

Emerging Reasons and Consequences of Early School Leaving in Quezon Province

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Abstract This research investigated the reasons that led school-aged children in Quezon province to leave school early. It utilized qualitative case study method. The researcher recruited four early school leavers and their parents to participate through snowball sampling technique. The data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and video recordings where transcribed data were subjected to thematic analysis to classify emerging reasons and results of early school leaving. Findings revealed that satisfaction from work and money, failure to understand English language, and children's reactions to derogatory actions and remarks influenced school-aged children to quit schooling. Consequently, the participants experienced negative consequences such as unstable jobs and feelings of regret. Hence, interplay of diverse reasons led students' decision to quit school. However, further local studies must be endeavoured to triangulate statistical reports in mitigating undocumented causes of early school leaving.

Keywords: *case study, early school leavers (ESL), qualitative research, semi-structured interview, thematic analysis*

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was launched in 2015 to end poverty and set the world on path of peace, prosperity and opportunity for all on a healthy planet. One of its goals is to ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Inopportunately, the United Nations (2020) has already reported that the 2030 education targets will not be met based on 2020 Sustainable Goals. UN revealed that attempts at improving access to education and enrolment remain a main concern as the presence of early school leavers continues to arise.

Early school leaving (ESL) is a global phenomenon which results from different problems and threats posed upon individuals, educational institutions, communities and the society (Erktin, Okcaboi, & Ural, 2010; Kishore & Shaji 2012). It is also referred to as dropout, early withdrawal, attrition, and student elimination from school without completing school or obtaining a qualification (De Witte & Cabus, 2013; Lavrijsen & Nicaise, 2015). It is being identified as an important issue that influences a person's capacity to manage the different problems and challenges in life (Cederberg & Hartsmar, 2013).

In the Philippines, there are a number of school children who are still discouraged to attend school regardless of the educational reforms such as free education and subsidy coming from the government. For the past ten years, early school leaving in elementary education is relatively high in grade one, contributing to a dropout rate of 1.52% or 15 in every 1000 pupils, while both grade five and six contributed to .90% or 9 in every 1000 pupils respectively. Dropout rate or school leaving in the Philippines is on a steady rise, posing a threat to continuously increase in the years to come due to the high population growth in the country. In fact, 28% to

34% of the total population has a tendency not to finish grade six (Philippine Institute for Development Studies- Policy Note, 2009).

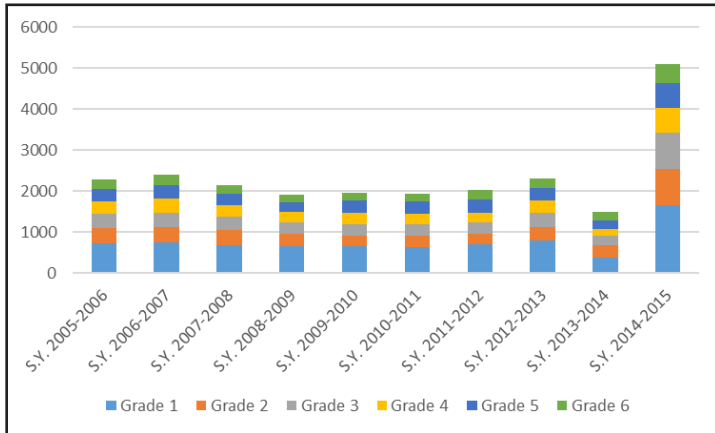


Figure 1. Trends of Early School Leaving in Quezon Province, S.Y. 2005-2006 to S.Y. 2014-2015.

As seen in the statistical data gathered by the Department of Education shown in Figure 1, there was an abrupt increase in the number of school leavers in School Year 2014-2015. The reason behind this is because during this School Year, the Department of Education issued a Memorandum to accurately and reliably register learners through the Learner Information System to track the number of enrollment and ESL in the country (DepEd Order, No. 26, s. 2015). Quezon Province consistently ranked 1st out of 18 provinces and cities in Region IV-A since 2005 with the biggest number of school leavers, totaling to 23,548 school leavers as of 2015 (DepEd, EMIS Division, October 2015). Given the 12-year dropout rates from 2003 until 2015 in Quezon, a 12-year forecast using ARIMA (Auto-regressive Integrated Moving Average) on what would be the dropout rate is computed at a 95% confidence level. If the student dropout factors such as social, economic, behavioral or

political policies will not change, it is expected that the dropout rates will be higher each year for the next 10 years with a rate of 7.296 for SY 2024-2025.

