Factors Affecting Student Drop-Out Behavior: A Systematic Review

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	Factors affecting student dropout behavior have been investigated overtime. A lot of factors came out to be affecting this prevalent concern in schools. However, in this study, a systematic review of peer-reviewed, empirical literature and studies published between 2015- 2023 was conducted to identify the common factors affecting student dropout behavior and the interventions implemented to minimize dropout rates. This review specifically tackles two key issues: firstly, an exploration of the common factors affecting student dropout behavior, and secondly, an examination of prevalent initiatives and interventions aimed at reducing student dropouts. A total of 12 studies were included in the review which passed the PRISMA diagram guidelines, Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist, and were organized using a literature matrix. Results showed that family, school, school/teacher, lack of guidance and counseling, social, individual, and socioeconomic factors were the common factors influencing student dropout behavior. Additionally, it showed that remedial programs addressing lack of interest, support and resources, improving the school's guidance program, offering mechanisms for support to counteract the impact of poverty, transportation and counseling services, increased funding for disadvantaged students, raising awareness of the consequences of pre-marital sex, enforcing school dropout policies, integrating sex education, and guaranteeing adequate resource availability were the common interventions implemented to address these prevalent factors. The results underscored the importance of tailored and context-specific interventions in effectively addressing the identified factors contributing to student dropout behavior. It became evident that a comprehensive approach, addressing the nuanced nature of each factor, is crucial for the development of efficient and effective programs aimed at reducing dropout rates. Further research suggests to further investigate interventions that are custom-tailored to each specific factor, thereby providing a more refined and targeted framework for addressing issues related to student dropouts.

1. INTRODUCTION

Student dropout is a major source of concern for educators, policymakers, and parents. Individuals, families, and society as a whole suffer significant consequences when children

drop out of school. Studies around the world have been conducted to address this prevalent issue. Factors contributing to student drop out behavior suggested interventions were studied by many researchers. Hence, this systematic review aims to review the empirical literature and studies published between 2015- 2023 and identify the common factors affecting student dropout behavior as well as interventions implemented to minimize dropout rates.

School dropout is a behavioral change where students stop attending school. It emphasizes that various factors within the student's environment can contribute to this behavior. Specifically, the student's social class, including cultural capital, human capital, division of labor, and anomalies within that class, can provide insights into potential school dropout behavior (Karacabey & Boyacı, 2018). Understanding the social and cultural context in which students belong is crucial for addressing the issue of school dropout. By considering factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural background, and societal norms, interventions and strategies can be developed to prevent dropout and promote educational attainment. Recognizing the complex interplay between individual students and their environment can help identify the underlying causes of school dropout and inform targeted interventions to address the issue effectively.

Students who dropout of school face fewer job opportunities, lower wages, and poorer health outcomes (Rumberger & Lim, 2008). Furthermore, dropping out of school can increase the likelihood of criminal behavior, drug use, and other negative outcomes. Understanding the factors that contribute to student dropout is therefore critical for preventing this issue. Family and social factors are one important set of factors that have been shown to contribute to student dropout. Parental education, parental involvement in school, family income, family structure, peer influence, and community support are examples of family and social factors. These factors can have an impact on student dropout behavior in both positive and negative ways.

In recent years, research has emphasized the significance of family and social factors in understanding student dropout behavior. Ouma et. al. (2017) emphasized that the parental involvement and support in a student's education were significantly associated with lower dropout rates. According to the findings, a number of variables, including a loss of interest in education, are among the main causes of school dropouts in the community such as relocation, absenteeism from school, parent deaths and separations, lack of school supplies, peer pressure, family duties, early pregnancies, and early marriages, as well as negative perception of education in the community are just a few examples. In addressing the causes of school dropout requires a multi-faceted approach that involves collaboration among various stakeholders, including the government, schools, communities, and families. By implementing targeted interventions that address these causes and provide necessary

support, it is possible to reduce school dropout rates and promote a conducive learning environment for the students.

Furthermore, studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of specific family and social factors on student dropout behavior. Trinidad (2022) acknowledges that dropping out of high school is influenced by student-level factors like poverty, race, gender, and behavior, as well as social factors such as school context and peer beliefs. However, the social factors have often been studied without considering the spatial dimension, which is crucial as neighborhood dropout rates might be associated with adjacent neighborhoods. By considering the spatial dimension, policymakers and educators can gain a deeper understanding of the localized dynamics of dropout rates and develop more effective strategies to address the issue.

