International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Challenges Encountered of Student at Risk of Dropping Out: Basis for Intervention Program

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A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study was to address the multifaceted issue of high school dropout, or early school withdrawal, which arises from factors across various life domains. Students at risk of dropping out face numerous challenges that impede their educational progress. The study focused on SARDO students in the District of Pio V. Corpus, Masbate Province as a basis for designing an intervention program using a quantitative method. These challenges include personal factors, family factors, socio-economic factors, and school-related factors. Findings revealed that personal factors include low self-esteem, lack of motivation, and personal issues such as health problems. Family factors involve family responsibilities and instability. Socio-economic factors include students working as laborers to support their studies. School-related factors involve difficulties in understanding the material, a lack of interest in subjects, or feeling overwhelmed by the workload. Additionally, systemic issues such as poverty, limited access to resources, and inadequate support systems within the school contribute to a student's risk of dropping out. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including academic support, fostering a positive school environment, and providing resources to help students overcome these obstacles.

Keywords: Student at Risk of Dropping Out, Challenges Encountered, Personal Factors, Family Factors, Socio-economic Factors and School Factors.

1. INRODUCTION

Education is viewed as a crucial function of society, with schools serving as the primary institutions through which societal existence is maintained; thus, schools are considered a "key factor" in development (Stanica, 2019). High school dropout rates have emerged as one of the most significant educational issues in society (Fan & Wolters, 2014). Education is a prerequisite for accessing wealth and social well-being in today's world, and a quality education can transform lives. However, chronic absences and class skipping, leading to dropping out, have increasingly become prevalent both nationally and globally. If school administrators can summon the necessary determination, in collaboration with the community, parents, and teachers, they can help mitigate the dropout problem. A student deemed at risk of dropping out is referred to as a Student-At-Risk of Dropping Out (SARDO). The National Center for Education Statistics defines dropping out as leaving a course without obtaining a diploma before graduation. This issue not only affects the individual student but also impacts their family, community, and society as a whole. The Department of Education (DepEd) believes that if this trend continues without intervention, it poses a problem that will eventually affect the entire country. This study aimed to address this gap by analyzing the SARDO data set from the Division of Masbate, focusing specifically on junior and senior high school students at Tanque National High School, Buenasuerte Integrated School, Isidro C. Mendoza High School, and Conrada Tero Kho Memorial High School in Pio V. Corpuz.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this study was to identify and provide interventions for the challenges encountered by dropout students in public high schools in the District of Pio V. Corpus, Masbate. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1. What was the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of: 1.1 Sex; 1.2 Age; and 1.3 Marital status? 2. What were the challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of: 2.1 Personal factors; 2.2 Family factors; 2.3 Socio-economic factors; and 2.4 School factors? 3. Was there a significant relationship between the demographic profile and the problems encountered by the respondents?

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to systematically investigate the challenges encountered by dropout students in public high schools in the District of Pio V. Corpus, Masbate. By utilizing this approach, the researchers aimed to gather numerical data that could provide insights into the demographic profiles of the respondents and the specific challenges they faced.

2.2 Data Sources

In this study, data was obtained from Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and Philippine Statistics Authority.
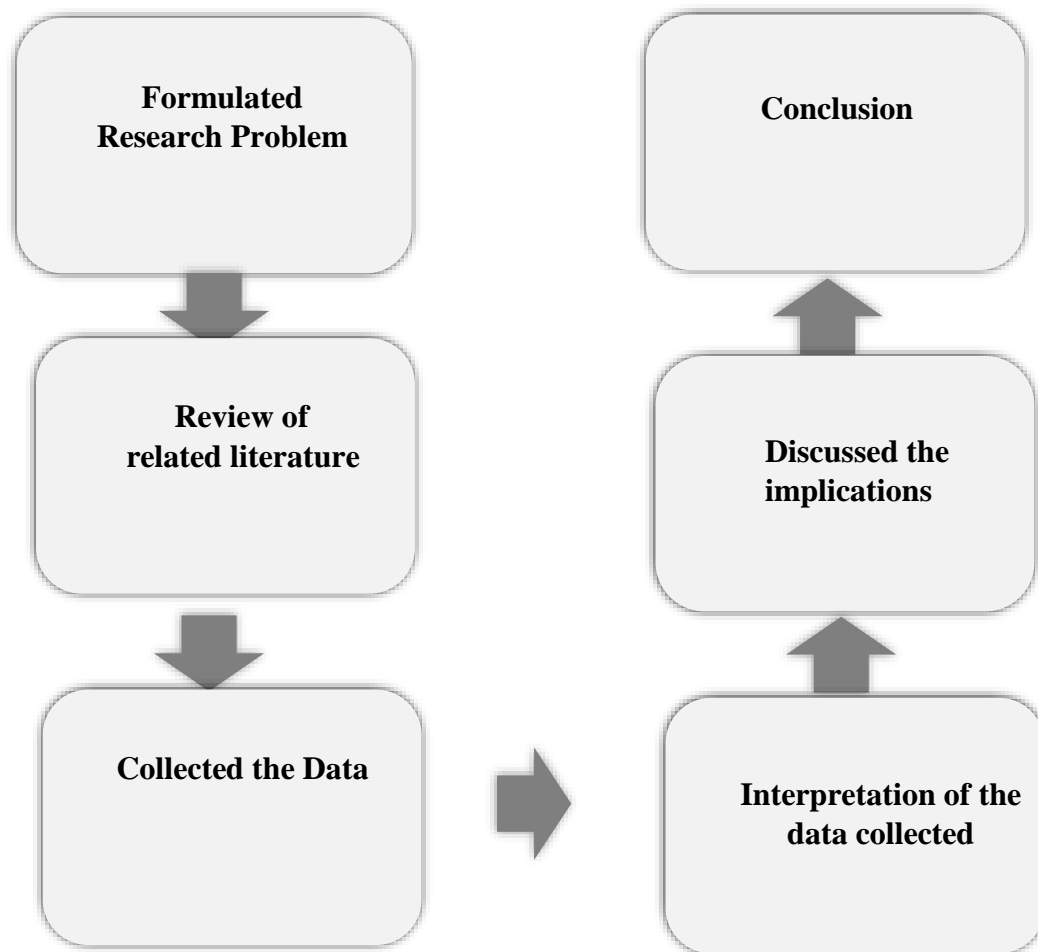
2.3 Research Procedure

