

**DROPOUT AND ITS SOCIAL EFFECTS AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF
ZAMFARA NIGERIA**

AHMAD KAINUWA

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2017

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SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF
ZAMFARA NIGERIA**

by

AHMAD KAINUWA

**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

November 2017

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated, with deepest love and everlasting respect, to my late parents. Without their prayers, support and encouragement, I could not have reached this stage. It is also dedicated to the entire members of my family for their patience and support throughout the period of my research and to my loving friends for their patience while being away from me. Their sweetest memories keep me working hard.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My humble salutation is to the Almighty Allah who enabled me to reach this stage. Peace blessings, salutations, benedictions and glorification of Allah are upon our noble prophet Muhammad (SAW), his companions and who so ever followed their footsteps till the day of resurrection. My struggle in pursuing my PhD has given me both strenuous time and valuable experience which would be engraved in my thoughts forever. I am taking this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to those who have made me succeed in this challenging Endeavour.

It would not have been possible to write this thesis without the help and support that I received from the people around me. I would like to sincerely thank all the people who contributed in one way or another to the work presented in this thesis. While it is not possible to thank everyone who helped me to reach this stage in my life, I will try to acknowledge those who made the completion of this work possible.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere appreciation, to my main supervisor, Prof Madya Dr. Najeemah Bint, Moh'd Yusof, for her guidance, patience, and insight throughout the research. Deepest thanks to Dr. Jamalsafri Bin Saibon, my core supervisor for his valuable suggestions and comments to improve my work. As well my unqualified appreciation and gratitude to Prof Shukri Statistical Methodology Adviser, Institute of Postgraduate Studies USM for his constructive advice, corrections assistance and inputs which made it possible for me to successfully complete this work.

I equally thank the management, Directors and entire staff of Zamfara State Female Education Board Gusau under the leadership of Dr. Lubabatu Lawal

Ammani, I'm particularly acknowledging the support of Dr. Lubabatu towards my academic and educational career.

I would also like to thank the entire management of Federal University Gusau who employed me before completing my PhD program and permitted me to complete the program. Special thanks go to Professor Mohammed Lawal Mayanci, Head of Department (HOD) Educational Foundations and also Dean Student's Affairs, Federal University Gusau, I salute him for his support, assistance and contribution as well as experience-sharing which have enriched me and this work. Many thanks also go to Professor Muhammad Aliyu Bunza, the Dean Faculty of Humanities and Education and all my colleagues and the entire members of the University for supporting me throughout writing this thesis and my life in general.

Many have contributed to make this study possible and successful. This study would not have been possible without the respondents who sacrificed their valuable time to communicate in this report by sharing their views and experiences. These include all principals and teachers of junior and senior secondary schools of Shinkafi local government, their students both dropouts and non-dropouts and also the parents of the affected students. I am greatly indebted to them for their contributions. Many thanks go to them for sparing their time to provide information and share their views on the issue of secondary school students' educational participation in Shinkafi local government area.

A special word of gratitude goes to my late parents, brothers and sisters for their unlimited and unconditional support. I also thank my wife who has been a source of an inspiration to me and supported me every step of the way. Thank go to my children who frequently asked me when I would finish my PhD degree; this gave me the energy to continue and finish the work successfully. I thank them very much

for their patience, perseverance and endurance throughout the period of my stay in Malaysia.

Warm regards to all my colleagues in USM and in Nigeria. I salute them for their assistance and contribution as well as experience-sharing which have enriched me and this work.

Special thank also go to the Dean School of Educational Studies Professor Dr Hairul Nizam Ismail and his Deputies for their maximum support toward completing this research.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to Allah once again the Almighty God for making this research a reality.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFA	Education for All
WAEC	West African Examination Council
NECO	National Examination Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMG	United Nations Millennium Goals
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
PTA	ParentTeacher's Association
SBMC	School Based Management Committee
FOS	Federal Office of Statistics
NSC	National school census
NER	Nett Enrolment Ratio
FRN	Federal Republic of Nigeria
GMR	Global Monitoring Reports
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
AAIN	Action Aid International, Nigeria
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
NPE	National Policy on Education
AFTHD	Africa Human Development Department
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
UBE	Universal Basic Education

DFID	Department for International Development
UPE	Universal Primary Education
NEDS	Nigeria Education Data Survey
TEGINT	Transforming education for girls in Nigeria and Tanzania
SCT	Social Capital Theory
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age
IPOP	Indigenous People of Biafra
OPC	Oodua People's Congress

