



I dropped out but do I have a choice?

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Abstract

Dropout refers to students who stop schooling or missing from the enrolment. Secondary school dropout is considered an issue in education including Malaysia and the effect from school dropout is clear and predictably affecting the future of the students. In Malaysia, few studies ever conducted on the school-related factors. The objectives of this study are to investigate secondary school dropped out students schooling experiences, social experiences and students' intention to re-enrol back to school. This study was conducted at a secondary school in Pasir Gudang district in Johor. This is a case study involving semi structured interview of two secondary school dropped out students to extract their previous schooling experience. This study discovered schooling experience and social factor are not the ultimate reason for dropouts as peers lead to enjoyable experience of being in school even though students encountered negative relationship with teachers. A finding discovered that despite realising the importance of education, students actually dropped out because of their parents' decision. Yet, they do have the intention to return to school for the purpose of sitting for examination. These findings enable for school to provide the conducive environment for students' learning experience and social progress as to develop the sense of belonging to the school. For the purpose of future study, researcher suggest for investigation on the dropped-out students who returned to school with focus on the academic performance as they return with reason of examination, and the challenges which they face before and after returning to school.

INTRODUCTION

Undeniably education is important and students in schools are seen as an asset to the future of a country. "Education plays a central role in any country's pursuit of economic growth and national development. There is no better predictor of a nation's future than what is currently happening in its classrooms. In today's global economy, a nation's success depends fundamentally on the knowledge, skills, and competencies of its people." (Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025) However, being a developing country, presumably expected the quality and attainment of education is developing as well (Hanushek, 2020). School dropout is a subject of major concern in most developed countries and it is not inevitable (United Nations, 2011). Dropout of school is an issue in Malaysia and it should be a concern as the future of the children in Malaysia (Fatima Khamis & Mohd Asri, 2020). Dropout of school is also an issue here in Malaysia.

The statistics obtained from the Ministry of Education Malaysia, (MOE, 2019), primary school enrolment in 2018 reached 97.8% while upper secondary school 87.2% showed a difference of 10.6%. Meanwhile, the transition from form three to form four also showed a significant gap of 8.1% from 95.3% (lower middle) to 87.2% (upper secondary) (MOE, 2019). Inferring from the statistics, based on the significant gap of 8.1% of student are missing from the upper secondary enrolment and did not complete secondary education and has no minimal qualification. Therefore, this study would focus on the dropout of secondary level.

School dropout represents, as a whole, a key issue when investigating the accumulation of human capital, especially in developing countries, where dropout is a persistent and widespread phenomenon, particularly at the secondary school level. (UNESCO, 2016) The issue of dropout still occurs despite realising the importance of education and the effort the Ministry of Education has given to ensure education is free and equal for all Malaysian. UNESCO (2016) reported the transition from primary to secondary education is another point where dropouts occur in Malaysia. At the age of 13, it is a vulnerable age as children are constantly being exposed to and easily being influenced.

Dropout involves individual reasons related to academic failure, class level, absenteeism, factors involving structure and atmosphere of the school and individual perception on the quality of education (Zorbaz & Özer, 2020). Despite other personal factors, there is school as education institution that can be a factor itself by providing the positive schooling experiences. Tinto (2010) claims that too much studies focus on events that are external to the institutions that are not under the immediate ability of institutions to affect (p.54). Moreover, Tinto (2010) exclaims that the environments within the institution is important and it is within the control of the institutions as reflected in the conditions created, the decisions made and actions taken to ensure decline numbers of dropouts. Therefore, this study is focused on the schooling experiences and the social experiences within classroom and school.

Research Objectives

This study explores the experiences of students who remain dropout in secondary school. Below are the objectives of this study:

- i. to investigate the school experiences of the secondary school dropped out students
- ii. to investigate social experiences of the secondary school dropped out students
- iii. to investigate the future intentions of re-enrolment by the secondary school dropped out students

LITERATURE REVIEW

A renowned dropout theory is the Students Integration model by Tinto (1975) which explains attrition involving education at tertiary level. Tinto believes the importance of the interactional outcome between the students and the institution and the institution should be able to provide to the needs and interests of the students. It is important for students to be academically and socially integrated to ensure persistence but Tinto does not deny the existence of external community as acting force which pulls students out of the institution. The prediction through this model is the greater the individual being integrated in the academic system and social system, the greater his or her commitment to the institution and finally, they are dedicated to remain persist and without the intention of withdrawing from their study (Nicoletti, 2019).

