

Determinants of students' dropout rate in primary schools: The case of Awi zone selected schools, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine determinants of student dropout rate in seven second cycle primary schools situated in Awi Zone. To effectuate this, descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The data were collected via questionnaire and interview from teachers, students who had dropped out of school, school principals and parent-teacher association representatives. Seventy three dropped out students, seventy-five teachers, seven school principals, and seven parent teacher association representatives were participated in this study. Dropout students were selected using available sampling technique. Teachers were selected using a simple random sampling technique whereas school principals and parent teacher association representatives were selected using purposive sampling technique. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage, mean and independent t-test, whereas qualitative data were analyzed with themes and categories. Independent samples t-test revealed statistically significant differences across students and teachers on determinant factors of dropout. The mean in the t-test indicated teachers' ratings causes/reasons for dropout was significantly higher than those of students. The comparative mean score results, which one of out- of- school and in-school related factors exert the strongest influence students to drop out; the result indicates that in-school and school related factors were exerting the strongest influence that forced students to dropout in the study area. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were forwarded; the government, the school, the community and all of the stakeholders/concerning bodies should collaborate/team up to work together to assist students on the verge of dropping out to remain in school and solve drop out problem at each grade level to realize the millennium development goals and assuring quality education for all citizens.

Keywords: Determinants, students, dropout rate, primary schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a cornerstone of economic growth, social development and principal means of improving the welfare of individuals. It is also the basis for reducing poverty and inequality, improving health, enabling the use of new technologies, creating and spreading knowledge. Scholars also, affirmed that, education is a key to development of the economic, social, scientific and political institutions of nation states (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991). Primary education as the gateway to higher levels of education must be the first priority and

the foundation of secondary and higher education (World Bank, 2009). Accordingly, the Government of Ethiopia introduced a series of educational policies and strategies between 1994 and 2006. Most of them were focused on increasing access to education at all levels, with a special focus on the expansion of primary education. In line with this, Ethiopia has just launched its fourth Education Sector Development program (ESDP IV), which aims to build education as a major support of the economic development of the country.

The effectiveness of such human development depends upon whether the education produces skills that can be used productively in the economy. In other words education cannot be measured solely in years of enrollment. What matters is, what students learn, retain, and apply in life. Education can enhance development when it is "relevant and appropriate" to the needs and demands of the community (Tekeste, 1990). Ethiopia has currently one of the lowest primary enrollment rates in the world and reaching universal primary education in Ethiopia poses an enormous challenge. Low enrollments, high gender and regional disparity, and low quality of education remain major challenges to the Ethiopian education system (MOE, 1999, 2002). Similarly, Woldehanna et al. (2005) investigated that, some of the major factors affecting school performance and school completion level include family income, school, culture, location (urban or rural), parents' educational level, educational support and family size and individual child characteristics determining grade completion and primary school drop-out in Ethiopia. Accordingly, Andinet and Degenet (2008) aimed to estimate the impact of individual, parental, household and community factors on child's primary educational progress.

These and other objectives will not be achieved if there are dropouts at this particular level. In support of this idea, Woldie (2001) says that when students drop out of school, sequential school learning cannot occur, subject matter skills cannot be developed, and much student talent is wasted. Therefore, the study assesses major determinants of students' dropout and suggests some possible solutions to alleviate the problems.

Dropping out of primary school, that is, leaving school without graduating is a central educational issue in the lowest income countries. In broad sense, Coombs (1985), Magnen (1991) and World Bank (1998) mentioned the following points as the most acute problems in the educational system of developing countries such as low internal efficacy, high dropout and repetition rate, problem of access to educational opportunity, lack of qualified teachers, too high pupils/teacher ratio, shortage of educational facilities, too high pupils/section ratio, poverty, disablement/special educational needs and others. Poor children are much more likely to be out of school than their wealthier contemporaries (Akyeampong, 2009; Rolleston, 2009). Progress in reducing the number of out-of-school children has come to a standstill as international aid to basic education in 2011 fell for the first time since 2002.