KECICIRAN DAN KESAN SOSIAL DALAM KALANGAN MURID SEKOLAH DI ZAMFARA NIGERIA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini adalah berkenaan keciciran dan kesan sosialnya dalam kalangan murid sekolah menengah di Zamfara Nigeria. Perbincangan dalam kajian ini adalah berdasarkan Teori Modal Social, teori Modal Manusia dan Teori Penentuan Diri. Seramai 620 orang responden terlibat dalam kajian kuantitatif yang terdiri daripada murid yang tercicir dan yang masih bersekolah. Bagi bahagian kualitatif, sampel terdiri daripada murid yang tercicir, ibu bapa murid yang tercicir, guru sekolah, pentabir dan pegawai pendidikan tinggi. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam kajian ini adalah soal selidik dan protokol temu bual untuk mendapatkan maklumat daripada respondent. Dalam kajian ini data dianalisis dengan menggunakan SPSS versi 2.2, kaedah yang digunakan untuk analisis data kuantitatif adalah statistik inferens yang melibatkan ujian T dan regresi logistik. Untuk analisis data kualitatif, analisis data kualitatif Manual telah dijalankan menggunakan pendekatan tematik. Keputusan Ujian T menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan faktor ekonomi, faktor sosial dan faktor sekolah antara murid yang tercicir dan yang masih bersekolah. Dapatan juga menunjukkan perbezaan yang signifikan antara jantina dan faktor ekonomi, sosial dan sekolah, Terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam pencapaian akademik antara murid tercicir dan yang masih bersekolah di sekolah menengah kerajaan Zamfara, Nigeria. Hasil dari regresi Logistik menunjukkan faktor ekonomi merupakan peramal terbaik bagi murid yang tercicir dari sekolah menengah kerajaan Zamfara, Nigeria. Analisis temu bual yang dijalankan dengan

murid, ibu bapa, guru, pentadbir dan pegawai pendidikan tinggi membuktikan status sosioekonomi, kekurangan dorongan daripada ibu bapa, masalah intitusi, aktiviti tradisional dan kepercayaan agama negatif ibu bapa menyebabkan keciciran. Kesan sosial dalam kajian ini termasuk kadar ketidakamanan yang tinggi di negara ini, jenayah sosial yang tinggi dan kekejaman, penglibatan dalam pelacuran dan hasil kesihatan yang kurang baik dan tahap penyalahgunaan kanak-kanak yang tinggi. Kajian ini akan menjadi penting kepada guru, sosiologi pendidikan, perancang pendidikan, agensi-agensi antarabangsa seperti UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, dan pertubuhan bukan kerajaan dengan mengamalkan cadangan dan cadangan kajian yang akan membantu mereka menyelesaikan fenomena penolakan pelajar dengan meningkatkan kualiti pendidikan menengah dan mengurangkan masalah keciciran di Zamfara, Nigeria.

DROPOUT AND ITS SOCIAL EFFECTS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF ZAMFARA NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

This research examined the dropout phenomenon and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara Nigeria. The discussion in the study is based on the theoretical framework of Social Capital Theory, Human Capital Theory and Self Determination Theory. A total of 620 respondents were involved in the quantitative study comprising of both dropout Students and non-dropouts. For the qualitative part, a sub-sample of dropouts, parents of dropouts, school teachers, administrators and senior education officers participated in the study. The instruments used in this research were questionnaire and interview to elicit information from respondents. In this study the data was analysed using SPSS version 22; the methods used for quantitative data analysis were inferential statistics which involved t-test and Logistic regression. For the qualitative data analysis, Manual Qualitative Data Analysis was conducted using thematic approach. Result of T-test shows that there is significant difference of economic factors, social factors and school factors between dropouts and non-dropouts. The result also revealed that there is significant difference of economic factors, social factors and school factors across gender and there is significant difference of academic achievement between dropouts and non-dropouts among students from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria. The result of Logistic regression indicated that economic factors are the best predictors of students' dropout from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria. Social factors of parents and school factors are not significantly

associated and have low incidence of dropping out compared to economic factors. Analysis of the interviews conducted with students, parents, teachers, administrators and senior education officers provided significant insights into the socio-economic status, lack of encouragement from the parent, institutional problems, traditional activities and negative religious beliefs of the parents. The social effects in this study include high level of social crimes and atrocities, involvement in prostitution and poor health outcomes and high level of child abuse. The study will be significant to teachers, sociologists, educational planners, government, and international agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and nongovernmental organizations by putting into practice the suggestions and recommendations of the study which will help them tackle adequately the phenomenon of student's dropout by improving the quality of secondary education and minimize the problem of dropout in Zamfara, Nigeria.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on dropout and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara Nigeria. The chapter provides the background to the study, brief background of the study area, rationale for choosing the study area (Zamfara) and research purpose. The chapter went further in stating the statement of the research problem, pointing out the objectives, which the study aims to achieve by asking some questions in the research questions and research hypotheses through an appropriate methodology. The chapter finally discusses the significance of the study, organization of the study, scope and limitation of the study, research gap; operational definition of terms and summary of the whole chapter.

Education, no doubt, remains the most outstanding development priority area in the world. The core purpose of education is human development. Other things being equal, an educated person who is well or relevantly positioned in the socio-economic, cultural and political milieu is expected to be a valuable asset to the society than individual who is illiterate and perhaps ignorant (Ogundokun & Adeyemo, 2010). This simple fact explains why researchers and scholars all over the world, continue to research into ways of improving human knowledge and development by investigating the problems facing the education system such as the problem of dropout particularly in secondary schools (Ogundokun & Adeyemo, 2010). The socio- political and economic and technological development, which bring about a high frequency of innovations and reforms, have all combined to make discussion or debates on education and human development trendy, exciting and unending (Ogundokun & Adeyemo, 2010).

