

## **Effectiveness of Counselling in reducing the rate of School Dropout among Secondary School Students in Ondo**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the effectiveness of Counselling in reducing the rate of school dropout among secondary school students in Ondo State. Three research questions on causes, effect and counselling measures were formulated while descriptive survey design was adopted. Samples of 150 teachers were drawn from ten (10) secondary schools in Akure South local government area of Ondo State. A 36-item out was (CFRSD) was used for data collection while frequency count and percentages were used to analyse the data. It was observed that poverty, lack of interest in schooling, poor academic performance are some of the causes of school dropout. It was also gathered that many school dropout would become social menace and that counselling would be an unquantifiable measure for reducing the spate of school dropout in our country. Adequate suggestions for teachers, parents and government to forestall further deterioration and loss of manpower through school dropout syndrome.

**Key words:** Counselling, students, Dropout, poverty, performance

### **Introduction**

The future of any nation depends to a large extent on what she is able to make out of her citizenry; and to achieve any meaningful development, education has been identified as a viable instrument to bring about the desired growth in human development. It therefore requires that a nation must come up with the appropriate educational policy that will enable the nation to meet the set goals for national development. The national policy on education in Nigeria (NPE 2004) suggests a life-long education for all, and that secondary education shall prepare and equip the students to enter the world of work. To this end, the Nigerian government prescribed a free, compulsory education for all children from the primary through the junior secondary school as prescribed in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme.

Despite all the plans and provision so stated in the education policy, millions of school age children in Nigeria are out of school. Nigeria was also ranked high among nations where large population of children are out of the classroom (UNESCO, 2014).

The incidence of school dropout has been on the increase in recent times. Many have for one reason or the other dropped out of school without acquiring the basic education needed for productive living in the society. David and Achor (2014) pointed out that Nigeria holds the World record of having the highest number of her young people out of school with approximately 10.5 million kids out of school. This statistics is quite alarming and is also a pointer to the fact that Nigerian education would be a failure if the nation's human capital development cannot match the required work force needed for national development. Dropping out of school refers to the situation whereby a student who enrolled in school has to quit before the completion of his/her studies. UNICEF, 2004 even estimated that 7.3 million students annually drop out of school.

There are various reasons why an individual could decide to drop out of school. Some of the reasons could be inherent in the child; such as sudden disinterestedness in school activities, and low level of academic achievement. Some other factors could be associated with the teachers such as teachers not teaching well as a

result of poor teaching method, lack of interest in teaching profession while on the others hands, the reason for dropping out of school could be in relation to environmental issues such as governmental policies, lack of adequate teaching-learning facilities and equipment. Students could also drop out of school because of lack of finance and poor home situation.

If the school dropout rate continues to be on the increase and unchecked, there is the likelihood that Nigeria will face a serious problem of lack of skilled manpower and thereby resulting in low human capital strength for a society with emphasis on education and acquisition of education for national development.

The Universal Basic Education introduced in Nigeria is intended to be free and compulsory yet we still have teeming population of student dropout of school. The situation is quite unhealthy and there should be a means to curb the inimical progression of school dropout through counselling intervention. Counselling as observed by Oyinloye and Dada (2015) is the relationship between counsellor and his client aimed at helping the counselee achieve educational, vocational and personal social concerns. It is therefore expected that counselling would assist the counsel gain self-understanding and be directed towards productive living as well as for achieving empowerment (Oyinloye & Obasoro 2010).

To this, end this study seeks to find out the causes and effect of school dropout on students; efforts are also directed at finding out the effectiveness of counselling intervention as a measure for combating/reducing the problem of school dropout in Nigeria and more precisely in Akure South local government area of Ondo State.

## **Statement of the problem**

The issues relating to school dropout varies from one place to another. It has becomes noticeable that the number of students facing some severe psychological difficulties are on the increase. This study therefore attempted to investigate the causes, effect and possible counselling intervention, which if mounted can bring about a check in the alarming rate at which Nigeria experience and can strengthen her human and capital development means by which Nigeria. An understanding of reasons why students drop out of school may also serve as pointer to the likely steps required by stakeholders to forestall the rate of school dropout. It is also a common issue that the problem of school drop out if not nibbled in the bud, can degenerate to an extent whereby we would end up with a group of disgruntled citizens, many of who would become miscreant, vagabond and social deviant in the country. To guide this study therefore, the following research questions have been generated to guide the study:  
Research questions.

- (1) Why do children drop out of school before completing the full basic education?
- (2) What are the likely effect of school drop out on the individual and the nation?
- (3) What are the counselling measures to combat or reduce the number of school dropout in our schools?

## **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study surveyed the views of secondary school teachers on causes, effect and effectiveness of counselling in the reduction of school dropout in Akure. One hundred and fifty junior secondary school teachers were randomly selected from ten secondary schools in the study area for the study.