This issue of dropout is a crucial issue that requires attention in Malaysia. Mokshein, Wong & Ibrahim (2016) listed reasons such as broken family with some students staying with their close extended families, away from their parents; influence of non-schooling siblings; poor academic achievement; involvement with non-schooling friends and social problems and parents' attitude that couldn't care less are pulling factors of dropout. These factors have been identified mostly it cannot be controlled by the school but intervention to the right factor may enable school to attract students to be coming to school. Zorbaz & Özer (2020) in their finding reports dropout is not solely the result of individual characteristics of the students but due to other factors such as the *school environment* which leads to dropout. Therefore, this study focuses on dropped out schooling experiences.

Sense of belonging is an important aspect to ensure students feel accepted rather than alienated and it has to do with the relationship between students with the teachers, school administrators, and peers. Allen et al. (2021) explains students are more likely to be engaged with problematic behaviour, and expected to be low achiever for

those who experience the lack of sense of belonging to the school. Tinto (1975) emphasises that students who feel that they do not belong to a particular learning environment, tend to meet failure in finding satisfaction niche in academic setting and it is this failure which will later constrain them to drop out of their studies. Maluenda-Albornoz et al., (2022) explains that the social integration of students is perceived to foster the sense of belonging. Allen et al. (2021) explains that there are students who experience a non-supportive relationship with the teachers because “their teachers give them impression they are less intelligent than they were, their teachers disciplined them more harshly or their teachers ridiculed or insulted them in front of others.” (p.534). Such teacher and students’ relationship are detrimental to the state of belonging of the students.

Habibi (2017) states the findings of his study on dropout students who work in Yogya city presents the meaning of school that includes four themes; (1) to make more friends (2) to please parents, (iii) to obtain diploma and (4) as a place to study. Students do know the value of school and education to them however, there are factors that leads them to dropout. Habibi (2017) cited Brighi, Mazzanti, Guarini, & Sansavini (2015) explaining that the role of teachers primarily was to create conditions that allowed each student to get benefit positively from their interactions with friends. The implication of the finding is on the importance of peers and family support. Students who are dropped out may have the tendency to return because they realise the importance of education. Amagan (2018) stated the findings of his study revealed that children themselves know the importance of education in their life and they had inculcated in their minds that acquiring quality education could lead to have an easy life.

Utomo, et al. (2014) reported finding a study in Indonesia that suggest educational disadvantage clearly shapes the patterns in their post school-to-work transition to adulthood and the dissatisfaction with the level of educational attainment with the future job prospects was significantly high. Moreover, there are barriers for them to go back to school because they feel shamed, they have no friends, and they are already working. In relation to the intention to return to school, Ramsdall & Wynn (2021) who conducted a study on the experiences of being re-enrolled into schools after dropped out. At the beginning or re-enrolment, students experienced lack of inner motivation, confused since they had been out of school for a period of time and low endurance but during later phase, they were positive changes in motivation and they developed hope as they began to think positively.

Family is one factor that causes drop out that greatly dictates students’ education level. Rumberger (1995) acknowledges that family background is the most important prominent factor to success in school and parental education and income are the two predictors relate to socioeconomic factor that is commonly studied in relation to school achievement and dropout behaviour. Parents’ financial instability and literacy as in being uneducated affect children being drop out (Amagan, 2018). Amagan (2018) identified child labour is an issue in his finding as students’ experience working just to earn money and another term used is child work because they are exposed, and doing household chores or others obligations at home.

METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative that was used to gain understanding of the issue of dropouts aligned to the objectives of this study. The problem explored through this study is the issue of dropout in secondary schools based on the three constructs: (1) schooling experience, (2) social experience and (3) intention to re-enrol. Specifically, this study adopted case study design. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) describe case study as an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system which refers to a phenomenon, a program, an institution, a community or a policy. In this study, the focus is not just in the case itself, but in gaining of knowledge that are possible to understand the process and experience of those students who have dropped out.

The interviews were conducted on two students of aged 16 years old and have been dropped out for 3 years at the aged of 13. The two participants were from the same school in Pasir Gudang district. The participants had dropped out of secondary school in 2019 and they are supposed to be in Form 4 this year and last experience of being in school when they were in Form 1. Semi structured interview was used in this study. An interview protocol was developed according to the three constructs of this study. The interview protocol was reviewed by three secondary school teachers from the similar school to ensure the instrument used is able to collect the genuine experience from the respondents.

