

# Secondary school dropouts in OHAOZARA local government area: causes, implications for male students and intervention strategies for educational administrators

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## Abstract

**Background/Objectives:** This research paid attention to the causes of secondary school dropouts of male students in OHAOZARA local government area (L.G. A.) of Ebonyi State, Nigeria; its implications for students and existing actions by erudition administrators. The work was guided by three study questions.

**Methods/Statistical analysis:** The descriptive analysis design was adopted for the research. The population constituted of students and principals in all the community secondary schools in the area of this research. The sample comprised of students and all the principals in the research district. There were two sets of prearranged questionnaires self developed and adopted for the research; one for the students and the other for the principals. The statistical tool used to evaluate the data was mean  $\pm$  standard deviation.

**Findings:** After the study, the results showed that the key factors influencing school withdraw among male secondary school students in OHAOZARA L.G.A. are due to students' disenchantment about education; society's acknowledgment for wealthy people no matter how they made their money and the complicated nature of some school subjects cum the uninteresting environment of poor teaching strategies and results.

**Improvements/Applications:** The principals ought to enhance the environmental conditions in their schools to give students the inducement to continue in school, increase understanding and skills through work hard.

Keywords: Secondary, School, OHAOZARA, Students, Principals and Males.

## 1. Introduction

Schools stay alive for the function of imparting knowledge and skills to students in order for them to provide socio-economic and political desires of ever shifting society [1]. Young men and women attain necessary skills and instruction through education. As leaders of tomorrow, they require to be mainstreamed academically in order for them to be competent to become helpful to themselves, fill up management positions and be able to add in facility building for sustainable and purposeful growth and transformation [2]. This can only be realized when they are encouraged to right of entry and also complete educational programmers [3]. When they run a uninterrupted school programmers to completion, it prepares them for the potential appointment in sustainable growth and progress. Consequently, this underscores the need for the adolescence to be sufficiently prepared educationally. The national policy on education obviously set the right to education for every child [4]. High rate of school dropout is an obstacle to facility building. Therefore, students' dropout from school programmers does not only strip them of the essential skills and information desired to become recognizable to the humanity but also robs the humanity of its long term forecast of achieving its set objectives of growth and development. Dropping out from schools carries the root of backwardness, retardation as well as limitations to expert manpower for accelerated human capital development [5]. The stoppage or extermination of educational quest or, and even before conclusion of full educational programmed creates situations that not merely help to discourage personality but over all human development [6]. Correctly observed that in any society wherever there is a high rate of school drop-out there is scarcity of accomplished manpower and intrinsic poverty among the public. Obviously any country without adequate human development finds it hard to efficiently dispense other resources development [7]. Therefore, there is a connection amid low skilled manpower and high tendency to students' dropouts in schools. Furthermore, mass dropout of the youths from schools has far attainment implications which can lead to drug addiction, prostitutions, stealing, risk to lives and property

reiterated that life of exclusion and incapacitation predisposes an individual to social vices. And [8,9] stated that sustainable education serves as a bat to eliminate poverty, lack of knowledge and helplessness to disgruntled life potentials, low income life in squalors, social denial among other vices. Thus, the common indices for high school dropouts have been recognized as stemming from family-related, school environment-related factors, societal requirement and pressure, delayed social and economic return on education [10]. Yet, it has been observed that the youths no longer wait long enough in schools. Apparently, male students' dropouts seem to be vigorously on the increase in the recent past in eastern parts of Nigeria. The case in area of study is not dissimilar. It has become a widespread characteristic to discover youths abandoning education with every affronted chance and justification in search of faster economic return ventures, [11]. Some travel to cities or even try relocating to abroad where they feel their fortunes can turn around. They believe that engaging in profitable ventures (hawking/trading) has immediate and more rewarding social and economic profits [12] and [13] maintained that lack of incentive and search for material wealth are major factors for students' termination or stoppage of school before conclusion. Educational administrators are mainly charged with liability of providing leadership in schools [14]. Their functions predispose that they bring enabling learning atmosphere for the understanding of educational objectives. In the secondary system, the principals perform this visibly defined functions; bringing a synergy that help to strap up resources for quality educational service. Staff and student employees are synchronized through efficient communication and discipline to carry out educational activities in such a means that high school moral is sustained. Therefore the main duty of the principal is to make sure that school environment is learner welcoming. It is appropriate therefore to find out specific and peculiar causes for and implications of male secondary schools dropouts in OHAOZARA Local Government Area, Ebonyi State. It also aims at finding potential strategies for checkmating ceaseless male secondary school dropouts by educational administrators. The problem also stems from the fact that rising rate of male student' school dropout is a bane that not only impairs students from obtaining certificates for possible middle class employment opportunities but also for reaching his potential in life and thereby preventing his long term contributions to national economic growth and development.