A self-designed questionnaire titled counselling for reducing school dropout was used for gathering information on the study. The instrument has 36 items, divided into three sections A, B and C . Section A contains demographic data, section B covers causes and effect of dropout on students while section C covers counselling measures that can be employed in reducing dropout rates in schools. The validity of the instrument was established as tests experts assisted to review the items. The reliability of the coefficient of 0.73 was obtained through Cronbach Alpha.

Data collected were tallied and analysed using frequency count and percentages.

## Results

**Table 1: Reasons why students drop out of school**

S/NO	Items	Frequency	%
1.	Inability to pay school fees lead to dropping out of school	146	97.3
2.	Many students who do not want to continue with schooling drop out	144	96
3.	Students having difficulties with school work drop out	147	98
4.	Many school dropout are expelled from School	142	94.7
5.	Many students drop out of school because of the desire to earn money	140	93.3
6.	Some students needed to work at home and so drop out of school	138	92
7.	Some students drop out of school because of Illness	127	84.6
9.	Unwanted pregnancy makes some girls drop out of school	106	77.3
10.	Death in the family make some students drop out of school	138	70.6
11.	Failure and decision not to repeat a class make many students drop out of school	109	72.6
12.	Transfer from one location to another make some students drop out of school	98	65.3
13.	Withdrawal by parents/guardian make some students drop out of school	101	67.3

The table presents the responses of the respondents on likely causes of dropping out by students.

**Table 2: The effect of school drop out on the students and society**

S/NO	Items	Frequency	%
1.	School dropout end up as miscreants in the society	135	90
2.	School dropout engage in crimes	132	88
3.	School dropout face problem of unemployment	129	86
4.	School dropout end up in abject poverty	137	91.3
5.	School dropout develop low self esteem	136	90.6
6.	Many school dropout end up as cultists	126	84
7.	Many school dropout girls become sex workers(prostitutes)	123	
8.	Most school dropout don't go back to school	133	

9.	School dropout become dissidents in the society	131	
10.	Many school dropout become armed robbers	128	

**Table 3: Counselling measures to reduce rate of school dropout**

S/NO	Items	Agree	%
1.	Counsellors should handle personal problems of students with dropout tendency	146	97.3
2.	School counsellors should stress home-school interaction on students	144	96
3.	Group and individual counselling should be organised to render students support against dropping out of school	143	95.3
4.	Regular job sensitisation talk on goal setting, good study habits etc helps reduce school drop out	144	96
5.	Remedial classes can assist weak students to cope with low academic performance	142	94.7
6.	Students needs be assisted to attain self understanding	146	97.3
7.	Career counselling can assist students to develop in school activities	143	95.3
8.	Poor students can be assisted to assess scholarship and financial assistance	141	94
9.	Creating school friendly environment can reduce dropout rate	140	93.3
10.	Counsellors can assist students to engage in work-study arrangements	144	96
11.	Counsellors can encourage students to develop interest in school activities	146	97.3
12.	Students should be enlightened on coping strategies to stay in school	144	96
13.	Financial supports should be recommended for indigent students to forestall school dropout	148	98.7

**Discussion**

The results as presented in Table 1 reveals that there are a number of reasons why students can decide to drop out of school without completing the programme he embarked upon. In the views of the respondents, lack of interest in school work, poor academic performance, poverty, failure is some of the causes of school dropout. The findings of this study is in consonance with the findings of Alike & Egbochuku (2009), Ohila & Audu 2014 and Melaye 2007 studies on reasons why students could drop out of school before completing a school programme embarked upon.

Table 2 also presents the likely effect of school dropout on the individual, it is revealed that many school dropout later get involved in crime, became dissidents, many female dropout take to prostitution, the nation also stand to lose in terms of loss in terms of loss of manpower. The studies of Brideland et al 2006, Karl et al 1997,

Melaye, 2007 also support the fact that school dropout has a great consequence both on individual and the nation.

In table 3, we find out that counselling measures can be employed to reduce the number of dropout in our schools. A number of counselling measures widely agreed upon are, engaging in individual and group counselling, rendering information service, organising remedial classes and ensuring home school relationship. The result of this finding supports the finding of Oliha & Audu 2014 which reports that counselling measures can help reduce cases of school dropout.

Finally, it is revealed through this study that early detection of tendency to drop out of school if quickly matched with counselling relationship, will help forestall later drop out of school.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it is quite evident that indiscipline, lack of interest in school work, poverty etc are causes of school dropout. We can also conclude that criminal activities, negative behaviours are likely consequence of school dropout and that counselling will assist to curb school dropout, if intervention are mounted early enough.

Based on the findings, and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are drawn:

## **Recommendations**

1. Counsellors should be appointed in schools and there should be close working relationship between teachers, and school counsellors.
2. Various counselling measures that can nib the tendency to drop out of school should be employed and a drawback to school strategies can also be employed.
3. The school should provide a conducive learning environment that will assist students to learn and desire to stay in school.
4. Parents should show more concern in their children/wards interest in education and finance their education.

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