



The Reasons for Secondary School Students Dropping Out: The Teachers' Point of View

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Abstract: Students dropping out has become a serious attention recently, particularly in the third world countries. Many notions have addressed the main factors which underlies such a phenomenon. This study, therefore, aimed to identify the reasons for secondary school students in Jordan dropping out of their schools from the teachers' point of view. In this sense, the teachers' perspective was necessary to obtain overall depictions related to behind reasons of students' dropping out. The descriptive approach was used in addition to the use of the questionnaire as a study tool. The study sample consisted of 150 secondary school teachers in Ajloun Governorate, Jordan. The study was held in the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022 AD. Based on the data, the study concluded that there were 16 reasons for students dropping out of their schools to a high degree, and 6 reasons leading to students dropping out of their schools to a moderate degree, and 4 reasons leading to students dropping out of their schools to a low degree.

INTRODUCTION

The education sector in any society is always linked to the progress of social (Otto et al., 2020; Spiel et al., 2018), economic (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019; Maresova et al., 2018; Song et al., 2021) and political levels (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019). Therefore, many countries pay attention to this sector, as it constitutes the basic building block for the development of states. The school is one of the most important means of achieving education, refining personality and minds, and consolidating values and principles that contribute to serving the nation and society (Khasanova, 2020; Malik, 2018; Shaturaev, 2021). Considering that education plays the significant roles in a state's progress, there is great interest from educators and specialists in studying

the conditions of education in general such as teaching and learning process, education management, development of the level of education, teaching staffs and students (Akhmedov et al., 2020; Mukhamadovna et al., 2020; Seballo & Teslenko, 2020).

Since the school seeks to achieve the factual conditions of community development, dropping out of it stands in the way of the generation acquiring the basic values, information, knowledge and skills in their intellectual, cognitive and social development. Thought and performance ultimately affect the level and quality of educational qualifications and unemployment in the country.

The school dropout is a renewable and continuous phenomenon that occurs in various developing and developed

societies alike, especially in third world countries (Ahn et al., 2018; Gaeta et al., 2021; Ugwuoke et al., 2021). Where the difference lies in the reasons that lead to the occurrence of leakage and in the rates of its occurrence, this is mainly related to the structure and culture of each society. Where many studies have dealt with this subject in a broad way in terms of causes, forms, methods of treatment and limiting its occurrence, and its effects, whether on the individual, society or the state.

In fact, the school serves as the second building after the family in the individual's acquisition of knowledge and various life skills and the formation of his social and psychological personality (Mahoney et al., 2021; Newman, 2020; Renatovna & Renatovna, 2021); to create educated generations capable of advancing the progress of their societies.

However, the occurrence of dropout contributes to an imbalance in these roles, which casts a dark shadow on the development of individuals and societies and the deterioration of the educational system (Ewiss et al., 2019; Langsten & Hassan, 2018). Education plays a determinant role for society, as it is one of the criteria that shows the extent of the economic, social and cultural progress of any society (Biltagy, 2019; Sika, 2019).

Here it is necessary to address the dropout that occurs without the student's desire to occur, and is related to the political, social and economic conditions of the society where he or student's family lives, including the influence of the school environment as well. The cause of the leakage is the responsibility of the other (Nasrallah, 2001). Accordingly, the attention came to the issue of dropout among secondary school students, as this stage is considered a pivotal stage in the student's life, which separates him from the beginning of entering the university stage, and the negative and dangerous effects. It reflects in order to draw the attention of those interested in education,

and to identify the causes of dropout from teachers' point of view.

By and large, the education sector suffers from some problems, including school dropout, as the community loses with the dropout the tender and energies of this important group and help in the advancement of their societies (Ashour, 2019; Aydin et al., 2019). The effects are negatively reflected on the psychological (Mahoney et al., 2021), educational, social (Otto et al., 2020; Spiel et al., 2018) and economic (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019) aspects of the dropout student in particular, and on the family and society in general. Therefore, it is our responsibility as educators to confront and know the main reasons for the persistence of this problem in order to be able to seek the proper solutions.

The study done by Moore (2017) aimed to examine the factors that cause school students to drop out before graduation. The study used the qualitative approach by using an individual interview guide, follow-up phone calls, and notes. The study sample consisted of 15 respondents from a high school in East Tennessee in the United States of America. The results of the study showed that most reasons of students' dropping are due to several factors such as students' lack of affiliation, exposure to bullying, and language barriers.

