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Young females’ reasons for dropping out of secondary school in Matemwe, Zanzibar

Unga kvinnors anledningar till att hoppa av secondary school i Matemwe, Zanzibar

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Foreword

Just a few meters from the ocean shore of Matemwe, Zanzibar, we have slept, eaten and worked under the same roof for eight weeks. The study has been the topic from early morning to late evening; we have been breathing our work, day and night. To say who has done what is therefore hard to say, but our study areas are revealed by our contributions to the different sections. Johannes has social science as his minor subject and Josefhin has English; our common major is geography, environment and learning.

We would like to thank Sida for giving the opportunity of going to Zanzibar to write our undergraduate thesis in education. We will pass on the experiences to our future students. We would also like to thank the citizens of Matemwe for making us feel welcome in the village. And special thanks to all young females that participated in the study; the research would be nothing without you. Our last express of gratitude is to our supervisor Per Hillbur who has given good advice when best needed.

Abstract

This undergraduate thesis was conducted in the village of Matemwe, Northeast coast of Unguja Island, Zanzibar. It was financed by Sida’s Minor Field Study scholarship in September and October 2012. The study focuses on females who dropped out of Form 1 and 2 in lower secondary school between the years 2007 and 2012. Using qualitative interview technique with priority ranking flashcards functioning as a medium of communication, this study intends to identify reasons why eight females in this village dropped out of school and to understand their thoughts on how the decision affects their future. The content of each flashcard was based on previous research covering reasons for dropping out of school. Each respondent chose two to six reasons, with the most common causes being linguistic barriers, health issues and financial circumstances. Despite these patterns being identified, a dropout is a complex matter including a long story. The young females were found to have great ability to cope with difficulties that may cause school dropout partly because they had positive thoughts about education and its future benefits. To conclude, the decision to drop out was in all cases rational and based on several reasons. Finally, the relationship between dropouts and poverty cannot be ignored.

Key words: dropouts, female, priority ranking, secondary school, Zanzibar

List of abbreviations: Department of Public Information – United Nations (DPI), Education For All (EFA), Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Human Development Index (HDI), Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV), Millennium Development Goal (MDG), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Special Education Needs (SEN), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), United Nations (UN), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Zanzibar Education Development Programme (ZEDP), Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and the Reduction of Poverty Document (ZSGRP)

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1 Background

The correlation between education and poverty and how it matters for our future profession is introduced in this section. An international, regional, national and local perspective is presented, as well as an overview of the education policies of Zanzibar.

1.1 Introduction

As former United Nation, UN, Secretary-General Kofi Annan put it during the Global Action Week of the Global Campaign for Education in April 2003:

To educate girls is to reduce poverty\textsuperscript{1}. (UN).

Kofi Annan continued his speech by describing how study after study shows that there is no other tool for development more effective than the education of girls. In his speech, he claimed that there is no other policy that would raise economic growth, lower infant and maternal mortality, promote health and improve nutrition and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and increase the chances of education for the next generation to the same extent. Agreeing with Annan, we too believe in the correlation between educating females and poverty reduction. For a more equal, healthy and just world, females’ schooling is a policy worth fighting for, worldwide.

The selected research topic is as important for our future profession as it is to basic human values. As geography teachers in training, we follow the Swedish National Agency for Education’s Curriculum for compulsory school (Skolverket, 2011) and upper secondary school (Skolverket, 2012). When teaching geography in compulsory school, it is essential to give pupils opportunities to develop their ability to:

\textsuperscript{1} According to the World Bank, an average daily consumption of $1.25 or less is set as the international poverty line. The relative poverty line is bounded below by $1.25 and rises at a gradient of $1 in $3 when mean consumption is above $2.00 a day (Ravallion, Chen & Sangraula, 2008). However, definitions of poverty vary significantly among countries (World Factbook, 2012a).
assess solutions to different environmental and development issues based on considerations concerning ethics and sustainable development. (Skolverket, 2011, p. 151).

Regarding geography in upper secondary school, the aim is to give pupils opportunities to develop their knowledge about social justice and solidarity from perspectives such as gender, sexuality, class and ethnicity. This explains why we find the research topic important and how it will become useful in our future classrooms.

1.2 Identifying the problem area

1.2.1 International context

International conferences and declarations recognize the value of females’ literacy and access to school. At the World Education Forum (2000) in Dakar, 164 governments identified six goals to achieve Education For All, EFA. Goal number five concludes that gender disparities in primary and secondary school should be eliminated by 2015. The focus is to give girls full and equal basic education. Similarly, the third UN Millennium Development Goal, MDG, aims to promote gender equality and empower women, with target to eliminate gender disparity on all levels no later than 2015. This goal is one step out of eight to halve extreme poverty by 2015 (UN, 2012a). “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights” states that girls’ access to school, like that of boys’, is a human right (UN, 2012b). According to Article 26, everyone has the right to education. Also, it states that higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit, which indicate girls’, as well as boys’, access to school (UN, 2012b).

1.2.2 Regional context

Making secondary education more accessible is a serious challenge in many parts of the world, certainly in sub-Saharan Africa; however, significant increases in the Arab states and sub-Saharan Africa have been made. The Gross Enrolment Ratio, GER, provides
with the information that lower secondary education increased from 72 % to 80 % in the world between the years 1999 and 2009. Even though there is a progress in sub-Saharan Africa, the participation rate for this level of education remains at a very low level of 43 %. Another challenge is gender inequality among secondary school students in the region, as sub-Saharan Africa is facing serious gender disparities at the lower secondary level (UNESCO, 2011).

1.2.3 National context

Tanzania, ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world, has a current Human Development Index, HDI, of 0.466, and is thereby numbered 152 out of 187 ranked countries (UNDP, 2011). According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UIS, a pattern identified in sub-Saharan Africa is increases in gender disparity throughout the school forms. United Republic of Tanzania is one country out of three in sub-Saharan Africa where this pattern is the most evident; twice as many boys than girls complete lower secondary education, with the discrepancy increasing in higher forms.

UIS covers 209 countries and territories, but Zanzibar is not included and indicators should be interpreted with caution when analysing statistics from Tanzania (UNESCO, 2011). The explanation is that the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has considerable autonomy over its internal affairs, with its own legislative body and executive functions. These include the ministries of Health, Education, Agriculture and Forest, Finance and Planning and Investments among others. Zanzibar merged with Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964. Located 40 kilometres offshore mainland Tanzania, Zanzibar comprises two main islands: Unguja and Pemba; as well as a number of small ones (EFA, 2000). The population is 1.3 million inhabitants, whereof 95 % are Muslims, mainly Sunni (Nationalencyklopedin, 2012). Zanzibar consists of five regions, with each region containing two districts that are sub-divided into constituencies, which are then sub-divided into shehias (EFA, 2000).

1.2.4 Local context

Matemwe is located in North A district in the northeast coast of Unguja island (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007), and had a population of 7302 people in
2002 (Tanzania Sensa, 2002, cited in Juntunen, n.d.). According to the Zanzibar Education Development Programme, ZEDP in Unguja, the underrepresentation of females is highest in the North A district and it increases from Form 1 to 6 in all districts. The same district has the lowest adult literacy rates in Unguja, with 51% for males and 41% for females in 2002 (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007). However, United States Agency for International Development, USAID, stated in a World Bank report that the southern coastal region of Mainland Tanzania and the islands of Zanzibar remain subject to low capacity and inefficient procedures when it comes to gender disaggregated data (World Bank, 2012).

1.2.5 Education policies

The current education system on Zanzibar consists of a 3-7-2-2-2 format. It includes three years of pre-primary education; seven years of primary education, which includes seven Standards and starts at the age of seven; and finally two years of lower secondary education, including Form 1 and 2. Pre-primary is not included in basic compulsory education, but primary and lower secondary education is. The second cycle in secondary education, senior secondary education, includes Form 3 and 4. The third cycle of secondary education, advanced level, consists of Form 5 and 6 (SACMEQ, n.d.). According to the principal of Matemwe Computer School Centre, the students enrolled in an introduction year to secondary school called Orientation year before 2007 (K. Chumu, personal communication, 13 September, 2012). The purpose was to introduce more advanced mathematics as well as English as an instruction language, which is used in the following forms (SACMEQ, n.d.).

Primary and lower secondary education is officially free in Zanzibar (SACMEQ, n.d.); however, individuals and communities are encouraged to contribute to construction of classrooms, stationery and other financials (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007). Principal Kundi Chumu confirmed that they charge compulsory fees (personal communication, 13 September, 2012), despite the aforementioned official statements. Yearly tuition fees for Form 1 and 2 respectively is 5500 TZS, estimated costs for books is 12000 TZS, the school uniform for secondary school is 20000 TZS, and stationary is estimated to 10000 TZS (current exchange rate is 1 USD = 1600 TZS) (K. Chumu, personal communication, 13 September, 2012).
2 Aim and purpose

The aim of this study is to identify reasons why young females drop out of lower secondary school in Matemwe, Zanzibar. In order to achieve this, the following main research question will be deconstructed into two sub-questions:

- What are young females’ reasons for dropping out of secondary school in Matemwe, Zanzibar?
  - Which factors affect the decision to quit secondary school?
  - How do the young females think the decision will affect their future?