Despite all these national efforts and achievements gained so far, millions of school age children still face substantial barriers to entering and remaining in school. According to a recent Ministry of Education report, about 3 million children are out of school in Ethiopia. Nearly 25% of children enrolled in grade 1 are dropping out before passing grade 2. Quality of education has also come under increased strain. Furthermore, it is improbable to achieve the EFA goals other than access

to primary education (The 32 BDU, Annual May International Conference, 2014).

As a result, the present research would like to address the question of what are the major determinants of student dropout rate in primary schools at Banja district. Moreover, the study seeks answers to the following basic questions:

1. What are the major out-of-school related factors that influence student to dropout?
2. What are the major in-school related factors that influence student to dropout?
3. Is there any significant difference between teachers and students response about the causes of dropout?
4. Which of these factors (out-of-school or in-school) exert the strongest influence on student to dropout?
5. What measures could be taken to alleviate the dropout problem?

The overall purpose of this study is to assess determinants of student dropout rate in primary schools at Banja district. Accordingly, this study focused on the following specific objectives that indicate the direction of the research work was to explore the major out-of-school related factors that influence students to dropout, to assess the major in-school related factors that influence students to dropout, to investigate whether there is significance difference between teachers and students response about causes of dropout or not, to examine which factors (out-of-school or in-school related factors) exert the strongest Influence on students to dropout and to take measures which alleviate the dropout problem.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the determinants of students' to dropout and to identify the degree of impact of different factors on this issue. Descriptive survey research design was employed to find out the determinants of student dropout of school at Awi zone primary schools for this particular study since it is a convenient method to describe the existing situation and also enables to assess the opinions of large sample size (Yalew, 2006).

Sources of data

Dropping out of school appears to be the result of a series of events involving a range of interrelated factors, rather than a single factor. The complex nature of the process, leading to dropout demands input from various sources (that is, teachers, students who dropping out, school principals and parent-teacher association representatives) to detect and address at-risk factors early in order to reduce the likelihood of dropout. Thus, dropped out students, teachers, school principals and representatives of the parent teacher association were included in the study first and the right source of information on the causes of student dropout.

Population, sample population and sampling techniques

According to the Banja district education office annual statistics

abstract (Banja district Education Office, 2015), there were 32 primary schools. Among those 25 schools were first cycle primary schools (grade 1 to 4) and 7 schools were full cycle primary schools (grade 1 to 8). Based on this, all these 7 full cycle primary schools were selected as a sample using comprehensive/holistic sampling technique, because the number of schools is easily manageable

and the investigator wants to obtain relevant information from the whole schools.

From 150 teachers teaching in the sample schools from grade 5 to 8, 75 (50%) were selected by using simple random sampling technique so as to give an equal chance for all participants (Table 1).

Table 1. Sample number of teachers in sample schools.

No.	Name of the schools	Number of teachers	Sample in percent	Sample in number
1	Kesa	38	50	19
2	Enjibara	42	50	21
3	Tilile	18	50	9
4	Zengena	19	50	9
5	Kidamaja	10	50	5
6	Kosober	11	50	6
7	Bata	12	50	6
Total		150	50	75

Source: Banja Education office (2015).

Data gathering instruments

The major and complementary data gathering instruments were the questionnaire and interview used to gather the desired information from the participants. The reliability index for students' and teachers' questionnaire were found to be Cronbach's alpha of 0.801 and 0.715 respectively using SPSS version 20. Thus, the instrument was found reliable to use for the main data collection.