The issue of early school leaving in Quezon province is one of the barriers in reaching the goal of Education for All (EFA), and consequently better country economy. This state serves as the basis for investigating this phenomenon and looking for the causes that bring these school-aged children to leave the school early.

The study draws its motivation from this situation and aims to help the education agency and the government to engage in an in-depth investigation of the causes and consequences of early school leaving in the province. It is believed that while reasons related to family and finances are vastly presented in existing literature, a case study is necessary to report causes which are barely presented in quantitative evaluations but are equally important to mitigate root causes of early school leaving. Thus, the study aimed to gather firsthand information from the early school leavers and analyze their statements to organize new emerging themes or sub-themes which can be added to the growing body of local and international literature on early school leaving.

Reasons for Early School Leaving

According to Dizon-Luna (2013), there have been researchers who attempted identifying various reasons for these circumstances; they focused primarily on family, peer, community, and education-related factors. On the other hand, Rahbari and colleagues (2014) stated that the three influencing factors that lead to school dropouts are group factors, individual factors, and major factors.

Group factors for early school leaving are commonly attributed to family, peers, and community. Literature

supports that broken and single parenthood, uneducated family members (Ioana et al., 2015), low standard of living (Chirtes, 2010), hostility, indifference of parents towards school, low income and high unemployment (Ticusan, 2014) are among the family-related causes of school dropout. Aside from family-related concerns, the influence of peer group (Dizon-Luna, 2013), and the community (Chirtes, 2010) can also sway the child to quit school.

Pupils themselves also play an important part in early school leaving (Chirtes, 2010; Luna & Revilla, 2013; Meyers & Houssemand, 2011). Pupils' disregard to study, poor performance in school, chronic absenteeism (Erktin, Okcaboi, & Ural, 2010; Korhonen, Linnanmaki, & Aunio, 2014); poor physical and mental status (Kishore & Shaji, 2012), early involvement in child labor (Kishore & Shaji, 2012; Nava, 2009), teenage pregnancy and illnesses (Luna & Revilla, 2013), and exceeding school age (Sabates, Hossain, & Lewin, 2012) are among the attributing individual factors.

Meanwhile, the major factor includes education-related aspects such as teacher's pedagogy, expensive costs of studying (Chirtes, 2010; Nava, 2009) and student-teacher relationship (Luna & Revilla, 2013). Moreover, economic issues such as poverty and discrimination (Polidano, Hanel, & Buddelmeyer, 2013) also contribute to the rise of early school leavers.

Consequences of Early School Leaving

Most of the literature identifies child labor as the primary consequence of early school leaving. This is when a child is hired for work which violates his right since compensation for the job is low and his personal development is hampered (Yildirim, Beydili & Gorgulu, 2015). Kumar (2015) revealed that first-born children whose studying has been discontinued in their primary grades are most likely not to finish their study

and are more likely to join the workforce. They also strive to help their family (Le & Homel, 2015; Putnick & Bornstein, 2015) by working as laborers and unskilled farmers and fisher folks, being the most common among occupations. This situation is more prevalent in rural than in urban areas. Evidently, many child laborers in the Philippines are working in agriculture, which is considered one of the three hazardous work areas, along with construction and mining industries (Philippine Statistics Office, 2001).

