

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

CAUSES FOR STUDENT DROPOUT AT
PRIMARY LEVEL IN SNNPR

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CAUSES FOR STUDENT DROPOUT AT PRIMARY LEVEL IN SNNPR

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**By
Tadesse Woldie**

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to identify the major reasons(causes) that influence pupils to drop out of school at primary level in SNNPR and to forward suggestions so that the problem would be minimized.

To carry out the study, twelve primary schools were selected from six zones using the purposive or judgement sampling technique. One hundred forty-four primary school pupils(72 returnees and 72 non- returnees), twelve principals, and 36 teachers have filled in the questionnaire. Twelve pupils from grades 2,3, and 4 and 15 parents and/or community members as well as 6 ZED (Zonal Education department) officials were used as data source using interview questions. In addition, data on pupil enrollment, dropout, and repetition were collected from the statistical documents of MOE, SNNPREB, and from the rosters and other documents of the sample schools.

The obtained data were analysed using statistical tools such as percentages, means, the chi-square, and the rank order correlation coefficient.

The results of data analysis have shown that student dropout is the function of the in-school and out-of-school reasons. Among the in-school factors that have greatly influenced pupils to drop out of school in the region, incomplete grades of the school level, shortage of school supply and lack of encouragement from teachers were the major ones. Regarding the influential out-of-school reasons, pupils' involvement in income generating activities, lack of material and financial support and excessive involvement in domestic work stand out. Other in-school and out-of-school reasons were also identified although they were not as strong as the above mentioned

ones. The study has also noted that factors which cause pupils to drop out of school are not single. They are interrelated and interwoven.

On the basis of the findings, such points as up-grading the in-complete primary schools to 1-8 level, improving the professional competence of teachers, subsidizing pupils' clothing and school supplies, revising the policy on school fee, improving the agricultural sector to create more employment opportunities and expanding and strengthening literacy program and non-formal education are forwarded as recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Some four and half decades ago, Olsen (1954 : 67) wrote that education would promote self-realization, economic efficiency, human relationship and civic responsibility. Similarly, Assefa (1967), focusing on education as a right hand for economic development, said, "Indeed to talk of capital output ratio or the production function and development without regard to the effects of education, technical progress or innovation is to "Write Hamlet and leave out the prince". He warns that neglect of the educational framework could very well lead to an undesirable imbalance which could arrest the progress of economic development. In the same token , World Bank. is of the view that education is a corner-stone of economic growth , social development and a principal means of improving the welfare of individuals (World Bank Policy Paper, 1990: 2). Recent literature also lays greater emphasis on the importance of education that without an education, people cannot work productively, care for their health, sustain and protect themselves and their families or live culturally enriched lives. On society wide scale, the denial of education harms the cause of democracy and social progress and by extension international peace and security (UNICEF, 1999:1). On the basis of this general framework, education, with especial emphasis on primary level, is of a high priority in the overall development endeavors of the government in Ethiopia (MOE ; 1994 :4).

Primary education is the part of educational system which serves two major purposes: to produce a literate and numerate population who can deal with problems at home and at work and to serve as a foundation up on which

further education is built. (World Bank Policy Paper, 1990:8). However, in many countries of the developing world, it has not been able to meet these objectives. This is because, in developing countries, education in general and primary education in particular is entangled in such problems as:

- a) lack of access and equality of opportunities;
- b) low internal efficiency which is characterized by high rates of dropout and repetition;
- c) low external efficiency;
- d) low quality of education by which is meant poor achievement of pupils, unsuitability of curriculum to its goals, scientific education without any practical application or unavailability of school textbooks;
- e) shortage of qualified teachers and/ or too high or low pupil/teacher ratio;
- f) weak educational management;
- g) dilapidation and poor maintenance of school buildings; etc. (Bos, et. al. 1973 ; World Bank Policy Paper, 1990 ; Magnen, 1991.) .

Like in other developing countries, the system of education in Ethiopia is beset by the same web of difficulties. Despite the continuous governmental attempts to improve the educational system in the country, it is still faced with problems of enormous proportion. Ayalew (2000: 105) describes the situation and magnitude of these problems as follows:

... Very low participation rate of school aged children at the primary level; unacceptably high gender and rural urban disparity; high repetition and dropout rates; deteriorating quality of education at all levels; and inefficient management because of poor staffing of the educational offices...

We can thus simply understand that student dropout is one of the significant problems in the education systems, especially of the developing world. According to Campbell and Ramseyer (1958 : 92), student dropout is one of the serious concerns of school people. Adams (1969: 101) shows how serious the dropout problem in the developing countries is : many pupils start in the first grade, then drop out and then come back again as repeaters and drop out again. Some schools in rural areas offer only one or two primary grades because of lack of teachers capable of teaching the upper grades. Coombs (1985) notes that despite the dramatic expansion of primary schools and increased enrollment in many of the developing countries, the number of pupils who successfully complete their education is still insufficient. Lockheed and Verspoor (1991: 183) also indicate that the most relevant measure of the effectiveness of educational system is not the number of students enrolled but the number of graduates who have achieved the required level of learning. Many children drop out during the early years of the primary cycle and never attain basic literacy and numeracy.

Dropout problem pervasively exists in the education system of Ethiopia. It has been reflected in the recent Education and Training policy of the country (MOE ; 1994: 3) as " The gross participation rate of primary education is below 25% of the relevant age cohort. Of these, a large number discontinues and relapses to illiteracy. " This has been perceived by educators in the country a long time ago, but was regarded as a normal feature in the education system. Tadesse Terefe (1964) and Assefa Bequele (1967) , for example, pointed out that the intake rate for the country was small and there was the problem of high dropout rate. More recently, Ayalew (2000:105) also confirmed that dropouts and repeaters at primary and secondary level schooling are considerably high, and completion rates very low. Besides, the

wastage is more serious at the primary level and more severe on the already deprived sector of the population, i.e. girls and children from rural areas. He further suggests that if greater efficiency is to be attained, the loss of scarce resources due to wastage has to be curbed. Degarge (1998) also indicates the problem's resource implication in that dropping out has the worst impact because pupils drop out of school before the minimum permanent literacy and numeracy is achieved.

In SNNPR too, student dropout is one of the serious problems that challenges the education sector. In contrast to the attempts of the regional government to expand enrollment at primary and higher levels, statistics show that the dropout rates are increasing from time to time. (see table 1 below).

Table 1: Primary School Dropout and Repetition Rates Compared for SNNPR.

Grade	Academic year (E.C)							
	1987		1988		1989		1990	
	D	R	D	R	D	R	D	R
1-4	13.9	11.3	26.6	9.2	23.2	10.7	23.7	11.2
5-8	10.0	12.5	9.2	12.5	13.7	13.3	12.4	15.7

Source : Education Statistics of SNNPREB Annual Abstract (1991 E.C)

The above data also disclose that in the region, dropout is more serious in the first cycle primary level than it is in the second cycle. Besides, dropout is more serious than repetition in the region.

The problem of student dropout is one of the centre points in education sector study in order to identify:

- causes so as to be able to propose appropriate solutions:
- its educational, social and economic consequences and
- the obstacles to its solutions (Magnen, 1991: 48).

Accordingly, the aim of this study is to identify the major causes (factors) that influence students to leave school before completing the educational cycle (primary level) in SNNPR. The factors are then compared for urban and rural settings, gender, school and student characteristics in order to suggest possible solutions which will have implications to planners and decision makers.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Student dropout at primary level is one of the worst impediments to educational expansion at all higher levels. It hampers the efficiency level of education by reducing the size of enrollment and wasting educational resources. In addition students who drop out of school, as Lichter (1966) points out, harm themselves and the society at large both culturally and economically.

Although different researchers treated the problem as a contributing factor to educational wastage, (Adane, 1993; Ayalew, 1997; Darge, 1997 Degarge, 1998; Shiundu, 1999; etc.) intensive study has not yet been conducted to identify the major causes and recommend possible solutions especially in SNNPR, where there is large cultural, economic and linguistic diversities.

The case in point was taken up as an agenda for discussion during the first Annual Review Meeting (ARM) of ESDP conducted in Debre Zeit on 15th March 1999. The major questions raised regarding this issue were:

- What are the reasons that kept the dropout and repetition rates rising?
- What measures are envisaged to be taken to address these education wastage issues?

According to the minutes of this meeting, assumptions were aired out by different participants of the ARM as underlining reasons for high dropout and repetition rates:

- opportunity cost;
- abduction and other cultural barriers;
- poor facilities;
- poverty;
- high (overage) entry in grade one which causes several problems of its own, including the need of children to involve in income earning ;
- low consciousness of the importance of education.

However, the meeting at last strongly emphasized that an in-depth study be made to address the issue properly.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate the major causes of student dropout at primary level in SNNPR. More specifically, it seeks answers to the following basic questions:

1. What are the in-school (institutional) factors?
2. What are the out-of-school (socio-economic) factors?
3. Which of these factors exert the strongest influence?
4. What policy implications does this have to planners and decision makers?

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study will be of help in identifying the causes and , designing and compiling solutions to the problem of student dropout at primary level. Planners and decision makers will be able to consider the influential institutional and socio-economic variables in setting priorities. Teachers, principals, parents and the community at large will also be able to use the suggestions as guidelines to minimize and prevent the problem. It will also enrich literature in its category.

1.4. Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to the analysis of the major causes and their solutions of the problem of student dropout at primary level of the government schools in SNNPR. There are reasons for limiting the study to SNNPR. First, the writer of this paper has experiences on the school operation as he is one of the experts and school supervisors in the REB and knows that this is one of the severe problems in the education sector of the region. Second, as a result of this, the problem has repeatedly been raised as an issue during the Bureau's Education Conferences of sequent years. Third, as there are high linguistic, cultural and socio-economic diversities in this region, the writer thinks that the causes of student dropout might also be diverse. Finally, studies have not yet been sufficiently conducted on this problem to establish its magnitude in the region.

The study is delimited to primary level because of the seriousness of the problem at this level. The following table shows the increasing rate of student dropout at primary level for four consecutive years. It also compares the problem with other regions and shows that SNNPR is one of the regions where pupil dropout rate is constantly increasing at primary level.

Table 2: Primary School Dropout Rate in Different Regions of Ethiopia.

Region	Academic year					
	1996/97(89)		1997/98 (90)		1998/99 (91)	
	No of Dropouts	%	No . of Dropouts	%	No. of Dropouts	%
Tigray	43286	14.96	62292	16.01	78930	18.98
Afar	863	6.83	1220	8.24	1151	6.91
Amhara	104593	12.67	118157	11.22	152486	12.02
Oromiya	158684	12.54	192220	11.62	259867	13.42
Eth.Somale	66946	11.59	8226	13.42	9452	15.42
Benishangul	3328	6.44	10583	14.66	13136	16.50
SNNPR	244859	14.73	273464	15.79	302069	19.90
Gambella	3322	12.70	5025	15.42	5950	16.72
Harari	935	14.44	1356	7.27	2293	10.40
Addis Ababa	20829	16.38	23690	13.19	23615	13.45
Dire Dawa	2433	11.17	1877	7.68	3090	12.21

Source: Calculated from data in EMIS (1996/97-1998/99)

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

1.5.1. Dropouts:

Pupils who, for differing reasons, leave school before completing the grade or educational cycle in which they are enrolled (Hornby, 1974).

1.5.2. Returnees:

Those pupils who came back to school after dropping out for one or more years.

1.5.3 Non-returnees:- Those who have not dropped out and presently in school.

1.5.4. Efficiency:

Quantitative relationship between inputs and outputs.

1.5.5. Inputs:

Number of students enrolled

1.5.6. Outputs:

Number of students graduated completing the cycle they are enrolled in.

1.5.7. Effectiveness:

The degree to which an output accords with the stated objectives.

1.5.8. Cohort:

Group of pupils who are of the same age group, begin schooling at the same time and expected to complete it together.

1.5.9 Incomplete primary Schools: Schools which do not have 1-8 grade level in its complete form.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

In spite of the attempts made to compare the complete (1-8) and incomplete primary schools in terms of dropout rate, it was not possible due to lack of data in the region.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This paper is organized in five chapters. The first chapter deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the problem, limitation of the study and definition of key terms used in the study. The second chapter is devoted to the presentation of the review of related literature. The third chapter is concerned with the methodology and procedures employed to collect and analyze the data. Data presentation and analysis of the findings is dealt with in the fourth chapter. Summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations are presented in the fifth chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Dropping Out as a Problem in the Education Systems of the Developing Countries.

Various studies associate the systems of Education in developing countries with low standards and inferior quality. This may be described in terms mainly of low participation rate of school aged children at the primary level, high urban-rural and gender disparities high repetition and dropout rates, overcrowded classrooms, lack of teaching learning materials, inefficient management because of poor staffing of the educational offices and the resulting tenuous achievement of students (Carony, 1982; Teklehaimanot, 1998:4; Ayalew 2000:105). Similarly, Shiundu (1999:1) clearly states that most of the education systems in the developing nations are relatively young and still grappling with problems and constraints of various kinds. Among these are issues of access and equity, quality and relevance, dropouts and non-transition resources and failure. This evidence indicates that student dropout is one of the stumbling-blocks in the attempt to achieve educational goals in the developing countries.

The magnitude of pupil dropout in the developing countries, as Phillips (1975:4) wrote, is quoted as follows:

In the developing countries making up the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, there were as at 1970 an estimated 269 million children aged 5-14 who were out of school in the sense of having left school before completion or never attended school. The number is expected on present trends to increase from 129 million in 1975 to 375 million.

It has also been reported in some recent studies that there is a considerable difference in intake capacity between the first and the final grades of the educational cycle (Hetland and Ishumi, 1984: 61) and that in low-income countries, due to the high dropout rate, fewer than two-thirds of those who enroll in primary school complete the entire cycle (World Bank Policy Paper, 1990:11). Hetland and Ishumi further reported that on average for the 89 developing countries, only 61% of those starting primary education around 1976/77 would reach grade 4. This shows that the problem is so large and increasing from time to time.

Ethiopia is by no means an exception. The education system of the country is entangled in different problems (Ayalew, 2000) among which student dropout is one. This has clearly been stated in the recent Education and Training Policy of the country (MOE, 1994: 3) as "The gross participation rate of primary education is below 22% of the relevant age cohort. Of these, a large number discontinues and relapses to illiteracy". The findings of various studies agree with the statement of this policy. The observation from ESR (1996:iv), for instance, shows that country-wide, 21.1 % of the primary school students dropped out and this was 35.7% for boys and 42.6% for girls in grade one. Adane (1993:42) citing Tadesse (1974) showed the gravity of the dropout problem in the country. Accordingly, in 1970's about 80-90 per cent of pupils dropped out before completing the second grade. Tilaye (1999:67) declared that from those who entered grade one (the cohort of 1976/77-1993/94) the proportion of students who survived up to grade 12 was unlikely to exceed 12%. More recently, it has been recorded in Education statistics for the year 1999/2000 (MOE:EMIS, 1999/2000:13) that at national level, 30.3% of the pupils enrolled in grade one in 1991 E.C. have left school before reaching grade two.

