



Sociological variables and gender on students' drop-out among senior secondary school students in Potiskum local government area of Yobe State

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Abstract

This study investigated sociological variables and gender on students' drop-out among senior secondary school students in Potiskum Local Government Area of Yobe State. Three research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. A sample of 222 respondents was selected from the total population of 233 public senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA. The sample size was determined through multi-stage sampling technique of purposive, proportionate and simple random sampling technique. A self-designed questionnaire was employed as instrument for data collection and was validated and a reliability index of .84. The instrument was administered by the researchers with the help of research assistant in each school where the research was conducted. The data collected were analysed with the use of simple statistical tools of frequency counts and percentages as well as independent sample t-test. The result obtained showed that the respondents attested to the fact that the items on the instrument indicate influence of peer group on students' drop out in school; indicates that the respondents detested to the fact that the items on the instrument indicate teachers' attitude on students' drop out in school; and the finding shows that male and female teachers do not significantly differ in their expression on the rate of school dropout. The study concluded that peer group influences students' drop out in school; teachers' attitude do not lead to students' drop out in school; and male and female teachers do not significantly differ in their expression on the rate of school dropout. Thus, recommendation was made among others that, both male and female teachers should make sure that they show positive attitude to their students to ensure that they do not become drop out of school.

Keywords: sociological variables (peer-group influence and teachers' attitude), gender, drop-out and students

Introduction

Every society has some kind of arrangement for bringing up and training her young ones so as to prepare them for adult life. As it is stated in the National Policy on Education (Revised 2014) Nigeria philosophy of Education is based on the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and equal Educational opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal system. Thus Education is a basic requisite for responsible citizenship, maintenance of our way of life, and successful entry into day's complicated working world.

Education is a highly rated public venture used as an instrument par excellence in natural development. Also Education is a process of receiving or giving systemic instruction especially at school or university, "a new system of public education". According to Fafunwa (2004) Education is an aggregate of all the process by means of which a person develops abilities and other forms of behaviour of positive value in the society in which he lives. Education is a life-long process that is, the process of renewing or up – dating knowledge to ensure job security, effective social, political and economic participation continuous individual growth and development (Nzeneri, 2018) [14]. According to Igbo (2016) [7] education is the process by which society deliberately transmit its cultural heritage through institutions such as schools, colleges and universities. It also prepares a person to perform justly,

skillfully and magnanimously in war or at peace on the bases of acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes. Education is the process of remarking experience; giving it more socialized value through increased individual experience by giving the individual better control over his own powers (Ozochi, 2019) [16].

Secondary education is the form of Education children receive after Primary Education and before the Tertiary stage. Secondary education is of six years duration and is given in two stages; Junior Secondary stage and Senior Secondary stage, each stage being of three years duration. Therefore, this work is concerned with only Senior Secondary School stage. In this respect, Secondary School education is viewed as most crucial since it is at this level of Education that entry into higher level of Education is determined. It is also at this stage that a child's fate in respect of what he will become in future particularly in relation to career is decided. Therefore the importance of the Secondary Education needs to be over-emphasized. In this (NPE 2014) the importance of it is expressed as "preparation for useful living within the society and preparation for higher Education". However students' dropout of school for many reason such as personnel and social incapacitation due to peer group influence, attitude of teachers, recreational facilities, others are geographical location of school, feeding system, sex differences, lateness, truancy, absenteeism and many other reasons. According to (Lawrence *et al.*, in Samuel 2011) [18], when a student drop

out of school, his behavior generate varieties of reactions from the social milieu, from his school, parents, peers, and even from himself.

Regardless of the cause of students' premature school leaving, the dropout behaviour increases wastage of the state resources on Education and also creates more problems to the security and social welfare agencies. (Licher and Luiz cited in Muraina, 2013) ^[12] observed that lack of academic aptitude is not a primary cause of school dropout. A heterogeneous range of reason relative to each dropout's psychological and economic deficiencies was suggested as probable reasons for students' withdrawal from school. Some students' dropout of school on their own accord, others do so in response to family, peer or social pressures. Some also dropout because of incompatible differences between themselves and school value system. In view of this diversity of causes, it become necessary that any Education reform or programme of intervention that aims at checking the dropout problem starts from an understanding of the causes of school dropout, and the characteristics of the affected students. Educationist and decision-makers need to know what students' goals are and whether school assist or interfere with their attainment. It is from this understanding that effectiveness of students' retention shall be improved.

