderson, 1996). In this study, qualitative data will be analyzed using content analysis. According to Berelson (1971), Content analysis is systematic, replicable technique of compressing many words into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. The content analysis systematically extracted large amount of textual information from open - ended questions will be coded and interpreted to describe and make inferences on the effective use of data from schools.

Quantitative data will be analyzed statistically and presented in graphs or tables, frequencies, percentages and averages. This will be done by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 to provide statistical interpretations on the effective use of few available resources in CSSs.

3.12 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter presents research methodology that was used to examine the study objectives. The first section presents the geographical position of Dodoma Municipality, the second part presents the sample size and sampling procedure, the third and fourth section presents data collection and data analysis technique.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings and discussion on the study aimed at investigating parental involvement towards improving students' retention in CSSs in Dodoma Municipality. The findings was organized and presented according to the research objectives and questions which sought information on the ways parents involved in improving students retention in CSSs, the challenges facing community secondary schools towards parents involvement in improving students retention and the strategies put forward to ensure parents involvement in improving students retention. Both interview and questionnaire were used to obtain data from 60 students, 30 parents, 16 class teachers, 4 heads of school and 2 District Secondary Education Officers.

Documentary review was also used to collect documented information from schools and DSEOs. The findings presented by using descriptive statistics in tables, charts and figures.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

This section presents information related to respondents' characteristics such respondents' category, sex, age, socio-economic status and parents' education level.

4.1.1 Respondents' Analysis.

Table 4.1 (a): Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Category, (N=112).

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Students	60	53.6%
Parents	30	26.8%
Class teachers	16	14.2%
Heads of school	4	3.6%
District Secondary Education Officer	2	1.8%
Total	112	100%

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Data contained in Table 4.1 reveal that, majority of respondents were students who constituted 53.6 percent of all respondents compared to 26.8 percent parents, 14.2 percent class teachers, 3.6 percent school heads and 1.8 percent DSEOs.

4.1.2 Sex Analysis

Table: 4.1 (b) : Frequency and Percentages Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Sex and Category	RESPONSE, CATEGORY AND PERCENTAGES					
	Students	Parents	CT	HoS	DSEOs	Total
Male	36 (32.1%)	13(11.6%)	9(8.0%)	2(1.8%)	1(0.9%)	61(54.5%)
Female	24 (21.4%)	17(15.2%)	7(6.3%)	2(1.8%)	1(0.9%)	51(45.5%)
Total	60 (53.5%)	30(26.8%)	15(14.3)	4(3.6%)	2(1.8%)	112(100%)

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Key: CT=Class teachers

Data in Table 4.1(b) denote for variation of respondents by gender in which males constituted large number (54.4) of participants and female respondents' were 51(45.5%). making a total of 112 respondents. Out of those 24 (21.4%) were female students and 36 (32.1%) were male students making, total of 60 students (table 4.1b). Also other respondents included parents whereby there were 13 (11.6%) males and 17 (15.2%), females. Then 9 (8.0%) males class teachers and 7(6.3%), female class teachers participated in the study. In addition 2 school heads and (1.8%) District Secondary participated in the study (*ibid*).

4.1.3 Parents' Education Level

Table: 4.1 (c): Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Parents' Education Level, (N=30)

Education Level of Parents	Frequencies	Percentages
Degree and Above	1	3.3
Diploma	1	3.3
Certificate	4	13.3
Form Six	3	10.0
Form Four	4	13.3
Primary School	12	40.0
Informal School	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Table 4.1 (c) presents parents' where by 40 percent were primary school leavers, 16.7 percent of parents had informal education 13.3 percent of parents had form four education levels. Also 13.3 percent parents had certificate education level 10.0 percent of parents had form six education level, 3.3 percent had diploma and also 3.3 percent had degree.

4.1.4 Occupation of Parents Analysis

Table: 4.1 (d): Frequencies and Percentage Distributions of Occupation of Parents, (N=30)

Occupation	Frequencies	Percentages
Business	3	10.0
Civil Servants	4	13.3
Petty Traders	7	23.3
Farmers	12	40.0
Pastoralists	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Table 4.1 (d) shows that farmers had the highest (40.0%), rank of followed by petty traders (23.3%), 13.3 percent civil servants 13.3 percent pastoralists and 10.0 percent business persons. The highest percentage of farmers dominating the other occupations implies that students' drop-out may have been contributed by low income of their parents as the result of students to engage in income generating activities rather than concentrating in school daily attendance and their studies.

4.2 Summary of the Results by Specific objectives

4.2.1 In What Ways are Parents Involved in Improving Students' Retention in Community Secondary School?

The first specific objectives intended to collect information on ways parents were involved in improving students' retention in CSS. Data were obtained through an open ended questionnaire and interview. The targeted respondents were 60 students, 16 class teachers, 4 school heads and 2. The findings are presented in Tables 4.2 (a), 4.2 (b), 4.2(c) and 4.2 (d).

Table: 4.2 (a): Open Ended Questionnaires Result Obtained from Respondents on Ways Parents were Involved in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=60).

Ways Parents Involved in Improving Students Retentions	Number of responses	Percentages
Provision of basic school requirements (school fees, book and uniforms)	35	58%
Restrictions on peer groups with bad behavior	21	35%
Advice on the importance of educations to children	16	27%
Passing through students exercise books every day	15	25%
Provision of basic needs(food, shelter and clothes)	7	11.6%
Living peacefully at home and provision of enough time for resting and self studying	5	8.3%
Awareness education about adolescents	5	8.3%

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Results in Table 4.2 (a) indicate that the most mentioned ways were provision of basic requirements (school fees, book and uniforms) mentioned by 35 respondents, followed by 21 respondents who mentioned restriction on peer groups with bad behaviour. Very few respondents mentioned living peacefully at home and provision of enough time for resting self study and awareness education about adolescent as parental involvement in improving students retention.

Table: 4.2 (b): Interview Results Obtained from Class Teachers on Ways Parents were Involved in Improving Students' Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=16).

Ways Parents Involved in Improving Students' Retention	Frequencies of Mentioned Percentages (%)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Provision of basic school requirements (school fees, books and uniform)	16	100
Making follow up through students report	10	63
Attending school meetings	9	56
Through frequent communication parents-teachers	8	50
Making physical follow up to school	7	44
Restriction of children to peer groups	4	25

Source: Field Data (March, 2014)

Table 4.2 (b) shows that the highly ranked mentioned ways by majority of class teachers were provision of basic school requirements (school fees, books and

uniform), making follow up through students' reports, attending school meetings, through frequent communication between parents and teachers and making physical follow up to school. A few class teachers' revealed restriction of children to peer groups. The Provision of basic school requirements (school fees, books and uniform) this way has been believed by parents as the most applicable way to retain their children at school while posting other basic ways which are the main stimulators for students' retention in CSS such as attending school meetings and making follow up through students report.

Table: 4.2 (c): Interview Results Obtained from School Heads' views on Ways Parents were Involved in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=4).

Ways Parents Involved in Improving Students' Retention	Frequency of Mentioned	Percentages (%)
Provision of basic school requirements (school fees, books and uniform)	4	100
Parental involvement in construction of physical buildings (hostels, laboratories and classrooms)	4	100
Physical contacts with head of schools	3	75
Parents being members of school boards	3	75
Attending school meetings	2	50

Source: Field Data (March, 2014)

Findings in Table 4.2 (c) indicate that school heads felt that provision of basic school requirements (school fees, books and uniform) was the most useful way for parental involvement towards improving students' retention in CSS. Physical contacts with school heads and attending school meetings were mentioned as the least ways for realizing the same aspect.

