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The Contribution of Teacher-Student Relationships to reducing School Dropout.
Case study in a "Second Chance" High School

(Long Abstract)

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INTRODUCTION

One of the main subjects that occupies the education system is the search for tools to cope with the problem of dropout among high school students. The issue of dropout and also the search for coping strategies become even more pressing as the students mature (ages 13-18). Adolescence is anyway a difficult period, and the constrictions of the education system further augment difficulties. It should also be remembered that in the present era technology dominates life, young people are exposed to unlimited contents, some of which open up opportunities while others do harm. These circumstances put all young people at risk, even if they are not thus defined. This is especially so for young people that are defined as at-risk youth and the education system often lacks the ability to prevent their dropout from school.

The research described here was conducted at the "Second Chance" school in Israel. This is a unique school intended especially for students aged 14-18, who have dropped out of other mainstream education institutions, experiencing failures throughout their school years. The "Second Chance" school aims primarily to motivate the students to undergo change and supervise their perseverance in school until the end of their studies.

The purpose of the present study was to direct a spotlight on teacher-student relations in the "Second Chance" school, and their influence on students' dropout from school, and the ability of these relations to motivate students for change. But first, the research notes and highlights the fact that teacher-student relations are work tools. According to this perception, teacher-student relations, naturally occur every day in the education system, whether willingly or not, and the present study examines possible correlations between these relation and the school students' motivation to learn and dropout in the "Second Chance" school.

The research population included the full-time teachers teaching in school, the students studying in the school at the time of the research and also graduates of the school, some of whom completed their studies there and others who dropped out.

There is extensive research literature of teacher-student relations. These relations are a natural and essential component of the teacher's work and the student's life. As noted this is a daily process, in which communication constantly flows between the teacher and the students, depending largely on the teacher's perceptions and their attentiveness (Pianta, 1999).

The research then examines the question whether the character of teacher-student relations, which as noted constitutes such an important component of the teaching-learning process, should be shaped and designed so that it can be used to reduce dropout. This is an important issue, to the extent that it defines the school. Should the teachers orient and shape their relations with the students in order to reduce dropout and to increase students' motivation for change. The research therefore aims to examine whether teacher-student relationships constitute a significant key for dropout and motivation; and if so how and in which way can this be achieved, especially for at-risk youth.

Research Background

This is a case study conducted at a single school in the center of Israel. This is a high school defined as a "Second Chance" school. Schools of this kind exist in various places in Israel and are intended mainly for at-risk youth, those who have dropped out of mainstream schools, and have a high tendency for dropout from the education system in general. This student population consistently fails. Although they find it difficult to persevere with their studies, teachers fail to reach out to establish positive communication with them and thus fail to help them to improve their achievements. Most of these children have attention and concentration disorders, behavior disorders, a low socio-economic level, accompanied by social problems, violence in the family, and are sometimes themselves violent. They accumulate educational gaps over the years. It is therefore not surprising that these students have difficulty in persevering with their studies and they lack the motivation to do so. Nevertheless, the "Second Chance" school is supposed to help these students to alter their motivation and continue with their studies.

Various scholars have tried to explain the reasons for dropout, some find the source of difficulty in the family, while others relate to socio-economic difficulties and some relate to the students' own characteristics: their abilities, skills and learning habits (Alexander et al., 1997; Bartholme, 1994; Frank, 1990; Gilborn, 1997; Lareau, 1987Sasson-Peretz, 1998). In recent decades, the school has been considered as an influential factor for dropout, but as a secondary factor (Adler, 1980; Cairns & Neckerman, 1989; Cohen & DeBettencourt, 1991; Finn, 1987; Lahav, 1999; Wolman, Bruiniks & Thurlow, 1989 and others). The present study aims to focus on the school especially the teachers and their relationship with the students in correlation with student dropout and motivation for change.

Gap in Knowledge

Research that has considered at-risk youth in high schools, and teacher-student relationship in these schools, emphasizes the important of these relationship for at-risk youth. However, they focus mainly on attentiveness to the needs of these young people, improvement of their feelings, improvement of the relationship as a condition and fertile bed for the students' advancement (and sometimes these studies even consider the teachers' feelings or their satisfaction in work with at-risk students). Researchers also discuss the concept of "high quality relationships" (Blum, 2005; Capern, 2014; Hattie, 2009; Klem & Connel, 2004; Pianta, 1999).

Giles (2011) stresses the importance of the orientation of teacher-student relationship, however it appears that teacher-student relationship are not friendly relationships, rather they are goal-oriented and should be accurate in order to be influential, especially when working with at-risk youth. The present study that links teacher-student relationship with dropout and motivation for change, attempts primarily to draw attention and add weight to teacher-student relationship and secondly to consider the shaping of the character of these relationships so that they will help the students to persevere and remain in school. The research findings form the foundation for a proposed model that can inform teachers coping with at-risk youth.

Research Aims To identify what the "Second Chance" school teachers do to attune teacher-student relationships in order to decrease students' dropout tendencies and increase their motivation for change.

- To examine how do teacher-student relationships affect students' motivation for change and their dropout tendencies at a "Second Chance" high school

Research Questions

1. What do teachers do to attune teacher-student relationships to decrease students' dropout tendencies and increase motivation for change at the studied "Second Chance" high school?

2. How do teacher-student relationships affect students' motivation to change and their dropout tendencies at the studied "Second Chance" high school?

3. What are the teachers' views on education and credo at the studied "Second Chance" school?

Research Hypotheses

- There will be a negative correlation between teacher-student relationships and dropout tendencies at the studied "Second Chance" high school.

- There will be a positive correlation between teacher-student relationships and the students' level of motivation for change student at the studied "Second Chance" high school.

The theories that underpinned and guided the research were primarily theories dealing with behavioral and psychological aspects of human development, since the research dealt with teacher-student relationships. The theoretical framework of the research relied on the following main theories:

a.) Self-Determination Theory proposed by Ryan and Deci (2000), that emphasizes that people are naturally social creatures, influenced by society, with basic needs such as: competence, relatedness and autonomy, and the extent to which these needs are met influences their types of motivation.

b) The Theory of Self-Efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977) stresses the need to help the student to develop their sense of self-efficacy, indicating the factors that can help this development. These important factors include the direct and indirect experiences that the student accumulates, the social factor, and also the student's own beliefs and attitudes (and additionally those of the teachers).

The literature review also discusses characteristics of at-risk youth (Amos, 2008), aspects of student dropout and the reasons for this phenomenon as explained by various researchers (Adler, 1980; Bettencourt et al., 2000; Cairns & Neckerman, 1989; Cohen & de Janosz, 1991; Finn, 1987; Lahav, 1999; Wolman, Bruininks & Thurlow, 1989).

I.1 Motivation

I.1.1 Self-Determination as a motivating power for change

Ryan and Deci, theorized that the basic existential characteristic of humans is that they are naturally curious, vivacious and personally motivated, and yearn to learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

I.1.2– Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

SDT emphasized people's intrinsic power sources through which they develop (Ryan, Kuhl & Deci, 1997), their need for competence (Harter, 1978; White, 1959), relatedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Reis, 1994) and autonomy (de Charms, 1968; Deci, 1975), and when all these needs are met, there people can develop appropriately and attain a state of emotional wellbeing. This approach sees context and environmental factors as cardinal influences on people's emotional wellbeing, and necessarily for their motivation.

It seems that the task of promoting appropriate development is mostly imposed on school teachers, and of course also on parents outside school. Teachers are those who enable and nurture students' autonomy, constituting a real catalyst for students' intrinsic motivation, and increases their desire to be challenged (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

I.1.3 Students' internalization and regulation of environmental values

Students can integrate successfully through coincidental self-evaluation (Ryan & Deci, 1995). People's awareness of internalization processes deepens their sense of autonomy. When regulation between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is successfully internalized, the student will be free to invest more interest and cooperation, the greater efforts at school and in their studies demonstrated by students (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Studies have shown that when students have greater autonomy, extrinsic motivation is identified with relatedness (Connel & Wellborn, 1991), better performance (Miserandino, 1996) and reduced dropout rates (Vallerand & Bissonette, 1992). In other words, students' relationship with their human environment and their need to belong, constitute powerful factors in the internal regulation, integration and internalization processes that the student undergoes. For at-risk youth this may be more dramatically important.

I.1.4 Teacher-Student-Motivation: An essential correlation for success

Assor (2001) viewed the learning process as a sort of miracle, and defined it as a spontaneous event that is difficult to summon, create, manufacture or predict, but which relies on scientific theory to produce successful results. The use of the term "miracle" illustrates how important this process is, however teachers are required to pay attention to other key factors such as environmental conditions, learners' exposure to interpersonal and intrapersonal processes in order to ensure success of the process.

I.1.5 Types of motivation

Before reviewing different types of motivation, it is worth noting that in this context, Assor (2001) felt it was important to consider two mistaken attitudes of teachers:

1. The teacher's perception that the reason for the student's lack of motivation stems from the student's personality or low abilities or both of these factors.

2. The teacher's perception that extrinsic motivation is the main and strongest motivation.

These two perceptions guide, influence and define the teacher's work with the pupils in the context of motivation. These attitudes contradict research that has shown that man has a natural motivation to learn.

There are several types of motivation: extrinsic motivation, conformist motivation, placation-abstention motivation (fear of rejection), placation-nearing (belonging) motivation, intrinsic-conscious motivation, intrinsic conscious-integrative motivation, intrinsic-emotional motivation. In order to be significant intrinsic motivation should be *conscious, integrative and emotional* (Asor, 2001).

Thus, it seems that *motivation is an internal feeling created over time, with help from various environmental factors*. For this reason, teachers have an important role to play in activating the different types of motivation. With at-risk youth that does not always know how to direct its motivation to where it is most needed, the role of teacher in stimulating motivation for change becomes extremely important.

I.1.6 Students' self-efficacy and their ability to make changes

Self-efficacy theory relates to cognitive processes that people undergo in order to structure their own self-efficacy. These processes involve collecting diverse sources of information, relating to their abilities, and integrating all the material that is collected over the years (Bandura, 1977).

Such processes continue for years, they are dynamic processes affected by diverse factors. When these processes are experienced consciously, they are performed more effectively.

I.1.7 Society's role in nurturing students' self-efficacy

Many scholars have dealt with the issue of nurturing self-efficacy. Some of these scholars mention the use of external rewards, as unsatisfactory (Condry, 1977; Lepper & Greene, 1978). Nevertheless, there are some studies that consider positive encouragement, as an apparently external process which nevertheless reinforces self-efficacy (Boggiano & Rubble, 1979; Ross, 1976). And as an extension to this theory, some researchers have also noted that external incentives awaken internal incentives when they refer to ability (Enzle & Ross, 1978). All of the above-mentioned scholars indicate that the social aspect has a strong influence on the individual's sense of self-efficacy. Moreover, beyond the concept of self-efficacy Bandura (1982) discussed the

concept of collective efficacy, a strong force that influences self-efficacy. The reciprocal relations between collective and individual self-efficacy are cognitive integrative processes (Bandura, 1978b; Cairns, 1979, Endler & Magnusson, 1976; Pervin & Lewis, 1978).

I.1.8 Teacher-student relationships

Important components of teacher-student relationships

Giles (2011) argued that teacher-student relationships are taken for granted. This is because teachers are in regular contact with their students on a daily basis, and friction inevitably ensues. Although these relationships are a necessary interaction, as with the relationships between married couples, teacher-student relationships need guidance, responsibility and control and if these three elements exist it is possible to attune the relationship to required goals. Giles (ibid.) notes that it is also important to give the student a sense of belonging and to relate to the student as an individual (Marzano & Marzano, 2003; Wessler, 2003).