Furthermore, education is as important and very essential to man as life itself in this world. Societies through ages have one form of education or the other, whether indigenous or western education. Education varies from place to place and from time to time. In fact, it is a very important means of developing any nation. The term education has not lent itself to any strict consensual definition as it depends on the perspective from which one views it. It can be considered as the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, factors, interest, abilities, competence and the cultural norms of a society by people to transmit this life to the coming generations to enhance perpetual development of the society (Okoro, 2011). The Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2002) documented that, education improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life such as child labor as well as bringing about empowerment. Hence, secondary education builds upon the basic educational foundation which has been laid at primary education. The success of secondary education is dependent upon the foundation earlier laid, whether such was solid or not (OH, 2012).

In Nigeria, education is considered the most important instrument for change and national development. However, of all the problems facing Nigeria's education system, none is more agonizing and persistent as the poor academic performance of students and dropout, especially of secondary schools, at the external examinations conducted by the West African examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). In addition, this has resulted in frustration, high dropout rate particularly in secondary school and inability to gain admission into tertiary institutions. In spite of numerous efforts made by researchers, educators and policy makers to tackle this problem, academic performance of students and the

problem of dropout does not seem to have improved (Ogundokun & Adeyemo, 2010).

The problems facing Nigeria educational system cannot, however, be over generalized because of the diversity characterizing its history which makes some problems peculiar to certain regions. This means for example, that while the education of female children and women is characterized by low enrolment than that of boys, females enroll in larger numbers at the lower primary levels than males, but the numbers begin reducing midway in the cycle and drop drastically by the end of the cycle. In Nigeria, variations in educational participation between genders are quite significant and the similarity of problems in most parts of the country nevertheless, makes concern over secondary education pertinent and deserving of special attention (Atayi, 2008).

The global Figureure of out of school and dropout children according to UNICEF (2007), are estimated at 121 million, with 65 million being female children and 80 per cent of these female children are in Sub Saharan Africa. Despite the attention given to secondary school education, gender equality in education in terms of enrolment and completion as highlighted in the Dakar World Education Forum (2000), there is still problem of secondary school dropout where many children in Sub-Saharan Africa and Nigeria are being denied their fundamental human right (Driscoll, 2008) and consequently dropout from secondary schools. One of the key objectives of the World Education forum on Education for All adopted by the World Summit for Children in 1990 is universalizing access and promoting equity and minimizing problem of dropout in the area of education. This Forum identified provision of access, the improvement of quality education for male, female children

and women, remove obstacles and parental factors that hampers their active participation and lead to their dropping out (Lawal, 2010).

The challenge of school completion is not confined to Nigeria; millions of children and youth around the world are denied or have limited access to education. For those who are fortunate to have the opportunity for some level of public schooling, it is often limited to a primary education. For those who attend school, the promise for a future based on their education is not bright, causing countless numbers to drop out of school and look to survive on the streets (United Nations Millennium Goals, 2008). By examining the dropout issue globally, it becomes clear that many of the challenges around completing school are the same; what varies is the scope and depth of the problem. In January 2008, the United Nations established the Millennium Development Indicators. The second goal of this auspicious list references education and it reads as follows:

“Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.” (United Nations Guidelines, 2008 in Edwards, 2013, p. 1).

The issue of dropout in Nigeria (especially Zamfara state) has been with education system for at list 20 years back when the state was established in 1996. Fafunwa (1983) noted that dropout is one of the most serious problems that have continued to affect our educational system negatively since independence in 1960 from the colonial administration. Even before we got our independence, the problem of dropout has already established its grip on our educational system (Ajaja, 2012). Dropping out from school occurs after children have previously achieved access to school. A major problem in many developing countries, dropping out is often obscured within statistical data and by the emphasis on initial access (Hunt, 2008).

Dropping out of students from secondary schools can be caused by many factors such as parental and school factors (Ananga, 2011).

Economic factors are found to be some of the contributing factors to secondary school dropout; these include monthly family income, financial situation of parents and engaging in selling. Other factors include accessing of internet connection, organizing extra lessons, cost of transportation and cost of text books as usually mentioned by the parents (Kainuwa, 2014). According to the United Nations Millennium Goals (2008), children from some of the Nigerian states are not likely to enroll in school, and if they do, it is unlikely they will complete primary and secondary education due to the high level of poverty. High levels of poverty often force parents to choose between food for the family and school for the children. This situation becomes magnified when looking at higher levels of education and it contributes to the cycle of poverty which was passed on from generation to generation. Often parents choose to take their children out of school and involve them in activities that produce income, and many times these activities are illegal, immoral, and extremely detrimental to the lives of the children (NBS, 2009, United Nations Millennium Goals, 2008). In Nigeria especially Zamfara state, there is high poverty rate among parents, which may be attributed to economic factors. This may have relationship with their inability to meet the financial demands for their children schooling (Yusuf, 2008).

