

TREND ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS DROPOUT RATE AND THE EFFECTS ON THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: This is a descriptive study design focused on the study of the pattern and trend of enrolment and dropouts among primary and secondary school students in Nigeria with the north central geopolitical region as a case study. The objective is to establish the magnitude of dropout occurrence. The populations of study consist of data on all the students enrolled in the states of the North-central region of Nigeria who could not complete the basic study before leaving school. Data was analysed using statistical methods of Mean, Time series, Regression Bar chart and percentages. From the analysis it was found that high rate of student dropouts is a common phenomenon in all the states under study in both primary and secondary schools. The rate of dropouts among male students was also found to be higher than their female counterparts in transition from primary to secondary schools in the period under review.

KEYWORDS: Education, Dropout, North-Central, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of education cannot be definite as it means different things to different people depending on their perception. There are cases where education is simply taken to mean “knowledge, Enlightenment, or “Wisdom”. No wonder one hears such expressions as “you are not enlightened “ to refer to the person that behaves differently from the norms of those who have been to school and so are hence “ the educated ”, “ the enlightened” or “ the wise ones”. It therefore lingers in controversy to adequately describe a person that has not attended a formal school system as uneducated.

Education could be defined as the process of teaching, training and learning in schools and colleges for the development of knowledge and skills so as to prepare individuals to live happily with themselves and others in the society where they live. Nwagwu (1976), defined education is the process by which every society attempts to preserve and upgrade the accumulated knowledge, skills and attitudes in its cultural setting and heritage in order to foster continuously the wellbeing of mankind and guarantee its survival against the unpredictable, at times hostile and destructive elements and forces of man and nature”. However, the focus of education is to imbue the individuals with the knowledge abilities, skills or behavior to enable them function in their immediate environment and the society at large.

From the definitions above, it is clear that education is the weapon of man or a society to war against destructive elements of man and nature. Hence, it is pertinent that a group of people bounded by a territorial boundary such as Nigeria should ensure that its educational goals are properly set and attained to make it abreast of educational developments among the committee of nations so that it will not be relegated to the background. Of importance among the usefulness of education, is its strategic position as the bedrock of technological and economic development of nations as the development of a nation is likely the output of efficient and well-developed educational system.

Education is the process through which individuals are made functional members of their society. It is a process through which the young acquires knowledge and realizes his/her potentialities and uses them for self-actualization and become useful to himself/ herself and others.

Education is one of the fundamental rights of individuals. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December, 1949 stipulated that:

- i. Everyone has the right to education. This shall be free at least in the elementary and primary stages.
- ii. Elementary education shall be compulsory while technical and professional education shall be made generally available.
- iii. Higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Reasons why everyone should have access and right to education includes the following;

- i. The child is born helpless and has to rely entirely on parents and other older members of the society to survive and fulfill his/her growth needs in all their ramifications.
- ii. The degree and quality of participation in the life of the society depends to a large extent on the degree and quality of his/ her education. This will enable him/her performs the political and other citizenship duties and exercises the rights pertaining to it effectively.
- iii. Since every citizen benefits from the result of the education of his/her fellow citizens and since every generation receives its education from an older generation, every generation has a duty to reciprocate by educating the generation that comes after it.

No nation can afford to toy with the education of her citizens, especially the child, who will be the father or mother of tomorrow because education is the bedrock of all facet of development. Children are the future leaders of tomorrow and mothers are guardians of the future, the first aim of every family and society should be to raise healthy and productive individuals who are physically, psychologically, socially and mentally well-developed. These can be achieved through proper education of a child who is the leader of tomorrow.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research sought to determine the trends and extents of dropout rate of students (especially at the elementary and secondary levels) and its utmost effects on social and educational systems in the North-central part of Nigeria.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research study employed the descriptive survey method. This method focused on systematic description of variables being considered; the enrollment statistics over time, the pattern of dropout from schools and comparison of the results. All are measured and studied in the same format, subject to neither control nor manipulation. The study was analytic by being focused on the relationships between variables and further interpreted the relationships.

AREA OF STUDY

This research project work covers only the dropout trends in the North-central part of Nigerian educational system. As documented in Annual Abstracts of Statistics. (A publication of the National Bureau of Statistics 2010 edition) and earlier editions which cover documented dropout figures in Nigerian schools. The time interval covered is however limited by paucity of data.

