

ESTABLISHING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF STUDENTS' DROPOUT FACTORS IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study explores the factors contributing to student dropout in Sokoto metropolis, Nigeria. It investigates the influence of parental factors (occupation, socioeconomic status, residential location, and religious belief) and school climate factors (school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plant, and school administration). Using a qualitative approach, the study interviewed six principals and six education zonal officers. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to identify key sub-themes and themes. The study emphasizes the crucial importance of establishing validity and reliability in qualitative research. To ensure validity, the researchers employed triangulation, member checking, peer examination, submersion, and external validation. Reliability was addressed through dependability, triangulation, audit trails, peer review, trustworthiness, and appraisal (generalization). The study recommends that schools create a more inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their background, and that parents demonstrate greater commitment to their children's education. Furthermore, the study recommends that researchers using qualitative methods prioritize establishing validity and reliability at every stage of the research process.

Keywords; Student Dropouts; parental and school climate; validity; reliability; qualitative research

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Introduction

Education is universally valued for its role in fostering social awareness, acculturation, and self-reliance. However, these important goals face numerous challenges. A growing number of social issues originating from homes, schools, and society impact teachers, parents, students, and educational authorities, demonstrably affecting Nigerian schools (Abraham, 2011; Aluede, 2011). These problems include students dropping out due to socioeconomic hardship, and the erosion of crucial school functions such as socialization, education, moral training, and empowerment, regardless of the quality of school facilities. Student dropout rates in Nigeria are alarmingly high, currently estimated at 18.3 million across all ages in primary and junior secondary school (10.2 million in primary and 8.1 million in junior secondary) as of May 2024 (UNICEF in Vanguard, 09/05/2024). While the population of children eligible for formal education has increased in recent decades, those who remain in school often face inadequate learning environments characterized by classroom overcrowding, poor teaching and learning resources, limited parental socioeconomic support, and insufficient stakeholder commitment to the maintenance, sustainability, and evaluation of education. These factors negatively impact learning and the activities of both teachers and students.

The positive influence of family and school factors on junior secondary school (JSS) students' education is declining rapidly due to dynamic social and economic challenges, including job insecurity among parents. A child's success in life and school is linked to

parental involvement, while school success depends on the quality of schools and teachers. These parent- and school-related issues are currently major challenges faced by teachers and students, contributing to student dropout. Meighan and Siraj-Blatchford (2004) suggest that schools should support families and society in childcare, education, and socialization. Fafunwa (2004) argues that the socialization process, transitioning from home to school, connects a child's formal education with societal expectations, including culturally defined rules and role-taking by parents and school officials. This perspective supports the idea that educational institutions are microcosms of society (Chu, 2009). Education serves as a vehicle for human development, cultural socialization and integration with industrial development, cultural reproduction, innovation, and social mobility (Babatunde & Adefabi, 2005; Singh, 2007; Mandate, 2002; Evis & Okon, 1993). Therefore, every citizen deserves the right to education, regardless of socioeconomic background or societal perceptions of minority or less privileged individuals. Schools provide avenues for social survival, individual development, and overall social security.

The often-invisible daily costs associated with education can be substantial, posing significant challenges for families with limited socioeconomic resources. This can restrict parental involvement in educational support and negatively affect children's attitudes toward schooling. These factors influence students' interest in school and contribute to inconsistent attendance (absenteeism), which is a strong indicator of potential dropout (Evis & Okon, 1993; Okopi, 2011; Ready, 2010). Access to basic education for school-aged children in Sokoto State remains low, with approximately 60% of basic school-aged children out of school due to limited or nonexistent socioeconomic support and sociocultural beliefs.

Problem Statement

Family and school are the primary social units responsible for education and socialization, preparing young people for dynamic societal roles aligned with social expectations. This preparation should reflect current social circumstances and incorporate educational ideologies that promote positive social life. However, there are fundamental problems related to school effectiveness that contribute to student dropout in Sokoto State. To a large extent, these problems are associated with parental factors (occupation, socioeconomic support, residential location, and religious belief) and school climate factors (school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plant, and school administration).