2.1 Limitations and scope of the study

The field study was conducted during eight weeks in September and October 2012. A total of ten interviews were conducted, which included eight young females, Principal Kundi Chumu of Matemwe School Computer Centre and Dr. Eugenia Kafanabo, School of Education, University of Dar es Salaam. The research took place in Matemwe, which is located in a rural area on the island of Unguja, Zanzibar.
3 Previous research on female dropouts

In this section, research on reasons for female school dropouts\(^2\) is reviewed. The first part covers several studies on global, regional, national and local levels, which are divided into five categories. The last part reviews the relationship between education and future opportunities.

3.1 Financial circumstances

When it comes to financial circumstances in relation to school dropout, literature identifies both direct and indirect costs of school. Firstly, financial circumstances have an effect on at what age children enrol in school; secondly, how often they attend; and thirdly, when and if they drop out. Direct costs of schooling could be tuition fees, as well as more hidden costs like school uniforms, books, stationery and transportation. These financial circumstances may have an effect on children’s schooling (Croft, 2002).

Furthermore, several researchers identify the relationship between poverty and dropouts (Birdsall, Levine & Ibrahim, 2005; Boyle, Brock, Mace & Sibbons, 2002; Brown & Park, 2002; Bruneforth, 2006; Cardoso & Verner, 2007; Dachi & Garrett, 2003; Hunter & May, 2003; Ranasinghe & Hartog, 2002; Vavrus, 2002). Dachi and Garrett’s study took place in Tanzania, where they interviewed parents and guardians. They found that even though school was considered important, the main reason for not sending the children to school was because parents and guardians were unable to pay the fees. According to Mukudi (2004), being unable to finance school fees does not only mean permanent dropouts, but also temporary dropouts and under-enrolment.

To finance education, girls, more often than boys, have to work instead of attending school (Kane, 2004), with the heavier workload usually in domestic and household

\(^2\) Dropouts are those students who leave the educational system at a specified level without obtaining a first qualification (OECD, 2012).
settings (Hunt, 2008). In countries where people depend on agriculture, parents often value having many children for the sake of labour and for emotional and physical support (UNICEF, 2011). The opportunity cost for sending a child to school increases with age, and leads to greater pressure on the child to find a job (Cain, 1977; UNESCO, 2005). Agreeing with Cain, Hunt also adds that children from poorer backgrounds are more likely to be affected by this occurrence. Poor households are exceptionally vulnerable to fluctuation of income, so called income-shocks, which might lead to withdrawal of children from school in order to save schooling costs and at some times work to earn money. However common, some households try other methods before withdrawal, such as using household assets, taking a loan or asking relatives and friends for financial support (de Janvry, Finan, Sadoulet & Vakis, 2006). The poorest families most commonly value education and have rational reasons for not sending the child to school, such as decisions made on education quality, financial value and future investments (Boyle et al., 2002).

3.2 Health, sanitation and limitations

Permanent and temporary withdrawals from school are often a result of health issues. Even though many students go back to school, absence affects children’s school achievements and reintegration negatively (Batbaatar, et al., 2006; the PROBE Team, 1998). Pridmore (2007) stresses the importance of governments’ investment in public health since studies recognise the relation of health-related conditions and absenteeism among school children. The report *The Link Between Health, Social Issues, and Secondary Education: Life Skills, Health, and Civic Education* (Smith, Nesbakken, Wirak & Sonn, 2007), published by the World Bank, concludes that health and civic education have an impact on children’s access to secondary school. This creates a vicious circle because lower attendance in secondary school limits citizens’ knowledge about public health.

Illness and death in the family may affect children’s attendance in school, especially females’, as they are more often expected to act as caregivers (Case & Ardington, 2004; Chesterfield & Enge, 2000; UNAIDS, 2000 cited in Kane, 2004). Bereavement, for both

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3 “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 2003).
family members and the females in question, often causes vulnerability to dropout, non-or late enrolment and slow progress (Case & Ardington, 2004; Bicego et al., 2002 cited in Hunter & May, 2003). Even if they recover from the disease, the family members emerge from that period poorer in many cases: this will most likely make them vulnerable to future dropout (Hunter & May, 2003).

Studies, such as Nekatibeb (2002) and Rose & Al Samarrai (2001), recognize a connection between females’ menstruation patterns and dropouts. The report *How to integrate water, sanitation and hygiene into HIV programmes* (WHO, 2010) similarly illuminate the issue and estimates that 10 % of African school-age girls do not attend school during menstruation or drop out when the first period occur. The report concludes that several days of absence each month has a negative impact on girls’ education and learning ability. Furthermore, those girls that have limited access to soap might not attend school because of the possibility of the period showing on the clothes; also, there is an urge for cleaner and more private toilet facilities. ZEDP reports that water and sanitation facilities are often insufficient in many of Zanzibar’s schools (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007).

Children suffering from malnutrition such as lack of protein and micronutrients in their diet are more likely to repeat grades, do not have equal opportunities to pay attention in class, often suffer from low motivation, drop out early and have poor cognitive function in comparison to well-nourished and healthy children (Pridmore, 2007). Other studies also highlight the issue of malnutrition and the importance of policy reforms to attain basic education for children (Ampiah et al., 2010). The Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and the Reduction of Poverty Document, ZSGRP, adds that malnutrition is one of several factors affecting school attendance and achievements in Zanzibar (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007).

Another important factor of school dropouts among children is the presence of disabilities and special education needs, SEN; in fact, Peters (2003) argues it to be the single most important factor for the exclusion of school children. Categorization and the definition of disability and SEN vary between countries, as well as between different research (Hunt 2008). It is estimated that 40 million of the worlds’ out-of-school children have some sort of disability, with only 5 % of these 40 million completing primary school, and many never enrolled (Birdsall et al., 2005).
3.3 Social and cultural contexts

Several studies engage in gendered social practices such as how the investment in girls’ education differs from boys’: some of them imply that many households prefer investing in boys’ education because it is deemed more important, with the consequence of females being more likely to drop out (Admassie, 2003; Boyle et al., 2002). Hunt (2008) claims that it is often seen as a poor investment to educate a girl since she is expected to marry and leave home; her education will then benefit the husband’s family rather than her own. Similarly, several studies recognize that gendered social practices within households as well as schools influence patterns of schooling access for girls (Boyle et al.; Colclough, Rose & Tembon, 2000). In school, Kane (2004) recognizes that gendered social practices sometimes take place within the classroom when teachers either encourage or discourage students to take on gendered tasks and roles. This indicates that females’ educational patterns are not only affected by the question of investment, but also by the notion of patriarchy embedded in society where the father or eldest male is head of the family, community and the government (Hood, 1988).

Teenage pregnancy is a significant policy factor related to education access for young females. The common practices in Tanzania to expel pregnant girls from school violates the fundamental rights to education that is articulated by the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, which says that all individuals who want to pursue education have equal rights to do so (Johnson, 2011). Bhalalusesa (2000) claims that in the situation of pregnancy, girls are assumed to take responsibility for the situation while the father suffers no school-related consequences. Other research has found that some mothers pull their daughters out of school once they reach puberty in fear of them becoming pregnant (Kiluva-ndunda, 2001).

An existing practice in Tanzania is that when a girl becomes pregnant, the young father meets with the girl’s family to negotiate a bride price. In this sense, traditional cultural gender norms subordinate women in the patriarchal system, and hold back women’s educational development (Kerner, 1986). According to several studies (Boyle et al., 2002; Brock & Cammish, 1997; Colclough et al., 2000), dropouts are high in areas where marriage is arranged at an early age. The same studies show that girls are often encouraged to marry as soon as they reach puberty. Additionally, notions of
adulthood, like pregnancy and marriage, may make adolescents think themselves simply too grown up to stay in school, with dropout as a result (Thomas, 2002).

Traditional domestic roles are usually passed on from mother to daughter. According to Beoku-Betts (1998), the primary roles of women in developing areas are farming, domestic labour and care giving. Sutton (1998) argues that domestic responsibilities might result in lower priority of studying. As mentioned, conforming to traditional roles can jeopardize females’ educational opportunity, as can various belief systems and religious practices (Kwesiga, 2002). Even though variation exists, Muslim regions and countries in sub-Saharan Africa tend to have more strictly defined gender roles, which affect females’ access to enrol and complete education (Beoku-Betts). However, Kwesiga argues that not only Islam, but also other religious ideologies, can put women in restricted roles, and further have an impact on school enrolment.

3.4 School related issues

School related issues are often viewed as minor factors for dropping out of school; however, in some cases of schooling it can be the primary determinant for a dropout (Hunt, 2008). The definition of school quality is a matter of debate and varies between studies (PROBE Team, 1999). For instance, low quality of education and children’s school attendance can be defined by under-qualified teachers (Colclough, et al., 2000), the unavailability of resources such as textbooks, desks and blackboard (Molteno, Ogadghoh, Cain & Crumpton, 2000); teacher absence, insufficient accountability and monitoring mechanisms (Ghuman & Lloyd, 2007), and teaching quality (Hunt).

UNESCO’s report *Education in a Multilingual World* (2003) argues that students who receive instruction in a foreign language will have a disadvantage in the educational system. Similarly, Jackson’s (2000) research, carried out on school children in Burundi, shows that school dropouts increases with 28-40 % in the first two years of using French as an instruction language. Additionally, a study made in Paraguay highlighted using Spanish as a foreign instruction language as the main reason for repetition and low school attainment among Guarani speaking school children (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 1995). Brock-Utne and Holmardsottir’s (2004) study in Tanzania and South Africa suggests that using a language different from the mother tongue affects students’ ability to follow the lessons with the result of them falling behind.
They argue that what might seem to be a learning problem or a matter of bad grades, resulting in repetition and dropouts, is really a language problem.