Data analysis

Depending on the nature of the problem and the data collected, different statistical methods were employed in the study for data analysis and interpretation. The data collected through questionnaires were tallied and tabulated in frequency tables and then percentage, mean, standard deviation and t-test were employed in the analysis and interpretation by using SPSS statistics version 20. The two groups mean scores intended to identify the item, which was rated above/below average using the median line (that is, 3.0) as a dividing line to be considered among the major causes for pupils low survival rate in schools. Similarly, independent t- test was employed to see the significant difference between teachers' and students' response on the determinants of student dropout and the cumulative was employed to compare which one is out-of-school or in-school related factors influence students to dropout. The data obtained through interview was narrated to substantiate the teachers' and dropout students' responses; only one interview theme analysis was made to summarize the idea of interviewed groups to indicate the remedial actions taken by the school, the government and the community, to alleviate the dropout problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of major factors that contribute to student dropout

This part presents the major determinants of dropout and

the extent to which these determinants are aggravating dropout rate. To this end, data collected from dropout students and teachers through questionnaires was analyzed using standard deviation, t-test and mean.

Table 2 presents those students who dropout and teacher participants response to the extent of contribution of some major out-of-school related factors to students' early school leaving in the study area; regarding the effect of low level of parental education on pupil survival rate in the educational system. The calculated average means of the dropouts (mean = 4.01) and that of the teachers (mean=4.29) meaning both participants rating above average, but teachers perceived this factor as serious problem than the dropouts did. Similarly, data which is also obtained from interviews conducted with school principals reveals that low level of parents' education/less educational background the parents have the higher chance for the student to drop out of school.

Economic condition stood out to be one of the determinants of dropout in the area. The calculated mean values of the dropouts (mean = 4.04) and the teachers (mean = 3.89) indicated that, both of the respondents rated above average, but the dropout students highly rating than teachers. Similarly, the data collected from the school directors through interview showed that low level of parents' income is due to lack of money, inability to buy clothes, exercise books and other educational materials, is the bottleneck problem that forced the students to discontinue their schooling. It implies that this factor having high influence on the student dropout. In line with this, Graham-Brown (1991) documented that the rate of early school leavers of low-income families' children are three times more than those from higher income families. Lack of parents/guardians encouragement for their children academic is the main

Table 2. Out-of-school related factors determining students to dropout.

No.	Items	Respondents			
		Teachers		Students	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Low level of parental education	4.29	.802	4.01	1.061
2	Low level of parents' income	3.89	.746	4.04	.920
3	Lack of parents/guardians encouragement with your academic activities	4.00	.944	4.04	.978
4	Less support of parents/guardians with academic activities their children at home	3.97	.854	3.89	1.208
5	Divorced parents/broken family	2.83	1.107	2.66	1.426
6	Pupils health problem/ sickness	2.49	.978	2.55	1.395
7	Parental/ relatives health problem	2.28	.952	2.37	1.328
8	Influence of peer group	3.24	1.038	2.74	1.444
9	Parents low attitudes towards education	4.13	.811	4.05	1.092
10	Unable to afford expenses of school supplies	3.93	.741	3.89	1.220
11	Work load, involvement in domestic work and income generating activities	4.13	.759	4.16	1.000
12	Early marriage	3.53	1.095	2.78	1.750
13	Teenage pregnancy	2.69	1.219	1.52	1.132
14	Orphan	2.68	.918	1.78	1.158
15	Believes (religious barriers) of parents	2.95	1.272	3.07	1.531
16	Frequent absenteeism	4.33	.949	3.82	1.194
17	Students' low interest towards education	4.25	.790	3.44	1.333

cause that pushes student dropping out from school. The mean scores of students (mean = 4.04) and that of the teachers (mean = 4.00) reveal that both respondents rated the item above average, which further reveal that its contribution to high rate of dropout in the study area is significant.

Another related question put to the respondents was, less support of parents/guardians with academic activities of their children home as a cause for dropout. The calculated mean scores of the student and teacher respondents (m = 3.89) and (m = 3.97) respectively show that both of the respondents rated the item above average but, the mean score of teachers is slightly greater than the students' mean.