Social factors include sub-variables such as meeting from time-to-time with teachers and having regular connection with children's school. Other social factors are spending time with children outside school hours, participating in extracurricular activities of children and attending Parents Teacher's Association (PTA) and School Based Management Committee (SBMC) meeting for the benefit and motivation of

children. Other studies (Begum, Khan & Iqbal, 2007) suggest that social traditional environment, which is rooted in culture, creates the barriers that rob females of their human identity and social rights. Begum, Khan and Iqbal (2007), maintained that, a negative attitude toward girls' education, control of women's lives, male privilege and time constraints as well as the multiple roles women perform are some of the cultural barriers impeding women access to education.

School factors in secondary school do matter; studies by Rumberger and Lim (2008) show that students are less likely to drop out if they attend schools with a stronger academic climate and available learning facilities. On the other hand, students are more likely to drop out in schools with a poor academic and disciplinary climate and unavailable learning facilities. Other school factors may also contribute to secondary school dropout such as differential treatment by teachers and lack of understanding of subjects taught. Other school factors are sexual harassment by teachers and non – teaching staff, lack of free hostel facilities, lack of basic facilities in schools, hostels and in the classrooms.

Inadequate scholarship paid, inability to get scholarship and absence of free textbooks in the school are also among many factors that can lead to the problem of dropout. Other factors that are related to school are indifferent attitude towards children by teachers, lack of discipline, collecting too much money from the students for school activities and classroom maintenance. Other factors in this regard are preferential treatment given to chosen sections by teachers, either according to communal caste or religion, going on leave very frequently by teachers, discriminatory treatment by the teachers inside the classroom to mention but a few (Shahidul & Karim, 2015).

On the relationship between gender and the problem of dropout, female students were found to be the most vulnerable group that dropout of school. Issues of early marriage and teenage pregnancy most often associated with females as well as the parental factors and school factors (Green and Marcus, 2005) may have created this situation. Thus, the problem of students' dropout from secondary schools seems worth stressing. The 2005 National school census (NSC) revealed that there are large gender disparities between Southern and Northern Nigeria partly due to the parental factors and school factors. Female net enrolment Ratio (NER) in some states in the South are as high as 70% while some in the North like Zamfara are as low as 10%. So, it is pertinent that a study is done to identify the exact causes of dropout in Zamfara. The present study aims to investigate dropout and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara Nigeria.

1.1 Background to the study

The National Policy on Education in Nigeria was launched in 1977. The orientation of the policy is geared towards self-realization, individual and national efficiency, national unity, aimed at achieving social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological development. In 1985, the objectives of the policy were broadened to include free primary education among others; and this policy has been reviewed from time to time (Amaghionyeodiwe & Osinubi, 2006). Until 1984, the structure of Nigeria education system was 6 years of primary schools, 5 to 7 years of post-primary schools (Secondary, Teacher Training College and sixth form) and 4 to 6 years of tertiary education (College of education, polytechnics, College of Technology and University education). From 1985, the structure of Nigeria education system can be classified thus, pre-primary or kindergarten education (2 to

3 years), for the children of ages 3 to 5 years the primary school which is of 6 years' period for children of ages 6 to 11 years, the post primary education which is of 6 years' duration but divided into two halves 3 years of junior secondary school and 3 years of senior secondary school and the 4 to 6 years of tertiary education level. This is called the 6-3-3-4 system (Anyanwu, 1999 cited in Amaghionyeodiwe & Osinubi, 2006). Since the inception of the Obasanjo led administration in 1999, a Universal Basic Education Scheme was launched in 1999. The specific targets of the scheme are total eradication of illiteracy by the year 2010 and increase in adult literacy rate from 57% to 70% by 2003 by increasing the enrollment rate and minimizing the problem of dropout (FRN, 2001).

In Nigeria, there is a sequence of higher educational levels, the first channel assumes that a graduate went through Nigeria certificate in education (NCE) and then to the university. The other two channels are the more common ones, that is, those who went straight from secondary school to university and those who went through polytechnics to university (Amaghionyeodiwe & osinubi, 2006). A variety of patterns around the problem of students drop out emerges, but these differ according to context. Looking at Global Monitoring Reports (GMR) survey data on student's drop outs from primary and secondary schooling in Africa and South Asia some indications of the scale of the problem are evident. In the South Asian countries with data available (UNESCO, 2006) different patterns of access emerge. Similar to the African countries, both Bangladesh and India have large drop outs from grade one who are between the ages of 13-14 in secondary school (14.6% for Bangladesh; 14.4% for India). However, these reduce to 4.4% for India and around 10% in Bangladesh in grade two. Drop out in Nepal remains more constant between 7-10% through the grades.

Nigeria has been committed to education in the belief that overcoming gender disparity will accelerate gender parity for national educational development. Despite Nigeria's tendencies to equalize educational opportunities for boys and girls, there tend to be perpetual inequalities as many poor people are denied from educational processes and outcomes (OH, 2012). According to Obadiya (2011), the girl-child contends with challenges like forced under-age marriages, girl-child labor and trafficking, displacements from armed conflicts as well as unhealthy cultural practices. In the same vein, children will not go to school because of cost of schooling, opportunity cost, illness and hunger, limited economic costs of education and low quality of schooling (Action Aid International, Nigeria-AAIN, 2003).