The area of study consists of Nigeria especially the North-central region of the country which comprises of Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau (States) and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in terms of the characteristics of its educational system both past and present of schools enrolment and dropout of students. The population consists of all the students enrolled in the North-central region of Nigeria both at primary and secondary institutions.

INSTRUMENT OF DATA COLLECTION AND PRESENTATION

Data for this research are of secondary nature. Data are acquired from publications of different national and international organisations which include; Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Federal Ministry of Education (FME), United Nations (UN), United Nations Emergency Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) and other websites that are essential for data validation.

METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The methods of analysis employed in this research work include; analysis of enrolments with simple descriptive statistics such as mean, percentages and bar chart. Other statistical tools such as time series and linear regression are also computed for trend analysis.

TABULAR DATA ANALYSIS

Data accumulation and aggregates with mean are summarised in tabular formats viz:

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TABLE1A: MALE STUDENTS TOTAL DROPOUTS(MD) (FROM PRY SIX TO JSS 1) AND MEAN IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA (2002 – 2008)

	2002 M D	2003 M D	2004 M D	2005 M D	2006 M D	2007 M D	2008 M D	MEAN MD
BENUE	292750	350829	468093	468668	440385	388877	-16317	341898
KOGI	314616	340133	586178	389343	378859	397286	450312	408104
KWARA	141849	183240	167752	185876	157296	257989	132526	175218
NASSARAWA	191905	185849	243763	217532	55864	229254	183550	186817
NIGER	224778	255257	350725	339999	305233	284650	261657	288900
PLATEAU	249687	297354	315001	339764	319186	252129	306946	297152
FCT	77208	89987	164829	92914	81761	79164	77712	94796
NORTH CENTRAL	1492793	1702649	2296341	2034096	1738584	1889349	1396386	1792885

TABLE 1B: FEMALE STUDENTS TOTAL DROPOUTS (FD)(FROM PRY SIX TO JSS 1) AND MEAN IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA(2002 – 2008)

	2002 FD	2003 MD	2004 FD	2005 FD	2006 FD	2007 FD	2008 FD	MEAN FD
BENUE	247495	300196	395527	402996	385279	352658	321200	343622
KOGI	302627	309183	529726	403787	403493	400380	460330	401361
KWARA	121551	152626	141594	151665	127412	227931	120772	149079
NASSARAWA	128245	127135	177858	166638	28832	170219	140413	134191
NIGER	127496	148856	205948	196047	186901	173719	177647	173802
PLATEAU	232979	267122	284284	310661	290245	240977	287478	273392
FCT	69068	73840	141253	84783	74405	73443	129057	92264
NORTH CENTRAL	1229461	1378958	1876190	1716577	1496567	1639327	1636897	1567711

TABLE 1C: TOTAL STUDENTS (MALE/FEMALE) DROPOUTS (TD) (FROM PRY SIX TO JSS 1) AND MEAN IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA(2002 – 2008)

	2002 T D	2003 T D	2004 T D	2005 T D	2006 T D	2007 T D	2008 T D	MEAN TD
BENUE	540245	651025	863620	871664	825664	741535	304883	685519
KOGI	617243	649316	1115904	793130	782352	797666	910642	809465
KWARA	263400	335866	309346	337541	284708	485920	253298	324297
NASSARAWA	320150	312984	421621	384170	84696	399473	323963	321008
NIGER	352274	404113	556673	536046	492134	458369	439304	462702
PLATEAU	482666	564476	599285	650425	609431	493106	594424	570545
FCT	146276	163827	306082	177697	156166	152607	206769	187061
NORTH CENTRAL	2722254	3081607	4172531	3750673	3235151	3528676	3033283	3360596

TABLE 2A: MALE STUDENTS TOTAL DROPOUTS(MD) (FROM JSS 3 TO SSS 1) AND MEAN IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA(2003 – 2008)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	MEAN
BENUE	2410	2212	-91	-30016	2832	21437	-202.7
KOGI	346	1323	328	-25946	2079	10738	-1855.3
KWARA	13	-448	6580	-30230	2412	15108	-1094.2
NASSARAWA	2507	5286	-6569	-137226	134838	17529	2727.5
NIGER	-617	-1202	-1888	-27074	-11120	-12296	-9032.8
PLATEAU	5142	4940	-3100	-19380	-15550	-1509	-4909.5
FCT	523	3831	-313	-6851	-9655	16583	686.3
NORTH	10324	15942	-5053	-276723	105836	67590	-13680.7