Divorce was found to be one of the determining factors of dropout in the region. The mean scores of students (mean = 2.66) and that of the teachers (mean = 2.83) also reveal that both of respondents rated the item below average, which further reveal that its contribution to low rate of dropout in the study area. This can be seen from the fact that teachers rated the item higher than the dropout respondents. Pertaining to pupils' health problem/sickness, the calculated mean scores of the teachers (m = 2.49) and students (m = 2.55) show that both of the respondents rated the item below average confirm the view that pupils health problem is not among the major contributing factors to high rate of dropout in the study area. Regarding the parents/relatives health problem determinant factor to dropout, the mean scores

of students (mean = 2.37) and that of the teachers (mean=2.28) reveal that both respondents rated the item below average, which further reveal that its contribution to low rate of dropout in the study area is significant. It implies that parents/relatives' health problem is not the cause pupils to dropout from school in the study areas.

Another factor which this study considered was an influence of peer group determinant factor to dropout of students from school. In this regard, the mean scores of students (mean = 2.74) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.24), which further reveal that its contribution to moderate rate of dropout in the study area is significant. Concerning the effect of parents' low attitude towards education on the pupils survival rate in educational system, the mean values of the students (mean = 4.05) and that of teachers (mean = 4.13) reveal that both groups rated the item above average, but both respondents' mean show slight difference, which means that students and teachers perceived low attitude of parents towards education is a determinant factor of students to drop out in the study area. Participants were also asked to indicate the extent of the impact that made them not able to afford to educational expenses on pupils' survival rate in primary schools of the study area. Accordingly, being unable to afford expenses to cover school supplies seem to be rated as a very high cause of dropout by calculating mean scores of the dropouts (mean = 3.89) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.93) indicate that though both of the participants rated the item

above average, teachers rated it slightly higher than the dropouts which tells us that they perceived the effect of this factor as serious problem more than the students did.

Workload involvement in domestic work and income generating activities, students' mean for the cause of this problem ($m = 4.16$) is significantly higher than those of teachers mean ($m = 4.13$). As the mean indicates both participants rate above average it, depicts that workload, involvement in domestic work and income generating activates force pupils to dropout. Similarly, the data obtained from the interviews, school principals and PTAs reveals that the major reason was the economic problem, where children go to the nearby places for excessive involvement in income generating activities and better opportunity to earn money that influence their academic achievement and school attendance, then after weeks or months they leave the school. Regarding the effect of early marriage on students' survival rate in education of the study area, the mean values of the students (mean = 2.78) and the teachers (mean = 3.53), it indicates that the teachers rated the item above average than students, which in turn tells us that the contribution of this factor to early school leaving in the study area is the teachers' perceive more than the students did. So, teachers response agreed with the study of Rose (1998) contended that early marriage has a negative contribution for girls' school participation and it is also one of the major cause of an increasing in their dropout from school.

Teenage pregnancy as a cause of drop out is also similar to that of early marriage. The mean scores of students (mean = 1.52) and that of the teachers (mean = 2.69) reveal that both of the respondents rated the item below average, which further reveal that its contribution to high rate of dropout in the study area has a little impact. Orphan/absence of parents as a cause to dropout, the calculated mean scores of the students mean ($m = 1.7$) and teachers mean ($m = 2.68$) indicates that the calculated mean of both of respondents below average. So, orphan/parental death is not the cause for dropout in the study area. Parents' religion is another cause of dropout in which the mean scores of students (mean = 3.07) and that of the teachers (mean = 2.95) reveal that students who dropped out respondents rated the item above average than teachers, meaning the students perceive the problem than teachers did. It implies that parents' religion/believes is one of the constraints that cause the pupil to dropout.

On the other hand, frequent absenteeism from school causes for dropout. The mean scores of teachers (mean = 4.33) and that of the dropped out students (mean = 3.82) reveal that both of the respondents rated the item above average, but teachers highly rating the issue than students. Hence, we can say that student frequent absenteeism from school, leads to high rate of dropout in the study area. Similarly, data collected from the interview revealed that the majority of school principals said that, students' frequent absenteeism from school is

the main reason that leads to dropout. Students' low interest towards education is the determinant factor to dropout. The mean scores of teachers (mean = 4.25) and that of the drop out students (mean = 3.44) also reveal that both of the respondents rated the item above average, but teachers highly rating the problem than students. It implies that, low interest of students towards education is a determinant factor for dropout in the study area.