According to Nguyen et. al. (2022) parental involvement has a significant role in the students' academic success, especially for those who may be struggling academically. By actively participating in their children's education and providing support, parents can positively influence their children's motivation, academic performance, and overall educational attainment. These results emphasize the importance of fostering strong partnerships between parents, students, and schools to promote student success and reduce dropout rates.

In addition, Ilic and Simic (2017) suggest that efforts to reduce dropout rates should consider a comprehensive approach that addresses factors at multiple levels of the social ecology. This includes strengthening connections between schools, families, and local institutions, improving the quality of neighborhoods, and promoting cooperation and effective legislation at the macrosystem level. The study provides valuable guidelines for future investigations, offering insights into potential areas for intervention and strategies to prevent dropout behavior in Serbia.

However, it can be inferred that high levels of stress and depression may potentially contribute to an increased risk of dropout among students. Students who struggle with managing stress and experience depression may find it challenging to cope with the demands of their academic life, leading to disengagement and ultimately dropping out of school (Deng et. al., 2022). To address this issue, it is important for parents, educators, and other stakeholders to be aware of the impact of stress and depression on students' academic performance. Providing support and resources to help students manage stress and mental health issues can play a crucial role in reducing dropout rates. By promoting a supportive and nurturing environment, offering counseling services, and implementing strategies to mitigate stress, educational institutions can help create conditions that foster academic success and decrease the likelihood of students dropping out.

Recent studies on school dropout have been conducted for several decades, highlighting various causes and prevention strategies. In contrast, more recent research suggests that push factors are now considered the primary cause of dropout overall. This shift in emphasis may be attributed to the influence of rising academic standards imposed by initiatives like No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The implication of this information is that the factors contributing to dropout can vary over time and across different age groups. Understanding these factors and their relative importance is crucial for designing effective prevention strategies and interventions. By examining the specific causes reported by students in a comprehensive manner, researchers can gain valuable insights into the evolving nature of the dropout problem and its relationship to educational policies such as NCLB. Future research is needed to validate these observations and provide further clarity on the impact of changing standards on dropout rates (Doll et. al., 2013).

Similarly, research has suggested that individual student factors such as academic achievement and motivation, rather than family and social factors, may be stronger predictors of dropout. Academic achievement was found to be the strongest predictor of high school dropout among at-risk students in a study by Rocque et. al. (2015), while family and social factors had weaker associations with dropout. Previous research from developed and some developing countries has shown the positive impact of parental involvement in reducing dropout rates. However, there is a lack of similar evidence in the Indian context. The findings from the multivariable models indicate that children whose parents did not participate in Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, discuss academic progress with school teachers, and supervise their children's homework had a higher risk of school dropout (Paul et. al., 2021).

Furthermore, research has highlighted the importance of taking into account the larger societal and economic factors that contribute to student dropout. Rumberger and Lim (2008) discovered that poverty, unemployment, and a lack of access to resources and opportunities were significant contributors to student dropout, with family and social factors playing a smaller role.

Recent research supports the importance of family and social factors in understanding student dropout behavior. Tsolou & Babalis, (2020) suggests that family factors play a crucial role in influencing students' decisions to drop out of school in Greece. Parental involvement, support, and engagement in their children's education were identified as important protective factors against dropout. The findings underscore the significance of fostering positive family-school relationships and parental involvement in supporting students' educational attainment and reducing the risk of school dropout. Positive peer relationships, a supportive social network, and a sense of belonging in school have been linked to lower dropout rates. On the other hand, peer pressure, involvement in deviant behaviors, and a negative school climate can contribute to higher dropout rates. Understanding the role of family and social factors in

student dropout behavior is crucial for designing effective prevention strategies and interventions. By identifying the key factors associated with dropout, educational stakeholders can develop targeted programs that address the specific needs of at-risk students.

In contrast, dropping out of school not only affects the students themselves but also has implications for their families, communities, and society as a whole. This is supported by Kumar et. al. (2023) which suggests that the decision to drop out of school has far-reaching effects beyond the individual. One significant consequence of dropping out is under-employment, which refers to being employed in jobs that are below one's skills and qualifications. This can lead to a lower quality of life for young people. Dropping out of school can limit opportunities for further education and training, which can impact future job prospects and earning potential.