Table: 4.2 (d): Interview Results Obtained from DSEOs' on Ways Parents Involved in Improving Students' Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=2).

Ways Parents Involved in Improving Students' Retention	Number of Mentioned	Percentages (%)
Provision of basic school requirements	2	100
Monitoring of children to attend at school	1	50
Parents helps on making sure children have good discipline at home and school	1	50
Physical contacts with DSEOs	1	50
Attending school meetings	1	50

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Results presented in Table 4.2 (d) put forward the most mentioned way as provision of basic school requirements (school fees, books and uniform) in which physical contacts with DSEO, and attending school meetings were the least mentioned by District Secondary Education Officers.

4.2.2 What are the Challenges Facing Community Secondary Schools Towards Parents' Involvement in Improving Students Retention Responded by Students.

Key informants for this aspects were students, class teachers, school heads of and DSEOs. Open-ended questionnaires were used to collect data from students and structured interview questions were used to collect data from clas teachers, Heads of School (HoS) and DSEO. Findings are presented in Tables 4.3 (a), 4.3 (b), 4.3(c) and 4.3 (d)

Table 4.3 (a): Open Ended Questionnaire Results Obtained from Students on Challenges Facing Community Secondary School Towards Parents Involvement in Improving Students Retention, (N=60).

Challenges	Number of Responses	Percentages
Poor communities support on CSS	34	32.1
Lack of database for communication link between parents and teachers	25	23.6
Inadequate support from local government authority	16	15.1
Low understandings of the parents on importance of education	16	15.1
Poverty	15	14.2
Total	106	100.0

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Table 4.3 (a) reveal that good number of respondents mentioned poor communities support on CSS, followed by lack of data base for communication between parents and teachers as the most challenges facing CSS towards parents involvement in improving students retention. Other factors included inadequate support from local government authority, parents, low understanding on importance of education and poverty as challenges for parental involvement in students retention in Dodoma Municipality.

Table 4.3 (b): Interview Results Obtained from Class Teachers on Challenges Facing Community Secondary School Towards Parents Involvement in Improving Students Retention, (N=16).

Challenges	Number of Mention	Percent ages (%)
Lack of database for communication link between teachers and parents	12	75
Poor community support on CSS	10	62.5
Low understandings of some parents on importance of education to childre	10	62.5
Poor cooperation between the CSS	8	50
Low support from local government authority	8	50
Inadequate involvement of parents in CSS for decision making	5	31.25
Poverty	5	31.25

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Table 4.3 (b) indicates that the highly mentioned factors from majority of respondents as challenges facing CSS were lack of database for communication link between teachers and parents, poor community support on CSS and low understanding to some parents on the importance of education to children. However, a few respondents revealed that low support from local government authority and poverty were mentioned as challenges facing CSS towards parents' involvement in improving students' retention.

Table: 4.3 (c): Interview Results Obtained from HoS on Challenges Facing Community Secondary School Towards Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention, (N=4)

Challenges	Number of Mentioned	Percentage (%)
Poor community supports on CSS	4	100
Lack of database for communication link between teachers and parents	4	100
Low understanding of parents on the importance of education to children	3	75
Inadequate of regular parents–school meetings	3	75
Community mistrust on CSS	1	25
poverty	1	25

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Findings in Table 4.3 (c) shows that respondents mentioned that poor community support on CSS and lack of database for communication link between teachers

and parents as the most burning of all challenges facing CSS towards parental involvement in improving students retention explained by schools heads. The least mentioned challenge was poverty.

Table 4.3 (d): Interview Results Obtained from DSEOs on Challenges Facing Community Secondary School Towards Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention, (N=2)

Challenges	Number of Mentioned	Percentages (%)
Poor community supports on CSS	2	100
Lack of database for communication link between teachers and parents	2	100
Low understandings of some parents on importance of education to children	2	100
Socio-cultural background of the family	2	100
Low support from local government authority	2	100
Poor public rally on parental involvement in CSS education	1	50
Poverty	1	50

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Results in Table 4.3 (d) reveals the highest ranked variables included poor community supporty on CSS, lack of database for communication link between teachers and parents, low understandings of some parents on the importance of education to children and low support from local government authority, towards

parental involvement in improving students retention explained by DSEOs. Poverty was mentioned by respondents as the minor challenge facing the CSS.

4.2.3 What are the Strategies to be Taken to Ensure Parents Involvement in Improving Students Retention?

The research objective sought to identify strategies to be taken to ensure parents involvement in improving students retention in CSS. Data were collected from students and parents through open ended questionnaires. Interviews were used to collect data from class teachers, HoS and DSEOs. The findings are presented in Tables 4.4 (a), 4.4 (b), 4.4 (c), 4.4 (d) and 4.4 (e).

Table: 4.4 (a): Open Ended Questionnaire Results Obtained from Students on the Strategies to be Taken to Ensure Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=60)

Strategies	Number of Responses	Percentages
Establishing of food programme by parents in cooperation with teachers during school hours in CSS	33	55
Timely improvising of basic school requirements by parents (school fees, school uniforms)	29	48.3
Participation of parents in extra curriculum activities (parent day, sports and graduation ceremonies)	24	40
Establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSS	23	38.3
Improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students retentions in CSS	22	36.6

Source: Field Data (May, 2014).

Table 4.4 (a) indicates that the highest strategies mentioned by students on strategies to be taken to ensure parents' involvement in improving students retention were establishment of food programme by parents in cooperation with teachers during school hours in CSS, timely provision of basic school

requirements by parents (school fees, school uniforms), participation of parents in extracurricular activities (parents day, sports and graduation ceremonies) and establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSS. However the least mentioned strategy was improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students' retention in CSS.

Table: 4.4 (b): Open Ended Questionnaire Results Obtained from Parents on the Strategies to be Taken to Ensure Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=30)

Challenges	Number of Responses	Percentages
Improvement of cooperation between parents and teachers	24	80
Provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education to their children	22	73.3
Improvement of extra-curriculum for students	19	63.3
Establishment of by-laws to guide parents on students retentions	15	50
Improvement of school board and committees in parental involvement in student retention in CSSs	12	40

Source: Field Data (May, 2014).

Table 4.4 (b) provides an understanding that most of the mentioned strategies were improvement of cooperation between parents and teachers, followed by provision of awareness education to parents on the importance of education to their children, improvement of extra-curricular for students and establishment of by-laws to guide parents on students retentions. The least mentioned strategy was improvement of school board and committees.

Table 4.4 (c) : Interview Results Obtained from Class Teachers on Strategies to be Taken to Ensure Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=16)

Strategies	Number Mentioned	Percentage (%)
Involvement of parents in education matters	12	75
Provision of awareness education to parents on the importance of education to their children	14	87
Handling of disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers	10	62.5
Establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSSs	9	56.25
Improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students retentions in CSSs	8	50

Source:Field Data (March, 2014).

Table 4.4 (c) denotes that the most of mentioned strategies by class teachers on the ensuring parents' involvement in improving students retention were involvement of parents on education matters, provision of awareness education to parents on the importance of education to their children, handling disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers, establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSSs. The least mentioned strategies were improvement of communication link between parents' and teachers for effective students' retention in CSS.

