



## Reflections on the Methods of Combating Student Attrition

Fatima Zohra Boutahar

Department of English Studies, Mohamed I University, Oujda, Morocco

ORCID iD: 0009-0003-5372-3659

[Fatimazohra.btr.33@gmail.com](mailto:Fatimazohra.btr.33@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**

*Student attrition remains a critical challenge for educational systems, particularly in contexts marked by socio-economic disparities. In Morocco, despite significant efforts to expand access to education, dropout rates remain a major concern, reflecting deep structural and pedagogical issues. This raises important questions about the limitations of existing educational policies in effectively addressing this phenomenon and the extent to which they can reduce it.*

*This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of student attrition by adopting a multidimensional approach. It first defines the phenomenon and highlights its magnitude through statistical data, including those related to "second chance schools" programs. It then examines the causes of dropout, distinguishing between extra-school factors — such as poverty, family environment, and health issues — and intra-school factors, including inadequate curricula, overcrowded classrooms, and ineffective teaching practices. The study also explores the consequences of school dropout, emphasizing its social and economic impact. Particular attention is given to the role of teachers as key actors in preventing school dropout, through their pedagogical practices, classroom management, and interactions with students.*

*Finally, the paper reviews the historical strategies implemented by the Ministry of Education, along with the contributions of civil society organizations. It critically assesses the limitations of these policies and explores the conditions under which their effectiveness could be strengthened, advocating for a holistic approach that integrates educational, social, and institutional interventions to more effectively combat school dropout.*

### 1. Introduction

Student attrition is a phenomenon that affects both the educational institution and society as a whole, given that any child who does not attend school or has dropped out may later contribute to the reproduction of illiteracy within the family sphere, notwithstanding its negative impact on society, including delinquency, unemployment, and drug abuse, to name but a few. Based on these findings, this paper reflects on the methods for addressing school dropout.

In Morocco, school dropout has become a major concern for education decision-makers and civil society stakeholders. It is, in fact, one of the most significant failures of the educational institution, as it reflects the system's inability to provide adequate support for certain students. Although considerable efforts have been made by the public authorities to generalize access to education, official statistics continue to reveal worrying dropout rates, particularly in primary and secondary schools, especially in rural areas and the disadvantaged suburbs of large cities.

This work examines the limits of educational policies in addressing school dropout in Morocco, as well as the conditions under which their effectiveness can be strengthened. It first presents the conceptual framework of school dropout and highlights its magnitude through national statistical data. It then analyses the principal factors contributing to student attrition, together with its educational, social, and economic consequences. The study subsequently examines the strategies implemented by the Ministry of National Education and the contributions of civil society organizations, while critically assessing their effectiveness and identifying avenues for improvement. Finally, it proposes recommendations that advocate a holistic approach integrating educational, social, and institutional interventions to strengthen student retention and reduce school dropout.

## **2. Conceptual Framework and Statistics**

This section first presents the conceptual framework of school dropout before examining the official statistics illustrating the magnitude of the phenomenon in Morocco. In the Moroccan educational context, school dropout refers to the premature interruption of the learner's educational path before the completion of compulsory or secondary education. It can therefore be understood as a form of disengagement from the educational system resulting from social, economic, familial, institutional, or pedagogical factors. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a dropout is "a person who leaves school, college, or university before completing a qualification" ("DROPOUT | English Meaning - Cambridge Dictionary"). Likewise, *Le Petit Robert* defines *abandonment* as "the renunciation of a right, to a good, the fact of deserting, the action of giving up," while the term *scolaire* refers to "that which is related to school or education" (*Le Petit Robert*). In this sense, the phenomenon can be defined as the learner's renunciation of the right to schooling through the abandonment of studies before graduation, whether voluntarily or under external constraints.

Having established the conceptual meaning of school dropout, it is equally important to examine the magnitude of the phenomenon in Morocco through official statistical data. An INDH study entitled *Social Development Toolkit*, carried out in 2007, highlighted the role of ENF in addressing school dropout and reported that nearly **1.5 million** children aged 9 to 15 had left school before completing their education, highlighting the magnitude of the phenomenon in Morocco (Ministère du Développement social, de la Famille et de la Solidarité, 2007, p. 52).