This systematic review aims to analyze and identify the most common factors affecting student drop out behavior, as well as the common interventions to reduce student dropout rates. The review focuses on studies conducted from the year 2015 onwards to capture the most recent research findings in this field. By synthesizing the available evidence, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors of student dropout behavior as well suggests initiatives or interventions that may be applied to schools to reduce student dropouts.

2.   METHODS

This study is a systematic review of local and international empirical studies and literature related to factors affecting student dropout behavior and the interventions they used to address the issue. The design was patterned from the study of Cana, et al (2023) and Sandelwoski and Barroso's approach (2007). The steps involved (i) selecting published papers to include (ii) quality review and data extraction, and (iii) summarizing and synthesizing.

Search Strategy

In selecting published papers for review, the Publish or Perish software via Google Scholar electronic database was used. All studies from 2015-2023 were preselected using the key terms family, social factors, and student dropout behavior. Publish and Perish results were screened using the Literature Matrix template and Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) to assess the quality of the included studies. Studies were screened using the (CASP) in terms of the study design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and analysis techniques following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Guidelines to ensure that all the relevant information were included.

Selection /inclusion criteria

The study included in this review were chosen based on the following criteria: articles must be published and not have duplication, must be reported in English, must have High

School respondents from both Private and Public School, must be around the year 2015-2023, must have fitting abstract, must undergo intensive screening, and must be fitting using the CASP checklist or the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme.

3.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The studies in this research were examined using thematic analysis with Clark and Braun's protocol (2017). The six steps thematic analysis methodology were utilized which includes: (1) taking notes of the emerging themes (2) producing codes by gathering data common to each code (3) searching for themes by collecting relevant data for each theme; (4) reviewing themes constructing a thematic map; (5) explaining and classifying themes clearly specify emerging themes, (6) developing the report discussing the study's analysis and implications.

3.1   Search Result

The PRISMA Diagram, adapted from (Page et.a; 2021), presented I Figure 1 was used to identify the studies considered for this research.
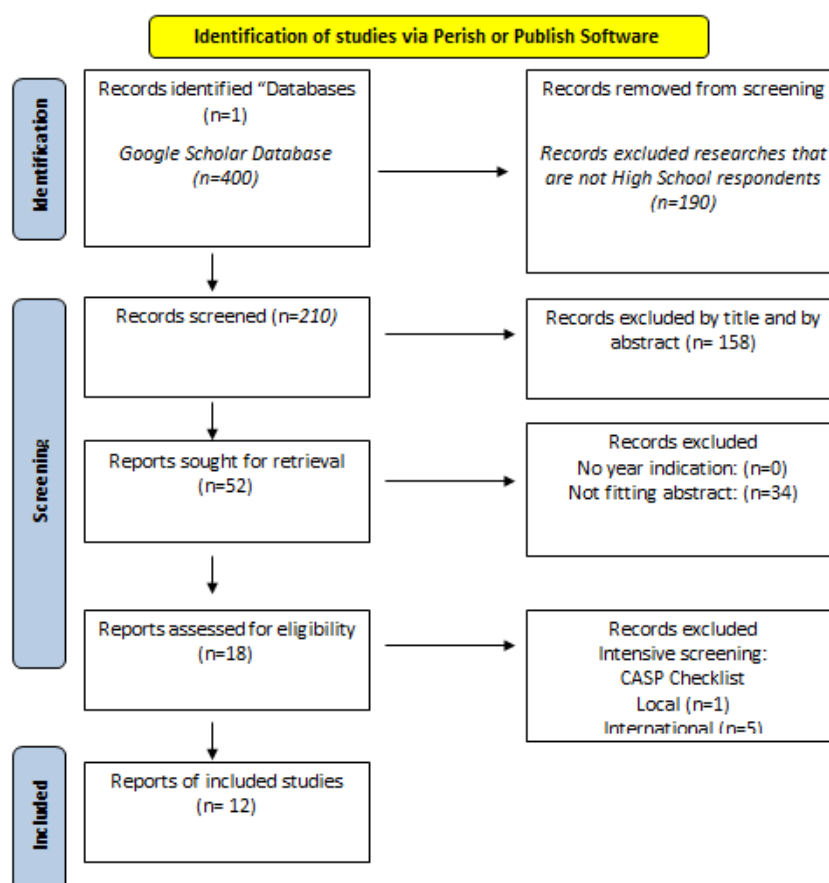