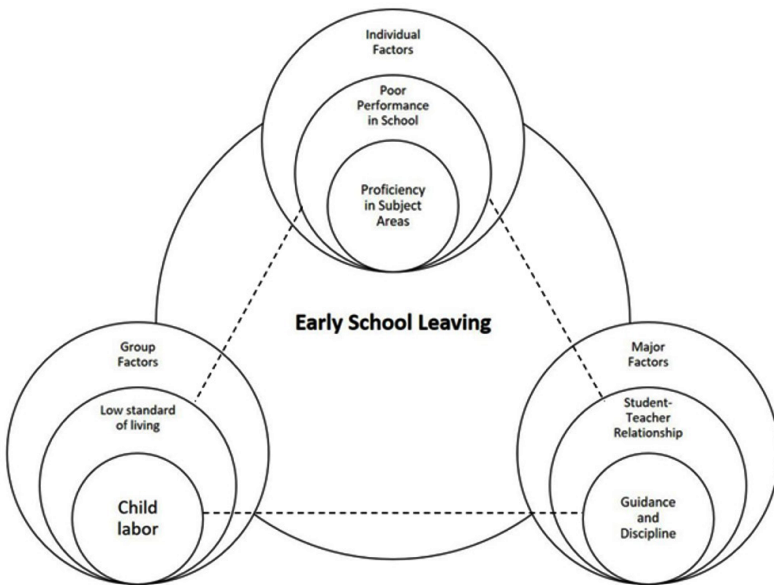


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Causes of Early School Leaving.

With these factors and previously held assumptions and observations in mind, the above conceptual framework was devised to guide the course of this case study. It is fitting that since there are a lot of factors at play, each belongs to a group of related factors. Consequently, these groups of factors are interconnected and contributed in varying degrees

to the decision of students to leave school early. Findings from previous studies attested for instance that low standard of living (Petrick, 2014) and student-teacher relationship (Luna & Revilla, 2013) correlate with poor performance in school; while students' negative experiences with teachers result to former's feelings of rejection and disinterest in school environment, and eventually lead to child labor (Kumar, 2015).

While most of the previous studies have delved into discussing child labor as the main result of early school leaving, all available resources were exhausted without finding any study pertaining to the impact of early school leaving on child's emotions and decision-making. Moreover, it is acknowledged in this study that sub-themes can still emerge from the aforementioned causes of early school leaving such as economic issues and student-teacher relationship.

This research will be an addition to the growing study and literature on early school leaving in the Philippines. Understanding students' reasons for dropping out of school and the tangible and intangible consequences of leaving school early will provide insights to educational institutions, and hopefully influence the government to evaluate and strengthen policies and programs for the welfare of these out-of-school youth who still need to pursue their studies.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following research questions: What are the profiles of the identified early school leavers? Aside from family-related problems, economic issues, and teacher factors, what else causes students to leave school early? Are there consequences that they might currently be experienced which may affect their well-being?

Methodology

This section aims to explain the methods through which the study was conducted. This part also aims to discuss the sampling procedure for getting the participants, the instruments used to collect data, and the analysis of the data gathered.

Research Design

This qualitative research utilized case study to investigate the real-life contemporary context (Yin, 2012) in a natural setting. The case study is used to probe the reasons for and consequences of selected individuals' early school leaving in Quezon province, being the unit of analysis. It sought to reveal emerging causes aside from those already documented in previous studies pertaining to this line of inquiry.

Participants

Profiles of Identified Early School Leavers

The participants are residents of Quezon province. All of them were supposed to be high school graduates by now except for ESL 3. They stopped going to school for 4-7 years already.

Table 1.

Profiles of Identified Early School Leavers

Early School Leavers (ESL)	Residence	Current Age	Age when left the school	Grade level when left the school
1	Lucban, Quezon	19	11	4
2	Lucban, Quezon	20	13	3
3	Padre Burgos, Quezon	17	12	3
4	San Francisco, Quezon	18	12	4

Snowball technique was used to identify four early school leavers aged 13-21 as well as their parents. The participants are residents of Quezon province. All of them were supposed to be high school graduates by now except for ESL 3. They stopped going to school for 4-7 years already. After learning from sources that they had identified early school leavers in their locality, the researcher scheduled an initial visit to the site and asked consent from key informants' parents for their interview. Ethical issues that may arise during the research conduct were also anticipated. A certificate of approval from the Graduate School Ethics Review Committee University's was secured in compliance with ethical standards. Parents of the participants were advised to sign a waiver for eliciting voluntary submission of their children to an interview and informing them of their rights to withdraw from the study anytime without any penalty.