More recent reports published by the NOHD in partnership with UNICEF indicate that Morocco continues to record high levels of young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). According to the NOHD household panel survey, nearly 28.5% of young people aged between 15 and 24 were classified as NEETs in 2019, representing approximately 1.7 million individuals. By contrast, 48.4% of young people, or 2.9 million, were still pursuing their studies, undergoing vocational training, or completing internships, while 23.1% were already integrated into the labor market (Observatoire National du Développement Humain [NOHD] & UNICEF, 2019, p. 9).

In light of these alarming figures, it is therefore necessary to question the persistence of school dropout in Morocco and to examine the extent to which students' disengagement is linked to academic failure, socio-economic constraints, or structural weaknesses within the educational system. This is particularly relevant given that, since 2007, Morocco has implemented several educational reforms aimed at improving access to education and reducing dropout rates. Thus, during his speech in Parliament on May 22, 2023, the Minister of National Education stated that School dropout in Morocco reached 334,664 during the 2021-2022 school year, compared to 331,558 in 2019-2020 according to the MEN census, which states that the indicator of school dropout concerns three categories of students:

Students who dropped out during the 2021-2022 school year (15% of overall enrollment).

Those who dropped out due to class council decisions at the end of the 2022-2023 school year (34.4% of overall enrollment). Non-students (admitted or repeating) in 2021-2022, who

had not enrolled during the 2022-2023 school year (30.4% of overall enrollment) (Médias24, 2023).

Middle school education concentrates 55% of dropouts, as observed by the Ministry of National Education. The number of dropouts during the school year in the 2021-2022 academic year is distributed according to the levels of education as follows:

- 730233 dropouts for primary education.
- 183,893 for secondary school education.
- 74.538 for vocational education.

School dropouts in rural areas reached 129,594 during the same year, or 4% of the total. During this year, 129,594 girls left school. The ministry recovered 65,944 students in 2022-2023, thanks to the efforts made by the ministry within the framework of the second chance school (Médias24, 2023).

Although recent reforms have contributed to a relative decline in dropout rates, the phenomenon remains a major educational and social challenge. During the 2022–2023 academic year, approximately 294,458 students dropped out of school, while recent statistics published by the Ministry of National Education indicate that nearly 280,000 students continue to leave school every year, including a considerable number at the middle school level (Plateforme CDE Maroc, 2025, p. 37). These alarming figures demonstrate that, despite the efforts made by the public authorities and the implementation of several educational reforms, school dropout continues to constitute a major obstacle to educational equity, social integration, and sustainable development in Morocco.

During the 2023–2024 school year, dropouts fell by 12%, from 334,664 to 294,458, including 45.5% in rural areas. Girls account for 38.64% of total dropouts, with an estimated number as high as 113,777. It is also noted that 62% of students who drop out are over 16 years old. The average dropout rate fell from 5% in 2021–2022 to 4.4% in 2022–2023. As for the repetition rate, it has also declined from 12.2% to 10.8% (Aujourd'hui le Maroc, 2024).

Interviewed by *Telquel*, the Minister of Education stated that the ministry's objective is to reduce annual school dropout by half and to direct at least 80,000 middle school students at risk of dropping out towards second chance schools (Telquel, 2025). In the same perspective, the Ministry of National Education aims to further reduce school dropout to 200,000 by 2026, compared to approximately 295,000 in 2024 (TelQuel, 2025).

The statistics relating to the second chance school published by the Ministry of National Education are as follows:

During 2012, 31,700 children benefited from the second-chance school. Among them, 979 children were upgraded through associations, and 6,969 were directly integrated into formal education, for a total of 39,648 children in care (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports, 2013).

