

## Library and Information Services for School Dropouts in Rural Nigeria: Case Study

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### ABSTRACT

*School dropouts are fast becoming a regular trend in our society today. This article aimed at ascertaining Library and Information Services for School Dropouts in Rural Communities using Omoku community in Ogba/Egbema/Indoni Local Government Area (LGA) of Rivers State, Nigeria as a case study. The main focus of the study was to explore the factors responsible; sources of information available, challenges faced in accessing information by school dropouts, and the role play in enhancing school retention for the dropouts through library services to rural communities. The study adopted a survey design. A total of 120 structured questionnaire instrument was administered to the respondents in markets, the streets, and camps during the school peak hours and the school days in the week with a simple interview carried out to the respondents of which 96 copies were completed and retrieved. A purposive sampling technique was used due to the size of the population. The data used for this study included both primary and secondary sources. Data obtained from the field survey was analyzed using simple percentage. The findings revealed that lack of finance to access information (93.7%), absence of public community library and information centres (82.2%), lack of ICT centre (77.1%) were the greatest challenges faced by school dropouts in the community studied. It was recommended that; a branch of the State public library and information centres should be established as a matter of urgency, libraries and librarians should collaborate with the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku and other stakeholders within the LGA library advocacy programmes to sensitize the various groups affected on the ills of school dropout in rural communities, amongst others.*

**Keywords:** School Dropouts, Nigerian Education, Nigerian Communities, Libraries, Information Services.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized as crucial not only to human development and to the eradication of poverty but also to enable all people to live in dignity (Wils, Zhao & Hartwell, 2006). Education is seen as fundamental and key to the development of individuals and as such, a legal right of every individual to education at all level. Therefore, no nation can develop without quality education of her citizenry. In the bid to ensuring that the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015 are met, the global movement on Education for All (EFA) led by UNESCO (United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has focused its attention on issues bothering on individual participation and completion in education. Despite this effort, rate of school dropouts is still on the increase. This however, is common in Nigeria, especially in the rural communities where children and young adults are still struggling to attain free access to education coupled with other influencing factors. School dropout is a major global issue that has challenged both the educational systems in particular and the development of any nation in general.

According to UNICEF & UNESCO, (2011), school dropouts refer to children who were enrolled in school but have left school before completion. Dropping out of school is characterized by a variety or number of factors ranging from: individual, involved family, school, culture, religion, disability, early marriage, unwanted pregnancy, poverty, social and gender, community, fund, amongst other factors. No nation can afford to toy with the education of her citizens, especially the child, who will be the father or mother of tomorrow because education is the bedrock of all facet of development. Children are the leaders of tomorrow and mothers are guardians of the future, the first aim of every family and society should be to raise healthy and productive individuals who are physically, psychologically, socially and mentally well developed. These can be achieved through proper education of a child who can become leader of tomorrow (Arowolo, Arowolo & Adaja, 2016). However, the perception of most people especially youths in the rural setting might be contrary to this as a result of lack of adequate knowledge or information and the awareness of the danger or consequences of not embracing education.

Public libraries play a vital role in the development of knowledge society. They contribute greatly in promoting education and socio-cultural services through provision of access to meet the information needs of the communities they serve. Wheeler and Goldhor in Adebayo and Isiakpona (2012) opined that public library provide awareness to meet the information need of the people for educational activities in rural areas. This however, could be achieved through information extension services such as public awareness campaigns and sensitization programmes.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

School is the focal point of the educational process. Youths are said to be the future leaders. This statement can be seriously challenged when the educational structure or system of a nation is weak leading to the youth dropping out of schools on daily basis. Sadly, school dropout is degenerating to becoming a norm in most rural communities across Nigeria today. This research therefore, sought to determine if the variables so identified could be contributing to dropout rate of

students in rural communities and its implication on the Nigerian educational systems and society at large.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This paper aims at investigating the role libraries can play in reducing school dropouts in the rural communities using Omoku community in Ogba/Egbema/Indoni LGA of Rivers State, Nigeria as a case study.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the factors responsible for school dropouts in Omoku Community;
2. Determine the sources of information available to school dropouts;
3. Determine the role of libraries in information services for school dropouts;
4. Highlight the challenges faced by school dropouts in accessing information
5. Recommend the way forward.