It is assumed that family and school influence students' success and failure, and that dropout and non-dropout status are related to family social capital. These interconnected factors (family and school) influence student success and are linked to school effectiveness and efficiency.

Residential location is an integral pre-social condition, related to parental occupation and socioeconomic support for children's education. It influences family and children's educational opportunities in Sokoto metropolis, as some residential areas are far from schools, leading to lateness and absenteeism. This suggests that peer and neighbor interactions can either encourage or discourage school engagement. Furthermore, parental religious beliefs influence the general lifestyle of families and individuals in Sokoto metropolis. Some families use Islamic religious beliefs to criticize Western

education, contributing to school dropout and lack of interest (Fafunwa, 2004). School climate factors (school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plant, and administrative organization) also affect student dropout. Classroom ecology is crucial for teaching and learning, but achieving a standard is challenging. Some public schools in Sokoto metropolis operate below national and international standards, with poor teaching and learning environments. These challenges often include pedagogical issues, inadequate infrastructure, school hostility, and a poor classroom environment (ecology). Schools often face overcrowding, resulting in teacher-student ratios as high as 1:100, 1:75, or 1:85, far exceeding the conventional ratio of 1:25 or 1:30 (UBE, 1999; FME, 2007, 2011).

In Nigeria, various forms of poverty (absolute and relative) are recognized as significant factors affecting student success (Iyamu & Aduwa, 2004; UNESCO, 2011). This means that while some students remain in school, others drop out due to a lack of parental support and commitment, which is linked to poverty, income, and social status. The potential consequence is a growing population of uneducated, unskilled, unproductive, and vulnerable youth, posing a threat to individual, family, and national social security. For a nation striving for national productivity, heritage preservation, and global economic and knowledge competitiveness, dropout issues should be a priority. Dropout is a challenge to national productivity, human resources, and represents a loss for parents, schools, and the government. It is a consequence of poor learning conditions in schools and a lack of parental care for students in Nigerian society (Ananga, 2011; Inuwa & Yusof, 2013).

Parental and school climate factors are strong social variables that affect and influence student educational success (Evis & Okon, 1993; 2006; USID, 2010; Okopi, 2011; Okpukpara & Odurukwe). This study uses a qualitative approach to examine how parental factors (parents' occupation, socioeconomic support, residential location, and religious belief) and school climate factors (school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plant, and school administration) influence student education.

Methodology

The study is a qualitative mode that explore parental and school climate factors on student's dropout in Sokoto metropolis Nigeria. The population was purposefully selected to respond to ten interview question guide which largely covers parental and school climate factors. The study has sample population of six, Principal of some selected schools and 6 zonal education officers from the 6 educational zones of Sokoto State.

Instrumentation

Data collection was conducted using a semi-structured interview guide containing ten questions. These questions explored aspects of parental factors (occupation, socioeconomic status, residential location, and religious belief) and school factors (school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plant, and administrative organization). These variables—social, parental, and school-related—can influence students' persistence in school or contribute to dropout before completion. The interviews were conducted using the guide, a voice recording device, and a notepad for note-taking. The reliability and validity of the interview guide were established through

triangulation, internal and external validity checks, and other qualitative measures such as peer examination and audit trails. Participant observation, involving the researcher's direct observation and interaction within the school environment, complemented the interview data. This practice provided a clearer understanding and facilitated the interpretation of recorded information.