Figure 1. Identification of studies via Perish or Publish Software

The PRISMA diagram above showed how the researchers came up with a total of 12 research studies to be included in the review. The process involved three stages namely

Identification, Screening, and Included. In the Identification stage, four hundred (400) studies were collected from Google Scholar Data Base using Perish or Publish software. During the screening stage, the titles and topics of the 210 studies were reviewed, resulting in the removal of 158 studies that were deemed unrelated. This left a total of 52 research studies for further review. In the next sub-stage, the abstracts of these 52 studies were evaluated, and 34 studies were removed as they were considered unfitting. The remaining 18 studies underwent re-screening and were re-evaluated using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist. Six studies were found to not meet the criteria set by the CASP checklist and were subsequently removed. Finally, 12 studies met all the inclusion criteria and were included in the systematic review. The final collections of twelve (12) research studies were conducted in Asia (7), Europe (2), and Africa (3).

Table 1 provides a summary and characteristics of the 12 included studies. It includes information such as the author, year of publication, study setting, research design, factors affecting student dropout behavior, and interventions or initiatives to address dropout behavior. Here is a brief summary of the studies:

Table 1. Summary of the studies

No.	Author	Year	Setting	Design	Factors affecting Student Drop Out Behavior	Interventions/Initiatives to address Student Drop Out Behavior
1	Arturo Alvarez-Roldan, Ivan Parra, & Juan F Gamella	(2018)	Spain	Mixed Methods	• Lack of motivation to continue schooling • Negative Perception of High School as an unsafe environment • Lack of role models of educational successes and professional achievement • Priority given to early marriage, early maternity and the role of women as homemakers and care takers • The need for teenagers to work at home and take care of their siblings	• Remedial Programs through concept mapping among the community to enlighten their negative thoughts about schooling.
2	Rafi Amir-ud-Din, Hafiz Zahid	(2021)	Pakistan	Quantitative Method	• Lack of interest • Wealth Status • Gender	• Intervention that targets lack of interest.

No.	Author	Year	Setting	Design	Factors affecting Student Drop Out Behavior	Interventions/Initiatives to address Student Drop Out Behavior
	Mahmood, Faisal Abbas, Verda Salman & Sameen Zafar			(multivariate logistic and multinomial logistic regression models to analyze the data)	• Migration of a family member • Marital Status	• Support and resources for students in lower educational levels, addressing the needs of orphaned students, focusing on urban areas to enhance educational engagement, considering the unique challenges married students face, and addressing potential gender disparities in educational opportunities. • Develop effective policies and interventions to reduce school dropout rates in Pakistan
3	Nestor R. Amoroso, Victoria S. Cordero, & Maurice Dence Bacaling	(2021)	Davao Del Sur, Philippines	Mixed Methods	• Lack of interest stemming from poverty • Peer influence	• Improve the school's guidance program and prevent student dropouts. • Special attention was given to addressing the impact of poverty on student motivation and providing support mechanisms to counteract its effects. • Teachers, especially those with advisory classes, were recommended to undergo training on recognizing and addressing the challenges faced by students from impoverished backgrounds
4	Erick B. Atilano,	(2016)	Davao City, Philippines	Mixed Method	• Financial constraints • Marital Status	• Provide support services such as transportation and counseling to

No.	Author	Year	Setting	Design	Factors affecting Student Drop Out Behavior	Interventions/Initiatives to address Student Drop Out Behavior
	Rose Anne G. Omanito, Camille Joy Desipeda, Zayra Jane M. Domingo, & Shari Naldee L. Garbin				• Employment Status • Accessibility to transportation • Lack of support from family and friends • Distance to the learning center	address the needs of participants who live far from the learning center or lack support from family and friends. • Funding from the government
5	Jayson Troy Bajar & Mary Ann Bajar	(2019)	Rural School in Southern Philippines	Quantitative Method	Parents Involvement	Text Message Intervention to Parents
6	Robertus Dole Guntur, and Maria Lobo	(2017)	East Nusa Tenggara Province Indonesia	Descriptive Method	• Unaffordable school fees and money-related issues • Lack of Interest for pursuing higher education	• Financial Assistance for Schooling • creating opportunities for vocational education, • promoting the importance of education
7	Phiona Mukisa	(2018)	Namutumba District Africa	Descriptive Method	• Parental factors such as education background, poverty, alcohol, and parental attitude • Parental Neglect • School/teacher-related factors such as corporal punishment, poor school performance, poor school administration, and suspension/expulsion from school. • Teenage pregnancy	• Increase funding for disadvantage students • Promoting Students' awareness of the negative consequences of pre-marital sex
8	Maria Nabbumba	(2017)	Luwero Town Council, Luwero District Africa	Mixed Method	• Early marriages, pregnancy • Lack of guidance and counseling • Peer influence • Financial issues	• Enforce school dropout policies • Integrate sex education in the curriculum • Ensure adequate resources

