



## Research Article

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# The Factors Contributing to School Dropout in Schools in Aqaba Governorate, Jordan: The Perspective of School Principals

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## Abstract

*The research aims to identify the factors contributing to school dropout from the perspective of school principals; and to demonstrate the impact of a set of variables including gender, educational qualifications, and teaching experience. The research sample consisted of 123 male and female principals, selected randomly. A questionnaire was developed comprising three domains: school factors, social factors, and economic factors. The results were as follows: The factors contributing to school dropout for students in the schools of Aqaba Governorate were of moderate degree. There were statistically significant differences in the gender variable in favor of females, while there were no differences in the educational qualifications and teaching experience. In light of the results, some recommendations were proposed, including expanding the development of training programs for school counselors to deal with dropout students and conducting further studies on the satisfaction of students' parents with the counseling and social services provided to their children to mitigate the phenomenon of dropout as a preventive measure.*

**Keywords:** School dropout, school principals, factors contributing to dropout

## 1. Introduction

Education holds great importance in the development of human skills and capabilities, as well as in the advancement of societies in various fields, as education is considered one of the finest forms of investment in achieving the development of individuals in particular, and society in general. Education leads societies toward progress and comprehensive development. A society that places education at the top of its priorities always gains sovereignty and leadership. Although educational institutions give importance to education, many students still drop out of school. Thus, the problem of dropout is considered one of the obstacles to the progress, development, and prosperity of society. Being fundamentally an educational problem, it ultimately leads to causing serious damage in all areas of life, most notably: social, economic, educational, and psychological. Therefore, school dropout contributes to weakening the social structure and disrupting its foundations (Nasser, Mohammed Hussein, 2020).

School dropout is considered one of the main problems that hinder the progress of the educational process in many countries worldwide, especially in third-world countries like Jordan. It is

considered a manifestation of educational wastage in any country, leading to negative effects on both the dropout and the society. The dropout becomes a citizen overwhelmed by illiteracy and becomes an unproductive member of his environment, which reduces his aspirations and weakens his level of participation in building the community. Consequently, it becomes difficult for him to integrate into social life. In societies where dropouts are prevalent, productivity decreases, and the economy weakens because its human resources lack the elements upon which any society relies (Baltahir & Garghout, 2018).

Furthermore, it generates serious phenomena such as child labor and exploitation, leading to an increase in the volume of social problems due to the difficulty of alignment between the educated and the uneducated classes in terms of ideas and performance (Thahabiya & Lamia, 2020).

Here comes the role of school administration in creating appropriate conditions to provide services that help in the upbringing and education of students, and striving to achieve integrated growth for them that aligns with educational development. This constitutes the significant responsibilities entrusted to school principals, aiming to provide students with complete intellectual, psychological, and social education (Samara, 2020).

The importance of school administration lies in achieving educational efficiency by directing teachers to use the best teaching methods to make the educational process effective. In addition, it seeks to provide support and development programs to guide students, enhance their learning level, encourage innovation, and develop a comprehensive environment capable of reducing educational problems, especially school dropout, and work towards implementing educational policies and strategies (Al-Mutairi, 2020).

Since school administration is one of the responsible entities for education and for reducing school dropout by addressing all its contributing factors, the development of administrative performance for school principals is one of the fundamental pillars for human resource development and overall performance improvement within the school. This is because the performance of individuals working in the school relies on the performance of the school administration itself and the existence of clear strategies and goals for the school. It determines what individuals should do within the school, as well as the expected outcomes and desired behavioral patterns. It also determines the suitability of their skills to solve problems encountered in the educational process, such as school dropout, and aspects of performance that require improvement and the necessary measures to address them (Mohammed, Ahmed Megahed, et al., 2022).

Considering that school dropout is a phenomenon that affects the educational system and has serious social, economic, psychological, and political dimensions, it has become a concern for educators and professionals in the educational field, because it creates social disintegration, where there is a mix of two categories: learners and dropouts. Due to the waste of human and material resources in the educational field that it causes, it becomes a burden on society and the country. This study aims to identify a set of factors contributing to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate, Jordan, from the perspective of school principals, provided that its results and recommendations are invested to reduce school dropout, to enable society to progress and develop in all its aspects.