### **4. AN OVERVIEW OF OMOKU COMMUNITY IN OGBA/EGBEMA/NDONI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE**

Omoku is the headquarters of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area (LGA) of Rivers State in Nigeria, located in the central Orashi-Sombreiro plains of Rivers State. The Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni LGA is inhabited by the three tribes; Ogba, Egbema and Ndoni peoples. The Egbemas speak their own dialect of the Igbo language, whereas Ogbas speak the Ogba language while Ndonis speak a dialect related to Kwale language in Delta State. They are great farmers and fishermen with a rich cultural history. Omoku is a host to Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) and a central business hub of Orashi region of the Rivers State of Nigeria (Tamunobereton-ari, Omubo-Pepple & Amakiri, 2014). However, despite its image as one of the main contributors to the wealth of Nigeria, there is a lot of poverty among the communities resulting from unemployment, poor educational system, illiteracy, under-employment, low wage jobs and deterioration of the natural resource base with high gas flaring. Omoku is also the capital seat of the Oba of Ogba land. Omoku enjoys relatively stable power supply. But lately, the oil companies that provide these services free of charge are complaining of challenges in providing this service. This may not be unconnected with the rapid growth small-scale businesses and unchecked development on this social service. It is one of the few towns in Nigeria which are not connected to the national electricity grid and thus is not under the control of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) (Wikipedia, 2019).

### **5. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The global rate of school dropouts is quite alarming. For instance, about 137 million children began primary school in 2011, but about 34 million of them drop out of school before reaching the highest grade of primary education (UNESCO, 2013). UNESCO (2012) Global Report on education stated that there was an urgent need to address the high numbers of children leaving school before completing primary education. The findings by UNESCO (2011) on the global picture towards

attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) indicated that about 31.2 million primary pupils in 2010 dropped out of school globally and may never return.

The dropout student refers to the child or young adult who had been enrolled in school and was unable to complete his/her education at different levels. These individuals vary according to their level of studies, such as primary, college and higher institutions. According to Asharaf (1999), a child who abandons a course of study on which he or she has embarked before its completion is called a dropout. Price (2007), states that the term dropout refers to an event, such as leaving school before graduating the cycle or without attaining an educational status. Similarly, Chugh (2011) states that dropouts from school are defined as young children, who enroll in the school and for some reasons other than death leave school before completing the grade without transferring to another school. Hence, this implies that, there are varying factors or reasons responsible for school dropouts.

### **5.1. School Dropouts and Associated Factors**

According to UNICEF & UNESCO, (2011), school dropouts refer to children who were enrolled in school but have left school before completion. Dropping out of school is related to a variety of factors that can be classified in four categories, namely: individual, family, school, and community factors.

An overwhelming percentage of our population lives below the poverty line. This has no doubt affected the income level of rural habitants leading to parent's inability to pay for their children education amounting to increased number of out-of-school children. According to the Education For All (EFA) global monitoring report for 2010 (UNESCO, 2010), the economic down turn between 2003 and 2008, as well as drought, resulted into high food prices forcing many poor households to cut on schools. With the scenario seeming to escalate, an increased number of children, particularly girls, are being made to leave school before completion. It has been observed that the ability of a household to sustain the long-term investment in education might be hampered by short and intermediate economic difficulties and labor demands, (Amadi, Role & Makewa, 2013, Hunter & May, 2002). According to Arowolo, Arowolo & Adaja (2016) parents who cannot pay school fees and provide necessary materials needed in schools forced their children out of school system. The study conducted by Colclough, Rose & Tembon (2000) revealed that poverty in Africa appears to have a major influence on the demand for schooling, not only because it affects the inability of households to pay school fees and other costs associated with education, but also because it is associated with a high opportunity cost of schooling for children. As children grow older, the opportunity cost of education is even larger, hence increasing the pressure for children to work and earn income for the household as opposed to spending time in education. Similarly, Sabates et al. (2010) pointed that ill-health, malnutrition, and poverty have been some of the reasons for school dropouts among students.