I.1.9 Key factors in teacher-student relationships: Support, belonging – alienation

According to Skinner, Wellborn and Connell (1990, in Guvenca, 2015), the sense of belonging and its opposite, a sense of alienation, appear to be important factors in teacher-student relationships, having a significant influence on students' learning processes. Studies have found that when students have a sense of belonging, this helps to protect them from risk (for example dropping out of school), and also predicts successful achievements (Skinner et al., 2008). Conversely, students experiencing alienation are at risk of dropping out (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). A sense of belonging and obtaining support appears to produce a motivational outcome (Basaran, 1982). It is important to remember that motivation is a highly complex concept (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

I.1.10 Teacher-student relationship and motivation

In order to create motivation, the student needs a sense of competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Teachers touch upon and even more than that, are sometimes able to satisfy these needs of the students in their relationships with them, as was already noted above with regard to other needs: the need for belonging and support (Guevara, 2015). However, it transpires, rather strangely that contrary to expectations, teachers feel that they have no effect on students' motivation, particularly in high schools (Patrick & Pintrich, 2001).

If this is indeed so and teachers do not feel they possess influence, then it may not be possible to take care of students needs for both autonomy and belonging since this belief may have implications for the teachers' work and relatedness, for example:

1. Teachers may invest less effort in issues such as belonging, support and autonomy. In other words, teachers themselves will lack motivation to invest in their students' motivation.

2. Teachers may feel that they are not responsible for these issues.

3. Teachers may pass on the responsibility for and work on the issue of motivation, to others.

It can therefore be concluded that a situation is likely to develop where no one specific person undertakes responsibility for and guides the issue of students' motivation. It can also be understood that for motivation to develop, it is important that there should be a specific figure who is responsible for encouraging motivation, who is aware of the extent of his/her influence and responsibility.

I.1.11 What is needed in teacher-student relationships to respond to the needs of students with behavioral disorders

Students' with behavioral disorders need the teacher to understand their needs (Capern & Hammond, 2014), and the relationship should be a "quality relationship" (Capern, 2014, p.48). Students need warmth, understanding, patience, attention and support from teachers (Capern & Hammond, 2014) (Cefai & Cooper, 2010; Daniels et al., 2003; Dods, 2013;) and most importantly emotional support.

I.1.12 Challenges involved in establishing teacher-student relationships in high school

Teacher-student relationships is an essential factor, a psychological need, and critical motivational behavior in promoting students' achievements (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Gehlbach, Brinkworth & Harris (2011) enumerated several challenges that emerge when investigating teacher-student relationships:

- There are multiple components to consider in teacher-student relationships (Murdock, 1999, Resnick et al., 1997).

- Teachers have different expectations from students (Murdock and Miller (2003).

- Teachers and students: it takes both to form a relationship (Gehlbach, Brinkworth & Harris, 2011).

- It is difficult to evaluate and measure these relationships.
- Teachers and students' roles are different, so are their needs.

I.2 At-risk youth in high school

I.2.1 "At-risk" student " - A label that says it all

When identifying behavior disorders, the focus is always on students from a low socio-economic background, minorities and students with learning disorders and difficulties - that is where at-risk students are found (Amos, 2008). There are accompanying variables such as absences, behavioral problems and social anxieties (Hickman et al., 2008; Suh, Suh & Houston, 2007) and adolescence, which is defined as a multi-problematic and complex period in relation to all aspects of teenagers' development (Rowley et al., 2005) and makes the student's life more difficult.

Researchers have found that at-risk students should be considered holistically. This means that the teacher should be concerned for and nurture these students in thought, body, spirit and soul, so that they can live full lives (Myers, Sweeney & Witmer, 2000).

I.2.2 Emotional learning resilience and motivation among at-risk students at risk - What is more accurate?

When considering the holistic wellbeing of students, emotional strength is one of the important values to be included. 'Emotional resilience' has been defined as students' success in learning despite personal and environmental difficulties (Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1997). A link has been found between positive teacher-student relationships and learning emotional resilience (Downey, 2008), a link even stronger with at-risk students. So, it seems that they need to develop their social skills to gain those positive relationships with teachers (Downey, 2008). In this context, it should be noted that with students at risk, one must differentiate between emotional resilience that students activate with regard to their learning and their mental resilience outside school, to which they refer as 'real-life', as true reality, where they mostly found find themselves in survival situations.

I.2.3 Teachers mentoring at-risk youth

Mentoring is a process by which adults accompany young people through life processes, and provide them with support and encouragement (DuBois & Karcher, 2005; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). However, it was found that teachers have negative preconceptions about at-risk students (Garza, 2012). Hence, it is possible that this

should be teachers' starting point when coming to care for students at risk. It seems that to do so teachers need to improve their negative perceptions of these students, their communication skills and their problem-solving skills (Fresko & Wertheim, 2006; Meyer, 1997). Another very important resource is that the teachers should believe in themselves, and their ability to arouse the student's desire for change and to influence the student (Sergiovanni & Starrat, 2007).

I.3 Student dropout

I.3.1 Causes of dropout

According to many research studies, the main reasons for school dropout are:

- **Family causes -** when families are dysfunctional (Cairns et al., 1989; Janosz et al., 2000), a stressful family event (Alexander et al.,1997; Frank, 1990; Sasson-Peretz, 1998), low socio-economic status etc.

- **Social causes** - youth with different cultural backgrounds who find it difficult to adapt, and have a different view of the importance of education, how teachers perceive youth from diverse cultures etc. (Bartolome, 1994, Gillborn, 1997; Lareau, 1987).

- **Personal causes** - - youth with low achievement rates, inappropriate behavior at school: many absences, negative relationships with school, academic frustration (Karp, 1988), social problems (Austin Independent School District, 1982), frequently changing schools over the years. Other characteristics are self-control disorders, aggressive tendencies, difficulty deferring gratification, attention and concentration disorders, inappropriate behavioral, difficulty accepting authority (Bachman et al., 1972; Kroner, 1988; Rehavia & Friedman in Sasson- Peretz, 1998; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986), low motivation, scant ambition regarding education generally (Cairns et al., 1989).

- **Crises and life events** - ill health, pregnancy, criminality, arranged marriage, drugs and alcohol abuse, suicidal thoughts or attempts etc. (Broun & Emig, 1999; Rumberger, 1983; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

- **School causes**- studies have linked dropout with the schools' responsibility (Brad, 1993; Bruininks & Thurlow, 1989; Fine, 1983; Karp, 1998; Toles et al., 1986; Wolman, Darling-Hammond, 1997). These studies emphasized the importance of school factors in either delaying or increasing student

dropout. Factors found significant for dropout include teachers who communicate low expectations from students, insufficient resources and funding, inadequate teaching quality, inappropriate learning methods etc.

It cannot be ignored that although there are many significant reasons for students' dropout out, the central players in this process are the students and the teachers. Students are exposed to additional, new, different teachers every year. Each one of them constitutes a key factor responsible for how students function. Teachers are 'central players' in this field. They are not a secondary factor, but a key factor in children's education.

Students' needs

"You can do it"
Regardless of your behavior or abilities

with students responds accurately to behavior or abilities
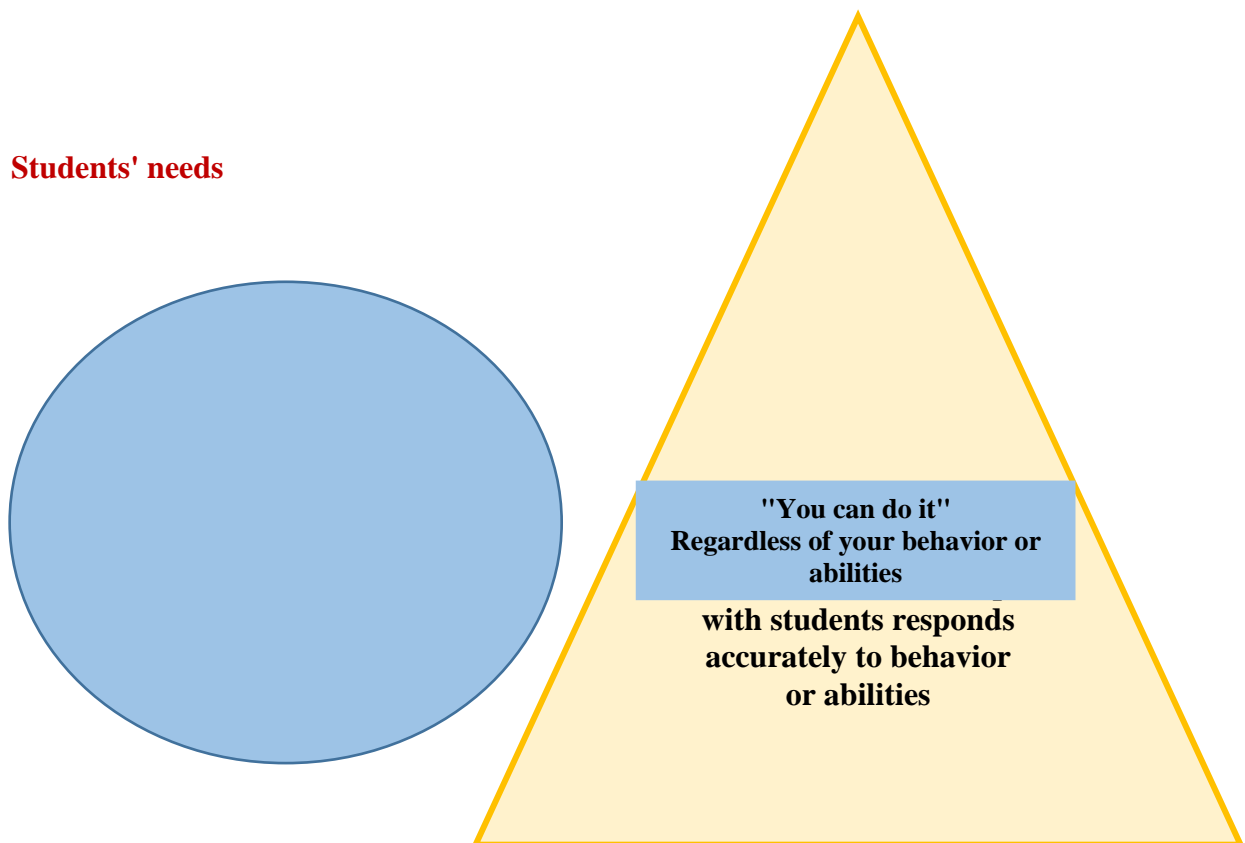
Figure 1: The teacher-student relationship must focus on pupils' improvement, adhering to trust and respect for students despite their inappropriate behavior

I.3.2 The dropout process

Research by the Brookdale Institute and Bar-Ilan University (2011) maintains that the 'dropout process' is the result of reciprocal relations between students and

schools. They explain that everything depends on school circumstances and teachers' reactions; in other words, these variables, school circumstances and teacher reactions, were the significant variables in the dropout process and they determined whether students would continue their studies at school.

Family Factors

Cultural Factors

Personal Factors

Crises and Life Events

School factors
School circumstances and the teacher's response
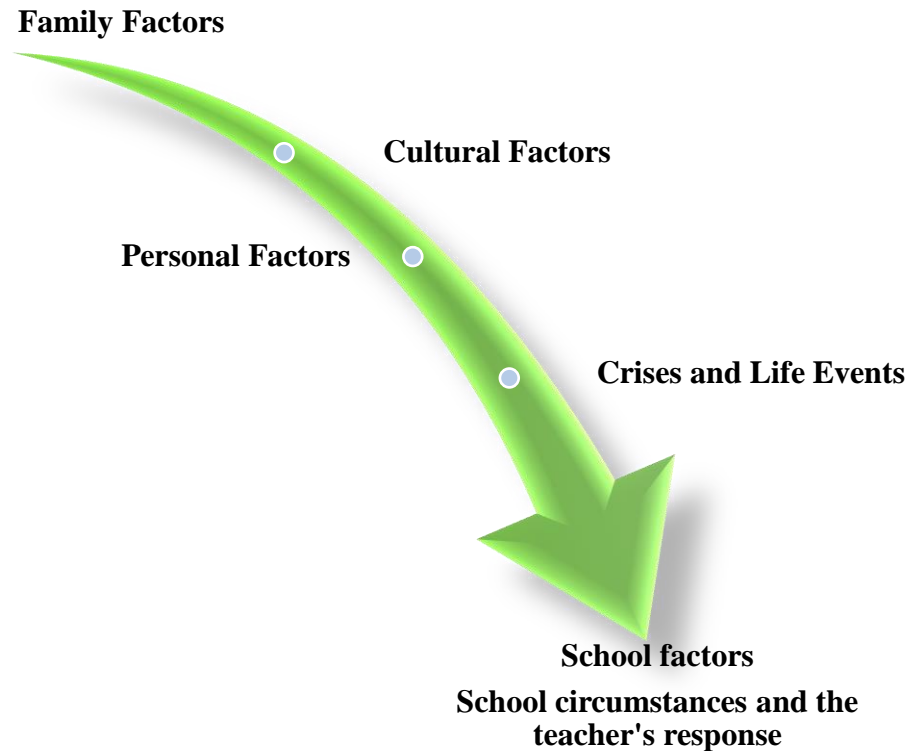
Figure 2: Highlights – The students' dropout process occurs over several years
I.4 Discussion and conclusions

It is important to remember that STD Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977) refer to the human aspect, in relationships between adults and children, between teachers and students. These relationships are an important key tool in creating motivation in people.

