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BOYS DROP – OUT FROM SCHOOLS, IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS: A CONFLICT / MARXIAN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Schools in every society have been accorded great value, ranging from preservation of cultural heritage, transmission and renewal of cultural values in societies. Schools are agents of socialization, centers for youth empowerment and a centre of knowledge. The main thrust of this paper is to examine the cause of boys drop-out from schools in Sokoto metropolis, under the perception of conflict/Marxian theory. This is done by conceptualizing school under conflict/Marxian perspective. The meaning of drop-out is stated. The causes of boys drop-out from schools and the prospect to improve on schooling, attendance, and to reduce drop out rate are proffered. The paper concludes by analyzing the factors to be more of social and economic challenges facing the individual less privilege child and families.

INTRODUCTION

The simple generalization is that education is simply an aspect of socialization. It involves the acquisition of knowledge and learning of functional skills. Education in all forms and categories is geared toward shaping the individual to have positive and acceptable values and beliefs. Considering the giant importance of education, which is a universal culture and a means of transmitting social and societal massages, value to the young, yet, the chances of schooling or acquiring education in many societies is narrowed. In view of the above statement, Inuwa (2008) states that: The accessibility of the child to school may therefore be attributed to some factors, ranging from home background of which could be socio-economic. That is why it is important to find out how far Nigerian homes are ready to assist their children acquiring quality education (p.8). The schooling chances of the individual has been perennially influenced by external factors ranging from individual social and economic status, environmental factors, political thought and indeed historical development of the nation. These factors are intergenerational and stagnating in their nature. School covers very important portion in the making of the individual to become socially oriented and economically empowered in society. School gives armful opportunities to the individual to be part of the whole society. The school as an agent of socialization is adopted by every society in

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the world to train the younger generation, transform and maintain the socio-economic and political homogeneity that exist therein. Societies of the world use the chances of education, the quality and certificates of education to rate and secure the chances for social mobility. In respect to the above statement, Singh (2007) states that: One of the important social objectives of education is to equalize opportunity, enabling the backward or underprivileged classes and individuals to use education as a lever for the improvement of their condition (p.v). Sequel to this statement, the importance of school cannot be over emphasized. Every society that value the lots of their members and is anxious to promote social justice, cultivate all available talents, must ensure an equitable distribution of social facilities for the citizens. To have a guaranteed development in society and to promote social equality and fairness, schools must be open to all and sundry. It must be free from all act of stratification, discrimination and promote equal chances of accessibility. In Sokoto metropolis, there are chances for children to attend schools and stay by schooling, but the problems of drop out is alarming, truancy and lukewarm attitude towards schooling by children Ministry of education (2002), in Inuwa (2008), Sokoto equally enjoys all the educational provision by federal government, and presently there are adequate numbers, with full-time paid officials to maintain the standard of education in the Sokoto metropolis. Education in this area of study is free, but the turn out is not impressive and there is serious problems of boys-dropout from school. The causes of boys drop out from schools are considered to be socio economic factor attributing to lack of interest, historical factors of the children home, whether or not their parents attend western schools and to what level. Finally government policies toward education may not favour every student in Sokoto metropolis due to unfair grouped of competition. The causes of boy drop –out from school in Sokoto metropolis is going to be examining under the conflict/Marxian perspective of sociology of education. Mahuta (2007), Enoh (2003) agreed that: It is generally accepted that the school is an agent of socialization and social stratification, and the school promote social differentiation. The social system is base on strata, this seriously affects schooling chances of every child in society. Inuwa (2008) states that, both the school and the society operate, on stratification, none provide, equal chances of life for the children in the state. Thus inequality affects schooling and subsequently leads to the drop out of children from schools.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory is an abstract explanation of the existing relationship of two or more facts. Theory involves more perception and provides strange ways of examining social phenomenon. Sociological perspectives provided explanation to the practitioners, and supporters of each theory believe it to be right, but no