Exclusively, the purposes of the research are to:

1. Identify the main causes of dropouts among male secondary school students
2. Determine the implications for rising secondary school dropouts on the male youths.
3. Determine intervening strategies of principals for curbing increase in secondary school male dropouts.

## 2. Research design

This study used the descriptive survey method in the generation, analysis and explanation of data with the aim of unfolding clearly existing conditions beliefs attitudes perceptions [15] and [16]. The choice for this research design was informed by the reality that this work focused on human beings with the objective of generating data from field performance, and analyzing such data so as to arrive at non generalized findings that will describe specific phenomena within a given area.

## 3. Area of the study

This study was carried out in Ohaozara L.G.A. Ohaozara is in Ebonyi State, bounded on the North by Onicha Local Government, East by Afikpo North, South by Ivo L.G.A. and Enugu State on the West. The headquarters is in the town of Obiozara Uburu. The major communities that make up the Local Government Area are Ugwulangwu, Uburu and Okposi. They are mainly agriculturists (farmers) while majority of the youths are into commercial activities and ventures with the bulk of the male youth into hawking and trading within and outside the state (Ebonyi). They are individuals who possess professional skills and are employed as civil and corporate servants in public and private organizations. Perhaps this was the justification for the researcher to delve into this research in order to seek for specific cause of male students' dropouts in the area of the study and to possibly address the implications for educational administrators.

#### 4. Population of the study

The study covers 1177 students and 250 teachers in the public secondary schools in the area of study. There are 13 public secondary schools with the total population of 1427 students and teachers [3].

#### 5. Sample size and sampling techniques

Out of the 13 public secondary schools, 6 schools were purposively selected, 2 from each of the communities. Stratified proportionate randomly sampling technique was adopted to select 200 students used for the study (150 females and 50 males). It is worthy to note also that the entire 13 principals (population) were selected; making the total sample size of 213 (students and principals).

#### 6. Instrument for data collection

There were two sets of tool for data collection; one for the students and the other for principals. The item questions that covered research questions (1&2) were for students while the third research question formed items for principal respondents only. The two sets of questionnaire consisted of part "A" which covered bio data of the two sets of respondents respectively. Section "B" which addressed research question 1 &2 were for the student respondents and "C" which covered research question 3 was for principal respondents.

#### 7. Method of data collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher by hand. The distributed copies were collection on the same day. There was no loss of questionnaire as it was duly filled and returned.

#### 8. Validation and reliability of instrument

The structured questionnaire was submitted for face and content validations by three experts, two in Educational Administration and Planning in Department of Educational Foundations and one from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Science Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Corrections, adjustments and restructuring were carried out which formed the final copies that were used for the study. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the researcher conducted a test-re-rest procedure on the instrument. The instrument was administered to twenty (20) students in a secondary school in Onicha Local Government Area. A second test followed the first one two weeks after. Hereafter, the responses of the first and second tests were analyzed and compared to ascertain their correlation coefficient (r). The correlation coefficient was 0.88, which was interpreted as positive and strong. Thus, instrument was reliable.

#### 9. Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were decoded, grouped into frequencies, compared and arranged in \les for easy references and analysis. The descriptive statistics of mean (X) in line with the 4 – point Likert scale was used. The Likert scale type is given as.

$$X = \frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

The formula for calculating the weight mean for raw scores is given as follows:

$$(X) = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum x}$$

Weight mean

Where X = Mean of the distribute

$\sum$  = Summation (sum of), F = Frequency of the scores, X = Raw score

**Decision Rule:**

Any score below 2.50 is rejected, while scores from 2.50 and above are accepted.

## 10. Results

The analysis on research question one (1) as seen in Table 1 focused on major factors influencing school dropout among male secondary school student in OHAOZARA L.G.A., yield a grand weighted mean of 2.93 which is an indication that the respondents on the average, agreed that included items in this section influenced school dropout rate among male secondary school students.