Meanwhile, the study conducted by Suárez et al. (2016) showed the risk factors for school dropout in a sample of the juvenile delinquents. The judicial files of a sample of 270 delinquents (218 males and 46 females) were examined in Asturias (Spain) in 2012. Multivariate logistic regression analyzes were performed to estimate the relationships between school dropouts and individual, family and school variables. The results indicated that school dropout is a multidimensional or complex process that is linked to all individual, family and school variables.

The other study also showed by UNRWA study-the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA, 2013), which aimed to identify the reasons that compel students to drop out of school. It examined as many as 172 UNRWA schools in various parts of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. To understand the reasons that compel students to drop out of their school, UNRWA educators interviewed the students, their families and their teachers. The data were analyzed at York University in the United Kingdom and the American Research Institute in Washington, DC. The study categorized its results into groups that include ten main reasons, and the results showed, in total, that the dropouts refer to issues related to academic aspects such as: academic achievement, lack of interest, or fear of exams. The results indicated that the majority of the dropouts experienced, at least, one risk factor at the socio-economic level.

After reviewing previous studies over different years and perspectives, the main reasons leading to students dropping out of their schools were studied, those of which are educational, social, cultural, economic and health reasons. Thus, the focus that should be examined in this study is to answer the following question: what are the reasons for secondary school students dropping out of their schools in Jordan from the teachers' point of view?

This study is necessary to conduct considering that it is still lack of attention behind the reasons of students dropping out from their schools, particularly from the teachers' point of views. Thus, the importance of this study lies in the following: 1) Provide a theoretical study about the reasons for dropping out in schools from the point of view of secondary school teachers, 2) Arriving at a set of proposals and recommendations to find out the reasons for the dropout, which would impede students' academic

progress and regular attendance at school in order to contribute to curbing this phenomenon, 3) The possibility of implementing awareness programs related to the results of the study to be presented to students and educational institutions in Jordan. To explore and examine such questions, therefore, this study aimed to identify the reasons for secondary school students dropping out of their schools in Jordan from the point of view of the secondary school teachers.

METHOD

To achieve the objectives of the study and answer the research questions, the descriptive approach was used. It is an approach that aims to describe the phenomenon as it is on the ground, and then analyze, interpret and link it to other phenomena (Apuke, 2017). For study population, it consisted of all secondary school teachers in the schools of Ajloun Governorate, who numbered 639 teachers. Then, the study sample comprised of 150 teachers who were chosen by the simple random method, with a percentage of 23.4 % of the original study population as described in Table 1 related to distribution of study sample members according to demographic variables.

To achieve the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was also designed based on the previous theoretical and research literature related to the various causes of dropout. The questionnaire prepared by the two researchers consisted of two parts: the first part contained demographic information, while the second part included items of the study tool and its items in its initial form consisted of 31 paragraphs, and the questionnaire items were prepared to answer them according to the five-point Likert scale, as follows: (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), and the responses were given numerical values, which are (5,4,3,2,1) respectively (Joshi et al., 2015).

To verify the validity of the study tool, the validity of the content was adopted, as it was presented in its initial form to a group of 12 arbitrators with their expertise and experience. They were asked to evaluate the degree of suitability of the questionnaire's paragraphs to what they were designed to measure, and to make any appropriate modification, whether by deletion, merging, or paraphrasing, and to clarify some statements that they believe inappropriate from their point of view. The arbitrators agreed on the validity of a large number of paragraphs, and suggested some The amendments in the formulation of the paragraphs that have already been modified, so that the study tool becomes in its final form of 26 paragraphs that measure the reasons for dropping out of secondary school students in Ajloun Governorate from the point of view of the teachers.

In this sense, to verify the stability of the study tool, the researcher used the internal consistency coefficient according to Cronbach's alpha equation, to extract the degree of stability of the study tool, and the total score for identifying the reasons for dropping out of schools from the teachers' point of view was 0.89, and this result indicates that this tool has good stability for the purposes of scientific research, and satisfies the purposes of the study.

To answer the study question, the following statistical methods were used: 1) Arithmetic averages and standard deviations for each item of the tool, and for the responses of the study sample members. 2) Application of the "Cronbach's alpha" coefficient of the stability of the instrument (Cronbach Alpha).