The respondents were interviewed using the following guided questions:

- i. In your understanding, are you familiar with the issue of student dropout and non-dropout in Sokoto Metropolis schools?
- ii. How is parental occupation related to student dropout?
- iii. In what ways do you believe parental socioeconomic support is significant to student dropout?
- iv. How do you consider parental residential location to be a factor influencing student dropout?
- v. Do you see a connection between parental religious beliefs and student dropout?
- vi. How would you explain the consequences of school culture (explained to respondents) on student dropout rates?
- vii. How would you describe the relationship between classroom ecology (environment) (explained to respondents) and student dropout?
- viii. How is the school physical plant (explained to respondents) related to student dropout rates?
- ix. What are your thoughts on the relationship between school administrative organization and student dropout rates?
- x. What measures (explained to respondents) would you suggest to reduce student dropout rates in Sokoto Metropolis schools?

Justification for Validity and Reliability of Questions and Interviews

While quantitative research emphasizes validity and reliability, qualitative research focuses on trustworthiness and credibility. Nevertheless, qualitative researchers also face challenges related to validity and reliability, though these concepts are applied differently than in quantitative studies. This is because qualitative research methods and instrumentation differ, often not requiring statistical tools for numerical representation in sampling, interpretation, or analysis, except in specific, unique cases. Consequently, the processes of sampling, selection, instrumentation, data collection, interpretation, usability, and generalization take on a subjective nature due to inherent human variability, which numerical data cannot fully capture. While validity and reliability are traditionally associated with quantitative research, in qualitative research, validity refers to the accuracy (credibility) of data description or explanation (Rolfe, 2006; Bear, Gaskins, Blank, & Chen, 2011; Kothari, 2004; Khan, 2014; Maxwell, 2016). The purpose of addressing validity and reliability in qualitative research is to ensure and demonstrate that the research approach is appropriate for the study's objective, addressing issues of trust and credibility and mitigating any doubts about the findings. Reliability, in this context, refers to the appropriateness of the research method, including the scope and expected coverage of the study variables.

Validity

This study addresses two types of validity: internal and external. Internal validity focuses on how accurately the research findings represent the study variables, discourses, themes, and sub-themes within the research scope. External validity addresses the extent to which the study's findings and interpretations can be confidently and legitimately applied to groups or social contexts beyond the specific study sample (Cole, 2024 and William, 2024).

In addition, other crucial qualitative validity strategies were employed in this study, including triangulation, member checking, peer examination, a clear statement of the research background, assumptions, prior orientations, and the duration of engagement in the research process.

Triangulation: This study employed multiple qualitative data collection methods, enhancing the credibility of the findings. Using interviews, focus groups, and participant observation, along with diverse respondent selection, minimized potential researcher bias and ensured a more objective representation of the social phenomenon under study. This approach helps avoid skewed or one-sided responses.

Member Checking: Member checking ensured that respondents confirmed the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations of their opinions. This process fostered trustworthiness and transparency between the researcher and respondents, as both parties scrutinized the collected and interpreted information, further enhancing credibility.

Peer Examination: Peer examination involved colleagues reviewing the collected data to assess its objectivity and reasonableness. This step verified the fairness and relevance of the data in addressing the research questions, ensuring that responses aligned with expectations and that the data contained valuable insights.

Submersion: Submersion refers to the researcher's extended engagement in data collection. Prolonged immersion in the research setting, environment, or contact with the phenomenon or respondents increases the likelihood of in-depth investigation and strengthens internal validity. This extended engagement facilitates a more thorough understanding and interpretation of the observed phenomenon.

External Validation (Generalization): External validation involves the potential for generalizing study findings to other contexts. While some argue that qualitative generalization is not always possible, this study adopted the perspective that qualitative findings can serve as working hypotheses to guide future research (Patton, 1991). Generalization, therefore, is not a fixed conclusion but rather a flexible guide. This approach aligns with Erickson's (1986) concept of "concrete universals," which describes how individuals generalize from specific experiences. The usefulness and applicability of research findings depend on the reader's, user's, or consumer's acceptance, trust, and likelihood of referring to the findings in the future (Patton, 1991; Wilson 1979; Green & Glasgow, 2006).