The above evidence thus appears to show that dropping out is a serious and pervasive problem in the education systems of the developing countries depriving children of access to education- their basic right.

At this stage, it seems logical to ask a question why student dropout is more serious in developing countries than it is in the developed ones. Ayalew (1997:493) citing Simmons (1980) presents the reasons for this phenomenon as follows:

- a) The supply of school places, expressed as a percentage of the school age cohort, is higher in developed countries, thus obviating the need to reduce the number seeking admission, as is necessary in the developing countries. Lack of finance and of local self-reliance are the main constraints to expand enrolment.
- b) individuals in developing countries generally have less motivation to obtain more years of schooling.
- c) parents of poor children are not as understanding or supportive as are parents of upper income children.
- d) the costs of education, both direct and in earnings foregone, are often too great for the poor to afford.

2.2. Dropouts as a Form of Educational Wastage.

Literally, the term wastage is defined as loss or no longer in use (Hornby, 1974:986). It simply means loss caused by waste. Wastage in education is described as the failure of educational system to achieve its objectives (Eiclus, 1984:114). This term has emerged in education and is being used mainly for two

reasons. First, education is perceived as a right to which every child or person is entitled, at least basic education, in order to develop human potentials for self-actualization both socially and economically and become useful member of the household or family, community and nation. Secondly, education is perceived as an investment from which dividends and profit must accrue (Shiundu, 1999:4).

Wastage in education is measured mostly by the magnitude of the combined effects of repetition and dropout rates (Ayalew, 1997: 492). Since one of the main objectives in education is to transmit certain levels of knowledge to students by leading them through a cycle of studies, it has been considered that dropping out before having completed the cycle is a waste (Eiclus, 1984:114). In addition, it deprives individuals and nations at large of the ability to make the most efficient use of scarce resources (Shiundu, 1999:3) because dropouts raise the costs associated with producing a graduate of the primary education system (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991). These costs, according to the writers, have three components: the amount spent directly on schooling, i.e. both the cost to society for providing a place for each child in school and the cost to parents for items such as transportation and school supplies. The second is the opportunity cost of school children's time- the value of the labour foregone when children attend school instead of holding outside job or working at home. The third is the future cost to dropouts and their parents in the labour market, failure to complete a primary education translates into a lower rate of return for each year of schooling missed. Other authorities (Hanson and Brembeck, 1966; Gargiulo and Crouch, 1994; Tegegn, 1998; and MOE: EMIS, 2000) are also of the same opinion that student dropout is wastage because the investment in a dropout in terms of money, buildings, and teachers is largely wasted.

Wasted too are his human potentialities and talents which only minimally developed, often do not enable him to create a more satisfactory life for himself and his community as well.

Although all the evidence given above related student dropout with the raised cost of schooling, none has indicated the gains made by a pupil before dropping out. This may be cited as a limitation in these studies. However, dropping out of school is beyond doubt costly both to the individual as well as to society (Rumberger, 1987 in Ayalew, 1997:493).

In general, when pupils drop out of school, they are being excluded from meaningful participation in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities (Shiundu, 1999). Thus, dropout problem seems to be one of the tragic dimensions in educational wastage because it is the missed opportunity for individuals, families, communities, entire nations and regions of the world.

2.3. Causes of Dropping Out

Various studies provide causes due to which students quit school. These are categorized in a variety of ways such as family related, school related, socio-economic or individual causes, etc. This section attempts to cite as many causes as possible so as to be able to understand their sources, trend of development and magnitude in different places and span of time in the education systems.

To begin with, Smith (1961) puts reasons for student desertion in three big categories. These are mismatch between school curriculum and pupils' interest, need for child labour and social enforcement in which are included such factors as health, lack of parental awareness about the importance of education, etc.

Levin (1987) in agreement with the first point of Smith, says that improving standards and minimizing the dropout problem is possible only when pupils' learning needs are met.

Richard (1969) in " Planning Education for African Development" points out that dropout can be caused by a number of factors which often operate together. The most frequent of these are, the availability of school places and facilities, attitude towards schooling, and the level of school fees. He further clarifies that dropout (wastage) at the major points- the end of primary and junior secondary school- mainly results from insufficient places at the next level. However, according to Richard, the mere availability of empty places at the next level may not mean that the dropout problem would be solved.

Frey (1970) groups dropouts into three categories : those who leave school forcedly, those who leave because of academic incompetence and, those who leave while academically competent.

Pupils who are included in the first group are those who leave school because of such external factors as parental death, ill health of themselves or their parents, etc. which are beyond their control. Those who are included in the second category leave school because they think that they cannot keep up with school work, or experience multiple repetition and finally realize that they can't complete the level they are in. The third group contains students who have sufficient academic competence for the level they are enrolled but they do not realize this and desert school due to socio-economic or other reasons.

Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985:209) and Banerji (1998) elaborately analysed the causes of pupil dropout and came up with more or less similar reasons.

Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, for instance, show us the list of causes for pupil dropout as follows:

Poverty which may give rise to illness, malnutrition and absenteeism, the high opportunity cost of schooling for poor families, cultural factors which affect girls in particular, inappropriate curriculum and examination, which are often excessively academic and designed to prepare a minority of pupils for upper secondary and higher education; badly trained teachers; lack of textbooks and materials ;overcrowded schools; and shortage of secondary school places...

Gargiulo and Crouch (1994:14) in their study entitled Schooling, Repetition and Dropout in Nicaragua identified two major classes of factors that caused pupils to leave school before completion. These are immediate or self-reported reasons and indirect or implicit reasons. Among the self-reported reasons, the need to work stands out causing 25% of all desertions. Health was the second important problem causing 10.5% of the children to abandon their studies. Pregnancy is euphemistically included under this reason. That's why health is a more significant factor for girls than it is for boys. Another self-reported cause of dropout is the inavailability of higher grades at the next level which caused 6.2% of the children to quit school. Among the indirect or implicit reasons late entry, multiple repetition, mother's and father's education and occupation, marital status of parents, etc. are the major ones.

Carron and Chau (1996:79) lay greater emphasis on parental faith in school as a reason for pupil dropout .They say that parents do not send or do not

keep their children in school even when the school is on their doorstep. Parent's willingness and ability to school their children cannot be taken for granted if they lack faith in school as an instrument of social promotion. According to these researchers, the combined phenomena of graduate unemployment and the booming of the informal sector of the economy, which employs many people without formal qualifications, is supposed to feed these doubts about the value of schooling. They cited the example of China where the attraction of industrial or commercial activities had been identified as one of the main reasons for dropping out among children, mainly at junior secondary school level. They further reported that such reasons as poor quality of school, pupils' home environment (rural Vs. urban) and weak contact between parents and the school caused pupils to quit school early.

Concerning pupil's home environment they added that town centers are systematically advantaged over marginal urban zones and even more so over rural zones. Many pupils in the rural areas live in houses without electricity or running water. Few pupils have their own desk, let alone their own room. Children have little contact with the written word outside of school due to the paucity of reading materials and to the low level of education of parents... parents with little formal education on average are poorer, offer their children less opportunity to study, are less able to assist them in school and need them more to help out at home or in the field. With regard to parental faith in education, Tekeste Negash (1996:65) said, "Many children in rural Ethiopia are kept out of school not because of lack of school places but because their parents might have made the conscious decision not to enroll them". We can simply understand from this statement that such parents are unlikely to keep their children in school even after they got the chance to enroll.

Tilaye (1999:75) mentions that students may quit school due to various reasons which could be classified as: extraneous (socio-economic) and school related factors.

Extraneous (socio-economic) factors, according to the author, have two parts: social and economic. Social factors include ill- health of the students themselves or their parents, parental disunity (family breakdown), parents' hatred of formal education, peer group influence, early marriage, etc. Factors such as gloomy employment prospects for educated, parental inability to afford educational expenses, pupil's involvement in income generating tasks and family work, etc. are put under economic reasons. On the other hand, school-related or institutional factors include home-school distance, irrelevant curriculum, difficulty in the language of instruction, shortage of trained teachers, lack of guidance and counseling service, inadequate supply of instructional materials or other facilities, inadequate library service, frequent repetition and erratic attendance. Although all these factors listed above have influenced pupils to drop out of school, according to the findings of this study, the degree of severity of their influence differs with the difference in sex and geographic location of schools.

In the case of BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) experience, student dropout is mainly attributed to inflexible school timing. Rigidity of school timing is the most common reason for student dropout according to BRAC (1997:3) . Most children are needed for work at home or in the fields during the harvest season which makes regular attendance a problem. To ensure that every child can attend school. the BRAC school hours are flexible based on the agreement between the teacher and the parents.

According to a more recent study conducted by Wendy (2000:3-4) , dropouts cited the following reasons to have caused them to desert school. These are categorized as:

A. School Factors: Included under these factors were that a student:

- didn't like school in general or a particular transfer school;
- was failing, getting poor grades, or couldn't keep up with school work;
- didn't get along with teachers and/or students;
- had disciplinary problems, was suspended or expelled;
- didn't fit in or;
- didn't feel safe.

B. Personal Factors: Here, a student:

- got a job, had a family to support, or had trouble managing both school and work;
- got married, got pregnant, became a parent, wanted to have a family, or had a family to take care of ;
- had friends who dropped out;
- had a drug or alcohol problem.

Literature thus provides us with a number of causes for student dropout . However, we can group them into a manageable category so that they would easily be understood.

Thus:

- 1) those that are related to physical, emotional and mental characteristics of the child or the learner;
- 2) those that are rooted in the over all social and economic environment, and
- 3) those that stem from the way school system itself is structured and operates.

Social and economic forces are largely beyond the control of educators and educational experts. They need the intervention of policy makers and legislators(Shiundu, 1999:20) . However, certain factors contributing to wastage can be readily addressed by educators and professionals.

In summary, it is, therefore, a paramount importance to understand the source, nature and magnitude of different causes of dropout before embarking into the effort to minimize or eliminate them.

2.4. Consequences of Dropping out

2.4.1. Economic Consequences

There is ample evidence in literature that primary education, by imparting cognitive skills (literacy, numeracy and problem solving), has direct and positive effect on earning and productivity. Citing evidence from Wheeler (1970) and Marris (1982) Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985:20) argue that on average an increase in the literacy rate from 20 to 30 per cent causes national income (GDP) to increase by 8 to 16 percent (which is even more in the African countries). According to the same authorities, not only that education strongly affects economic growth but that general investment has less effect on growth rates when it is not supported by educational investment. Besides, it has been

well documented in the World Bank Policy Paper, (1990:10) that four years of education increased small farm productivity by 7 per cent across thirteen developing countries, and by 10 per cent in countries where new agricultural techniques were being introduced.

Here, what is being reflected is that increased education of the labour force appears to explain a substantial part of the growth of output. Thus, it can apparently be inferred from this evidence that deprivation especially of primary education (dropping out of school) will result in the loss of economic benefits for the society. Events of this kind take their toll in the developing countries. Economically, dropping out of school means a great loss of human resources potential ... (Phillips, 1975:4)

The phenomenon of dropping out results in economic crisis for the individual too. The individual remains with low academic skill and little or no opportunity to obtain further education (Adane, 1993:41). An educated person is in a better position to compete for the limited number of employment opportunities available in the country's economy. He/She could also have a better chance of creating self-employment than does one without formal education (Tilaye, 1999:67).

As Jolly (1969:67) shows , high dropout rate in preceding grades results in underutilization of capacity in the upper grades. This occurs at most levels in secondary schools where, because of dropout, the upper classes are often four, six or even ten short of full enrollment. Over a national system, this can lead to a ten or twenty per cent underutilization of facilities. Hetland and Ishumi (1984:61) also pointed out the existence of underutilization of the existing capacity in final grades due to high dropout in the preceding grades.

Underutilization of facilities in upper grades due to pupil dropout in preceding levels is also implied in Education Sector Review (1996). Accordingly, both GER and NER during the time of this review were found to be declining with the increase of the educational levels giving rise to underutilization of resources at higher levels. (See Table 3 below).

Table 3 Gross and Net Enrollment Ratios (All students) by Schooling Level, Urban/ Rural and Gender

Urban Rural & Gender	Schooling Level									
	Primary		Junior Secondary		Senior Secondary		Tertiary		Total	
Enrollment Ratios Urban	GER	NER	GER	NER	GER	NER	GER	NER	GER	NER
Male	.88	.62	.84	.28	.44	.26	.03	.02	.58	.36
Female	.94	.58	.64	.20	.34	.21	.01	.01	.51	.29
Total	.91	.60	.73	.24	.38	.23	.02	.01	.54	.32
Rural										
Male	.24	.10	.09	.01	.02	..	...	...	.13	.05
Female	.11	.05	.04	.01	.01	.01	...	...	.06	.03
Total	.18	.08	.06	.01	.02	...	...	...	.09	.04
Urban + Rural										
Male	.33	.18	.22	.06	.09	.04	.01	...	.20	.10
Female	.24	.13	.17	.05	.09	.06	...	...	.15	.08
Total	.29	.16	.19	.05	.9	.05	0.9	...	.17	.09

Source: Ethiopia Social Sector Studies, ESR (1996) PP.10-11.

The trend shown in the table above is also observed in the current education system in Ethiopia. Statistics show that in 1992 E.C, for example, the national Enrollment Ratio for primary education (1-6), (1-8) and senior secondary education (9-12) respectively was 60.6%, 51.0% and 10.3% (EMIS, 1992). It indicates that due to varying reasons, students who enter grade one do not reach the higher educational level. They leave the educational system early and this leads to underutilization of capacity at upper levels.

The evidence thus shows that dropping out negatively affects a country's economic development and this is significant for both developing and developed nations.

2.4.2. Social Consequences

School dropouts (usually from 2nd cycle of the primary school in our case) are either unemployed or underemployed. Concerning the social consequences of the unemployed or underemployed school dropouts, Shiundu (1999:14) has the following to say:

It (unemployment)is the source of extreme disappointment and frustration. What it means is that these youth have no opportunity to utilize their knowledge and skills productively. They appear and sound a wasted lot in society... Alternatively, they could turn into antisocial practices.

Regarding the social consequences of school dropouts, Tilaye (1999:68) also confirms the idea stated by Shiundu. According to Tilaye, the fact that some of the dropouts are not engaged in productive works may expose them to crimes. Most likely pupils who quit school will indulge in drugs, alcohol, smoking, delinquency, and other socially unacceptable activities.

In words of Phillips (1975:4), socially, dropping out means tension between the educationally privileged and the deprived; for the individual it means loss of dignity and of opportunity.

On the other hand, studies show that an educated person has a better concept to care for his health and nutrition, and has a better capacity and knowledge to lower birth rate which in the long run, results in social betterment (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985:54). These effects of education on social life are referred to as indirect or non-market effects of education. Their value, especially in developing countries, is estimated to be higher than the value of direct economic effects of education. The links between education, health, and fertility provide one way of measuring the non-market effects of education, which, according to recent estimates amount to as much as two-fifths of the full economic value of education. It could be argued that in developing countries the ratio of non-market to market effects is even greater than in developed countries (Ibid.).

In general, pupil dropout results in the loss of access to information, broader perspectives of human thought, non-market efficiency, market opportunities, status, attitudinal change and change in behavior patterns both for individual and for the community (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985: 295).