Distance to school is likely to influence school attendance and may lead to dropouts, certainly in rural areas where the distance between schools is larger (Hunt 2008; Boyle et al., 2002). Research made by Fentiman, Hall and Bundy (1999) also recognizes the great distance between schools in rural areas and that there are fewer secondary than primary schools; and further add that this might lead to increased dropouts in secondary school, something Colclough et al. (2000) also suggest in their study. Finally, the long distance can in some cases result in not feeling safe walking the way to school; in the cases where parents or guardians become concerned about the girls’ safety, it can result in school absenteeism (Bendera, 1999; Hunt).

Liu (2004) identifies teachers’ use of verbal abuse as an issue that might lead to absenteeism and dropouts. Hunt (2008) claims that bullying and physical violence emanates from both teachers and students. Also in some cases, sexual abuse is involved (Pridmore, 2007). Hunt (2007) also found that corporal punishment is frequently used in several countries, even though it is illegal, which might result in dropouts.

The correlation between overcrowded classrooms and dropouts is mentioned in several studies (Colclough, et al., 2000; Alexander, 2008; Little, 2008). The problem is recognized in Zanzibar and according to Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (2007), the urge to build new classrooms is critical as most schools are overcrowded and have double or triple shifts.

Lastly, Lafraniere (2005) find separate toilet facilities to be important for school quality, and even more important when the girls enter puberty, for sanitary reasons. A study conducted in Ethiopia (Colclough et al., 2000) revealed that five out of eleven visited schools lack sanitary facilities and only one had separate toilets for boys and girls; similar results was found in Guinea. The same study found that the unavailability of latrines in schools led to females’ nonattendance during their periods, which clearly has an impact on performance and may lead to dropouts.

3.5 Lack of internal and external motivation

Repetition of forms correlated to age is identified as problematic in two ways; firstly, tutoring students of different ages requires special learning practices and curriculum
(Lewin, 2007); and secondly, repetition may question the student’s capability to finish school, both from the parents’ or guardians’ and the student’s perspective (Hunt, 2008). Studies show that repetition leads to dropouts, both in the short- and the long-run: children repeating forms sometimes withdraw from school directly; additionally, students who have repeated at some stages are more likely to drop out compared to students who have not (Grant & Hallman, 2006; Hunter & May, 2003). Kane (2004) argues that girls repeat forms less frequently than boys, who often achieve higher results. Kane believes the lower repetition rate among girls can be explained by the higher dropout rates for girls than boys.

Perna’s (2006) research finds that external support and motivation from friends, family members and teachers has a positive effect on academic achievements. Batbaatar et al. (2006) argue that when students do not achieve good enough results, they are sometimes encouraged to drop out. Another study indicates that parents’ and guardians’ lack of interest and support towards education affect children’s school attendance and may lead to dropouts (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003).

The importance of role models who have higher education in relation to school attendance is highlighted in several studies (Colclough et al., 2000; Hunt, 2008; Hunter & May, 2003). Hunt discusses the importance of female role models in particular, using teachers as an example. Other studies show that higher household education level increases students’ access to education and attendance and ultimately decreases dropout rates (Ainsworth, Beegle & Koda, 2005; Al Samarrai & Peasgood, 1998; Grant & Hallman, 2006). In addition, some research indicates that non-educated household members many times neither provide enough educational support, nor recognize the value of schooling (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003).

A study made in rural China by Liu (2004) illuminates an example of school failing to provide motivation to continue study when the desire to leave the countryside for the city grew too big. Accordingly, students admiring the lifestyle of those that already left reported that they were tired of school and simply did not enjoy it. Other research recognizes the relationship between lack of motivation and low academic achievements (Alika & Egbochuku, 2009). Studies show that children who have low achievement records are more likely not to finish their studies (Boyle et al., 2002; Hunter & May, 2003). In Nigeria, poor achievement results in 10% of all dropouts among females (Alika & Egbochuku). However, Hunt (2008) argues that it should be taken into
consideration that low achievement is in turn related to a range of factors, such as school quality, teacher absence, repetition and the demand of children’s time.

### 3.6 Future opportunities

Millions of females around the world never complete their education. As a result, they will be marginalized in society as they are running a risk of becoming less healthy, less skilled and getting less opportunities and hope for the future (UNICEF, 2004). Students’ thoughts on how education influences future career possibilities and lifestyle can result in early withdrawal, but also in sustained access. Future job and lifestyle opportunities shape children’s values as early as on primary level (Hunt, 2008). Liu (2004) found that students who quit school in rural areas thought the possibility to achieve a university degree to be low; and even if they achieved one, it would not guarantee employment. In the same study, most students who dropped out sought employment in urban areas. Other studies show that an extra year of schooling places women in a higher earning category, as they will receive 10-20 % more in wages for each year, which is a higher rate than for men (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos 2004, cited in World Bank, 2008). Also, the social returns will be even higher than the private returns for these women (Acemoglu & Angrist 2000, cited in World Bank, 2008). Wage is not the only factor that is affected by female schooling: the outcome of farming increased with over 40 % as methods improved, which resulted in malnutrition declines (Smith & Haddad, 1999, cited in World Bank, 2008). Additionally, women have a greater impact on children education compared to men (Filmer, 2006, cited in World Bank, 2008). There is also widespread evidence that female’s education contribute substantially to better reproductive health (Greene & Merrick, 2005), as well as to the spacing and number of children (Shapiro & Gebreselassie, 2008).
4 Methods

This section presents the selections and limitations of the study and an overview of the participants. The choice of qualitative methods is explained, likewise the flashcard interview technique. Finally, possible methodological issues are illuminated.

4.1 Selection and limitations

The empirical study was carried out in Matemwe, Zanzibar (Fig. 1), and is based on qualitative interviews with females who dropped out of Form 1 and 2 in one of Matemwe’s Government secondary schools: Matemwe School Computer Centre. Choosing Tanzania and Zanzibar as the geographical site to carry out the study are based on the following grounds: firstly, political stability; secondly, The Swedish International and Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, is investing in a long-term development collaboration with Tanzania (Regeringskansliet, 2007) and is one of the top five partner countries where, among other things, gender equality is a priority area (Aid Watch, 2012); thirdly, Tanzania is also, as mentioned in the background chapter, one among the poorest countries in the world; fourthly, English, together with Kiswahili, is the national language in Tanzania (World Factbook, 2012b), which facilitated communication. Additionally, Zanzibar was chosen due to the semi-autonomous political system in Tanzania where the education policy differs between Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. On the mainland, they use almost four times higher tuition fees (E. Kafanabo, personal communication, 4 October, 2012), which means that financial circumstances as a reason for dropping out of school will be less important in comparison to the mainland. The Zanzibar school fees were explained in more detail in the background chapter. Finally, Pemba was excluded mainly because of poor infrastructure to and from the island, with several accidents as a result (Ng'wanakilala, 2011; "Zanzibar ferry disaster,” 2012).
Figure 1. Map of the research area. The map in the upper left corner shows the Zanzibar islands and their position in East Africa. In the lower left corner, the map shows the location of Matemwe on Unguja Island. The map to the right points out details of the village.

The choice to focus on girls’ reasons to drop out, not boys’, is mainly because maintaining girls in school affects poverty reduction and the consequences of poverty (UN, 2003). Also, the pattern in sub-Saharan Africa of increasing gender disparity in secondary school (UNESCO, 2011) affected the decision. Matemwe was selected because it is situated within the North A district, which has the highest underrepresentation of females in school on Unguja island. Also, the literacy levels in North A are the lowest on the island.
For the study, eight females were interviewed. This was considered a suitable number for the amount of time provided to shed light on qualitative differences between individuals in the village, while at the same time provide an opportunity to identify patterns. The females were located with the help of an interpreter: a female university student, teacher in training, with roots in Matemwe. The interpreter was used because the interviewees’ level of English was limited, likewise our level of Kiswahili. Fontana and Frey (1994) argue the importance of using an insider of the group when locating an informant as she, in this case, can act as a translator, not only of language, but also of cultural codes. Even though they mention that it is possible to carry out interviews without an insider, they claim it will save the researcher a great amount of time. Even though an insider was used, hours were spent on walking from door to door to find participants for the study. Different parts of Matemwe were randomly selected within the area of approximately three hours walk from one end to the other, and up to 30 minutes walk across. When looking for and interviewing the females, it was only the female interpreter, the female researcher and the interviewee participating, covering 1-2 interviews per day. Creating a relationship with the respondent before the interview and inviting to open-ended responses influenced the decision why only the female researcher and the interpreter took part in the interview with the girl. A large group of interviewers could have distorted the necessary informal atmosphere of each interview, and we did not want the respondent to leave out personal details of a growing teenage woman. To further explain why only one of us took part in the interview, Fontana and Frey argues that gender must be taken into consideration in the meeting between interviewer and respondent because it makes a fundamental difference in the context of interviews due to the cultural boundaries of the paternalistic social system. They argue further that the hierarchal relationship that is typical in interviews, where the interviewee might be placed in a subordinate position, can be overcome if the interviewer acts “courteous, friendly, and pleasant” (p. 369).

The principal, Kundi Chumu, of Matemwe School Computer Centre was interviewed mainly as a source of the institutional and economical context. Also, Dr. Eugenia Kafanabo, active at University of Dar es Salaam, answered questions about school fees on the mainland.