It was found that teachers are a most important resource in this process (Eccles & Roeser, 1998). From their point of view, teachers are can consider three aspects of their relationships with their students: conflict, closeness and dependence (Pianta, Steinberg & Rollins, 1995; Safi & Pianta, 2001). In addition, teacher-student relationships will be constructed and influenced mainly by students' behavior and less by other aspects (Stuhlman & Pianta, in press). Therefore, it is possible and desirable to help teachers to alter their views, especially regarding at-risk youth, with whom conflict often determines and molds the relationship. It should also be noted that

teachers who believe that they have influence over their students can encourage their progress and achievement (Midgley, Feldlaufer & Eccles, 1989).

Furthermore, from studies presented above, it appears that teachers and students seem to speak two different languages. Students wanted (and this is one of their developmental needs from accompanying adults) teachers to establish relationships with them irrespective of their behavior (of one type or another) and irrespective of their abilities (of one sort or another). Students need these relationships to be based on "you are worth it", "you can", and want teachers to hold these expectations and beliefs irrespective of their behavior and abilities. However, in the main teachers, build perceptions of their relationships with students based on the students' behavior and ability. These are two different languages. *When these insights, are applied to teacher relationships with at-risk youth the difficulties become clearer and the insights become more powerful and significant.*

I.5 The research context

I.5.1Special attributes of the research population

The school where the research was conducted

- The school at which the research was conducted is a high school, defined as a "Second Chance" school. The words 'Second Chance' reflect the fact that the school accepts students who failed at other schools, and the general message of the school for both teachers and students is that this is a place where students are given a second opportunity by the school system to succeed. The school declares that it is an educational institute that accepts pupils in the process of dropout. Intake of students who fail in other schools takes place throughout the year. The entire justification for the school's existence rests on students defined as at-risk for drop-out.

- Another message that this school wishes to convey is that it has expertise in areas where others have not succeeded and that it is oriented to providing different consideration to the students, aiming to understand the complexity of their lives, to provide them with a space for choice and also rich and more open possibilities to remain within the learning system and also to integrate their learning within their complex lives.

The school is situated in the southern part of a city in central Israel, an area rife with poverty, violence, unemployment, migrants and other components that

produce socio-economic as well as educational problems. The students, aged between 14-18mostly live in the school's vicinity. They were all referred to the school from other schools that could not cope with their difficulties.

There are about 130 students, 25 teachers, a principal, deputy principal, counselor, two social workers and a discipline coordinator at the school. There are ten classes from 10th to 12th grade. The school is defined as a technological school. Courses offered to students include: hairdressing, photography, business administration. In addition, the school offers the students possibilities to take course to attain different qualifications: a full matriculation certification (sometimes, though not consistently the school is able to help 1-3 students to attain a full matriculation certificate)., a partial matriculation certification, a technological diploma or just a diploma confirming completion of 12th Grade studies. Learning takes place in small groups of between 13-18 students per class.

I.5.2 Characteristics of the school's students

The school's students have on average moved between 2-4 schools between the ages of 14-18. The problems causing them to fail at school are severe behavioral disorders, attention and concentration difficulties, difficulties in basic organization, failure to adjust to school and to the school's demands and rules. They may have no basic level of study habits, such as organizing their school bag, coming to school with their school bag containing books, notebooks or even writing utensils. There is no internalization of either the processes within school or students' functioning. However, there is a desire and longing to succeed according to school concepts, but there is no understanding of the context or alternatively of the connection between behavior, effort, results and achievements.

Over the years, these students have accumulated huge knowledge gaps, in basic knowledge and skills such as reading, writing, mathematical understanding, mother tongue, other languages and more. They have not experienced success in most of their school years, almost never received praise from teachers about their work or abilities, and some have never earned any positive, and perhaps only negative attention from their teachers.

Most of the students come from a low socio-economic level, parental functioning is flawed to say the least, because parents are too busy dealing mainly with economic survival. Sometimes one parent is imprisoned or involved in crime,

unemployment or other negative occupations. Most of the students come from downtrodden families, lacking strength to help the students in their coping with the educational system, not to mention the difficulties of their teenage years. Some students even have to work and earn their keep.

I.5.3 Characteristics of the school's teachers

The teachers are employees of the Ministry of Education, with first or second degrees in their area of knowledge. Some have experience in the educational system. Some have experience with at-risk students, some are qualified to work in special education and some have no experience at all either with at-risk students or with students with special education needs.

Difficulties teachers encounter with these students include exposure to coarse, rude behavior, absence of learning habits, diagnosed attention and concentration disorders, and abnormal behavior in class. Teachers have to cope emotionally and organizationally with this situation. In addition, they have to teach the learning material, as required by the Ministry of Education. In this situation, teachers experience frustration in their work, helplessness and sometimes a sense of failure due to their lack of success with students.

The "Second chance" school's organizational culture

- Encourage perseverance at school. Prevent dropout.
- Prepare students for further learning, whether vocational or higher academic studies.
- Prepare students for social integration whether in their profession or socially.

The school's declared operating principles

- Teaching is individual and in small groups.
- Teachers are immediate aware, especially homeroom teachers, of any students' absences and special events in their lives.
- Provide assistance to struggling students.
- Zero tolerance of violent behavior in and out of school.
- Zero tolerance of verbal violence towards teachers or students.
- Community involvement and volunteering is especially important.
- Preventing racism and racist comments is especially important.

I.6 The conceptual framework of the research

The conceptual framework underpinning the research focuses on three main issues: teacher-student relationships, dropout and motivation for change. Other points of interest important for the research are: at-risk youth and the "Second Chance" high school. Thus, the following terms guided the present study: Teacher-Student Relationship, Motivation for Change, Dropout, At-risk Students, "Second Chance" high school.

I.6.1 Teacher-student relationships

These relationships are the very core of school events. They occur naturally whether they are positive or negative (sometimes the relationship is attuned to and created for a particular program or goal) and they develop from the moment that the teacher meets the students in the school. This relationship occurs on a daily and hourly basis within the school. It guides the learning events, providing a background which often becomes the center of the events. Teacher-student relationships are the important social aspect that envelopes the student from the beginning of the educational process and until its end. This social aspect is integrated over time by the student internally/perpetually (Ryan & Deci, 1995). Therefore, this relationship should be accurate and constructive (Elliot, Kao & Grant, 2004; Giles, 2011; Rayle, 2006). This research examined how this relationship influences particular aspects of dropout, especially in the context of students defined as "at-risk".

I.6.2 Motivation for change

This is the power that drives any person. Students naturally have motivation to some extent (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In order to create motivation, a person needs autonomy, capability and a sense of belonging (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Motivation is mental strength and will, influenced by continuous social dialog, that the person conducts throughout their life (Ryan & Deci, 1995). It is important that the person should be aware of this strength (Vansteenkiste, 2009). For this reason, teacher-student relationships are so important and meaningful. At-risk youths usually have low motivation and the "Second Chance" school needs to focus on the student's motivation when working with the student. The present study investigated the correlation between teacher-student relationships and students' motivation for change and the influence of these relationships on student dropout.

I.6.3 Dropout (in contrast to perseverance)

This is a prevalent phenomenon among at-risk youth. These students are at risk for dropout throughout most of their school years. The "Second Chance" school primarily aims to fight against this phenomenon. An important part of the school's work is to ensure that the student perseveres with their studies and graduates after completing their school studies. It also tries to educate the student to certain accompanying values. Due to the importance of this matter the research investigated whether teacher-student relationships had the power to reduce or eliminate the phenomenon of dropout

I.6.4 At-risk youth

An at-risk youth is defined as a young person with a low socio-economic status, attention and concentration difficulties and a behavioral disorder (Amos, 2008; Hickman et al., 2008; Suh, Suh & Houston, 2007). To this should be added the factor of adolescence (Rowley et al., 2005). Each of these factors are key factors in the formation of teacher-student relationships and influence both motivation for change and dropout/ perseverance.

I.6.5 The "Second Chance" school

This is a school whose objective is to take care of all the difficulties of at-risk youth. This is a special framework in Israel, which is supposed to absorb all young people dropping out of mainstream education settings and helping them to persevere and succeed.
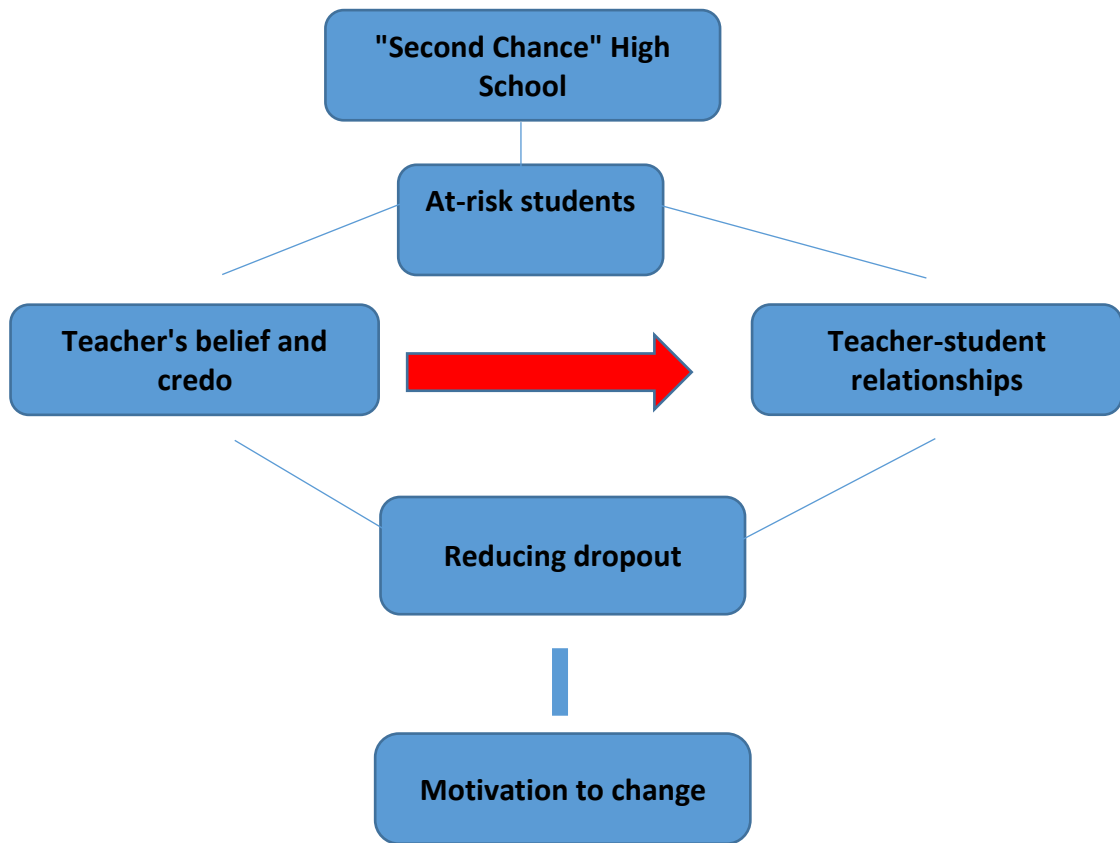
Figure 3: The conceptual framework

Figure 3 above describes the different components of the conceptual framework and the relations between them.