Reliability

Reliability in research refers to the consistency, stability, and accuracy of collected data. It aims to ensure trust and confidence in the reported information, demonstrating a high correlation if the same data were collected again. However, establishing reliability in social sciences like education or the sociology of education can be challenging. Human attitudes and behaviors are not static, and the factors that influence them are dynamic, changing over time. Given the complexities of human nature, environment, thought

processes, and the factors involved in data collection and interpretation, achieving perfect repeatability can be difficult due to inherent inconsistencies. Instead of focusing on static reliability measures like those used in quantitative research, qualitative research often emphasizes *dependability*, which refers to the consistency of processes and reported findings. Similar to the strategies used for establishing validity (triangulation, peer examination), the study employed an audit trail to demonstrate dependability. The audit trail meticulously documents the research process, including the research design, sampling methods, detailed data collection procedures, instrumentation, coding, recording, transcription, theme development, and conclusions. This detailed record serves as a guide for future research, showcasing the dependability, repeatability, and consistency of the study's design and findings (Rose & Johnson, 2020; Petrov, Tsoneva, Dimitrova, & Zhelyazkov, 2024; Mosbah, 2024; Green & Glasgow, 2006).

- i. Dependability (consistency or confirmability) was used to establish reliability in this qualitative study.
- ii. To ensure dependability, transparency was prioritized, creating a free and friendly environment for participants to express themselves openly and facilitate accurate data collection.
- iii. A detailed procedure was established to create an "audit trail," ensuring plausibility and credibility. This transparent process enhances the research's viability and reliability, allowing readers to understand the study's logic and assess its potential for replication.
- iv. Peer review, similar to inter-rater reliability, was crucial, providing multiple perspectives and assessments from colleagues.

Replicability was addressed by ensuring the trustworthiness of the procedures and verifying the alignment between reported information and researcher observations. This step confirms that the reports accurately convey the intended message and correspond with what was observed, making replication possible both theoretically and practically. This multi-source observation strategy ensures the reliability of observations and confirms the relevance of all data to the research goals.

Appraising, generalizing, or considering future use of the research findings depends on the reader and their assessment of the findings' adaptability to future research contexts. Therefore, the usability or generalizability of the research is largely determined by the correlations a reader or researcher establishes in any given research situation.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Questions and Responses

The validity and reliability of the research questions and interview responses were established using triangulation, member checking, peer examination, submersion, and external validation. Reliability was ensured through triangulation, dependability, peer review, audit trails, and applicability.

Table 1: Types and Strategies of Validity used for Research Questions and Responses

S/N	Types of validity	Strategies used for the Validation
1.	Triangulation	This study employed both interviews and participant observation to evaluate the suitability and flexibility of the interview guide for achieving the study's objectives. Combining these methods helped mitigate potential bias, as the researcher could correlate observed behaviors with interview responses.
2.	Member check	Respondents were given the opportunity to review the recorded and interpreted responses to ensure that they accurately reflected their answers to the interview questions. This process verified the accuracy of the collected, recorded, transcribed, interpreted, and presented data.
3.	Peer examination	This step was taken to ensure that the responses were fairly and accurately aligned with the research questions, as judged by other readers.
4.	Submersion	This method was used to ensure that the extended data collection period allowed for more in-depth observation, study, and understanding. This, in turn, facilitated thorough data extraction from participants and the research setting, contributing to a richer description and interpretation of the social phenomenon under investigation.
5.	External validation	The research questions in this study are well-suited for similar studies examining the same social phenomenon in other settings due to their focus on globally relevant factors affecting children's education. The broad scope of the instrument and findings encompasses educational factors within both the school and home environments. These factors align with contemporary social issues affecting students, teaching, and learning worldwide.

Field survey 2014.