The study focuses on Form 1 and 2, as these are the last stages in the compulsory basic education in Zanzibar, but at the same time part of secondary school. Basic education is an interesting field because the government aims for all children to finish
the compulsory years. In addition, the selection includes only females who dropped out between the years 2007 and 2012 because of the termination of the previously mandatory Orientation year.

Table 1. Details about the participants of the study. The names are fictitious.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Form of dropout</th>
<th>Year of dropout</th>
<th>Total years in school</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatuma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Seaweed harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julieti</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Seaweed harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Seaweed harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidede</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Seaweed harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liliani</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndeonio</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Seaweed harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scola</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Seaweed harvest and housewife</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants were born between 1989 and 1994 and the majority of their parents had no education; some parents had a few of years of education and some of them had finished Standard 7. Two of the participants had children.

4.2 Qualitative interviews

The choice to use qualitative interview technique is based on the aim of the study, which is to gain knowledge on an in-depth level about why females drop out of school and their thoughts on how that affects their future. Doing a study at a micro level required qualitative methods to understand the individuals’ full experience. Filstead (1970) explains that the nature of qualitative methodology includes in-depth interviewing and total participation in the activity. This allows the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge about the empirical context and to approach data at a close level.
To conduct reliable qualitative data, Carspecken (1996) suggests five steps of collection after identifying the problem area: firstly, compose a list of general questions for the interview and interact with the social site (see Appendices); secondly, reviewing the first drafts of the interview material; thirdly, carry out the interviews; fourthly, explore the greater context; and fifthly, focus on the voice of the research participants.

A university student in Dar es Salaam translated the flashcards, a tour guide located in Matemwe checked the translation, and the interpreter used for the interviews made a final judgment. In addition to this, the interview guide, the cards, the invitation letter and the information sheet (see Appendices) were reviewed in detail together with the interpreter to overcome linguistic barriers during the interview. Also, this review of the material helped us revise and make the guide and the cards as appropriate as possible.

The third step followed with carrying out the qualitative interviews, which combined unstructured and structured techniques. Flashcards were used as a medium of communication, which, briefly described, is a combination of the two techniques. In the second part of the interview, presented in chapter 5.6, only structured interview technique was used as flashcards could not be used for those questions. An unstructured interview, given its qualitative nature, will result in a greater scope than other types. It gives an open-ended ethnographic in-depth interview, as well as ending up as more dissimilar (Fontana & Frey, 1994). An unstructured in-depth interview can, among others, influence the respondents and their stories. The stories may never even be born because of the inability to express them (Osteraker, 2002). Studies have shown that dropping out of school is not the matter of a single reason; it is a combination of several (Hunt, 2008). This potential complexity was taken into consideration when choosing methods. A structured interview involves an interviewer asking a respondent a series of pre-established questions, with few sets of response categories (Osteraker).

The fourth step in the model contains exploring the greater context. This was mainly looked at when interviewing the principal of the school where the females once were enrolled. Conducting this interview provided greater depth in the institutional knowledge as we came to understand better the actual costs of schooling and how the education system works.

The last stage of Carspecken’s method involves focusing on the voice of the research participants. The transcription came together with the photographs of the cards, the information sheet and the researcher’s field notes; this put emphasis on the emic, or the respondent’s, perspective. The data evolved to what can be found in chapter 5.
4.2.1 Using flashcards as a medium of communication

As mentioned above, structured and unstructured interview techniques were used in Carspecken’s so-called “third step.” Flashcards as an interview technique combine the two (Osteraker, 2002), while the latter part of the interview used only structured technique. The priority ranking technique was inspired from Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques, PRAs, where it is sometimes used as an instrument in the context of development studies (Mikkelsen, 2005). Every informant was given the same flashcards, which makes it partly a structural interview: this to minimize the differences between the informants. Simultaneously, the interviewee will interpret the flashcards on their own terms and deliver unstructured answers. Using flashcards does not only help the interviewee, but it also facilitates the preparations of the interview for the researcher (Osteraker, 2002). As mentioned in previous section, with the linguistic and cultural barriers and the complex process of dropping out also taken into consideration, flashcards were used to reduce the effect on the interview and bring to surface stories full of life.

The content of the flashcards (see Appendix B) was inspired by international theories on females’ reasons for dropping out of school, presented in chapter 3. The flashcards were constructed before the interviews; therefore, the flashcards reveal our hypotheses. For example, the card *I got married* was chosen on the basis of different studies saying that teenage marriage has an effect on females’ schooling (such as Boyle et al., 2002). Only selection of the card *I got married* does not reveal much if you want to know whose decision it was, why, etc.; therefore, asking follow-up questions like the ones just mentioned will help the story grow. Other flashcards were more informative than others, but they all opened for an opportunity to tell a story using follow-up questions. To reduce misunderstandings of translation during the interview, the cards were written in Kiswahili on one side and in English on the other.

According to Osteraker’s (2002) recommendation, the first step in using the flashcards (see Appendix B) in the interview was to go through them one by one with the respondent to make sure the meaning of the card was correctly understood. This took about 20 minutes per interview. The interviewee had three flashcards with the text *Your own reason* in the deck of flashcards to bring additional reasons to surface. Using flashcards, the interviewer invites the interviewee to play a central role in the research process; the informant’s prime role is to be the storyteller while the interviewer is the
passive listener (Osteraker). The second step for the interviewee was to put the 24 flashcards in different piles: 1) Very important reason, 2) Important reason, 3) I am not sure and 4) Not important reason. Following, a photograph was taken. This step contained no follow up questions, but was used as a first step in the priority ranking process to create a base for the discussion. Using flashcards as an interview technique may also give birth to colourful stories, where the resulting quotations benefit the scientific text, help the reader to understand the material and also helps the reader to understand the researcher’s interpretation of the material (Osteraker).

Finally, Colwell (1990) argues that in the context of qualitative interview technique, the attributes of a researcher are more important than the methodology; therefore, a researcher must find a suitable method in order to conduct good research. We were comfortable and enthusiastic with the chosen method both during the interviews and the analysis of the results.

4.2.2 Methodological issues

As we are Swedish, the cultural norms and morals of Tanzanian culture were unfamiliar to us, which we are aware will affect the study. Fetterman (1998) argues that before doing a study, learning about culture and language is helpful in grasping the “holistic, contextual, emic, etc, and nonjudgmental concepts…[that] boil down all the information, observations, interviews, theories, and patterns that emerge during fieldwork to produce a sense of culture” (p. 24). Only spending a few weeks in the country before conducting the interviews will not have affected the etic, the researcher’s, perspective, in the extent Fetterman describes; however, being exposed to different cultural practices did shape the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee to some extent. In addition to this, using an interpreter affected the relationship in the interview setting in ways such as body language; it was important to use body language and speech in a way that put the informant in the centre of the interview. Also, even though using an interpreter is necessary to overcome linguistic barriers, it may sometimes be problematic when there are misinterpretations. However, to overcome this as much as possible, both researchers went through the interview and the content of the flashcards with the interpreter before the interviews took place. In this way, the interpreter had a chance to ask any questions about the procedure or the
meaning of specific words or sentences on the flashcards. The result: linguistic barriers and potential misunderstandings during the interview were reduced when the translator had profound knowledge of the content.

An introduction letter and an information sheet (see Appendices C & D) functioned as directives in the process of building up a relationship, as well as to see patterns between the females. This process took approximately 30 minutes per interview. Johnson (2011) experienced that filling out the form before the interview may result in an “organic conversation” (p. 53) that can help the communication forwards. However, spending up to two and a half hours together, including social interactions, introducing the set up and going through the silent and recorded part of the interview with each respondent is not enough time to create a strong relationship.

Madison (2005) suggests that in qualitative research, it is important to remember that the researcher works as the instrument and therefore must be aware of ethical considerations related to the research. Dropping out of school can be a sensitive matter for the interviewees, and no money was involved as a gratitude for participating. However, it was not difficult to find former students who were willing to speak with us.

4.2.3 Method of analysis

To facilitate the analysis of the results, audio recording and photographing was used during the interviews. The priority ranking and the questions about the future took approximately 30-60 minutes and contained both English and Kiswahili. This part of the interview was audio recorded. Because only the female researcher was interviewing, it was considered appropriate that the male researcher did the transcription the same day. We discussed question approaches and other specifics in the interview, feedback important for the research quality. The photograph technique used during the interview included categories 1), 2) and 3) and the ranking of most to least important reason. The pictures were essential for the data analysis to facilitate to identify who said what.

When composing the result, in the example of chapter 5.1, keywords such as “money,” “financial,” “uniform,” “fees” and “poor” were highlighted in the 60 pages long transcript to easier identify who said what.
5 Results: the females’ stories

In this section, the findings of the study will be presented and interpreted. Sections 5.1-5.5 correspond to the first research sub-question, while section 5.6 responds to the second research sub-question. Five main areas frame the reasons found in the eight interviews: financial circumstances, health, sanitation and limitations, social and cultural contexts, school related issues and lack of internal and external motivation. This chapter will explore these five areas as well as the females’ attitudes on education and how those attitudes affect their future, to answer the research questions.