Table 4.4 (d): Interview Results Obtained from HoS on Strategies to be Taken to Ensure Parental Involvement in Improving Students' Retention in Community Secondary Schools,(N=4).

Strategies	Number of Mentioned	Percent ages (%)
Involvement of parents in education matters	4	100
Handling of disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers	4	100
Construction of school fence for all CSSs	4	100
Improvement of cooperation among teachers, parents and communities on students retention in CSSs	4	100
Establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSSs	3	75

Source: Field Data (March, 2014).

Interviews with school heads presented in Table 4.4 (d) revealed that the highest mentioned strategies were involvement of parents on education matters, handling disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers, construction of school fences for all CSSs and improvement of cooperation among teachers, parents as well as communities on students' retention in CSSs. The least mentioned strategy was establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs.

Table 4.4 (e) : Interview Results Obtained from DSEOs on Strategies to be Taken to Ensure Parents Involvement in Improving Students' Retention in Community Secondary Schools, (N=2).

Strategies	Number of Mentioned	Percent ages (%)
Involvement of parents in education matters	2	100
Handling of disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers	2	100
Improvement of support to CSSs from local government authority	2	100
Improvement of volunteerism activities by parents to CSSs	2	100
Establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSSs	2	100

Source:Field Data (March, 2014).

Table 4.4 (d) indicates that the highest mentioned strategies by DSEOs were involvement of parents on education matters, handling of disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers, improvement of support to CSSs from local government authority and improvement of volunteerism activities by parents to CSSs. The least mentioned strategy was establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, analysis of the findings and discussion as per objectives of the study as explained in chapter one. The information presented in this chapter was obtained through questionnaires, informant interviews and documentary reviews. The discussion focused on the findings presented in chapter four through descriptive statistics in tables, figures, frequencies and percentages.

5.1 In what Ways are Parents Involved in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary School?

Generally findings subjected to research question one is presented in Tables 4.1(a), 4.1(b), 4.1(c), 4.1(d). Results obtained through open ended questionnaires from students respondents revealed that, the following were mentioned as ways in which parents were involved in improving students' retention in CSSs.

The most frequently mentioned ways were provision of basic school requirements such as school fees, books and uniforms, followed by restriction on peer groups, advice on importance of education and checking students' exercise books every day, provision of basic needs (food, shelter and clothes) The least mentioned

ways were living peacefully at home, provision of enough time for resting and self-study and awareness education about adolescence. This implies that, most parents in the study area were involved in providing basic school requirements for retaining their children in CSSs. But the researcher found that in the study area implementation of the mentioned ways differed from one CSS to another which was associated by school managerial system. This entails that effectiveness of the detailed ways depended much on management and leadership of the school as well as parental involvement on academic matters.

To cross check the findings obtained through questionnaires, similar questions were asked through interviews to class teachers, HoS and DSEOs. Results obtained through interviews are presented in Tables 4.2 (b), 4.2 (c) and 4.2(d). Responses from all 16 (100%) class teachers, all 4 (100%) HoS and all 2(100%) DSEOs revealed that provision of basic school requirements such as school fees, books and uniforms were ways for parental involvement towards improving students retention.

The most of parents afford to meet basic school requirements for their children as the way forwarded to improve students' retention due to the established government supportive programmes in CSSs. For example, Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP I) and (SEDP II), which setup a very important strategy of introducing capitation grants. This has reduced the expenses in terms of school fees as well as teaching and learning materials from parents contribution for their children in CSSs. Thus most parents have been able to

manage and afford to meet other needs for their children at school and home such as food, school uniform, books and pens which resulted in improvement of students retention in CSSs. In supporting results one HoS had the following comments

“.....Through capitation grants, parents are released from school fees and other contributions in which we were supposed to get from them. This has made parents encouraged to be involve on education matters and students’ retentions.....”(Interview held with HoS on 23 April 2014).

Apart from questionnaires and interviews; documentary review was conducted at one of the selected CSSs. From the school, HoS identified that by August, 2013 about 400 (74.07%) out of 540 parents had ready paid school fees required for their children. That gave an opportunity for students to be free from school fees disturbances and hence encouraged students retention. In addition, one of the DSEOs said that good responses on payment of school fees were influenced by capitation grants which helped to reduce the burden of school fees and other contributions.

The findings support those reported by Uwazi (2010) which stated that uses of capitation grants supported reduction of school fees where by the grants helped in covering the following: facility repair (20%), text books, teaching guides, supplement reading materials (40%), chinks, exercise books, pens, pencils (20%), administration materials (10%) and examination papers, purchase of the support materials as well as printing (10%). Also the findings are in compliance

with those revealed by Grace and colleagues (2012). They (*ibid*) stated that by providing children with basic school requirements and basic needs like school fees, uniforms, plenty of nutritious food, shelter, clothes, medical care and ill, clothing that is appropriate for the weather conditions those parents must meet for the up keep of their children which support in students retention and academic performances.

Futhermore, attending school meetings was another mentioned way of parental involvement towards improving students retention in CSSs. From interviews it was revealed 9(56.25%) class teachers that attending school meetings were applied by parents as the way forward to be involved in improving students' retention in the selected CSSs. Similarly, this way was supported positively by half of the HoS during interviews, and half of the DSEOs. According to HoS, CSSs sit for meetings with parents during and after school vacation which help in decision-making for students' retention and other school matters. In the selected CSSs some parents were willing to attend in school meetings and respond positively during school calls for discussion on school matters concerning improvement of students retention.

In addition documentary review from one of the selected CSSs revealed that 324 (60%) out of 540 parents attended opening school meetings for the year 2013. This implies that parents recognized their roles on education matters for their children a pattern, which helps in providing an opportunity for CSSs staff and

teachers to exchange ideas with parents concerning improvement of students retention.

The results are in sync with Lewis (2011) who specifies that involvement of parents on education matters with aspect of attending meetings is perceived to be instrumental in improving children's access, attendance and retention in schools. In addition Carranza and colleagues (2009) stated that it is potential to improve parents' sense of empowerment, and support the greater achievement of valued educational outcomes. Parental involvement may even compensate for lack of meaningful learning in schools, especially when favorable environment is created at home for learning.

Moreover, making follow up through students reports was agreed by respondents as the way used by parents to be involved in improving students retention for CSSs in Dodoma Municipality. Reaction from respondents indicated that 10(62.5%) of interviewed class teachers affirmed that making follow up through students' was a way parents were involved in improving students retention in CSSs. The study found that some parents made follow up through CSS reports to determine their childrens' academic progress, behaviour and school attendance. In addition the class teachers explained that parental follow up for their students especially those who went to schools gave teachers an opportunity to make good decision making for children who misbehaved being involved in peer groups, sexual relationships and drug abuse.

However, some of the class teachers added by revealing that information on student's report were not enough to clarify further about students' behaviours. Therefore through talking to parents, teachers learn more on parents and kind of people surrounding their children and their attitudes toward their children. When parents scheduled physical follow-up, schools took the lead and made a strong statement about their commitment in education and improving students' retention. In supporting this, the HoS from one of the selected CSSs commented that,

"Infact.....since we have set a programme that involves dispatching letters to parents and phone calling as the way forward to invite and receive parents who make follow-up for their children's attendances have showed support on students retention...."(Interview held with SH on 17th April 2014)

The study is in compliance with Harderves (1998) who revealed that family whose parents have opportunities to visit where their children are schooling makes additional advantages in monitoring truancy, absenteeism, improved academic achievements and increased cooperation with staff.