For this study, the school selected is in close proximity to the researcher. Permission was granted by the school principal. The names of the four students were taken from the database and purposefully selected based on the criteria of dropped out in lower secondary and have not re-enrolled back into the system. Prior to the interviews, consent from the parents were granted through telephone call and parents were briefed on the purpose of this study and the ethics involved in the interview. Interviews were conducted at students’ home with date discussed and decided by the parents through telephone conversations. Initially, there were four respondents but two parents declined and researcher only had two parents who agreed. During the interview, the researcher read

the ethics and interview protocol to the students and briefed on the purpose of the study. The interview session was conducted within 35 minutes and the entire interview session was recorded using digital voice recorder.

TABLE I
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Constructs		QUESTIONS
School Experience	1	How was your experience being in school?
	2	How was your experience in classroom? Why?
	3	How would you describe your school's environment?
Social Experience	1	How was your relationship with your friends?
	2	How was your relationship with your teachers?
	3	Have your teachers helped you before you dropped out of school? How?
Future Intention	1	Is education important? Why?
	2	Have you ever had the intention to return to school? When? Why?
	3	How returning to school would help you?

The participants were labelled as P1 and P2 as their names are kept hidden due to ethics and protocols of interview as all personal information are dealt with anonymously and confidentially. Impromptu questions were asked to help the participants to provide a deeper insight of their experience and to help them to go through and complete the interview. The interviews were conducted in English even though the interviewees have low proficiency in English. There are grammatical errors and the use of words in Bahasa Malaysia in the responses by the students but meaning is clearly conveyed as the researcher is bilingual.

The recordings were transcribed into text data. The transcripts were manually analysed. The transcriptions were analysed to identify the underlying essential information by coding of fragments and followed by categorisation into emerged themes based on the objectives of the study.

FINDINGS

Secondary School Dropped Out Students' Schooling Experiences?

The first objective is on their previous experience of being in school. Students' schooling experiences are based on four emerging themes; conducive environment, teachers, friends and family. Generally, these four elements exist in a school but the experience they have may varies.

Both respondents, P1 and P2 had a pleasant experience due to school's conducive environment as P1 stated "*My experience is good.*", and P2 stated "*I enjoy in school.*" Later P1 and P2 described their school as "*very beautiful*" and they like and love their school's environment. The conducive environment of the school is also a place for socialising with their friends, "*I like to meet my friends, to meet my teachers.*" (P2). It depicts the positive relationship between students and teachers as well as among the students. Both respondents remember their friends as they "*love and miss friends*" (P1) and "*have many friends*" (P2). Conducive environment is not just the school but most importantly in the classroom.

Classroom is a location in school where interaction between students and **teachers** takes place and most time spent by the students as P1 "*I like my class because I have friends.*" and P2, "*I enjoy in classroom.*" classroom is not just about learning but also space for students to socialise. However, upon having conducive environment, students experience of being in school could negatively affected, caused by teachers who are less concern about the well-being of the students. P1 used the word "*hate*" to refer to the teacher as he explained his experience of being threatened to be expelled from the school by the teacher. There is no support given to the students by the teacher to at least try to understand the situation of the students. However, it was not the main reason for P1 to drop out of school, instead it was the father who wanted him to stop schooling to help him. P2 had a positive experience with her English teacher as she describes her teacher as "*kind*" and "*helps me with my English*". Both respondents had different experiences with their teachers even though they experience conducive environment.

In sharing their schooling experiences, especially in relation to classroom experiences, both participants relate it to their **friends**. Respondent P1 express his emotion of "*love*" and "*miss*" his friends and stated his disappointment as he "*...got no time to meet my friends*" (P1). Respondent P2 stated she "*... have many friends.*", and she "*... enjoy classroom*" because she met her friends. She also restated that she liked to go to school "*to meet my friends, to meet my teachers. I like to study.*". It suggests student wants to go to school as the experience

conducive environment, they enjoy being with friend and teachers but they are also bounded by responsibility to help their family in term of economy.