5.1 Financial circumstances

Six of the interviewees touched upon financial circumstances. Ndeonio, Amina, Julieta, Miriam and Kidde mentioned the difficulties of direct costs like school uniforms and tuition fees that they encountered enrolling in secondary school in Zanzibar. According to Ndeonio, these direct costs were the most important reason for her to drop out:

After enrol in school when I was in Standard 2, 3, 4 up to 5, my family was buying for me books, pencils, uniform. But when I got mature, period, the family refused to provide with money. Since Standard 5, I must find money to buy those things myself. We had no money.

As Ndeonio explains, the parents claimed she was mature enough to finance school herself when she got her first period. This meant she had to pick seaweed alongside the studies. According to Ndeonio, this demand did not affect school attendance as she worked after school and on weekends. It was later, when she failed the final exams in Form 1, that she decided to drop out even though her parents encouraged her to stay in school. Ndeonio did not want to go back as long as her family did not support her financially.
Experiencing similar issues, Amina’s parents could not afford the new school uniform for secondary school and she was forced to work alongside her studies. She explained she collected seaweed on some days while going to school the other days; as a result, she fell behind with schoolwork. When in school with the wrong uniform, which is blue and beige instead of black and white, she was verbally abused by teachers and fellow students. This went on for six months before she decided to drop out, without ever buying the uniform.

For Julieti, it was difficult to pay tuition fees, school uniform, books and stationery due to illness in the family:

My father got the disease when I was in standard 7. When my father got the disease, I had not enough money for uniform, fees and books. I had no money; that is a reason. It is related with the illness, illness and not afford with books and uniform. When he got the disease, we got no money to afford the basic needs.

When this happened, money that used to go to Julieti’s school costs suddenly had to be prioritised for the family’s basic needs and her father’s and sister’s medical expenses.

Similarly, Miriam’s parents could not afford the direct costs of enrolling and completing secondary school. However, friends and relatives supported her financially. Kidede, on the other hand, did not state financial circumstances as a reason to drop out, but mentioned by the end of the conversation that she plans to go back to school, and now saves money to buy books and school uniform. But before that turns into reality, she must spend her days collecting seaweed to be able to finance school.

Scola’s two reasons for dropping out of school was pregnancy and marriage; however, she explains her economical situation after marriage:

When you get married, and you get some children, also, this child [baby sitting in her lap], is dependant on her mother. So you must work hard so to find money, for food for the babies.

Pregnancy, and following marriage, forced Scola to collect seaweed to financially support her children; therefore, to continue with studies was not an option.
5.2 Health, sanitation and limitations

Five of the participants, Fatuma, Julieti, Miriam, Amina, Liliani and Ndeonio had reasons to drop out of school related to health, sanitation and/or limitations. However, the reasons differ from one another. Fatuma’s, Julieti’s and Miriam’s reasons differ in the manner that they suffered from diseases affecting their schooling indirectly, but on different levels. Apart from the diseases, Fatuma and Julieti found bad eyesight as a problem in school, a problem also identified by Liliani. Amina found having her period affected her attendance. Finally, four of the participants did not get enough food, which affected their education.

Fatuma and Julieti suffered from stomach-related illnesses and claimed it to be the major cause for dropping out of school. Fatuma explained that her issues commenced in Standard 5, which was three years before she quit. She describes the pain:

It was like a fire in my stomach.

She repeatedly visited several doctors who among other things did x-rays, but in spite of this, she got worse. She fell asleep during the lessons because of her illness. The pain increased in 2011, the same year as she dropped out of school.

Julieti had similar issues with her stomach, starting in Standard 7, two years before dropping out. Even though she visited several hospitals in different villages, financially supported by her brother, the illness worsened in Form 1, 2007. Julieti described the pain to increase when in school and that it felt like a different disease when she was at home. She claimed it to be a traditional disease. Today, six years later, Julieti’s stomach issues are still a problem for her.

Miriam also had health issues, though illness was not the predominant factor for the decision to drop out. She suffered from vomiting and diarrhoea, which made her completely miss out on school for one month. In combination with other reasons, she decided to drop out two months after she came back to school after being ill.

As mentioned in the chapter 5.1, Julieti’s father and sister got ill:

My father got paralysis disease. It means that his legs and arms cannot work at all. My father got the disease when I was in Standard 7.
The illness of the family members did not only affect the family economically, but Julieti was also affected emotionally, which made her schoolwork suffer. She explained it was hard to pay attention to the teachers when knowing her father and sister being on the sickbed back home.

Amina missed out on school due to pain when having her period. The pain usually endured for three days at a time when she was at home recovering. When back in school, still having her period, she was sometimes worried somebody would see on her clothes she had a period. She also explained it was easy to go home to change because she lives close to school.

Liliani, Fatuma and Julieti described their bad eyesight as affecting the decision to drop out. Liliani found it difficult to see what was written on the blackboard, and the bad eyesight also made it difficult for her to write. This commenced in Form 1 and endured the rest of her schooling, which was one and a half years.

Fatuma also had issues with her eyes. The following citation describes her experience of traditional medication:

I went to others, traditional doctors, to find some medicine for the eyes, using some sticks and leaves. Now I am well, I am treated.

Fatuma went to several doctors, for example this traditional medicine man referred to, to get her eyes treated. As the citation indicates, she got better. This was also the case for Julieti, who, apart from bad visual sight, suffered from bad headache. However, the reason behind was not further explained.

Julieti, Amina and Ndeonio, expressed the lack of food as a reason to drop out, and additionally, Liliani stated it affected her decision but as less important in comparison to the above mentioned participants. Having not enough food before or in school lead to difficulties focusing on the lessons, as Julieti explained:

When I was in school and felt hungry, when the teacher came to the class, the body was there, not the mind. When I felt hungry, I went back home and missed the rest of the day.
She explained that as an effect of the hunger, there were occasions when she slept during the lessons, which made it hard to follow.

Amina said she was only given tea at home on some days; so in similar to Julieti, hunger affected her ability to pay attention in school. Amina explained that if you want food when in school you have to pay out of your own pockets, money that she seldom had. This, as she expressed, made her feel not mentally present in the classroom; thoughts of food circulated in her head instead of attention to the teacher’s instructions.

Likewise, hunger affected Ndeonio’s presence in school. When replying to the question “How did you feel when you were hungry?” she said her whole body was shaking.

Finally, Liliani stated that hunger affected her attendance in school. The walk to school took over one hour and sometimes she did not have any breakfast before leaving home early in the morning. When in school, she could only afford to buy food on some days. But although Liliani defined hunger as a problem in school and she had difficulties concentrating during the lessons, it was not her main reason for dropping out.

5.3 Social and cultural contexts

Both Scola and Miriam mentioned reasons related to social and cultural contexts, though Miriam’s dropout was also based on reasons from other categories. Scola explained pregnancy and marriage to be her reasons to drop out, while Miriam’s explanation is considerably more complex, with neither pregnancy nor marriage as the main reasons. Nevertheless, pregnancy and marriage were at the root of the thoughts that finally made her drop out.

Scola became pregnant in Form 2 with her boyfriend whom she later married. According to the principal of the school, pregnant girls are not allowed in primary school and in Form 1 and 2. However, if a girl becomes pregnant in Form 3 or 4, which is the highest form in this particular school, she is allowed to stay (K. Chumu, personal communication, 13 September, 2012). In spite of this, Scola claimed that her teachers encouraged her to stay in school, likewise her parents. The decision to drop out came
when Scola felt ill three months into pregnancy. When the child was born six months later, Scola married the father on the initiative of her parents. On the question if Scola wanted to go back to school she replied:

I would not return because now I’ve got family.

She explained she has a new role as a married woman. The domestic labours that marriage and moving to a new house entails things like cooking, cleaning, childcare and laundry.

Miriam married in Form 2, and she replied on the question on whose initiative:

It was my parents’.

The parents wanted her to marry because of the pregnancy. When Miriam miscarried, though, she went back to her studies after one month. Some fellow students and, in particular, one teacher, harassed her for being married and in school, however, this will be described in more detail in the next section. When still in the same form, she got pregnant once again and two months into pregnancy, by the end of Form 2, Miriam quit her studies. However, the primary reason for dropping out of school was neither marriage nor pregnancy, but harassment.

5.4 School related issues

School related issues affected the decision-making in all cases except from Scola’s. Five of the participants mentioned English as an instruction language being too difficult, and in two of the cases, it was the prime reason to drop out. Both teachers and fellow students harassed three of the participants for different reasons. Finally, distance from home to school was a reason to drop out for two of the participants.

Julieti, Amina, Kidede, Liliani and Ndeonio all said the use of English as an instruction language had an impact on the decision to quit school because it made it hard to follow the lessons. According to the principal, all subjects except Kiswahili, Arabic and religion are taught in English, but he added that the teachers sometimes
translate to Kiswahili at the end of the lesson. Amina and Liliani in particular found English too difficult, so difficult it was their prime motive to quit their studies. Amina tells about her experience of the language difficulties:

Teacher, after finish the lecture, she or he asked the class if they understood. Even if there were three or four students that understand the lecture, she or he didn’t repeat the lecture. There were some of them that didn’t understand, like me.

Even though the teachers sometimes repeated in Kiswahili when asked to, Amina did not always understand. When she was asked how it felt when she did not understand she replied:

I was empty in my head. I gained nothing.

Amina explained the tuition style was basically only on the blackboard, and when she did not understand, she did not ask questions. Liliani too did not ask for explanations when she did not follow during the lessons, neither did she get any support with homework from her family. To the question of what made English difficult she replied:

It was difficult reading. Even when the teacher came to class, I got nothing. I couldn’t hear and understand what the teacher said.