2.5. Trends of Dropout Rate

2.5.1. National Trends of Dropout Rate

It can be observed from the Education Statistics of Ethiopia that there is an increasing tendency in dropout rates in the country. The figure for 1988 E.C. (1996/1997) for instance, shows that 10.5% of the students at primary level

(1-8) in the previous your have dropped out. The same figure for the consecutive years of 1989, 1990, and 1991 respectively was 11.2%, 12.1% and 18.9% (MOE,1989-1992 E.C).

We can thus see that the dropout rate is increasing from time to time although the current education policy favours reduction in dropout rate and improvement in student retention (MOE, 1994).

The regional dropout rates have similar appearance with the national trend. It is possible to see from the regional figures of student flow rate that dropout is increasing with the increase in time. The dropout figures recorded in grades 1-8 for the consecutive Ethiopian years of 1989,1990, and 1991, for example, were 8.9% 15.8% and 16.0% respectively (REB,1990,1991, and 1992).

2.5.2. National Dropout and Repetition Rates Compared

Dropout and repetition rates are statistical methods used to measure the internal efficiency of an education system. The higher these rates, the weaker is the efficiency of that system. In other words, these rates are the indicators of the level of internal inefficiency of an education system. In Table 4, comparison is made between the two rates to show the degree of their seriousness in the Ethiopian education system.

Table 4 National Dropout and Repetition Rates (1987-1991)

Academic year	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Dropout Rate	8. 5%	10.5%	11.2%	12.1%	18.9%
Repetition Rate	12.6%	10.4%	11%	12%	8.2%

Source: MOE, Educational Statistics, Annual Abstract (1987-1992) Addis Ababa: EMIS.

We can observe from the data above that repetition rate tended to decrease while dropout rate was increasing constantly in the last five years. According to the data, although both rates remain high, dropout rate seems a more serious problem than the repetition rate in the education system of the country.

2.5.3. Dropout Rates by Grade Level

Dropping out can occur at any grade level. But studies and national statistics show that it is most severe in the first grade. The ESDP of SNNPR (1998) for instance, reported that dropout, especially in grades 1 and 2 was a serious problem in the region. A study conducted by the Woman's Affairs Department of MOE (1999) pointed out that dropout rate was the highest in the first grade and it went down in grades 3 and 4. Education Sector Review (1996) on its part, showed that pupil attrition was higher between grades 1 to 3 and the reason was attributed to relatively late entry and higher opportunity cost of sending children to school.

The percentage of dropout by grade level in four consecutive years in Ethiopia is summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5 National Dropout Rates by Grade Level (1988-1991 E.C)

Academic year E.C	G r a d e s							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1988	0.2937	0.0960	0.0688	0.0751	0.0707	0.0641	0.0993	0.0696
1989	0.2904	0.1040	0.0668	0.0678	0.0693	0.0507	0.1340	0.1149
1990	0.2697	0.1036	0.0872	0.0823	0.0895	0.0353	0.1308	0.1673
1991	0.3028	0.1471	0.1309	0.1283	0.1387	0.0890	0.1640	0.1395

Source: MOE, Educational Statistics Annual Abstract,(1989-1992) Addis Ababa: EMIS.

As the above figures illustrate, the highest dropout rate is recorded in grade one in the years concerned. Then it begins to decrease from grades 3 to 6 but rises again in grades 7 and 8. Another fact which the table shows us is that dropout rate is increasing in all grade levels with the increase in the academic years.

Studies also show that dropout rate is higher in the first or lower grades not only in Ethiopia but also in other developing countries. Brimer and Pauli (1971), for example, reported that in thirty-six of the forty - six countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, the highest dropout rates were observed in the first grade. Francois (1968) also stated that in the developing countries many pupils-nearly half-dropout in the course of their first or second year of primary schooling. " At the end of the cycle," Francois says, "only about a quarter of those who started are left." Shiundu (1999) also reports that of approximately 96 million pupils who entered school for the first time in 1995,24 million are likely to leave before they reach grade5. Many leave at grades 2 and 3. He goes on to say that dropouts leave school before they reach the level of sustainable literacy and numeracy; this is the major problem in the less developed countries. Other studies also confirm that even in the most developed countries , dropping out is high in the lower grades of the primary school (Blitz, 1965; Phillips, 1975; Simmons, 1980).

2.5.4. Dropout Rate from Gender Perspective.

Disparity between genders in pupil dropout rate is one of the phenomena that attracts the attention of educational researchers. However, it seems that there is no general agreement in the pattern of male and female dropout rates as indicated by different researchers. In some studies, dropping out is more serious

among girls while others argue that more boys drop out than girls do. The Education Sector Review of Ethiopia (1996), for example, stated that percentages of male discontinued schooling at grades 1 to 8 were higher (by about 2 to 8 percentage points) than that of girls in rural areas. Beyond grade 8 it was the girls who took the lead in dropping out. In urban areas, girls' dropout rate is higher than boys' in all grades except the junior secondary level. The findings of Brimer and Pauli (1971) were quite the opposite. According to them, dropping out was higher among boys in the urban schools and higher among girls in the rural ones. Regarding the issue, Nielsen and Cummings (1997:26) show the higher dropout rate among girls especially in rural settings and pose reasons for this as:

Girls' daily tasks such as fetching water and firewood, and/or tending infants, etc. keep them more tied to the household than boys, whose work is more seasonal. Moreover, ... girls generally receive less encouragement and support from home and school and thus drop out more readily.

According to Gargiulo and Crouch (1994), there is no significant variation in dropout rates for boys and girls when seen from the perspective of other reasons. But when it is seen from health perspective, dropout is always more significant for girls than it is for boys. This reaches a very high proportion for adolescent rural girls. The reason these researchers forward for this phenomenon is that girls discontinue schooling due to pregnancy and this is euphemistically reported as health problem.

Shiundu (1999) on his part expresses that due to common stereotyped gender feelings in some communities, girls feel that they are a weaker sex and

their place is at home. Schooling may not be their priority. And, thus more girls than boys dropout. He goes on to say that in situation of poverty, girls are the most disadvantaged. They simply stay at home as boys go to school. Early marriage and pregnancy are also factors which have contributed to the high girls' dropout rate according to Shiundu.

Asseffa (1991:94) in his study on " Female Participation and Performance in Rural Primary Schools in Ethiopia " reported his findings as follows:

The female pupil dropout rate compared to male pupils dropout rate is found to be high in rural primary schools at all grade levels (Grade 1-6). The trend is that there is decreasing dropout rate. High dropout rate is observed in lower grades with a greater number of female pupils dropout rate than the male pupils and low dropout rate in higher grades with very small difference among the two sex groups.

The factors that were found to have caused the high dropout rate among girls in Asseffa's study were labour demand by the family, unsafe road condition from home to school, distance from home to school, inability to buy learning materials and to pay school related fees, lack of interest in schooling, losing hope in making future career from schooling, lack of understanding by parents about the purpose and usefulness of education, cultural and traditional gender bias on females and early marriage.

This finding outrightly contradicts with the results presented by the Education Sector Review of Ethiopia (1996) and Workneh (2000) where the percentage of males discontinued schooling in rural areas of Ethiopia was higher than that of girls and where girls took the lead beyond grade 8.

Assefas finding, however, agrees with the findings of Brimer and Pauli (1971). Nielsen and Cummings (1997) and Shiundu (1999) who showed that girls' dropout rate was high in rural settings for different reasons.

On the other hand, as seen by bejeren (1969) and UNESCO (1980) no clear difference was observed between the dropout rates of boys and girls.

More recently, however, the education statistics of Ethiopia for the year 1992 E.C. have shown that in all grades the rate of dropout is lower for girls than for boys which, according to the document, reflected the improving rate of girls' retention.

In this regard, it seems that there is no consistency among the results of different researchers. The difference might probably be attributed to differences in such factors as time, area (urban Vs. rural) culture, etc.

As shown in Table 6 below, in all grades females' dropout rate is lower than that of males; for both males and females, the highest rate is recorded in the first grade. The data also show the rising dropout rate in grades 7 and 8 for both males and females.

Table 6 Dropout Rates by sex and grade in primary schools of Ethiopia since 1988 to 1991 E.C.

Academic Year E.C	Sex	Grades								Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1988	M	0.2931	0.0931	0.0715	0.0718	0.0723	0.0701	0.1041	0.0712	0.1059
	F	0.2947	0.1015	0.0638	0.0806	0.0681	0.0555	0.0927	0.0669	0.1030
1989	M	0.2886	0.1046	0.0715	0.0681	0.0728	0.0596	0.1400	0.1042	0.1137
	F	0.2935	0.1029	0.0579	0.0673	0.0635	0.0361	0.1258	0.1268	0.1092
1990	M	0.2724	0.1091	0.0915	0.0871	0.0976	0.0495	0.1381	0.1439	0.1236
	F	0.2654	0.0933	0.0790	0.0732	0.0751	0.0112	0.1200	0.1853	0.1128
1991	M	0.3085	0.1568	0.1421	0.1390	0.1526	0.1087	0.1891	0.1716	0.1982
	F	0.2944	0.1310	0.1102	0.1082	0.1130	0.0537	0.1260	0.0920	0.1750

Source: MOE, Education Statistics. Annual Abstract (1989-1992 E.C.) Addis Ababa EMIS

2.6. The Role of Parents, Schools and the Community in Preventing and /or Reducing Dropout Rate.

2.6.1. Parents

Sylvia L. Peters, an educator with 37 years of experience, says that the more you involve parents, the stronger your program will be (Scherer, 1996). Carron and Chau (1996) pointed out that where there were very close contacts between parents and teachers, schools generally achieve good results. Sutherland (1997) also indicated that there were circumstances in which parents, whether naturally good teachers or not, have to cope with teaching their own children. Again, according to Gargiulo and Crouch (1994) even parents who are relatively uneducated can be mobilized to improve the link between school and community in order to successfully develop an efficient and equitable educational system.

These writers reflect the importance of involving parents in educational undertakings. But what specific activities can parents do so that their participation would be meaningful?

According to Hicks (1956:393-397), four major ways in which parents can assist with the activities carried out by the school system worth mentioning.

These are:

1. Parents can help with broad school programs by:
 - seeing that the child is immunized before school begins in order that any reaction may not cause absenteeism and/or dropping out;
 - seeing that the child has nourishing and well-balanced meals, proper outdoor exercises and enough rest and sleep;
 - seeing that the child is not over-stimulated by engaging in too many activities (household chores);
 - examining the child each morning and keeping him home if he shows signs of illness; etc.
2. Parents can help the school promote the desirable emotional development of the child by :
 - giving the child a home where he feels love, kindness, security and understanding. The child must be given a home where disappointments and sorrows are faced with courage and where unnecessary fears and threats are avoided;
 - helping the child to learn to solve his own problems;
 - sharing with the child's teacher any happy or unhappy experiences in the home which may affect the child emotionally; etc.
3. Parents can help the school secure the social development of the child by:
 - building happy attitude toward his going to school and toward the school, the teacher, and the things he will do at school.

- providing opportunities for the child to know, play with and share with children of his own age and to meet and associate with adults other than those of his own family. These broadening experiences will help the child to fit more readily and happily into the school group;
- teaching personal and social attitudes and habits which will help the child be more independent and happy in the group.

4. Parents can help the school determine the quality of the child's intellectual development by:

- having confidence in the child's teacher, consulting him/her, respecting his/her judgments and cooperating with him/her;
- listening what the child has to say, training him to listen well and to express his ideas clearly;
- trying to answer all good questions of the child intelligently;
- encouraging the child to use every available means, including his five senses as well as his preprivileges of asking others who may know;
- arousing intellectual curiosity by means of pictures, books, and actual experiences; etc.

However, it is apparent that parental help can be secured only when parents are fully aware of the importance of their children's education. In this regard, Haile Gabriel Dagne (1997) suggests that teachers should contact parents and increase their awareness. Parents, particularly mothers, have to be invited to school each semester and made aware of the problems facing their children. In

addition, Tilaye (1999) discloses that the incapacity of parents to appreciate the value of modern education in front of their children and to initiate or motivate their children to pursue their education might lead the children to drop out of school. Tilaye further explains that the minds of those parents who value their children's marriage more than education have to be changed. As Fitihalem and Mehari (1998) indicated, parents who know the value of modern education can play a role in controlling and checking the every day school attendance, progress and academic achievement of their children. This will subsequently result in reducing the chance of student dropout.

Pupils who enter school on time (right age) are less likely to desert school than the over aged entrants (Gargiulo and Crouch, 1994; ESR, 1996). Those who do not enter school at the appointed age become self-conscious about studying with younger students and are more likely to drop out (Nielsen and Cummings, 1997). Therefore, the most proper solution to this problem as the writers implied is to involve parents by increasing their awareness so that they would cooperate by sending their children to school in time.

In addition to the low capacity and awareness problems of parents, some writers indicate that some parents trust the school without knowing it and tend to leave the whole responsibility of teaching to the school. Carron and Chau (1996:81) , for instance, wrote the following:

.... teachers in general remain widely respected. Contacts between parents and teachers are rather tenuous. Parents trust the school without really knowing it, especially in rural zones. A non-negligible proportion of them (parents)... have never even met their children's teacher.

The foregoing discussions appear to show that strong home-school relations are indispensable to improve educational quality. However, as Hicks (1956) mentioned, good working relations between the school and the home do not just happen; they are earned. In this process, school personnel are largely responsible for the development of conditions which foster favorable relations with the home.

2.6.2. The School

Low achievement of pupils is one of the major reasons that causes students to drop out. Low achievement, as observed by Rensburg (1967) is the result of low quality in primary education. According to Rensburg, it is important to bear in mind that quality may be more important in primary education than quantity. A quantitative expansion may not as quickly produce increases in the numbers successfully completing primary education, as improvements in the standards of teaching. The cornerstone of standard teaching is the teacher (UNICEF, 1999). Thus, schools must have quality teaching staff. As Rensburg further mentioned, it is necessary to teach the teachers themselves before they can properly teach the numbers of pupils whose education at the different stages is good enough to launch them into the next stages. Similarly, UNESCO (1974) in its publication "Education in Rural Environment" reported that the teacher would remain the keystone of education. Accordingly, the teacher exercises a considerable influence on the children at a particularly impressionable age. This is related of course to the amount of time he spends with them. The value of the children's education is thus determined largely by their teacher's professional competence, and his intellectual and moral qualities. According to the same report, especially in rural settings, teacher stability is the

problem. The best teachers make to the cities where they find greater opportunities in terms of promotion, lodging, the education of their own children, medical services and entertainment. In the words of Shiundu (1999), low teacher motivation and commitment is identified to have caused educational wastage.

Under these conditions, teachers constitute the real bottle -neck of the education system. This is because teachers are at the heart of the education revolution; without them, quality is impossible. Teaching conditions including salaries need to be improved world-wide to halt the vicious cycle of demoralization and decline. At the same time, teachers must reform their educational practices to be more in keeping with a child-centered, rather than a teacher dominated classroom (UNICEF,1999).

Thus, the inference from this evidence is that schools(in collaboration with the concerned bodies) must play a role in boosting teacher competence, motivation, stability and morale so as to achieve quality education which will subsequently result in improved pupil performance and retention.