## **2. Literature Review**

The study conducted by Al-Qahtani and AlHarbi (2023) titled "School Dropout from the Point of View of the Mothers of the Students who Dropped out of Attendance in Government Primary Schools is Jeddah during the Corona Pandemic: a Case Study" aimed to understand the views of mothers of students regarding the concept of school dropout, its causes, and the proposals of mothers to mitigate resulting damages. The study followed a qualitative approach (case study), using individual interviews as its research tool. The sample consisted of 4 mothers selected purposively. The results indicated both positive and negative perspectives on school dropout.

The study conducted by Abed Rabbo and Hijazi (2022) titled "The Role of School Counselors in

Confronting the Phenomenon of School Dropout: from the Perspectives of School Principals in West Nablus" aimed to explore the role of school counselors in addressing the phenomenon of school dropout. The study sample comprised 34 school counselors, and a questionnaire was developed for data collection. The results showed no statistically significant differences at the significance level regarding the role of the school counselor attributed to gender, educational qualifications, or years of experience. It was revealed that the counselor plays an effective role in monitoring student absences, motivating them, providing awareness sessions, and diversifying counseling methods to assist students in solving their problems.

The study conducted by Al-Rashidi et al. (2021), titled "The Role of Arabic Language Teachers in Mitigating the School Dropout Phenomenon from Their Perspective," aimed to uncover the role of Arabic language teachers in reducing school dropout rates among secondary school students in Al Farwaniya Governorate, Kuwait. The sample consisted of 100 randomly selected teachers, both male and female. The descriptive-analytical method was employed, and it was found that the role of Arabic language teachers in mitigating the dropout phenomenon was of a moderate degree.

The study conducted by srayh (2021), titled "School dropout in Kut district: a study in population geography," aimed to identify the factors contributing to school dropout and the characteristics of dropout students. Surveys were utilized with a sample size of 250 families having one or more dropout students. The descriptive method was employed, revealing that the reasons for school dropout include poverty and orphanhood, fear of difficult subjects and repeated failure, child labor, and the financial needs of the family.

The study by Moulay and Bahaji (2021), titled "Cultural and Social Factors Influencing School Dropout among Secondary School Students," aimed to identify the cultural and social factors contributing to dropout. A snowball sampling technique was used with a sample size of 50 dropout students. The descriptive-analytical method was followed, revealing that cultural and social factors do influence school dropout.

The study by Alsagaier (2020), titled "The role of the college of education in facing the phenomenon of school dropout," aimed to understand the role of the Faculty of Education at Brak Al-Shati in Libya in addressing the phenomenon of school dropout. It also sought to identify the social role of the college in tackling this phenomenon and to determine the reasons for dropout among college students. The study adopted a descriptive-analytical approach, using a questionnaire with axes focusing on the educational role, the social role of the college, and the reasons for dropout. The study sample consisted of 23 individuals. The results indicated that the college does not prioritize monitoring students' academic performance and discipline and that familial supervision is an important factor in preventing dropout.

The study conducted by Shuibat (2020), titled "The Role of School Principals and Teachers in Palestine to Face School Dropout Phenomenon," aimed to identify the role of school principals and teachers in addressing the phenomenon of school dropout. A questionnaire was used, and the sample consisted of 97 principals and 391 teachers selected randomly. The descriptive method was employed, and the study results indicated that the role of school principals and teachers in confronting the school dropout phenomenon was high, with statistically significant differences found in the roles of school principals and teachers.

The study conducted by Sous (2020), titled "The Role of School Activities in Reducing School Dropout Phenomenon from the Point of View of the Principals of Public Schools in the Deir Ala district in Jordan," aimed to uncover the role of school activities in reducing the phenomenon of school dropout. A questionnaire was utilized, and the sample consisted of 138 principals selected randomly. The descriptive method was employed, and the results showed that the role of school activities was high, and the level of administrative creativity among department heads was also high.

The study by Boyaci (2019), titled "Exploring Factors Associated with the School Dropout," aimed to examine the social, demographic, and individual factors leading to dropout. It adopted a descriptive-correlational method and utilized a questionnaire as the study tool with a sample size of 35,475 individuals aged 15 and above. The results indicated that factors contributing to dropout

include marriage, employment, living in a village or district away from the father, or a separated family, in addition to economic problems and low academic achievement.

### 2.1 Commentary on Previous Studies

The researcher benefited from reviewing previous studies to identify the research gap and prepare the theoretical framework, as well as to develop the research tool and interpret the results.