Table 2: Types and Strategies of Reliability of the Research Questions and Responses

S/N	Types of Reliability	Strategies used for the Reliability
1.	Triangulation	The interview questions and responses were validated through observation and interaction with participants. This process was reinforced by correlating coded interview data with frequently observed factors related to the variables and the questions themselves. This dual approach ensured the reliability of responses, data, and variables within the research.
2.	Dependability	The extracted data demonstrates high consistency and confirmability. This consistency reflects reliability,

		indicating that all responses and study variables are aligned and strongly connected to the participants' perspectives.
3.	Peer Review	This process allows others to review, question, and challenge the research procedures. This is also known as peer debriefing, as the procedure involves peer review by experts familiar with the methodologies, study variables, and challenges.
4.	Audit Trial	The audit trail was used to establish the credibility of the research process, demonstrating consistency, reliability, transparency, and accountability in the methodology. This establishes plausibility and makes the research believable. It involves the participants, researcher, study conditions, and the basis upon which the research can be trusted, adopted, or adapted.
5.	Replicability	The research presents credible content related to the social phenomenon of schooling. This emphasizes the trustworthiness of the research, suggesting that it can be replicated using the established procedures for future investigations.

Field survey 2024.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

This study presents interview responses collected from school principals and zonal coordinators, using a qualitative research approach with an interview guide. The recorded interviews were transcribed, coded, and initially analyzed by highlighting key concepts to identify potential constructs and preliminary themes. These highlighted concepts served as a basis for categorizing similar responses and identifying potential thematic connections, contributing to an understanding of the social phenomenon under study. This process led to the development of key themes (Goyanes, Lopezosa, & Jordá, 2024; Petrov et al., 2024), reflecting the respondents' perspectives on strategies to prevent student dropout in Sokoto metropolis schools. The two groups of respondents are referred to as school principals and zonal coordinators.

Research question; what are the suggestions that can be adapted to prevent students' dropout and motivate non-dropouts in schools of Sokoto metropolis.

Table 3: School Principal and Zonal coordinator Responses to Research Question

S/N	School Principals	Zonal Coordinator	Extract Themes	Concept
	Many of the problems facing schools and students stem from the education authorities' lack of commitment to the system. Improved salaries, better working environments, and enhanced educational resources are needed. Both parents and the government	The decline in boarding schools compared to the past is a major factor contributing to low student commitment and discipline. Converting schools back to boarding	School Principals' Concerns: Negative work attitudes, a flawed education system, low morale, a lack of teaching and learning facilities, and poor accountability.	

should share the responsibility of making education a worthwhile investment.	schools could improve both academic performance and discipline, as it would be more difficult for boarding students to miss school unnoticed by their parents. (Gwadabawa Zonal Coordinator)	Zonal Coordinators' Concerns: Lack of commitment from education stakeholders, low discipline, high truancy, insufficient parental monitoring, and the need for more boarding schools to improve student attitudes and discipline.
Today's school system faces numerous challenges. Teachers, students, and school authorities often rely on improvisation to compensate for the lack of resources. Education authorities are not providing the necessary facilities for effective teaching and learning. All required materials should be readily available for both teachers and students.	The financial burden of schooling, which many parents cannot afford, should be shared by the government and private organizations. These two entities should collaborate to cover the costs of children's education. (Yabo Zonal Coordinator)	(SP) School Principals' Concerns: Schools primarily rely on improvisation due to limited support from the government and other stakeholders. They face numerous challenges due to a lack of resources and commitment from educational authorities.
		(ZC) Zonal Coordinators' Concerns: Schools experience challenges related to a lack of teaching and learning resources for teachers and students, as well as a suitable learning environment. The financial burden on parents and authorities is increasing.
Education authorities appear to have lost interest in the system, demonstrated by their reluctance to invest adequately in the education sector. This lack of investment contributes to student dropout and the declining quality of	Parents and community members should be educated about the importance of education for individual success. The government should also offer	(SP) School Principals' Concerns: Education authorities have reduced their investment in public education, leading to frequent student dropouts and