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CENTRAL							
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TABLE 2B: FEMALE STUDENTS TOTAL DROPOUTS(FD) (FROM JSS 3 TO SSS 1) AND MEAN IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA(2003 – 2008)

	2003 M D	2004 F D	2005 F D	2006 F D	2007 F D	2008 F D	MEAN F D
BENUE	1825	2101	-1221	-19723	5782	17090	975.7
KOGI	-1	2217	446	-22040	4062	9401	-985.8
KWARA	307	-16	736	-23674	7027	11138	-747
NASSARAWA	1341	2029	-5855	-119914	112586	14373	760
NIGER	49	383	4168	-12731	12854	-15493	-1795
PLATEAU	3874	3448	-3123	-16650	16663	642	809
FCT	229	2728	-913	-6279	6436	15394	2932.5
NORTH CENTRAL	7624	12890	-5762	-221011	165410	52545	1949.3

TABLE 2C: TOTAL STUDENTS TOTAL DROPOUTS(TD) (FROM JSS 3 – SSS 1) AND MEAN IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA(2003 – 2008)

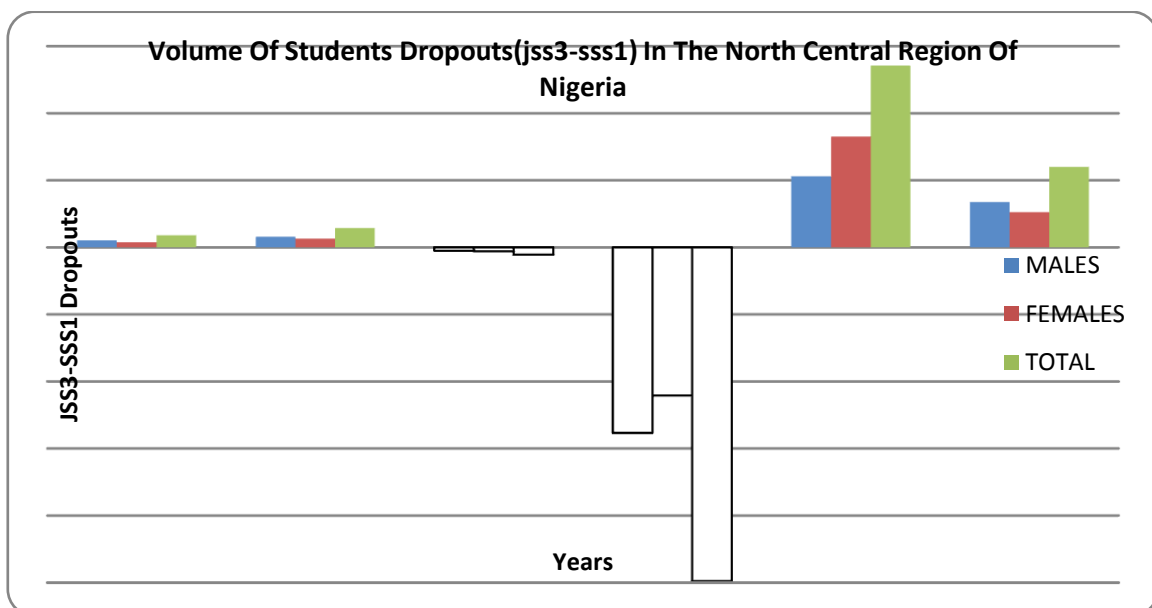
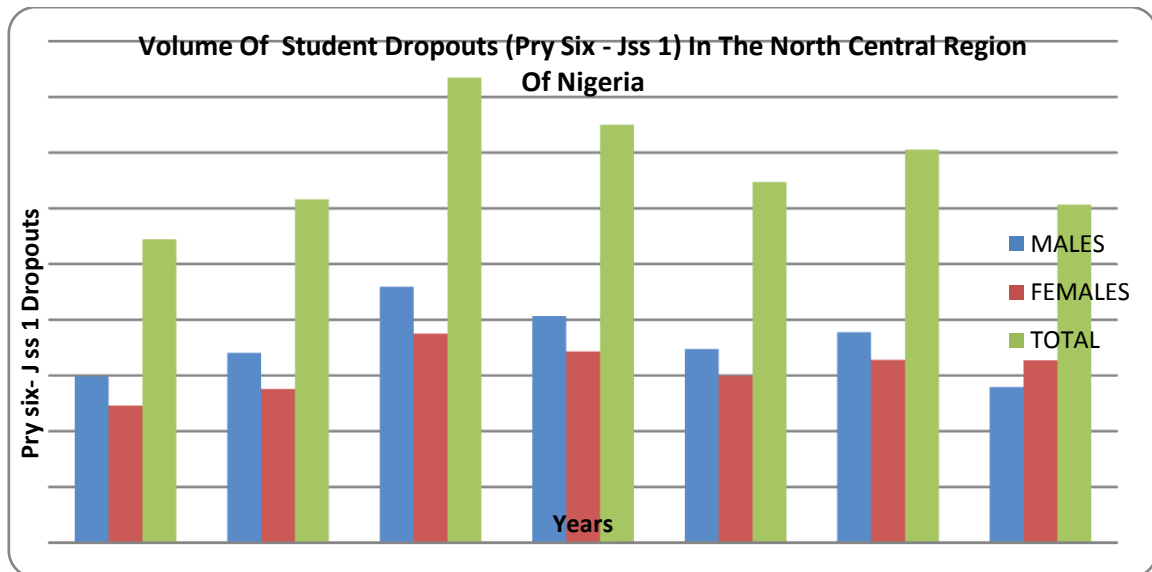
	2003T D	2004 T D	2005 T D	2006 T D	2007 T D	2008 T D	MEAN T D
BENUE	4235	4313	-1312	-49739	8614	38527	773
KOGI	345	3540	774	-47986	6141	20139	-2841.2
KWARA	320	-464	7316	-53904	9439	26246	-1841.2
NASSARAWA	3848	7315	-12424	-257140	247424	31902	3487.5
NIGER	-568	-819	2280	-39805	1734	-27789	-10827.8
PLATEAU	9016	8388	-6223	-36030	1113	-867	-4100.5
FCT	752	6559	-1226	-13130	-3219	31977	3618.8
NORTH CENTRAL	17948	28832	-10815	-497734	271246	120135	-11731.3