Despite international and national efforts to ensure a successful migration from gender disparity to gender parity of secondary school students, huge success has not been recorded. Evidence has noted that in Nigeria, governmental, non-governmental and private initiatives within and outside the frontiers of the nation for the northern states to embrace education has proved abortive (Mohammed, 2004). The number of secondary school students more especially girls attending schools in some northern states of Nigeria such as Niger, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto is still abysmally low while the male child has a choice to attend; his female counterpart is strictly discouraged from obtaining the basic western education (UNGEI-Nigeria, 2012, www.ungei.org). UNGEI-Nigeria (2012) further stated that there are still millions of boys and girls without access to primary needless secondary education across the continent and many millions that have started drop out.

The crisis of secondary school's dropout is an international problem and the prevalence of drop out varies between and within countries depending on the educational structure and patterns of participation in that country (Collins, 2009).

Drop out, by definition, depends on children being previously enrolled, and so in countries where there is low initial enrolment, actual numbers who drop out may be lower than where initial enrolment is high. In a survey of UNESCO institute for statistics (UIS, 2005) data as in (Bruneforth, 2006) on Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia and Nigeria on the characteristics of children who drop out of school, a number of conclusions were drawn. Another data that supports the previous statistics by showing dropout rates for secondary school students was World Bank report (2004), which revealed that children are unlikely to complete even primary school under conditions of extreme poverty of their parent.

The problem of dropout is a subject of major concern in most developed countries. Secondary school dropouts experience considerably larger unemployment rates than their better-educated peers and are much more exposed to poverty and delinquency (Belfield & Levin, 2007). In periods of economic stagnation, the gap between dropouts and other young people tends to increase over time, leading to rising polarization and concern for social cohesion. Dropout in its simplest meaning is the untimely withdrawal from school. These students who withdraw from school prematurely end up not obtaining any certificate of graduation. The issue of dropout is a global problem confronting the education industry round the world. Researchers like; Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison (2006), and Oghuvbu (2008) have since buttressed this fact.

According to United Nation (2013), progression to the next education level is also a challenge. In fact, among class 6 students who are between 13 to 14 years, only 53 percent transitioned to secondary school. The secondary completion rate is even lower. A high percentage of students never finish secondary school and only 29 percent of those who started school graduated secondary school at the official

graduating age of 17 years old. Even if there is a delay up to age 24, only 75 percent finish secondary school and the remaining 25 percent never finish secondary school (UN, 2013).

The variables or indicators linked to secondary school dropout that were used for this study were selected based on the conceptual framework developed for this study, but the variable selection was also supported by various articles of published research (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Suh & Suh, 2000). The variables include parental factors, which include economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement (Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Rumberger, 2001).

Economic factors include monthly family income, financial situation, engaging in selling, having access to internet connection, organizing extra lessons, cost of transportation, cost of text books to mention but a few. Social factors include issues such as meeting from time-to-time with teachers, having regular connection with children's school, spending time with children outside school hours and participating in extracurricular activities of children to motivate them. Other social factors are: attending Parents Teacher's Association (PTA) meeting for the benefit of children, attending School Based Management Committee (SBMC) meeting and usual encouragement of children to seek help from teachers for schoolwork.

School factors are some of the factors (related to schools especially secondary schools) either which are contributing positively or negatively to the education of secondary school students of the study area; these include lack of discipline, collecting too much money from the students for school activities and classroom maintenance. Other school factors include preferential treatment given to chosen sections by teachers, according to either communal caste or religion, going on leave very frequently by teachers and discriminatory treatment by the teachers inside the

classroom. Others are extracting too much of other works from the students by teachers apart from school activities, misuse of students for personal reasons by the teachers during regular working hours and insufficient place to study at home among others (Shahidul & Karim, 2015).

Academic achievement on the other hand, represents performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, college, and university. School systems mostly define cognitive goals that either apply across multiple subject areas (e.g., critical thinking) or include the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in a specific intellectual domain (e.g., numeracy, literacy, science, history). Therefore, academic achievement should be considered to be a multifaceted construct that comprises different domains of learning.

From the foregoing, attempt was made to explain the meaning of dropout, discussed the seriousness of the problem, x-rayed the causes and characteristics of possible dropout, highlighted the consequences of dropout, and finally the strategies to reduce the problem of dropout. Instead of replicating studies that dealt with the above recurring variables, this study concentrated its efforts on dropouts in gender types based on the factors contributing to the problem of dropout and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara Nigeria. These factors include parental factors (economic factors, social factors), school factors and academic achievement. The gender of interest is male and female secondary school students. The findings of this study also provided the necessary suggestions that could be applied to lessen dropout from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.

1.1.1 Brief Background of the Study Area

Zamfara is a state in northwestern Nigeria its capital is Gusau. Until 1996 the area was part of Sokoto State. The area today called Zamfara state (see Appendix J) was one of the old Hausa city-states like Kano, Katina, Gobir, Kabi and Zazzau. It extends up to the bend of River Rima to the North West and River Ka in the southwest. Zamfara Kingdom was established in the 11th century and flourished up to 16th century as a city-state. Its capital has shifted with the fortunes of the kingdom from place to place like Dutsi and Birnin Zamfara. Zamfara state comprises of fourteen local government areas according to the regulation of three tiers (levels) of government under presidential system (Bashiru, 2010).