To generalize, taking score of 3.0 as a median of respondents' reply, among 17 out-of school related factors both respondents rated parents low attitude towards education, workload involvement in domestic work, low level of parental education, less support of parents/guardians for their children academic achievement, lack of the parents encouragement for their children, low level of parents income, lack of students interest towards education, frequently absenteeism, and unable to afford expenses school supplies, were among the major factors that contribute to high rate of dropout in the study area respectively. The remaining factors were rated below average, which tells us that their contribution to the problem under discussion is low.

In-school and school related factors

School distance from home is one of the determining factors for students to dropout. The calculated mean scores of the dropouts (mean = 3.55) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.44) indicate that both of the respondents rated the item above average. Unsafe road condition from home to school emerged the determinant factor for dropout, the calculated mean scores of the dropouts (mean=3.44) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.49) indicate that both of the respondents rated the item above average but, teachers rating the problem slightly higher than students (Table 3). Here, we understood that unsafe road condition between pupils' village and the school is a determinant factor for dropout in the study area. The difficulty of language instruction/inappropriate medium of instruction as a determinant factor for dropout rate, the calculated mean scores of the dropouts (mean = 3.62) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.61) indicate that both of the respondents rated proportional and above average. It depicts that the inappropriate/difficulty of language instruction is a major cause that forces students to leave the school.

In relation to absence of instruction in the mother tongue, the mean scores of students (mean = 3.68) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.88) also reveal that both of the respondents rated the item above average, but teachers highly rating the item than students. From this it is possible to deduce that the issue be discussed; absences of instruction in mother tongue are the main cause to student dropout in the region. Inaccessibility of the school for disabled children, the calculated mean

Table 3. In-school and school related factors determining student to dropout.

No.	Determinants of drop out in-school and school related factors	Respondents			
		Teachers		Students	
		Mean	St. Deviation	Mean	St. Deviation
1	School distance from pupils home	3.44	.662	3.55	1.259
2	Unsafe road condition from home to school between clan conflict	3.49	.950	3.44	1.323
3	Difficulty language of instruction/inappropriate medium of instruction	3.61	.820	3.62	1.308
4	Absence of instruction in mother tongue	3.88	.716	3.68	1.342
5	Inaccessibility of the school for disabled children	4.07	.827	3.14	1.437
6	Low awareness of teachers to assist students with special educational needs in the teaching learning process	3.48	.891	3.42	1.363
7	Lack of identification/assessment mechanisms from the school to help students with special educational needs	3.85	.748	3.45	1.270
8	Poor academic performance (grade repetition)	3.43	.841	3.08	1.115
9	Disciplinary problem	3.23	1.085	2.45	1.405
10	The curriculum is irrelevant the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental situation of the local community	3.91	.701	3.63	1.161
11	Poor school facilities such as desk, laboratory, library, latrine, water, etc.	3.53	.844	3.48	1.375
12	Mismatch of textbook contents with student capacity	3.77	.669	3.73	1.158
13	Shortage of text books	3.28	.781	2.96	1.241
14	Low teacher-student interaction during instruction	2.59	1.054	3.64	1.295
15	Unattractiveness of teaching method	2.24	1.051	3.59	1.289
16	The large size of students in the class	2.49	1.389	2.86	1.337
17	Lack of counseling service in the school	3.01	1.279	4.05	1.235
18	Low teachers attitude towards students	2.25	1.231	3.21	1.384
19	Unavailability of qualified teachers in the school	2.19	1.238	3.07	1.456
20	Unavailability of enough teachers in the school	2.37	1.3.03	2.64	1.388

scores of the respondents show that the teachers mean score ($m = 4.07$) and students mean ($m = 3.14$) both of respondents rating above average but, the mean score of teachers is higher than that of students. Low awareness of teachers to assist students with special educational needs in the teaching learning process the cause for dropout, the mean scores of students (mean = 3.42) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.48) also reveal that both of the respondents rated the item above average but, teachers rating the items slightly higher than students.