A finding from this study is **family** also affect the schooling experience of the students. Students dropped out because they have different experience at home which affect their schooling. Respondent P1 help his father at work until late night while P2 help her mother who is a single-mother. It explains about the importance family's financial stability. Bothe work with the intention to help their family. Respondent P1 experience a dilemma as he has to work to help his father but because of work he was too tired and woke up late which affected his attendance and discipline record as he came late to school. The consequence is he was threatened to be expelled, "Teacher said want to *buang sekolah* because I come late or I don't come." (P1).

Secondary School Dropped Out Students' Social Experiences?

The second objective is to explore the social experiences they had in school. Three themes involving social experiences are friends, teachers and family. Respondents had encouraging relationship with their **friends**. P1 described his experience with his friends as "close to me", and "help me", and P2 described her friends as "kind" and helpful. However, P1 did mention 'last time' which signifies he is no longer close with his friends like when he was in school. It is different experience compared to P2 "*Even I no longer schooling, they still meet me when I am not working or during weekend.*", which explains an ongoing relationship with friends even when she had stopped schooling.

Respondents also had social experiences with the **teachers**. Respondent P1 expressed that he liked some teachers and "*Some I don't like.*" And respondent P2 described her teachers as "good" and "kind". Teachers even requested P2 not to stop schooling, "*... but I have to stop.*", and she was actually in dilemma as it was not her will to drop out of school. P1 had an undesirable experience with his teacher, "*They angry at me... I don't have time to do homework ... help my father ...*". In the case of P1, he was caught between his responsibility as a son at home and as a student in school. The consequence from such experience, he experienced teacher being "angry" and he was punished and he had a perception that teachers "*... they don't understand me and scold me.*" However, he did have a teacher, teaching Islamic Education who he described as kind and "*...never angry at me.*" He felt comfortable with the teacher and he was advised not to drop out by the teacher which is similar to respondent P2 as teachers "*... want me not to stop study*". Teachers had helped by giving advice but family has different implication on the decision to drop out of school.

In this study, **family** is the reason for students to drop out of school. Respondent P1 experienced a conflict as he was advised not to stop schooling by his teacher, but his father insisted as for his father "*...better to help him ... because I cannot study.*" Another conflicting social relationship experienced by student involves family. In this study, respondent P1 dropped out of school because of his father's decision who perceives his child's education as unimportant because his academic performance. Respondent P2 had to drop out to help her mother to take care of the siblings as her mother was working, and later when her brother can take care of younger siblings, she started working to help with the family's economy.

Dropped Out Students' Intention for Re-enrolment

Intention for re-enrolment is important even though they have dropped out but knowing the importance of education, one will definitely want to return to school. In this study, both participants perceive education as important and it shows they know the importance of education. Correspondingly, Amagan (2018) found that his study also revealed that children themselves know the importance of education in their life. In relation to the third objective, three themes emerged from this study; examination, future and family.

In this study, both respondents intended to return to school for the purpose of sitting for the Sijil Pelajaran Menengah (SPM) **examination**. P1 wanted to return to school "*get SPM result*" and P2 mentioned "*I want to study hard and get good result ...*" The perception they have is SPM examination is important for their future. However, both planned to return to school when they are 17 to sit for the examination. They realised that SPM is the peak of their secondary education.

Both respondents intended to continue their education because of their future. They had inculcated in their minds that acquiring quality education could lead them to have an easy life. P1 stated "*good work*" and P2 stated "*better job*" signifying they want to have better job for their future as they have been in hardship at young age. P1 mentioned "*... I can do better work*" and "*get more money for my future*", and P2 even have the intention to further her study. Both participants are concern about their future. The deduction is the hardship they face in

life at young age made them realise the importance of education and their future. P1 stated that *"I help my father, I only get RM20 one day. I not happy."* He is not happy with his experience of having to work and he wants to earn more in the future.

In this study, both respondents had different experience in relation to family. Respondent P1 did not mention about helping his family. He had experience from working to help his father and family is the reason he dropped out. However, he learned through hardship that education is important and affect his future. Respondent P2 had the intention of returning to school to complete her study by sitting for the SPM examination but she still could not escape her living condition which is to financially help her family, *"... help my mother and family"*. P2 even planned *"...do part time job after school at shopping mall because not far from my house."* It shows that despite knowing the importance of education, she still has the responsibility to help her family in term of financial.

DISCUSSION

The discussion is based on dropped out schooling experiences, social experiences and intention to re-enrol.