1.1.2 Rationale for Choosing the Study Area (Zamfara)

Zamfara State is located in the north-west of Nigeria (see Appendix J) bordering the Niger Republic to the north east, Katsina State to the east, Katsina and Kaduna State to the south, and Kebbi and Sokoto State to the west. Agriculture provides employment for most of the people especially in the rural areas, but in the city, commerce and both formal and informal sector occupations play a major role. The Hausa-Fulani ethnic group accounts for over 90% of the population, although the state capital is assuming a more cosmopolitan character, with all the major ethnic groups having a vivid representation. The state capital is situated in Gusau. Despite the fact that the state has lagged behind many others in educational attainments and overall living standards, it has earned an impeccable reputation of being amongst the most peaceful, especially in view of the sporadic cases of ethnic and religious skirmishes experienced in several other states of the country.

Poverty and low educational attainment amongst women and men and their families in the rural areas of Zamfara State of Nigeria have been rife and have presented a major challenge (Sanda & Garba, 2007). Data from the Federal Office of Statistics show that more than 70% of Nigerians live on less than US\$2 a day and the country as a whole is adjudged to be amongst the poorest, with a UNDP report ranking the country 152nd amongst a list of 175 countries (UNDP, 2004). These overall indicators present a grim picture, which in fact is worsened by regional variations in the rates of poverty. Comparing rural and urban areas, Canagarajah & Thomas (2001) show that poverty rates were 78% in the rural areas, compared with 34% in the urban areas. Their study also revealed that while some states in the country witnessed some improvement in poverty rates, others have recorded deterioration, with Sokoto in particular reported to have recorded the highest increase of more than 6 percentage points in the rates of poverty over the period 1985 and 1993. The state lags far behind many others in terms of educational enrolment figures. In 1996, it recorded an overall literacy rate of 21.4% for males and 9.71% for females, compared with the national average of 58.22% and 41.03% respectively. As for school enrolment, the state recorded an average of 20.46% for boys and 13.2% for girls, compared to the national average of 64.59% and 62.17% for boys and girls respectively (FOS, 1996).

The rationale for choosing Zamfara state for this study is because the recent study conducted by the researcher (Kainuwa, 2014) investigated only parental factors on female Muslim dropout from government junior secondary schools of the study area but the present study primarily centered on dropout and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara Nigeria. These factors include economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement, which are not

mentioned in the previous study conducted by the researcher. Despite the national policy on education (2004) which emphasized on equal opportunities for all citizens of the nation in primary, secondary and tertiary institution still great challenges lie ahead, if the goal of education is to be achieved, as pressing education problem or concern which include poor student participation, high dropout, repetition level, low academic performance and low student attendance still pose a threat to educational development in Zamfara state.

The findings of the recent study (Kainuwa, 2014) indicated that some students are from low socio-economic background where there is no-availability of audiovisual reading or writing materials but still perform beyond expectation academically. Similarly, some other students may come from high socioeconomic status where there is necessary encouragement and learning materials at their disposal. Yet they cannot perform academically as expected. The findings also show that some students are high achievers but still dropout and some students are low achievers but continue their school until graduation. Because of this, the present study intended to make deeper investigation on the issue of dropout in this area, which includes the gender of the respondents (both male and female children), parental factors, school factors and academic achievement.

However, to justify why Zamfara is so special that the study was done, Zamfara is a state that has lagged behind many others in educational attainments and overall living standards with a serious problem of dropouts (Kainuwa, 2014, Sanda & Garba, 2007); it is also a place where there is parent that occupied unequally position in the society. It is in the light of this, that the researcher became interested on the topic “Dropout and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara”.

1.1.3 Research Purpose

The problem of dropout has generated increased interest among researchers (Agbomeji, et al, 2010; Akinsolu, 2010; Akinsanya et al, 2011; Ajaja, 2012; Björkman-Nyqvist, 2013; Eneji et al, 2013; Borgen & Borgen, 2014; Broussard, 2014; Board, 2015;), policymakers, and educators in recent years (Bean, 1980). This study examines the many issues involved in trying to understand and solve this complex social and educational problem. The issues are grouped into four areas covering the economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement. The study also examines the differences of these factors between dropouts and non-dropouts in the study area. Within each area, the discussion identifies the important issues involved. The purpose of this study is to investigate dropout and its social effects among secondary school students of Zamfara Nigeria. The study examines the relationship between parental factors (economic factors, social factors) and school factors and dropouts. The study examines the difference of parental factors and school factors across gender among students' dropouts, and also examines the difference of academic achievement between dropout and non-dropout.

Furthermore, the research determined which of the factors would be the best predictor of students' dropouts. In addition, the study identified other contributing factors of secondary school dropouts from the parents and student's perspectives; and investigated the social effects of dropout and its impact on the students.

