

Causes of Dropout in Primary Schools: A Study of Primary Schools of Sargodha Tehsil During the Years, 1996-97 & 1997-98

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Abstract: The Encyclopedia Americana, 1985, (Volume 9) defines dropout in these words: "A person who leaves school before completing a course of study". The main objections of the present study was to find out the causes of dropout at primary level schools in tehsil Sargodha. The total number of respondents were 552 from Sargodha tehsil. For the purpose of selection of sample educationally administrative tehsil of Sargodha was divided into urban and rural area. Overall, 24 primary schools were selected by stratified random sampling method. The results showed that poverty is the most important cause and, as such, the main cause of dropouts from the schools, in Sargodha Tehsil. The other main causes of dropouts were parents carelessness, regarding the child, increase of educational expenses, students lack of interest in education, Not gaining immediate economics advantage from education.

Key Words: Dropout, Primary Level, Universalization of Education

Introduction

Primary Education forms the basis of our entire system of education. Its importance lies in the fact that it serves as the foundation stone on which the subsequent edifice of the education system is raised. The immense contribution it makes to the overall development of the country is indicated by the research studies undertaken in both developed and developing countries including Pakistan. These studies indicate that the rates of return to investment in education are commonly high, especially at the primary level, and argue that investment in primary education makes a vital contribution to economic development of the developing countries.

To quote the (National Education Policy 1998-2010) "The average private rate of return is 29% at primary, 19% at secondary, and 24% at the territory level. Similarly, the social rate of return is 27% at primary, 16% at secondary, and 13% at the territory level 10. (National Education Policy 1998). All these facts clearly establish the importance of primary education for Pakistan as a developing country.

Not only in social but also in the economic sector, educationally developed counties of this region, have made substantial progress. All the countries of the region such as Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives which have achieved remarkable progress in primary education, have in turn secured and sustained very higher per capita GNP and vice versa.

Unfortunately, there are many problems confronted in primary education in Pakistan. The list of such problems is very long. Among these problems, dropout stands out as a very formidable one which is hindering the universalization of primary education in Pakistan.

According to Report of Advanced Level Workshop on Universalization of Education at Primary Level November, 1984, a broader definition of dropout is as following:

"Any child who enters in Primary school but does not complete five years cycle, whatever the reasons, will be considered a dropout." (Advanced level workshop on

universalization of Education at primary level, Nov. 1984)

The Commission on National Education in Pakistan, (1959) made the following statement regarding the problem of dropouts and its causes.

"One of the major contributing factors in the dropping out of children from schools is the practice of forcing them to repeat 5 classes..... The retention power of the school itself is more attractive to pupils through better teaching methods and through offering a curriculum more clearly related to national community and individual needs and interests." (Report of the Commission on National Education, 1959).

Education Policy 1972-80, showing its concern over the high rate of dropout, counts the existing systems of examination as one of its root causes.

In the policy it is suggested:

"The existing system of examination is one of the root causes of the general malaise of our education system..... The high percentage of failure not only leads to heavy dropouts but also brings lifelong feeling of frustration and inferiority in the affected students." (Education Policy 1972-80)

National Education Policy and Implementation 1979, shows as follows:

"Low enrolment is further aggravated by high dropout. About 50% of those enrolled in class-1 dropout by Class-V. Low enrolment and high dropout have been attributed to a number of both out of school and in school factors." (National Education Policy and Implementation 1979)

This high rate of dropout at primary school level has created problems for the educationist, planners and the teachers as well. Half of the children enrolled in class I dropout before the completion of primary education.

It is estimated that only in every three boys and one in every five girls complete primary level.

In Sindh, during the year 1994-95, the dropout of pupils between grade I and II was 18.1% between grade II and

III was 7.8% between grade III and IV was 5.4% and between grade IV and V was 4.0% (Ahmad Tauhiduddin, Mirza, 1996).

According to the data of Educational Management Information System (EMIS) Schools Census 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96, the dropout of pupils between classes 1 to 3 was 21.3% between classes 2 to 4 was 10.5% and between classes 3 to 5 was 13.3% (PIDE, 1996).

In NWFP, during the year 1989-90, the drop-out of pupils at primary level was 27.5% (Saeed Ullah, 1992). In Balochistan, during the year 1998, the dropout of pupils in grade I, II, III and IV, was 7.7% (Ahmad Tauhiduddin, Mirza, 1996).

According to the Pakistan Development Review of Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) 1996, if some schools do not use its capacity or a school does not have sufficient enrolment we can say that there is a wastage of school capacity. A school is also inefficient if it does not retain the students who got enrolled and later dropped out. However, schools are not solely responsible for dropout and there are many other factors as well which cause high dropouts. (PIDE, 1996). Study of dropout at primary stage is quite relevant to Sargodha which is a divisional head-quarter city and has a large number of educational institutions. In spite of this concentration of education potential in it, this tehsil is known to have a rather low rate of literacy comparatively.

Government has taken various measures to deal with the problem of dropout at primary level by making education free, providing textbooks and writing material to primary school children and encouraging teachers to improve teaching techniques. Mosque schools are also being opened at large scale and one double - shift girls high school is functioning in Sargodha city.

Hence, the problem of dropout at primary stage invited attention of researchers in education as it caused wastage on one hand and under utilization of facilities on the other.