On the other hand, Shiundu (1999) states that each child has unique physiological and psychological set up which influence his or her abilities and attitudes. Attitudes, abilities and disabilities can have significant influence on the child's participation in education. Lichter (1962) also indicated that behaviour problems requiring disciplinary measures and feeling of not belonging (because of size, speech, personality development, nationality, social class, family disgrace, retardation in school, dress, lack of friends among school mates or staff) are included among the reasons that cause pupils to fail and quit school. Here it is implied that the teacher with the help of other school personnel should identify the problems of such pupils and render individual help as much as he/she could so that these pupils can attend as competently and regularly as their

friends do. In other words, it means that teachers helped by other school communities must render counseling services to students with the above mentioned problems.

School should be healthy and health-promoting because there is a strong link between children's health and school performance (UNICEF, 1999:4). Accordingly, there are characteristics of a healthy and health promoting school: it is a place of safety where children are protected from sexual exploitation and violence; it is a place where diseases can be detected and often treated; it has a healthy environment including safe water and sanitation; and it teaches life skills. Therefore, schools being healthy and health-promoting can minimize student dropout rate or promote student performance and achievement.

In sum, it demands that schools be zones of creativity, safety, and stimulation for children, places where children can expect to find not only safe water and decent sanitation facilities, with motivated teachers and relevant curricula, but also where children are respected and learn to respect others. Under these conditions, pupils' retention and achievement will apparently be improved.

2.6.3. The Community

There is ample evidence that community involvement results in quantitative and qualitative improvement of schooling. Nielsen and Cummings (1997), for instance, pointed out that where there is community support, children attend school regularly and are interested in their studies. Moreover, where communities support education, schools are able to achieve a great deal even under very difficult circumstances.

Community support, according to Nielsen and Cummings, can take two forms: support for instructional program and support in the form of supplementing school resources. Accordingly, community can support school instruction in one or more of the following ways:

- Cultivate an environment supportive of school program;
- Improve enrollment, retention and attendance;
- Motivate study at home;
- Ensure all students have adequate study space;
- Identify and help students with problems;
- Help students with family emergencies;
- Boost morale of school staff ;
- Provide assistant or regular teachers;
- Provide instruction in specific areas (where teachers lack expertise);
- Pass on community knowledge;
- Provide apprenticeships/work opportunities/;

Supplementing school resources includes:

- Donating land for school:
- Donating labour/ materials to build/ help build school buildings;
- Repair /maintain /facilities;
- Donate equipment, learning aids (e.g. books, teaching materials, etc.
- Raise money for school.

Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) on their part added that in order to improve school quality, and thus improve pupil retention, community must involve in financing education. Central government funding is not the only way to finance all educational investment. Thus, governments have to devise

mechanisms for shifting part of the financial burden to community. One of these mechanisms can be involving community in the form of using direct labour to build schools, by allowing communities to provide goods and services in kind and by relying on other forms of local community involvement. In this regard, Psacharopoulos and Woodhall cite examples of many countries such as Nepal, Kenya, Tanzania, etc. where schools are built and/or maintained by the local communities. This practice, according to the writers, significantly eases pressure on the government's budget.

Not only can communities support schools materially, they can also render their help in the form of instruction and management. Nielsen and Cummings (1997) say that while the financial angle is of obvious appeal to governments, greater attention to drawing instruction and management support from communities can help schools become more efficient. Similarly, Nham (1973) in Bray and Lilli (1988) has stated community participation to have significant effect on the curriculum:

It is now time to get more involvement of parents' associations in sharing responsibilities in the education of their children as a whole. Parents' associations based on democratic principles and good-will should not only provide materials and school facilities but also contribute to the orientation of the school curriculum towards the real needs of their daily life. In this way, school ceases to be a center, separated from the community.

Generally, schools are effective when there exists a two-way relationship between schools and the community they serve. This kind of relationship is reflected in the following quotation:

The third major dynamic... was the strong relationship higher achieving schools had created with their surrounding communities. Parents were more involved in school decisions, the curriculum of the school and, probably as a result of such involvement contributed more to the school, both financially and in in-kind services. School was a part of the community, not a separate government institution... parents felt comfortable visiting the school whenever they wished. They came to expect the school to educate their children and were willing to support the school in this endeavor. ... Finally, both the principal and the teaching staff participated in local community activities including religious ceremonies (Shaeffer, 1992 in Nielsen and Cummings, 1997:67).

Table 7 in addition, clarifies what services schools can render to the community in order to obtain sufficient support and recognition so that they can be effective.

Table 7 What schools can do for communities.

Community Problem	What Schools can do
Many school dropouts, illiterates,	- Offer instruction; - Provide alternative ways for dropouts to obtain educational certificate; - Provide dropouts with ways back into the formal school system;
Few learning resources	Share educational resources.
Community problem addressable with information	Provide access to information
Low level of community development	Provide ideas information, leadership and labour to address specific community problems.

Source: H.Dean Nielsen and William K.Cummings, 1997, P.65.

Hence, participating communities in the school affairs and vice versa is the most important measure to improve school quality. And, apparently, improvement in the school quality minimizes educational wastage. Such an approach, according to Nielsen and Cummings (1997) is referred to as collaborative model of educational provision in which:

1. government considers the constraints needs and values of the community,
2. the community is actively involved in supporting the school and,
3. the school plays an active leadership and instructional role in the community.

Generally speaking, the foregoing evidence tried to point out that school-community relations, if creatively handled, are the building-block to bring about effective educational quality in general and to reduce dropout rates in particular.

In sum, literature shows us that a large number of pupils are leaving school due to individual and socio-economic reasons, especially in the developing countries. This causes a high magnitude of educational wastage which would mean the creation of social ills and the loss of economic benefits for the individual and for the society at large. Literature also provides evidence that the problem of pupil dropout could be curbed through the cooperative participation of parents, the school and the community.

CHAPTER THREE

3. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The descriptive method was selected for the purpose of this study. The relevance of this method to such a purpose has been noted by Lehmann and Mehrens (1979) and Koul (1988). Related literature and previous research findings were reviewed in order to achieve the objective of this study. In addition, data regarding pupil enrollment and dropout were gathered from the Regional Education Bureau (REB) and the records of sample schools.

Primary school principals, teachers pupils (returnees and non-returnees), selected parents and / or community members as well as relevant officers from Zonal Education Department (ZED) were used as source of data for the purpose of the present study.

3.1. Sampling Technique and the Sample Population

In order to ensure fair representation of Zones and schools with different characteristics in the region, the purposive or judgement sampling technique was employed. Thus, the twelve zones and seven special woredas were grouped into two categories on the basis of their location.

Group one consisted of central zones and special woredas while group two consisted of zones and special woredas which have peripheral location. From each group, three zones (special woredas) were selected as samples. Accordingly, Sidama, Gedeo and Wolaitta zones were selected from group one while Dawro and South Omo zones and Konso special woreda from group two. It was assumed that reasons for student dropout in the zones and special

woredas of different location might be different on the basis of their economic and cultural differences.

Twelve primary schools (two from each sample zones and special woredas) were randomly selected as sample schools. Care was taken to include schools from urban and rural settings.

A total of 150 pupils (50% of whom were returnees) were randomly selected from grades 5,6,7 and 8 to answer the questionnaire. Pupils from grades 1,2,3 and 4 were not made to fill the questionnaire because it was proved during the questionnaire try-out that pupils from these grades were unable to give proper responses to questions prepared in Amharic. Thus, 12 selected pupils from grades 2,3 and 4 were interviewed by the writer in Wolaitta and Dawro zones (whose language he speaks) and using translators in other zones.

On the other hand, a total of 36 primary school teachers (three from each sample school) were randomly selected. Principals of all the sample schools(i.e. twelve principals) were taken as samples. In addition 15 parents and / or community members and 6 relevant officers from zonal Education Departments were interviewed.

3.2. Variables Included in the Study

In this study, three major independent variables were used:

1. Pupil- related variables which include :

- a) pupils' personal characteristics such as sex, age, pre-school experience, absenteeism, attitude towards learning, distance from school, expectation of future success, etc.
- b) family background of the pupil such as parental education, parental occupation, material support, academic help and encouragement, family size, family structure, etc.

2. Teacher- related variables such as teacher age, educational level, teachers expectation and evaluation of their pupils, teachers attitude towards their profession, etc.
3. School- related variables such as school location (urban Vs. rural), principals' qualification and experience, availability of textbooks and other school facilities, school community relationship, teachers' absenteeism etc.

The dependent variable in this study is the rate of pupil dropout.

3.3. Instruments and Procedures of Data Collection

Three basic procedures of data collection were used in this study. First, data regarding pupil enrollment and dropouts were collected from printed statistical documents of the MOE and REB as well as through direct access to the records of the sample schools.

Second, four types of questionnaires were prepared in English and later translated into Amharic to be answered by principals, teachers and pupils (returnees and non-returnees) of the sample schools. Third, interview schedule was designed to conduct interview with parents and/or community members and relevant officers in Zonal Education Departments as well as pupils from grades 2,3 and 4 who do not understand Amharic well.

The questionnaire answered by pupils (both returnees and non-returnees) was intended to collect information on pupils' personal, environmental and family background characteristics and the reasons they ascribe to pupil dropout.

A list of probable reasons for pupil dropout was given to the respondent pupils in which they were asked to judge according to the degree of seriousness of these reasons in the area the pupils dwell. Similarly, questionnaires answered by both teachers and principals were designed to gather data regarding teachers' and principals' personal, educational and professional characteristics and school characteristics as well. Teachers were also asked to judge the reasons for dropping out according to their degree of seriousness and as they affect boys and girls separately. Questions that could not be put in the form of alternatives were given in open-ended items in the questionnaires both of teachers, principals and pupils. At the end of the questionnaire, all the respondents were asked to give their suggestions to minimize or get rid of the factors that cause students to drop out of school.

To see the trend of pupil dropout rates through time in the sample schools, the enrollment and dropout data in four consecutive years (1988-1991 E.C) were collected from school records. Four consecutive years were thought to be sufficient to approximate a true picture of the trend of the dropout rates. Besides, there is lack of data beyond this year (1988 E.C) in the region.

3.4.Methods of Data Analysis

Percentages and mean score were used to analyse the obtained data. In addition, the Spearman's rank order correlation was computed to see the degree of agreement in teachers' and pupils' judgement regarding the important reasons for pupil dropout. The chi-square was also computed to see whether returnees and non- returnees were equally affected by some family background or home-related factors.

The next chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data using the above discussed methods.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This part of the thesis deals with the presentation and analysis of data gathered from the documents of Regional Education Bureau, the records of sample schools and through questionnaire answered by pupils, teachers and principals. In addition, interviews were conducted with a small sample of zonal officers, parents and/or community members as well as pupils from grades 2,3 and 4 to elicit information on the reasons of and measures for pupil dropout.

With regard to questionnaire administration, 150 questionnaires were distributed to pupils (returnees and non-returnees), 36 to teachers and 12 to principals. Of these, 144(96%) from pupils, 36(100%) from teachers and 12(100%) from principals were collected and analysed.

4.1. Magnitude of Dropout Rate in the Sample Schools

In the following lines, the analysis of pupil dropout rate in the sample schools will be presented based on the data collected from the rosters and other school documents. The presentation will focus on the dropout rate from the perspective of grade level, sex (boys and girls), age distribution and residence (urban and rural).

Dropout Rate by Grade Level

In the sample schools, the highest dropout rate is recorded in the first grade. It then begins to decrease in the following grades but rises in grade seven. However, in grade 8, it shows a sharp fall.

This finding agrees with what was reported by MOE (1989 E.C). Similar findings have also shown that the highest dropout rates were observed in the first grade (Brimer and Pauli, 1971; ESR, 1996; MOE, 1999). These studies have pointed out that at primary level, early school leaving has been a characteristic of most education systems of the developing countries for which Ethiopia is not an exception. The most commonly cited reasons that cause this early desertion are home-school distance, incomplete upper grades in a school, ill-health of pupils and their parents, lack of material and financial support, etc.

Table 8 Dropout Rates (in %) by Grade Level and Sex (1989-1992 E.C.)

Grade	1889		1990		1991		1992	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	36.1	27.3	34.4	32.0	35.3	30.2	32.6	29.4
2	19.5	11.0	13.6	13.9	14.1	12.3	15.0	13.2
3	7.4	5.8	7.4	7.7	10.4	16.1	11.0	8.5
4	7.5	10.6	10.5	10.1	10.9	9.4	13.6	9.8
5	5.9	4.6	9.2	9.5	9.7	8.9	7.6	8.9
6	5.8	3.1	10.6	9.5	9.1	6.0	9.0	9.6
7	20.0	17.1	19.3	13.0	18.0	17.5	22.1	20.0
8	7.5	9.4	9.1	10.2	15.5	8.5	7.3	8.6
Total	16.8	12.4	15.8	14.9	16.6	15.1	16.1	14.9

Source: Calculated from Enrollment statistics of the sample schools.

The present study may be inadequate to make a conclusive remark regarding the pattern of dropout rates. Nevertheless, the data show that there is no trend of improvement in student retention in the sample schools; the absolute number of dropouts remains considerably high. The total number of first grade dropouts in the sample schools in 1989 academic year, for instance, was 576 and it was 594, 539 and 528 in the next consecutive years. On the other hand, the total number of dropouts in all grades in the consecutive years of 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1992 E.C/ was 1408, 1430, 1491 and 1506 respectively.

The common reason why children leave school before completion is mostly attached with the poverty in the family. The data collected for this study as well as other research findings (Psachgropoulos and Woodhall, 1985; Banerji, 1998) show that the high opportunity cost of children's time in poor families leads children to leave school seeking work through which they secure income. However, the opportunity cost of children's time ought to increase with age. A twelve year old child is much more useful doing household activities or engaged in income generating means than a seven year old child. Therefore, it is not clear why a higher percentage of first grade children leave school as compared to those in higher grades. Here, it seems that reasons other than pupils' opportunity cost are at work for the first grade children. These reasons might be distance from school especially in rural areas, frequent drought occurrences in the region causing food shortage or malnutrition by which kids are more affected, ill-health of the children and/ or their parents, adjustment problems aggravated by lack of guidance and counseling services or psychological assistance, poor parental motivation and academic help, the higher size of enrollment in the first grade which promotes academic failure which again gives

rise to dropping out, etc. These reasons may apply to children in all grade levels but younger children are affected more than the older ones.

On the other hand, the most probable reason for the high dropout rate in grade 7 may be attached to the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in grades 1-6 in the region. A sharp shift from mother tongue to English in all subjects takes place in grade 7 and it seems that pupils find it difficult to adjust themselves to the shift in the medium of instruction. Hopeless to pass to the next grade, or perceiving themselves as incompetent for school work and learning in English medium, many pupils decide to drop out of school which raises the dropout rate in this grade level.

Dropout Rates by Sex (Boys and Girls)

A quick look at the data in table 8 reveals that in the years considered, more boys dropped out of school than girls. This is true for all grade levels except in grade eight where girls' dropout rate increased to exceed boys' dropout rate especially in 1989 and 1990 academic years.

