

Research article

# GENDER AND DROPOUT RATES OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN ILIGAN CITY, PHILIPPINES

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## Abstract

Education is essential for everybody to become a transformed individual with wisdom, bravery and determination. This aimed to make a difference and positively contribute to social, economic and environmental transformation of the society. Dropout of male and female students has been a problem for many reasons in Philippines schools, particularly in Iligan City. As such, this study was conducted to determine the dropout rates of male and female and the factors affecting on it based on the past three years. Results revealed that male dropout rate was relatively higher than females at an average of 11.29% over 9.41% for the three consecutive school years. Top three highest factors among males include family problems (21.2%), lack of interest/distraction (16.1%), and peer influence or pressure (15.1%). In females, it includes family problems (21.9%), transfer of residence (16.9%), and illness (13.5%). In both gender, family problems surpassed seemed to be the prime factor behind student dropouts. This implied an urgent formulation of program to address dropout rates among the students involving the parents concerned. **Copyright © WJDCER, all rights reserved.**

**Keywords:** Gender, School Performance, Dropout rate

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## Introduction

Historic scholarship on school dropout spans from as early as 1927 monograph that labelled it “school leaving” and associated those at risk with possible mental inferiority. In all regions of the country men have a clear advantage over women in access to and control over resources while cultural practices also bestow men with more power than women in different aspects (Kasente et al., 2003). In response to this, an Executed Order No. 273, otherwise known

as “The Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development, 1995-2025,” mandated to all government agencies and department to incorporate Gender and Development (GAD) efforts and concerns in their planning, programming and budgeting processes in the Department’s Annual Agency Plans. Pursuant to the provision, the Department of Education (DepEd) established and institutionalized the Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Point Systems (GFPS). Public interest in improving education surpassed all other policy issues in the United States (Rose and Gallup, 2001).

The word gender is used since the 14th century as a grammatical term, referring to classes of nouns designated as masculine, feminine, or neuter in some languages. On the other hand, dropout refers to a person who stops going to school before finishing. It appears that boys and girls do not significantly differ in dropout rates. However, they seem to dropout for different reasons: Girls are most likely to drop out of school due to pregnancy and marriage, while boys are more likely to drop out to seek employment. Additionally, boys are twice as likely to dropout as girls due to behavioral difficulties (Leslie et al., 1998).

In Philippines, studies on dropping out have attributed the phenomenon mainly to poverty (Barton, 2006). One extensive critical review of about 50 studies on public school education described dropouts as coming from low-income families whose parents had little or no education, and who were unemployed or had jobs that gave them little or irregular income (Barsaga, 1995). The study also identified reasons for dropping out such as poor health due to malnutrition, distance between home and school, lack of interest, and teacher factor. It concluded that the education system then was —socially selective since most dropouts were from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. To attain gender equality in education means that boys and girls will have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development (USAID, 2008).

In the case of public schools in Iligan City, dropout rates are increasing among male and female as reported by the Department of Education in 2014. Thus, teachers and parents are working together in many schools to implement policies and programs that work for male and for female (Bailey and Campbell, 1999).