Instruments

The primary data were gathered by means of semi-structured interview from case studies to provide in-depth information necessary to gain a more holistic view of the ESL phenomenon. Samples questions are: *When you were still studying, in what aspects do you think you find some difficulties? In your opinion, what are the reasons why you did not continue your schooling?* and *Do you think you may say that you are happy after leaving the school?* were raised in order to serve as guide to probe into the reasons and consequences. Subjecting both ES leavers and their parents, two sets of interview questionnaire were used to gather data about the profile of the ES leavers, their reasons for leaving school, and the consequences they are currently experiencing. Gathered responses from the participants' parents served to support their ESL's statements.

Data Collection

The lived experiences of selected early school leavers were investigated. ES leavers and their parents were asked to provide anecdotes about their experiences when they were still in school and their current situations.

This study is limited to the cases of the four identified early school leavers with their parents. The case of the participants focused only on describing their reasons for leaving school and in describing the situations they are experiencing as a result of leaving school early. Since there is one minor participant, research ethics was safeguarded by means of seeking parental consent and ensuring that anonymity and confidentiality in informants' responses were secured.

Personal conversations provided opportunities for the researcher to gain insights into their past experiences and to immerse in the environment they are currently in as of the time of this study. The immersion happened for about four (4) months requiring the researcher to stay in each place for two to three days every second and last week of the month so as to observe their daily conditions.

The data gathering procedure included: preparation of questionnaire for interview, schedule for home visitation; personal interviews and audio/video recording with the consent of the parents and the key informants; transcription of responses, and consolidation of results.

Data Analysis

The thematic analysis through priori codes was used to analyze the result of the interview. The reasons presented in this study and classified under existing themes previously established in other studies are as follows: single parenthood, hostile family, and unemployment of

parents (family-related problems), poor performance in school, poor mental conditions, early pregnancy, over age (individual factor), economic issues, and teacher factor.

Furthermore, the transcribed data were grouped together prior to the coding process (Raufelder et al., 2016). Linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, coding was carried out to represent the identified themes (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). Only important and relevant statements were recorded for the analysis. Original responses were included for substantiating the analysis. The statements were categorized into themes which describe their common reasons for leaving school and the current situations they are experiencing. Statements that include confidential information were excluded upon the researcher's prerogative to respect the agreement made with participants.

Results

The research yielded the following results:

New Sub-Themes of Reasons for Early School Leaving

Reasons for early school leaving are varied and are an interplay of numerous factors as confirmed in many studies (Al-Hroub, 2015; Gibbs & Heaton, 2014; Meyers & Houssemand, 2011). Such reasons are true to the participants of this study. Although some of them put emphasis on one reason over the others, still they have several reasons leading them to quit school early.

The emerging themes from the participants' statements include: 1) satisfaction from work and money (under child labor); 2) failure in understanding the English language (under poor academic performance), and; 3) children's reactions to adult misbehaviors (under student-teacher relationships).

Table 2.

Generated Text

Statement Locator	Significant Statement	Codes	Generated Themes	Description
Satisfaction from work and money	<i>N a l i b a n g na ako sa pangungupahan.</i>	S1	Loss of interest in school due to more satisfying experiences at work	Early school leavers find their job over schooling more rewarding.
	(I enjoyed my job.)			
	<i>Tinamad na ako.</i> (I already dislike schooling)	S2		
	<i>Nawawala ang isip...sa pag-aaral</i> (My mind is not anymore for studying)	S3		
Failure in understanding the English language	<i>Sa English ako nahihirapan.</i>	E1	Lack of proficiency and confidence in using English language for studying and communication	Difficulty to learn and use the English language leads pupils to quit school.
	(I find English hard)			
	<i>Hindi ko maintindihan.</i> (I cannot understand it)	E2		
	<i>Hindi ako sanay magbasa ng English.</i>	E3		
Children's reactions to adult misbehaviors	<i>Natakot po ako.</i>	C1	Pupils' emotions provoked by teachers' derogatory remarks and actions	Fear and disappointment toward teachers leads learners to leave school.
	(I was afraid [of my teacher].)			
	<i>Nawalan po ako ng gana.</i> (I lost the drive [to study].)	C2		
	<i>...pinapagalitan</i>	C3		
	([I got] scolded.)			