Thus, these research intents to study the effect of sociological variables and gender on students' drop-out among senior secondary school students in Potiskum LGA. Particularly factors such as peer-groups influence, attitude of teachers, and students' gender were considered variable of interest in this study.

Statement of the Problem

Many people especially parents, students, schools and the society in general have expressed concern about the increasing number of school dropouts at the Senior Secondary School level. Ideally, such a problem draws much attention to the causes of Senior Secondary School dropout in Yobe State, so as to understand why people resist schooling in the state. Is it probably because of possible causes of school dropouts in the State? The probable areas that could be investigated include the peer-group influence, attitude of teachers and sex barrier, so as to test if there is any significance effect of the variables in question and the act of school dropout.

However, such a problem is unofficially reported in the school system in Yobe State. It affects both Primary and Post Primary Schools. Most of the Educational reforms and policy changes which had, and are still taking place in recorded in attracting children to school. Parents have still failed to encourage or support their children's education. Hence, contrary to one of its principal aims of boosting enrolment, the establishment of more post-primary schools has not substantially increased the role of schools attendance in the State. Many schools have now become functionally ineffective and deserted due to mass student truancy, lateness, absenteeism and withdrawal.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study was to:-

1. Examine the level of peer-group influence on students' dropout among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA.

2. Examine the level of teachers' attitude on students' dropout among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA.
3. Investigate whether gender is a factor in school dropout among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of peer-group influence on students' dropout among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA?
2. What is the level of teachers' attitude on students' dropout among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA?
3. What is the effect of gender on the rate of school dropout among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA?

Null Hypothesis

One null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant

H₀₁: There is no significant gender difference among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA.

Methodology

Research Design

Based on the nature of the study, the researchers employed survey research method. According to Rasaan (2014) survey research is a study which involves an investigation on the entire population of the people or items by collecting data from samples drawn from the population and assuming that these samples are representative of the entire population. Abdullahi (2020) ^[2] also viewed this method of survey research as to be used when dealing with a very systematic collection of data or information from population or sample of population through the use of personal interview, opinion scale, questionnaire or observation.

The population of the study include all the teachers in the five public senior secondary schools in Potiskum LGA with a total number of 233 teachers. The population subject or respondents is restricted to the teachers. The teachers constitute the main target of the research since the problem has a direct effect on them. Consequently, the sample for this study was drawn from the population of the study through multi-stage sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the public senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA. This is appropriate to this research because the researcher find it more appropriate and convenient. Purposive sampling also referred to as judgmental sampling technique is a technique used for this study based on the assumption that with good judgment, one can handpick element of cases in a population, which are satisfactory in relation to one's needs. Fraenkel and Wallen in Abdulkadir (2019) ^[1] opined that purposive sampling is a non-random sample used when those to be selected have the requisite information, Nworgu (2006) ^[13] noted that purposive sampling specifies element which satisfy some predetermined criteria for selection, for example, possessing certain characteristics relevant to the study.

A sample size of 222 teachers was further determined with the aid of Isreal (2013) ^[8] table for determining sample size to simplify and justify the work. Thereafter, the 222 teachers

were proportionately selected across the five schools. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select corresponding numbers from the various schools to ensure equal or proportional representation (Creswell, 2008) [4]. With proportionate sampling method, the researcher does not leave the representativeness of the sample entirely to chance. It ensures that the sample is similar to the

population in certain respects, or matches the population on certain key variables (Mitchell & Jolley, 2017) [11]. In selecting teachers to represent the sample in each school, the researcher used simple random sampling to select the final participants. The number of respondents selected in each school and was presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Size for the Study

S/N	School	Population	Sample Size
1.	Gov't Girls Sci. Tech. College Potiskum	53	50
2.	Fika Gov't Sec. Sch. Potiskum	48	46
3.	Gov't Day Sec. Sch. Potiskum	66	63
4.	Gov't Sec. Sch. Mamudo	29	28
5.	Gov't Sci. Tech. College	37	35
	Total	233	222

Source: Israel (2013)

Instrumentations

For the purpose of this study, researchers' designed questionnaire was employed as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire which reflect the aims and objectives of the study was given to the selected respondents to fill. This type of questionnaire enables the respondents to select from the provided options which comprises of the following: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), strongly disagree (SD) and disagree (D). The respondents filled the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate option that suits their opinion.