Even when the teacher explained several times, Liliani did not understand. Subjects using Kiswahili as an instruction language was easier. She does not believe school would have been hard for her if all subjects were instructed in her native tongue. She wished the lectures contained less information that she had to process in her head. Julieti also mentioned she did not follow the pace of the lessons. For example, when the teachers taught the English alphabet it was okay for her, but when reaching a higher level, she did not follow. Similarly, Kidede found English very difficult, but she did not blame the teachers, only herself. Even though the teachers tried to help her, language was a problem for her. She had difficulties with Kiswahili as well when it came to vocabulary. Likewise, Ndeonio blamed herself for not understanding English, and she thought the teachers did a good job the way they taught. She said she is a slow learner,
especially when it comes to English.

For Kidede and Liliani, one reason to drop out of school was the long distance, having to walk about 30 and 60 minutes, respectively, to school one way. Kidede did not like school because of the long daily walks, and claimed distance to be her main reason to quit her studies. She explained she had to wake up very early in the morning and when she arrived late, she was punished to clean the school. She thought the morning walk to school was the toughest one, even though the way back was hotter. Liliani however found the return harder because of the heat, and also because of being tired after a long day in school. Some days she stayed at home to escape the one hour-long walk.

Fatuma, Miriam and Amina experienced harassment in school on a level that affected the decision to quit school. For Miriam, it was the prime reason to drop out. It was one teacher in particular that harassed her:

This teacher told me: now you got married, now you have to stay at home – not go to school. I was feeling fear. I was scared because he told me in the class, crowded of people. I was feeling very harassed.

She also said classmates harassed her because she was married and still in school; however at the same time, others supported her to be there.

Fatuma too had problems with her teachers, which were related to her illness:

There were some teachers, they told me, at abusing language, because when I was in school, sometimes I was sleeping. I was not very well in the stomach. Other teachers come in to the class and they told me: ‘why do you sleep at lessons? You are always sleeping, you can quit.’ I tried to tell them about the stomach but they were not supporting me. Lastly, I dropped out.

Even though Fatuma experienced harassment, she claims her reason to drop out was the illness itself.

Amina could not afford the new school uniform for secondary school. Because of this, both teachers and fellow students harassed her until she dropped out, six months later.
5.5 Lack of internal and external motivation

Four out of eight of the participants declared lack of internal and/or external motivation as a reason among others for dropping out of school. Fatuma as well as Kidede repeated forms one or several times. Kidede repeated Standard 6 and explains the consequences that followed:

I repeated for a long time because my fellows that were together since we were in Standard 1 now they already got married, and I still in school. I decided to drop out.

When Kidede repeated forms, she felt inadequate. She also missed her classmates from childhood. Fatuma wanted to drop out when repeating Form 1, but because her parents encouraged her to stay in school because they argued she was too young to quit, she continued.

For two of the interviewees, lack of encouragement was a reason to drop out of school. However, none of the participant’s parents had negative attitudes towards the importance of going to school. As mentioned, Julieti suffered from disease, but she also said that neither family, nor friends, encouraged her to continue studying. In addition, she had no role model who motivated her to continue studying:

In this village, there is no woman who is more educated; that will concentrate me to go to school. If there was someone like a teacher, maybe she could motivate me to go to school.

Likewise, Liliani could not identify any role model who had motivated her studies. However, Liliani’s description of a role model differs from that of Julieti’s. Liliani would have liked to have a role model who could help her with her studies and that was good in English. For Liliani, it would not make a difference if the role model were male or female. Liliani experienced little help with homework from her family when she was still in school, neither from friends. She also said she did not get enough support from the teachers.
5.6 Future opportunities

All participants of the study mentioned how the decision to drop out had a negative impact on their opportunity to, as they defined it, get a good job in the future. Everyone, except from Miriam and Liliani, works at the moment with harvesting seaweed, which they later sell in town. The majority of the participants talked about striving for a “good life,” which was described as having a better job and a better life based on completing secondary education, something beyond the horizon due to the dropout. Julieti and Miriam describe how the decision to drop out did not only affect the opportunities to get a job, but also how it has limited their abilities in daily life. When Julieti explained what the difference is between females who only finish Standard 7 and those who complete secondary school she said:

She gets little education. She cannot get enough skills to get a job, any skills to study life. The one who finish Standard 7 knows less about how to do agriculture for example. That is skills in life.

She claims her dream of becoming a teacher is no longer rational. Now that she has no complete education, she would like to become a dressmaker instead; however, she cannot afford a sewing machine. Likewise, Miriam claims education is important for life’s daily challenges and adds that you become a better housewife with education.

Some participants mentioned the importance of good knowledge of English in order to get a good job. They believe many jobs require it, and that their geographical range for finding work increases. Several of the females explain how the dropout has limited the ability to support their family and children. Amina revealed her thoughts:

When you get enough education, you get your certificate, and then you find a job. Because if you have no education, you can find a job but you cannot get it. It can also help your family and your other relatives.

All participants agreed on that it is desired their children get more education than themselves. A few of them gave the example that their children or future children can use their education to find a decent job, which will later help them to financially support their mother, that is, herself.
6 Discussion and conclusion

This section identifies and discusses patterns in the females’ stories that we believe are important to bring to surface in order to understand the complexity of a school dropout. We also discuss possible actions to decrease the amount of dropouts. The reliability of the methodology is deliberated. Finally, the correlation between poverty and education is discussed.

6.1 Discussing the results

The proverb the straw that broke the camel’s back illustrates what we would like to call the ultimate decision to drop out of school. Hunt’s (2008) statement that pupils’ dropout reason does not consist of only one but several factors, fits well in this study, as all participants had two to six reasons for dropping out of school. Figure 2 shows which reasons were identified among the participants, as well as how we believe the reasons are connected. It cannot be stated, or overlooked, that the four reasons, which are not connected in the figure, might have connections with other reasons not revealed through the interviews. The young females’ ability to cope with difficulties varies; therefore, the figure cannot represent individuals. The strength of the camel’s back reveals the girl’s vulnerability. The weaker the ability to cope with difficulties, the more vulnerable she is to each added straw. It is not primarily the number of reasons that matters when it comes to a dropout, it is how strongly one or several reasons affects the female’s situation. How the reasons affect each other and how strong these relations are also varies from case to case and has an impact on the dropout. In spite of dropout being an individual occurrence, it is possible to identify patterns in the females’ stories.

The vast majority of the reasons pointed out by the young females are connected; some of them are either an effect of other reasons or they fortify already existing ones. These interactions and relations create vicious circles that will be difficult to get out of, and therefore, increase the possibility for a school dropout. To demonstrate an example,
Fatuma’s top ranked reason was disease followed by bad eyesight. These two reasons had an impact on the third reason, which was repetition. Her fourth and last reason was harassment, which was a result of the disease, but also low education quality. Even if the respondent did not mention low education quality as a reason, we believe harassment is a behaviour that is most likely not questioned in this context. Fatuma’s story shows that her reasons are connected, and further affected her reality. In other words, the reasons’ significance and relations break the camel’s back.

Figure 2. The figure illustrates how we believe the 14 reasons chosen by the young females are connected.

One identifiable pattern is that all the reasons have prevented and made the young females’ schooling more difficult, which in many cases lead to low achievement. Again, we agree with Hunt (2008) that low achievement is usually a consequence of several universal reasons, such as malnutrition, low education quality and various reasons for absence. We also believe that low achievement contributes to and accelerates the whole process of dropping out of school.

In line with other research (Birdsall et al., 2005; Boyle et al., 2002; Brown & Park, 2002; Bruneforth, 2006; Cardoso & Verner, 2007; Dachi & Garrett, 2003; Hunter & May, 2003; Ranasinghe & Hartog, 2002; Vavrus, 2002), the correlation between
poverty and school dropouts was identified among the majority of the participants of this study. The families’ household economies are vulnerable to fluctuation of income and external stress. This is most visible when it comes to significant expenses, what Janvry et al. (2006) call income-shocks, affecting the household economy, such as having to upgrade uniforms when students enter secondary school in Form 1. In other words, the girl’s situation and her ability to cope with difficulties do not only depend on the individual, but the family’s household economy. Therefore, poor families and their children are at greater risk of dropping out of school. To counteract this vulnerability, many of the interviewed females found alternative ways to hang about in the education system. This finding indicates the following two things; firstly, there is a will of going to school as it is highly valued; secondly, there are additional alternatives to finance school other than from parents or guardians. Even though all participants dropped out of school, they made rational decisions based on the circumstances: not only in the decision to take alternative ways but also in the decision to drop out of school. In these cases, it was often a matter of prioritising money. The school is seen as a future financial investment, but they all had a limit of how much it could cost when it comes to effort and prioritising in relation to intended yield. This without forgetting that other reasons also had an impact on where this limit is reached. Therefore, we believe that no tuition fees, free school uniforms and stationery, etc. would help young females’ schooling significantly. The will to go to school is there, but not the financial resources. If this were the case, the young females and their families would not have to face taking decisions about financial priority to the same extent. Free schooling is expensive for the state; however, we believe it is well-invested money for the country’s future.