Furthermore, through frequent communication between parents and teachers approved by respondents as the way parents were involved in improving students' retention in CSSs in Dodoma Municipality. Through interviews it was revealed by 8(50%) of class teachers that frequent communication between parents and teachers improved students' retention in CSSs. The study found that for better parents and teachers' cooperation there was need for CSSs to improve

communication links with parents. That was stated by one of the SH in the selected schools. However, the findings found that most of CSSs in the study area had no communication data base in which its existence could be used to create communication link between school administration, teachers and parents. The following was among comments given by one of the respondents:

“.....One of the class teachers said that CSSs has to establish school database where contact details of students’ parents could be kept.....” (Interview held with class teacher on 18th April 2014).

The findings relate with result from the study by Lee and Bowen (2006) who revealed that the school communication databases help to link parents and teachers cooperation but they have to be updated regularly to ensure that when the need arises to communicate, the intended parents will receive the information. In the same vein, the study by Leon (2003) denotes that many parents find frequent telephone contact very helpful. Parents find the calls they get from teachers and SHs about both positive and negative aspects of their children’s school performance to be valuable.

In addition, making physical follow-up to schools was revealed by respondents as a way applied by parents in improving students’ retention in CSSs in Dodoma Municipality. Results obtained through interviews from 7(43.75%) of class teachers exposed that making physical follow-up to schools by parents’ used a way forward in improving students retention in CSSs. The findings were-cross

checked against the SHs through interviews in whereby 3(75%) of them agreed that making physical follow up to schools was used as a way for parents' involvement towards improving students' retention in CSSs. The study identified that parents appreciate hearing about their children's problems through physical follow-up to schools. The measure facilitated to get direct information from teachers that reinforced about their children's behavior inside and outside of school and eventually children got good results during the final national examinations.

Result from the study corroborate with findings from the study by Watson (2011), which revealed that parents who intended to make physical contacts with school staff helped to determine children's developments on education matters. They become the instrumental in improving children's access, attendance and retention in schools. But it also had the potential to improve parents' sense of empowerment, and support the greater achievement of valued educational outcomes. This is in contrast with the study of Leon (2003) who stated that physical absence of parents from the school is not a reliable indication of the extent to which parents are involved in their children's education. Parents who said they never came to the school often reported being very active in monitoring the children's progress (*ibid*).

On top of that, the least mentioned way of parental involvement in improving students' retention was physical contacts with DSEOs. Results obtained through interviews revealed that 1(50%) of DSEOs argued that physical contacts with

DSEOs is partially used by parents towards improving students retention in CSSs Dodoma Municipality. According to DSEOs, most parents who attended to his office had other problems rather than students retention like transferring students from one school to another. In addition parents who attended to DSEOs' office went there to report about schools' unofficial contributions.

Apart from questionnaire and interviews, documentary review was also conducted at the office of HoS and DSEOs on ways parents were involved in improving students' retention. In the documentary review, it was observed from one of the selected CSSs that only 102 (15.9%) out of 640 parents did physical contacts with the DSEOs per year. This implies that most of the parents were not involved in improving students retention as revealed from the attendances to the office of DSEOs seeks assistance for other problems such as students transfer rather than retention.

The findings are in accordance with result from the study by HakiElimu (2010), which stated that when parents spoke with DSEOs they had a significant effect on reduce students' absenteeism. Likewise, parental attendance to DSEOs had a significant effect on parental involvement in improving students' retention and academic achievements in CSSs.

Findings from the study imply that parents have a great role to play on shaping and advancing their children on various environments such as at homes and schools. This is in the same vein with Psychodynamic Theory on Parenting which

states that parents are assumed to be positive for children's education to solve psychological problems, which result into students' good attendance to schools and retentions. The theory states that "learning does not take place in a vacuum it requires a caring, warm, home learning environment". (Allen and Santrock, 1993).

5.2 What are the Challenges Facing Community Secondary Schools Towards Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention

Findings for this aspect were obtained through open-ended and close-ended questionnaires from students and interviews from class teachers, HoS as well as DSEOs as indicated in Tables 4.3 (a), 4.3(b), 4.3(c) and 4.3(d). Several challenges facing CSSs were identified by respondents towards parental involvement in improving students retention in Dodoma Municipality.

The findings obtained through open ended questionnaires revealed that among challenges mostly facing CSSs towards parental involvement in improving students retention included poor community supports, followed by lack of database for communication link between parents and teachers. Other included inadequate support from local government authority and low understandings of parents on importance of education. The least mentioned challenge was poverty. This implies that respondents were aware of challenges facing CSSs in improving students' retention.

The results were cross checked through interviews conducted with class teachers, HoS and DSEOs. During interviews 10(87.5%) out of 16 class teachers,

all 4(100%) SHs and all 2(100%) DSEOs insisted that poor community support on CSSs stood a great challenge for prosperity of CSSs in achieving good parental involvement in improving students retention. Due to lack of support from communities, CSSs were unable to construct physical infrastructures such as laboratories and libraries. Such pattern led into some students' poor performance in some subjects. Hence it made students feeling uncomfortable to proceed with schools because it led to students' poor retention. In supporting the results one of the SHs had the following comments;

“.....Low community supports on CSSs has resulted into absence of laboratory and library in our school. Communities are not willing to make contributions for construction of the laboratory even library, a pattern which results into students' poor performance thereby leading to poor students retention.....”(Interview held with HoS on 23rd May 2014).

Apart from questionnaires and interviews, documentary reviews indicated that in all 4 (100%) visited CSSs, no school had its own laboratory for science subjects and practical despite the order provided by the President of United Republic of Tanzania (URT) Honourable Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete. The president ordered that at the end of the year 2014, every CSSs in each ward should have its own laboratory established from efforts of local communities and local government authorities. Lack of laboratories in the visited CSSs probably could be associated with inadequate support from parents fund.

The findings are in agreement with result from the study by Uemura (1999), which exposed that community support in secondary school helps to ensure society members commitment to education. It defines responsibilities of the community members and their participation, both financially and in-kind. It means that they are more likely to demand accountability from school staff. Community members could be highly involved in the day-to-day management of the school where they see what is happening and what needs to be corrected and serve as the school's official representative to the government. Poor community support on education matters results into poor organizational structure that encourages teachers' and local administrators' lack of accountability to parents.

In addition, findings from this study reveal that lack of database for communication link between teachers and parents was another challenge facing CSSs in Dodoma Municipality. The results obtained through interviews from 12(75%) out of 16 class teachers, all 4 (100%) HoS and 2 (100%) DSEOs agreed that lack of database for communication link between parents and teachers hindered parental involvement towards improving students retention. Moreover, it was revealed from the study that most CSSs did not have an identified database programme for communication with parents. One of the SHs had the following comments

“.....At our school, absence of a database for communication links between teachers and parents made parents to be far away from school. That aspect leads to difficulties on decision making for

education matters.....”(Interviews held with HoS on 23rd May 2014).

The findings are in agreement with those from a study by Lee and Bowen (2006) who stated that parents or guardians failed to attend school functions due to poor database communication on links between parents and teachers an aspect, which stood as a challenge. When asked how they communicated with parents or guardians, most participants said that they gave circulars to students to their parents. That made parents who will have genuinely wanted to attend at schools fail to do so if their children forgot or deliberately forgot to give them the circular. In this age of technology, schools, which are not having a database on communication programme should tap into this resource and improve communication between schools and parents (*Ibid*).