Dropouts could be associated with negative attitude of the students to education. Alabi (2005) is of the view that personal problems affecting students seem to be the main cause of students drop out of schools. Personal characteristics to an extent determine individual behavior. These range from

biological characteristics such as gender, race, or ethnicity, to cognitive abilities, personality, psychological, and behavioral characteristics (Kattan & Székely, 2015).

The condition or state of most public schools in the communities has degenerated to the point of battered structures, dilapidated classrooms, lack of equipment and the poor attitude of staff characterized by general poor working condition. These factors can adversely affect the quality of teaching, the moral of pupils and standard of education, hence, school dropouts. Kane (2004) identified some of the factors that affect the opportunities of girls and boys to complete primary school to include; quality education, teacher quality, availability of facilities, instructional resources, infrastructure, and supervision of instruction and provision of school meals, hand-on and learner centered methods and approaches, parental involvement and learner-friendly environment. Furthermore, the diversity and value system must be the focus of education to ensure that quality education is given to the children. Through strict intervention of the Government, there is hope for the children who have been out of school to pursue their lifelong dreams.

Attitude of parents to education and care determines the level of the child commitment to school. According to Jaynes (2007), if there is little parental involvement in a child's education, there is more likelihood that the student will not succeed. When a parent is not involved or interested in his or her child's education, there is a greater chance that the child will not be interested in his or her own education. Parents seem not to have time or pay adequate attention to their children in order monitor their activities in schools, even at home due to the pursuit of daily living, career and material wealth. This non-commitment attitude of parent in towards their wards' school activities makes their children become free, whether they attend school or not, the parent at such time may not know. The likely end result of this is invariably a dropout of school.

One of the reasons given for girls' drop out of school include teenage pregnancy and lack of role models ( Ifijeh & Osayande, 2011). Gender cuts across a wide range of constraints that lead to drop out. There are gendered cultural practices, school safety issues and teenage pregnancy (Kane, 2004). Social-community factors have to do with the quality of education services, health, protection, infrastructure, and security, which determine the context in which people operate, as well as the influence of the environment and social groups within it. The inadequacy or lack of services, including the quality of education, is a risk factor in itself and can also be triggered from exposure to other vulnerabilities (Kattan & Székely, 2015). Teenage girls are often at the risk of the consequences related to the vulnerabilities experienced, such as early marriage, sexual abuse and leaving them to the faith of teenage pregnancy.

Teenage pregnancy is a social issue that has created a major educational challenge in the society today. This has led to an increased number of dropouts as most victims of this have resorted to go into hiding from public stigmatization or battling with psychological trauma. According to Odebode and Kolapo (2016), the problem of teenage pregnancy is often explained in relation to different social changes. Two events most referred to, are the growing numbers of pregnancies

outside of marital context which is undesirable and the increased number of adolescents attaining secondary education with which teenage pregnancy often interferes.

According to UNICEF (2001), early marriage inevitably denies teenagers of the education they need for their personal development. What this implies is that the affected student would be out of school thereby refocusing their attention on mostly family related issues or affairs, with little or no interest to going back or continuing their education. This scenario is a common trend in the rural communities within Nigeria. However, other cases that could lead to dropouts include parents or guardians withdrawing the children from school to pressurizing a child into street hawking, farming, commercializing them for domestic purposes amongst others leading to permanent dropout.