II.1 Research paradigm and approach

II.1.1 The research strategy: Case study

Case study is a *unique* way of observing a phenomenon that exists in a basket of data, according to Yin (1984), or in another definition: a case study is a *detailed examination* of a single event (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 1984).

The uniqueness is expressed in that it is knowledge dependent on context, and if a study is about examining issues involving people's behavior, then people are naturally dependent on context (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Case study observation is intense (Beveridge, 1951), with attention to many little details, so that case study offers an excellent tool for researchers to avoid falsification ((Flyvbjerg, 2006). This is because it is a research approach based on life stories. However, it is therefore sometimes difficult to integrate within scientific insights, theories or generalizations (Benhabib, 1990; Mitchell & Charmaz, 1996; Roth, 1989; Rouse, 1990; White 1990).

In more profound understanding, it appears that research carried out using case studies is qualitatively degrees higher and more beneficial than quantitative paradigms, since everything depends on rich descriptions of cases and researchers' interpretations (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Nonetheless, it is desirable not to abandon other effective research tools.

II.1.2 Choosing mixed methods as the research methodology

According to Bryman and Becker (2012), mixing the quantitative and the qualitative research approaches, in one study produces a synergetic result. Bryman and Becker (ibid) indicated that this mix of methods enables triangulation to be used, adding value to both the quantitative and qualitative research when they are combined.

Each research approach has different strengths, may be appropriate to respond to different research questions and has a different relationship with the research. Information ascertained in this research from a number of sources will be crosschecked, thus enriching the picture and validating the findings. Thus, research statements will be more robust.

II.1.3 Research Design

The questionnaires and interviews were conducted simultaneously. Classroom observations were carried out after a number of findings emerged from the

quantitative questionnaire. Observation of teachers and students in real time, in lessons and school routine can either verify or confront personal stories heard in interviews, revealing information from an additional viewpoint further illuminating information acquired in interviews with regard to both teachers and student

Table 1: The research stages

Research stage	Purpose/Aim	Population	Research tool	Data analysis method
Stage 1 Qualitative research	1. To examine correlations between teacher-student relationships and dropout tendencies	101 school students	QTI quantitative questionnaire (Wubbles, 1993) examines teacher-student interactions.	Statistical analysis
Stage 1 qualitative research	1. To examine what teachers do to prevent dropout. 2. To examine whether there is a correlation between teacher-student relations and dropout and what it is. 3. Why and how do teacher-student relations affect motivation	16 teachers	Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Stage 2: Qualitative research	1. Graduates attitudes towards teacher-student relations and their effect. 2. Clarifying graduates' attitudes concerning and understanding of the processes they experienced at the studied school	9 student graduates of the school	Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative content analysis
Stage 3: Classroom observations	Examining teacher-student relations in real time in class Clarifying teachers' "credo" as expressed in daily activities	3 observations	"Pure" observations (Shkedi, 2015) According to observation units (each lesson was an observation unit	Qualitative content analysis

II.1.4 Research population and sampling method

The research populations were selected as a convenience sample. The studied populations included teachers teaching at a "Second Chance" high school, students studying at the same school and graduates, both those who had dropped out and those who completed their high school studies.

101 students out of 130 registered as students at the school, completed the quantitative questionnaire. 16 semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with significant teachers from the school. The research also collected data from nine graduates (including both those who completed school and those who dropped out) of different ages, men and women, who were chosen randomly. And in addition, three classroom observations were carried out.

II.1.5 The research tools

The quantitative questionnaire

The questionnaire distributed to students in this research was the "Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction" (QTI), first developed in 1993 by Australian researchers (Wubbles, 1993), containing 48 questions. The questionnaire was used to evaluate behavioral interactions of teachers with students in class. Topics in the questionnaire were arranged into 8 sections according to eight types of teacher behavior. The tool was accepted as a research tool on a reliability scale between 0.76-0.84 for students' answers (Wubbles & Levy, 1993).

In order to clarify students' answers, and to allow their unique individual voices to be heard, four open questions were added to the questionnaire. Two questions asked students to describe, according to their understanding, what teachers had done to influence them positively and/or negatively (description) as well as two questions that asked students what they would expect from the teachers, that could contribute something more to their learning success and help them cope with learning. The open questions provide an opportunity for the students to add something of their own.

II.1.6 In-depth semi-structured interviews (Teachers and graduates)

In-depth interview

One of the ways of understanding people is through in-depth interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This is a key sentence regarding this research, when the emphasis is on the word 'understanding'. It is noted that responses to the quantitative questionnaire can perhaps identify and clarify the examined phenomenon, but the

reasons for its existence are not investigated in depth. In-depth interviews reveal the thoughts and motives of the research participants.

Structure of interviews with teachers

Duration of interview: 90 minutes. The interview included consideration of seven sub-issues: Questions about teachers' background, and the teachers' educational 'Credo', According to their understanding, how teachers view their students and their relationships with them, Teachers' responsibility for and involvement with the issue of motivation (relevance, autonomy, supporting ability), What teachers do in lessons, Teachers' responsibility for and involvement in students' dropout from school, How important and significant teachers feel they are for the students.

Interview questions investigated all interaction processes between teachers and students, with regard to teachers' contribution to students' dropout or motivation to change, in a manner that penetrated daily minutiae. Information elicited from these interviews, clarified teachers' understanding, school reality, their responsibility for this reality, and their interpretations, in their own language. It is noted that language and culture, are important to understanding an examined phenomenon.

Structure of interviews with graduate students

Duration of interview: approximately 90 minutes. The interviews examined several dimensions of teacher-student relationships, dropout and motivation to change:

First part: Discussing graduate's circumstances, how and why they came to the school and a comparison with schools they attended previously, from points of view of students, teachers and student-teacher relationships.

Second part: Focused on the type of students they thought they were, teachers' influences, school atmosphere and disciplinary problems.

Third part: Investigated their interactions with teachers, their levels of interest, and the support, relevance and autonomy they felt at school, what, for them, constituted a 'good' teacher, and what was missing for them to persevere at school (if they had dropped out).

II.1.7 Classroom observations

Observations are another tool for collecting information. In this study, the emphasis traced participants' (teachers and students) behavior in real time, in their regular and daily work environment and life routine.

The researcher wrote up a protocol of the lesson including comments about the protocol (Shkedi, 2000a). Data acquired from observations, will complement and correspond with data acquired from other research tools (quantitative questionnaire and interviews).

II.2 Data analysis methods

- Dependent variables - dropout tendency and motivation to change
- Independent variable - teacher-student relationships

Data elicited from the responses to the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction underwent quantitative statistical analysis and the semi-structured interviews underwent content analysis according to themes and categories. Data from responses to the different tools underwent triangulation.

The researcher administered the questionnaire personally. She went into each classroom separately, explained the reasons for distributing the questionnaire, and the purpose of the research, explained how the questionnaire should be completed, referred specifically to the open questions at the end of the questionnaire and answered questions that arose while completing the questionnaire.

II.2.1. Qualitative analysis

Qualitative analysis was employed in organized and transparent stages (Huberman & Miles, 1994) in order to mitigate arguments about intuitiveness that are often raised concerning qualitative analysis (Shkedi, 2015).

There are three important aspects of qualitative analysis: interpretation, abstraction and method. Researchers have pointed out that qualitative researchers must simultaneously integrate data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 1990, 1995; Fetterman, 1989; Rist, 1982; Strauss, 1987). This is because researchers can then maintain the consistency of the research and insights that develop during the research process itself. (Shkedi, 2015).

II.2.2 Validity, Reliability, Triangulation and Generalizability

According to Shkedi (ibid) and many other researchers (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), in quantitative research, the most important value is objectivity, while subjectivity makes the quality of research more superficial. Shkedi (ibid.) concluded that the researcher's perspective is of equal value to the objectivity of quantitative research for the determination of the research's reliability, validity and generalization.

It is easier to refer to the question of generalization in quantitative rather than qualitative research. The ability to generalize is very important in quantitative research, because this is how one learns from other events about future events (Schofield, 1989), while according to Stake (1995), uniqueness is the most important issue in studies and not generalizations. Shkedi (2015) indicated that the readers, who would try to find new contexts for research findings should be the ones to determine whether particular research findings could be generalized to their own context.

The purpose of triangulation is to strengthen research data, reinforcing validity, by acquiring data from various research tools (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 1985, 1998; Morgan, 1988; Stake, 2000). The present study findings were reinforced by performing triangulation between the data from several research tools (observations, in-depth interviews and a questionnaire).

II.2.3 The researcher's position

According to Woods (1996, in Shkedi, 2015), the researcher's self is an integral part of the research. More radically, this means that researchers do not even have a commitment to objectivity. The researcher's involvement (Geertz, 1973; Jorgensen, 1989) may even take the form of being a participant, so that the researcher is able to more closely feel the participants' experiences (Woods, 1996 in Shkedi, 2015).

However, Shkedi (2015) notes that when qualitative researchers are closely involved in the research, it is difficult for them to draw a dividing line between the extent of their involvement to whatever extent and their research thinking.

In the present study the researcher held a unique position. For 12 years, the researcher had worked at the examined school, first as the school counselor and then as Deputy Principal. Within her role, she of course had access to all the research participants, as well as all aspects of the school's work as an organization. That being the case, the participants knew her, and she herself knew the organization's culture very well, the participants' language (both teachers and students) and even knew the interviewed graduates well.

Because of her position of influence over participants, the researcher was careful to explain and adhere to the rules regarding interview conduct. On the other hand, because she knew the participants, their language and culture, she could create a

rich, fluent, trusting and authentic conversation with them, within the interview "game rules".

In addition, when she administered the questionnaires to the students, an added value was created because the researcher was familiar with the students' abilities, aware of their difficulties, understanding and more.

Furthermore, in relation to the participants' explicit and implicit testimony, the implicit evidence could sometimes be substantiated precisely because of the researcher's advance knowledge. The researcher's advance knowledge also helped participants to reveal things implicitly in their own words. However, due to researcher's awareness of possible response bias due to the interviewees' desire to please, she was careful not to lead the participants, but rather to allow them to answer as they wished at that time.

II.3 Ethical Considerations

Researchers must consider and adhere to three important ethical principles in any research:

1. Researchers must ascertain that no physical or psychological harm comes to participants during and after the research, as a result of their participation. Their confidentiality and the information they give must be presented in such a way as to maintain their confidentiality in case of publication of the research (Gregory, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; McNamee, 2002).

2. Researchers must be direct, honest, clear and open about their research, they should be fair to participants and even report the research results to participants.

3. Participants must volunteer to take part in research, they must also know enough about a study to agree to volunteer, and additionally, participants are free to leave whenever they decide and have no obligation to explain and justify their decision to leave (BERA, 2011; Cohen et al., 2007; Denscombe, 2003; Gregory, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; Mason, 1996; McNamee, 2002) and researchers must advise participants of their rights.

There are also a number of principles regarding material acquired from participants (Achinewhu-Nworgu et al., 2015):

1. Material must be processed fairly
2. Data should be processed for limited purposes, as determined in advance
3. Data must be accurate, relevant and up to date

4. Information must not be kept unnecessarily

Data must be protected, even if transferred to other countries (ESRC, n.d.; Market Research Society, 2015) In qualitative research, other ethical considerations are discussed (Shkedi, 2015):

1. Researchers' approach in interviews must be polite, attentive, trusting and understanding (Arskey & Knight, 1999).
2. Researchers must show real interest in participants.
3. Researchers must explain about the research each time, and must be careful to prevent any bias or placation in participants' answers.
4. Some researchers ask to replay recordings to participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Riessman, 1993) whereas others have no intention of seeing or contacting interviewees again (Seidman, 1991).