Formulated Research Problem

Review of related literature

Collected the Data

Interpretation of the data collected

Discussed the implications

Conclusion

Figure 1. Flowchart of the Research

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

11 Demographic profile of the respondents in terms Sex

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	71	78.89
Female	19	21.11

Table 1. Demographic of the respondents in terms of Sex

Table 1 indicated that a higher percentage of male students were at risk of dropping out of school compared to female students, with males accounting for 78.89% of the dropouts. This finding highlighted a significant gender disparity in dropout rates, suggesting that male students faced various challenges that contributed to their decision to leave school. In contrast, female dropouts represented only 21.11% of the total, indicating that while female students also encountered difficulties, the prevalence of dropout among males was notably greater. This disparity called for targeted interventions to address the specific needs and challenges faced by male students in order to effectively reduce dropout rates.

1.2 Demographic profile of the respondents in terms Age

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
12-15	38	42.22
16-18	42	46.67
19-21	10	11.11

Table 2. Demographic of the respondents in terms of Age

Table 2 revealed that students at risk of dropping out were older than their grade-level peers, with the age group of 16 to 18 years accounting for the highest percentage of dropouts at 46.67%. In contrast, students aged 12 to 15 represented 42.22% of those at risk, indicating that while younger students also faced significant challenges, they were more likely to remain in school compared to their older counterparts. The lower percentage of students aged 19 to 21, at only 11.11%, suggested that those in this age group had either already dropped out or transitioned into alternative educational pathways. This trend highlighted the need for targeted interventions to address the unique challenges faced by older students at risk of dropping out.

1.3 Demographic profile of the respondents in terms Marital Status

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	75	83.33
Married	15	16.67

Table 3. Demographic of the respondents in terms of Marital Status

Table 3 showed that the research indicated there were 16.67% married students and 83.33% single students, which may be related to the reasons why some students were at risk of dropping out of school. Marital status is also a factor contributing to why some students experience early pregnancies.

2.1 Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of Personal Factors

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Total	WM	Interpretation
1. I have difficulty gaining friends.	32	6	5	36	11	90	3.13	Neutral
2. I am sickly.	25	6	8	31	20	90	2.83	Neutral
3. I wanted to be alone by myself.	21	20	15	32	2	90	3.29	Neutral
4. I am not ready for high school.	10	10	4	62	4	90	2.56	Neutral
5. I am engaged in different vices (eg. Alcoholism, gambling and etc.)	0	0	16	72	2	90	2.16	Disagree
6. I'm into fraternities / gangs.	0	5	12	60	13	90	2.10	Disagree
7. I lack motivation to study.	25	32	12	21	0	90	3.68	Agree
8. I lack self-confidence.	20	38	18	9	5	90	3.66	Agree
9. I have no one to talk about my school problems.	13	36	24	8	9	90	3.40	Neutral
10. I got pregnant / I have a child	15	0	0	75	0	90	2.50	Disagree