Throughout the 2022–2023 school year, there were 18,000 beneficiaries in 230 reception centers. Among these beneficiaries, 16% were integrated into formal education, 21% into vocational training, and 35% into working life (H24Info.ma avec MAP, 2024).

The Ministry of National Education has also signed agreements with 22 associations to support 1,760 young people who dropped out of school within the framework of the "Second Chance School – New Generation" program. The program already benefits more than 20,000 young people each year, with an integration rate of 81%, including 29% returning to formal education, 20% joining vocational training centers, and 32% entering the labor market (LesEco.ma, 2025).

### **3. Understanding the Causes of School Dropout**

The causes of early school leaving are multiple and interrelated, with strong interactions between the different factors involved. They may arise from pedagogical and institutional

conditions within the educational environment, as well as from student-related behaviors and the broader sociological dimensions of the phenomenon. In this perspective, school dropout is not the result of a single factor, but rather of a complex combination of extra-school, intra-school, and individual determinants that progressively lead to disengagement from the educational system.

Poverty, parental illiteracy, and early marriage for girls constitute some of the most significant factors contributing to school dropout. *Le Rapport métier de l'enseignant* highlights the social disparities that often affect the schooling of children belonging to disadvantaged social groups, despite the generalization of access to education in Morocco for children from different social backgrounds. It states that:

*This is how students who are unable to continue the teaching process find themselves in 'academic difficulty'. They are therefore threatened with exclusion from the system, either because of their socio-economic situation or because of specific difficulties.* (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports, n.d., p. 44).

In rural and pre-urban areas, parental illiteracy and poverty are among the main causes of school dropout. In such contexts, a child who helps his parents work in the fields or who sells plastic bags or tissue packs to drivers is often considered more economically useful for the family than an uncertain academic future. As a result, these children are withdrawn from school and forced into work, such as welding, carpentry, or domestic work, while still minors. This situation negatively affects their health and academic performance and may directly contribute to school dropout.

In this context, the case of girls in the Moroccan Rif can also be cited, where they participate in fetching spring water or collecting wood, which forces them to travel long distances with all the risks this entails. It is evident that a child engaged in such tasks is unlikely to progress significantly in his or her studies. Early marriage of girls is also one of the factors behind school dropout, and it still persists in rural areas and in poor urban neighborhoods, where traditional norms are deeply rooted in the mentality of some illiterate fathers, leading to the interruption of girls' schooling at the end of primary school or at the beginning of middle school.

However, it is important to note that some poor rural families, despite their difficulties, make significant sacrifices to ensure the schooling of both girls and boys. Nevertheless, it is enough for the school to fail in its commitments for them to withdraw their children from education without hesitation. In rural areas, a study conducted by UNICEF states that the only handicap to overcome for girls is access to school. Once engaged in the system, the girl gives up less frequently than the boy (Chaddati, 2004, p. 7).

Family issues and poor parenting also contribute significantly to school dropout. Poor education, family problems, and divorce are all issues that negatively affect children's schooling, as students often feel abandoned by their families. In such a complex situation, the child needs stable reference points. Preoccupied with issues beyond his control, he is no longer able to strike a balance at his age between play, school, and adult problems. The subjectivity of these family tensions becomes a central component of his situation.

The child is negatively affected by the separation or disagreement between his father and mother and is unable to focus his energy. Yet, this is a stage in which emotional stability is already difficult to preserve. In order to attract the attention of his parents or to punish them in his own way, he may actively escape into games, screens, or mobile phones to forget his reality. In more extreme cases, he may attempt to forget his frustration by associating with young delinquents.

Another aspect of poor parenting is the absence of limits and discipline. Some parents give their children everything they want, including expensive clothes, electronic games, motorcycles, and bracelets, and the child may develop continuous pressure on the parents, who often give in to his demands in the hope that he will improve his school performance, which is

rarely the case. In general, these children develop problematic social associations and may fall into smoking, drugs, or even delinquency.