The current study is consistent with the study by "Abd Rabbo and Hijazi" (2022) and "Sous" (2020) in terms of sample selection, while it differs from the study by "Moulay and Bahaji" (2021) regarding sample selection and from the study by "Al-Qahtani and AlHarbi" (2023) in terms of methodology and research tool. This study may benefit professionals in the field of education by identifying factors leading to dropout and the resulting significant waste of human and material resources in the educational field; developing preventive and remedial educational strategies to deal with dropout students, focusing on the social and economic factors contributing to school dropout. Providing specialized personnel in the educational, psychological, and social fields to offer psychological and social counseling programs can contribute to reducing the phenomenon of dropout. Moreover, this study may pave the way for further research in the field of support services needed by dropout students.

### 2.2 Study Problem

Due to the school dropout, which acts as an obstacle to the progress sought by societies, dropouts enter society to occupy simple and marginal social roles that lack the necessary productivity due to their weak cultural background and low mental and performance skills. The study seeks to identify the factors leading to dropout in all areas of school, social, and economic life, which lead to the weakness of society and its foundations, especially the category of school students who are the real wealth of the nation. If they are ignorant, they will pose a significant danger to the nation.

In light of the foregoing, the main question of the study crystallizes as follows: What are the factors leading to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate, Jordan, from the perspective of school principals? This main question branches out into the following sub-questions:

- A. What are the school factors leading to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals?
- B. What are the social factors leading to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals?
- C. What are the economic factors leading to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals?
- D. Are there statistically significant differences at a significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the school, social, and economic factors leading to dropout among students in schools in Aqaba Governorate according to the variables of educational qualification, gender, and teaching experience from the perspective of school principals?

### 2.3 The Importance of the Study

The importance of the study is as follows:

1. Identifying the factors contributing to school dropout among students from the perspective of school principals, categorizing them according to their degrees, and clarifying the relative importance of each domain of dropout, analyzing and discussing them.
2. This study is a field study that reflects the collective mind of school principals, who are in direct contact with the phenomenon of school dropout. They understand the real reasons leading to dropout and its dangers.
3. This benefits the employees of the Ministry of Education, including principals, teachers, and

counselors, as well as students' parents. It helps in identifying the factors leading to dropout as a precursor to taking preventive measures to reduce dropout and its risks.

#### 2.4 Objective of the Study

The study aims to investigate the factors leading to school dropout from the perspective of school principals in Aqaba Governorate. This is achieved through:

- Contributing to motivating school principals and teachers to provide possible means to achieve educational goals and reduce the school, social, and economic factors leading to school dropout.
- Determining whether there are statistically significant differences in the responses of school principals based on the study variables (gender, educational qualifications, teaching experience).
- Providing proposals to reduce the dropout rates of students in Aqaba Governorate schools in light of the theoretical and field frameworks of the study.

#### 2.5 Limitation of the Study

This study is determined by the following:

- Human limits: This study exclusively included principals working in public schools in Aqaba Governorate.
- Spatial limits: The scope of this study was limited in term of data collection to public schools located in Aqaba Governorate.
- Time limits: The study was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024.
- Objective limits: The primary focus of this study was to identify the school, social, and economic factors leading to dropout from the perspective of principals of public schools in Aqaba Governorate.

### 3. Methods and Procedures

#### 3.1 Research Methodology

The descriptive-analytical approach was adopted to identify the factors contributing to this phenomenon, understand its implications, and analyze its data.

#### 3.2 Research Community

The research community consisted of the entirety school principals in Aqaba Governorate, Jordan, for the academic year (2023-2024), totaling 123 principals, distributed according to gender as shown in Table (1).

**Table 1:** Distribution of the research population according to the gender variable.

Gender	Number
Aqaba Principals (Males)	63
Aqaba Principals (Females)	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>

3.3 Study Sample

The researcher prepared a list of Aqaba Governorate schools along with the names of their principals, numbering them from (1-123). From this list, a random sample comprising 50% of the study population was selected. The research sample consisted of 62 principals, representing 50% of the study community, selected randomly, as shown in Table (2).