## **5.2. School Dropouts and the Role of the Library**

Library is the bedrock that holds the information needs of every facet of a nation. The basic purpose for establishing libraries irrespective of the type is to acquire, organize, preserve and disseminate information as many forms as possible to serve its host community. Therefore, as agents of information dissemination, the provision of information services to rural communities lies the power of the public libraries as they are established to provide and create access to information to all members of its community and beyond irrespective of age, sex, religion, ethnicity, race, etc. This service in turn helps to promote literacy and thus keeps people informed thereby reducing ignorance and illiteracy in the society. Libraries as agent of social communication as viewed by Ifijeh & Osayande (2011) are the vehicle through which the awareness gap among members of the society is bridged. Adebayo & Isiakpona (2012) comment that the library as an institution has the responsibility to provide information contained in information materials of various formats to the target group in order to curb the challenges of teenage pregnancy by organizing programs such as orientation to help address teenage pregnancy through collaboration with NGOs. They further stressed that libraries through packaged information can advance knowledge in terms of developing community programmes.

Ifijeh & Osayande (2011) and Adebayo & Isiakpona (2012) outline the functions of the public library include to:

- Support and re-enforce programmes of adult and fundamental education
- Provide effective service for children and young people including requisite services for schools
- Provide much needed information and reference services
- Promote and stimulate reading for pleasure and recreation
- Provide awareness to meet the information need of the people for educational activities rural areas.
- Provide needed, adequate services for special groups, such as women, language groups, the disadvantaged etc.

Public libraries can provide awareness that will help to meet the information needs of school dropouts in communities. This however, could be achieved through information extension services

such as public awareness campaigns and sensitization programmes that can enhance education retention.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

This study focused on library and information services for school dropouts in rural communities using Omoku community in Ogba /Egbema /Ndoni LGA of Rivers State, Nigeria as a case study. The main nature of the study was to explore the factors responsible; sources of information needs, challenges faced in sourcing/accessing information by school dropouts and the place of the library in enhancing school retention and reduction in school dropouts through the provision of information services in Omoku community. The study adopted a survey design. A purposive sampling technique was used due to the size of the population. Data were gathered from semi-structured questionnaire/open-ended interviews conducted with purposively selecting respondents as some of them had difficulties in understanding the questionnaire items. However, to ascertain the real dropouts, the instruments were administered to the respondents in markets, the streets, and camps during the school peak hours and the school days in the week. Out of the total of 120 questionnaires distributed, only 96 were correctly filled and retrieved. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to elucidate the information.

## 7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Figure 1 shows the demography of the respondents. There were 44 males (45.8%) and 52 females (54.1%). The commonest age bracket was the 15 – 19 years age group (38.6%) followed by those who were 20 years and above (32.2%) and the 10 – 14 years age group (26.0%) while the least was 10 years age group (3.1%). The most common level of education at which the respondents dropped out of school was the secondary level (62.5%) followed by the tertiary level (21.9%) and primary school level (15.6%).

Table 1 shows the factors responsible for school dropouts in Omoku. Majority of the respondents indicated that unwanted pregnancy (62.5%), early marriage (64.6%), finance (90.6%), loss of parents (63.5%), lack of fund to sponsor self (70.8%) and parental/guardian factors such as child abuse and social vices (66.7%) contributed to school drop outs in Omoku. However, most of the respondents did not agree that disability (74.0%), lack of personal interest as a result of ignorance (51.0%), culture/religion (86.5%), hawking (77.1%), attitude of teachers (83.3%), peer influence (57.3%), expulsion from school (52.1%), gender issue (63.5%) and unawareness of relevance of education (62.5%) contributed to school drop outs in Omoku.

Table 2 shows the sources of information available to school dropouts in Omoku. Majority got their information from town criers (81.2%), radio and television (89.6%), mobile phone (83.3%), oral information (83.3%), friends and neighbours (92.7%), newspapers, posters, billboards and magazines (66.7%), town hall meetings (82.3%), church bulletins (60.4%), family meetings (64.6%) and age grade (69.8%). The highest source was from friends and neighbours and the least source was from church bulletins.

Challenges faced by school dropouts in Omoku are shown in Table 3. Majority of the respondents indicated that absence of library and information centres (82.2%), lack of ICT centre (77.1%), lack of internet facility (76.0%), lack of free education (76.0%), lack of finance to access information (93.7%), lack of access to information (67.7%) were challenges faced.