No.	Author	Year	Setting	Design	Factors affecting Student Drop Out Behavior	Interventions/Initiatives to address Student Drop Out Behavior
					• Inferiority complex	• Provide guidance and counseling services
9	Stephanie Rose T. Dizon-Luna.	(2021)	San Pablo City, Philippines	Case Study	• Financial Issues • Illnesses • Peer Pressure • Early Pregnancy • Experiencing boredom	• Create programs for the potential dropouts • School and Home coordination • Educating students of the school's guidance and counseling programs
10	Jose Eos Trinidad	(2022)	New York City	Exploratory Spatial Data Analysis	• Poverty • Racial minorities	Include allocations for the minorities
11	Jessica T. Trivino, Benjamin D. Tiongzon, Leviticus M. Barazon, Jr., and Edsel P. Inocian	(2017)	Cebu. Philippines	Quantitative Method	• Gender • Deceased Father • Cyber situation • Broken Family • Inferiority complex • Child labor • Lack of community support	Implement Drop out Reduction Program (DORP) which tracks Learners at Risk of Dropping Out(LARDO) and strengthen early warning signs.
12	Maryanne N Wagachira	(2015)	Murang'a County, Kenya Africa	Mixed Methods	• Socioeconomi constraints • Cultural norms, early marriages, inadequate infrastructure, • Lack of sanitary facilities, • Gender-based violence, • Limited access to educational resources.	• Improving access to quality education, addressing socioeconomic barriers, • Providing support systems for girls, promoting community involvement, • Enhancing infrastructure, • Implementing policies that safeguard girls' rights to education.

3.2   Prevailing Factors Affecting Student Dropout Behavior and their interventions

Based on the 12 included studies, the following themes summarize the most common factors affecting student drop out behavior and their interventions:

a.   Family- Related Factors

Family-related factors play a significant role in student dropout behavior. Parental neglect, early marriages, teenage pregnancy, and financial issues within the family can all contribute to a student's decision to drop out of school. These factors may create an

unsupportive home environment, limit opportunities for education, and increase the likelihood of students prioritizing immediate needs over long-term educational goals.

According to Roy and Garcia (2018), parental involvement and the development of social/emotional skills are crucial protective factors against dropout behavior. When parents are actively involved in their children's education and support their social and emotional development, students are more likely to stay engaged in school and have better academic outcomes. Therefore, understanding the global perspectives on parental involvement and social/emotional skills can contribute to strategies and interventions aimed at reducing student dropout rates and promoting academic success.

Additionally, the study of Tsolou and Babalis (2020) highlights the importance of parental awareness of their children's social lives and their active engagement with the school. Family factors play a significant role in dropout behavior among Greek students. Parental involvement, support, and communication with the school are crucial in promoting student engagement, motivation, and academic success, ultimately reducing the likelihood of dropping out. Policymakers, educators, and families can utilize these findings to develop interventions and strategies that enhance parental involvement and support in order to prevent school dropout and improve educational outcomes.

b.   School – Related Factors

Various school-related factors can contribute to student dropout behavior. These factors include poor school performance, inadequate school administration, disciplinary actions like corporal punishment, and a lack of guidance and counseling services. Negative experiences within the school environment can diminish students' motivation, engagement, and sense of belonging, ultimately leading to dropout.

Salgong et. al. (2016) revealed that the presence of effective guidance and counseling services in schools can contribute to improved discipline among students. When students receive appropriate guidance and counseling support, they are more likely to develop the necessary skills and attitudes to overcome challenges, make positive choices, and stay engaged in their education. This, in turn, can reduce the likelihood of students dropping out of school. Additionally, the study suggests that promoting dialogue and building strong relationships among students, counselors, teachers, and administrators can enhance conflict resolution and create a supportive environment where students feel comfortable expressing their concerns. By addressing these challenges and promoting the role of guidance and counseling, schools can work towards preventing student dropout and fostering a positive learning environment.