**Table 2:** Sample distribution by research variable.

No	Variable	Variable Sections	No	Percentage
1	Qualification	B.A Degree	14	%22.2
		Higher Diploma	18	% 28.6
		Master's Degree	20	%31.7
		PhD	11	%17.5
2	Gender	Male	33	%52.4
		Female	30	%47.6
	Education Experience	3-5 years	6	%9.5
3		5-10 years	14	%22.2
		More than 10 years	43	%68.3

3.4 Research Tool

After reviewing the educational literature and previous studies related to the causes of dropout, the researcher developed a questionnaire to identify the factors leading to school dropout. The questionnaire included 38 factors categorized into three domains: educational, social, and economic factors which were constructed following a thorough examination of pertinent literature covering dropout phenomena across all academic stages. Additionally, the researcher employed a document and records analysis method, carefully reviewing documents from the Ministry of Education in Aqaba Governorate to determine the actual numbers of school principals as well as understand the unique circumstances of student dropout.

To verify the validity of the tool, the questionnaire was presented to a group of reviewers consisting of 10 referees, including educational administrators, teachers, and counselors. The researcher considered the referees' comments, where some items were deleted, and others were added or modified.

To ensure the reliability of the tool used, the researcher distributed and applied it to a pilot sample consisting of 20 directors from the research community outside the research sample. After two weeks, the researcher re-applied the study tool to the same sample. The correlation coefficients between the responses of the sample in the two applications were calculated using the Pearson correlation equation.

To ensure the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, the researcher calculated the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha equation, where the value was (0.92). This value is considered high and can be relied upon for this research. Table (3) illustrates this.

**Table 3:** The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the research domains and the total.

No	Domain	No of Items	Correlation Coefficient	Cronbach's alpha Variable
1	School factors for dropout	15	**0.876	0.899
2	Social Factors for Dropout	11	**0.358	0.783
3	Economic factors for dropout	12	**0.907	0.901
-	Total for questionnaire	38	-	0.920

### 3.5 Research variables

The independent variables in the study consisted of 3 variables: (educational qualification, gender, teaching experience).

Dependent variable: Factors leading to school dropout categorized into domains: (educational, social, and economic factors).

### 3.6 Data Analysis

The study determined the sample members' answers to each questionnaire item by calculating the mean scores and standard deviations. The impacts of experience, education level, and gender were investigated using the T-test. The statistical analysis indicated internal consistency by using Cronbach's alpha equation to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire in identifying the factors contributing to school dropout. The Kruskal-Wallis test was also used to assess the significance of differences between more than two independent groups, including experience, gender, and educational background.

## 4. Results and Discussions

The following is a presentation of the research results obtained after analyzing the data, interpreting these results, discussing them, and linking them to previous studies.

Results of answering the main question "What are the factors leading to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate, Jordan from the perspective of school principals?"

The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample responses were calculated, and the results were as follows:

**Table 4:** The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample responses regarding the factors contributing to dropout.

Domain	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Agreement Degree	Rank
School Factors	3.16	0.756	Medium	2
Social Factors	3.95	0.463	High	1
Economic Factors	3.08	0.829	Medium	3
All Factors contributing to school dropout	3.36	0.547	Medium	-

Table (4) shows that social factors have the highest arithmetic mean (3.95), signifying a high level of agreement, followed by educational factors with an arithmetic mean of (3.16), which reveals a moderate level of agreement, and then economic factors with an arithmetic mean of (3.08), with a moderate level of agreement. The total for all domains has an arithmetic mean of (3.36). This result is consistent with the study conducted by Moulay and Bahaji (2021). This indicates that all these factors contribute to school dropout from the perspective of school principals, with social factors having the most significant impact, attributed to the social and cultural composition of students' families.

### 4.1 School factors.

Results of answering the 1<sup>st</sup> sub-question: "What are the school factors contributing to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals?"

The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample were calculated, and the results were as follows:



**Table 5:** The arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the sample responses for the school factors.

No	Item	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Agreement Degree	Rank
1	Not linking students with frequent absences to school activities such as the School Discipline Committee or the School Radio	4.16	0.723	High	1
7	The school administration does not provide extra classes for students with learning difficulties	4	0.88	High	2
3	The school administration does not provide a counseling or therapeutic program for the risks of school dropout	3.95	0.974	High	3
11	Lack of diversity in teaching methods to stimulate student motivation	3.81	0.877	High	4
2	Recurring student failure	3.71	1.396	High	5
14	Lack of use of teaching aids by teachers	3.41	1.131	High	6
9	Focusing exam questions on memorization rather than understanding	3.24	1.341	Medium	7
6	The abundance of commands and instructions caused by school regulations	3.19	1.268	Medium	8
12	Difficulty of subject and their density	3.11	1.189	Medium	9
5	Shortage in school playgrounds	2.79	1.393	Medium	10
10	Lack of monitoring frequent absences by the school administration	2.75	1.367	Medium	11
4	Setting exams in more than one subject on the same day	2.45	1.318	Low	12
13	Lack of continuous monitoring by the school for students' repeated absences	2.48	1.268	Low	13
8	The use of punishment in all its physical and psychological forms by both teachers and school administration	2.21	1.138	Low	14
15	Lack of Justice and discrimination between students in the classroom	2.08	1.126	Low	15
	Arithmetic Mean	3.16	0.756	High	-