Total	*2.93*	*Neutral*

Table 4. Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of Personal Factors

Table 4 presented findings related to personal factors affecting students, revealing a generally neutral stance on various challenges they faced. Many students reported difficulty in forming friendships, with 32 strongly agreeing and a weighted mean of 3.13. Additionally, 25 students indicated health issues, resulting in a mean of 2.83, while 21 students expressed a desire for solitude, reflected in a mean of 3.29. A significant number felt unprepared for high school, as evidenced by a mean of 2.56 for the statement "I am not ready for high school." Students disagreed with statements regarding engagement in vices and gang involvement, with means of 2.16 and 2.10, respectively. However, challenges related to motivation and self-confidence emerged as more pressing concerns, with weighted means of 3.68 and 3.66 for the statements "I lack motivation to study" and "I lack self-confidence," respectively. Overall, the total weighted mean of 2.93 suggested that while students generally held a neutral view regarding their personal challenges, specific areas such as motivation and self-confidence required further attention to support their educational success.

2.2 Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of Family Factors

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Total	WM	Interpretation
1. My parents do not support me.	15	52	2	10	11	90	3.56	Agree
2. I came from a broken family.	30	48	0	12	0	90	4.07	Agree
3. I don't have enough funds to support.	39	42	0	9	0	90	4.23	Agree
4. I always have fights with my siblings.	18	25	38	0	9	90	3.48	Neutral
5. I have to work and earn money for the family.	42	38	0	8	2	90	4.22	Agree
6. I didn't grow up with my parents.	35	40	0	15	0	90	4.06	Agree
7. I lack communication with parents.	35	42	10	10	5	102	4.42	Agree
8. I experienced physical abuse from my family.	31	36	10	12	1	90	3.93	Agree
9. I can't study at home because of poor home condition.	39	36	7	6	2	90	4.16	Agree
10. I have excessive family responsibilities.	32	39	15	4	0	90	4.10	Agree
Total							*4.02*	*Agree*

Table 5. Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of Family Factors

Table 5 indicated significant challenges related to family factors that affected students, with a total weighted mean of 4.02, suggesting general agreement on these issues. Many students reported a lack of parental support, reflected in a mean of 3.56, while 30 students strongly agreed that they came from broken families, resulting in a mean of 4.07. Financial constraints were prevalent, with 39 students indicating insufficient funds to support their education (mean of 4.23), and the necessity for students to work for their families was highlighted with a mean of 4.22. Additionally, many students reported not growing up with their parents (mean of 4.06) and lacking communication with them (mean of 4.42). Experiences of physical abuse were noted by 31 students (mean of 3.93), and poor home conditions hindered studying for 39 students (mean of 4.16). These findings underscored the critical need for targeted interventions to provide emotional support and resources to address the challenges stemming from family dynamics, ultimately aiming to enhance students' academic success and well-being.

2.3 Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of Socio-Economic Factors

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Total	WM	Interpretation
1. Low family income affects my academic performance	22	56	12	0	0	90	4.11	Agree
2. The cost of my studies like projects and other contributions at school may affect my academic performance	26	42	16	6	0	90	3.98	Agree
3. I don't have enough allowance to sustain my needs at school	32	48	10	0	0	90	4.24	Agree
4. I need to work to sustain my studies	30	25	20	6	9	90	3.68	Agree
5. My parents don't have permanent job to sustain my studies	35	39	12	0	4	90	4.12	Agree
6. I have many siblings to support studies	12	48	15	10	5	90	3.58	Agree
7. My family is not a 4ps beneficiaries	15	32	0	30	13	90	3.07	Neutral
8. I have many responsibilities at home like taking good care of our domesticated animals	38	36	10	5	1	90	4.17	Agree
9. My family don't have enough budget for my schooling	40	44	6	0	0	90	4.38	Agree
10. I need to support my schooling by myself.	32	44	5	5	4	90	4.06	Agree
Total							*3.94*	*Agree*

Table 6. Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of Socio-Economic Factors

Table 6 indicated that socio-economic factors significantly impacted students' academic performance, with a total weighted mean of 3.94, reflecting general agreement on these challenges. Many students reported that low family income (mean of 4.11) and insufficient financial support for school needs (mean of 4.24) adversely affected their education. Additionally, the necessity to work to sustain their studies (mean of 3.68) and the lack of permanent employment among parents (mean of 4.12) further exacerbated these issues. The findings underscored the critical need for targeted interventions, such as financial assistance programs and resources to support students' educational needs, which could help alleviate the burden on families and improve academic outcomes.