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sociological theory claim to be the best. Among the major theories are the functionalist, conflict and symbolic interactionism. The functionalism approaches emphasizes on the contribution made by each part and individual of the society for continuity. The conflict made clear distinction by analyzing the role of conflict competition and constraint within a society, here the power to control the behaviour of others is necessary. The symbolic interactionism focuses on the interactions among people based on mutually understood symbols. According to Shepard and Greener (2001), sociological perspective is a particular way of varying social fact, phenomenon and integrations. The perspectives offer clear explanation of social situations. An effective theory may have both explanatory and predicted power. To Hurns (1985) in Inuwa (2008), a theory suggested to some people a high degree of abstraction and complexity and an intricate structure of logically constructed and related propositions. To the Marxists, equality of educational opportunity is impossible this draw a clear line of inequality in the pursuit for education chances. Bowles and Gintis (1976) are of the view that, equality of opportunity is seen as an ideological play to make the disadvantaged groups in society accept their status and support the maintenance of the elite's status quo. Education is a weapon in the hand of the ruling class to further produce and reproduce the existing inequalities and injustices that are in society. To the Marxists the school does not teach skills rather it only covey the message of class related value and attitude of the privileged ones. Schools are centers and instrument of class domination, a way in which the haves render the have-nots population docile and subservient. The study is in array with the teachings of Marxist theory, relating this to the Marxist theory it signifies that the issue of boys drop-out is as a result of social, economic class and the level in which social stratification displaces the have-nots in the society. Sociologists of education should be Marxist in their orientation, this is to fight for fairness in education,

CONFLICT/MARXIAN SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE
AND THE CONCEPT OF SCHOOL

School is a social unit, deliberately designed by societies to educate, train and mould the younger children to suite into the society as desired by the adult society. In the view of Daramola (2001), school took colony from the elder's society. Sociological perception on school has also been challenged by various sociological schools of thoughts, due to the differences in perceptions. In the view of Mahuta (2007), functionalist or the consensus theory, states that the school serves to bind and build homogeneity in society that is why functionalist like Emile Durkhiem (1858-1917) in Sule (2003) states that: It is the society as a whole and each particular social milieu that determines the ideal that education realizes. Society can survive only if there exists among its member a

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education realizes. Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity. Where education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child, from the beginning, the essential similarities that collective life demands. (p. 1x). Despite the diverse nature of education specialization the consensus theorists ascertain it is for homogeneity. The conflict perspectives are the sharp and direct opposite of the so called orthodox consensus, sociological perspective. Among the founding fathers of the conflict theory are Karl Marx, Gintis Samuel and Ralf Dahrendof. This perspective originated from the inspiration of great Karl Marx, this is from his argument and believes that the entire social system is a conflict set of system, which is characterized by struggle for survival, domination and exercise of power between different classes of the society. It is base on this simple analysis that the Marxist believe that the school being a society in miniature is equally a conflict ridden ground. Where class differences are displayed and the children of the haves dominate and exercise control over that of the have-not. Here, schools are agents of social differentiation and stratification, for the less privileged that drop-out given wider chances for the privileged ones. These struggles continue both at the societal level, where certificate determine the chances of ones survival. According to Haralambus and Holborn (2008), Marxist depicts the social system of being united, static and unchanging. Thus, schools in the society are termed as a tool used by the powerful to make the disadvantages have sense of belonging and artificial unity. Sokoto did not escape these experiences as it is equally practicalizing elite system of society control. According to Hurns (1985), the school is seen as a center for cultural reproduction, but the contrasting argument of the Marxists is that, schools are channels, organs and centers which the elites use to strengthen their control over the masses, here the school is a mechanism for presenting and indoctrinating the young to recognize the norms and values of the elite in society. These and the content of school teaching are uniformly known as the culture of society. The schools are part of the parts that made up the super structure (the social system) is a place of systematic selection, differentiation and stratification of various individual to occupy social position or the other, and to reproduce sexual, social, economic and political inequality in society. In another view to paraphrase, Enoh (2003), the social institution of learning is an established social unit, which establishes chain of inter generational and intra-generational bound between the youth in schools and the economy, polity religion and the entire social structure of the society. These structures are created and maintained by few privilege elites. The only strong tool for capitalist domination is school, an ideological weapon for control, school uses education ideology, instructional

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pedagogies, social clubs and organizations which are very effective and arousing the interest of youths to belief and have believe on the existing social system.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SCHOOL DROP-OUT IN MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE

The culture of schooling take into cognizance the amount of time spend in school, the possibility of completing schooling statement attract certificate which is the meal ticket of capitalist societies. Many factors had prevented many youth to lead through the schooling process and thereby resulting to drop-out factors. Dropout is a term used for student who started educational programs in schools, colleges or university and do not continue or complete the designed programme. This can be a state of withdrawal before completing the course of study. Drop-out case is a state of one withdrawing from a course of study without completing the intended programmes of study. According to Fafunwa (2004), the problem of Nigeria education system include, the issues of stay out, drop in and drop out. The drop out are those who left the school system or where thrown out of the conventional schooling system before the end of a stipulated course of study. This phenomenon of school drop – out is strongly connected to irrelevant curriculum, poor teaching and learning environment, poor recreational activities in the schooling premises. Others are psychological problems, attitudes of parent toward children school, religious belief and cultural factors. The issue of school drop out has a correlation with the above factors.