Moreover, parents' low understanding on importance of education stood as a challenge facing CSSs towards their involvement on improving students retention. Then 10 (62.5%) of interviewed class teachers agreed that parents' low understanding on importance of education played a big role on poor students' retention. Parents required their children for petty trades and domestic activities like caring for families rather than school matters. In addition, interviews conducted with HoS and DSEOs revealed that 3 (75%) HoS and all 2 (100%) DSEOs had similar views with class teachers. One HoS had this to say,

“.....parents' low understanding of parents on importance of education for their children made some

of them support truancy and early marriage for their children which strengthened students' drop-outs from our school....." (Interview held with HoS on 23rd May 2014)

One of the DSEOs explained that literacy empowers parents to participate fully in the life of society of which schools are part, and acquire skills including confidence in their own abilities to exercise their rights as well as responsibilities in supporting education for their children.

Findings from this study are connected with Stegelin (2003) who denotes that lack of knowledge, low literacy skills and cultural mismatches/misunderstandings, negative experience of schooling and low educational attainment for parents result into poor involvement on educational matters. Moreover, parents' negative experience of schooling and low educational attainment may limit their ability to help their children with homework and their familiarity with educational resources available in the community.

On top of that, low support from local government authority was mentioned as a challenge towards parents involvement in improving students retention in CSSs. Interviews conducted at the visited school revealed that 8(50%) out of 16 class teachers disclosed that low support from local government authority on CSSs made parents and other community' members to contribute less on students' effective learning and academic growth. Among the interviewed 5 (31.25%) out of 16 class teachers denoted that if the government was really committed to

strengthen education for all children in the country, then the local government authorities should invest efforts on developing the existing CSSs in their areas and promote parental involvements for effective education system. There would be realization of students' retention by improving infrastructures like classrooms, toilets as well as construction laboratories and libraries.

In addition through interviews, 3 (75%) out of 4 interviewed HoS confessed that low support from local government authority led into difficulties towards parental involvement in improving students retention in CSSs. At large, respondents in the visited schools indicated that most CSSs lacked physical buildings such as laboratories and toilets. Also they lacked laboratory equipment and desks due to low support gained from local government authority in Dodoma Municipality. In supporting the results one of SHs had the following comments

“.....Low support from local government authority results into lack of laboratories and libraries in most CSSs in which students face poor learning environment. That aspects leads into problem of maintaining students retention In due regard mass failures during national examinations.....”(Interview held with HoS on 08th May 2014)

On one hand, all 2 (100%) interviewed DSEOs had the same opinion that low support from local government authority reduces the speed to meet aspects proposed by government on development of CSSs. The DSEOs on pressure because they are required to explain on failure of having laboratories and

laboratory equipment as the order provided by the president of the URT that by end of the year 2014 every CSSs in each ward should have a working laboratory.

The findings are related with those from the study by Maguire (2002), who explained that low support from local government authority (LGA) makes parents not to react effectively to education related challenges they face or those faced by their children. It is the responsibility of LGA to strengthen lifelong Secondary School education and empower parents and communities at large in order to acquire sustainable improvement of CSSs and maintain students retention.

Among the least mentioned challenges by respondents included poverty that confront parental involvement towards improving students retentions in CSSs in Dodoma Municipality. Then 5 (31.25%) out of 16 interviewed class teachers disclosed that poverty played a large part on holding back development and parental involvement towards improving students' retention in CSSs. It was prescribed that poverty made some of the parents support truancy for their children. Also early marriage, failure to meet some of the school contributions and being unaware on importance of education for their children accelerated to poor students retention in CSSs. Also interviews were held with the SHs to validate views of class teachers. Thus 1 (25%) out of 4 HoS established similar suggestions with those provided by class teachers.

It was indicated that most indigenous parents in Dodoma Municipality are farmers who depend much on agricultural activities for crop production and animal

husbandly for their lives and support their children on education matters. The lower the harvest in the year, the poorer the services students got from their parents like school uniforms, exercise books, pens and poor contributions to school which results into poor students' retentions in CSSs. In addition, one of the SHs in the visited schools explained that poor parents were reluctant to participate in education matters because they were unaware of the importance of conveying education expectations for their children. Also they could not be able to support their children on education matters such that there was poor students' retention.

Moreover, 1(50%) DSEOs confessed that poverty among families reduces cooperations between parents and teachers towards parental involvement in improving students' retention. Since secondary education is neither free nor compulsory, school fees represent a major obstacle for parents in keeping their children in school due to poverty within the families. They are required to pay 20,000 Tanzanian shillings (Tshs) equivalent to 50 percent of the total tuition fees for each student in CSSs. The study found that besides government efforts reducing school fees and other teaching and learning materials, still poverty among the families made some parents unable to cover for school expenses such as contributions on water, printing and examination fees. In supporting the reported result one of the DSEOs had the following comments,

“..... Some of the students leave school due to poverty within their families, Parents force their

children to drop out from school so as to participate in petty trade and others become house maids to save the entire families at home.....”(Interview held with DSEOs on 8th May 2014)

The above information agreed with that of UNESCO (2012) who reveals that poverty remains the main challenge to improvement of secondary education and students retention. Since secondary education is neither free nor compulsory, school fees represent a major obstacle for parents in keeping their children in schools because it is linked directly with poverty level within the family.

However, Tremblay colleagues (2004) state that parents' economic, emotional and /or educational deficiencies potentially inhibit their educational relationship and support to schools. Moreover, Hill and Tylor (2004) explained that poverty limits parents ability to provide for their children and argument their children' educational with resources in the home. Reduced financial resources may limit families abilities to provide educational materials and opportunities such that they may influence parents educational expectations on their children (*ibid*).

In general, the leading mentioned challenges by respondents through open ended questionnaires, interviews and documentary reviews included, parents' low understanding on importance of education and poor community support on CSSs. In addition the least mentioned challenge was poverty among families which hinders on parental involvement towards improving students retention in CSSs.

Findings from this study are in agreement with Psychodynamic Theory on Parenting. The theory emphasizes on parents to be responsible in creating a conducive and very safe environment for students. When parents sacrifice their time and energy to support their children. It helps them realize the importance of education. Learning does not take place in a vacuum it requires a caring, warm, home learning environment (Allen and Santrock, 1993).

5.3 What are the Strategies to be taken to Ensure Parental Involvement towards Improving Students' Retention

The findings for strategies to be taken to ensure parents involvement towards improving student's retention in CSSs were obtained through open-ended questionnaires to students and semi-structured interview with class teachers, HoS and DSEOs. The obtained are results presented in Tables 4.4(a), 4.4(b), 4.4(c), 4.4(d) and 4.4(e). Data obtained through open ended questionnaires from the students denoted out the following highly ranked strategies; establishing a food programme by parents in cooperation with teachers during school hours in CSSs, followed by timely provision of basic school requirements by parents such as school fees, school uniform, text and reference books as well as sports gear. Participation of parents in extracurricular activities such as parents' day, students' exhibition of what they are learning, sports and graduation ceremonies and establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs were mentioned strategies. The least mentioned strategy was improvement of a communication link between parents and teachers for effective students' retention in CSSs.