This finding is in direct contrast with the idea stated by Nielsen and Cummings (1997) that girls' daily tasks such as fetching water and firewood and/or tending infants, etc. keep them more tied to the household than boys whose work is more seasonal. They also pointed out that girls receive less encouragement and support from home and school and thus drop out more readily. Other studies have also declared that more girls drop out of school than boys (Gargiulo and Crouch, 1994; Shiundu, 1999).

However, the present finding is in agreement with what has been reported by MOE (1992 E.C). It was stated in the education statistics (1992) that in all

grades the rate of dropout was lower for girls than it was for boys, and it was mentioned in the same document that girls' retention rate was improving.

The phenomenon (lower dropout rate among girls) of the present finding could be attached to the current value given by parents and the community to the girls' education. It may show that the awareness level of parents to send their daughters to school and keep them there is improving.

On the other hand, the reasons for high dropout rate among boys in the region could be attributed to several factors. Among these, the outstanding one is the prevailing belief among the community that boys at their early age must have their own earnings, possess their own property and be independent. This belief very strongly exists among Dawro and Wolaitta nationalities where more boys are engaged in farming and other agricultural activities and mini-trades even when their parents are rich. This may hold more boys back from school.

Age Distribution of Primary School Dropouts

Table 9 shows the age distribution of dropouts in the sample schools. It is possible to see from the table that the majority of primary school students drop out of school between the ages of nine and fifteen. Of the total number of dropouts (5835), 3178 (54.5%) are at or below twelve years of age. This shows that most pupils drop out at their early years of schooling. The resulting consequences may be worse because those who drop out of school before they are matured enough to participate in social and economic activities will turn out to be the most disadvantage groups. Moreover, these pupils would raise the size of population who are illiterate.

Table 9 Age Distribution of Primary School Dropouts by Grade and Sex(1989-1992 E.C)

Age	Grade	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
5	-		3														
6		16	6														
7		82	29	2	6												
8		109	87	19	9	3	1										
9		189	141	27	97	21	11	3	4								
10		270	155	109	92	23	29	22	36	6	7						
11		312	113	119	22	55	35	25	39	34	28	3	6				
12		202	78	130	10	49	42	62	56	42	37	19	27	14	5		
13		110	69	70	7	22	17	79	19	23	24	24	30	123	96	8	4
14		99	48	10	2	27	8	59	13	19	10	30	8	240	57	96	30
15		25	30	8	2	14	6	30	10	7	6	18	3	89	62	82	39
16		18	29	3	1	18	6	12	4	10	3	12	2	92	19	40	22
17		12		2		10	3	6	1	15	2	16	3	58	18	22	18
18		5		3		3	4	2	2	11	1	7	1	34	12	29	20
19				2		2		1		8	2	4	1	21	7	21	6
20						2		2		7		4		13	6	20	5

Source : Calculated from statistical data of sample schools (1989-1992 E.C)

Raised number of illiterate population in a society will , in the long run, result in the loss of economic benefits for the individual as well as for the society. It also results in under utilization of the existing resources in the upper grades besides its social effects such as youth involvement in crimes, drugs alcohol, smoking, delinquency and other socially unacceptable practices.

Dropout Rates in Urban and Rural Schools

Table 10 presents percentages of dropouts in urban and rural primary schools sub-divided by grade and sex. Since some sample schools in rural setting are incomplete (do not have grades 1-8 in its complete form), the comparison is made for grades 1-5 only.

Table 10 Percentages of dropouts by Grade & Sex (Rural)

Year	1		2		3		4		5	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1989	40.2	39.8	27.6	26.7	8.2	7.9	9.6	18.7	8.0	6.4
1990	44.9	43.8	15.1	20.9	10.1	10.0	11.7	5.3	13.2	27.1
1991	38.4	42.9	18.9	16.0	12.4	30.7	18.9	22.3	14.2	19.6
1992	41.5	48.6	17.2	18.4	13.3	13.5	19.5	17.9	10.0	20.3

Percentages of dropouts by Grade and Sex (Urban)

Year	1		2		3		4		5	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1989	31.9	20.9	15.3	7.5	6.6	5.0	5.7	6.8	4.2	4.2
1990	26.9	26.8	12.2	10.7	6.0	7.2	9.4	16.9	6.2	5.4
1991	32.6	24.0	10.8	10.6	8.5	8.8	6.7	6.1	5.8	5.1
1992	27.3	22.7	13.1	10.5	9.2	6.3	9.3	7.0	6.0	5.6

Source: Calculated from statistical data of the sample schools (1989-1992 E.C)

The data in the table reveal that in all grade levels the dropout rate in the rural schools is higher than that of urban schools in all academic years. This is true for both sexes. In both urban and rural schools, more boys dropped out of school than girls in the years considered. The highest dropout rate is observed in the first grade in both urban and rural schools in all academic years. The data also show that dropout rate decreases with the increase in grade level (1-5).

Although the dropout percentages in the urban schools appear to be less than that of rural schools due to large size of enrollment, the absolute number of dropouts shows that the problem is equally serious in both settings. For example, in the academic years of 1989-1992 E.C. the total number of dropouts in grades 1-5 in urban schools was 2064 while it was 2125 in rural ones. The difference thus is not that much significant.

The reason for larger dropout rate especially in the first grade in rural schools is attributed mainly to home-school distance, and associated economic and socio- cultural constraints. Besides, the low level of parental literacy among the rural communities must have exerted a strong influence on children to leave school during their early years of schooling.

In general, the data presented above could reveal that quite a large number of pupils are leaving school at their early ages before mastering the basic skills of literacy(reading, writing and arithmetic). Since primary education is one of the largest means to reduce illiteracy, it needs particular attention to improve the holding power of primary schools.

4.2 Reasons for Pupil Dropout

4.2.1 In-School Reasons

The major in-school reasons for pupil dropout treated in this section are variables related mainly with the characteristics of school principals, teachers and the availability and degree of usage of some facilities as seen by the school principals. For the purpose of this study 12 primary school principals and 36 teachers have filled questionnaires and these responses were analysed.

Primary School Principals

Principal qualification and experience with better leadership skills both have direct effect on school efficiency and quality of education (Chantavanich Chantavanich and Fry, 1990; Adane, 1993 and others.).

In other words, low level of principal qualification, experience and leadership skills results in pupils' academic failure which is indirectly related with dropping out of school.

Among 12 primary school principals, in the present study, 3 (25 %) are college diploma holders, 2 (16 .7%) are at 12+1 level while 7 (58.3 %) are TTI graduates. The three diploma graduates are principals of the urban schools. Two of them are trained in Educational Administration while the other one is trained in another academic subject. With reference to their service year 9 (75 %) of the principals have 6 to 10 years of teaching experience but have served as principals for 5 or less years. The rest 3 have served as principals for less than 4 years. All the principals said that they participate in teaching carrying a load not less than 10 periods as per the guidelines of the career structure requirement.

The data show that only 2 (16.6 %) of the principals have trained in principal ship (Education Administration) while others are leading schools without proper training. According to the current education and training policy, principals would be selected among teachers and are given trainings on school leadership skills through in-service trainings. It was on this policy basis that some principals were selected among teachers but are not given sufficient training. Another fact which the data reveal is that those who are diploma graduates serve in urban schools; in this case urban schools are more advantaged over the schools in rural settings.

Another factor which this study considered was the extent to which the school contacts parents and the surrounding communities to discuss the problem of pupil dropout. Three of the 12 principals reported that they contact parents and school committee members to discuss school problems in general, not the dropout problem as a particular issue. The other principals said they had no such a particular program except the fact that they make parents to call upon schools when their children misbehave.

This shows that schools have loose relationship with the parents and the surrounding communities.

Frequent teacher absenteeism apparently affects the proper teaching-learning process in different ways. First, teachers may not be able to cover the portions in an allotted time span and may leave out some part of it. Second, if teachers try to cover large topics in a shorter period of time, young children may not be able to keep up with them which may result in academic failure.

Principals of the sample schools were asked to give the average absence rate of teachers in a semester. In 8 of the sample schools, the average rate of teacher absenteeism was 10 to 19 days, in 3 schools 5 to 9 days and in one school it was 4 or less days. The major reasons principals cited for the high rate

of teacher absenteeism were teachers' occupation in individual work(which ranges from small agricultural to commercial activities), teachers participation in political issues such as election, etc. the newly accepted three month's delivery leave of female teachers, illness, social and/or cultural practices such as wedding or funeral ceremonies, etc. These reasons, according to the responses of the principals, have highly influenced those who teach in the area (village) where they were born and grown up.

Principals have also given their opinion on the degree of motivation on the majority of teachers in their schools. Only one principal said that teachers were highly motivated, 6 said the degree of teacher motivation was medium while 5 of them agree that the motivation level was low. In general, 11(91.6%) of the principals agree that teacher motivation was either average or low.

In order to reduce pupil dropout rate, a teacher has to be motivated to work and be satisfied with his profession as a career. With this regard, Sergiovani(1979) in Adane (1993) says that a satisfied worker is not always productive which implies that the satisfaction must come from the work itself. Although it is said that teachers are satisfied with the current career structure because it secured them professional development and improved salaries, most are unhappy with the work they are currently doing. Therefore, teacher satisfaction must generate not only from extrinsic but also from intrinsic factors (his performance). It is only when these two factors support each other that a better school efficiency be achieved.

Primary School Teachers

According to the current education and training policy of the country, teachers in the second cycle primary level (5-8) are required to be diploma

graduates. To see whether this requirement was satisfied or not, 36 teachers from the above mentioned level were asked to give their level of qualification.

The data obtained show that 21 (58.3 %) of the respondents are TTI graduates, 11(30.5 %) have obtained 12+1 level through " Keremt" and other programs while only 4 (11.1%) are diploma holders. Here, we can see that a majority of teachers are under-qualified to the level they are teaching.

Teachers' level of training, according to such writers as Biniaminov and Glasman (1992) in Adane (1993) is the determining factor of the quality of education. In other words, a school with under qualified teachers for a specific level is not strong enough to improve its holding power.

With regard to the teaching experience of respondents, the data show that 8.3% , 41.6% and 50% have taught for 5 and below, 6 to 10 and 11 years and above respectively. More than 33% of these teachers have taught for 5 or more years in schools they are currently teaching. However, 21 (58.3%) of these teachers had never participated in any in-service training although they have long time teaching experience.

Another factor which this study considered with regard to teachers was their attitude towards teaching as a profession. Twenty-one (58.3%) of the respondents would choose teaching as a profession if they were given the chance to choose their occupation. However, 30(83.3%) of these teachers are not satisfied with the current teacher management in their respective zones and are not satisfied too with the work they are currently holding (doing).

Some of the major reasons they have listed for their dissatisfaction with teacher management are:

1. Undue administration such as transfer without one's demand, biased evaluation of the career structure, salary paid too late, discrimination or partiality while selecting teachers for different training programs, responses too late for different teacher demands, etc;
2. Political interferences;
3. Lack of professional support, communication and in-service training;
4. Lack of financial and material inputs in schools; etc.;

In addition, teachers were asked if they had ample time and space to plan the lessons and give and correct homework of their pupils. Fifty-two percent of the teachers had no sufficient time while 50% lack ample space to plan their lessons and give and correct the homework of their pupils. Forty-eight percent of those who lack time are from rural schools while 38% of those who lack space are from urban schools. Besides, 30(83.2%) of the teachers were unsatisfactorily or poorly provided with materials that would enable them to plan and teach their lessons properly.

The data, therefore, point out that although teachers have long time teaching experience, they are more likely to lose strength because they find themselves in a system where there is no sufficient incentive, encouragement, and professional development through refresher courses, etc. Therefore, teachers in such a system are more likely to be very much lenient in controlling and guiding their pupils. Furthermore, they lack time, space and materials to properly plan and teach their pupils. This would very likely weaken the internal efficiency of school and result in pupils' dropping out of school.

Availability and Degree of Usage of School Facilities

Principals were asked to give the extent of availability and degree of usage of school facilities so that school efficiency and effectiveness could be estimated. Accordingly, among 12 sample schools, only 4 have libraries while others have either small reading rooms or none. All of the four schools which have libraries are located in urban centers. Regarding the degree of library usage, only one principal ranked "good" while the other three ranked "fair" or "poor". Among the reasons for insufficient library usage, less interest, lack of time, lack or out datedness of reference books narrow or unclean reading rooms, etc. are the major ones cited by principals. Principals were also asked to give their opinions on the availability of teaching materials and aids in their School. Four principals said their schools were fairly equipped, 6 said it was insufficient and two said their schools were very poorly equipped. Regarding the degree of usage of these materials by teachers two principals reported that teachers use "sometimes". The reasons which principals mention for insufficient usage of the existing materials and teaching aids are related mainly to teachers' interest and lack of time.

The data thus indicate that schools lack material inputs that are important in the teaching – learning process. It is also possible to see that even the existing resources are not used effectively. Still, those which have better materials and average degree of usage are located in urban centers.

Similar studies report that the variation in school efficiency is a result of differences in physical facilities (Urwick and Junaidi, 1991).

4.2.2. Out- of- School Reasons

Pre-School Experience

It seems that there is no general agreement whether pre-school education contributes to reduce educational wastage (dropout and repetition) by increasing promotion rate. Such writers as Riley (1986) and Halpern (1986) support the assumption that pre-school education reduces wastage while others such as Olatunji (1990) and Adane (1993) show no significant relationship between pre-school education and academic success.

Leaving such disagreement as it is, the present study shows that 77(53.5%) of the respondents (both returnees and non-returnees) had no pre-school experience at all. On the other hand, of the total respondents, 67(46.5%) said that they had attended either kindergarten, Literacy program, Koranic or Church schools. However, it is evident that all these pre-school education programs seem to be inadequate in the region and in the country at large. This is because:

1. Kindergartens are not financed by the government, and these days, they lack materials and facilities appropriate to the developmental level of children;
2. The teaching- learning process in these kindergartens is conducted by teachers who lack professional training, competence and commitment to help children;
3. Church and koranic schools emphasize the importance of religious education which has no or insignificant relation with the primary schooling.

Thus, even if studies agree that there is positive relationship between pre-school experience and reduction in wastage rate, our pre-school education system seems not to be competent enough to do the job.

Home- School Distance

Adane (1993) citing Heyneman (1980) declared that home – school distance has no relationship with pupils' school performance; but it has the possibility to affect one's study time and health.

Thus, it is clear that long distance from home to school causes pupils to quit school by affecting their study time, thus weakening their performance or affecting their health.

In this study, long distance is considered to be distance that is covered by an hour's walk while short distance is that which takes less than an hour from home to school on foot.

Of the total respondents, 93 (64.6%) walk short distance (which takes more than 30 minutes and less than an hour) while 51 (35.4%) walk long distances. All the respondents use no means of transportation other than foot.

Although the number of pupils who walk long distances is less than the number of those who walk short distances, it can not be underestimated.

Family Background

Studies show that the socio-economic condition of parents is strongly tied with the pupils' progress in school work. The occupational and educational level of parents, family conditions and family size are some of the major family background factors that influence the academic success of individual pupils (Coombs, 1985; Adane, 1993).

In the following lines, some important family background variables are presented based on the data from the sample schools.