Validity of the Instrument

To validate the instrument, the researcher gave out the instrument to measurement experts in the Department of Education, Faculty of Education, Niger state University, Lapai for perusal. Observations were raised among which was that the instrument contains 20 items but the experts increased the items to 30. The researchers affect the corrections before producing the final copy for pilot study.

Thus, the supervisor's independent judgment adjudged the content validity of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

To obtain the reliability of the instrument, the researchers conducted a pilot study through test re-test method by administering the instrument on teachers within the population but who were not part of the final sample for the study at the interval of three weeks. At the end, the two set of scores were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and a reliability index of .84 was obtain. Hence, this was considered high enough for the study. Hence, the data collected were analysed through simple statistical tools of frequency counts and percentages as well as independent sample t-test.

Results and Findings

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the level of peer-group influence on students' dropout?

Table 2: Mean and Rank Order of the Level of Peer-group Influence on Students' Dropout

Item No.	The following are Influence of Peer-group on Students' Dropout	Mean	Rank
1	School dropout are mostly influenced by friends.	3.62	1 st
12	When school environment is not safe, students tend to drop out from school	3.58	2 nd
14	Sargent punishment makes me to run out of the school	3.32	3 rd
2	Peer-group in this school mostly influence students towards school activities	3.13	4 th
3	Friends tend to absent themselves from school.	2.98	5 th
4	Teachers in this school are friendly to their students.	2.93	6 th
5	Teachers listen to students problems and make efforts to help	2.67	7 th
15	Students' dropouts are as a result parental economic hardships	2.66	8 th
6	Most of the boys who leave school before they finish the courses do so as a result of marriage.	2.65	9 th
7	Most of the girls who leave school before they finish the course do so as a result of marriage.	2.64	10 th
8	Girls who leave before they finish their schooling are more than the boys.	2.62	11 th
9	Students that withdrawn from school usually start with lateness to school.	2.37	12 th
10	Students leave the school after they become truants.	2.09	13 th
11	Demoralization has significant impact on drop out of students	2.07	14 th
13	Gender is one of the factors that leads to drop out among students	2.02	15 th

Grand mean 2.88

Table 2 presents the mean and rank order of respondents' expression on the level of peer group influence on students' dropout. Item 1 was ranked 1st with mean score of 3.62 and states that school dropout are mostly influenced by friends, item 12 ranked 2nd with mean score of 3.58 and states that when school environment is not safe, students tend to drop out from school and item 14 with mean score of 3.32 which

states that Sargent punishment makes me to run out of the school. The above table shows that most of the items have mean scores that are above the mid-cut off point of 2.50, this indicates that the respondents attested to the fact that the items on the instrument indicate influence of peer group on students' drop out in school.

Research Question 2: What is the level of teachers’ attitude on students’ dropout?

Table 3: Mean and Rank Order of the Level of Teachers’ Attitude on Students’ Dropout

Item No.	The following are Teachers’ Attitude on Students’ Dropout	Mean	Rank
13.	My students are always proud of me	3.43	1 st
3.	I feel very satisfied with my students’ performance	3.11	2 nd
1.	I study hard because of my students expectation me to	2.56	3 rd
14.	My students expect me not to give them homework promptly	2.41	4 th
11.	My students are very concerned about their success in my examinations	2.33	5 th
15.	I do not feel my students feel concerned about me	2.12	6 th
2.	As a teacher I make sure that I am at school every day.	2.10	7 th
10.	People at home feel concerned about my performance at school.	2.08	8 th
4.	I get too much pressure from students to work less during my class	1.50	9 th
6.	My students expect me to be tolerant even when I am annoyed	1.30	10 th
5.	I study hard in order to please my students	1.14	11 th
12.	It does not matter to my students whether I do well in class or not	1.12	12 th
9.	My students worry over possible misfortunes that might disturb my class	1.10	13 th
7.	My students get easily upset at me when I treat them badly at school	1.08	14 th
8.	My students often wish I were somebody else	1.01	15 th

Grand mean 1.92

Table 3 presents the mean and rank order of respondents’ expression on the level of teachers’ attitude on students’ dropout. Item 13 was ranked 1st with mean score of 3.43 and states that my students are always proud of me, item 3 ranked 2nd with mean score of 3.11 and states that I feel very satisfied with my students’ performance and item 1 ranked 3rd with mean score of 2.56 which states that I study hard because of my students expectation me to. The above table shows that most of the items have mean scores that are

below the mid-cut off point of 2.50, this indicates that the respondents detested to the fact that the items on the instrument indicate teachers’ attitude on students’ drop out in school.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant gender difference among senior secondary school teachers in Potiskum LGA