Another finding suggests that these school factors have a significant relationship with the dropout rate in individual schools. It implies that larger schools, higher student-teacher ratios, and lower academic achievements are associated with higher dropout rates. The study

highlights the importance of considering school-level variables in understanding and addressing the issue of high school dropout. The implications of these findings are twofold. Firstly, they suggest that interventions targeting school factors, such as reducing school size, improving student-teacher ratios, and enhancing academic achievements, may contribute to reducing dropout rates. Secondly, the findings underscore the need for school accountability and monitoring systems to identify and address schools with higher dropout rates. Further research is needed to delve deeper into the complex interactions between school factors and student dropout behavior, considering additional variables and exploring potential causal relationships (Kim et. al., 2018).

c. Social Factors

Social factors, including peer influence, cultural norms, and being part of racial minorities, can significantly impact student dropout behavior. Negative peer relationships, societal expectations, and discrimination based on cultural or racial background can create additional challenges and barriers for students, contributing to their decision to leave school.

Simons-Morton & Chen (2009) suggests that authoritative parenting practices, characterized by high levels of involvement, expectations, and monitoring, can directly foster school engagement. This implies that parents who are actively involved in their child's education, have high academic expectations, and monitor their child's school-related activities can contribute to increased school engagement. Additionally, these parenting practices indirectly influence school engagement by discouraging affiliation with problem-behaving friends, who may have a negative influence on students' academic motivation and behavior. Parents can support their child's academic success by maintaining authoritative parenting practices and fostering positive peer relationships. Schools and educators can also play a role by promoting parental involvement and providing support for students' social and emotional adjustment within the school environment.

Shahidul & Zehadul Karim (2015) underscores the importance of addressing gender-specific issues in education to reduce dropout rates among girls. Their findings suggest that interventions and policies aimed at reducing girls' dropout should take into account the identified factors. The recommendations provided in the paper can guide policymakers and education planners in designing strategies to support girls' education and create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. By addressing these factors, such as educational inequality, policymakers can work towards reducing the dropout rate among girls and ensuring their continued participation and success in education, and promoting gender equality in education and improving overall educational outcomes.

d.   Individual Factors

Individual factors, such as an inferiority complex, can contribute to student dropout behavior. Feelings of low self-esteem, a lack of confidence, and a belief that academic success is unattainable may lead students to disengage from school and ultimately drop out.

The study of Hassan et. al. (2016) emphasizes the role of self-esteem and academic self-concept in students' educational experiences. Enhancing self-esteem, particularly in the domains identified, could be beneficial for improving academic success and potentially reducing dropout rates. Educators can use this research to develop interventions that enhance students' self-esteem and academic self-concept, ultimately promoting their academic achievement and reducing the likelihood of dropout. Additionally, the study underscores the need to address truancy and its underlying factors to support students in their educational journey. Further, the study emphasizes the importance of self-esteem, academic self-concept, and addressing truancy in promoting academic success and reducing dropout rates. Self-esteem and academic self-concept play important roles in students' educational success. Students with higher levels of self-esteem tend to have a more positive perception of themselves and their abilities, which can contribute to increased motivation, engagement, and academic achievement.

e.   Socioeconomic Factors

Poverty is widely recognized as one of the most significant socioeconomic factors affecting student dropout behavior. Students from low-income backgrounds often face numerous challenges that can increase their likelihood of dropping out of school. These challenges include limited access to educational resources, inadequate housing and homelessness, food insecurity, and limited healthcare access, among others. Understanding the multifaceted nature of poverty and its interplay with other factors is crucial for implementing effective interventions and policies aimed at reducing student dropout rates among economically disadvantaged populations.

Socioeconomic conditions are typically considered as important factors influencing student dropout rates. Poverty can impact dropout rates through various mechanisms: Financial constraints where students from low-income families may face financial difficulties in accessing and affording education; Lack of resources where students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may have limited access to resources such as tutoring, educational materials, or technology, which can hinder their academic performance and increase the likelihood of dropout; Work and family obligations where students from low-income families may need to work to support themselves or their families potentially leading to increased stress and reduced ability to cope, which may contribute to dropout; and Educational preparation from which students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds may have experienced inadequate educational opportunities in primary and

secondary school systems. This disadvantage in educational preparation can create difficulties in adjusting to the demands of higher education, potentially leading to dropout. It is important to note that the specific relationship between poverty and student dropout can vary depending on the context and individual circumstances. Factors such as the availability of financial aid, support systems, and the overall educational environment can also influence the impact of poverty on dropout rates. (Guzman et. al., 2021).