Discussion

Satisfaction from work and money (under child labor)

In contrast to child labor as cited by Nava (2009) for early dropping out of school, the participants' workforce involvement in labor is a deliberate choice. Their engagement in child labor is not a consequence of poverty or parental choice. In fact, their parents were against them working at a young age as they explicitly express dismay toward their children's early school leaving. They also shared attempts to convince the leavers to return to schooling:

Ay amin nga pong pinipilit pumasok ay nagagalit laang sa amin sabi nga sa amin ay "Di kayo ang pumasok." (We were forcing him to go back to school but he would just get angry and say, "Go to school yourself!") (Parent 2)

Akin pong kinumbinsi kahit nga po pumunta kami sa school at makipag-usap kami duon para maging okay na po ay talagang ayaw na po. (I tried to convince him and even went to his school to settle the matter. However, he doesn't want anymore.) (Parent 3)

When asked about why they chose to work instead of going to school, they said that they enjoyed earning money and other rewards they only get in the workplace. They still have the choice to study because their parents are committed to earning for them to continue schooling. However, earning for the participants themselves becomes a personal choice. Most of the participants have already tried several jobs, ranging from working in the farm, and in factories, to being merchants in small-scale stores.

Ako po ay nagko-construction o kaya ay nasama kay tatay sa linang. Tapos, ako po ay nage-

enjoy naman dahil nakaka pera ako. (I am a construction worker and also help my father in the farm. I enjoyed getting paid so I stopped going to school.) (ESL 1)

Kahit ano pong trabaho kung anong available. Naglilinis ng bahay, natulong kay nanay sa pangangatulong. Tapos nag-tuturo po ako ng sayaw pag may magpapaturo. Pa-extra, extra. (I already earned money so I quit school. I accept any available job. Sometimes, I get paid for cleaning houses... teaching dances and choreography for extra income.) (ESL 2)

Having asked participants if quitting school for work had any bad effects on their lives, the following responses are noteworthy:

Nakakasama po dahil mahirap ang walang pinag-aralan minsan ay bibu-bully at walang kinabukasan. Kaunti lang po ang naidulot na kabutihansa akin. Yun po kapag kumikita ng pera. Ang masama pong epekto ay naaadik sa paninigarilyo at sa pag-iinom ng alak. (It had bad effects because sometimes, I would get bullied. I learned how to drink and smoke. Its only good effect is being able to earn money.) (ESL 1)

Nakasama po dahil di ko po matutupad ang pangarap ko. Natuto po akong magyosi at mag-inom pero madalang lang po. (It had a bad effect because I did not reach my dream. I learned to smoke and drink but occasionally.) (ESL2)

Implicitly, the participants earn money and find work more rewarding than their experiences in school which led them to prefer their job over studying. This is in

contrast with their statements when asked about how they deal with their school works. Apparently, they were less enthusiastic in answering questions about it as marked by their brief responses and expressionless faces:

Ako po ay nagsasagot ng assignments. (I do my assignments.) (ESL 1)

Nagbabasa po, nagsusulat nag-aassignment. (We read, write, and do assignments.) (ESL 3)

Failure to understand the English Language (under poor academic performance)

All the participants cited English as the subject they find the most difficult to learn. While Korhonen, Linnanmaki, and Aunio (2014) maintained that early school leavers have different areas of weaknesses, this study reports that the participants unanimously identified English as the subject area they struggled with which eventually added to the reasons for quitting school.

Sa English po ako nahihirapan. Nakakaintindi po ako ng English pero konti lang. (English is the subject I struggle the most with. I can understand English but only a bit.) (ESL 2)

Sa English po ako nahihirapan di ko po alam kung bakit. Di ko po masabi. (I find English difficult; I don't know why. I can't tell.) (ESL 3)

When asked how they cope with learning English, they answered seeking for their teacher's assistance though teachers' guidance was still inadequate for them. Eventually, they resort to other sources of information and assistance.

Nagpapatulong po ako sa kuya ko kapag kami po ay babasa at susulat sa English. Pero mas lalo po akong nahirapan nung lumipat na siya kasi

nag-grade five na siya, inulit ko po ang grade 4. Iniwan po niya ako. (I ask for my brother's help whenever we read and write in English. However, I found it more difficult when he already got promoted to Grade 5 and I repeated Grade 4. I was left behind. (ESL 1)

Natingin po ako sa computer kung papaano ako matututo sa English. Tulad po sa English ay di sa tulong po ng translator sa computer maiintindihan ko po. (I use the computer to find ways to learn English. For example, I use a translator to understand sentences in English.) (ESL 2)

The early school leavers resorted to seeking help from family, friends, and technology. For a certain reason, they sought help from their teachers in other subjects, but not in English. They sensed that they are not improving at any rate and thought that they cannot progress anymore due to repeated failures. Eventually, inability to cope with English language learning contributed to their decision to quit school.