This chapter is composed of three central parts, presenting the analysis of the collected data in line with the three research questions.

III. 1 Findings relating to Research Question 1

III.1.1 Findings from interviews with teachers

Content analysis of the transcripts of the interviews with the teachers revealed the following subjects.

1. Establishing direct personal relationships with pupils:

The teachers believed that the extent of success in their teaching and students' learning depends, in many cases, on the nature of teacher-pupil relationships. Nevertheless, they also pointed out the considerable difficulties involved in creating these relationships which was no trivial matter to them.

2. Challenges faced in establishing teacher-pupil relationships:

One challenge is the conflicts that erupt between pupils and teachers, which delays the building of effective relationships. Another complicated challenge, linked to the previous one, is that teachers have control over various events, mainly discipline, which also acts as a delaying factor for the establishment of required relationships with pupils.

3.Correlation between teacher-student relationships and teachers' sense of
satisfaction:

Teachers reported a sense of satisfaction as a result of the successful establishment of their positive relationships with students.

4. Developing motivation to change

Develop perceptions of self-efficacy to increase motivation to learn: Teachers note as a fact that pupils' sense of self-efficacy is low, motivation is low. Nonetheless, they expressed impotence and frustration regarding the requirement that they should respond to these difficulties.

5. Pupils' Dropout

Teachers' attitudes concerning pupils' dropout from the school: Teachers emphasized that these students come from a socio-economic level that invites failure, they habitually drop out of school, the students lack confidence in the school system,

they feel that teachers' relationships with students have a partial influence on student dropout.

    a. The social factor at school and its effect on student dropout: Teachers identified the importance of the peer groups' power and influence on students' decisions regarding dropping out of school, *or alternatively, regarding the function of learning in general*. These influences hasten dropout.

III.1.2 Findings from interviews with graduate students or students who dropped out of school

Findings from the interviews with some of the school's graduates and dropouts yielded the following categories and themes

1. Consideration of teacher-student relationships

    Taking an interest/support/belonging/ autonomy on part of teacher for students - components of relationships with teachers: Some students commented that they had felt confident at school, and most of them reported that in general the teachers provided support for them. Students' sense of belonging was mainly social and channeled to their peer group and was not connected to the random action of teachers.

2. Regarding autonomy given to the student in the class or lesson

    Graduates reported that in their opinion there was no autonomy for students in the school.

3. The sense of 'belonging' (to the school)

    From students' points of view, the sense of belonging was not connected to anything teachers did. However, if students felt role-holders' genuine interest, this greatly affected their learning and disciplinary behaviors. It was a force that was significant for them as they tried to cope with school conditions. From the students' viewpoint a sense of belonging was formed in their peer group in school.

4. Relationships with teachers:

    Most students reported in their interviews that they had ambivalent relationships with their teachers. On the one hand, teachers were close to them. On the other hand, in many cases students maintained that their teachers did not understand them properly, only made demands without giving anything, they were not attentive and did not really help them. In fact, teachers' attitudes led them to truancy from lessons and classes

5.   Teacher's positive or negative influence on me:

The graduates felt that there was a large gap between students' expectations as a student (at this type of school) and the teacher's actual actions.

Positive influence - The more a student feels wanted by a teacher, feels that a teacher wants him, the more he feels confident with the teacher.

Negative influence - students were not given attention, and even felt that they and the teachers spoke a different language, and would never understand each other.

The graduates strongly emphasized the great influence the teacher-student connection had on them and their continued studies at the school.

6. Interaction with Teachers at School:

The graduates reported that their interaction with the teachers was often meaningful, when the teacher or other role-holder understood them, guided them and even mediated between them and other school role-holders. These interactions influenced them and helped them to remain in school. Nevertheless, because of the great difficulty that teachers had in managing these complex interactions, without any ability to solve problems, the graduates reported that there were also negative interactions, such as the teachers lack of belief in them, the teachers' referrals to higher hierarchies in the school, a teacher's total avoidance of a relationship with a student or a student's own reticence to form a relationship with the teacher.

7. What is a "Good Teacher" for me:

The students described their view of a "good teacher": The teacher who is helpful, support, aid, listen, cares, takes an interest and "who tells you the truth".

On the matter of motivation to change

Students' attributes and personal learning experiences as students at the school: Both the graduates and those who dropped out described their learning experiences in the school, as primarily negative experiences. Many reported difficulties acclimatizing and learning at the schools in which they learned and some had even moved to other schools to clear their slates and have an opportunity to start again. Most often, they struggled with teachers, learning material and school rules. As the system did not 'understand' these behaviors, in the students' words, it excluded them.

They recognize they are not normative students. However, in a non-declarative and sometime declared, manner, they were asking teachers to relate to them non-

judgmentally and despite their inappropriate behavior and/or negative functioning, to continue to care for them.

Students dropping out from school

Students' motives for coming to school: interviewees emphasized that their motivation to come to the "Second Chance" school was not out of choice but because they were forced to come, and only so that they could continue in a learning framework, even if the school was stigmatized as "not good" or "not of a high standard". It is important to note that even if it was not their free choice, they still felt it was important to them to continue school until Grade 12, and try to save what they had missed in previous years. Some of the students indeed came with motivation to start with a clean slate and some were satisfied with just passing the time and getting some sort of certificate at the end of Grade 12.

Disciplinary issues with teacher

It appears that discipline problems are the fate of most at-risk students. These discipline problems are a factor affecting their continuation of studies at school. Sometimes, these discipline problems lead students to drop out of the system. In other words, a disciplinary event occurs, and as a result the student leaves the school, because the school emphasizes that after such an event, there is no possibility that the student can continue. Nonetheless students stated that if teachers had related to them differently, it is possible that these problems would not have occurred at all (despite the fact that they took responsibility and emphasized that they were to blame). Alternatively, after a problem had been created, how principals dealt with such crises was extremely important, and responsibility for this lies in the hands of the teachers.

Effective personal conversations I had with a teacher

The interviewees reported that influential conversations were always initiated by a key figure (and there were a few of them), who played an important role in students' lives. This conversation had an effect both on behavioral changes and crucial decisions. From the interviews, it is possible to generalize and state that conversations with teachers were not systematic.

III.1.3 Findings from Classroom Observations

Three classes were observed, they were preparation classes for matriculation in different disciplines composed principally of small groups (5-12 students in each) in Grades 11 and 12. These groups are characterized by a greater response to learning

processes in lessons, and there are less disciplinary issues. The teachers aimed to teach and provide material required for matriculation exams.

A. Teacher-student relationships

What do teachers do to create attuned teacher-student relationships during lessons? - Analysis of the observation transcripts, clarified that teachers create direct communication with students during lessons. Direct communication (sometimes even harsh), sometimes intimate, sometimes cynical, sometimes seeking to compliment, sometimes seeking to reproach, sometimes as an instruction and sometimes with humor. This type of communication created the classroom atmosphere. teachers turn mainly to students who appear to be participating in the learning event and not to those who are not.

B. Motivation to Change

Belonging/interest/support/autonomy in practice during lessons: It appears from the observations that most of the teachers try to share their enthusiasm with everyone. Teachers seem to express support of students who respond to the lesson No evidence was observed indicating that the students were given autonomy in the lesson.

III.2 Findings relating to Research Question 2

"How do teacher-student relationships affect the students' motivation for change and dropout at a ʺSecond Chanceʺ high school."

III.2.1 Quantitative findings from the questionnaire

Findings relating to Question 2 are presented in three stages. Firstly, statistical theoretical data will be presented using tables and pie charts. Secondly, the Pearson Test was used to examine the correlation between teacher-student relationships and dropout tendencies from school. Finally, in Stage 3, the correlation between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change among school students was also tested.

Stage 1 - Statistical, theoretical data and distribution of participants in research variables

Table 2: Statistical theoretical data of key research variables (dropout rate, teacher-student relationship, motivation to change)

Variable	N	Range	Mean	S.E.

Mean dropout rate	100	1-4	2.18	0.66
Mean teacher-student relationship	100	1-4	2.99	0.55
Mean motivation to change	100	1-4	2.90	0.62

The findings shown in Table 2 indicate that the research participants were characterized by a medium to high mean of teacher-student relationships (M=2.99) and motivation to change (M=2.90). A high mean reflects high levels reported for the variable. In contrast, the dropout rate mean was a little low (M=2.18) in comparison to the means for teacher-student relationship and motivation to change.

The findings shown in Table 2 also indicate that there is a positive and strong linear correlation between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change. Moreover, there is a strong negative linear correlation between the dropout rate and teacher-student relationships
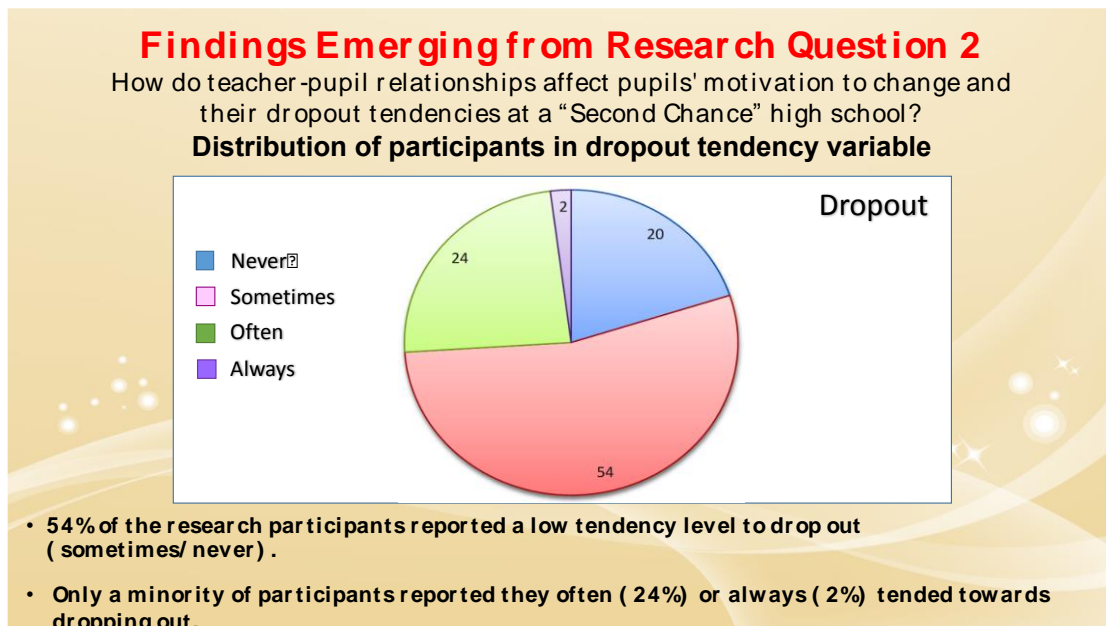
Figure 4: Distribution of participants by frequency of dropout tendency

Findings Emerging from Research Question 2
Distribution of participants in teacher-pupil relationships variable

Teacher – Student Relationship

- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

16

27

57
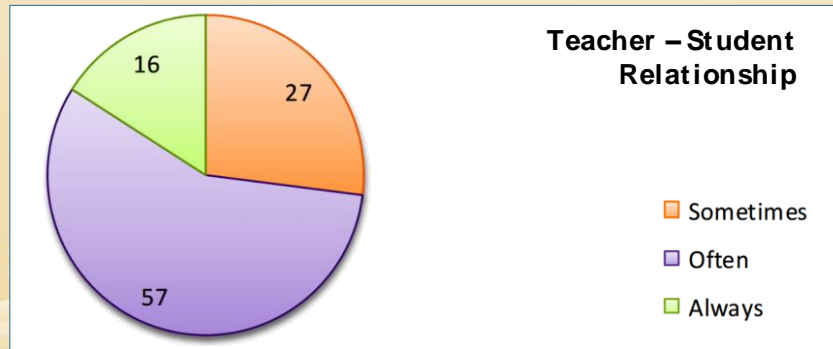
73% reported high levels of teacher-pupil relationships (often/always), whereas only a 27% reported that sometimes teacher-pupil relationships were not good.