This further emphasizes that students from impoverished backgrounds may have limited access to quality educational resources, such as textbooks, computers, and tutoring services. This lack of resources can hinder their academic performance and increase the likelihood of dropping out. Additionally, students who lack stable housing face numerous challenges in attending school regularly, completing assignments, and maintaining focus on their studies. This instability can significantly impact their educational outcomes and increase the risk of dropping out. Poverty can contribute to food insecurity, where students do not have regular access to nutritious meals.

Hunger and malnutrition negatively impact a student's physical and cognitive development, making it difficult for them to engage in learning and succeed academically. This is corroborated by a research conducted in 2014 by Chinyoka, which found that malnutrition has adverse effects on physical growth, cognitive development, and subsequently, academic performance, as well as the overall health and survival of learners. Malnutrition was also found to contribute to deepening poverty due to increased healthcare costs. Hungry and undernourished learners faced difficulties in engaging in physical work, sports activities, attending school regularly, concentrating, and learning effectively.

Malnutrition weakens the immune system, making students more prone to illnesses and health complications, leading to extended absences and falling behind academically. Insufficient nutrition can result in fatigue, lack of energy, and difficulty concentrating in class, hindering students' engagement in learning activities. Poor cognitive development due to malnutrition can make it challenging for students to keep up with their peers and meet academic expectations. Moreover, the deepening of poverty caused by malnutrition can exacerbate financial hardships for families, leading them to prioritize immediate survival needs over education expenses, increasing the likelihood of children leaving school. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive interventions, including improving access to nutritious food, addressing the root causes of malnutrition and poverty, and providing support to vulnerable students and families to reduce the risk of dropout (Chinyoka, 2014).

Erb-Downward & Evangelist (2018) states that homelessness and housing instability can have a significant influence on dropout rates. It disrupts education where students often face frequent changes in their living situations, which can lead to disruptions in their education that increase the risk of dropout as students struggle to keep up academically. It causes emotional

and psychological stress of the well-being of students, making it difficult for them to concentrate, engage in learning, and stay motivated to complete their education. It limits resources and support where students may face difficulties in obtaining school supplies, transportation, stable housing, and basic necessities, which can hinder their ability to fully participate in school and meet educational requirements. It also increased vulnerability where students may face additional barriers, such as limited access to healthcare, food insecurity, and exposure to violence or unsafe environments. By understanding the impact of homelessness on students' lives is crucial for policymakers and local stakeholders to address the needs of homeless students effectively. By identifying and providing appropriate resources and support, schools can help mitigate the risk factors associated with homelessness and reduce the likelihood of student dropout.

4.   CONCLUSION

The systematic review highlights the common factors affecting student dropout behavior as well as the interventions to address each factor. The results show that factors can be both within and outside the educational system that contribute to student dropout rates. Thus, it is crucial for schools, policymakers, and communities to recognize the importance of addressing these factors. This may include providing adequate support and resources for students facing financial difficulties, promoting parental involvement and guidance, addressing issues related to school performance and administration, implementing inclusive and culturally sensitive education practices, and raising awareness about the negative consequences of pre-marital sex and teenage pregnancy. Furthermore, the studies emphasize the importance of a holistic approach to tackling student dropout behavior. Interventions should not only focus on addressing individual factors but also consider the interconnectedness of these factors and the broader socio-economic and cultural contexts in which students live. Collaboration among stakeholders, including schools, families, communities, and governments, is crucial in implementing effective strategies to prevent and reduce student dropout rates. The systematic review of the 12 studies provides valuable insights into the factors influencing student dropout behavior and offers a range of interventions and initiatives to address this issue. By implementing evidence-based strategies that address the identified factors and involve multiple stakeholders, it is possible to improve student retention rates and ensure equal educational opportunities for all students.

The interventions proposed in the studies may vary but generally focus on improving school guidance programs, providing support mechanisms, addressing financial barriers, promoting parental involvement, integrating sex education, enforcing school dropout policies, strengthening early warning signs, improving access to quality education, and implementing policies to safeguard girls' rights. These interventions aim to create a supportive and inclusive

educational environment that addresses the specific needs and challenges faced by students at risk of dropping out.

5.   ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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