*Table 1. Research question 1: What are the causes of male school dropouts in secondary schools in OHAOZARA L.G.A.?*

S/N	Items	Male (X)	SD	Decision	Female (X)	SD	Decision
1	Male students often get frustrated as a result of poor learning environment, which can lead to their dropping out from school	2.62	1.11	Agreed	2.86	1.00	Agreed
2	The society hold high regards to riches (recognizes rich people more), no matter how they made their wealth	2.82	0.81	Agreed	2.58	1.06	Agreed
3	A feeling of discontent arising from adjudged ungratifying use of WASC certificates and possibility of securing a well paid job	3.18	0.99	Agreed	2.52	1.16	Agreed
4	Poor orientation of parents towards secondary school as being time consuming compared to short period spent in learning crafts	2.67	0.65	Agreed	2.52	1.16	Agreed
5	Lack of role model to help sustain their interest through secondary education	2.37	0.55	Agreed	2.54	0.95	Agreed
6	Quest for quick money through other means instead of waiting for admission into tertiary institutions after secondary education.	2.77	1.12	Agreed	2.98	0.85	Agreed
7	Present challenges emanating from low recognition of secondary school certificate for social gratification	2.98	1.02	Agreed	1.87	1.12	Disagreed
8	Parents lack of interest in secondary education, seeing it as time wasting	2.97	1.28	Agreed	2.88	1.06	Agreed
9	Societal pressure on male child to assume family responsibility at shortest time	1.58	1.00	Disagreed	1.07	0.91	Disagreed
	<b>Cluster mean standard deviation</b>	<b>Mean ()</b>	<b>SD ()</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Mean ()</b>	<b>SD ()</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

These items include male students' disillusionment about schooling society recognition of rich people the long period needed to finish schooling and poor Socio-economic background of parents' notable factors such as lack of school dropout among male secondary school students in the area.

*Table 2. Research Question 2: What are the long-term implications for students on male secondary school dropout in OHAOZARA L.G.A.?*

S/N	Items	Male (Mean))	SD	Decision	Female (Mean)	SD	Decision
15	Male secondary school dropout limits male students opportunity for possible enrolment into tertiary institutions	3.01	1.23	Agreed	3.04	1.16	Agreed
16	Dropping out from school creates opportunity for increase in unskilled labour	1.79	1.09	Disagreed	3.54	0.95	Agreed
17	Male school dropout encourages increase in male street hawking.	2.52	1.17	Agreed	2.50	1.17	Agreed
18	Male secondary school dropout could affect future economic family stability	1.15	0.54	Disagreed	1.26	0.61	Disagreed
19	Dropping out from secondary schools could lead to desperation through other means to succeed in life	2.58	1.06	Agreed	2.52	1.16	Agreed
20	Dropping out from school could result into social misfits	1.98	1.10	Disagreed	2.57	0.65	Agreed

In research question three (3) as seen in Table 2 the grand mean recorded on the long-term implications of school dropout among male secondary school student in Ohaozara L.G.A. was 2.97. This reveals an agreement among the respondents on the items included as long term implication of school dropout among male secondary school students. These long-term implication include inability to access good jobs with good wages, living unfulfilled lives, abusive parents in the future, leading a life of envy and hatred, social rejection even from dream life partners. The respondents, however, refuted the motion that dropouts usually end up as social misfits, such as armed robbers, things and drugs addicts.

*Table 3. Research Question 3: What possible intervention strategies can educational administrators adopt to curb secondary school male students' dropouts?*

S/N	Items	Male (mean)	SD	Decision	Female (mean)	SD	Decision
21	The school administrators should regularly hold meetings with parents to sensitize parents and students on long term benefit of education (social return of sustainable education) in order for students to be motivated to complete schooling.	3.01	1.23	2.81	3.0	1.07	Agreed
22	There should be public awareness and sensitization programmes organized in schools through collaborative efforts of private partners within the locality to reduce high rate of male school drop out	2.18	1.07	Agreed	2.78	2.21	Agreed
23	School administrators should liaise with local authorities and Chiefs to conduct a drive to retain students (boys) in secondary schools	3.54	0.95	Agreed	2.52	1.17	Agreed
24	The school administrators should seek sponsorships to aid financially disadvantaged willing students as it would help encourage students to remain and complete schooling.	8.18	1.14	Agreed	2.78	2.21	Agreed
25	There should be regular and close monitoring of school activities to ensure gender friendly school environment for learning.	3.54	0.98	Agreed	2.52	1.17	Agreed
	<b>Cluster Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.27</b>					<b>Agreed</b>

The responses on the perception of the public on school drop on among male secondary school students in Ohaozara L.G.A. as seen in Table 3 scored a grand mean of 3.27. This is an indication of a near unanimous agreement among the respondents on their perceptions towards school drop outs. The responses reveal that the public holds education in high esteem, and do not accept the idea of people dropping out from school. The public also see school dropouts as deviants, treating them with contempt, and believe that only would-be miscreants dropout from school.