Children's reactions to derogatory actions and remarks (under student-teacher relationships)

Several studies already mentioned dysfunctional teacher-student relationships as a contributing factor to school leavers' decision to quit school (Lessard, Poirier & Fortin, 2010; Raufelder et al., 2016). However, the narratives of some participants shed light on how seriously they take teachers' statements and actions.

Kasi po halos isang linggo akong di pumasok noon kasi nagkasakit po ako. Nung bumalik po ako ay bigla akong sinabihan ni Ma'am na "Bakit di ka pa namatay" doon po ako natakot at nawalan ng ganang pumasok. (I got ill for

a week and couldn't go to school. When I got back, the teacher told me, "Why haven't you died yet?" That's when I got scared and lost interest in schooling.) (ESL 2)

Lagi po ako pinapagalitan ng maestro ko dahil daw po ako ay sutil. Habol nga kami sa niyugan. Dahil po sa ganoon ay di ako natutuwa. Sabi po ng titser ko wag na daw po ako pumasok. [My teacher] scolded me always because I'm hard headed and even chased us through the niyugan (coconut tree farm). I was not happy about that. My teacher told me not go to school anymore. (ESL 3)

As they grew up, the participants think differently about these instances. However, teachers' condescending treatment to the learners had a deep-seated impact on them when they were still young. It is worth noting that they experienced these when they were aged 10-12. Their initial reaction was fear leading to less thought of responses and decisions.

Consequences of Early School Leaving

While child labor (Yildirim et al., 2015) was already cited by numerous studies as the main consequence of early school leaving, the school children's nature of labor involvement is further discussed. It is deemed necessary to include their feelings of regret as a part of the intangible consequences of their decision to leave school, in addition to self-rejection already documented by previous studies (Tukundane et al., 2014).

Table 3.

Generated Sub-themes of Consequences of Early School Leaving

Statement Locator	Significant Statement	Codes	Generated Themes	Description
Difficult and Unstable Jobs	<i>Mahirap po. Mabigat po at masakit ang katawan.</i>	D1	Find jobs difficult and tiring. They used to stand by when there were no works.	Since students leave the school early, the jobs available for them are contractual or temporary leading them at times to be idle or bystanders.
	<i>Nahihirapan at napapagod po ako. Ako po ay naka-istambay. (My body aches. I get tired. I just standby.)</i>			
	<i>Ayon po napapagod laang. Natambayna lang po ako. (I do get tired. I just stand by.)</i>	D3		
Mixed Emotions	<i>Nalulungkot ako dahil walang pinag-aralan. Masaya ako lalo't kasama ng barkada ko para di mainip. (I'm sad that I quit schooling. I feel happy especially when I'm with my friends to drink and have fun.)</i>	M1	Feeling of sadness and happiness.	Early school leavers are happy as they are able to earn money at their young age and sustain their needs but sad at the same time having regrets of not finishing school.
	<i>...masaya ako sa ngayon pero paglipas ng panahon ay malulungkot ako dahil di ko natupad pangarap ko. (I can be happy for now but may soon be sad because for not fulfilling my dreams.)</i>	M2		

Difficult and unstable jobs. While it is true that they enjoy working to earn a living, the labor they go through is difficult.