The child's health condition also constitutes an important factor in explaining school dropout. The student's state of health is a very common case in which dropping out of school is directly explained. The child feels unable to follow his classes normally and is frequently absent before eventually giving up completely. Parents are sometimes unable to meet the child's health needs, particularly in cases of chronic or serious illness. Children suffering from ADHD, epilepsy, or other chronic conditions often require specialized pedagogical support and individualized attention in order to remain engaged in school.

Absenteeism is often the first step towards dropping out of school. The more a child is repeatedly and permanently absent, the higher the likelihood of school dropout. Absenteeism can be caused by chronic illness, lack of interest in school, academic failure, insufficient parental supervision, family problems, or the influence of deviant peers.

Bad associations can also contribute to school dropout. Some adolescents become involved in delinquency, smoking, or drug use because of poor parental supervision or family instability. These behaviours often reinforce disengagement from school and may eventually lead to early school leaving.

Academic failure itself constitutes one of the strongest predictors of school dropout. As Meirieu (2008) explains, struggling students generally require remediation, whereas students experiencing school failure often become disconnected from the institution itself. Persistent academic difficulties, comparison with successful siblings, lack of academic support, demotivation, repeated failure, and social exclusion progressively weaken students' attachment to school.

The educational system may also contribute to students' frustration. The current school system, characterized by rigid rules, overloaded curricula, limited extracurricular activities, and insufficient adaptation to individual differences, often fails to respond adequately to students' needs. Students facing repeated failure gradually lose confidence in the value of schooling, especially when employment prospects appear uncertain. In addition, exclusion following class council decisions, multigrade classrooms in rural areas, and insufficient educational support may accelerate disengagement.

Class overcrowding continues to affect the quality of education in Morocco. Large classes considerably reduce teachers' ability to provide individualized support and increase the risk that struggling students remain unnoticed. Likewise, the transition from primary to middle school constitutes a critical period marked by new subjects, more abstract learning, overloaded programmes, and linguistic difficulties. Many students accumulate learning gaps during this transition, eventually leading to academic failure and school dropout.

Within these institutional factors, the role of the teacher also deserves particular attention. Although school dropout cannot be attributed to teachers alone, the quality of the teacher–student relationship remains a determining factor in students' engagement and academic success. As shown by Fallu and Janosz, "among students at risk of dropping out (behavioral problems, academic difficulties), a positive teacher–student relationship would produce greater benefits than those observed among their peers without academic difficulties" (Fallu & Janosz, 2003, as cited in Instance Nationale d'Évaluation, 2021, p. 42). Thus, the teacher does not simply transmit knowledge but also builds a pedagogical relationship based on trust, listening, and support. Students are particularly attentive to teachers who explain lessons clearly, adapt instruction to their learning needs, and provide educational guidance (Métier de l'enseignant au Maroc, p. 42).

Appropriate pedagogical practices can therefore contribute significantly to preventing school dropout. Success pedagogy places the learner at the centre of the educational process and values progress rather than failure. It relies on diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment, guided practice, regular verification of understanding, and educational remediation to help students overcome learning difficulties (Coupeau & Rogovas-Choupeau, 2025, p. 8;

Gauthier, Bissonnette, & Richard, 2008, p. 363). Conversely, indifference to students' difficulties, excessive severity, favoritism, inadequate classroom management, repeated teacher absences, or inappropriate disciplinary practices may reinforce students' disengagement, particularly among vulnerable learners.

Nevertheless, these pedagogical difficulties should also be understood within a broader institutional context. Overcrowded classrooms, insufficient initial and continuing teacher training, and limited professional support may constrain teachers' ability to provide individualized assistance (Instance Nationale d'Évaluation, 2021, pp. 43–45). Consequently, while teachers remain key actors in preventing school dropout, their effectiveness also depends on the institutional conditions within which they work.

#### **4. Consequences of School Dropout**

One of the consequences of dropping out of school is the difficulty in integrating children into society and work. Similarly, adolescents who have interrupted their studies are more likely to experience social, economic, and health problems. A further, more serious consequence is that any child who does not attend school or has dropped out will have as an undeniable corollary an illiterate family in the future.