## 11. Summary

In line with the analysis above, the following observations were made: 1) The major factors influencing school dropout among male secondary school students in Ohaozara L.G.A. include students' disillusionment about schooling; society's recognition for rich persons, no matter how they made their riches; the difficult nature of some school subjects; and the boring nature of poor teaching strategies and results. 2) The long term implications of school dropout among male secondary school students in Ohaozara L.G.A include inability to secure good jobs in future, a future life of envy and hatred, low chances of attracting dreamed partners in life.

## 12. Discussion

The arrangement and analysis of the data generated exposed some interesting findings. Factors that were cited to have influenced school dropout among male secondary school students in Ohaozara L.G.A. include male student's disenchantment about education (3.15), society's acknowledgment of ill-gotten riches (3.72), difficult nature of some subjects (3.18) and poor socio-economic background of the male students (3.06). These findings are in conformity with the submissions by [17] etc. for example [4] cited family-related, parental and school environmental-related factors. [1] identified poverty cited the need to make wealth and meet society's expected, while earlier identified dislike for schooling and low academic performance. Also the findings are in line with those of who reported lack of motivation, resulting from students' disillusion about schooling, as a factor that influences school dropout among secondary school students. The results, however, deviated from those of [13], [17], and [5], who reported that early marriage is also a factor influencing male students' dropout from secondary school. Results on the effects of school dropout among male secondary school students in the area include low self-esteem and powerlessness (2.99), under-development of productive capacity (3.24), increase in the rate of unemployment (3.08) and an increased likelihood to end up being poor in life. Previous research reports have echoed these or related effects of school dropout among students. Identified increase in unemployment as one of the effects of school dropout. Earlier found that school dropout increases the total costs of educating a particular generation, thereby retarding natural growth. Results on long term implications of school dropout among male secondary school students in Ohaozara L.G.A. include inability to secure good jobs (3.56), a future life of envy and hatred (3.56), possibility of abusive parents (2.89), social rejection (2.96) and difficulty in attracting ones' dreamed partner in life (3.30). These results occurred with [9], whose study revealed long-term implication of school dropout to include social maladjustment, child abuse and neglect, irresponsible parenting, low self-esteem, envy and hatred, etc. the results are also in agreement with [7] who reported social rejection, difficult in finding dreamed partners in life, etc. The results revealed that the public frowns at cases of school dropout. Dropouts are regarded with contempt (3.30) and area perceived as would-be miscreants (3.27). The society perception towards school dropout is informed by the fact that, the society, through free or subsidized education has put in place strategies to encourage the individuals to access and complete secondary school education.

## 13. Conclusion

This study focused on the causes and implications for male secondary schools' dropout in Ohaozara L.G.A and possible interventions for school administrators. It discovered that major factors associated with high rate of males dropping out from secondary schools include lack of motivation (disillusionment), inability to cope up academically and poor socio-economic background of students. There are equally long term implications on students which include inability to transit into tertiary institutions and possibility of securing self-reliant jobs in the future, vulnerability to poverty and low level income status that can lead to life of envy and hatred among youths. It also showed that the principals in collaboration with the leaders and private individuals in the communities in the area could create social networks that can help reduce high school dropout among the males.

## 14. Recommendations

In view of the finding obtained in this study, the following recommendations were made:



1. The principals should improve the social conditions in their schools to give students the motivation to stay in school, gain knowledge and skills through work hard.
2. The communities and the entire local government should declare an educational drive for male students through free or subsidized educational costs for male students in secondary schools as this would enable students from poor socio-economic backgrounds to complete their secondary school programmes.
3. Secondary schools should be provided with appropriate and adequate instructional facilities and materials to facilitate learning and retain interest for learning.

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*The Publication fee is defrayed by Indian Society for Education and Environment (www.iseeadyar.org)*

### **Cite this article as:**

Uzoma Aja-Okorie and Adali A. Onele. Secondary schools' male dropout in OHAOZARA local government area: causes, implications for students and intervention strategies for educational administrator.  
*Indian Journal of Economics and Development*. Vol 5 (9), September 2017.