Schooling Experiences

The first objective is on the school experiences through previous experiences of being in school by the dropped-out students. Ideally, students' involvement in classroom is important so the socialising process would enable student to have the sense of belonging and the outcome of it is students would remain in school. The finding of this study is in support of Tinto (1975) who suggested the importance of interaction between students and the institution is important and the institution should provide to the needs and interests of the students. In providing the needs one of it is the conducive environment in school and classroom.

Based on the interview conducted, the respondents positively described their schooling experiences. They enjoy being in school but both respondents relate the enjoyment they felt to their relationship with friends. When it comes to classroom they like and enjoy being in their classroom which is perceived as not just about learning but also space for students to socialise. The finding of this study contradicts with the finding by Zorbaz & Özer (2020) that stated school environment leads to dropout but supports that dropout is not solely due to individual characteristics only. The experience by the students expresses the importance of classroom and schooling experience for students. It further suggests the importance for teachers to provide the opportunity for social development of the students in classroom.

In describing schooling experiences, respondents often relate to friends. As in the study by Habibi (2017), students perceived school as a place to make more friends besides a place to study. This study found that sense of belonging is strong through conducive environment and relationship with friends as both respondents describe the physical appearance of the school surrounding and they enjoy being with their friends. This finding supports finding by Maluenda-Albornoz et al., (2022) that sense of belonging is fostered though social integration. It contradicts to Allen et al. (2021) who suggest low sense of belonging

Social Experiences

As part of the social experiences, students' relationship amongst peers are also questioned in the interview. Both respondents had a positive engagement as words such as 'close', 'kind', 'help', 'share' and 'miss' are being used to describe the relationship they had. Consequently, it is important for teachers to create the conditions which encourage students to develop social relationship in classroom and school (Habibi, 2017). Even in explaining about classroom, the respondents still refer to the relationship with their friends. Based on the respondents, classroom is not just about learning but also space for students to socialise. Tinto (1975) explains the ability to socialise creates the sense of belonging to the learning environment as students are able to fit in and achieve the social integration.

The interview sought to study further the relationship between teachers and students. It is an important aspect in building the supportive environment for students. P1 used the word 'hate' in describing his feeling towards his teacher as he had a negative experience from the use of words such as 'angry', and 'scold'. In analysing the relationship between students and teachers, there is the need for teacher to understand the students. As for respondent P1, he enjoyed coming to school but he came late or absent from school because he was helping his father and such condition should be in knowledge of the teachers so they could help P1 and not threatening to expel him from school.

Being in negative relationship with the teachers triggers negative schooling experience of the students. Such conflict is expressed by Allen et al. (2021) as students are involved in non-supportive relationship with the teachers. The development of sense of belonging is affected as the social integration is not achieved (Tinto, 1975). P1 explained his experienced with the teacher he hated because he was scolded by the teacher as from his perspective, teacher does not understand his situation as he was forced to work by his father. He was even threatened to be expelled from school for his late attendance to school. Such relationship would affect student's sense of belonging to the school which is an important aspect in social integration because he had been tainted with such event. Ramsdal & Wynn (2021) students withdraw and resolves to being absent from school when facing conflict with teachers or peers but in this study, it does not occur as this study found that the relationship with his teacher was not the reason he dropped out of school.

On the contrary, this study found that the respondents actually dropped out of school because of family. Rumberger (1995) recognised family as prominent factor with two predictors involving parents' education level and income. Similar to the finding of this study. The reason for dropping out of school was due to parents' decision. For P1, it was his father who wanted him to stop schooling to help him work while P2 had to help her mother from taking care of siblings and support the family financially. Mokshein, Wong, and Ibrahim (2016) found that parents' attitude that couldn't care less is pulling factors causing dropout. P1 encountered conflicting problem with his father as he wanted to remain in school but his father had a different perspective as his child is not good in academic, he might as well help him. Therefore, in this study, academic performance does not directly affect dropout. Parents' attitude is affecting P1 to be dropped out and not the school as *push out* factor. In this study, the decision to drop out of school does not come from the students but the family. Family is one reason for students to be drop out and mainly related to financial instability. Amagan (2018) found that children experienced problems related to financial instability aspects of their parents and they were exposed to works especially in doing household chores as means of helping their parents. Students had to work to help family. Children's education is affected and involved with financial instability of the family. At early age P2 experienced broken family and she had to help her mother to take care of the siblings and went to work at age of 14 while her younger brother helps to take her role to take care of third sister. Then, her younger brother is dropped out at age 13. As reported by Mokshein, Wong & Ibrahim (2016), broken family and parents' attitude are the pulling factors for students to drop out.