The associations between health, sanitation and limitations and financial circumstances often overlap. Their connection sometimes resembles symbiosis, which we believe is an effect of the recognized relationship between health and poverty. In other words, if the girl and her family are poor, not only is the risk higher to get ill, but also the accessibility of medical assistance decreases. Likewise in the case of illness the household economy will be affected both by medical expenses and the resultant absence from work. This study shows that health, sanitation and limitations are related to other reasons for dropping out of school, as visible in Figure 2. It becomes most noticeable in the discussion of hunger and its effect on the participants’ schooling, which we claim to be based on financial issues, however, visible as a health issue. As claimed by Pridmore (2007), malnutrition has a direct effect on schooling, which was also the case for our
study. To visualize this connection, all four young females that had difficulties concentrating as a result of hunger also identified English as a reason to drop out. We believe it is not too bold to argue that there is a correlation, without defining how strong it is. We believe provision of school lunch would significantly increase the young females’ ability to pay attention in school. This would also mean economic relief in the household as it stimulates continuing schooling when motivation to continue is lacking. In the line with other research (Batbaatar, et al., 2006; Pridmore, 2007; PROBE Team, 1998), this study identified the relationship between disease and how it affects schooling both directly and indirectly; directly by long- and short-term absence and financial costs, and indirectly as these reasons affect the student’s achievements, such as learning English. We believe that the impact of tropical diseases and infections on schooling are common in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, an increase of health education would not be out of place. We believe it would decrease the number of diseases, which in turn would lead to decreased absence and dropouts among the students. As recognized by Smith et al. (2007) in a World Bank report, illness consequently generates a vicious circle, which may result in that education does not reach every child. Therefore, a compendium that informs school children on diseases and how to prevent them could be useful. In addition to that, it could be sent home to every household. Bad eyesight was not a hypothesis in this study, and is therefore not to be found in the review of literature or among the flashcards. We claim that in the case of having bad eyesight, it is closely related to difficulties with English as a medium of instruction and repetition. To take measures against this, we believe the first step would be to locate children with impaired vision with basic compulsory eye tests. In this way, the children and their parents become aware of the problem in time, and can undertake depending on their current situation. Also, the teachers become aware if there is an issue and can adapt the lessons after these limitations. A second step could be to give compensation to children with bad eyesight, because, as mentioned, we believe that bad eyesight and how it affects schooling initially is strongly related to poverty.

No indications that parents prioritise boys’ education over girls’ were found in the study. Neither was it found that females’ education was seen as a bad investment, which Hunt (2008), among others, mentions. However, Boyle et al. (2002), Colclough et al. (2000) and Kane’s (2004) studies showed that ideas about gendered social practices and expectations of a woman sometimes limit females’ education. In the line of Kane’s research on how teachers sometimes encourage or discourage students to take on
gendered roles and tasks, views on gender roles were visible in this proceeded study in the form of harassment. We believe this view on gender roles will not only affect the young females’ schooling but the prosperity of the whole society, as it prevents the participation in society at all levels. In addition to that, it violates the fundamental rights to education that is articulated by the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (Johnson, 2011). We claim that education of gender roles in school, teacher education, and service teacher training is essential to develop the country. However, we are aware that breaking norms is a hard and lengthy process. Education and patience are fundamental tools when tackling discrimination of females in the education system.

Nobody in the study criticised teacher absence, overcrowded classrooms, the amount of schooling hours, or pedagogical and didactic skills, which are reasons to drop out identified by Colclough et al. (2000), Hunt (2008) and Ghuman and Lloyd (2007). We believe why the respondents did not identify some of these reasons may have two explanations; firstly, to question something considered as normal is unusual, such as concerns about overcrowded classrooms; secondly, a social norm of respecting elders and authorities may have prevented such thoughts. Maybe they did not reflect upon it due to the aforementioned reasons, but it affects the education quality and following their achievements indirectly. Because of this, we believe teachers’ professional skills in relation to school dropouts is best investigated using other methods than in this study. The size of the classes, and following overcrowded classrooms, school facilities and private toilets were also reasons not mentioned by the participants. We cannot exclude that these may also have been reasons, even though they were not mentioned during the interviews; and in the long run, they indirectly affect the education quality. We would also like to point out, as PROBE Team (1999) mentioned in their report, that defining school quality is not an easy task. Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir’s (2004) research shows that bad grades, resulting in repetition and dropouts, are results of using English as an instruction language. This study addresses the same issue. However, we would like to take one step further and pose the question: Why did they struggle with English? Reasons mentioned before in this chapter, such as absence due to illness and work, impaired vision, education quality and lack of food, we believe are reasons that make learning more difficult, without excluding the possibility of suffering from more general language difficulties. That English is used as an instruction language is most likely based on the intention to integrate Zanzibar in a global world; however, our study indicates that it instead marginalises the majority of the interviewed females and denies
them the right to an equal education. We believe school density is a political matter that emerges in financial priority, which can only be improved with political implementations like building more schools, providing transportation or offering some kind of compensation for those who live too far away from school. Teacher and student harassment is identified as a problem by several researchers (Liu, 2004; Hunt, 2008). We believe the harassment can be explained by the teachers’ lack of professionalism, and an inability to recognize the individual’s reality. The lack of professionalism may further be explained by an inadequate teacher education, as well as in social and cultural codes where the norm is not to be challenged. As mentioned before, education in gender questions would be preferable, but also to increase the practice of treating students as individuals, not only as groups.

As Figure 2 illustrates, we believe there is a connection between repetition and several other reasons. Repetition may be an outcome of difficulties with language and theoretical thinking among other things; however, the hidden reasons, which did not come to surface during the interview, can only be speculated on. We believe thorough appraisal on why children repeat grades is essential, not stopping at the explanation of English being too difficult. It should be further investigated why each individual has difficulties, and what can be done. Leaving it at the first explanation may result in school dropouts, both because the fundamental problem is not dealt with and because the young female’s self-confidence drops after repeating grades. In line with other research (Colclough et al., 2000; Hunt, 2008; Hunter & May, 2003), this study suggests that having a role model and to get external support has a positive effect on academic achievements. One way to achieve this could be to allocate females by quotas to the teaching profession. The next step would be to give financial assistance to female teachers who choose to settle down and work in the village, which would mean that the girls have a female role model in their direct environment.

In spite of the young females’ awareness of the benefits of education, they still dropped out of school, which indicates that dropout was unavoidable due to the magnitude and multitude of reasons; consequently, a rational decision was taken. In other words, the respondents’ circumstances did not allow them to reflect upon and act long-term, as the present was more urgent than the possible future opportunities of education. We also believe their thoughts about the future are firmly correlated with their strong will to stay in the education system. The young females’ ability to cope with difficulties would not have been as successful if they did not have positive
thoughts on education. Therefore, it is vital to emphasize the benefits of education and in that way fortify their ability to cope with difficulties even more. One way could be for the state to promote the benefits of education. However, it is important to remember that even though the will is strong and belief in the future good, dropouts may still be unavoidable. The above-mentioned suggestion is only a tool to strengthen the young females’ motivation to continue schooling.

All participants went to school longer than their parents. This indicates progress and maybe the participants’ children will complete more years in school than themselves. This is an important finding because it sheds light on a brighter future for every generation. In the line of Greene & Merrick’s (2005) report, we also believe that educating females contribute substantially to better reproductive health, among other things, and further to the prosperity of the nation.

The young females’ stories have shown that several reasons affect the decision to drop out of school. The last straw, metaphorically speaking, broke their backs. It is likely that other young females have problems that affect school, such as in the example of bad eyesight, but it does not mean it was in combination with hunger or being forced to work alongside their studies. However, it does mean that they can achieve more in school if they are supported. The positive impacts acting to balance their problems have only been speculated on, as it is a different area of study. However, the ones with best conditions will continue in the education system, while others will not. We do not see it as impossible that this hypothetical scenario creates an elite system and thereby contributes to increased class distinctions.

6.2 Discussing the methodology

6.2.1 Inadequate information

The first contextual factor affecting the study was the lack of adequate information. The prime reason for choosing Zanzibar over Mainland Tanzania was the information provided by SACMEQ (n.d.) that lower secondary school is for free in Zanzibar, which means that financial circumstances as a reason would be less distinctive in comparison to the mainland. Nevertheless, it was later found from Zanzibar Ministry of Education
and Vocational Training (2007) that the pupils are encouraged to contribute financially to the school. In addition to that, it was found in an interview with the principal that the school where the interviewees once were enrolled take out compulsory fees (K. Chumu, personal communication, 13 September, 2012); however, four times smaller than on the mainland (E. Kafanabo, personal communication, 4 October, 2012). The difference between information and reality in this case indicates difficulties in providing with adequate information to research; but most notably, it demonstrates the importance of finding information in the field and not only to rely on official documents.

### 6.2.2 Selection and generalizability

Selecting a group of eight females who were all once enrolled in the same educational system brought homogeneity to the study. Selecting a homogeneous group within certain frames was crucial for the reliability of the study. One of the major findings in this study, which is the issues of using English as medium of instruction, would have been unreliable if the selection of females were enrolled in different educational systems; in this case, with or without Orientation year.

Even though the study is carefully framed, the question of generalizability should be considered when only capturing a limited share of eight females’ stories. It is important to remember that other reasons most likely exist in the village, and that the females conducted may not have provided with a fair diversity of reasons representing the village as the study was not a quantitative one. Interviewing fewer females for a longer time or several times may have provided even deeper understanding, and interviewing more females for a shorter amount of time may have given a more quantitative result.