The results obtained through open ended questionnaire were cross-checked with interviews conducted with class teachers, HoS and DSEOs. During the interviews 12(75%) class teachers revealed that, involvement of parents on education matters will help to widen their participation towards improvement of students' retention in CSSs. In addition, 1(6.25%) out of 16 class teachers and all 4(100%) HoS explained that, involvement of parents in extra-curricular activities such as games and sports handcrafts and participation of parents in meetings will actually motivate students in school attendances. Hence they will help to improve students' retention in CSSs. According to them, involvement of parents in education matters assist teachers to work under the direction on supporting specific students or groups of children in shaping their disciplines and class academic progress.

In all 4(100%) visited CSSs, it was found that, when parents are involved in school development activities like construction of classrooms, laboratories for practical studies, libraries, toilets, increase availability of material resources such as desks as well as tables and provision of support on teaching/learning materials like text books and reference books will help to bring good learning environment for children thereby improve students' retention in CSSs.

Comparable, through interview results from SHs and DSEOs, it was pointed out that all 4(100%) HoS and all 2(100%) DSEOs revealed that involvement of parents on education matters was the best strategy for improving students'

retention in CSSs. One of the HoS in the visited CSSs stated that effective involvement of parents on education matters improves co-operation between parents and teachers. Hence it facilitates in improving students development in academics, learning and socialization. As a result there will be good students' retention in CSSs. In addition, one of the DSEOs suggested that, it is the fact that parents have to know what schools and staff expects from them, or how they might contribute to their children's schooling. That could help a lot in solving different problems including students' retention. In supporting the results one of DSEOs had the following comments,

“.....In my own experiences, involvement of parents in education matters will create the habit of frequent follow up by parents for their children's academic progress. Hence this will improve students retention in CSS.....”(Interview held with DSEOs on 7th May 2014).

The findings revealed the same as explained by Bouakaz (2007) that involvement of parents in education matters increases co-operation between parents and teachers in school activities. For example, construction of buildings, children's development in academic matters, increases teaching/learning materials, socialization and supporting an on-going provision of supports in CSSs for the improvement of students' retention. It is also seen important for development of the democratic process, giving the parents opportunities to influence activities and relationships in the CSSs settings (*ibid*). Moreover, the study collocates with the idea contributed by Kurian (2008) that involvement of parents in education

matters has a strong connection in students' retention which involves good communication to inform parents about students' attendance and other matters pertaining to their children at the school and college. The school can use feedback from parents to enhance good educational environment in the school (*ibid*).

Additionally, provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education to their children, was mentioned by respondents as the strategy for ensuring parental involvement in improving students' retention in CSSs. Interviews carried out with 14(87.5%) out of 16 class teachers disclosed that provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education helps the families to create conducive home learning environments for extra studies which will support children to increase courage for attending school thereby leading to improved students retention. Moreover, 1(6.25%) out of 16 class teachers and all 4(100%) HoS pointed out that, awareness education to parents could be obtained when politicians address public such as in parental meetings.

Also as school, which has a potential role in improving awareness education to parents motivates parents in providing their children with school basic requirements such as books, school uniforms and school fees thereby helps in improving students' retention in CSSs. It was revealed that parents with educational awareness motivate their children in schooling by giving them different awards. Moreover, to validate the results from class teachers, similar questions were asked to HoS and DSEOs through interviews. Responses were

closely linked as 3(75%) out of 4 HoS, revealed that provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education helps to establish a close relationship with teachers, students and education stakeholders.

Moreover, DSEOs were interviewed on the same question and all 2(100%) agreed that provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education stand as the good strategy for parental involvement towards improving students retention in CSSs. Understanding and knowledge about the importance of education help parents to gain confidence in their own abilities and skills thereby become part of the education system.

The findings are in compliance with work by Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) who denoted that provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education parental helps on parental involvement in education matters. That can enhance children's educational performance, increases parental participation in administrative processes for secondary school education and finally, provide opportunities for parents to get maximum local knowledge, an aspect which seems to be crucial in gaining parental trust for education for their children (*ibid*). Moreover awareness education to parents promotes partnerships with school staff and puts parents in touch with the institution. Also it helps parents to fill out forms and further lead to impact in terms of learning about other families' involvement in education matters, Bouakaz (2007).

Another proposed strategy was handling disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers as articulated by class teachers. They held that it helps to create a foundation for ensuring parental involvement in improving students' retention. Relying on interviews, 10(62.5%) out of 16 class teachers signified that handling of disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers considered to be an indicator for improving students' retention in CSSs.

It was highly evidenced from all 4(100%) visited CSSs that most of the students with poor school attendance and academic performances were found to have bad discipline behaviours to both parents and teachers. That pattern led to school dropout and hence poor retentions. In addition, 2(12.5%) out of 16 class teacher explained that, students with good discipline had good attendances at school and they performed well. Therefore it is the responsibilities of parents and teachers to handle disciplines of students so as to make them away from indiscipline behaviours such as drug abuse, alcoholism, early engagement in sexual relations and involvement in petty.

The results obtained through interviews from all 4(100%) HoS and all 2(100%) DSEOs supported views of class teachers that handling disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers has power in improving students' retention. It was evidenced from one of the HoS that, parents who are able to handle their children's disciplines helped in identifying and integrating educational expectation. Hence it motivated children to have daily attendances to school. As a result, it improved students' retention in CSSs. Hopkins (1998) points out that

students' retention in community secondary schools often failed because of students' indiscipline and inability or unwillingness of parents and teachers to handle discipline of the students.

On top of that, establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs was proposed by respondents as an applicable strategy for parental involvement in improving students' retention. The interview results gathered from 9(56.25%) out of 16 class teachers agreed that among strategies for parental involvement in improving students' retention included establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in CSSs. From all 4(100%) visited CSSs, it was evidenced that with presence of by-laws which will guide on parental attendances in school meetings, conduct physical follow up at the end of every month, ensure contributions for school feeding programmes and ensure effectiveness of volunteerism during school development programmes. The later could be such as construction of school buildings and rehabilitations will direct activate attendances of students and hence, improves students' retention in CSSs.

In addition, interviews with school heads and DSEOs had it that 3(75%) out of 4 HoS and all 2(100%) DSEOs had the same opinion as expressed by class teachers. One of the DSEOs explained that establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs will help to enforce the responsibilities of parents on their children in education matters such as

attendance and academic performances. In supporting this proposition, one of the DSEOs had the following comments:

“.....Establishment of by-laws to guide parents will enable on fulfillment of responsibilities of parents on educational needs for their children such as school requirements like school fees. As a result it will help in improving students’ retention in CSSs.....” (Interview held with DSEOs on 10th April 2014).

Findings from the study resemble with ideas exposed by Craig (2000) who denoted that establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students retention in secondary school justifies the parental proper co-operation with teachers. It helps to meet the responsibilities on supporting their children in education matters and motivates management of secondary schools. The by-laws provide a setting for parents to become involved in education matters and such involvement of parents in education matters extends to broader community life. Thus it implies that the primary goal of establishment of by-laws is to reinforce individual learners, parents and the institutions (Craig, 2000)

Basing on the least mentioned strategy by respondents include improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students retention in CSSs. Interviews results from all 4(100%) visited CSSs identified that 8 (50%) out of 16 class teachers verified that improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students retention in CSSs appeared to be a

good strategy for students retention. The study found that proper communication link between parents and teachers helps to support students' attendances at school, reduces students' absenteeism and even encourages on good co-operation between parents and teachers on education matters which results into improved students' retention. In addition 3(18.75%) out of 16 class teacher from the visited CSSs argued that through good communication link between parents and teachers supports on controlling early pregnancies and makes students misbehaviours to be open and known to both parents and teachers because they will be closely communicating.