Study procedures: 1) A questionnaire was prepared to measure the reasons for dropping out of secondary school students in the schools of Ajloun Governorate from the teachers' point of view, depending on the theoretical and

methodological frameworks for constructing the questionnaires. 2) The study questionnaire was applied to an exploratory sample other than the study sample consisting of 30 teachers in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. 3) The study population was determined by all the secondary school teachers in male schools affiliated to the Directorate of Education in Ajloun Governorate in Jordan. 4) The sample of the study was determined, which is with the percentage of 23.4 % of secondary school students' teachers in male schools which were affiliated to the Directorate of Education in Ajloun Governorate in Jordan. 5) Data were then collected and statistically processed to answer scientifically the study questions. Finally, the tool was applied to the study sample members, and after the process of collecting questionnaires from the sample members was completed, after they answered them correctly.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To answer one of the main study questions, which states "what are the reasons for secondary school students dropping out of their schools in Jordan from the teachers' point of view?" To answer this question, the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the responses of the study sample members to the study tool items were extracted, and the following Table 1 illustrates this.

It is clear from the previous Table 1 that the total score of the study tool paragraphs to identify the reasons for dropping out of schools came at an average level with a total mean of 3.5, and with a total standard deviation of 0.68, from the point of view of the secondary school teachers in Ajloun Governorate schools where 16 items came at a high level. It points out that 6 items were at a medium level and 4 paragraphs with a low degree, in which the paragraph states "accompaniment" occurred buddies bad and ease "reliability" on the highest

arithmetic average, which reached 4.46 with a standard deviation of 0.89 and at a high level, while the paragraph that states "weakness of Administration school" on the lowest arithmetic average, which merely reached 2.15 with a standard deviation of 0.59 at a low level. This result can be attributed in the Table 1

below that the teachers confirm that bad companions and the family's lack of interests in the importance of education represent the biggest challenge faced by the students in schools, which may hinder their academic progress or feel unable to continue their studies, and consequent aversion to the educational process.

Table 1. Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of the Responses

Rank	Paragraphs	Average	Standard Deviation	Level
1	Accompany bad companions and amenable to ease	4.46	0.89	High
2	Lack of attention to some Parents by studying as well their children as a result of the spread of university unemployment	4.41	0.64	High
3	Weakness of the relationship between family and school	4.32	0.58	High
4	Failure to provide daily expenses for the student at school	4.12	0.47	High
5	Lack of consideration for individual student differences by some teachers	4.05	0.97	High
6	Student's concern about some subjects	3.98	0.88	High
7	Parents not providing all the student's school needs	3.91	0.69	High
8	Family disintegration (divorce, polygamy, disagreements)	3.87	0.77	High
9	The death of one or both parents and the student's need to take responsibility for the family	3.85	0.64	High
10	Feeling unable to follow lessons in one or more subjects	3.80	0.84	High
11	There are no private rooms for the student at home	3.78	0.47	High
12	The difficulty of the curricula and the lack of appropriate teaching aids	3.77	0.61	High
13	Instability of teachers in school	3.74	0.74	High
14	Lack of learning aids such as a computer	3.72	0.82	High
15	The student worked while studying to meet his school needs	3.70	0.90	High
16	Parents' failure to provide awareness and advice when students fall short in lessons	3.69	0.59	High
17	Poor student relationship with classmates and teachers	3.55	0.64	Average
18	Family income is not enough to meet the needs of secondary school students	3.41	0.78	Average
19	Not having a job for parents (unemployment)	3.22	0.79	Average
20	Discrimination between students in all its forms	3.16	0.84	Average
21	Low self-confidence, tension, and shyness overtaken the learner	3.11	0.92	Average
22	The school does not carry out recreational and social activities	2.53	0.54	Average
23	Classes crowded with students	2.31	0.55	low
24	The distance of the school from the student's residential area	2.24	0.65	low
25	Increasing the number of siblings causes not providing all the needs of the student	2.17	0.59	low
26	Weak school administration	2.15	0.59	low
Total		3.50	0.68	Average

It is clear from the previous Table 1 that the total score of the study tool paragraphs to identify the reasons for dropping out of schools came at an average level with a total mean of (3.5),

and with a total standard deviation of (0.68), from the point of view of secondary school teachers in Ajloun Governorate schools, where (16) items came at a high level, and (6) items were at

a medium level, and (4) paragraphs with a low degree, where the paragraph that states “accompaniment” occurred buddies bad and ease “reliability” on the highest arithmetic average, which reached (4.46) with a standard deviation of (0.89) and at a high level, while the paragraph that states “weakness of Administration school” on the lowest arithmetic average, which reached (2.15) with a standard deviation of (0.59) at a low level.