Young teenagers who drop out of school, without a goal or work, today will be illegal migrants, victims of exploitation, drug addicts, or even recruits for delinquency or organized crime. On this subject, there is a recollection of the young street-addicted children, locally called “Cham-kara”, a Moroccan term referring to street children addicted to inhaling glue or other volatile substances (“sniffers”), looking for leftovers to eat in trash cans, or even young children in public landfills collecting recyclable waste which they then resell. These children are probably schoolchildren who have run away from their homes and have likely dropped out of school without being counted in the Ministry of National Education statistics. According to UNESCO, the high rate of school dropout in Morocco seriously threatens the country's social and economic development. The cost of school dropout in Morocco is estimated at 196 million US dollars per year, representing a loss to society of about 1% of GDP (Al Ahdath Al Maghribia, 2024, June 25).

These consequences are also reflected in the field observations conducted during this study. The different cases encountered illustrate that school dropout often leads to social exclusion, unstable employment, health vulnerability, or delinquency. They also confirm that early school leaving is generally the result of a cumulative process involving socio-economic hardship, family difficulties, health conditions, institutional shortcomings, and pedagogical factors rather than a single isolated cause.

The analysis above reveals that the causes and consequences of school dropout in Morocco are multidimensional and closely interconnected. They combine socio-economic constraints, family-related difficulties, individual health conditions, and intra-school factors such as pedagogical practices, overcrowding, and institutional shortcomings. These elements often interact and reinforce each other, making early school leaving the result of a cumulative process rather than a single cause. Consequently, its effects extend beyond the individual learner to affect families, communities, and society as a whole, reinforcing social inequalities and hindering the country's social and economic development.

#### **5. Policy Analysis: Strategies for Addressing School Dropout**

Over the past decades, the Moroccan education system has undergone a series of reforms aimed at addressing the issue of dropping out of school. These reforms reflect an understanding of the phenomenon, shifting focus from access and infrastructure to concerns related to educational quality, equity, and student support. In this perspective, it is fundamental to examine the main strategies introduced by the Ministry of National Education, which illustrate the construction of public policies designed to reduce dropout rates and improve school retention. Alongside this, the contribution of civil society actors also requires attention, as

associations and foundations contribute to prevention efforts, remedial education, and the reintegration of students who have left the school system.

The first major reform was the **National Charter on Education and Training (1999–2009)**. During this period, Morocco's priority was to ensure the massive enrollment of children, as a large part of the population, especially in rural areas, had no access to school. In this context, the fight against school dropout was addressed mainly from a social and infrastructure perspective. The State implemented several mechanisms, including school canteens to combat food poverty, boarding schools for remote students, and school transport in rural areas. These measures considerably improved access to education, although they mainly addressed the social causes of school dropout.

The **Emergency Plan for Combating Illiteracy and School Dropout (2009–2012)** broadened this approach by focusing on school repetition, academic support as a response to school failure, and improving infrastructure. This programme aimed at making school compulsory up to the age of 15, extending secondary education, and improving teaching performance. It was implemented through a set of mechanisms aimed at preventing school dropout and strengthening student follow-up. The student monitoring booklet enabled teachers, guidance counselors, and class councils to monitor students' progress and identify learners experiencing difficulties. The Ministry also instituted a system of academic support in Arabic, French, and Mathematics, in addition to refresher sessions organized for students with learning difficulties. Other initiatives included the Student Identification Campaign, the Caravan operation, and the Second Chance School programme, which sought to identify school dropouts and facilitate either their reintegration into formal education or their orientation towards vocational training. Nevertheless, some of these mechanisms encountered implementation difficulties. For example, monitoring units were not systematically activated, academic support often depended on volunteer teachers, and students not identified during the Caravan operation were not included in the official statistics of the Ministry of National Education.