Table (5) shows that the arithmetic means of the sample's agreement scores on the school factors contributing to school dropout ranged from (2.08 - 4.16), where items (1, 7, 3, 11, 2, 14) received high agreement scores, with item (1) "Not linking students with frequent absences to school activities such as the school discipline committee or school radio" having the highest mean score (4.16). The researcher attributes this result to the lack of interaction from school principals towards school activities that cater to the needs and interests of students with frequent absences. This finding is consistent with the study by Alsagaier (2020). Followed by item (7), "The school administration does not provide extra classes for students with learning difficulties," with a mean score of (4.00), due to the dense curriculum and numerous class periods. Item (3), "The school administration does not provide a counseling or therapeutic program for the risks of school dropout," had a mean score of (3.95), as school principals focus more on administrative and leadership aspects. Item (11), "Lack of diversity in teaching methods to stimulate student motivation," had a mean score of (3.81), due to many teachers relying on traditional teaching methods because of the heavy curriculum and the constraints imposed by the Directorate of Education to complete the curriculum. On the other hand, items (4, 13, 8, and 15) received low agreement scores, with item (15) "Lack of justice in dealing with and discriminating between students in the classroom" having the lowest mean score (2.08). This is in line with the study by Sous (2020). The table also illustrates that the total items had a mean score of (3.16) with a moderate level of agreement.

#### 4.2 Social factors

Results of Answering the 2<sup>nd</sup> sub- Question: "What are the social factors contributing to school dropout in the schools of Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals?"



The means and standard deviations were calculated for the sample responses regarding the social factors contributing to school dropout, and the results are as follows:

**Table 6:** The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample responses to the social factors.

No	Item	Arithmetic mean	Deviation Standard	Agreement Degree	Rank
23	Parents do not attend regular parent meetings to follow up on their children's progress.	4.37	0.630	Very high	1
20	Failure of family to follow up on absence of children from school without excuse.	4.27	0.574	Very high	2
18	Illness or death of a parent.	4.26	0.599	Very high	3
17	Parents lack of understanding of students' academic problems.	4.17	0.708	High	4
16	Family disintegration and lack of stability.	4.15	0.627	High	5
21	Negative perception towards education from surrounding environment.	4.12	0.599	High	6
26	Not choosing the right study mate.	4.11	0.704	High	7
25	Parents mistreatment of their children.	4.10	0.588	High	8
22	Busy parents in their work life.	3.97	1.077	High	9
19	Parents lack of awareness of the importance of education to their children due to poor educational level and cultural awareness of some families.	3.37	1.274	Medium	10
24	Large family size.	2.52	1.255	Low	11
	Arithmetic Mean	3.95	0.463	High	-

Table (6) indicates that the arithmetic means of the scores of the sample individuals' agreement on the social factors contributing to school dropout ranged between (2.52 - 4.37). Items (23, 20, 18) obtained very high agreement scores, with item number (23) "Irregular attendance of parents at parent-teacher meetings to monitor their children's progress" having the highest arithmetic mean (4.37). The researcher attributes this result to the parents' preoccupation with their daily work and lack of sufficient time, as most parent-teacher meetings are held during school hours, which is consistent with Boyaci's study (2019). Followed by item (20), "Failure of family to follow up on absence of children from school without excuse," with a mean score of (4.27), due to excuses from children and the lack of trust from their parents in the availability of job opportunities for their children after completing university education. Item (18), "Illness or death of a parent," had a mean score of (4.26), as being the sole breadwinner for their children drives them to seek employment and leave school. Item (17), "Parents lack of understanding of students' academic problems.," had a mean score of (4.17), due to being busy with their work, family burdens, poor financial conditions, and some parents' ignorance on how to deal with their children's issues. Meanwhile, item number (24) "Large family size" obtained the lowest arithmetic mean (2.52) and a low agreement score. This indicates that having a large family size does not necessarily lead to dropout. The table also shows that the total arithmetic mean of the items is (3.95) with a high agreement score. This reveals that the main factors contributing to dropout are social factors, which ranked first with a mean score of (3.95). Social upbringing, low income and poverty, high cost of living, poor nutrition, unemployment, and early marriage for female students are social factors that have contributed to school dropout.