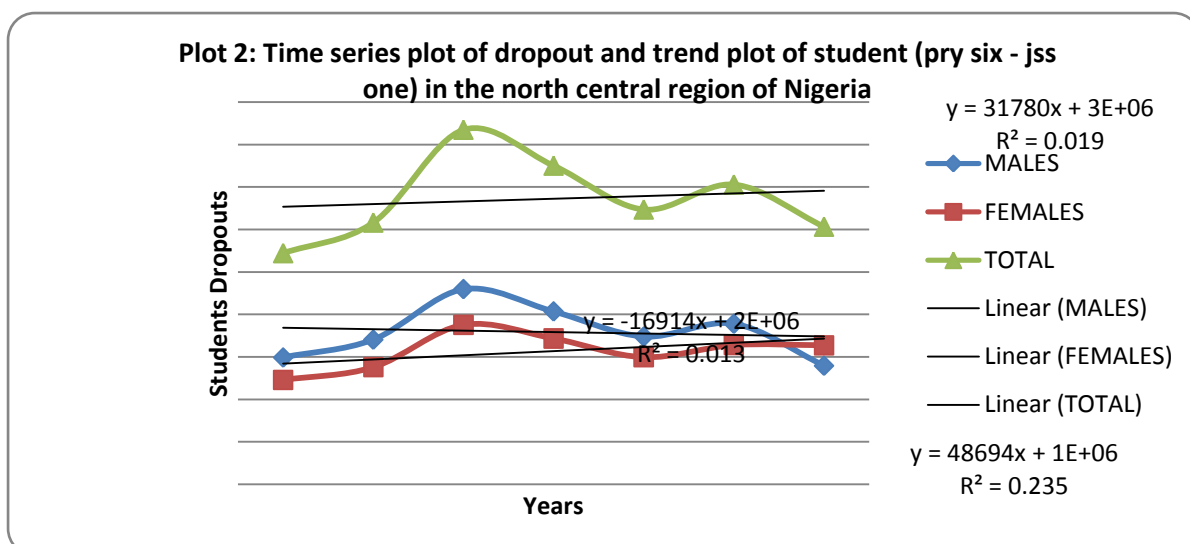
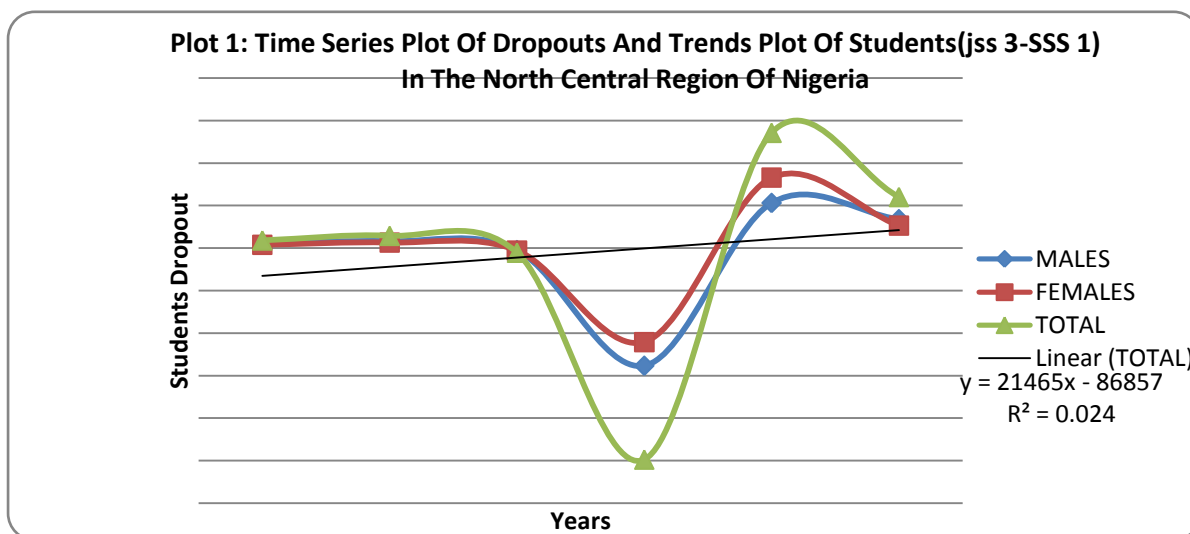
TABLE 3: (PRIMARY SIX) TO (J S S ONE) STUDENTS ANNUAL DROPOUT PERCENTAGES (2002-2008)