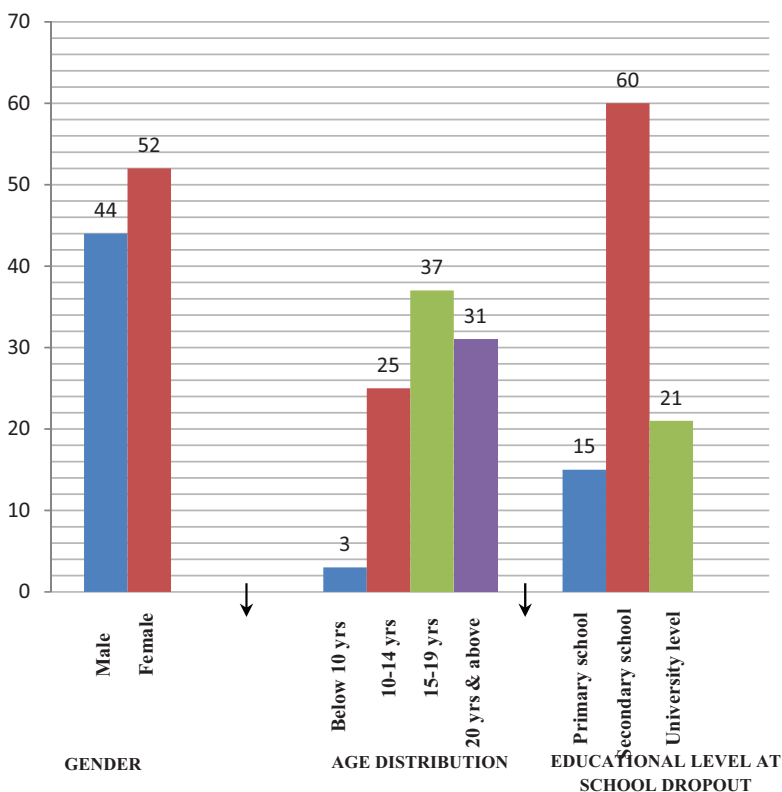


Figure 1: Demographic Data of respondents

Table 1: Factors Responsible for School Dropouts in Omoku Community

S/N	Factors	YES (%)	NO (%)	TOTAL (%)
1	Unwanted pregnancy	60 (62.5%)	36 (37.5%)	96 (100)
2	Disability	25 (26.0%)	71 (74.0%)	96 (100)
3	Early marriage	62 (64.6%)	34 (35.4%)	96 (100)
4	Lack of personal interest as a result of ignorance	47 (49.0%)	49 (51.0%)	96 (100)
5	Finance	87 (90.6%)	9 (9.4%)	96 (100)
6	Loss of parents	61 (63.5%)	35 (36.5%)	96 (100)
7	Culture/religion	13 (13.5%)	83 (86.5%)	96 (100)
8	Hawking	22 (22.9%)	74 (77.1%)	96 (100)
9	Lack of fund to sponsor self	68 (70.8%)	28 (29.2%)	96 (100)
10	Attitude of teachers	16 (16.7%)	80 (83.3%)	96 (100)
11	Peer influence	41 (42.7%)	55 (57.3%)	96 (100)
12	Expulsion from school	46 (47.9%)	50 (52.1%)	96 (100)

13	Gender issue	35 (36.5%)	61 (63.5%)	<b>96 (100)</b>
14	Unawareness of relevance of education	36 (37.5%)	60 (62.5%)	<b>96 (100)</b>
15	Parental/guardian factors: child abuse, social vices	64 (66.7%)	32 (33.3%)	<b>96 (100)</b>

**Table 2: Sources of Information Available to School Dropouts in Omoku Community**

S/N	Sources of Information	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
1.	Town criers	78 (81.2)	18 (18.8)	96 (100)
2	Radio and television.	86 (89.6)	10 (10.4)	96 (100)
3	Mobile phone	80 (83.3)	16 (16.7)	96 (100)
4	Oral information	80 (83.3)	16 (16.7)	96 (100)
5	Friends and neighbours	89 (92.7)	7 (7.3)	96 (100)
6	Newspapers, posters, billboards, magazines	64 (66.7)	32 (33.3)	96 (100)
7	Town hall meetings	79 (82.3)	17(17.7)	96 (100)
8	Church bulletins	58 (60.4)	38 (39.6)	96 (100)
9	Family meetings	62 (64.6)	34 (35.4)	96 (100)
10	Age grade	67 (69.8)	29 (30.2)	96 (100)