A further stage in policy development was the **Strategic Vision for Reform 2015–2030**, which focused on equity, equal opportunities, and improving the quality of education. This approach was based on the key observation that dropping out is not only related to access to school but also to the quality of learning. In this context, particular attention was paid to improving the performance of educational actors, including teachers and educators, through continuous training and professional qualification. School remediation and individualized support systems were introduced to help students experiencing learning difficulties, while non-formal education programmes facilitated the reintegration of students who had left the school system. The Ministry also strengthened social support programmes through initiatives such as *Tayssir*, the distribution of schoolbags, the construction of communal schools, the strengthening of school transport in rural areas, and the provision of conditional financial aid to families. However, despite these ambitious objectives, the implementation of this vision continues to face important constraints, notably the lack of human and material resources, persistent inequalities between urban and rural areas, governance and coordination difficulties, and the insufficient implementation of some measures on the ground.

The adoption of **Framework Law 51.17 (2019)** represented the implementation of the recommendations of the Strategic Vision for Reform 2015–2030. It established a new school open to all, based on equity, equal opportunities, and quality education. The law recommends the renewal of teaching professions, the revision of pedagogical approaches and curricula, the reform of higher education, the encouragement of scientific research and innovation, and the adoption of plurilingualism and an educational model promoting critical thinking and citizenship. Rather than introducing completely new measures, the Framework Law consolidated the strategic orientations already established in previous reforms.

The Roadmap of the Ministry of National Education (2022–2026) adopts an approach that breaks away from previous reform methods while remaining consistent with the objectives of

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the National Charter and the Strategic Vision. According to the Roadmap, improving the quality of public schools requires a systemic approach acting simultaneously on the student, the teacher, and the educational institution. At the operational level, the strategy focuses on improving preschool education, school curricula, individualized support for students in difficulty, continuous teacher training, infrastructure, and extracurricular activities in order to improve both learning outcomes and student well-being.

Alongside these public policies, civil society actors have become important partners in the fight against school dropout. Associations and foundations contribute both to prevention and to corrective approaches aimed at strengthening mastery of fundamental learning and offering students adequate support capable of promoting their academic success or, where appropriate, their integration into the professional world. In this context, the Ministry of National Education signed agreements with civil society associations for the implementation of the New Generation Second Chance School programme, aimed at the socio-professional integration of young people who have dropped out of school through programmes combining educational qualification, vocational training, and personal development. According to Ministry statistics for 2025, 20,236 learners benefited from training in second-chance centres, with an integration rate of nearly 81%.

Several associations illustrate the contribution of civil society. The Sanady Foundation, for instance, finances school support programmes, teacher training, school rehabilitation, and extracurricular activities. The EMA Association promotes vocational training and apprenticeship programmes for young people who have left school without qualifications. Similarly, the Chabiba Association in Oujda provides non-formal education together with vocational training adapted to learners with special needs, thereby facilitating both educational and professional integration.

Moroccan public policies demonstrate a gradual evolution from expanding access to education towards improving educational quality, student support, and school retention. Nevertheless, persistent inequalities, limited resources, implementation gaps, and institutional constraints continue to reduce the effectiveness of these strategies. The collaboration between the Ministry of National Education and civil society organizations, therefore, remains an essential component of the national strategy to prevent school dropout and promote the successful reintegration of vulnerable learners.

## **6. Recommendations**

In light of the above analysis, combating school dropout requires a comprehensive educational policy capable of addressing the different factors contributing to academic failure. The following recommendations are based on the issues identified throughout this study and propose measures aimed at strengthening prevention, improving student support, and promoting school retention.

As a first step, intervention should take place at the earliest signs of possible dropout, such as absenteeism and declining academic performance. This responsibility concerns all stakeholders: the teacher, the school administration, the monitoring unit, and the student's parents. The teacher acts as the first line of intervention in identifying and supporting students with academic difficulties, provided that he or she is sufficiently equipped and demonstrates patience in engaging all students without distinction, rather than relegating the weakest learners to the back of the classroom. As Wiel states, "The school failure syndrome is in fact a pathology specific to the school, born at school against the school" (Wiel, 2000, pp. 60–62). School failure begins in the classroom and may become a persistent condition if the teacher does not take time to investigate its causes, whether in the way teaching is delivered, classroom management practices, or teacher–student interactions. This may involve questioning the rigidity of teaching approaches, diversifying sources instead of strictly applying an inadequate curriculum, critically reassessing pedagogical choices, and identifying external causes of failure through regular communication with students' parents.