Of the total respondents, 77 (53.4%) have both parents living, 51(35.6%) have lost one of them (either father or mother) and 16 (11.1%) lost both of their parents. Fifty-eight (75%) of the parents who are alive live together while 19(25%) of them have separated (divorced). The data also show that 61(42.3%) of the respondents live with both of their parents, 32(22.2%) with mother only, 10(6.9%) with father only, 10 (6.9%) with grandparents 3(2%) with guardians, 22 (15.3%) live alone helping themselves and 6 (4.4%) have not specified whom they live with. According to the data, 86(59.7%) of the pupils belong to a home with a single or no parent while 77 (53.5%) live alone or with a single parent.

The degree of help or encouragement with which children are provided may differ according to the type of parents or gurdians. A single parent may provide his/ her child with better help or encouragement than a pair of parents. However, the psychological atmosphere in a home where parents are alive and live together can never be underestimated. In this study, therefore, a majority of pupils are psychologically affected and this is one of the factors that has contributed to the aggravation of the dropout problem in the region.

On the other hand, the data showed the following facts with regard to parental level of education. (See Table 11 below).

Table 11 Parental Level of Education in Urban and Rural School

Parents' Level of Education		In Urban Schools		In Rural Schools		Total	
		Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
1	Higher Education	4 (5.6%)	1(2.8%)	1(1.4%)	0	5(3.5%)	2(1.3%)
2	Secondary Education (9-12)	14 (19.4%)	15(20.8%)	7(9.7%)	3(4.2%)	21(14.6%)	18(12.5%)
3	Primary Education (1-8)	12(16.7%)	21(29.2%)	15(20.8%)	3(4.2%)	27(18.6%)	24(16.6%)
4	Literary, Church, or Koranic Education	8(11.1%)	7(9.7%)	13(18.1%)	6(8.3%)	21(14.6%)	13(9.0%)
5	Illiterate	21(29.1%)	27(37.5%)	49(68.1%)	60(83.3%)	70(48.6%)	87(60.4%)

The data in Table 11 above revealed that 48.6% of the total number of fathers and 60.4% of the mothers are not able to provide their children with academic help, i.e. they are illiterates. It is also possible to observe from the data that the percentage of illiterate fathers (68.1%) and mothers (83.3%) in rural schools is higher than that of fathers (29.1%) and mothers (37.5%) in urban schools. In this regard, it indicates that urban children are more advantaged than children who attend rural school. Similar to this, Carron and Chau (1996) wrote that rural children have insufficient contact with written words outside of school due to the paucity of reading materials and to the low level of education of their parents. Parents with little formal education on average are poorer, offer their children less opportunity to study, are less home or in the field. This is thus able to assist them in school work and need them more to help out at one of the

reasons that has contributed to the larger dropout rate in the rural schools in the present study.

Still, closer observation into the data reveals that literacy rate is higher among fathers by 11.8% than it is among mothers, and thus it can be asserted that children who live with their fathers are more advantaged than those who live with their mothers.

Although those parents who were reported to have attended the koranic, Church education, literacy program, or even primary education in Amharic or other medium are taken to be literate parents in this study, they have now become illiterates because they cannot write and read texts written in Latin Script in the Zones where mother tongue is the medium of instruction. Thus, this fact raises the number of children who are not helped by their parents academically.

The chi-square was computed to see whether returnees and non-returnees were equally affected by some family background or home-related factors.

Table 12 The chi-square Results for Returnees and Non-Returnees.

Pupil Type	Family Background Factors						
	Live in a broken family	No-academic help from parents	Lost both parents	Come from illiterate parents	Cover educational expenses themselves	Walk long distances	Help parents with work at home
Returnees	8	39	8	27	37	27	67
Non-Returnees	16	41	8	40	24	24	44
Total	24	80	16	67	51	51	111

Significant at 0.05 level.

The χ^2 critical value for the above data is 12.592 for 0.05 level of significance while the obtained value is 16.282. Since the obtained value (16.282) is higher than the critical value (12.592), there is a significant relationship between the individual and family back-ground reasons for returnees and non-returnees. This means that the non-returnees (those who are presently in school) are potential dropouts.

Regarding the marital status of parents, 56 (39%) of the total respondents are sons and daughters of polygamous fathers. More specifically, 35(24.3%) of the fathers have married two wives, 16(11.1%) three wives, and 5(3.6%) more than three wives at a time. The average number of children these fathers have had by each of their wives is 3 and the average number of children each father has is 6.

This finding may indicate that in a country such as ours such parents cannot afford to cover the educational expenses of their children. Besides, they find it difficult to render affection and academic help to their children in a manner monogamous fathers do. This is because, first, children of polygamous fathers reside in different homes with their mothers which makes it inconvenient for fathers to give continuous help, assessment and love. Second, when polygamists share love and help among their children, knowingly or unknowingly, partiality or bias plays its part. Thus, it is more likely that children from such families lack proper parental help and psychological assistance during their early years of schooling. The result of this may be either academic failure or desertion.

In addition, the study has also tried to identify the number of children in a household. Accordingly, the data showed that of the total number of respondents, 16(11.1%) live in a family with more than 9 children, 40(28%) with 6 to 8

children, 69 (48%) with 3 to 5 children and 19(13.2%) with 2 or less. Here, we can see that a majority of the respondents reside in a large sized family. It is apparent therefore, that the share of material and psychological inputs these children secure would be in slices or tenuous.

Another family background factor which was given consideration in the present study was parental occupation. While office work, professional and other unspecified jobs account for only 18.2% among fathers and 16% among mothers, 81.8% and 84% of the total number of fathers and mothers respectively are engaged in either farming, trading or daily labour.

As these are labour demanding occupations, the need for child labour would unquestionably be high among these families aggravating dropout rate.

Pupils' Individual (personal) Characteristics

Of the total number of respondents 67(46.5%) reported that they cover school expenses themselves. This is 28% for urban children and 72% for rural ones. The income generating means they mentioned go directly or indirectly to agricultural or commercial fields. The rest (77(53.5%)) said that they depend on parents, gurdians or others. This shows that almost half of the pupils have additional occupations that share their study time. The problem is more serious among the rural children. On the other hand, almost all of the respondents answered that they help parents or guardians, etc. with work at home. The type of help children provide is needed especially during harvest seasons in rural areas.

Both returnees and non-returnees were asked if they were interested in their education. Among pupils from rural schools 65 (89.6%) reported that they were interested in going to school because they liked learning while 7 (10.4%)

said they were not. Similarly , 78% of the pupils form urban areas were interested in education, 22% were not. We can see here that a majority of pupils in both settings have positive attitude towards learning. The data also show that more students from rural schools are interested in going to school than their counterparts from urban schools. However, it seems that the issue needs further study; the present data may not be enough to enable us to arrive at such a conclusion.

Another related question put to the respondents was, " How would you feel if somebody tells you that you must discontinue schooling?" Almost all the respondents reported that they would get sad. This also indicates that pupils have positive outlook towards learning.

Still, pupils were asked the question: " If it is said that there will be no employment opportunity in government institutions when you finish schooling, what would you do?"

Students gave differing responses to this question as indicated in Table 13 below:

Table 13 Pupils' Responses to Employment Opportunities in the Government Institutions.

	Items	responses (in%)
1	I will leave school	36
2	I will go on learning because I can be self-employed	15
3	I do not know what to do	42
4	Other	7

In addition, more than half of the pupils interviewed from grades 2,3 and 4 responded to this question that they like to be employed by the government.

From these responses an assumption can be made that a majority of pupils have not decided or do not have a clear objective why they are going to school while a significant number have positive attitude towards learning as far as there is employment opportunity in the governmental institutions. Less employment opportunity may thus mean more dropout rate.

4.2.3. Reasons for Pupil Dropout as Observed by

Teachers, Pupils and Parents(Community Members)

A list of reasons that would probably cause students to dropout of school in the region were given to teachers and pupils. They were asked to judge these reasons as " not observed", " not serious", " serious" or " very serious" seeing their level of importance in their respective areas. Through interview questions, parents and pupils from grades 2,3 and 4 have also mentioned the reasons according to their level of importance. The data are presented as follows.

Teachers' Observation

According to teachers' judgement, most of the factors affect boys and girls in almost a similar degree. (Hence, the data were not presented for boys and girls separately.)

Table 14 Causes for Pupil Dropout: Teachers' Observation

(1-4 scale: 1= not observed, 2= not serious, 3= serious, 4= very serious)

Reasons for Dropping out	Proportion of respondents for each score in % (n=36)				range	mean score	Rank
	1	2	3	4			
Involvement in income generating activities	-	-	38.8	61.1	3-4	3.62	1
Incomplete grades of the school level	-	2.8	33.3	63.9	2-4	3.61	2
Lack of material and financial support	-	5.6	30.5	63.8	2-4	3.58	3
Involvement in domestic work	-	8.3	44.4	47.2	2-4	3.38	4
Shortage of teaching materials	-	19.4	33.3	47.2	2-4	3.27	5
Home-school distance	8.3	13.8	33.3	44.4	1-4	3.13	6
Over crowded classrooms	11.1	16.6	30.5	41.6	1-4	3.02	7
Early marriage	8.3	8.3	61.1	22.2	1-4	2.97	8
Inadequate teacher preparation	-	33.3	41.6	25	2-4	2.91	9
Lack of time for study	11.1	22.2	38.8	27.7	1-4	2.83	10
Pupils' health problem	-	41.6	38.8	19.4	2-4	2.77	11
Unattractive lessons	-	33.3	58.3	8.3	2-4	2.75	12
Little hope in future prospects of educational benefit	-	44.4	38.8	16.7	2-4	2.72	13
Ill-health of parents	2.8	38.8	47.2	11.1	1-4	2.66	14
Family disunity	5.5	36.1	47.2	11.1	1-4	2.63	15
Frustration of academic failure	30.6	11.1	38.8	19.4	1-4	2.47	16
Irrelevant curriculum	13.8	38.8	36.1	11.1	1-4	2.44	17
Parental consciousness of the failure of elder children to find employment opportunity	2.5	30.6	30.6	-	1-3	2.33	18
Lack of encouragement from teachers	19.4	47.2	16.6	16.6	1-4	2.30	19
Parental death	8.3	55.5	36.1	13.8	1-4	2.27	20
Lack of interest in education	30.5	41.6	16.7	-	1-3	2.08	21
Heterogeneity in age composition in a class	27.7	58.3	8.3	5.6	1-4	1.92	22
Language of instruction	27.7	52.8	19.4	-	1-3	1.91	23
Disciplinary measures in school	36.1	44.4	11.1	8.3	1-4	1.90	24
Lack of suitable place for study	38.8	33.3	11.1	16.6	1-4	1.83	25
Unsafe road conditions to and from school	38.8	47.2	13.8	11.1	1-4	1.75	26

As we can see in Table 14 above, the most important factor that was judged serious or very serious by all respondents in all zones was pupils' excessive involvement in income generating activities. The next most important factors in their order of importance were:

1. incomplete grades of the school level;
2. lack of financial and material support;
3. excessive involvement in domestic work and
4. shortage of teaching materials (school supply).

These factors which teachers have identified to be the most influential are highly tied with the economic conditions of the region. Teachers' observation also shows that both the in-school and out-of-school factors are causing pupils to quit school.

Incomplete grades of the school level is the second important factor to cause pupils to drop out of school. This may be attached to the decision of the current Education and Training policy on the structure of primary education. Accordingly, the grade level of primary schools is 1-8 which is subdivided into first cycle primary (1-4) and second cycle primary (5-8) level. As per this decision, the previous primary (1-6) and junior secondary (7-8) schools were either down-graded to 1-4 or up-graded to 1-8 level on the basis of the schools' organizational strength. However, many of the previous 1-6 schools were organizationally weak and were down-graded to 1-4 level. As a result, pupils have to move to a second school after completing the first cycle primary education. A move to the second school, according to a majority of respondents, was unaffordable in terms of school related and other costs. This has held many students back from schooling. Similar studies have reported that dropout (wastage) mainly results from insufficient places at the next level (Richard, 1969).

Table- 15 Number of Primary Schools by Grade Level in the Region (1992E.C)

Zone	Grade 1-4	Grade 5-8	Grade 1-8	Total
Guraghe	84	..	193	277
Hadiya	27	..	129	156
K.A.T ☆	55	1	104	160
Yem. Sp. ☆	1	..	15	16
Burji Sp.	10	1	6	17
Gedeo	49	1	75	125
Amaro Sp.	8	..	21	29
Sidama	141	1	272	414
Konso Sp.	10	1	24	35
Semen Omo	122	5	457	584
Bench Maji	69	..	42	111
Kafa Sheka	83	..	127	210
Debub Omo	18	1	53	72
Derashe Sp.	8	..	16	24
Total	685	11	1534	2230

☆ Sp = Special Woreda

☆ K.A.T = Kambata Alaba Tambaro

Pupils' Observation

Table 16 shows that although all the factors have influenced pupils to drop out of school to some degree, pupils' involvement in income generating activities stands out according to the observation of pupils. The second and third important factors that have been judged to be serious or very serious are lack of financial and material support, and incomplete grades of the school level. Lack of encouragement from teachers was the fourth reason to cause pupil dropout although it was judged low by teachers. Similarly, parental ill-health was a serious reason for pupils but it was not viewed as serious by teachers.

Table 16 Causes for Pupil Dropout: Pupils' Observation
(1-4 scale: 1= not observed, 2= not serious, 3= serious, 4= very serious).

Reasons for Dropping out	Proportion of respondents for each score in % (n=72)				range	mean score	Rank
	1	2	3	4			
Involvement in income generating activities	-	-	34.7	65.2	3-4	3.65	1
Lack of material and financial support	-	5.5	30.5	63.8	2-4	3.58	2
Incomplete grades of the school level	-	8.3	30.5	61.1	2-4	3.52	3
Lack of encouragement from teachers	8.3	8.3	27.7	55.5	1-4	3.30	4
Parental ill-health	2.7	13.8	43	40.2	1-4	3.20	5
Involvement in domestic work	11.1	8.3	38.8	41.6	1-4	3.17	6
Home-school distance	6.9	15.2	31.9	45.8	1-4	3.16	7
Early marriage	11.1	5.5	55.5	27.7	1-4	3.00	8
Parental consciousness of the failure of elder children to find employment opportunity	12.5	27.7	37.5	22.2	1-4	2.70	9
Unattractive lessons	5.5	27.7	58.3	8.3	1-4	2.69	10
Little hope in future prospects of educational benefit	12.5	27.7	37.5	22.2	1-4	2.67	11
Family disunity	2.7	38.8	47.2	11.1	1-4	2.66	12
Pupils' health problem	13.8	27.7	38.8	19.4	1-4	2.63	13
Frustration of academic failure	30.5	11.1	27.7	30.5	1-4	2.58	14
Lack of interest in education	41.6	30.5	16.6	11.1	1-4	1.97	15
Language of instruction	41.6	38.8	16.6	2.7	1-4	1.80	16
Disciplinary measures	54.1	27.7	13.8	4.1	1-4	1.68	17
Unsafe road conditions to and from school	66.6	13.8	8.3	11.1	1-4	1.63	18

The Spearman's rank order correlation was computed to see if there is any degree of agreement between pupils' and teachers' judgement on the reasons for dropping out in primary schools. In the rankings of the reasons for dropping out, the rank correlation coefficient is 0.75 with 18 pairs. The correlation is positive and significant. This indicates that there is a very good agreement (concordance) between pupils' and teachers' judgement.