Objectives of The Study: Major objectives of the study were as under:-

- To find out the dropout rate of primary school for boys and girls (urban and rural) in tehsil Sargodha.
- To identify causes of dropout at primary level for rural and urban male & female.
- To compare the rates and causes of dropout at Primary level with reference to male & female and urban & rural aspects of the sample.

Materials and Methods

Sargodha Tehsil (urban & rural) areas were selected as a universe. The total number of respondents were 552, 24 head of primary schools, 48 senior teachers of the schools, 240 students (boys & girls), Who left the schools without completing their primary education, (Ten students per school), 240 parents (fathers & mothers) of those children, who left the schools at primary stage without completing five years.

Overall, 24 primary schools were selected by stratified random sampling method.

So total 12 schools (size boys, six girls) were selected from each area i.e. urban and rural. The detail of respondents were as under:

For this study, data were collected through questionnaire method with the help of: One Proforma for heads of institutions, three questionnaires, one separately for: Children who left the school at the primary level without completing primary education, one for parents of children who left the school, one for teachers of primary schools.

Results and Discussion

In urban area there was 12.90% dropout rate in the year (session) 1996-97 and that decreased to 12.39% in the year 1997-98 was 16.46% whereas in the year 1997-98, the dropout has been calculated as 13.61% Thus 2.85% decrease in dropout was noticed during the period.

Overall dropout rate in 1996-97 was 14.00% whereas in the year 1997-98, the dropout has been calculated as 12.78% Thus 1.22% decrease in dropout was noticed during these years. In urban & rural areas there was 14.28% dropout rate of the boys primary schools in the year 1996-97 and that decreased to 12.33% in the year 1997-98. Thus 1.95% decrease in dropout rate was noticed during these two years.

In urban and rural areas there was 13.42% dropout rate of the girls primary schools in the year 1996-97 and that increased to 13.42% and that increased to 13.70% in the year 1997-98. Thus 0.28% increase in dropout rate was noticed during these two years. In urban and rural areas there was 14.28% dropout rate of the boys primary schools in the year 1996-97, whereas the dropout rate of the girls primary schools in the year 1996-97 was 13.42% in the same areas. So the dropout rate in the girls primary schools was less than the boys primary Schools i.e. 0.86% in the year 1996-97.

In urban and rural areas there was 12.33% dropout rate of the boys primary school in the year 1997-98. Whereas the dropout rate of the girls Primary School in the year 1997-98 was 13.70 in the same areas. So the dropout rate in the boys primary schools was less than girls primary school i.e., 1.53% in the year 1997-98.

In urban area there was 13.63% dropout rate of the boys primary schools in the year 1996-97. Where as the dropout rate of the girls Primary school in the year 1996-98 was 11.10% in the same area. So the dropout rate 2.53% in the girls primary school was less than the boys primary schools i.e, 2.53% in the year 1996-97.

In rural there was 16.08% dropout rate of the boys primary schools in the year 1996-97. Whereas the dropout rate of the girls primary schools in the year 1996-97 was 16.99% in the same area. So the dropout rate in the boys primary schools was less than the girls primary schools i.e. 0.91% in the year 1996-97.

In urban area there was 12.03% dropout rate of boys primary school in the year 1997-98. Where as the dropout rate of the girls primary school in the year 1997-98 was 13.22% in the same area. So the dropout rate in the boys primary school was less than the girls primary school i.e. 1.19% in the year 1997-98.

In urban area there was 13.05% dropout rate of boys primary school in the year 1997-98. Where as the dropout rate of the girls primary school in the year 1997-98 was 14.51% in the same area. So the dropout rate 1.46% in the boys primary school was less than the girls primary school i.e. 1.46% in the year 1997-98.

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Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Dropout Rate of Boys, During the Years 1996-97 and 1997-98

S.NO	Category	Dropout of male		Decreased	Increased	Total
		1996-97	1997-98			
1.	Urban	13.63%	12.03%	1.6%	—	12.87%
2.	Rural	16.08%	13.05%	3.03%	—	14.55%
3.	Total	14.28%	12.33%	1.95%	—	13.34%

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Dropout Rate of Girls, During the Years 1996-97 and 1997-98

S.NO	Category	Dropout of female		Decreased	Increased	Total
		1996-97	1997-98			
1	Urban	11.10%	13.22%	—	2.12%	12.14%
2.	Rural	16.99%	14.51%	2.48%	—	15.82%
3.	Total	13.42%	13.70%	—	0.28%	13.62%

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Dropout Rate of Boys and Girls, During the Years 1996-97 and 1997-98

S.NO	Category	Dropout of female		Decreased	Increased	Total
		1996-97	1997-98			
1.	Urban	12.90%	12.39%	0.51%	—	12.66%
2.	Rural	16.46%	13.61%	2.85%	—	15.07%
3.	Total	14.00%	12.78%	1.22%	—	13.41%

Conclusion

We conclude that poverty is the most important cause and, as such, the main cause of dropouts from the schools. Parents carelessness, regarding the child is directly related to poverty, has played a major role in increasing dropout. Increase of educational expenses, directly related to poverty, has also played a major role in resulting dropouts. Lack of interest in education has also a very precarious effect which has led to this state of affairs. Not gaining immediate economic advantage from education is also one of the important causes of dropout. Child's mental weakness has also contributed to a large number of dropouts. Government may give some incentives to the people by subsidizing stationery and other related items just like books. Pakistan is basically a poor country and it is a frequent observation that even primary school going children are bound to assist their parents for earning. Hence either morning school hours may be reduced or evening classes may be introduced to enable the children to support their parents.

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