Figure 5: Distribution of participants by frequency of teacher-student relationship

Findings Emerging from Research Question 2
Distribution of participants in motivation to change variable.

Motivation to Change

- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

19

29

52
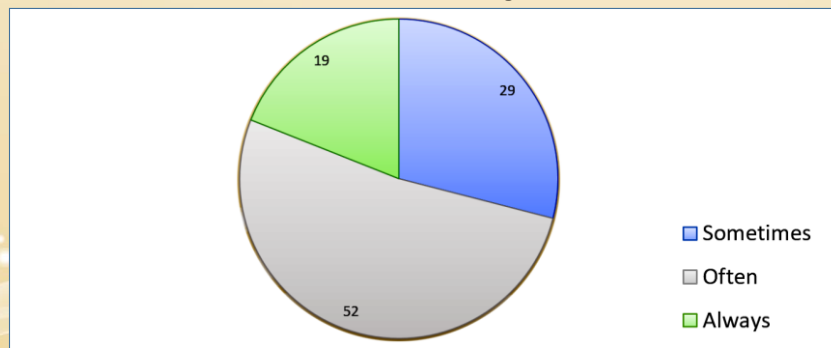
71% of research participants reported high levels of motivation to change (often/always) .

Figure 6: Distribution of participants by frequency of motivation to change

Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficients between the research variables, means and standard deviations

Variable	1	2	3
Mean dropout rate	-	-0.67	0.784 ***
Mean teacher-student relationship	-	-	0.849 ***
Mean motivation to change	-	-	

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; ***$p<0.001$

Table 3 above presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between the research variables - dropout rate, teacher-student relationships and motivation to change.

III.2.2 Qualitative findings from the interviews

This section presents the findings derived from in-depth semi-structured interviews with teachers and students. Content analysis of the interviews with teachers on the issue of teacher-student relationships, dropout and motivation to change, yielded the following categories:

1. *Link between teacher-student relationships and school dropout tendencies:*

There is a close link in many cases between the nature of teacher-student relationships and school dropout tendencies. The teachers know that they actually have more ability to influence their students. Nevertheless, the teachers indicated that they played just a small role in the lives of students, and this was despite the fact that they described having a close relationship with students. When relationships were better, in certain cases, school dropout tendencies would lessen, apparently because of teachers' influence on students with dropout potential.

2. *Link between nature of teacher-student relationships and students' motivation:*

The nature of teacher-student relationships and students' motivation are two inter-dependent issues in important aspects, reflected in the correlation between the system's motivational impact on students and their perseverance in studying and their ability to function appropriately in general. That is to say, if the teacher-student relationships have a stronger presence, then students' motivation will be stronger and they will have greater ability to gain achievements and persevere in all their studies and not drop out.

3. Themes and categories from interviews with students in relation to Research Question 2

Content analysis of interviews with students on the issue of teacher-student relationships and motivation raised the following categories:

A. What graduates said about the link between teacher-student relationships and dropping out: Students pointed out how important their relationships with teachers were. Some emphasized that without such an effective relationship with a teacher or other role-holder, they would not have remained at school.

B. What graduates said about the link between teacher-student relationships and motivation: Students mentioned key words such as support, caring, "genuine interest" or "teachers' efforts" regarding their motivation. However, most students chose to point to a lack of these values in their relationships with teacher. Most students indicated that there was a link between relationships with the teacher and their motivation to learn and persevere.

III.2.3 Triangulation

Dropping out and motivation to change among students

These two values found at opposite ends of the scale, depend on and are fed by teacher-students relationships. In line with this short introduction, relevant information emerged from questionnaires administered to school students and interviews carried out with teachers and students.

Answers given by students still studying at the school in questionnaires pointed to a strong and significant correlation between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change and dropout tendencies.

Qualitative research expanded and deepened this information. In interviews with teachers and graduates, the same correlation emerged and was even stronger among graduates. Graduates, both those who finished school and those who dropped out, stated over and over again (and even gave details of stories), that if their teacher had supported them, taken an interest in them, created committed and obligating relationships with them, and was "genuine" (in their words), acting in a way that was attuned to this, they would have successfully completed school.

According to the teachers, they were more cautious about expanding their responsibility for the relationships that they established with students and were less sure about being able to influence them on issues as critical as dropping out and

motivation. They agreed that teacher-student relationships are attuned to this role and contribute, but immediately qualified that they are not the only factor influencing motivation and dropout tendencies, but that there are other factors influencing students' lives. In addition, they stated that their influence on students was limited. Few teachers took responsibility for dropout tendencies and motivation, and linked these variables to their relationships with students and attuned relationships with them to this purpose, and few teachers connected teacher-student relationships with dropout. These teachers noted that they had not done enough to attune their relationships with students to the topics of motivation and dropout not had they considered or emphasized these issues, and added that they regretted this.

III.3 Findings from interviews in relation to Research Question 3

Content analysis of the transcripts of interviews with teachers regarding their views of education and "Credo" yielded the following categories:

1. Teachers' views on education and influence on students Tolerance, inclusiveness, therapeutic, talk as equals - key components of the teachers' views on education: The basis of teachers' views on education is patience, tolerance and inclusiveness. Moreover, teachers' professional accompaniment is more 'therapeutic' and helped students cope with personal life problems, anxieties, fears, mental anguish and many other difficulties. It is better to talk to students as equals, being inclusive, offering heartfelt assistance and accurate treatment of students' difficulties, and refraining from criticism, without judgment.

2. Teachers' "Credo" regarding their work as teachers Education is a process of transferring knowledge, values and educational inputs. Some teachers said that they have a clear internal perception of education, intending to pass on knowledge, values and inputs to their students. The teachers' views on education are in a sense their internal "credo", the doctrine according to which they educate and influence people and situations they encounter on a daily basis. Their messages were both direct and indirect, with an emphasis on human and social values. Some of the teachers emphasized that they should be a respected and respectful figure who can become a model for imitation, meaning in fact that teachers must refrain from "going off the rails". Teachers must not "demean themselves" and should always use appropriate language. And some mentioned that education is a genuine process for students. They felt that using precise learning processes with reinforcement and guidance, would enable the students improve their motivation, ability and achievements.

3. Classroom observation of the expressions of teachers' views on education and "credo" revealed two main themes: It is again noted that the observations took place in groups studying for matriculation in particular disciplines. Two themes clarified the way in which teachers implemented their "Credo" and expressed their educational view in practice.

A. Students' behavior during lessons: it took the students a long time before they began to be partners in the learning process. Some of them did not integrate at all until the end of the lesson. Students employed direct, sometimes coarse, language when speaking to teachers, and sometimes either completely ignored them or reacted cheekily. It appeared that some students expressed no interest in learning. They felt that they had to be there, and it made no difference what they did in the lesson. It was clear to them they could be present/absent, and the time would pass. Some students were bored, and were looking for activities unconnected with the lesson. Although they behaved as if it was compulsory for them to be in the lesson, everything else was seen as a matter of choice. It should be noted that a minority of the students took the lesson seriously and were partners in the learning processes during the lesson.

B. Disciplinary events during lessons: In an observed lesson, it appeared there were no disciplinary problems. On the other hand, there were disruptions during lessons and disruptions that 'invaded' the lesson from the outside. Conflicts with teachers did not erupt mainly because teachers ignored these disruptions, consciously/as a decision or unconsciously. Sometimes the teacher lost patience, but

this did not become a disciplinary issue. It was noticeable that the teacher applied restraint regarding what happened in the lesson.

III.4 Findings chapter summary

Analysis of the findings identified certain important key findings:

1. In the interviews with the teachers, they acknowledged the importance of their relationships with students. Nonetheless, they were careful not to place too much importance on these relationships for various reasons, such as not believing in their abilities to influence students, as well as fear of the great responsibility they would have to undertake if they actually acknowledged their powers of persuasion.

2. Teachers found it difficult to establish relationships with students, and much more so with at-risk students. This is primarily because teachers build relationships in reaction to students' behavior and ability, or alternatively their achievements.

3. According to students, their relationships with teachers are extremely important and they hold these relationships partially responsible for the quality of their learning or alternatively, for their dropout.

4. The interviewed students wanted to see stronger teacher commitment, so as to be able to trust their relationships. Some even pointed out in clear language that they did not believe that teachers' interest in them was "genuine". Their relationships with teachers were ambivalent, and sometimes they really battled with teachers. Nevertheless, they also talked about positive relationships with a particular teacher or other role-holder who was committed and they saw this as important.

5. According to the majority of the interviewed teachers, they had no clear or agreed knowledge on the level of dropout, and they felt that dropout did not depend on them. They felt that there are many reasons for dropout that are not dependent on the school or teachers. Some teachers stated unreservedly that they were not responsible at all for dropout.

6. Regarding motivation, most teachers accepted that motivation was low, and that there was little to be done about it.

7. From classroom observations, it was clear that some teachers employed direct language with students, verbally supporting participants in lessons. Nevertheless, with students who did not take part in the lessons or pay

attention, even though they were present in class, teachers sometimes verbally invited them to take part, but no more than that.

8. According to the questionnaire findings, there is a significant negative correlation between teacher-student relationships and dropout and a significant positive correlation between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change.

9. In their views on education, the teachers refer to tolerance, inclusion, talking at eye level, education as a process by which knowledge and values are passed on. In practice, from lesson observations, it appeared that the teachers were determined to pass on learning material in lessons. They try to avoid disciplinary events, and so they continue to conduct the lessons by overlooking these events. Teachers conduct direct dialogue with students, are accessible to and tolerant towards the students.

CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

IV.1 Discussion of findings relating to Research Question 1

"What do teachers do to attune teacher-student relationships, to decrease dropout tendencies and increase motivation to change at a "Second Chance" high school?"

IV.1.1 Establishing teacher-student relationships that influence development of students' self-efficacy, and student dropout tendency in a "Second Chance" school

It is important to note that teachers recognized that their aim was to achieve calm relationships that could empower and positively influenced students, nevertheless most teachers and students reported that they had difficulties in creating the relationships that they wanted to create.

According to the teachers, it is a challenge to establish attuned relationships with students, that could influence and empower them. The teachers felt that they needed to reduce conflicts with students and to know, as a teacher, how to deal with these conflicts. Teachers pointed out that conflicts with students are one of the key factors that delay the creation of an empowering relationship. They also noted that another delaying factor is their need to control disciplinary events, and the way in which these events are managed. The difficulty in building teacher-student

relationships also appeared indirectly in students' responses to the quantitative questionnaire.

The strongest message emerging from the findings is that there is no convergence between the expectations of both sides. Teachers expect that students (even if defined as at-risk youth) will comply with required behavioral and learning norms, whilst students expect teachers to be attentive and aware of the fact that they require more time than regular students so that they can meet teachers' expectations and integrate into the system. Gehlbach, Brinkworth and Harris 2011 demonstrated that these different expectations are derived from teachers' and students' differing needs.

This finding clarifies that there is a possibility of moderating the students' difficulties by paying attention to important needs identified by the students. Since the teachers are responsible for leading these relationships, it is possible that the teacher could consciously let go of some of the limiting labels with which students arrive. Furthermore, it would actually bring students' givens and relate to them as a foundation on which relationships could be established with them. This is the **significance of this finding**.

IV.1.2 Meaningful teacher-student relationships attuned to developing students' self-efficacy

Some of the teachers related to the issue of nurturing students' self-efficacy as a problem, about which little can be done. It therefore seems that if the teachers' attitudes are that there is no chance of changing the sense of self-efficacy of at-risk youths, and they then employ these cognitive conclusions when guiding the students, then the impression is that the teachers have already given up on influencing the students' sense of self-efficacy. Moreover, in their cognitive dialogue with their environment, the students will also assume that they should to give up and presume that their capabilities are low. The role of teachers here is critical and if they act to respond to students' needs for autonomy, belonging, confidence and self-efficacy, they will be able to strengthen students' motivation and their belief in their ability to succeed (Deci & Ryan, 2006).