education at all levels, impacting teaching, learning, commitment, and the overall school environment.	scholarships and sponsorships for high-achieving students pursuing higher education. (Bodinga Zonal Coordinator)	declining educational quality. Improvements in staff quality, productivity, and the teaching environment are needed. (ZC) Zonal Coordinators' Concerns: Low parental support and questions about the relevance of education are prevalent. Scholarship programs should be established, and the teaching and learning environment improved.
Principals, teachers, and parents must fulfill their responsibilities before addressing student issues. The failure of parents and teachers to adequately perform their duties contributes to student dropout, particularly in subsidized schools, and a decline in discipline.	The government should enact legislation providing special medical care and social services to parents and their school-aged children in Sokoto State. This would incentivize school attendance. (Goronyo Zonal Coordinator)	SP) School Principals' Concerns: Parents and teachers should be more committed to their duties and responsibilities toward the school and students. (ZC) Zonal Coordinators' Concerns: Legislation for educational subsidies is needed to encourage parents and students to attend school.
Many teachers work only half-days at school, engaging in other income-generating activities to support their families. They neglect their teaching duties due to poor working conditions. Furthermore, many parents are not actively involved in monitoring their children's academic progress. Therefore,	Civil servant parents should be required to send their own children and those of their neighbors to school. This would create a system of accountability. District and ward heads should also encourage their	(SP) School Principals' Concerns: Low teacher commitment and challenging financial situations make it difficult for them to remain in their jobs. Poor working conditions negatively

neither teachers nor parents are fully committed to the students' education.	communities to enroll their children in school. (Sokoto South Zonal Coordinator)	impact student learning. (ZC) Zonal Coordinators' Concerns: Parents and neighbors should ensure their children and wards attend school and monitor their attendance. District heads should encourage local parents to enroll their children.
Students' academic performance is concerning; some parents express their concerns, while others do not. Students who drop out of school often lack adequate guidance and support. Educating children is a shared responsibility. Neither parents nor teachers alone can effectively train students; cooperation among all stakeholders is essential.	Some parents use religion as an excuse for not enrolling their children in Western education. The government should engage religious leaders to educate Muslim parents about the importance of educating their children. (Sokoto North Zonal Coordinator)	(SP) School Principals' Concerns: Poor student academic performance and selective parental complaints highlight the need for greater care and guidance for students. (ZC) Zonal Coordinators' Concerns: Some parents use religion as an excuse for not sending their children to school. Therefore, the government needs to engage religious leaders to promote the importance of education.

Field survey 2024.

Correlation and Highlights of Relevance of Responses

This section focuses on demonstrating the validity and correlation of responses from principals and zonal coordinators, as well as the reliability of those responses within the framework of qualitative research principles. The responses are analyzed for similarities and relevance to the research objectives, aiming to identify the degree of correlation or disparity related to the study variables.

Table 4: Extract Summary and Correlated Relevance of Responses from School Principals and Zonal Coordinator as Evidence of Validity and Reliability

S/N	Principal	Zonal coordinator	Highlight Relevance
	Increased government commitment and full teacher participation in school activities, along with dedicated commitment to education from both the government and school authorities, will improve students' attitudes.	Schools are environments where children should learn discipline; therefore, all secondary schools should be converted to boarding schools. This would improve learning, discipline, and the dedication of school authorities to their duties.	Both sets of responses emphasize the need for dedicated, committed, and collective work ethic toward achieving school and education system goals.
	Adequate teaching and learning facilities, including all necessary materials, should be provided.	Lack of parental support is a significant challenge for students. Therefore, the government and the public should invest in education within the state. Supporting students' education is the shared responsibility of parents and education authorities.	The central point raised was the need for adequate teaching and learning facilities, which should be provided by stakeholders to encourage learning and teacher commitment.
	Education is underperforming due to a lack of government commitment. Proper commitment from the relevant authorities is essential.	The value of education should be emphasized to the public. Therefore, the government should make education free.	The focus is on initiating laws or other means to make education more accessible for parents and students.