Apart from views obtained from class teachers, interviews with HoS to relate the views of class teachers had it that 2(50%) out of 4 HoS put forward related opinions like those provided by class teachers. It was evidenced from the visited CSSs that good communication link between parents and teachers helps to determine the challenges facing CSSs and their children such as few classrooms, toilets and inadequate teaching and learning materials like text books and reference books. Hence it provides an opportunity for inclusive strategies for solving the challenges in the CSSs. Thereafter it leads to improvement of students' retention. In supporting this proposition, one of the HoS had the following comments:

“.....It is hoped that through good communication link between parents and teachers, parents will then become volunteers in the school. Also, that can

*contribute to raising retention of children. It will help to improve basic skills and students retention.....”
(Interview held with HoS 24th April 2014).*

Moreover, all 2(100%) DSEOs articulated that improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students’ retention in CSSs is the strategy that will help to improve parental involvement towards the improving students’ retention. It was substantiated by one of the DSEOs that effective communication link between parents and teachers of in CSSs increases teachers’ morale in working. Furthermore, both parents and teachers feel as part and parcel of the school, breaks out the gap between the two and motivates the entire community to be involved in education matters, thereby improves students’ retention in CSSs in Dodoma Municipality.

The findings are in the same vein with the study results by Epstein (2005), who stated that improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students’ retention in secondary school supports good communication between home and school to be regular, two-way, and meaningful. Also it improves parenting skills to be promoted and supported and promotes student learning when parents play an integral role by communicating with teachers in assisting students learning.

Generally, the main leading strategies put forward by respondents through open ended questionnaires and interviews included: involvement of parents in

education matters, followed by provision of awareness education to parents on importance of education to their children and handling disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers. Others were establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs. The least strategy was improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students' retention in CSSs. It is obviously that findings are guided by the Psychodynamic Theory of Parenting. The theory emphasizes parents to be responsible in creating a conducive and very safe environment for students. When parents sacrifice their time and energy to support their children, it helps them realize the importance of education. Recall learning does not take place in a vacuum it requires a caring, warm, home learning environment (Esho, 2013)

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. Therefore, it intends to wind up the cases have been discussed from the introduction chapter to presentation and discussion of the data.

6.1 Summary of the Study

The study investigated parental involvement towards improving students' retention in community secondary school in Dodoma Municipality. The study employed three research questions to meet the objectives of the study; ways parents involved in improving students' retention in community secondary school, challenges facing community secondary schools towards parents' involvement in improving students' retention and strategies to be taken to ensure parents involvement in improving students' retention.

The study was guided by two theories; Psychodynamic Theory of Parenting and the field theory both theories emphasize parents to be responsible in creating conducive and very safe environment for students. Also the study employed theoretical and empirical studies from both developed and developing countries for verification of the findings obtained from the study area.

Methodologically, the study employed a cross-sectional research design. Dominated by qualitative research approach and supported by some elements of quantitative techniques. In addition data were collected by using both open and closed questionnaires, semi structure interview and documentary review. A total of 60 students, 30 parents, 16 class teachers, 4 heads of school (HoS) and 2 District Secondary Education Officer (DSEOs) participated strongly in the study. Moreover the validity and reliability of research instruments and methods were issued through peer groups and supervisors' consultation, triangulation and pilot study before the actual collection of data commenced. Ethical procedures were observed through obtaining permission from relevant authorities. In addition data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Research (SPSS) version 16.0 where by tables, figures and frequencies were obtained.

6.2 Conclusion and Recommendation of the Study

Conclusion and recommendation of the study are presented relying on three major questions of this study.

6.2.1 Ways Parents can be Involved in Improving Students Retention in Community Secondary Schools.

The study identified ways parents can be involved in improving students retention in CSSs such as provision of basic school requirements like school fees, books and uniforms, restriction on peer groups and advice on the importance of education. On the other hand passing through students exercise books every day, provision of basic needs (food, shelter and clothes), living peacefully at

home, provision of enough time for resting and self studying. Others included awareness education about adolescents were the ways mentioned for parental involvement towards improving student retention in CSSs.

There fore it is recommended that, parents have to specify time for dialogue with their children concerning education matters, in time provisison of basic school requirements like uniforms and school fees, parental involvement in handling children disciplines and good co-operation among school adminstration, teachers, local governmenta and parents for improving students retention in CSS.

6.2.2 Challenges Facing Community Secondary Schools Towards Parental Involvement in Improving Students Retention.

Regarding to the research question number two the study revealed that most of CSSs are being faced by different challenges in parental involvement towards improving students retention. Among challenges they included poor community supports, lack of database for commucation link between parents and teachers and inadequate support from local government authority. Also parents' low understandings on importance of education and poverty found to be part and parcel of the challenges.

Therefore it is recommended that, parents, teachers, community and government at large should work together on improvement of CSSs such as on construction of physical buildings like laboratories, libralies and toilets, establishment of data

base system for effective communication links between parents and teachers, increased support of both fiscal and human resources from local government authority and sustainable planned programmes for poverty reduction among the parents.

6.2.3 Strategies to be taken to Ensure Parental Involvement towards Improving Students Retention.

In relevant to the research question number three, the results obtained from students, parents, class teachers, HoS and DSEOs pointed out strategies to ensure parental involvement towards improving students retention. Suggested strategies included involvement of parents in education matters and provision of awareness education to parents on the importance of education to their children. Others were handling disciplinary matters for children by both parents and teachers, establishment of by-laws to guide parents towards students' retention in CSSs and improvement of communication link between parents and teachers for effective students' retention in CSSs.

Therefore it is recommended that, educational stakeholders should adhere the strategies established in the study so as reduce challenges that face parental involvement towards improving students' retention.

6.3 Recommendation for Policy and Action.

In accordance with results from the study, the following are recommendation on general and policy action:

- Policy makers should ensure that parents and community at large are involved in initial stages of policy making to enhance cooperation among parents, teachers and the government for effective parental involvement in students' retention at CSSs.
- Policy makers should establish a policy which will help to guide school administration and ward leaders to involve parents in all stages of planning in order to create sense of transparency and ownership. Such measure will simplify implementation of planned strategies and encourage effective involvement of parents in the management of their schools.
- Policy makers have to formulate policies that allow collaborations between government education institutions and private education institutions for improving parental involvement in students' retention in CSSs.

6.4 Recommendations for Further Studies.

- The study was conducted in Dodoma Region, within Dodoma Municipal Council in Dodoma Urban District. Therefore, it is recommended that further studies are to be conducted in other remaining districts so as to get a wide picture of parental involvements towards students' retention in CSSs.

- Parental involvement towards improving students' retention cuts across all education levels from primary school to colleges and universities. Thus, further studies have to be carried out by putting into consideration on other education levels mentioned.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Interview Guide for District Secondary Educational Officer

1. When were you appointed to be the District Secondary Education Officer of Dodoma Municipality?
2. How many CSSs are there in the District?
3. Is there any problem of poor retention of students in CSS?
4. How many students have been affected by poor retention from the time of your appointment to date?
5. What were reasons behind for such a poor students' retention in CSS?
6. Which ways do you employ to encourage heads of your CSSs to involve parents for the improvement of students' retention?
7. What are strategies employed to solve cases reaching your office concerning poor student's retention from CSSs?
8. What challenges do you face when encouraging involvement of parents in CSS towards improving students' retention?