Finally, the study provided suggestions, which were obtained from teachers, and administrators that could be applied to reduce the problem of dropout from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Education has many benefits and has positive impact in our life. Education, no doubt, remains the most outstanding development priority area in the world. An educated person is an asset for any country. In today's world, human capital is considered the best national resource. Education improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life (EFA, 2002). An educated person can explore better opportunities for himself and the entire nation would get benefited from his works (Ogundokun & Adeyemo, 2010). On one hand, secondary school education is important because, for one to be able to interface with the kind of technology that people need to be able to interface with today, computers and software for example, one needs more than a primary education typically. Typically, one needs at least a secondary education to become computer literate and to interface with the kind of technology that is going to allow for at least a degree of prosperity to take root. So secondary school is very important. Hence, secondary education builds upon the basic educational foundation, which has been laid at primary education (OH, 2012).

However, there is much debate over the general topic of students dropping out of school especially from secondary school. There is much debate also, over the best indicators to use in identifying who is susceptible for dropping out of school. Studies have shown that various factors such as parental and school factors can be used as predictors of dropping out of school more especially from secondary school (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Lehr, et al., 2004). As noted by Collins (2009), the crisis of secondary school's dropouts is an international problem and the prevalence of drop out varies between and within countries depending on the educational structure and patterns of participation in that country and the factors that usually lead to dropout.

Researchers (Bridgeland et al., 2006; Wotherspoon 2004; Mary Clare Reim, 2014; Oghuvbu, 2008; Patrick 2008) indicated that in order to improve educational outcomes and minimize the problem of dropout in the United States and other countries in the world, special attention must be paid to economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement that contribute to students' retention in schools and be free from the problem of dropping out. Indeed, economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement, should be the focus of the current study over secondary school dropouts. The social effects of dropping out were also investigated in this study.

In relation to Africa, Yaw Ansu Director Africa Human Development Department (AFTHD) mentioned in one of the World Bank (2004) reports that “yet, secondary school enrolment in African countries averages only about 30%, compared to 65% for developing countries worldwide, and close to 100% in East Asia. From the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) secondary data analysis, it is clear that the problem of secondary school dropout remains the biggest challenge in Nigerian, although the proportion of secondary school dropout might appear to be reducing. There appears to be an urgent need to focus research on secondary school students that are more likely to drop out in the study area.

There are many potential causes of dropout, pertaining to the individual, the school and the social environment (Rumberger and Lim, 2008; Murnane, 2013, Goux, Gurgand, & Maurin, 2014), but the mechanisms leading to dropout are not completely understood. It is clear that the number of children enrolled in school has increased over time. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of children who start secondary school are not completing this cycle. There are many factors associated with drop out, some of which belong to the individual, such as poor health or

malnutrition and motivation (Sabates, Akyeampong, Westbrook, & Hunt, 2011). Others emerge from children's household situations such as child labor and poverty. School level factors also play a role in increasing pressures to drop out such as teacher's absenteeism, school location and poor quality educational provision. The system of educational provision at the community level generates conditions that can ultimately affect the likelihood of children to drop out from school. Therefore, both demand and supply driven factors, are embedded in cultural and contextual realities, which make each circumstance different.

Nevertheless, it is possible to make general points about the causes of drop out. First, there is not one single cause of drop out. Dropout is often a process rather than the result of one single event, and therefore has more than one proximate cause (Hunt, 2008). Second, poverty appears to influence the demand for schooling, not only because it affects the inability of households to pay school fees and other costs associated with education, but also because it is associated with a high opportunity cost of schooling for children. As children grow older, the opportunity cost of education is even larger, hence increasing the pressure for children to work and earn income for the household as opposed to spending time in education. Third, distance to schools, poor quality of education, inadequate facilities, over crowded classrooms, inappropriate language of instruction, teacher absenteeism and, in the case of girl's school safety, are common causes for school dropout (Colclough, et al. 2000). These are seen as supply side causes of drop out, mainly driven at the school level. In the case of Zamfara there is not much knowledge on whether these factors are the main causes of secondary school dropout because no study was conducted on this aspect as a result the present study will investigate parental factors such as economic factors,

social factors and cultural and religious beliefs; as well as school factors and academic achievement.

Moreover, there is some discrepancy in the literature regarding the best factors to use in determining who is at risk of dropping out of school. This study was carried out to correct the imbalance in research efforts on our knowledge of school dropout. Most of the researches on dropout have been centered on causes, effects and remedies. Most if not all the researches in Nigeria on the same subject matter followed the same pattern. Investigation from Zamfara state Ministry of education (ZMOE, 2013) shows that no studies investigated dropout problems under the parental factors, school factors and academic achievement among secondary school students; this study is therefore very timely and significant.

The dropout problem is pervasive in the Nigerian education system. Many children, who enter school, are unable to complete secondary education and multiple factors are responsible for children dropping out of school. Risk factors begin to add up even before students enroll in school that includes: poverty, low educational and occupational level of parents. Other factors such as economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement usually create an environment, which negatively affects the value of education. Further, students could drop out because of a multitude of school factors such as differential treatment by teachers, lack of understanding of subjects taught, sexual harassment by teachers and non – teaching staff, lack of free hostel facilities, lack of basic facilities in schools among others. It is important to carefully investigate whether the aforementioned factors are the real causes of dropout among the secondary schools of the study area. Certain suggestions from teachers and administrators are also needed that could be applied to

reduce the problem of dropout from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.