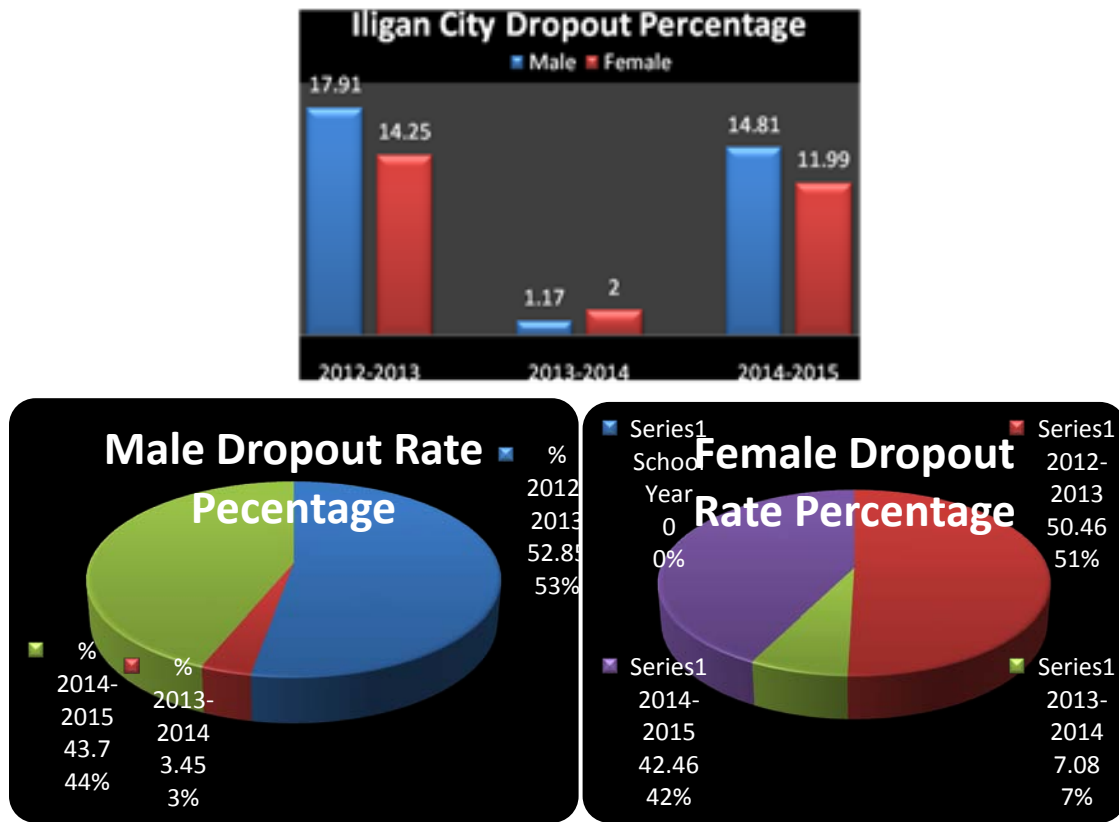
This study was conducted to determine the dropout rates of male and female students in the public schools of Iligan City and the factors affecting on it. As a result, relevant interventions would be given to them upon knowing factors contributing to dropout rates like domestic-related factors, individual-related factors, and school-related factors, geographic/environmental and financial-related factors.

## **Materials and Methods**

The study was conducted in Iligan City, Philippines. Respondents of the study were generated from the three schools namely; Iligan City National High School, Digkilaan National High School, and Tomas Cabili National High School-Annex. Secondary data of dropout rates were taken from the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for three (3) years of academic years: 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Factors affecting dropout rates among male and female were gathered using the School Form 2 (SF2). Structured questionnaires and ocular visits were used to validate the secondary information obtained. Mean data were translated into histograms.

## **Results and Discussions**

Result showed male dropout rates was relatively higher than females with an average rate of 11.29% and 9.41%, respectively. Highest dropout rates were observed for both gender in SY 2012-2013, it abruptly went down in SY 2013-2014, and went up again in SY 2014-2015 (Figure 1). As per observation, males usually leave school due to financial constraints experienced in the family and that they need to help augment their family income to survive. This problem has been observed for many years as a recognized global problem against similar problem observed among females. In Philippines, males being outperformed by the females, has already been going on for a decades based on various census and labor force survey data. Likewise, it showed that the proportion of adult population (25 years and above) with college education has been higher for girls than boys since 1975 and the trend is increasing (Orbeta, 1995).



**Figure 1.** Dropout rates of male and female students in the public schools of Iligan City from SY 2012-2014.

The major factors affecting dropouts among male students were family problems (21.2%), lack of interest/distraction (16.1%), and peer influence or pressure (15.1 %). Among the females, factors include family problems (21.9%), transfer of residence (16.9%), and illness (13.5 %). In both gender, family problems were the common top factor over other factors involved (Figure 2). Male and female students tend to leave schools and helped their families earn a living to economically survive. This may be similar to cases in India where their education system is at risk of dropouts due to the factors including: poverty, low educational level of parents, the weak family structure, pattern of schooling of sibling, and lack of pre-school experiences (Chugh 2011). Dropout behavior and school performance are consistently influenced by the socio-economic status of the parents that affect children in schooling (McNeal, 1999; Bryk and Thum, 1989). Moreover, family problems were seen as a strong influence on dropouts which highlighted the impact of these focal needs throughout high school in both gender (Doll et al., 2013).

Dropout rate is defined as the proportion of children that cease to remain enrolled in the schooling system (Islam and Pavel 2011) is a problem for many reasons in all parts of the country. Thus, literatures available on the issue indicate that most factors and concerns affecting dropout in secondary schools contribute greatly to economic growth and social being of its people (Hanushek et al., 2006). To this, gender is taken into account in studying dropout rates across the globe wherein a proportion of dropout among males were comparatively higher than females (Siddiqui and Mujiaba 2014), while there is a rapid increase in female educational attainment for the past two to three decades ago (Pekkarinen, 2012).