In conclusion, it can be said that some teachers did not form sufficiently attuned teacher-student relationships to build and nurture students' self-efficacy.

IV.1.3 Teachers and students speak different languages

Key quotations of the students included: "attentive ear", that "one teacher who always saw in him something that others did not", "saw him as a person". "Communications between me and some of the teachers - it's not clear". "We speak different languages", "I can accept authority if the person in authority tells me the truth". Among at-risk youth, language gaps between teachers and students are even greater.

Most students spoke about ambivalent relationships they had with some of the teachers, who did not understand them properly, who were not attentive, and who did not genuinely help them. The moment a clear communication channel is opened between teachers and students, it is possible to attune the relationships to meet the students' needs. This is a central finding in this research, in that it is the basis for formulating empowering teacher-student relationships.

The teacher should prepare to respond to the students' needs, by using precise language, common to teachers and students. The students wanted teachers to build their relationships with them irrespective of their behavior, ignoring their inappropriate behavior. The students clearly did not want their inappropriate behavior to determine their relationships with the teachers. This distinction arose in interviews with both teachers and graduates, and is critical to the research since it points to the need to attune teacher-student relationships in the context of dropout and motivation. This finding should constitute a red light regarding teacher-student relationships in general, and particularly everything related to student dropout and motivation.

IV. 2 Discussion of research findings relating to Research Question 2

"How do teacher-student relationships affect motivation for change and dropout tendencies at a Second Chance high school?"

IV.2.1 The link between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change and dropout

Analysis of the questionnaires revealed that there is a positive and strong linear correlation between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change, and also between dropout and motivation to change. *In addition, it emerged that there is a strong negative linear correlation between dropout tendencies and student-teacher relationships*.

In the interviews, both teachers and students mentioned the prime importance of teacher-student relationships in the context of students' dropout. Nonetheless, some of the teachers had no idea what the dropout rate from the school was and the question must be asked whether this is a result of lack of interest or repression of this issue, as if it was not part of their role. In addition, although most teachers felt that they did were able to the students, there was also one teacher who noted: "I play a very small role in the lives of students", that is to say he believed that his relationships with students carried minimal weight in their lives. It appears that some teachers find themselves trapped regarding the extent of their responsibility for the dropout issue. Some of them felt that dropout was the responsibility of teacher training institutions, others felt that it was the student's responsibility and still other indicated that it was the responsibility of the school where they teach.

In contrast, the students, from their perspective, stated without hesitation and with complete confidence how important teacher-student relationships were with regard to their dropping out from school.

The research findings reinforced this argument and pointed to a close correlation between teacher-student relationships and tendencies to drop out. The corollary to this finding indicates that attuning teacher-student relationships to the students' needs and expectation, should turn these relationships into a motivational force in students' lives, particularly with at-risk youth, with behavioral problems at the "Second Chance" high school.

IV.3 Discussion of research findings relating to Research Question 3

"What are the teachers' views on education and their 'credo' at a "Second Chance" school?"

IV.3.1 Teachers' views of education and credo at a "Second Chance" school

Most teachers, when asked what their 'credo' was, clarified that during their work in school they had developed insights and formulated their views on education. Partial correlation was found between what the teachers said and evidence in the professional literature on this subject (Dixon, Rayle & Myers, 2004; Elliott, Kao & Grant, 2004; Lemon & Watson, 2011; Magnusson & Stattin, 1998; Marshall, 2001; Myers, Sweeney & Witmer, 2000; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). In the review of the teachers' views on education in this study, teachers mentioned the following issues: commitment to teach the required learning material, the value of mutual

respect between teachers and students, refraining from harsh criticism and being judgmental, being patient, loving together with setting boundaries, speaking at eye level, inclusion and support, and education as a process. These values are very important to teachers' 'credo', guiding them in their work. (Tepovich, 2012). Teachers' belief in their ability to motivate students is important in order to encourage educational steps by the students.

It seems that some of the teachers interviewed were unsure as to how significant they were to students and to what extent their 'credo' contributed to building the students' resilience.

IV.3.2 Gaps between teachers' stated views on education and their classroom behavior, and between teachers' views and students' expectations. Triangulation of findings - Interviews with teachers, interviews with pupils and observations

According to research findings from the interviews and observations, some teachers pointed out that they support students. It was seen that they ascribed much importance and a significant place to this support, as part of their views on education. However, it appears that in students' perception, perhaps because of a lack of trust, this support is neither recognized nor proven, and students do not use the word "confidence" at all when speaking about the teachers.

IV.4 Conclusion of the discussion chapter

Discussion of the analysis of the transcripts of interviews with teachers and students, and of the observations, yielded answers to the research questions as concluded below.

IV.4.1 Answer to Research Question 1

1. Recognizing the importance of teacher-student relationships at school

Teachers know the importance of teacher-student relationships and even students refer to its importance. Nonetheless, teacher-student relationships for which teachers are mainly responsible, are difficult to establish and mold, and certainly more difficult if they are meant to be attuned to developing self-efficacy, preventing students from dropping out or changing motivation, especially when teaching students who have the potential to dropout even before they reached the school.

2. Difficulties communicating with students:

Part of the difficulty derives from unclear communications between teachers and students, sometimes to the extent of completely opposite understandings. This

causes students to lose trust in the system and in the teachers, and leads to a chain reaction. Teachers, for their part, also vacillate between skepticism regarding their power to influence students' motivation and tendencies to drop out, and their strong desire to be meaningful for the students and to help them to make changes. Nevertheless, some students reported that certain teachers, with particular roles, influenced them to such an extent that thanks to them, they completed school.

3. *Developing students' self-efficacy through teacher-student relationships*

Most teachers accept that changing students' self-efficacy is hard, and that they are not attuned to it at all. A few role-holders and teachers do invest in their relationships with students through constant dialogue. Hence, they provide their students with a sense of confidence, support, encouragement, patience, interest etc. Such support does indeed develop students' sense of self-efficacy.

4. *Ambivalence in teachers' attitudes towards their responsibility or student dropout and motivation to change*

Teachers are cautious about accepting responsibility for school students' tendencies to dropout and motivation to change. Some said that they had no part in students' dropping out, and had no responsibility for it, because they played only a small role in their students' lives. A few stated that they had a decisive part in this matter, mainly among these students, because of how they influenced their lives. They added that they felt they had not done enough in this area, and it appears that teachers' sense of responsibility affects their sense of being able to influence, and vice versa. Nonetheless, teachers fluctuate in their attitudes towards the extent of their responsibility for students' motivation and dropping out.

IV.4.2 Answer to Research Question 2

1. *Correlation between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change and dropping out from school*

From the questionnaires distributed to students, a clear negative correlation was found between teacher-student relationships and dropout tendencies. A clear positive correlation was found between teacher-student relationships and motivation to change.

It is important to remember that the research was a case study and took place in one school Therefore these findings should be treated with caution when trying to make generalizations. Nevertheless, these findings are important because they open

channels of thought and the possibility of understanding various nuances regarding teachers' behavior, their relationships with students and their influence on students' dropout and motivation.

2. Teacher-student relationships are a motivational factor

Interviews with teachers and students confirmed the importance of the correlations between teacher-student relationships and motivation and dropout tendencies. Teachers reported that they do much to strengthen these relationships, such as conversations with students, telephone calls, daily communication with them, reports to parents etc. Nonetheless, they found it difficult to say with certainty what the dropout rate is at the school.

One can say that teachers, as they understand it, do what is required, whilst understanding the important significance their relationships with students have in motivating the students to learn. In this context, Giles (2011) expanded that because of the importance of the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, these relationships need to be attuned to the required goal. Teachers in this research indeed reported that they acted and worked to deepen relationships with students, but perhaps they lacked appropriate tuning.

IV.4.3 Answer to Research Question 3

Gaps between teachers' stated views on education and their behavior

The views on educations and 'credo' of some teachers, were aimed at passing on knowledge and values to students. Some mentioned regarding that their 'credo' included the values of consideration with respect, refraining from criticism and providing support. One teacher spoke about her view of education as a process. It should be noted that such thinking by teachers is important and accurate, however these views, according to this study, are difficult for some teachers to implement, in a complicated school reality. The following issues were identified and discussed:

a. A link between teacher-student relationships and dropout and motivation to change was found.

b. Both students and teachers recognized teacher-student relationships as a driving force.

c. These relationships still have to be more accurately enlisted to reduce dropout tendencies and increase motivation to change.

d. It appears there is a gap between teachers' views and their implementation in the field.

IV.5 Research limitations

IV.5.1 Limitations related to a case study

This research is a case study, which was carried out at a ″Second Chance″ high school in central Israel. As a case study, studying one single case, it is limited. This study examined only one type of school. Therefore, the findings and conclusions of this research could be informative mainly to schools of this type. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it may be possible to draw generalizations concerning schools with similar conditions regarding different phenomena and variables to the school studied here. Moreover, even the findings of a single case study can open and stimulate channels of thought, which can lead to further research and unlock new possibilities.

IV.5.2 Limitations associated with research participants

101 students aged between 14-18 and defined as at-risk youth participated in the research. As students with gaps in their knowledge, when administered the questionnaire some expressed dissatisfaction both because of the length of the questionnaire and the content of the questions themselves. Therefore, in each class, prior to completing the questionnaire, students received a comprehensive explanation and demonstration regarding how to complete the questionnaire. In some cases, the researcher sat individually with some students to verify that they understood the questions and completed answering the questionnaire, hence, reducing the possibility of students not completing the questionnaire fully or properly.

IV.5.3 Limitations stemming from the researcher's attitudes

Prior to carrying out this study, the researcher served as Deputy Principal of the school, but the research was undertaken after her retirement when she was no longer working at the school. The researcher knew the teachers at work, some of the students and certainly the graduates who were interviewed for the research.

It should be noted that it was precisely the researcher's acquaintance with the school's work that made it easier for both teachers and students to participate fully in the research. Research participants knew the researcher, which contributed to reducing strangeness and isolation, and made interviews more open and comfortable. In addition, the researcher's questions were more focused because of her knowledge and familiarity with the cultural and work worlds of the participants.

It is important to note that when discussing the findings, the researcher continually found herself confronting previous knowledge with the new knowledge from the findings, stimulating insights and with careful qualifications, opening additional and varied possibilities of thought.

The researcher remained alert throughout the research, as well as when analyzing the findings. This was expressed in constant clarification of the research rules to the subjects. The findings, discussion and conclusions in this research were guided with similar care so as to acquire a picture of the studied phenomenon based on strong and clear findings.

The conclusions are presented in this chapter in three parts: The first part presents the factual and conceptual conclusions derived from the research findings and discussion. In the second part, a new practicable model is proposed, which was derived from the research conclusions and describes teacher-student relationships, dropout and motivation. In addition, recommendations for future research are delineated.

The third section of this chapter explains the original and innovative aspects of the research findings, and the contribution of this study to knowledge in Israel and around the world.

V.1 Factual and conceptual conclusions

V.1.1 Conclusions referring to establishing empowering relationships between teachers and students at a "Second Chance" school

The first research question inquired what teachers do to attune teacher-student relationship in order to decrease dropout tendencies and increase motivation at a "Second Chance" high school.

Factual Conclusions

The first conclusion arising from the research findings is that establishing empowering relationships based on trust between teachers and students at a "Second Chance" school, constitutes a difficult challenge for teachers. The difficulty lies principally in the at-risk students' behavior and the conflicts that arise between teachers and students. A situation is therefore created in which the teachers are required to ignore the behavioral factor in order to form effective relationships with the students. This task, according to the research findings is complicated and difficult.

One can say that relationships between teachers and students built on students' behavior, achievements and functioning in class, do not withstand the tests of the reality of a "Second Chance" school.

Conceptual Conclusions

The conceptual conclusions arising with regard to establishing relationships is that students, at a "Second Chance" school, who came from other schools after experiencing many failures in their past, are not used to functioning in an organized manner, aimed at learning achievements. Their socio-economic background, their past in various schools, their expectations, as well as the lack of trust they have developed

regarding the educational system in general and teachers in particular, cause their struggle and that of teachers to establish trusting and empowering relationships.