Table 4: Mean difference between Male and Female Teachers on Students’ Dropout

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Male	133	65.68	1.561	220	1.346	.671	Not Significant
Female	89	64.45	1.523				

From Table 4, it can be seen that the difference between male and female teachers has t-cal= 1.346, p-value= .671 greater than .05 level of significance. The result indicates mean difference between male (65.68) and that of females (64.45) which was not significant. Hence, there is no significant gender difference between male and female teachers. Specifically, the finding shows that male and female teachers do not differ significantly in their perception on the rate of school dropout among senior secondary school students in Potiskum LGA.

Discussion of findings

The findings of the study revealed that school dropout are mostly influenced by friends, when school environment is not safe, students tend to drop out from school and that Sargent punishment makes me to run out of the school among others. The findings were in line with Litcher *et al* (2019) [10] understand many things about each youngster; his social life; significant interpersonal relationships with parents, siblings and other important figures and behaviours at home, at school and with peer-groups”. In this regard there are many factors that cause the youngster to drop out of school including peer group influence.

In a related literature on the influence of peer-group towards school dropout (Kagai, 2016) [9] said, that in his research findings, which was based on school dropout in Jama’a Local Education Authority in Kaduna State. There are “high school fees, parents transfers, death of parents, bad company and bad home care, and many more”. From this finding one

could elaborate that bad company to the youngsters is always a serious problem that usually leads to school dropout. But the finding on high school fees could be rejected on the ground that L.E.A.’s Primary Schools particularly in Kaduna State do not pay school fees as per time of that research. In essence peer-group influence members towards or away from the academic goals of the colleges, lack of recreational facilities, nutrition even general school environment which to some extent dictates the kind of peer-group that exist in it.

Also, it was revealed that teachers level of students’ dropout are mostly influenced by my students are always proud of me, I feel very satisfied with my students’ performance and I study hard because of my students expectation me to. The findings were in line with Shert (2017) [19] said on early marriage, failure at school, bad relationship between teachers and students, the irrelevant of the school curriculum to individual needs and bad social relationship at school and broken homes” are among the causes of school dropout. However, this is telling us that, there are many factors aggravating the act, among which is that of bad relationship between teachers and students. This unhealthy situation will inevitably lead to the early school leaving of the youngsters which could be term as wastage.

Moreover, in another literature of Docter (2014) [5] state that inadequate training of teachers is responsible for dropout (Odeh, 2010) [15] have similar view. The gravity of teacher’s relationship towards the students dropout problem could also be seen where (Shetzer, 2001) [20] said “students

dropout of school as a result of academic failure, inability to go along with teachers, dislike of social relationship in the school.” In this regard teachers attitude were seriously attributed to the youngsters school dropout problem.

While the only null hypothesis tested in this study revealed that, there is no significant difference in the effect of gender on the rate of school dropout in Potiskum LGA. This means gender of the respondents did not have effect on the rate of school dropout. This finding is in line with that of Astin (2001) [3] on the most frequent reasons for dropping out for both sexes are bore-done with causes, financial difficulties dissatisfaction with requirements or regulations, and change in career goals. Women, however, give marriage, pregnancy, or family responsibilities more often than any other reason. A related question to this is the role of children, does the number of children have any effect on the drop-outs tendency to give marriage, pregnancy, or other family responsibilities as a reason for leaving colleges? The data show clearly that having children increases the drop-out chances of giving marriage as a reason from leaving college. The effect occurs among both sexes, although women are consistently more likely to give this particular reason. Both sexes give financial difficulties and boredom with dissatisfaction of school regulations relatively often as reasons for leaving colleges. Men are somewhat more inclined than women towards such reasons.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it was concluded that peer group influences students’ drop out in school; teachers’ attitude do not lead to students’ drop out in school; and male and female teachers do not significantly differ in their expression on the rate of school dropout.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings, the following recommendations are made;

1. Teachers should encourage students to develop self-concept through regular guidance instead of them relying on friends’ decision.
2. School counsellors should encourage teachers to make sure that they show positive attitude to their students to ensure that they do not become detrimental to their schools/academics.
3. Both male and female teachers should make sure that they show positive attitude to their students to ensure that they do not become drop out of school.

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