**Table 3: Challenges Faced by School Dropouts in Omoku Community.**

S/N	Questionnaire items	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
1.	Absence of library and information centres	79 (82.3)	17 (17.7)	<b>96 (100)</b>
2.	Lack of ICT centre	74 (77.1)	22 (22.9)	<b>96 (100)</b>
3.	Internet facility	73 (76.0)	23 (24.7)	<b>96 (100)</b>
4.	Lack of free education	73 (76.0)	23 (24.0)	<b>96 (100)</b>
5.	Lack of finance to access information	90 (93.7)	6 (6.3)	<b>96 (100)</b>
6.	Lack of access to information	65 (67.7)	31 (32.3)	<b>96 (100)</b>

The study conducted by Ouma, Ting & Pesho (2017) on the socio-economic factors that contribute to children school dropout in artisanal small-scale gold mining communities of Tanzania revealed that there was a male preponderance (68%) in the dropout respondents studied. Similarly, a study by Arowolo, Arowolo & Adaja (2016) on student dropout rates in north central geopolitical zone of Nigeria also revealed male preponderance. However, the present study noted a female preponderance (54.1%). The difference may be in the population studied. Males were more involved in income-generating gold mining activities in the North Central. Also females may have been introduced to household duties and minor income generating tasks as is seen in rural communities in the North Central Geopolitical Zone. The female preponderance in the present study may be related to unwanted pregnancy and early marriages. It may also, explained the fact more females in the South-South enroll in schools than those in the North Central. Hence, there is a population of female dropout as against non-enrollment of females in North Central.

The study by Ouma, Ting & Pesho (2017) revealed that 23.5% dropped out of school at the age of 6-10 years, 53.0% dropped out of school at the age of 11-15 years and 23.5% dropped out of school at the age of 16 years and above. The present study found that 3.1% dropped out at less than 10 years, 26% at 10-14 years, 38.5% at 15-19 years and 32.1% at 20 years and above. In the gold mining communities of Tanzania, children of young age were involved in the different economic generating

activities for income particularly mining after dropping out of school. This could have been responsible for the difference.

The findings by Ouma, Ting & Pasha (2017) revealed that loss of interest to education, migration, school absenteeism, death of both parents, and separation of parents, community's poor perception to education, lack of school necessities, peer pressure, family obligations, early pregnancies and early marriages are factors for students dropping out of school in the gold mining communities of Tanzania. Devkota & Bagale (2015) studying primary education and dropout in Nepal identified economic status, family background, access and equity, quality degeneration, lack of school community relationship, public-private dichotomy, responsibilities in household chores, migration, grade repetition as some of the reasons behind dropout. Arowolo, Arowolo & Adaja (2016) on student dropout rates in north central geopolitical zone of Nigeria identified negative attitude of the students to education, parents' socioeconomic status, parental factors such as non-commitment attitude of parent in their wards' school activities, and lack of monitoring of the activities of their children in schools and even at home, absenteeism, cultural practices and institutions including early marriage for females, home services, pregnancy, sexual harassment, religious beliefs and employment in domestic market activities as factors that contribute to students' dropout from schools. Iwara & Obadire (2018) in their study on parental factors contributing to high school dropout in a South African village, identified parents' poor supervision and academic support, stereotype on female education, parents' separation, mockery over the failure of their children, parents' eagerness to be supported by their children and rape by parent and relatives as major parental causes.

The present study identified unwanted pregnancy, early marriage, finance, loss of parents, lack of fund to sponsor self and parental/guardian factors such as child abuse and social vices as major factors that contributed to school drop outs. However, the lesser contributory factors identified were disability, lack of personal interest as a result of ignorance, culture/religion, hawking, attitude of teachers, peer influence, expulsion from school, gender issue and unawareness of relevance of education.