Lack of identification/assessment mechanisms from the school to help students with special educational needs is a determinant factor for students to dropout from school. The mean scores of students (mean = 3.45) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.85) also reveal that both of respondents rated the item above average, but teachers rated the item highly than students. Information gathered from Interviewees revealed that no school base assessment mechanisms has been made to identify those children with disabilities and attempt to arrange equitable educational program to educate these children and no significant support has been provided by the school to educate children with disabilities and this situation imposes them to dropout. Poor academic performance/grade repetition is also considered as the

mean values of the students ($m = 3.08$) and that of the teachers mean ($m = 3.43$) also indicate that both of the respondents rating above average, but teachers rating the item higher than students. From this, one might conclude that poor academic performance/grade repetition is the determinant factor for students to dropout in the study area.

Another factor which this study considered is the disciplinary problem as the cause for dropout. The mean score of the teachers ($m = 3.23$) that of students mean (2.45) show that the teachers mean above average than the students mean. Here, we understood that teachers perceive the problem more than students as disciplinary problem is a determinant factor for dropout. The curriculum is irrelevant to the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental situation of the learners. The mean scores of students (mean = 3.63) and that of the teachers (mean = 3.91) reveal that both of the respondents rated the item above average but, teachers rated the item higher than students. Poor school facilities such as laboratory, library, latrine, water etc. are the causes for dropout. When we compare the mean score of both groups, the students mean ($m = 3.48$) and that of the teachers mean ($m = 3.53$), it shows that both groups rating above average and it also proportional. Therefore,

one can understand from this that poor school facilities have their own influence for dropout. Hence, lack of adequate school facilities negatively attracting students for the attainment of their education and that leads to dropout. Mismatch between textbook contents and student capacity, the mean indicates teachers mean ($m = 3.77$) that of students mean ($m = 3.73$) it shows that both groups rated above average so their mean is proportional. It depicts the mismatch between text book contents and student capacity is a determinant factor to dropout students in the study area.

Shortage of student textbook has a very high and high contribution to dropout. The mean indicates teachers ratings for this cause ($m = 3.28$) higher than those of students ($m = 2.96$). From the aforementioned case there is difference between teachers and students response. It implies that teachers perceive the challenges than students in the study area. Low teacher-student interaction during instruction is a determinant factor for dropout, that the mean indicates students ratings for this cause ($m = 3.64$) higher than those of teachers ($m = 2.59$). It indicates that there is a difference between teachers and students response about this issue, so students perceived the problem more than teachers. And also, it implies that the mode of the delivery system teachers implementing in the teaching learning process is not inviting students to interact with their teachers. Unattractiveness of teaching method, the calculated mean scores of the students (mean=3.59) and the teachers respondents (mean=2.24), when we compare the mean score of both participants, the students mean is above average than teachers mean. It implies that the students perceive more than teachers this factor in the study area. Meaning that the pedagogical skill teachers (the how to teach) are applying in the teaching learning process is poor.

Regarding large class size, the mean indicates students' ratings reasons for dropout ($m = 2.49$) is similar that of teachers mean ($m = 2.49$). It implies that both of the respondents mean below average, meaning that large class size is not a determinant factor in the study area. Beside, regarding lack of counseling service in the school was a determinant factor for dropout. The calculated mean scores of the students (mean = 4.05) and the teachers respondents (mean = 3.01), which both groups rated the item above average, but students rated the item, than teachers. It indicates that, absence of counseling service in the school level is a determinant factor to students to dropout from school. Another factor which appears to be a cause of student dropout is that low teachers' attitude toward students. The calculated mean scores of the dropouts (mean = 3.21) and that of the teachers (mean = 2.25) also indicate that the students mean above average than that of the teachers mean. It shows there is difference between teachers and students response for the aforementioned issue. Meaning students perceive that negative attitude of teachers towards them