YEAR	MALE DROPOUTS	MALE %	FEMALE DROPOUTS	FEMALE %
2002	1492793	54.84	2722254	45.16
2003	1702649	55.25	3081607	44.75
2004	2296341	55.03	4172531	44.97
2005	2034096	54.23	3750673	45.77
2006	1738584	53.74	3235151	46.26
2007	1889349	53.54	3528676	46.46
2008	1396386	46.04	3033283	53.96

PICTOGRAPH ANALYSIS

Bar Chart of Magnitude of Dropouts (Primary and junior secondary) In the North-Central Region of Nigeria.





SUMMARY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL DROPOUT RESULTS

- (i) The Table: The table shows a general increase in the dropout rates of primary pupils over the years. And there is common pattern of primary school progression as they are important because they highlight key points where children are most at risk of dropping out from school. The pattern of dropout by gender differs markedly, as seen from the percentage distribution of student dropouts; male dropouts is consistently higher.
- (ii) Bar Chart: The Bar chart also shows a general increase in the pattern of dropout of primary school pupils over the years. But there is a sharp increase in 2004 which was not continued in 2005 and 2006 but rather with overall minimal increase in dropout over the years was continued.
- (iii) On the mean dropout of primary pupils by gender: It was found that there is higher dropout of males over females.
- (iv) On the time series plot of dropout trend of primary pupils: It was found that there is general steady increase in the trend of dropouts except in the year 2004 where there was sharp increase more than the previous years. The linear regression lines indicate positive slopes from the time series trend lines of gender and total dropouts analysis on the graph.

SUMMARY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL DROPOUT RESULTS.

Summary statistics on total dropout shows that there is general upward trend in the rate of drop out from 2003-2005 except little variation in 2004. These show negative dropout which means that there were no students dropout could not be ascertained within these years. It also indicates that there were more students going into SS1 after JSS3 in the North Central Region of Nigeria which may be attributable to influx of students from other

regions of the country. The significance of this negative dropout was much more pronounced in 2006 in which the trend of negative dropout was more than other years within the period under study.

CAUSES AND IMPLICATIONS OF BROAD-SPECTRUM DROPOUTS ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The overall results show factors resident to students and parents' contribution to the rate of drop out of students in North –Central region of Nigeria.