#### 4.3 Economic factors

Results of answering the 3rd sub-question: "What are the economic factors contributing to school dropout in schools in Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals?"

The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample responses regarding the economic factors contributing to school dropout have been calculated, and the results are as follows:

**Table 7:** The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the sample respondents' responses to the economic factors.

No	Item	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Agreement Degree	Rank
36	The lack of awareness among families about the financial burden on the state budget as a result of school dropout.	4.14	0.895	High	1
37	Inability of the parent to meet all needs of family members.	3.65	1.246	High	2
29	Inability of a parent to work.	3.75	1.316	High	3
28	Students supporting their parents to earn living.	3.27	1.310	Medium	4
27	The students' feeling of the economic ineffectiveness of education.	3.21	1.207	Medium	5
32	Availability of labor market for students.	3.16	1.139	Medium	6
33	Lack or scarcity of daily pocket money for students.	3.10	1.279	Medium	7
30	The belief of students that early work leads to financial wealth.	3.05	1.325	Medium	8
35	The family's belief that education is worthless and incapable of securing a future for their children.	2.95	1.263	Medium	9
31	Low household income.	2.76	1.214	Low	10
38	Lack of basic school supplies.	2.10	1.043	Low	11
34	High cost of education.	2.03	1.187	Low	12
	Arithmetic mean	3.08	0.829	Medium	-

Table (7) shows that the arithmetic means of the sample individuals' agreement scores on the economic factors contributing to dropout ranged between (2.03 - 4.14). Items (36, 37, 29) obtained high agreement scores, with item (36) "The lack of awareness among families by the school about the burden on the state budget as a result of school dropout" having the highest arithmetic mean (4.14). The researcher attributes this result to the parents' absence from school meetings, which would allow the school management to discuss the risks of dropout and the burden on the state budget. This result is consistent with the study by srayh (2021). Followed by item (37), "Inability of the parent to meet all needs of family members," with a mean score of (3.65), due to the high cost of living, large family size, lack of employment for the mother, and the unemployment of their university graduate children. Then item (29), "Inability of a parent to work," with a mean score of (3.57), due to various reasons, including illness preventing work or old age. This was followed by item (28), "Students supporting their parents to earn living," with a mean score of (3.27), due to low income and high living costs.

Meanwhile, item (34) "High financial cost of education" obtained a low agreement score, with the lowest arithmetic mean (2.03). This indicates the necessity of free and compulsory education to achieve educational opportunities equality, as shown in the table, where the total arithmetic mean of the items is (3.08) with a moderate agreement score. This suggests that all items represent economic factors contributing to school dropout.

Results of answering the 4<sup>th</sup> sub- question: "Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the educational, social, and economic factors contributing to dropout among students in schools in Aqaba Governorate from the perspective of school principals, according to the variables of academic qualification, gender, and teaching experience?

#### **The First variable: Academic Qualification**

Kruskal-Wallis test was used to determine the significance of differences in the sample's agreement scores on the factors contributing to dropout concerning the variable of academic qualification, the results were as follows:

**Table 8:** The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for the significance of differences in the factors contributing to dropout for the variable of academic qualification.

Domain	Academic Qualification	No	Average Ranks	Kruskal-Wallis	Degrees of freedom	Indication Level
School Factors	Bachelor Degree	14	30.25	0.719	3	0.869
	Higher Diploma	18	32.19			
	Master's Degree	20	30.88			
	PhD	11	35.95			
Social Factors	Bachelor Degree	14	34.86	1.235	3	0.745
	Higher Diploma	18	31.69			
	Master's Degree	20	28.75			
	PhD	11	28.75			
Economic Factors	Bachelor Degree	14	30.0	0.541	3	0.910
	Higher Diploma	18	30.61			
	Master's Degree	20	33.61			
	PhD	11	33.82			
Factors leading to school dropout as a whole	Bachelor Degree	14	30.29	0.458	3	0.928
	Higher Diploma	18	31.36			
	Master's Degree	20	32.08			
	PhD	11	35.09			

Table (8) shows the significance levels for the domains of school factors (0.869), social factors (0.745), economic factors (0.541), and all domains combined (0.928). All these values are greater than (0.05) across all domains, meaning that no statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the factors leading to dropout based on the educational qualification variable. This implies that the responses of school principals to the factors contributing to school dropout are similar regardless of their educational qualifications. The reason is the similarity in students' social, cultural, and educational environments, as they come from homogeneous social and cultural backgrounds and suffer from dense curricula and numerous class sessions, reflecting on the teaching methods of school principals regardless of their qualifications. This result is consistent with the study by Abd Rabbo and Hijazi (2022).