2.4 Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of School Factors

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Total	WM	Interpretation
1. I have difficulty understanding the lessons discussed by the teacher	26	39	13	10	2	90	3.86	Agree
2. School works are too hard for me.	23	52	10	5	0	90	4.03	Agree
3. Absenteeism of teachers.	22	25	38	2	3	90	3.68	Agree

4. Poor school facilities.	39	26	10	7	8	90	3.90	Agree
5. Overcrowded classrooms	48	39	5	0	4	96	4.61	Strongly Agree
6. My schoolmates bullied me.	13	60	16	1	0	90	3.94	Agree
7. My teachers are too traditional and boring.	12	26	12	30	10	90	3.00	Neutral
8. I am not interested in attending classes	30	34	8	15	2	89	3.80	Agree
9. I lack books and other needed school materials.	37	29	6	18	0	90	3.94	Agree
10. My teachers have unpleasant attitude and inconsiderate in students.	24	22	8	20	16	90	3.20	Agree
Total							*3.80*	*Agree*

Table 7. Challenges encountered by the respondents in terms of School Factors

Table 7 revealed that various school factors had a notable effect on students' academic experiences, with an overall weighted mean of 3.80. Many students expressed challenges in understanding lessons (mean of 3.86) and felt that schoolwork was overly difficult (mean of 4.03). Concerns about overcrowded classrooms (mean of 4.61) and experiences of bullying (mean of 3.94) were also significant. These results emphasize the critical need for enhancements in school environments, teaching strategies, and available resources, indicating that addressing these factors could lead to improved student engagement and academic performance.

3.1 Significant Relationship between demographic profile and challenges encountered by respondents in terms of Sex

Challenges Encountered/Factors	Chi-square value	P-value	Interpretation
Personal Factors	2.86	0.039	Significant
Family Factors	4.62	0.027	Significant
Socio-economic Factors	3.68	0.021	Significant
School Factors	4.01	0.351	Significant

Table 8. Relationship between challenges encountered and respondents' Sex

Table 8 showed significant relationships between challenges encountered by students and their sex, with personal factors (Chi-square value of 2.86, p-value of 0.039), family factors (Chi-square value of 4.62, p-value of 0.027), and socio-economic factors (Chi-square value of 3.68, p-value of 0.021) all indicating significance. In contrast, school factors did not show a significant relationship (Chi-square value of 4.01, p-value of 0.351). These findings highlighted the need for gender-specific strategies to address personal and family challenges, ultimately aiming to improve support systems and educational outcomes for students.

3. 2 Significant Relationship between demographic profile and challenges encountered by respondents in terms of Age

Challenges Encountered/Factors	Chi-square value	P-value	Interpretation
Personal Factors	1.98	0.019	Significant
Family Factors	3.25	1.024	Significant
Socio-economic Factors	3.58	0.031	Significant
School Factors	3.23	0.022	Significant

Table 9. Relationship between challenges encountered and respondents' Age

Table 9 illustrated the relationship between the challenges encountered by students and their age, revealing significant findings for personal factors (Chi-square value of 1.98, p-value of 0.019), family factors (Chi-square value of 3.25, p-value of 1.024), socio-economic factors (Chi-square value of 3.58, p-value of 0.031), and school factors (Chi-square value of 3.23, p-value of 0.022). These results indicated that age was significantly associated with all types of challenges encountered by the respondents. The implications of these findings emphasized the importance of tailoring support strategies to address the specific challenges faced by students at different ages, thereby enhancing their educational experiences and outcomes.

3. 3 Significant Relationship between demographic profile and challenges encountered by respondents in terms of Marital Status

Challenges Encountered/Factors	Chi-square value	P-value	Interpretation
Personal Factors	4.58	0.369	Significant
Family Factors	3.26	1.022	Significant
Socio-economic Factors	2.96	1.042	Significant
School Factors	0.07	0.997	Not Significant

Table 10. Relationship between challenges encountered and respondents' Marital Status

Table 10 presented the relationship between the challenges encountered by students and their marital status, indicating significant findings for personal factors (Chi-square value of 4.58, p-value of 0.369), family factors (Chi-square value of 3.26, p-value of 1.022), and socio-economic factors (Chi-square value of 2.96, p-value of 1.042). However, school factors showed no significant relationship with marital status (Chi-square value of 0.07, p-value of 0.997). These results suggested that marital status was associated with personal, family, and socio-economic challenges faced by the respondents. The implications highlighted the need for targeted interventions that consider marital status when addressing the specific challenges encountered by students, particularly in personal and family contexts, to improve their overall educational experience.

Conclusion

The conclusion drawn from our study highlighted that multiple factors contribute to the risk of students dropping out of school, necessitating targeted interventions to prevent premature school leaving. Our findings indicated that male students faced approximately twice the risk of dropping out compared to female students, aligning with common risk factors such as academic difficulties, lack of support, financial challenges, personal issues, and a general lack of interest in studies. To effectively address these challenges, it is essential to implement early detection and intervention systems to identify at-risk students and provide tailored support. Recommendations include offering individual assistance through mentorship and counseling, increasing community and family involvement, fostering a positive school culture that promotes inclusivity, providing comprehensive academic and career guidance, implementing social-emotional support programs, and considering flexible learning options. By addressing these areas, schools can create a more supportive environment that encourages student engagement and retention.

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