Student factors: This is focused on the students as an identical individual. Dropouts might be as a result of negative attitude of the students to education. Alabi, T (2005) agreed that personal problems affecting students seem to be the main cause of students drop out of schools. Also Oyeyemi (2005) affirmed that laziness, truancy and thuggery contributed to the high rate of drop out of students in the schools.

Factors local in parents also causes students drop out of schools. This means that parents cause students to dropout of schools. This was supported by good Community Committee (1995) and Oyeyemi (2005) that parents who cannot pay school fees and provide necessary materials needed in schools forced their children out of school system. Also, parents seem not to have time for their children, some parents are no longer monitoring the activities of their children in schools even at home because of pursuit of daily bread and material wealth. So non-commitment attitude of parent in their wards' school activities makes their children become free, whether they attend school or not, the parent do not know. Absenteeism according Ricardo S., et al (2010), leads to students' eventual drop out.

The study revealed that, majority of the parents who are the respondents and mostly from lower socio-economic backgrounds recognized that poverty and lack of socio-economic support prevent parents from sending their children to schools. In most communities, particularly in rural areas, children were introduced to household duties and minor income generating tasks from very early ages especially females. In fact, the incidence of poverty in Nigeria is very high which affects children's education in general, and in particular that of female children. The findings of this study coincided with Marks (2011), and Smith (2006), who affirmed that parent's socio-economic support, has greater influence on their children enrolment, retention and completion despite all the research and policy making. It was also found that children from poor households were less likely to be enrolled and stay in schools because of school fees, text books, school uniforms, etc. (UNESCO Global Monitoring, 2006).

Cultural factors are reflected in the patterns of behaviors, belief, preferences, customs and traditions, which account for gender-based differences within a society. Therefore, the socio-cultural environment in which students as members of society operate is an important factor in determining the extent to which they can attain their full potential. In Nigeria, this fact is also reflected in the level of students' educational participation in the different areas.

It is noticeable in the region that Dropout from school is high during harvest time and absenteeism on market days particularly in the rural areas. In Nigeria, domestic work of female demands affects children education. Cultural practices and institutions including early marriage for females, home services, pregnancy, sexual harassment, religious beliefs and employment in domestic market activities significantly contribute to student's dropout from school in Nigeria. Immediate action is needed on many of these issues. Schools also play their own parts in the dropout of students in Nigeria, the shortage of instructional materials and textbooks were found to be the crucial ones. This implies that any innovation which promotes children education requires meeting these needs for success.

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

The first implication of the findings is that all eligible Nigerians are not yet opportuned to be educated at all levels of our educational system. This could be attributed to the following factors:

1. Lack of availability of efficient public schools to address the educational needs of the people. The schools are not enough to cope with the number of people that require education.
2. Cultural practices, beliefs and social behaviors are still prevalent in certain areas, communities and regions in Nigeria like the case of North-central states.

The lack of opportunity to be educated at all levels has brought about some of the contemporary problems being witnessed in the Nigerian educational system, such as admission bottlenecks; where many have sought admission into secondary and tertiary institutions but few are admitted. This has caused the introduction of post JAMB examinations in tertiary schools and has exposed the system to favoritism and corruption in admission to schools.

The current rate of examination malpractices in secondary schools certificate examinations could be traced to this fact as students that desire to further their education consider it as a do or die affair. The current springing of illegal and substandard private schools in Nigeria could also be seen as the consequence of the fact that many students seek to be educated but not given the opportunity and some people are now trying to exploit the situation.

The high dropout rate noticed in the enrolment over the years and the lack of proper quality education reflect the lack of proper development of the citizens. As highlighted in the literature review, the quality of citizens' education and the quality of citizen's vocation offered by individual to the society go a long way to determine the level of development experienced in the society or a nation. Therefore the lack of development being witnessed could be traced to inherent failure in the educational system in both administration and policy implementations.

The findings of this study on dropout pattern especially in that of JSS 3- SSS1, Signify the failure of implementation procedures of the 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria. Since educational reforms emanate from the basic conviction that considerable progress can be made in a nation by its people through careful engineering of the educational process (Omolewa, 2007). Nigeria has witnessed several educational reforms which started at pre-independence. It was to the credit of Nigerians notably agitators for self-rule that led the British Colonial rulers to change the educational system in operation in 1954 from 8-6-2-3 system that is 8 years primary, 6 years secondary, 2 years High School Certificate and 3 years University to the then new system of 6-5-2-3, that is, 6 years primary, 5 years secondary, 2 years Higher School Certificate and 3 years University.