CAUSES OF SCHOOL DROP-OUT IN MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE

Drop-out from school remains high despite the introduction of various education schemes. Like the universal Basic Education (UBE), thus, this policy is just the absence of tuition fee that constitute its clear of been free. The invisible cost of education still remains a constraint to the parents, children and even the teachers. These are uniforms, desks, daily school needs and demands. Which involve books, pen, feeding, transportation and more. It is as a result of this fact that Inuwa (2008), argues that, the effort of the home interms of schooling chances of the child cannot be ignored, therefore, all education policies should study the home factors and understand how well the homes are ready for any education initiative. This is by providing for the homes alternative economic plan to support every school needs of the child. Among some causes of boys drop-out from school are as follows: Government policy toward school is always to improve the lots and wants of particular communities. In some areas where the policy do not favour indigenous interests student drop-out. The frequent complain is distance of the school, children social security and lack of adequate moral support from the government. The shift system of schools from

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morning to afternoon session in Sokoto metropolis affects many young children negatively and forced them to drop. This is particularly the senior secondary classes. Family historical factors, equally contribute to child schooling chances and ability to sustain the schooling procedures. If the parents are educated and the level of education is high and sound, the likely hood for a child to school, stay by schooling and excel will be higher than that in which the parent are semi-literates or completely illiterate as far as western form of school is concern. The social and economic factors influence not only the character of the child toward school but that of the parents toward the conduct of school itself. It is in respect of this that Mahuta (2007) suggests that: The socio-economic status of parents' influences to a great extends the educational life chances of a child. This means that the higher the socio-economic inclination of the child the greater his/her educational opportunities as well as educational attainments. Students from poor family backgrounds are likely to face problems of school-enrolment and dropout, since their parents may not be able to bear the school fees and expenses. Sociologists and sociologists of educational agree that parents have powerful influence on the educational life chances of their children (p. 88). The position status of every family has direct bearing to the success and failure of a child. Other factors that cause boys drop-out from schools are: Peer group influence in school, Haralambus and Holburn (2008), a group whose members share similar circumstances and are often of a similar age. By interacting with peers, children are influenced by either negative socialization or positive either of the two has a strong influence to the child subsequent character at home in school and outside. This set up of groups have similar status, for example, group of friends and school children in the same year. Poor remuneration for teachers, the success of education plans rest on the shoulders of the teachers, if the teachers of any society are not properly taken care of the standard of education will be very low, parents will withdraw their wards from schools, and many youths will drop-out. But with good payment, job security and social upliftment the teachers will work uniformly like parent, guidance and teachers. The general teaching and learning environment constitute to the conduct of the child, to be good and serious toward learning or to be of the other side. Causes of boy – drop out from school might be of personal interest of the child, but this interest must have a correlation to the stated factors above. The child will not willingly refuse schooling if the parents have the means to cater and track the child in the channel of schooling. It is base on the competitive nature of parent's status that children in themselves accept inferiority status, thereby leading them to quit for those who are said to have superior status.

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PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Considering the fact that education presently is said to be free, the basic concept of free education have been abused. The schools that are free in their operation are not well furniture, the staff are not well paid and the activities of these schools are losing strong grip. This is in comparison to the class schools and other private schools where school proprietors are up and doing to see that the quality of school is maintained. For drop out to reduce in public schools, the government have to design a policy that will attract even the outsiders, and maintain the ones in schools. Providing transportation, uniform, conducive teaching and learning environment and adequate social security in schools. The competitive nature of education determine the chances of others in society, the competitive atmosphere be reduced to favour those of the lower status, by providing for them a less competitive structure of schooling with the chances of equal footing. But the Marxists depict this and said that equality in opportunity is not possible and the world is full of struggle, between the haves and have not. The only way to improve the status is do create an atmosphere of fair competition. There should be a policy to compel people to compulsory schooling and to make people stay by it. According to Illich (1973) in Inuwa (2008), compulsory and obligatory schooling inevitably polarizes a society and this grades the society high, by providing for the citizens chances to equate the chances of life opportunity. Drop – out can be controlled by the government, parents and the teachers, that is why education is a corporative venture between the home, school and policy makers.

CONCLUSION

The conflict/Marxian sociological perspective on boys drop out from school reveals that the core factors are centered toward social struggle and inequality of distribution in society. The class, status and power, resulted to two broad camps in society the haves and have not, the privilege and less privileged. The children of the less privileged are not privileged to stay by schooling system due to the inferior status society has castigated them to. Schooling problem in a competitive society can only be reduced with strong government influence and provision of equal educational chances. But the obvious fact is that all the policies of education have not initiated a radical approach towards eradicating class schools which is as a result of the social class factors. Status determine to a great extend the ability for one to succeed or not in school.

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