Regarding the interview results, twelve pupils from grades 2,3 and 4 in the sample schools were interviewed to give their feelings why pupils in their schools (villages) or friends dropped out of schools.

The summary of their responses in their order of importance are listed as follows:

1. lack of money to buy clothes, exercise books and other educational materials;
2. better opportunity to earn money;
3. failure in first semester examination,
4. marriage, especially of girls.

Similarly, 15 parents and/or community members and 6 officers from Zonal Education Departments were asked to give the most important factors that make pupils to drop out of school. Although most of the reasons given by the interviewees agree with those of pupils' and teachers' incomplete grade level in a school is the most important factor that has been stressed by all the interviewees.

In summary, the responses of teachers, pupils and the interview results show that excessive involvement in income generating activities, lack of financial and material support, lack of upper grade levels in a school, excessive involvement in domestic work, home-school distance and early marriage are

some of the common and the most influential reasons that are affecting pupils to drop out of school. Added to these by pupils are reasons such as insufficient motivation and encouragement by teachers and parental consciousness of the failure of elder children to find employment due to which the younger ones are held back.

Here, it should be noted that in some particular situations, factors that were considered to be the least important could be first. Generally, what we could grasp from the judgements of all parties is that factors that cause pupils to drop out of school are not single. They are interrelated and interwoven. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the most significant ones and their roots (economic, social or cultural) so that a proper action could be taken by the government, the school and/or the community.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

The aim of this study was to identify the major causes (reasons) that influence pupils to drop out of school at primary level in SNNPR and to give proper suggestions so that the dropout problem would be minimized.

The purpose was attempted by raising some basic questions through which in-school and out-of-school factors were identified and some policy implications indicated.

To carry out the study, twelve primary schools were selected from five zones and one special Woreda using the purposive or judgement sampling technique. One hundred forty-four primary school pupils (72 returnees and 72 non-returnees), twelve principals, and 36 teachers were made to fill questionnaires. Twelve pupils from grades 2,3 and 4 and 15 parents and/or community members as well as 6 ZED officials were used as data source using interview questions. In addition, data on pupil enrollment, dropout and repetition were collected from the statistical documents of MOE, SNNPREB, and from the rosters and other records of the sample schools.

To analyse the obtained data, statistical tools such as percentages, mean score, the chi-square and the rank order correlation were used. The analysis of the data justified the following findings and conclusions.

1. Pupil dropout at primary level is of a high magnitude in the region. Of the total primary school enrollment, on average, about 17% dropped out of school in each of the four consecutive years (1988-1991 E.C.).
2. In the regional statistics as well as in the sample schools, the high dropout rate was observed in the first grade (initial years). It then inclined to decrease in the following grades, rose in grade seven and showed a fall in grade eight.
3. In the years considered in this study, no significant improvement was seen in student retention.
4. More boys dropped out of school than girls in the years considered in the sample schools.
5. Of the total dropouts in the sample schools, more than half (54.5%) were at or below twelve years of age.
6. In all grade levels of the sample schools the dropout rate in the rural schools was higher than that of urban schools in all academic years considered. In both settings more boys dropped out than girls.
7. With regard to out-of-school reasons for pupil dropout, 53.5% of the respondents had no pre-school experience, 59.7% reside in a home with a single or no parent while 15.3% live alone helping themselves. In addition, 48.6% of the fathers and 60.4% of the mothers have been reported illiterate, hence not being able to help their children academically.

8. The percentage of parental literacy was found to be higher in urban settings than rural ones, hence urban children are more advantaged. It has also been evident that literacy rate was higher among fathers by 11.8% than it was among mothers, hence children who live with their fathers are generally more advantaged.
9. The data have shown that 39% of the total respondents are sons and daughters of polygamous fathers. The average number of children these fathers have had by each of their wives is 3 and the average number of children each father has is 6. This is found to be inconvenient for fathers to control and help their children.
10. With regard to parental occupation, 81.8% and 84% of the total number of fathers and mothers respectively were engaged in labour demanding occupations which might need child labour and hence aggravated pupil dropout.
11. The chi-square result showed that home-related factors affect both returnees and non-returnees in a similar manner and hence non-returnees are potential dropouts. This study thus showed that out-of-school factors are seriously affecting pupil dropout.
12. According to the responses obtained, a majority of respondent pupils have not decided or do not have a clear objective as to why they are going to school; while a significant number of respondents have a positive attitude towards learning as far as education enables them to find employment opportunities in the government institutions. Thus, we can say that less employment opportunity in the government institutions means more dropout rate.

13. Regarding the in-school reasons, the data obtained indicated that schools are being led by principals without a proper training in principal-ship. It has also been found out that those who have better qualification and experience are serving in urban schools.
14. The study showed that schools have lose relationship with parents and the surrounding communities.
15. In the sample schools, it has been reported that there was a high rate of teacher absenteeism caused by teachers' engagement in private work, participation in political issues such as election, as well as social and cultural practices. It was also found out that teachers' motivation was either average or low.
16. The data collected on the teacher characteristics showed that only 11.1% were qualified to the level they are teaching (5-8), 58.3% have never participated in any in-service training, 83.3% are not satisfied with the current teacher management in their respective zones, 52% lack suitable place to plan their lessons, and 83.2% were unsatisfactorily or poorly provided with teaching materials that enable them to plan and teach their students properly. Teacher characteristics thus show that teachers are more likely to lose strength because it seems that the system they find themselves in is not encouraging. This would very likely weaken the internal efficiency of schools and result in high dropout rate.

17. Concerning the material availability and degree of usage in the sample schools, material inputs that are necessary in the teaching-learning process are lacking, the existing ones are not used effectively and schools which have relatively better supply and degree of usage are located in the urban centers.
18. Teachers' observation or judgement on the list of reasons for pupil dropout showed that most of the factors affect boys and girls in a similar manner. Teachers have further indicated that although all the reasons have affected pupil dropout, pupils' excessive involvement in income generating activities, incomplete grades of a school level, lack of material and financial support, excessive involvement in domestic work, and shortage of school supplies or teaching materials were the reasons in their order of seriousness.
19. Pupils' observations have also shown that pupils' involvement in income generating activities, lack of material and financial support, lack of upper grades in a school, lack of encouragement from teachers and parental ill-health were reasons in their order of seriousness to affect pupil dropout.
20. The Spearman's rank order correlation Coefficient for the judgments of teachers and pupils was positive indicating that there is a very good and significant agreement between the two judgements.

5.2-Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that pupil dropout is the function of the in-school and out- of-school reasons. The reasons that cause 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 the in-school and out-of-school reasons have to be equally considered and improved by identifying their right sources (causes).

5.3. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were forwarded. For the sake of convenience recommendations are divided into two: in-school and out-of-school.

In-School

1. The study showed that incomplete grade level in a school is one of the most serious factors causing pupils to dropout. In accordance with the current Education and Training policy, 685 primary schools have been down-graded to 1-4 level while 11 are 5-8 schools in the region. In other words, 696 schools have incomplete grade level. This means that pupils from these schools have to move to a second school after completing the first cycle of the primary education. However, a move to the second school is impossible in the region where there is a scattered settlement, rugged topography, big rivers, lack of safety especially for girls, meager economic capacity to cover expenses on house rent and/or transportation, etc. Hence, there is a crucial need in the region that the government, in collaboration with parents, communities and NGO'S , has to up-grade the 1-4 schools to 1-8 level step by step. This is also the best remedy for the home-school distance which is one of the significant reasons for pupil dropout.
2. According to the study, teachers' characteristics are affecting pupil dropout. Teachers are the indispensable inputs in any education system. Thus, it is the paramount importance that:

- a) up – dating programs such as seminars, workshops, etc. be prepared by the REB as well as MOE so that teachers would improve their professional competence.
- b) in-service teacher trainings through ' kremet' programs and the already started distance education for teacher up-grading be strengthened and intensified.
- c) teacher mismanagement in terms of salary payment, performance evaluation, undemanded transfer, etc. must be corrected.

Out- of 'School

1. The comments both of teachers, principals, pupils, parents and the community members agree that pupils' involvement in income generating activities (either to cover educational expenses or to support themselves in terms of food and clothing) and lack of material and financial support are grouped under the category of the most important reasons that draw pupils out of school. Therefore, it is reasonable to recommend that if such children from the poor families are to be made stay in school, attention should be given to subsidize pupils' clothing, school supplies, health facilities and school feeding programs particularly in the schools of the rural setting.

To implement this, the Kebele in collaboration with the schools must first identify those pupils who cannot afford to pay their educational expenses and are liable to dropping out. Then different budgetary

sources must be mobilized by the Woreda Education and Training Board and the Woreda Education Office. Some of these sources can be creating and strengthening means of income generation in schools, involving the identified needy children in income generating means during their spare time, mobilizing the local organizations such as "Iddir" and "Iqqub" and mobilizing the community as a whole. The responsibility of buying and distributing the consumer goods and materials to the children and reporting the implementation results to the Woreda office must go to the schools.

2. A dropout prevention or protection committee must be set up in a Kebele where the primary school is located. The committee may be comprised of persons from schools, parents, pupils, religious communities and/or other important personalities. Among the major roles this committee can play are persuading parents that education is valuable, up-lifting parental consciousness that education is necessary even when there is no government employment opportunities, fighting against cultural constraints such as early marriage and polygamy, laying the foundation for participatory educational activities and forging the ways and means to strengthen school- community relationship through which the community can solve school problems and vice-versa.
3. The current Education and Training Policy has taken a significant step in abolishing all forms of school fees up to grade ten. Yet, at present, it seems that the government is unable to allocate sufficient budget to schools or supply schools with teaching learning materials. Principals have reported that most of the annual plans remain unaccomplished

(unimplemented). Teachers have also reported that the supply of materials that are indispensable for teaching – learning purposes were meager. Therefore, the government must either allocate sufficient budget to schools or re-define the policy on school fee. Here, what is meant is that the policy must differentiate between those who can and can not pay. Those who can pay must pay for education.

4. In this study, it is the view of respondents that the pupils have positive attitude towards learning as far as education enables them to find employment opportunities. This indicates that we have to have wide employment opportunities if we are to attract children to school and keep them there. However, the only economic sector that appears to provide sufficient employment opportunity in the country is the agricultural sector. Employment opportunities in other sectors seem to be tenuous. Therefore, educational expansion should be in line with the modernization and mechanization mainly of the agricultural sector which is the sole means of creating employment opportunities in the region in particular and in the country in general. It also needs that educational expansion should be demand oriented; there should be a two-way relationship between sectors in terms of human resource supply and demand.

5. Children who belong to literate parents obtain better academic help than their counterparts. It is also apparent that literate communities are more likely to recognize the immediate and long term benefits of education. Thus, they would control their children, keep them in school and provide them with whatever support they need.

Pupils reported that 48.6% of the fathers and 60.4% of the mothers were totally illiterate while many of the parents are illiterate to Latin Script. This means that a majority of parents are unable to help their children academically. Therefore, it is so crucial that new community literacy programs have to be started and post-literacy programs have to be strengthened. In the implementation of the post-literacy programs, orthographic orientation to those parents who are illiterate to Latin script should be given priority if we are to use Latin Script to write primary curriculum in nationality languages.

6. There are several children who have dropped out but have no chance to come back to school. There are also children who have never come to school and even those who are in school may drop out tomorrow or the next day. Therefore, it needs that non-formal education for the out-of-school children who have little or no chance to come back to formal schooling must be strengthened by using different means. The already started programs such as non-formal education by Action Aid Ethiopia and the Community Skill Development Centers, if given due attention, may play a significant role in this regard.

In general, efforts to meet children's needs and to keep them in school may be effective when they are coordinated and cooperative. Education, social and health services, business people, community organizations all have a role to play in order to prevent the dropout problem.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-A

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Administration.

Questionnaire to be Answered by **Primary School principals.**

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect first hand information on the factors that cause students to quit school before completing primary level in SNNPR. It also seeks appropriate suggestions that would prevent (minimize) the problem. Since your cooperation in providing relevant and candid information will be of great help to this study, please, give complete and honest responses to all questions provided in this instrument.

Direction

- Do not write your name
- Use this (✓) mark to indicate your answer to questions in the rank order (Likert scale)
- Give concise responses to open-ended questions.
- You can encircle the letters for questions with alternatives.

3.

Zone_____

Woreda_____

Name of the school _____

Grade level _____

Sex Male _____

Female_____

Age_____

1. Location of the school plant

a) Town (with population exceeding 2000)

b) Rural (with population below 2000)

2. The level of your education

12+2 _____

12+ 1_____

TTI _____

specify if any other _____

3. Are you trained in principalship?

a) Trained

b) Untrained

4. Your general service year as a principal

- a) 5 and below _____
- b) 6 to 10 years _____
- c) more than 10 years _____

In school you are currently working

- a) less than 2 years _____
- b) more than 2 years _____
- c) more than 5 years _____

5.. Does the school have a library?

Yes _____ No _____

6. If there is one, how do you see the quality of its service?

- A. Very good
- B. Good
- C. Fair
- D. Unsatisfactory
- E. Poor

7. Do students have textbooks in the following subjects?

Subjects	Yes	No
Amharic		
Nationality language		
English		
Mathematics		
Environmental Science		
Social Studies		
Physics		
Biology		
Chemistry		

8. How do you see the availability of teaching materials and aids in your school?

- A. Sufficient
- B. Medium
- C. Insufficient
- D. Very poor

9. Do teachers use the existing teaching materials?

- A. They always use
- B. They sometimes use
- C. They don't use at all

10. If they don't use, at all, why?

A. They are not interested.

B. They have no time.

C. They are not capable

D. Any other reason? _____

11.. The extent to which the school contacts the parents and the surrounding communities to discuss the problem of dropouts.

A. Very high

B. High

C. Medium

D. Low

E. Very low

12. The practice among teachers to help each other in academic issues in your school is:

A. Very high

B. High

C. Average

D. Low

E. Very low

13. In a semester, the average absence rate of teachers in your school is:

A. 20 days and more

B. 10 to 19 days

c) 5 to 9 days

d) ≤ 4 days

14. If there is high teacher absenteeism, can you list some of the reasons?

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

15. The degree of motivation on the majority of the teachers in your school is:

- a) high
- b) medium
- c) low
- d) very low

16. The average teaching load of a teacher in your school per week is _____

17. Teachers' motivation to teach in ~~an~~ other tongue is

- a) very high
- b) high
- c) average
- d) low
- e) very low

18. Frequency of student absenteeism

A. Very high

B. High

C. Medium

D. Low

E. Very low

19. If there is high student absenteeism, what are the common reasons for this problem?

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

20. What are the major reasons for student dropout, in your school?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

21. In which season is the highest number of students drop out of school? _____

What are the reasons ?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

22. Are there any methods devised to reduce the dropout problem?

A. Yes _____ B. No _____

23. If yes mention some of them .

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

24. Is the annual budget sufficiently allocated to your school?

a. yes _____ b. no _____

If "no" how do you cover the costs of inputs needed?

a. generate school income

b. community contribution

c. parents pay fee for their children

d. cancel some of the programs

e. any other means _____

1.