The result of this study along with other studies revealed some factors that consistently relate gender to dropout rates over time and across studies. Many factors contribute towards the dropped out rates such as pressure of study, financial problems, and going abroad (Islam and Pavel, 2011). Dropout behavior and school performance are consistently influenced from the socio-economic status of the parents that affect children in schooling (McNeal, 1999; Bryk and Thum, 1989). As such, major interventions include the parents who would be involved in school

activities to address dropout problems in both gender. Likewise, other factors must be addressed by the school administrators, teachers concerned, parents, the students themselves and other peers including early marriage/pregnancy, parents attitude towards schooling, family problems, illness, poor academic performance/difficulty in coping academic problem, lack of interest/ distractions, peer influence/ pressure, distance between home and school, financial instability/ economic status/ poverty, and transfer of residence.

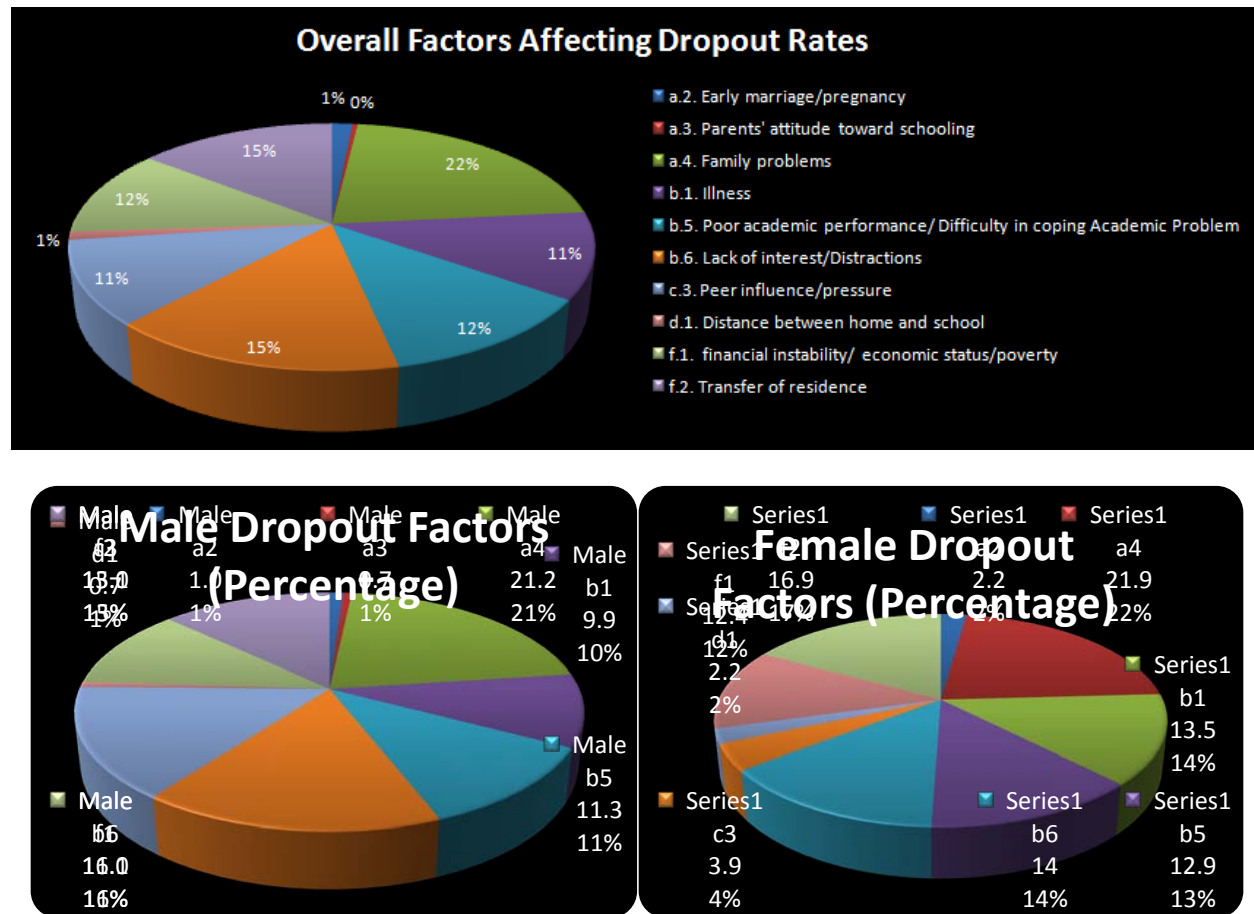


Figure 2. Factors affecting the dropout rates of the male and female students of Iligan City for SY 2012-2014.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Dropout rate among secondary level is high among males against female dropouts. Major reasons for dropping out for both male and female are family problem which indicate that parents has a major role in educating their children. To control the dropout rates, major interventions must include activities that would promote family case assessment and management; parents, teachers and students bonding affairs; and health intervention programs. These must be supported by all stakeholders including the school administrators.

### Acknowledgments

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