Future Intentions of Re-enrolment

The third research objective is on students' intention to be re-enrolled into the education system. Habibi (2017) reported students know the importance of education but they are affected by different reasons which cause them to drop out of school. Based on the interview, both participants perceive education as important. Coherently, Amagan (2019) reported similar finding as students inculcate in their mind that education is important for better future. Both respondents admitted that education is important for them. Both respondents realise the need for education and its relation to future job attainment. Such perception influences both respondents to having the intention to return to school. The intention to return to school is because of examination and for future prospect. Utomo et al. (2014) found that when dropped out students venture into adulthood, they are dissatisfied with their work as they are bounded by their own academic achievement. In this study, respondents were still drop out and had not enrolled back to school as Ramsdall & Wynn (2021) conducted a study on the re-enrolled students' experience and reported positive changes in the motivation of the students and Utomo et al. (2014) reported students feel ashamed, do not have friends and they are also on a job. These are considerations for these dropped out students especially when they returned to school as we do not want them to drop out again.

In this study, both respondents actually planned to return to school at the age of 17 to sit for the SPM examination that is important for their future, which means they do have the intention to return to school for examination but it raises a question of students' achievement in grades as they have not been in school. Despite knowing the importance of education, students are caught up with the family's socioeconomic reason as parents prevent their children from schooling and join in labour force to provide for household chores or support living expenses (Rasmy, Selvadurai, and Sulehan, 2017, & Ahmad Kainuwa et al., 2017). When it comes to parents' decision, students are forced to drop out of school.

CONCLUSION

In relation to the issue of drop out, undeniably, there are many factors that could lead to drop out especially personal factors. However, it is important for the institution such as the Ministry of Education, school, school administrators and teachers to provide the necessary conducive learning environment in school and classroom as support to students' learning experience and promoting social development in classroom and school. The positive learning environment would lead to positive schooling experiences and it would be the source of

motivation for students to persist regardless of the personal challenges they may be facing. Additionally, by building positive relationship between teachers and students would help to foster the social experiences. Furthermore, by instilling the notion education is important for the future would help students not to drop out of school especially at upper secondary level because they know the importance of the SPM examination. For the students who have dropped out, it is important to have them realise the importance of education and build reason for them to return to school.

Dropped out students have the intention to return to school. However, it might be challenging for the students to return as they have not been in school but teachers will need to understand the different needs that they have especially moral support for motivation and self-efficacy to complete secondary education. For future study, perhaps the focus can be on the challenges of students who have re-enrolled to school and emphasis is on the issues or challenges these students faced when they return to school. It is important to understand the challenges and issues so the school can prepare possible interventions to constantly ensure these students are motivated and do not have the slight intention to drop out again. Upon students' intention to return to school for the purpose of examination, it raises an issue of students' performance in the exam. For future study, researcher may look at the academic performance of students who had dropped out and returned to sit for the examination. It explains the implication of being school dropout and with the result obtained. Another area can be studied is on the challenges or obstacles of the dropped-out students when they returned to school and Ministry of Education could develop a special program for these students to help reducing the challenges.

The decision to drop out of school has least effect from the school but more due to family related problem and specifically financial matter. In this study, the decision to drop out of school is on parents' decision for their child to drop out of school. This is a factor beyond the school's ability as secondary education in Malaysia is not gazetted as compulsory. Perhaps, the Ministry of Education could gazette secondary education as compulsory. There is a need for such implementation through educational policy to reinforce the importance for these adolescents to complete their secondary education. It opens up for future study on the issue of whose decision to drop out is it the parents or the child himself or herself. Parents is a factor in the issue of dropout. Moreover, interventions on creating the awareness and having involvement of the parents are crucial as they have the great influence on students to avoid dropouts at secondary level.

School dropout out is definitely a serious issue in education and it involves the future generations of a nation. This study only observed a tiny bit of the issue as there are other concerns about school student's dropout especially in Malaysia which is essential to be discovered and to be explained to understand the reason and develop effective solutions and interventions involving the Ministry of Education, school, school administrators and teachers.

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