APPENDIX II: Interview Guide for Headmasters

1. When were you appointed to be the head master of this CSS?
2. In which class level in your school experience higher number of poor students' retention?
3. How many students have been affected by poor retention from the time of your appointment to date?
4. What are strategies and methodological approach (es) employed in your school towards parental involvement in improving students' retention?
5. Do you think parental involvement towards their children can be the solution for students' retention in your school?
6. What are the challenges that face your CSS in involving parents for improving student's retention?

APPENDIX III: Interview Guide for Class Teachers

1. When were you appointed to be the class teacher of three in this CSS?
2. How many students had experienced poor retention from your class?
3. What were reasons behind for such a poor students' retention in your class?
4. As a form three class teacher, what roles do you perform in improving students' retention in your CSS?
5. In which ways do you involve student's parent in your class towards improving their retention at school?
6. What strategies do you employ to improve retention of your students through parental involvement?
7. What are challenges that face your class in involving parents for improving students' retention?

APPENDIX IV: Questionnaire for Parents

Dear parents, this questionnaire seek information on parental involvement towards improving students' retention in community secondary schools. I assure you that all pieces of information you provide will provide be treated strictly confidential, and will be used for research only. Please be free to answer these questions as openly as possible.

(i) Name of CSS.....

(ii) Ward.....

(iii) District

(iv) Region

1. Do you have a child who is at CSS? (Circle or Tick)

(i) Yes

(ii) No

If the answer is NO in question 1 above continue with question number 13.

2. Is the student your own child? (Circle or Tick)

(i) Yes

(ii) No.

If the answer is "YES" in question 2 continue with question number 4.

3. Who is her or his parent? (Circle or Tick)

(i) My sister

(ii) My brother

(iii) My young sister

(iv) My brother

(v) My relative

4. Are you responsible to support him or her with necessary basic school needs or requirements? (Circle or Tick)

(i) Yes

(ii) No

5. What support do you give him or her? (Circle or Tick)

- (i) School fees
- (ii) School uniform
- (iii) Other fees
- (iv) No anything

6. Do you know your child's weakness (es) at school?

- A. Yes: State.....
- B. No: State.....

7. What do you do to make his or her daily school attendance?

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.....
.....
.....
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.....

8. Do you attend to teacher-parent meetings for your child's retention at school? (Circle or Tick)

- A. Yes
- B. No

If the answer is YES or NO why ?

.....
.....
.....
.....

9. Do you have a thorough check-up for your child's retention at CSS? (Circle or Tick)

- A. Yes
- B. No

10. Which thorough check-up do you really do for your child's retention at CSS? (Circle or Tick)

- A. Visiting to his or her school
- B. Cross-checking his or her exercise book
- C. Helping his or her homework
- D. Looking for his or her examination performance
- E. No any involvement

11. What roles do you perform in improving your child retention in CSS?

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12. What challenges do you face in implementation of your child's retention in CSS?

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13. What is your perception towards SCC?

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14. Why do think most of the students run away from their CSS?

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15. What things parents should put at home to ensure that their children attend school daily?

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16. What should be done by these CSS to enhance parental involvements towards improving students' retention in CSS?

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.....

17. In your own opinions what should be done by the GoT to enhance parental involvements towards improving students' retention in CSS?

.....
.....

APPENDIX V: Questionnaire for Students

Dear students,

You are requested to participate in answering this questionnaire. I would like to get your opinions and perception on parental involvement towards improving student's retention in community secondary schools. The information volunteered from this questionnaire will be confidentially treated and used for the purpose of this study only.

(i) Name of CSS.....

(ii) Ward.....

(iii) District

(iv) Region.....

1. Sex?

A. Male

B. Female

2. What is your age?

A. 10 - 14

B. 15 - 19

C. 20 - 24

D. 25 and above

3. What is your class level?

A. Form 1

B. Form 2

C. Form 3

D. Form 4

4. What aspect do you think can be done by your parents to improve your retention at school?

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5. What does your teacher do to involve parents or guardians attend to various school events for students' retention?

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6. Is there any communication between your parents and your school administration or teachers in improving your retention in your CSS?

A. Yes

B. No

If the answer is YES or NO give reasons?

.....

.....

.....

.....

7. Did your parents attend at school for teachers parents meeting for improving students' retention?

A. Yes

B. No

If the answer is YES or NO give reasons?

.....

.....

.....

8. Did your parents assist you at home when doing your homework?

A. Yes

B. No

If the answer is YES or NO why?

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.....

9. What strategies were instituted by your parents at home that make you attend at school daily?

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10. What are the reasons for drop-out of some of your fellow students from your CSS?

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11. What challenges do you face in improving your retention at school?

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.....

12. What should be done to improve students' retention at your CSS?

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.....
.....

13. What do you do to make sure that you attend at school at all times required by your CSS?

APPENDIX VI: Documentary Review Guide

TITTLE / OFFICE	DOCUMENTS
District Secondary Educational Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Strategic Plans for CSS➤ Secondary Registration Data➤ Candidate Report
District Secondary Academic Educational Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ CSS Academic Report➤ CSS Academic Strategic Plans
Heads of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ School Log Book➤ Strategic Plans for CSS➤ CSS Representatives➤ School Board Report
Class Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Attendance Registration Book

**APPENDIX VII: Students Faced with Poor Retention (Drop Out) In CSSs
from 2011-2013**

STUDENTS IN FORM	2011		2012		2013	
	ME	FE	ME	FE	ME	FE
I						
II						
III						
IV						

APPENDIX VIII: Total Payment of School Fees by Parents per Month in one of the Visited Community Secondary School in 2013

Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Total
Parents who paid school fees	113	90	71	40	26	20	35	5	-	-	-	-	400
Total number of parents in a visited school													540

Source: Field Data (2013)

APPENDIX IX: Total Parents who Attended Opening School Meetings in the Visited Community Secondary School 2013

Month	January	July	Total
Parents who attended in the meetings	181	143	324
Total number of parents in a visited school			540

Source: Field Data (2013)

ST JOHN'S UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Directorate of Research, Consultancy and
Postgraduate Studies

Tel: +255 26-2390044
Fax: +255 26-2390025
Website: www.sjut.ac.tz



PO Box 47
DODOMA
Tanzania

20.2.2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Graduate Student's Research Clearance

This letter serves to introduce Mr Mhangwa SEKULE (Registration Number M/2012/2205), who is a bona fide student of St John's University of Tanzania in the Faculty of Humanities and Education.

He is currently in the research stage of his Masters studies and is required to collect data. He has already obtained ethical clearance from SJUT Internal Review Committee/

His approved research topic is:

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT TOWARDS IMPROVING STUDENT RETENTION IN COMMUNITY
SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE OF DODOMA MUNICIPALITY, TANZANIA

I request that you grant this student all possible assistance to facilitate the completion of his research study.

Should you need further clarification please contact my office.

I wish to thank you for your kind assistance for this student.

Yours sincerely

St. John's University of Tanzania
P. O. Box 47 - DODOMA
Signature *ASavage*
DIRECTOR
Postgraduate Studies & Research

Dr Angela Savage
Director of Research, Consultancy and Postgraduate Studies
Email asavage@sjut.ac.tz