#### The Second variable: Gender

Independent -Sample T-test was used to determine the significance of differences in the sample's agreement scores on the factors contributing to dropout according to the gender variable, the results were as follows:

**Table 9:** Independent Sample T-test results to determine the differences in the agreement of sample individuals on the factors contributing to dropout for the gender variable.

Domain	Gender	No	Arithmetic mean	Standard Deviation	T value	Degrees of freedom	Indication levels
Schools factors	Male	33	2.91	0.688	-2.981	61	0.004
	Female	30	3.44	0.738			
Social Factors	Male	33	3.82	0.501		61	0.021
	Female	30	4.09	0.378	-2.366		
Economic Factors	Male	33	2.87	0.720	-2.223	61	0.030
	Female	30	3.32	0.887			
Factors Leading to School Dropout as a whole	Male	33	3.16	0.509	-3.384	61	0.001
	Female	30	3.59	0.503			

Table (9) shows statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the factors

contributing to dropout attributed to the gender variable favoring females. The T-test for school factors was (-2.981), for social factors (-2.366), and economic factors (-2.223), with a degree of freedom for all factors (61). This indicates variation in the responses of the study sample. The researcher attributes this result to early marriage among females, resulting in incomplete educational stages, focusing on childbearing and childcare, and household chores. This finding aligns with the study by Shuibat (2020).

### The Third variable: Teaching Experience

Kruskal- Wallas test was used to determine the significance of differences in the sample's agreement scores on the factors contributing to dropout for the variable of teaching experience.

**Table 10:** The results Kruskal-Walls test for the significance of differences in the factors contributing to dropout for the variable of teaching experience.

Domain	Years of Experience	No	Average Ranks	Kruskal-Walls	Degrees of freedom	Indication Level
School Factors	3- less than 5 years	6	34	0.236	2	0.889
	5-10 years	14	30.11			
	More than 10 years	43	32.34			
Social Factors	3- less than 5 years	6	40.33	1.667	2	0.435
	5-10 years	14	28.86			
	More than 10 years	43	31.86			
Economic Factors	3- less than 5 years	6	38.17	0.983	3	0.612
	5-10 years	14	33.39			
	More than 10 years	43	30.69			
Factors leading to school dropout as a whole	3- less than 5 years	6	38.08	0.779	2	0.677
	5-10 years	14	30.43			
	More than 10 years	43	31.66			

Table (10) indicates that the significance levels were greater than (0.05) in all domains. This suggests that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the factors contributing to dropout for the variable of teaching experience. The reason for this could be attributed to the high classroom density, lack of ventilation, lighting, and heating in some classrooms, and the lack of focus on selecting experienced teachers for teaching the first primary grades. Most teachers in the first primary grades are recent university graduates with no teaching experience, negatively affecting the academic alignment of the learners and leading them to dropout from school..

## 5. Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, the researcher recommends the following:

- Conducting a study to evaluate the curriculum and examination system to assess their suitability for students' abilities and levels.
- Linking students with frequent absenteeism to school activities such as the school discipline committee or the school radio.
- Diversifying teaching methods to stimulate students' motivation.
- The Ministry of Education activating the compulsory education law by incorporating mechanisms for monitoring and accountability regarding the implementation of compulsory education.
- creating a special program lasting two years or more by The Ministry of Education aiming to reintegrate dropouts into schools, which includes thoughtfully providing academic and professional culture to help students enter the job market after graduation.
- Activating communication and interaction between the family and the school to monitor the students' progress, identify the problems they face both inside and outside the school, and assist in resolving them.

- Forming specialized teams to visit villages and conduct awareness campaigns about the risks and consequences of dropout.
- Activating the role of the educational counselor in assisting students in solving their educational and non-educational problems, in cooperation with the school, the local community, and especially the students' parents.
- Raising awareness among families by the school about the financial burden on the country's budget as a result of school dropout.

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