As highlighted by Devkota & Bagale (2015), dropout from schools is often a process rather than the result of one single event. Hence, several factors contribute to students dropping out of school.

The present study identified the sources of information available to school dropouts in Omoku as coming from town criers, radio and television, mobile phone, oral information, friends and neighbours, newspapers, posters, billboards and magazines, town hall meetings, church bulletins, family meetings and age grade. The highest source is from friends and neighbours and the least source is from church bulletins.

Challenges faced by school dropouts in Omoku as identified by the present study include absence of library and information centres, lack of ICT centre, lack of internet facility, lack of free education, lack of finance to access information, lack of access to information. Lack of finance to access information contributed the highest challenge.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made as to the role of libraries and librarians:

- Printing and distribution of pamphlets and illustrative flyers on the importance and need for education for all, the implication and consequences of school dropouts, early marriage, unwanted pregnancy, social vulnerabilities amongst other. The pamphlets and flyers could also be produced in local dialects and interpreted for the sake of the illiterates.
- Libraries and librarians could organize public rallies in the community, sensitizing the indigenes, parents, guardians, etc in their local dialects on the need to send their children or wards to school, rather than using them for domestic activities, farming, commercial purposes (maids) or trading activities, etc during school hours which is capable of leading to loss of interest of the affected individual and causing total dropouts (Ifijeh & Osayande, 2011). This may also involve inviting important personalities and role models to address both parents and children in the community on the danger of early marriage and pregnancy, lack of parental care leading to exposure to social vulnerabilities.
- The annual Readership Promotional Campaign Programme aimed at encouraging the public on reading culture organized by the National Library of Nigeria in conjunction with the State public libraries across the Nation should be done in/concentrated to the rural communities. This could be a good avenue for sensitization on importance of school retention.
- The Nigerian Library Association Annual Readership programmes should focus more on the rural communities and schools to deliver information services beyond the urban on topics addressing related issues. Titles/literature relating to dropouts in local languages could be distributed free as part to mark such programmes or events.
- Libraries and Librarians in partnership with community youth leaders, traditional heads, Local Government Council heads, Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC), Total Fina Elf Company, school heads, etc, should organize talk shows, seminars and workshops as awareness campaign on school dropouts issues.
- Librarians could work with community agencies and professional persons to develop programmes that will help to reduce school dropouts. Where possible, they should function as members of local community education team or committee. They should use their institutions as publicity centres for education retention programmes by displaying posters, advertisements, community radio programmes schedules and other relevant media publications. Extension services by the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku library can be of great value in actualizing this.
- Information workers and librarians should align their efforts with other stakeholders to launch a campaign to sensitize the youths on the associated danger against school dropouts generally and in Omoku community particularly.

- The government in their effort to improve on the educational system and enhance education for all including those in the rural community, can be achieved through the establishment of the branch of functional public libraries and ICT centres in Omoku community bearing in mind its economic viability image and as one of the main contributors to the wealth of the nation's development and being a headquarter of the Local Government. They can collaborate with all the stakeholders within the area to facilitate a move on this. This would be a pathway to the reduction in school dropouts and school retention of the youths through information education opportunities for the citizens in Omoku community and its environs. Existing school libraries can also be revitalized for suitable learning and establishing one where there are none.
- Establishment of Mobile rural libraries with joint effort of all the oil companies within the host community can assist in addressing the issues of school dropouts among the youths through access to information.
- International agencies that support the cause of reducing the incidences of school dropouts are available to collaboration.
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## 9. CONCLUSION

Tackling school dropouts as global issue with reference to rural communities in Nigeria is not expected to be an easy task that can be solved in a twinkle of an eye. It cannot be reduced or eradicated overnight. It involves a network of process. Libraries and librarians are gatekeepers to information. They have a role to play in addressing the challenges associated with school dropouts syndrome. This is one way of fulfilling their professional mission and objectives of provision of access to information and disseminating same to communities through advocacy involving schools, churches, mosques, and parents.

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