Zone _____

Woreda _____

1. Interviewee's:

Age

Sex

M	
---	----------------------

F

Occupation

Educational level:

➤ Higher Education

➤ Secondary School

➤ Primary School

➤ Church/ koranic School

➤ Illiterate

2. Are you interested in the education of your child? Why ?
3. Have you ever visited your child's school and discussed with the teachers?
4. Do you help your child with academic activities at home? If no why ?
5. Does your child (children) help you at home?
6. What season do you need his/their help at home?
7. Is the school calendar convenient with the time you need your child's help?
8. Have your child (ren) dropped out of school for any reason?
9. Can you list some common reasons that cause students to dropout of school in your community?
10. Is there any solution that parents, school staff and students have to do?
11. Any other idea you have to add?

APPENDIX-B

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Educational Administration.

Questionnaire to be Answered by **Primary School Teachers.**

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect first hand information on the factors that cause students to quit school before completing primary level in SNNPR. It also seeks appropriate suggestions that would prevent (minimize) the problem. Since your cooperation in providing relevant and candid information will be of great help to this study, please, give complete and honest responses to all questions provided in this instrument.

Direction

- Do not write your name
- Use this (✓) mark to indicate your answer to questions in the rank order (Likert scale)
- Give concise responses to open-ended questions.
- You can encircle the letters for questions with alternatives.

2.

Zone _____

Woreda _____

Name of the School _____

Grade level _____

1. Teachers age

Sex

M

F

2. Level of Your education

12+2 _____

12+1 _____

TTI _____

grade 12 _____

any other _____

3. Total Years of teaching experience

a) 5 and below

b) 6 to 10 years

c) 11 years and above

4. Years of teaching in the School you are currently teaching

a) 3 and below

b) 4 and above

c) 5 and above

5. Have you ever participated in an in-service training program?

a) Yes _____

b) No _____

6. If your answer is "yes," specify the program.

7. If you are given the chance to choose your occupation, would you choose teaching as your profession?

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

Why?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

8. Are you satisfied with the current teacher management in the Zone you teach?

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

Why ?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

9. Are you satisfied with the teaching profession

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

10. If your answer is "No" to the above question, what is your reason?

a) . poor management b) hatred of the profession

c)Any other

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

11. In the school you teach, to what extent are the students interested in their education?

- a) Very high
- b) High
- c) Not known
- d) Low
- e) Very low

12. What do you feel when you evaluate the social activities in your school?

- a) Very much satisfied.
- b) Satisfied.
- c) Indifferent.
- d) Dissatisfied.
- e) Very much dissatisfied.

13. What do you feel when you evaluate the academic activities in your school?

- a) Very much satisfied.
- b) Satisfied.
- c) Indifferent.
- d) Dissatisfied.
- e) Very much dissatisfied.

14. Do you have ample time to plan your lessons and give and correct home works ?

- a) Yes
- b) No

15. Do you have ample space to plan your lessons and give and correct home works ?

- a) yes
- b) No

16. Are you provided with materials that would enable you to teach your students?

- a) Sufficiently
- b) Satisfactorily
- c) Unsatisfactorily
- d) Poorly

17. Below are listed some possible problems that can cause students to dropout. Please, select those which are common in the school you teach and give your answer in accordance with their seriousness. (use this "✓" mark)

Possible Reasons for Dropping out .	Gender Specificity			Seriousness			
	a cause for boys only	a cause for girls only	a cause for both sexes	not observed at all	not serious	serious	very serious
Long distance from home to school							
Excessive involvement in domestic work (familial obligations)							
Pupil's health problems							
Early marriage							
Involvement in income generating activities							
Lack of material and financial support							
Little hope in future prospects of educational benefits							
Parental death							
Parental consciousness of the failure of elder children to get employment.							
Unsafe road conditions to and from school							
Lack of interest in education							
Incomplete grades of the school level							
Ill health of parents							

Possible Reasons for Dropping out .	Gender Specificity			Seriousness			
	a cause for boys only	a cause for girls only	a cause for both sexes	not observed at all	not serious	serious	very serious
Family disunity							
Language of instruction							
Frustration of academic failure (poor performance)							
Disciplinary measures in school (corporal punishment)							
Heterogeneity in age composition in a class							
Irrelevant (inappropriate) curriculum							
Lack of encouragement or motivation from teachers							
Unattractive lessons							
Shortage of teaching materials							

Possible Reasons for Dropping out .	Gender Specificity			Seriousness			
	a cause for boys only	a cause for girls only	a cause for both sexes	not observed at all	not serious	serious	very serious
Inadequate teacher preparation							
Overcrowded classrooms							
Lack of time for study							
Lack of suitable place for study							

16. List any other reasons for drop out that you feel are serious in your school below.

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

17. Can you suggest solutions to the problems you listed above?

a) _____

c) _____

b) _____

d) _____

APPENDIX - C

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Administration.

Questionnaire to be Answered by **Returnees.**

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect first hand information on the factors that cause students to quit school before completing primary level in SNNPR. It also seeks appropriate suggestions that would prevent (minimize) the problem. Since your cooperation in providing relevant and candid information will be of great help to this study, please, give complete and honest responses to all questions provided in this instrument.

Direction

- Do not write your name
- Use this (✓) mark to indicate your answer to questions in the rank order (Likert scale)
- Give concise responses to open-ended questions.
- You can encircle the letters for questions with alternatives.

Zone _____

Woreda _____

Name of school _____

1. Pupil's personal data:

1.1. age _____

1.2. Sex _____ M ☐ F ☐

1.3. Marital Status- Married ☐

Unmarried ☐

Divorced ☐

1.4. Residence – Urban ☐ Rural ☐

1.5. Pre- Primary School Experience

Which of the following had you attended before you entered grade 1?

a) Literacy program _____

c) Kindergarten _____

d) Church school _____

e) Koranic school _____

f) none _____

2. Are your parents alive ?

a) Both of them are alive _____

b) One of them has died _____

c) Both of them have died _____

3. If your parents are alive, do they live together?

Yes _____ No _____

4.. With whom do you live now?

- a) with father and mother _____
- b) with father only _____
- c) with mother only _____
- d) with grand parent(s) _____
- e) with guardian _____
- f) alone _____
- g) Any other (mention) _____

5. What is your parents' educational level? (Use this (✓) mark to indicate your answer.)

Educational level	Parents	
	Father	Mother
Higher education		
Secondary (9-12) education		
Primary education		
Literacy program, church or Koranic education		
Illiterate		

6. How many wives does your father have ?

- a) one b) two c) three d) more than three

7. How many children does your father have from each wife if he has two or more wives?

8. Parents' occupation? (use this (✓) mark)

	father	mother
farmer (peasant) ✓		
merchant ✓		
office worker (clerk) ✓		
labourer ✓		
professional ✓		
other _____ f _____ other _____ _____ (mention) _____		

9. Number of children in your household

a) More than ☐

b) 6 to 8 ☐

c) 3 to 5 ☐

d) Less than two

10. Who covers the expenses for your clothing and school materials?

a) parents (s) _____

b) guardian (s) _____

c) myself _____

Any other (mention) _____

11. If it is you who cover the expenses, how do you earn the money?

12. Do you have enough time for studying and doing home-work when you are back home?

Yes _____

No _____

13. Do you have suitable place for studying and doing home-work ?

Yes _____

No _____

14. Do your parents (guardians) help or encourage you with your academic activities

Yes _____

No _____

15. If your answer is "Yes" to the above question, how do they help you?

a) Check homework / assignment _____

b) Discuss or explain notes _____

c) Ask questions and give answers _____

d) Any other (mention)

16. Do you help your parents with work at home?

Yes _____ No _____

17. What is the type of work you usually do ? _____

18. In which season of the year do your parents want your help? _____

19. How long does it take you to walk to school? _____

a) more than 30 minutes

b) more than an hour

c) less than an hour.

20. Mention the means of transportation you use while going to school _____

21. Do you face any problem against daily attendance ?

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

If yes, have you been absent frequently?

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

If yes, Why ? _____

22. Are you interested in going to school?

Yes _____ No _____

23. If you are interested in going to school, What is your reason to do so?

a) Because I see my friends go _____

b) Because I like learning _____

c) Because I like my teachers _____

d) Because I am forced by my parents _____

e) I don't know why _____

f) Any other reason _____

24. How would you feel if somebody tells you that you must discontinue schooling?

- a) I will get sad _____
- b) I would not mind _____
- c) I would rather be happy _____

25. How many times did you repeat before you dropped out?

- a) none
- b) once
- c) two times
- d) three times
- e) more than three times

26. What was the main reason that made you drop out? _____

27. What did your parents feel when you dropped out of school?

- a) sad
- b) very sad
- c) indifferent
- d) happy
- e) very happy

28. Why have you returned to school now? _____

And, whose decision was it?

- a) mine _____
- b) my parents' _____
- c) any other _____

29. Have you ever been punished in this school? a) yes _____ b) No _____

30. What was the punishment?

- a) suspension (forced withdrawal)
- b) corporal
- c) financial
- d) other _____

31. What was the reason for the punishment?

32. What do you hate most in this school and why? _____

33. Where do you want to go after you complete the grade you are in? _____

34. What do you want to do after you complete the grade you are in? _____

APPENDIX - D

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Educational Administration.

Questionnaire to be Answered by **Primary School Students.**

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect first hand information on the factors that cause students to quit school before completing primary level in SNNPR. It also seeks appropriate suggestions that would prevent (minimize) the problem. Since your cooperation in providing relevant and candid information will be of great help to this study, please, give complete and honest responses to all questions provided in this instrument.

Direction

- Do not write your name
- Use this (✓) mark to indicate your answer to questions in the rank order (Likert scale)
- Give concise responses to open-ended questions.
- You can encircle the letters for questions with alternatives.

Zone _____

Woreda _____

Name of school _____

1. Pupil's personal data:

1.1. age _____

1.2. Sex _____ M ☐ F ☐

1.3. Marital Status- Married ☐

Unmarried ☐

Divorced ☐

1.4. Residence – Urban ☐ Rural ☐

1.5. Pre- Primary School Experience

Which of the following had you attended before you entered grade 1?

a) Literacy program _____

b) Kindergarten _____

c) Church school _____

d) Koranic school _____

e) none _____

2. Are your parents alive ?

a) Both of them are alive _____

b) One of them has died _____

c) Both of them have died _____

3. If your parents are alive, do they live together?

Yes _____ No _____

4.. With whom do you live now?

- a) with father and mother _____
- b) with father only _____
- c) with mother only _____
- d) with grand parent(s) _____
- e) with guardian _____
- f) alone _____
- g) Any other (mention) _____

5. What is your parents' educational level? (Use this (✓) mark to indicate your answer.)

Educational level	Parents	
	Father	Mother
Higher education		
Secondary (9-12) education		
Primary education		
Literacy program, church or Koranic education		
Illiterate		

6. How many wives does your father have ?

- a) one b) two c) three d) more than three

7. How many children does your father have from each wife if he has two or more wives?

8. Parents' occupation? (use this (✓) mark)

	father	mother
farmer (peasant)		
merchant		
office worker (clerk)		
labourer		
professional		
_____ _____ other _____ _____ (mention) _____		

9. Number of children in your household

- a) More than ☐ 9
- b) 6 to 8 ☐
- c) 3 to 5 ☐
- d) Less than two ☐

10. Who covers the expenses for your clothing and school materials?

a) parents (s) _____

b) guardian (s) _____

c) myself _____

Any other (mention) _____

11. If it is you who cover the expenses, how do you earn the money?

12. Do you have enough time for studying and doing home-work when you are back home?

Yes _____ No _____

13. Do you have suitable place for studying and doing home-work ?

Yes _____ No _____

14. Do your parents (guardians) help or encourage you with your academic activities

Yes _____ No _____

15. If your answer is "Yes" to the above question, how do they help you?

a) Check homework / assignment _____

b) Discuss or explain notes _____

c) Ask questions and give answers _____

d) Any other (mention)

16. Do you help your parents with work at home?

Yes _____

No _____

17. What is the type of work you usually do ? _____

18. In which season of the year do your parents want your help? _____

19. How long does it take you to walk to school? _____

a) more than 30 minutes

b) more than an hour

c) less than an hour.

20. Mention the means of transportation you use while going to school _____

21. Do you face any problem against daily attendance ?

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

If yes, have you been absent frequently?

a) Yes _____ b) No _____

If yes, Why ? _____

22. Are you interested in going to school?

Yes _____ No _____

23. If you are interested in going to school, What is your reason to do so?

a) Because I see my friends go _____

b) Because I like learning _____

c) Because I like my teachers _____

d) Because I am forced by my parents _____

e) I don't know why _____

f) Any other reason _____

24. How would you feel if somebody tells you that you must discontinue schooling?

- a) I will get sad _____
- b) I would not mind _____
- c) I would rather be happy _____

25. If it is said that there will be no government employment opportunity when you finish schooling, what would you do?

- A. I will leave school _____
- B. I will go on learning because I can be self-employed when I finish my schooling _____
- C. I don't know what to do _____
- D. Any other (mention) _____

26. Below are listed some possible problems that can cause students to dropout please, select those which are common in the area you live and give your answer in accordance with their seriousness. (use this " ✓ " mark)

Possible Reasons for Dropping out .	Gender Specificity			Seriousness			
	a cause for boys only	a cause for girls only	a cause for both sexes	not observed at all	not serious	serious	very serious
Long distance from home to school							
Excessive involvement in domestic work (familial obligations)							
Pupil's health problems							
Early marriage							
Involvement in income generating activities							
Lack of material and financial support							
Little hope in future prospects of educational benefits							
Parental death							
Parental ill health							
Parental consciousness of the failure of elder children to get employment.							
Unsafe road conditions to and from school							
Lack of interest in education							
Incomplete grades of the school level							

Possible Reasons for Dropping out .	Gender Specificity			Seriousness			
	a cause for boys only	a cause for girls only	a cause for both sexes	not observed at all	not serious	serious	very serious
Family disunity							
Language of instruction							
Frustration of academic failure (poor performance)							
Disciplinary measures in school (corporal punishment)							
Heterogeneity in age composition in a class							
Irrelevant (inappropriate) curriculum							
Lack of encouragement or motivation from teachers							
Unattractive lessons							
Shortage of teaching materials							

Possible Reasons for Dropping out .	Gender Specificity			Seriousness			
	a cause for boys only	a cause for girls only	a cause for both sexes	not observed at all	not serious	serious	very serious
Inadequate teacher preparation							
Overcrowded classrooms							
Lack of time for study							
Lack of suitable place for study							

27. List any other reasons for drop out that you feel are serious in your school below.

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

28. Can you suggest solutions to the problems you listed above? _____

APPENDIX-F

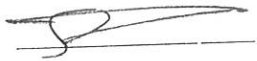


Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original work. All sources of materials used in the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Tadesse Woldie

Signature:



Date:

01/6/2001