Students' motivation to learn is strongly linked to parental efforts. The emphasis should be on government and school authority involvement as well.	The government should initiate subsidies for medical care and social services for students and parents who are invested in education. This aligns with other views regarding government efforts to sponsor educational activities in the state.	Parental care, support, and government capability are crucial for improving interest in and sustaining schooling.
Poor school activities indicate a lack of teacher commitment to their duties.	Parents in the community should monitor the school activities of all children in their neighborhood.	Poor school activities can result from a lack of community involvement in maintenance, which can negatively impact educational activities.
Students' academic performance should be monitored by both families and schools. Failure by either or both entities to fulfill this responsibility can lead to poor academic outcomes or student dropout.	Religious leaders should be engaged to promote the importance of Western education. This relates to other perspectives on government efforts to promote educational activities in the state.	All education stakeholders in the community are expected to maintain school activities and ensure proper learning and educational outcomes.

Field survey 2024.

To demonstrate the strong correlation of data and the validity and reliability of the interview responses, the following observations were made:

Analysis of data from both the 12 principal respondents (Table 1) and the 12 zonal coordinator respondents (Table 2), along with the extracted constructs and themes, revealed a central focus on improving teaching and learning. While different terminology and social variables were used, the responses consistently pointed in the same direction, emphasizing the need for commitment and responsibility from parents, schools, and authorities.

The content of the respondents' answers, particularly the highlighted sections related to parental and school climate factors, demonstrates a strong interrelationship with student educational progress. This highlights the significant impact of parental care, support,

and socioeconomic status on student success. School climate factors also play a crucial role in facilitating smoother educational pursuits for students and effective policy implementation by school authorities and teachers.

A common theme among respondents was the lack of strong commitment from parents and education authorities to providing school facilities and addressing students' needs, particularly for students who drop out. This suggests a correlation between student dropout rates and inadequate parental support, insufficient commitment from education authorities, and a lack of appropriate teaching and learning resources. These resources are essential for arousing and maintaining the interest of both teachers and students in the school environment.

Another commonality was the emphasis on the responsibilities of communities and stakeholders in supporting educational goals. Some respondents specifically mentioned sponsorship, scholarships, and consistent care for students. They suggested that achieving educational goals requires active and continuous monitoring, supervision, student care, and strong educational collaboration among communities, authorities, parents, teachers, schools, and students.

The principals' views generally centered on the commitment of parents, school authorities, the government, and private organizations to education. Their proposed solutions to student dropout focused on parental involvement and other forms of educational motivation that are lacking from the appropriate individuals and authorities. Zonal coordinators emphasized that key factors for improving education include comprehensive support from the government, parents, and community members. This support should address issues such as school facilities, which affect the needs of teachers and students, and create a secure and productive learning environment. These responses clearly indicate that the success and failure of education are closely tied to family background and government efforts in educational activities. These factors are also responsible for student dropout in junior secondary schools in Sokoto State. Family support is paramount to students' education, and the school environment must be rich in teaching and learning resources to attract students and improve their learning ability. Low social and economic support from families can influence poor student performance, while strong parental commitment can lead to successful student outcomes.

The matrix table presented in this section facilitates sub-categorization, grouping participants' concepts and beliefs in a more precise manner. This process involves categorizing research-generated concepts to form themes that represent the entire dataset, reflecting the variables of school and parental factors affecting student dropout. This categorization led to the development of the matrix table.

Table 5: Qualitative Data Categories, Sub-categories and Themes

S/N	Categories	Sub-Categories	Themes
1.	School location; social academic support from teachers and parents; Self sponsorship; Lack of school material for learning; Poor care from	Parental commitment to children education; Dedication to students training and socioeconomic support in schools.	Parental and society/community support for education

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- parents; Sponsorship from home; Need government intervention are factors leading to school challenges
2. Teachers' commitment; School dedication to training; School environment to teaching and learning either positive or negative; School to students' accommodativeness; school, teachers and student wellbeing and social services
 3. General sponsor and providing schools and students with basic needs for teaching and learning; teaching and learning materials; Providing a comfortable school for successful teaching and learning; Teaching and learning should be made to be attractive to both teachers and learners.
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Field survey 2024.