Finally, how the participants were selected affected the results. Using an insider, as suggested by Fontana and Frey (1994), provided a translator of cultural morals when searching for participants and facilitated interaction with the, for us, unfamiliar culture. When looking for participants, the only information provided for the interpreter was the framework of educational background and that the study wanted to cover different parts of the village. Even though the risk is to end up in a snowball effect when the insider use her contacts to show the way to the next respondent, it resulted in great variety of selection, which hopefully adds to the breadth of the deep slice stories of the females.
6.2.3 The interpreter’s role in the researcher-respondent relation

The interpreter’s role as an insider was just elaborated upon; now, the discussion will move on to how this affected the relationship between the researcher and the respondent. To start with, it would not have been possible to carry out the study without an interpreter due to linguistic barriers. Even though translation may affect the interpretation of the flashcards, different translators checked them three times. Also, the interpreter was well prepared before the interview. To fortify the relationship between the researcher and the respondent in this context, it was important to use a female interpreter, especially since sensitive matters and issues of the female body sometimes came up. Fontana and Frey (1994) argue that gender, as well as hierarchal relationships must be taken into consideration during interviews. The latter might place the interviewee in a subordinate position, which was overcome by only using one of the researchers for the interviews with the females. However, even though these methodological considerations were taken into account, not to forget is the imbalanced power relation that may have been created in the interview situation, as both the researcher and the interpreter are teachers in training asking a young female why she is not in school anymore.

6.2.4 Reliability of the interview and analysis technique

In comparison to the qualitative technique that was used for the study, a quantitative study would have given different results, such as a wider overview of young females’ reasons to drop out of school in Matemwe. Even though data is easier to organise in quantitative method, as responses can be compared directly, the respondents must fit their experience into categories that may be perceived as impersonal or irrelevant, which might result in distorting what they really want to tell; that is to say, the emic perspective and the individual’s story may not come to surface, in contrast to the results of this study.

The priority ranking technique let the interviewees interpret the cards on their own terms and deliver unstructured answers. Using this conversational technique increased the relevance of the questions from the emic perspective as the questions can be matched to individual circumstances appearing in the interview. However, it required
high attention from the interviewer both during the conversation and the data organisation and analysis. The question follows if the interview could have been conducted without using flashcards. An option for a semi-structured interview may be to follow an interview guide with open-ended questions. However, specifying in advance a sequence of questions may marginalise the interviewee, not putting the story in focus, shade the emic perspective and increase the hierarchal relationship between the researcher and the respondent. Even though this outline makes data collection systematic, salient topics may be missed out on. We believe the flashcards helped opening up for thoughts that may have been hidden otherwise. The card Your own reason played a vital role for bringing up additional stories to surface and worked as a tool to avoid manoeuvring the stories in a certain direction.

Finally, taking photographs and audio record facilitated the data analysis. It may be that these activities had an impact on the respondent’s confidence in the situation; however, to neutralise, both the camera and audio record were checked together with the respondent. To overcome the difficulties of organising and analysing conversational interviews, we used these two recording techniques, as well as searching for key words in the transcript.

6.3 Future research

The topic of young females’ reasons for dropping out of school is one that demands future research. A wide array of approaches could be used to better understand females’ reality. Methods could be qualitative or quantitative, depending on the research perspective.

To start with, every reason found either in literature or in this study could represent a separate area of research. Investigating only one reason could provide with thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of how one factor affects the decision to drop out, without excluding that dropout usually depend on several reasons combined. Another research area could be to investigate the connection between reasons and the role of vicious circles in relation to school dropouts. As mentioned in the discussion chapter, to study school quality requires other methods, such as observations and interviews with teachers. It will most likely bring light to how education quality affects young females’
schooling. Methods for preventing females to drop out of school could be investigated. And because it is a fact that young females do drop out of school, research could also be conducted on how to bring those females back into the education system. Other methods could conduct a geographical comparative study, both within rural areas and rural and urban areas compared. Finally, the gender approach could be different. The same method could be used on boys, as well as to look on the whole group. This could add to the understanding of gender differences in education.

6.4 Conclusion

The importance of the reasons, their interplay and the creation of new reasons in relation to the abilities and conditions of the individual are important factors to understand the level of the young females’ vulnerability and finally, the whole process of a dropout. Also, the participants’ reasons must be put in perspective to understand the origin of the reason to drop out. What is the root of the different reasons? Do the reasons have the same origin? We believe most reasons actually do, not surprising that of poverty: on an individual and national level. Reasons like not being able to afford to go to school, not being able to access to good health care, limited education quality and lack of role models all have the common denominator: poverty. Therefore, we believe that reducing poverty can help students avoid vicious circles and lead to lower dropout rates for young females. But at the same time, to educate girls is to reduce poverty, which reverses the vicious circle on a macro level; and therefore makes it even more important.

As mentioned in the background chapter, a teacher in geography is responsible for increasing students’ knowledge about development issues, social justice and different perspective of solidarity. We believe conducting this study has increased our understanding of the above mentioned, as well as increasing our knowledge of the complexity of a dropout, in a development context as well as in Swedish context, which will become useful in our future classrooms.
References


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### 7.1 Figures

Appendix A: Interview guide

- What are young females’ reasons for dropping out of secondary school in Matemwe, Zanzibar?

- Which factors affect the decision to quit lower secondary school?

1. Explain that every card includes a hypothesis of reasons for dropping out of school based on scientific research.
2. Read all the 26 flashcards, three is Your own reason, carefully and read them back, one by one, to make sure the interviewer and the interviewee interpret the hypotheses alike. The deck of flashcards is shuffled.
3. The interviewee has four choices for every reason (card) that is given to her;
   1. Very important reason
   2. Important reason
   3. I am not sure
   4. Unimportant reason
4. Is there any reason that is not among the flash flashcards? Write on Your own reason.
5. Choice number 4 is put aside.
6. A photograph is taken if there is an addition.
7. We talk about the flashcards, one by one, in category 1, 2 and 3, after talking about a card, she will rank them in order of importance, on a line, where left is the most important reason and right is the least important reason.
8. When all the flashcards are ranked, we will ask her if she would like to do any adjustments.
9. A photograph will be taken of the flashcards.
- **How do the young females think the decision will affect their future?**

- What do you think are the differences between females who finish secondary school and those who only finish Standard VII?
- What do you believe would have been different in your life if you had stayed in school?
- What are your dreams about your future children related to their education?
- Why do you think education is important?
Appendix B: Flashcards

1 Financial circumstances

1.1 My family and I could not afford schoolbooks, school uniform, stationary school fees and/or transportation to school
1.2 I worked instead of going to school

2 Health, sanitation and limitations

2.1 I got ill with disease
2.2 Someone in my family got ill with disease or died
2.3 When I arrived at puberty, it became hard to attend school every day of the month
2.4 I had difficulties concentrating as I got not enough food
2.5 I have a disability

3 Social and cultural contexts

3.1 It is more important that my brothers/brother go/goes to school rather than I
3.2 I got pregnant
3.3 I got married
3.4 I was too old for school
3.5 The school is not important

4 School related issues

4.1 The quality of the education was not good enough
4.2 The English language was too difficult
4.3 The school was too far away
4.4 The road to the school was not safe
4.5 Someone was hitting me or/and saying bad words
4.6 The classroom was too small
4.7 There were no private toilet facilities for girls

5 Lack of internal and external motivation

5.1 I repeated forms too many times, which made me lose hope to finish school
5.2 I did not get enough encouragement to continue school from my family, school staff, people from the village, friends and/or the government.
5.3 I did not have a role model to look up to
5.4 I did not like school

6 Blank cards

6.1 Your own reason
6.2 Your own reason
6.3 Your own reason
Appendix C: Letter of introduction

Letter of introduction

We are two students training to be teachers from Malmö University, Sweden. Johannes will not take part during the interviews but Josefhin will, together with a female interpreter.

We invite you to participate in a minor field study. The purpose of this study is to understand the reasons for why females do not complete junior secondary school in Zanzibar. This means we will interview females who have dropped out in form 0, 1 or 2 in Matemwe secondary school. Approximately 10 people will take part in this study.

During an interview of about one hour, Josefhin will ask you questions about the reasons for not completing secondary school, your thoughts on the decision and how you believe it will affect your future.

We would like to audio record our interview and make a transcript of the findings. The data will be deleted after it has been studied and approved by our supervisor. We assure you we will keep the information you provide confidential. We will create a fake name for you and will use this instead of your real name to identify your information. If you wish, you are welcome to go through the material at any time after the interview.

You may be uncomfortable talking about your life and family. You will be able to skip any questions you wish, and end the interview at any time. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary, and you will not be paid in money.

If you have any questions about this research study, we can be reached by calling Josefhin at 0774241303.

Thank you very much for taking part of this study.

Yours sincerely,

Josefhin Jartsjö and Johannes Elofsson

Malmö University, Sweden
Appendix D: Information sheet

Information sheet

Date: ____________  Place: ____________  Date of birth: ____________

Last name: ______________________________________________________
First name: _____________________________________________________
Contact number: _________________________________________________
Place of birth: _________________________________________________
Occupation: _____________________________________________________
Marital status: _________________________________________________
Number and age of children: ______________________________________
Total years in school: ____________  Grade of dropout: ____________
Age of enrolment: ____________  Age of dropout: ____________
Mother’s occupation: _____________________________________________
Mother’s education level: ________________________________________
Father’s occupation: _____________________________________________
Father’s education level: ________________________________________
Number of family members in your household at the time of dropout: __
Number of older siblings: _________  Number of younger siblings: _______