Another conclusion is that there is a gap between teachers' and students' expectations: Teachers expect students (even those defined as youth at risk) to meet required behavioral and learning norms, whereas students expect teachers to be attentive and aware that they require more time than other students to meet teachers' expectations. This conclusion sharpens the possibility of moderating the difficulty if there was more effective attentiveness to the important needs pointed out by students. Since teachers are responsible for leading these relationships, it is possible that they can free themselves of the restrictive givens with which students come to the school. Furthermore, they will use these givens as a foundation on which to build relationships with them.

A significant conclusion deriving from the discussion on the research findings is that teachers at a "Second Chance" school do not have enough tools to deal constructively with students. Teacher indeed put important weight on these relationships and dealing with students, but it appears that they do not consider that they do not know how to attune relationships in favor of reducing tendencies to drop out or to increase motivation.

V.1.2 Conclusions regarding the link between teacher-student relationship and motivation to change and tendencies to drop out

Factual Conclusions

There is a significant positive correlation between empowering teacher-student relationships and students' motivation to change and a negative correlation between empowering teacher-student relationships and tendencies to drop out of school, as shown from the findings that emerged from the quantitative questionnaires distributed to students studying at the school. From interviews carried out with teachers and graduate students, similar findings emerged that even strengthen the findings from the quantitative research. Here too teachers and students recognized the significant importance of their relationships, but the process of their execution is fraught with difficulties.

Conceptual Conclusions

The conceptual conclusion is that this significant correlation is very significant to teachers' work with these students. Teacher-student relationships in a Second Chance school have the power to influence positively or negatively students'

dropping out or alternatively, their motivation. At a school where students are defined as 'youth at risk', this influence is almost critical.

It can be concluded that tuning them, that is coloring relationships between teachers and students in favor of empowering students, is so important that it can have an immediate effect on reducing tendencies to drop out and increasing students' motivation.

V.1.3 Conclusions regarding teachers' educational "credo"

Factual conclusions

The conclusion arising from the research findings is that teachers in their views on education believe that they must speak to students at eye level, to include them, support them, be tolerant and patient, to understand that education is an ongoing process. All these are effective for all students, and how much more so for at-risk students.

Another conclusion of this study is that there is often a gap between teachers' educational 'credo' and their practical day-to-day actions. The gap produced between teachers' statements and actions is significant in two ways: firstly, teachers do not successfully realize their views on education, and they are found lacking both in terms of their satisfaction and in terms of their achievements; and the second, because of this gap students reveal a basic distrust of teachers and the system, and another gap is created between teachers' actions in practice and students' expectations.

Conceptual conclusions

When teachers come to teach youth defined as at-risk, it is important to put motivation and perseverance in first place, and to direct all their endeavors to this goal.

The teachers included the following important principles in their description of their 'credo' for work with at-risk youth: to believe that the students can succeed, to have high expectations of them, to converse with them honestly, straightforwardly and directly, to fulfill personal agreements, to listen to their needs, to pay attention to them. If these principles are included in the teachers' 'credo', and then applied it is possible that their work will be more attuned to students' needs at a "Second Chance" school.

V.2 A practicable working model constructed on the basis of the research conclusions and referring to teacher-student relationships, dropout and motivation

In this section, a model will be proposed for the establishment of empowering teacher-student relationships at a "Second Chance" school, based on the research findings and conclusions. The model attempts to characterize relationships aimed at reducing dropout tendencies and increasing motivation to change, with an emphasis on narrowing the gap between teachers' educational 'credo' and their actions in practice.

The main emphases in the teacher-student relationship system:

A. Teachers should not allow themselves, to be affected by students' inappropriate behavior and weak achievements when consciously building their relationships with students. Teachers' thoughts, beliefs and awareness should guide the relationships. Teacher-student relationships should withstand the test of reality, and cope with the special problems of these students, even if students fail in their behavior or achievements.

B. Teacher-student relationships, especially those with at-risk youth, should be built on the basis of the following statements. And these are the guidelines according to which teachers should work:

- You are now my student until you finish school
- Everything you do will not be judged, but we will deal with it in line with our goal.
- Your behavior is not what you are.
- Your achievements are temporary and therefore can change.

C. It is desirable that teachers should know and understand students' needs, and build relationships that meet these needs. They should spend a large part of their time actively listening to students, be aware of the 'language' gaps between them, and bridge them. Teachers have responsibility for this, as part of their role.

D. Students should be encouraged 'to commit themselves' to relationships with teachers. These students should be able to see and believe that their teachers' actions match their words. A state of 'commitment' is necessary on both sides but one side, and that is teachers, is supposed to direct and ensure that this is indeed the case.

V.2.1 The guidelines for establishing relationships aimed at reducing dropout
tendencies and improving motivation to change

❖ Thoughts/beliefs and trust

❖ High expectations

❖ Actions - 'walk the talk'

❖ Listening in ongoing dialogue

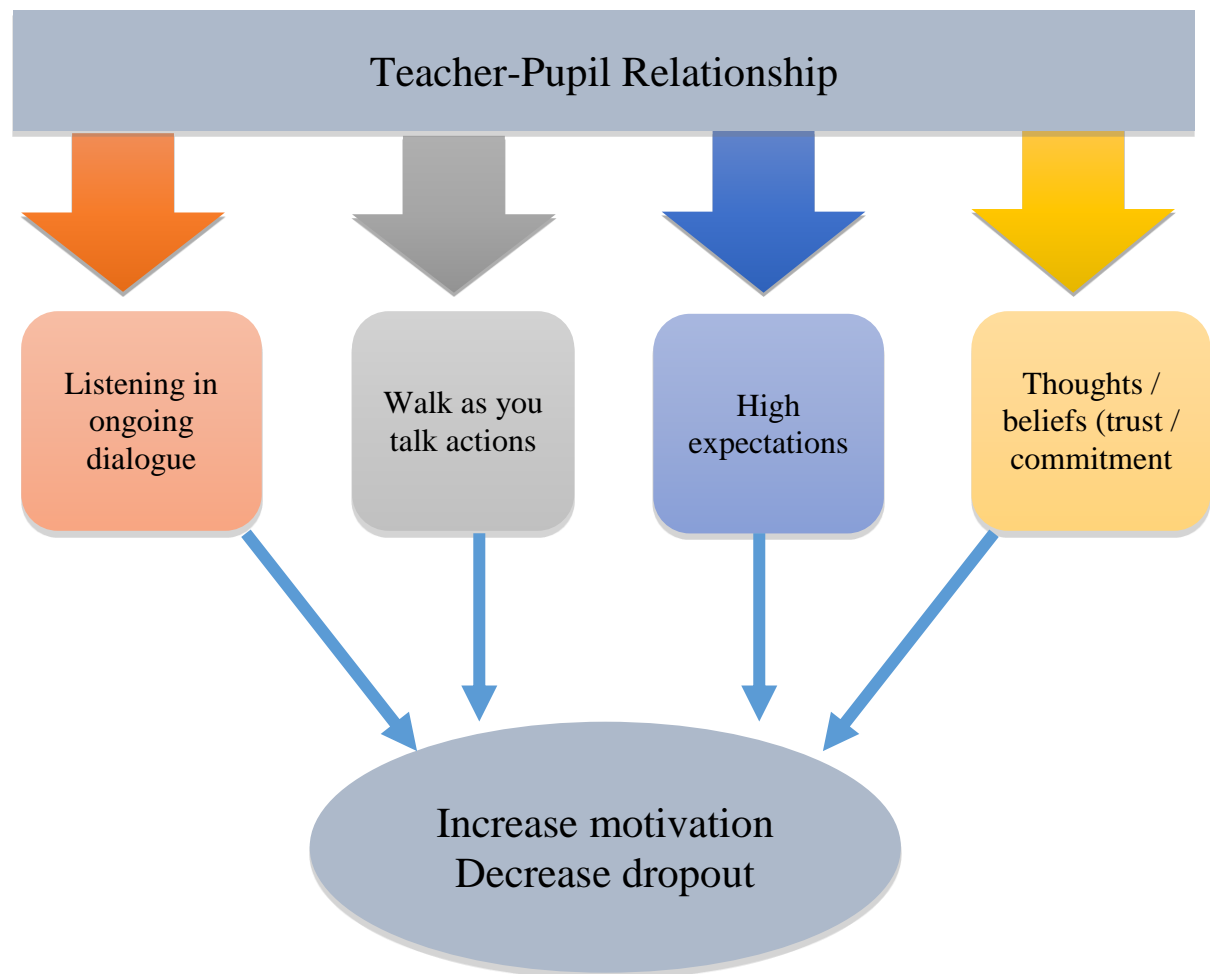**Figure 7: Outcome of teacher-student relationships for student motivation and dropout**

V.2.2 Guidelines for training veteran and new teachers

Systemic preparations:

• Allocating weekly hours to train and guide both teachers and professional instructors to develop teacher-student relationships.

• Set criteria for the development of teacher-student relationships.

• Set measurable goals.

Contents

- Read professional material about youth at risk and student dropout from schools
- Meetings for direct familiarization with students (for new teachers)
- Peer learning for teachers - weekly
- Teacher-student encounters - develop listening in dialogue (regular weekly meetings)
- Training in the following areas: developing listening in dialogue, changing attitudes regarding at-risk students, developing integrity in teacher-student relationships
- Practice

V.3 From a gap in knowledge to a contribution to knowledge

This research proved that there is a significant correlation between teacher-student relationships and students' dropout tendency and motivation, and sought to clarify how these relationships can be attuned in favor of reducing dropout tendencies and raising students' motivation in a "Second Chance" school.

From, a new theoretical and practical model was proposed to create and establish relationships between teachers and students, more attuned to and more focused on reduction of dropout and enhancing motivation, all mainly in relation to at-risk youth.

The innovation of this model is that it methodically specifies the values involved in teacher-student relationships, and their orientation.

The model constitutes a contribution to knowledge in that it deals with four key approaches, that can be applied to strengthen teacher-student relationships:

1. Thoughts/beliefs and trust
2. High expectations
3. Actions – "walk the talk"
4. Listening in ongoing dialogue

Another contribution to knowledge is the that in light of the research findings a recommendation ensues regarding the development of a new training program for teachers who teach in "Second Chance" schools - a program aimed at both new and veteran teachers. This program does not yet exist in Israel and it is recommended that it should be based on case studies, peer learning and the construction of a community

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of practice for teachers who encounter similar problems and can constitute an empowering support group for their peers.

V.4 The significance of the research in Israel in particular and universally

Many countries are dealing with the problem of students' dropout from their educational systems, and the issue is of great concern both on a theoretical and practical level. This research relates mainly to interpersonal relationships (teachers and students), and therefore is relevant across borders of countries and cultures. The proposed model in this research can be implemented in any system where there is a desire to work together so that teachers and students can reach achievements through trust and empowerment.

V.5 Recommendations for further research

This research examined only one school, and therefore further research is recommended to examine the studied phenomenon in other "Second Chance" schools.

One important matter worth further examination is the effectiveness of the model proposed in this research. Where is it more effective (if at all), in which schools, with which students is its effect stronger and influential, under what basic conditions will its effectiveness be more significant.

The technological aspect - the potential power of technology and technological tools should be recruited to benefit critical human needs, focusing precisely on social communication.

In summary, the research seeks to arouse the interest of educationalists and researchers, so that they will put their full weight behind investigation and practice relating to the following issues:

- There is a gap between teachers' and students' expectations (and this does not refer to how high teachers' expectations are).
- Further to the above paragraph, if teacher-student relationships with at-risk students, are determined by students' inappropriate behavior and weak achievements, they will not withstand the test of reality.
- Teachers working with at-risk youth lack tools to constructively and effectively help these students to succeed in school.
- There is a significant positive correlation between teacher-student relationships and students' motivation, and a significant negative correlation between these relationships and students' dropout tendencies.

- There is no room for randomness in teacher-student relationships when working with at-risk youth.

What is expressed in research is indeed made up of words, but words lead to actions, and this is the strength of any research.

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