The social effects of dropout and its impact on the students is another issue of great concern in this study, these referred to social consequences and problems that students are more likely to have encountered because of dropping out from school. The social effects may imply seasoned prostitution, poor health outcomes, missing all the different opportunities, high rate of insecurity in the country, high level of social crimes and atrocities and high level of child abuses. Other social effects may include pregnancy, creating an additional economic challenge for the young mother and risking perpetuation of the cycle of poverty for the child. Others include experiencing a wide array of labor market, earnings, social and income problems that exacerbate their ability to transit on to careers and stable marriages from their mid-20s onward, engagement in prostitution due to harsh economic situation, which puts them at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

With this backdrop, the present study tries to identify the major pull and push factors that lead to dropping out of school at secondary level for the children living in Zamfara, Nigeria. An attempt is made to uncover various factors associated with dropout and the social effects of dropping out among secondary schools of the study area. For this purpose, it draws on the recently concluded research study on “parental factors on female Muslim students’ dropout from government junior secondary schools of Shinkafi, Nigeria”. In addition, the study also considers ways to keep potential dropouts in school looking at the dropouts' own suggestions for changing the system.

Justification of why the parental factors, school factors and academic achievement are used in this research to Nigeria in Zamfara is that, educationally and

economically Zamfara is among the most backward states in Nigeria (Sanda & Garba, 2007, UNDP, 2004) that is why the study includes parental factors, school factors and academic achievement to investigate whether they are predictors of secondary school dropouts. Majority of the parents are lacking authentic religious knowledge, the absence of which sometimes made them to mix up their traditional beliefs and teaching of Islam; these beliefs sometimes leads the parents to withdraw their children from schools especially female children. School factors are also used to investigate the problems of secondary school dropout because majority of the schools in Zamfara like other Northern states are facing serious problems, which may negatively affect the secondary education and also lead to the problem of dropout among secondary school students of Zamfara.

Using academic achievement (Owoeye, & Yara, 2011, Akinsolu, 2010) as a factor also can be justified because some students may happen to be high achievers but still dropout, similarly some students may happen to be low achievers but remain in school. Despite the fact that studies were conducted in other states of Nigeria, using some of the variables used in this study, but it is not much known whether the result of the findings from other states can be applicable to Zamfara state due to unavailability of research on this aspect in the state. As a result of this therefore, there is still serious and emergent need to investigate whether economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement positively or negatively affect dropouts and non- dropouts from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.

The researcher's personal experience as an indigene of Zamfara state and working with different communities has shown that, despite the existence of the Universal Basic Education Act (UBE Act 2000-2004) in Nigeria, the secondary

school students in other communities of Zamfara do not participate much in basic education. The female dropouts in some schools were higher than males, 42.10% as against 28.67% (Ajaja, 2012). According to Ajaja, (2012) percentage of dropout was still higher among female students in other schools, 24.28% for females as against 21.47% for males. In another study it has shown that the participation of the female children and secondary school students in general in these communities is far greater than in other rural communities of Northern Nigeria with an increase of over 60% in enrolment (UNICEF & DFID Report 2008). It is of paramount importance therefore, to investigate the parental factors, which include economic factors, social factors and cultural and religious beliefs; as well as school factors and academic achievement and the relationship of these variables on secondary school students' dropout and provide solutions to the problem. By so doing, it is hope that the level of dropout will be reduced if not eliminated and the level of enrolment retention and completion will increase rapidly.

As mentioned earlier, data from the Federal Office of Statistics show that more than 70% of Nigerians more especially Zamfara state live on less than US\$2 a day (UNDP, 2004) which may directly affect the secondary school education and result to the serious problem of dropout the state is currently facing. The study contributes to the body of knowledge that unveils how the economic factors, social factors, school factors and academic achievement, are linked to students' decision to drop out from secondary school. Thus, dropout is not a mere problem that affects or impacts an individual, but it is a problem that affects the entire community as it has been noticed that certain dropouts get involved in crime (Jamil et al., 2010). Therefore, a study of this nature is pertinent and crucial as it is meant to raise awareness concerning school dropout and to understand more specifically the

phenomenon of school dropout from secondary schools. In addition to understanding, the causes and consequences of school dropout at the secondary school level thus stimulate the enactment of social policies that will help keep students in school. Investigating the difference of parental factors (economic factors and social factors) as well as school factors and academic achievement with the problem of dropouts is said to be very important and crucial in the study area, likewise choosing Zamfara state to be the research area is of paramount importance compared to other states in Nigeria; this is because poverty and low educational attainment amongst the inhabitants of Zamfara State of Nigeria have been rife and have presented a major challenge (Sanda & Garba, 2007) affecting negatively the education of secondary school students.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine if there are significant differences of economic factors, social factors and school factors between dropouts and non-dropouts from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.
2. To examine if there are significant differences of economic factors, social factors and school factors across gender among dropouts from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.
3. To examine if there is a significant difference in academic achievement between dropouts and non-dropouts from government secondary schools of Zamfara, Nigeria.