is a determinant factor for dropout. Absence of qualified teachers in the school appears to be a major determinant factor for dropout. The calculated mean scores of the respondents show that the students' mean score ($m = 3.07$) is higher than that of the teachers ($m = 2.19$). It means student respondents relatively believe that lack of qualified teachers is a major problem for dropout in the study area. Lack of enough teachers, unlike lack of qualified teachers, does not seem to be a major determinant of dropout in the region.

To summarize, based on the total response of teachers and dropped out students with regard to in-school and school related hindrances/constraints that leads students to dropout from the school were irrelevant curriculum, mismatch between text book contents and student capacity, low teacher and student interaction in the teaching learning process, absence of instruction in mother tongue, difficulty of language instruction, inaccessibility of the schools for students with disabilities, low awareness of teachers to assist students with special educational needs, lack of schools identification/assessment mechanism to support students with special educational needs, school distance from students home, unsafe road condition, unavailability of well established counseling service, and poor academic performance/grade repetition respectively were the key determinants of in-school and school related factors that forced students to dropout.

There is statistically significant difference between teachers' and students' responses about causes of dropout given equal variances across groups assumed ($t(0.988) p < 0.05$) (Table 4). As the mean indicates teachers' ratings causes for dropout ($m = 127.66$) is significantly higher than those of students ($m = 124.86$). In general it is possible to deduce that there is a slight difference between means of two groups.

When we compared the mean score of out-of-school and in-school related factors among these which one exert the strongest influence on students to dropout (Table 5). With regard to this the mean score of out-of-school factors ($m = 57.26$) and the mean score of in-school and school related factors ($m = 69.02$). Here, based on this data we can deduce that in-school related factors were the main hindrance or determinant factor in the study area that pushes the students to drop out from the school. However, not saying that out-of-school factors have not had their own contribution to drop out because, the two mean scores not that much indicate an exaggerated variation.

Conclusions

This study examined determinants of student dropout rate in primary schools. Based on the findings of this study, the dropout phenomenon has been observed to be very intricate with multiple interwoven factors responsible

Table 4. Significant difference between teachers and students response about causes of drop out.

Respondent	N	Mean	Std. deviation	t
Students	73	124.86	11.142	.988
Teachers	75	127.66	21.828	

*p < 0.05 Significant.

Table 5. Total means score of out-of-school and in- school related factors.

	No. of total respondents	Mean	St. Deviation
Out-of-school related factors	148	57.2635	11.78461
In-school and school related factors	148	69.02035	8.29340

for leading to this complex situation. This study has made modest attempt to explore this complex problem with reference to out-of-school and in-school related factors as contributing to this problem. It was found that parents low attitude towards education, low level of parental education, less support of parents/guardians for their child's academics, poverty and financial constraints are some major factors that contribute to school dropout phenomenon. The study has also revealed that certain in-school related conditions can lead to premature school dropout. Connected to this, students may also be pushed out of school mainly, because of in-school related factors. It was noted that lack of education programs to meet the individual's needs of the students ultimately leads to dropout, while as, an irrelevant, complex, rigid and congested curriculum puts learners off and predisposes them to dropping out. And also, other pertinent causes such as mismatch between text book contents and students' capacity, absence of instruction in mother tongue and inaccessibility of schools for disabled students/special educational needs, appear to be among the main causes of dropout. Teacher centric factors such as uncaring behavior poor teaching have also been shown to act as push out factors. It can be concluded that pupil dropout is the function of the out-of-school and in-school related causes. The determinants that influence pupils to drop out of school are not single they are interrelated and interwoven. Thus, in order to improve school quality and to minimize pupil dropout, it needs that both out-of-school and in-school related factors have to be equally considered and improved by identifying their right sources (causes).

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