Based on the data as shown in Table 1 above, the teachers also realize the importance of having a good relationship between the school and the family, in order to follow up the students and face any problems that might stand in the way of completing the study in the required manner. In addition, the economic conditions that the Jordanian people are going through in general may contribute to an increase in the problem of students dropping out of their schools, especially since the Ajloun governorate is considered as one of the poorest Jordanian governorates and the unemployment rates in it have increased. All contribute to an increase in the dropout level among students, and this may be in an attempt by them to shorten the conditions and crises that they may face in the independent or after entering and completing the university level, represented in the lack of getting a job opportunity quickly.

These results confirm that bad friends (Moore, 2017) and a lack of family interest in the importance of education are the biggest challenges that students face at school. This is in accordance with the results of research done by Hadfield et al., (2018) transitions to family harmony such as divorce, polygamy or the absence of parents as supporters affect children's stress levels which have an impact on hindering their academic progress or feeling unable to continue their studies, and consequently reluctance to continue the process education (Issah, 2019). Dropout involves multidimensional aspects related to all

individual, family and school variables (Suárez et al., 2016). Recognizing the importance of having a good relationship between school and family, to follow up with students and deal with any problem that might get in the way of completing studies in the required way. Based on a study conducted by Moore (2017), children dropping out of school are caused by several factors, namely school affiliation or distance from place of residence as shown in point 24 in Table 1, cases of bullying and social difficulties for students such as point 1, point 20 and point 21. Social problems among students are very influential because it is considered that there are still widespread gender problems, ridicule each other and difficulties adapting to schoolmates and class teachers (Holen et al., 2018; Krane et al., 2016).

The economic conditions experienced by Jordanian society in general can contribute to the increase in the problem of dropping out of school. Especially since Ajloun Governorate is considered one of Jordan's poorest governorates and the unemployment rate in it has been increasing. This can be understood as in research of Sarker et al., (2019) which explains that developing countries have many illiterate parents which affect dropout cases. Based on point 18 and point 19 in Table 1, the economic ability of parents or family has an influence on dropping out of school (Adelman & Szekely, 2016). There are many cases of parents who are unable to pay for school administration and in the end a child has to drop out of school because school fees are considered too high (Tooley & Dixon, 2005). Especially, a child is raised by a single parent (McLanah & Sanderfur, 1996).

As for the UNRWA study, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA, 2013), the results showed in total that the dropouts refer to issues related to academic aspects such as:

academic achievement, lack of interest, or fear of exams. The results indicated that the majority of the dropouts experienced, at least, one risk factor at the socioeconomic level. The main causes of dropout are varied and overlapping and difficult to identify directly and are not related to one factor, namely child labor, labor laws, early marriage, school infrastructure, resources and educational policy (Biggeri & Cuesta, 2020; Castelló et al., 2017; Kazdin, 1996; Pra, 2017; Rud et al., 2016). After analyzing the relevant research and the results of the questionnaire, it was found the reasons that caused students to drop out of school, such as educational, social, cultural, economic and health reasons from the teacher's point of view.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there are 16 reasons for students dropping out of their schools to a high degree, and 6 reasons leading to students dropping out of their schools to a moderate degree, and 4 reasons leading to students dropping out of their schools to a low degree. The total score of the study tool paragraphs to identify the reasons for dropping out of schools came at an average level with a total mean of 3.5, and with a total standard deviation of 0.68, from the point of view of the secondary school teachers in Ajloun Governorate schools where 16 items came at a high level. It points out that 6 items were at a medium level and 4 paragraphs with a low degree, in which the paragraph states “accompaniment” occurred buddies bad and ease “reliability” on the highest arithmetic average, which reached 4.46 with a standard deviation of 0.89 and at a high level, while the paragraph that states “weakness of Administration school” on the lowest arithmetic average, which merely reached 2.15 with a standard deviation of 0.59 at a low level. As such, this study concluded that the determinant

factors causing students dropping out were varied.

However, the researcher realized that this study required to further explore in order to obtain the whole depictions of why students dropped their schools by multiple-lenses and perspectives. Thus, the researcher reached the following recommendations and suggestions: (1) Working on studying the educational reasons related to the school environment and trying to improve it, which includes (curriculum, teaching methods, evaluation, rehabilitation of human energies from teachers and management) to reduce dropout; (2) Improving the social and economic conditions of families, through the implementation of development projects that help raise the standard of living, which leads to reducing dropouts; and (3) Conducting more studies on dropout in Jordanian society from the point of view of teachers, students and other groups of society.

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