Since the teacher is a pivotal actor in education, teacher training can no longer be limited to mastering disciplinary content. In order to combat school dropout, teachers should also be trained in the psychology of dropout, enabling them to move from the role of "transmitter" to that of "regulator," capable of rebuilding a relationship of trust with students before disengagement becomes irreversible. At the same time, continuous professional development should strengthen pedagogical skills, classroom management, educational remediation, and coaching competencies in order to improve support for struggling learners.

At the institutional level, the Ministry of National Education, through the Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation, de la Formation et de la Recherche Scientifique, is called upon to objectively re-evaluate the various educational reforms, with the possibility of opening up to educational expertise from countries such as Japan and Germany, without losing Moroccan identity and without reproducing models that have proven ineffective in other contexts. The objective should not be to multiply reforms but to ensure their effective implementation and continuity while adapting them to classroom realities.

Particular attention should also be given to redesigning the current educational programmes by making them more streamlined and better aligned with labour market demands, while rationalizing the selection of subjects offered to students. Educational orientation should be introduced from middle school onwards by offering literary, scientific, and technical pathways adapted to students' interests and abilities. Greater emphasis should also be placed on project-based learning, the pedagogy of success, multimedia-based learning programmes, and the development of students' autonomy, initiative, and spirit of challenge. Organizing the school day around morning academic instruction and afternoon practical, creative, cultural, or recreational activities would also contribute to making school more attractive and increasing students' engagement.

Furthermore, priority should be given to reducing overcrowded classrooms, activating school monitoring units, ensuring individualized student follow-up through the student record system, and providing remedial classes in fundamental subjects delivered by experienced teachers. The recruitment of psychologists, coaches, and educational counselors should also be encouraged in order to strengthen early detection and support mechanisms for students at risk of dropping out.

Finally, greater attention should be devoted to strengthening the contribution of civil society organizations in identifying school dropouts, supporting their reintegration into education, and providing educational and vocational programmes adapted to vulnerable learners. At the same time, public policies should continue addressing persistent urban–rural inequalities and socio-economic disparities while raising parents' awareness of their essential role in supporting their children's education.

## **7. Conclusion**

As this study has demonstrated, school dropout in Morocco results from a complex combination of socio-economic, family, pedagogical, institutional, and individual factors. Although the successive reforms undertaken by the Ministry of National Education have contributed to the generalization of access to education and the development of various mechanisms aimed at preventing school dropout, the persistence of academic failure, regional disparities, overcrowded classrooms, and institutional constraints continues to limit the effectiveness of these policies.

The evolution of educational reforms, from the National Charter for Education and Training to the 2022–2026 Roadmap, reflects a gradual shift from policies primarily concerned with expanding access to education towards approaches placing greater emphasis on educational quality, equity, individualized support, and school retention. Nevertheless, the implementation of these reforms continues to face several challenges related to governance, coordination among stakeholders, and the availability of human and material resources.

In this perspective, combating school dropout requires a comprehensive educational policy capable of addressing the different factors contributing to academic failure. Early detection of students at risk, effective pedagogical practices, continuous teacher training, individualized student support, curriculum adaptation, and strengthened collaboration between educational institutions, parents, and civil society organizations constitute essential components of such an approach. Within this framework, the teacher remains a central actor whose pedagogical competence, professional commitment, and relationship with students can significantly influence school engagement and academic success.

To conclude, reducing school dropout cannot be limited to increasing school enrolment or multiplying educational reforms. It requires the effective implementation of coherent educational policies capable of promoting equal opportunities, improving the quality of learning, and ensuring that all students are provided with the necessary conditions to complete their schooling successfully.

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