Mahirap po. Mabigat po at masakit ang katawan. Nahihirapan at napapagod po ako. (It is difficult. My body aches. I get tired and weary.) (ESL 1)

Napapagod po ako. (I do get tired.) (ESL 3)

Moreover, their jobs are unstable or contractual (e.g.

store assistant, and farms, factories, or construction worker) so they still end up as bystanders or “istambay” most of the time. Batan (2010) in his dissertation revealed that these bystanders or “istambay” are usually male, school dropouts, unemployed, lazy and spend considerable time with friends. They have lower behavioral and emotional stability which lead them to inclinations or involvement in crimes and substance abuse (Wang & Fredricks, 2014). These are attested by their responses:

Natambay na lang po ako. (I just stand by.) (ESL 1)

Natuto po ako mag-yosi at mag-inom pero madalang po. (I learn how to smoke and drink but occasionally.) (ESL 2)

During the days where these early school leavers are not busy in their work, they make their life unproductive by engaging in different activities like drinking alcohol, smoking, gambling or do nothing with their life (Batan, 2010). In connection, most of the aforementioned literature claim that ESL has an adverse impact on the society, on economic development, and on the individual itself (Ioana, Anda, Cornelia, & Mariana, 2015; Petrick, 2014). On the participant’s perspectives, they admitted that there are adverse effects on their decision to leave school early.

Feelings of regret (Mixed Emotions). The participants also expressed their regrets and wishful thoughts as to what could have been if they have finished their studies. They shared:

Nalulungkot po ako dahil walang pinag-aralan. Kapag nag-asawa ako ay wala akong ipakakain sa mga anak ko kaya po nagsisisi ako. I regret and am disappointed having not finished my studies. (When I get married, I will not have enough to feed my children.) (ESL 1)

Naiinggit ako sa mga kaklase . Pero kahit anong gawin ko di ko na magagawa na pumasok dahil wala naman kaming pera. (I feel envious of my classmates. Inasmuch as I wanted to go back to school, I just can't because we don't have much to spend on it.) (ESL 4)

At their current age, it is worth noting that none of them expressed any plans of action to continue their studies in spite of other opportunities. For instance, ESL 3 actually opted to enroll in ALS three years after he dropped out. However, he failed the final examination and decided not to pursue studying anymore. Consequently, the participants focused on dealing with the future while regretting of the opportunity they let go of when they quit school.

Implications of the Study

It can be presumed that early school leavers find work more satisfying and rewarding than school. Moreover, their motivation lies in the benefits that they could derive from money. Thus, it can be inferred that students as young as they are, aged below 12, already put immediate value on money over learning.

Also, it is not simply the lack of understanding of the language that adds to their reasons for quitting school. Rather, it is the sense of intimidation they get from lack, if not absence, of assistance they expect to gain, especially because learning the language will have detrimental effects in learning other subject areas taught using this medium of instruction. In this situation, it is of utmost importance for students to experience encouragement to participate in communication through motivating and warm remarks.

While teachers consider their actions and remarks imperative in disciplining their children, these may prove

otherwise. Moreover, as some of the practices stated by the participants are not actually aligned to discipline, school leaders and stakeholders must take active part in ensuring an environment where students are free from harm and other motives which are not beneficial for their learning.

Conclusion

The study surmised three causes identified as influencing factors that lead learners to leave the school early, namely: satisfaction from money and work, failure in understanding the English language, and children's reactions to adult misbehaviors. The identified consequences of early school leaving include difficult and unstable jobs and feelings of regret.

Satisfaction from money and work is a result of the participants' deliberate choice to work instead of going to school. Early school leavers' motivation for joining the workforce is not just money itself but the benefits it brings them which further demotivate them to return to school. Educational institutions may probe further into this and make school an environment more conducive for young learners. Students' failure in understanding the English language also contributes to their decision to quit school being a reason for poor academic performance in general since it is the medium of instruction for other subjects such as Science and Mathematics. Psychological underpinnings of early school leavers' initial reactions to derogatory remarks from their teachers may be investigated.

It is hoped that the Department of Education, particularly its agencies involved in English language learning, may consider these research findings to mitigate the problem on second language acquisition. Most importantly, results should be considered to thoroughly

investigate cases of students dropping out due to teachers' disparagement. The impact of early school leaving serves as a feasible measure that might contribute to education policies development for finding opportunities for early school leavers, to provide maximum access to learning and promote quality learning conditions.

This study can be augmented by future researchers by delving further into undocumented cases of early school leaving. While most of these cases involve students, who have been leavers for several years already, tracing and identifying their conditions remain relevant to addressing the issue they have endured so far. Furthermore, action-oriented researches are also ideal from this standpoint, involving the formulation of strategies to lead early school leavers back to school.



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