Discussion of Findings

The social phenomenon of student dropout is closely linked to students' ability to succeed in school. This inability to succeed is often associated with parental and school factors, as well as issues related to education authorities (Ready, 2010; Okpukpara & Odurukwe, 2006). Interviews with principals and zonal coordinators revealed a shared understanding of how to prevent dropout and improve teaching conditions for schools and students (Meighan & Siraj-Blatchford, 2004). Student dropout can be attributed to parental and school factors, along with other resource-related factors for which education authorities are responsible (Bear, Gaskins, Blank, & Chen, 2011; Inuwa & Yusof, 2013). The interview findings indicate that parental factors (socioeconomic support, occupation, residential location, and religious belief) and school climate factors (school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plant, and school administration) can all affect student education in Sokoto State, Nigeria, either negatively or positively (Ananga, 2011; Inuwa & Yusof, 2013).

The findings provide relevant, predictive, and interpretive insights into the current educational situation of JSS2 students in Sokoto metropolis, particularly concerning low parental, community, and authority support.

Student dropout represents a student's decision to leave school before the official completion period (Okopi, 2011; Abraham, 2011). These decisions are influenced by parental, school, and policy-related factors, including lack of interest. Parental educational support, such as care (including feeding, transportation, daily school money, reading and writing materials, uniforms), school visits, and monitoring of student activities, needs improvement to retain students in school (Evis & Okon, 1993; Ananga, 2011).

Poverty influences parental attitudes toward supporting students and preventing dropout. When families support a student's education, the likelihood of dropout decreases. However, students from families lacking support (assistance with homework, books, daily educational costs, feeding, and provision of other necessities) are more likely to drop out, exhibit poor attitudes toward school, and experience poor academic performance. Parental (family) socioeconomic support is a primary factor in student success; its absence poses a significant challenge.

School effectiveness and efficiency revolve around its norms and values, including both written and unwritten rules (Bear, Gaskins, Blank, & Chen, 2011; Okopi, 2011). These contribute to creating enabling teaching and learning environments. These factors can operate negatively or positively, and their impact is associated with student dropout. Interviewees noted that school culture, including teacher commitment and school resourcefulness, affects students' education.

Generally, teaching and learning materials were not readily available as required by teachers and students. Both school principals and zonal coordinators pointed out that many classrooms were not conducive to learning. Students faced challenges with desks and a shortage of chairs for both students and teachers. Therefore, classrooms often lacked adequate furniture for constructive and engaging teaching and learning. Education authorities should provide these resources to encourage a positive learning attitude.

In summary, respondents strongly emphasized parental care, noting that poor home living conditions often prevent parents from fulfilling their responsibilities toward their children's education. Parental lack of care or concern contributes to students developing negative attitudes toward schooling, even if authorities improve school culture, classroom ecology, school physical plants, administrative organization, and make schooling free (Inuwa & Yusof, 2013). Parents (homes) still bear the responsibility of monitoring their children's educational progress. Providing adequate teaching and learning facilities remains the responsibility of parents, teachers, and education authorities. Therefore, student educational success (access, retention, and completion) in Sokoto metropolis is the shared duty of parents, teachers, students, and education authorities.

Recommendations

Schools should be fully inclusive centers that support teaching and learning for all students, regardless of their background or status.

School culture, classroom ecology, administrative routines, and school environment and facilities should be readily available and accessible to all students.

Parents should be committed to their responsibilities and provide socioeconomic and parental support to learners at home, school, and in their daily life activities. This will enable student success in their educational pursuits.

Conclusion

Qualitative research should always undergo validation and reliability checks to ensure the quality of the research is beyond doubt and that its contents, facts, and sources are reliable and dependable. The processes involved in validation and reliability justify the research and the researcher's credibility, building trust between the research, researcher, readers, and the global academic community.

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