In September 1969 there was a national Curriculum conference held in Lagos. Participants at the conference were eager to see Nigeria chart a new course in its educational system. Such a system will empower the country towards the path of scientific and technological development. They criticized Colonial education system as lacking in vitality and relevance. In short, the conference recommended changes in the system from 6-5-2-3 system to 6-3-3-4 system, 6 years primary, 3 years junior secondary, 3 years senior secondary and 4 years University education. But when political authority picked up the document and shown interest in it, they interpreted it differently. They failed to realize that the document is a proposal produced by academics and interest groups. To put proposal into practice needs a careful planning. This was not done; the far reaching proposal was backfired. The intended result of this beautiful proposal was muddled up and so was never achieved.

Many children, particularly those in the rural agricultural areas have pressures on them to work which often clash with traditional schooling timetables. Temporary withdrawals in harvest times and migrating communities pull children away from school, often leading to more permanent dropout (Hadley, 2010).

The concept 'inspection' takes its root from the word 'inspect', 'to make official visit to an organization or check on standards'. Adetula (2010) defines it as the assessment of the state of educational system, to ascertain its acceptable standard. Inspection serves many purposes in the educational system. In Nigeria, schools inspection has been criticized for its inability to assist classroom teachers to improve their performance and maintenance of standards which has remotely contributed to dropout rate. Ige A. M (2012) Many factors however affects the effectiveness of inspection in Nigeria, which include the following: Inadequate Resources, Inadequate qualified Inspectors, Lack of Orientation for Inspectors, Limited Time for Inspection, Attitudes of Teachers and Schools' Administrators, 'Window Dressing' in Schools, Non implementation of inspection Reports and Non provision of Feedback and follow up on inspection.

Government efforts for improving school access, retention and achievement will not be successful unless accompanied by early and continuous health interventions to tackle nutritional deficiencies and other health related issues, illness and conditions that impact on children's school absenteeism and their overall cognitive development (Lewin, 2007). Gender cuts across a wide range of constraints that lead to drop out. There are gendered cultural practices, school safety issues and teenage pregnancy (Kane 2004), that affect the opportunities of girls and boys to complete primary school. Some of the factors that influence quality education include: teacher quality, availability of facilities, instructional resources, infrastructure, and supervision of instruction and provision of school meals, hand-on and learner centered methods and approaches, parental involvement and learner-friendly environment. Furthermore, the diversity and value system must be the focus of education to ensure that quality education is given to the children. Through strict intervention of the Government, there is hope for the children who have been out of school to pursue their lifelong dreams.

CONCLUSION

In view of all the discussions and findings, the following recommendations are hereby proffered.

- Government should see to the efficient implementation of the national policy on education.
- Government should emulate other countries who have achieved the Millennium Development Goals number two which is attaining Universal Basic Education.
- Government should encourage female child education to bridge the gap between male and female education in Nigeria.
- Teachers should be trained for effectiveness, more teachers they should also be employed to improve efficiency in the schools. Teachers should be equitably distributed and social amenities put in place in the rural areas to retain teachers.

- Schools inspection and supervision should be intensified to increase efficiency and quality in the educational system. Especially, the public schools should be properly monitored because the bulk of Nigerian children attend the public schools. The private schools should also be encouraged to maintain and improve standard.
- Evidence shows that multi-grade schooling can positively be used to target the different learning needs of children and reduce the potential dropouts. This should be encouraged in our schools.
- Scholarship programmes should be brought back to the elementary schools to encourage those pupils who are naturally endowed but have financial difficulty in the pursuit of their educational career.
- Government should make possible and available the access to credit facilities for education at all levels.
- Inspectors should always be monitored by higher authorities while there is need to ascertain the authenticity of their reports
- Government should enforce all household to enroll their wards in schools especially at the elementary level and ensure that they attend regularly.
- Health interventions in schools would be planned and delivered in collaboration between government departments engaged in health and / or education service delivery.
- School feeding programmes that aim at providing nutritious meals for children should be established and encouraged, this will have double benefit of improving attendance and general well-being of children.
- In Nigeria generally, there is need to radically improve the nation's moral and ethical standards through a revaluation of the value system. Also the nation must emphasize moralism. In doing so, hard work must be positively rewarded.

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