

Determining the Factors Influencing the Drop out in Government Primary Schools of Karachi

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to find out the factors and causes of drop out in government primary schools of Karachi. The study found that poverty, illiteracy, lack of motivation among children, learning difficulties, child labour, corporal punishment, teachers attitude, lack of co-curricular activities, formal and traditional way of teaching, school environment, lack of basic physical facilities, lack of monitoring and accountability are the major causes for drop out. Subsequent to findings it was suggested that Like Watan Card scheme (for flood affected people) Education and Health Card scheme should be introduced for needy students. For over age children (dropouts) non formal curriculum should be introduced in government schools. For the enhancement of professional capabilities, need base refresher courses, work shops and seminars should be organized for head-teachers and teachers. Follow-up programmes would be arranged to bring back dropouts.

Key words:

INTRODUCTION

The importance of education as an agent of socio-economic development is universally recognized. Illiteracy is one of the major and basic problems of education in Pakistan. Vast majority of the country's population is illiterate and the large group of school going population is out of school [1]. The situation has become severe with large number of students leaving school mid-way. Pakistan is a nation of high drop out. High drop out rates have been one of the major factor obstructing the enhancement of the literacy rate. Drop out is one of the major and serious problem which affects the ongoing efforts towards Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Especially MDG 2 which recommended that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015 [2]. According to all recent UNESCO reports Pakistan is not on track and has serious risk to attain the goal by 2015.

The overall purpose of the study was to find out the causes of drop out in government primary schools of Karachi. For addressing this purpose *study tested* the hypothesis "There will be no significant difference in the views of government primary school *teachers* and *head-teachers* regarding the factors influencing the drop out".

The study would help to enhance the literacy rate as well as completion rate and internal efficiency

of the government primary schools. The finding of the study will develop the understanding among all stakeholders (*teachers, parents, educational leaders and planners, NGOs, CBOs, political leaders, reformers and authorities concern*) about the causes and trends of dropping out from government primary schools.

The study was limited to all government primary school students (dropouts), teachers and head-teachers of government primary schools of Karachi.

The study was based on the assumptions that drop out is significantly high in government primary schools of Karachi and majority of the students belongs to low income households.

Key Terms

Dropout: Person who leave school/college before completing his/her education (Free Dictionary and UNESCO glossary).

Drop Out: Withdrawal of children from school at any stage before completion of primary education *grade V* (Ministry of Education Pakistan).

Primary Schools: All the educational institutions providing education to the students of class I to V (aged 5⁺-9).

Government Schools: All the educational institutions run by provincial government of Sindh.

Karachi: The provincial capital of the province of Sindh, administratively control by City District Government Karachi (CDGK).

Literature Review

Definitions of Drop out

Ministry of Education (EFA wing) Pakistan: According to ministry of education withdrawal of children from school at any stage before completion of primary education

Texas Educational Agency: A student is identified as a dropout if the individual is absent without an approved excuse or documented transfer and does not return to school by the fall of the following school year, or if he or she completes the school year but fails to reenroll the following school year.

Consequences of Drop out: It reduces the enrolment rate and obstructs the enhancement of adult literacy rate. Beside illiteracy and reducing enrolments rates, high rates of drop out also lead to internal inefficiency in educational system by increasing the unit cost of producing school graduates [3-5]. The consequences of drop out are multi dimensional and affect both individual and society in number of ways. These consequences lead to socio-economic problems like; increased illiteracy, employment opportunities, unskilled/child laborers and street children. Various studies indicate that violence, street crime like; mobile, violet and purse snatching, drug abuse; premature sexual activity and theft have been significantly correlated with dropouts [6].

Reasons for Drop out: According to many studies [7,8] poverty, parent's illiteracy and lack of awareness, child labour, corporal punishment, lack of quality education in public sector, lack of professional competency and commitment in teachers, quality of curriculum and textbook, lack of physical facilities and infrastructure, lack of supervision and monitoring and lack of political will are the major reasons for drop out. If the Pakistani government wants to increase literacy and numeracy rates, it must urgently address the problem of primary school dropouts. On an individual basis, the reasons for dropping out vary, but generally there are two main categories of factors that lead to this problem: out-of-school and in-school [9].

The main out-of-school reason for leaving primary school is financial. Pakistani studies have shown poverty to be the main reason forcing children out of school. A study indicated that 79 percent of dropouts are from low-income households. In these families, children also play the role of breadwinner. Changes in labor market conditions or household composition can mean the indirect costs of education are now higher or the direct costs cannot be met. Children must work to support their families or their families can no longer afford to send them to school.

The main in-school factor contributing to dropping out is low learning achievement. Some children repeatedly fail and so stay in the same grade year after year. Such repetition reduces the benefits of schooling and the lengthening of the school cycle increases the costs of education. Corporal punishment is another much-cited in-school reason for dropping out. In 1989, 52 percent of Pakistani teachers were found to use physical punishment with their students. [10] In the long run, reducing dropout rates results in a decrease in both the direct and opportunity costs of primary schooling. This in turn increases enrolments and is an important step in achieving universal primary education in Pakistan.

Methodology: Research can be defined as the search for knowledge, or as any systematic investigation, with an open mind, to establish novel facts, usually using a scientific method. The primary purpose for applied research (as opposed to basic research) is discovering, interpreting and the development of methods and systems for the advancement of human knowledge on a wide variety of scientific matters of our world and the universe [11].

The over all strategy of this study was survey. The population of the study comprised of all the head-teachers and teachers of government primary schools of Karachi, Pakistan. Total sample size was 200 (50 head-teachers and 150 teachers). A tailor-made questionnaire comprising of 36 items was served as a research instrument. The reliability and validity was ensured by pilot testing.

Data Analysis: The hypothesis was tested using the t test.

Hypothesis: There will be no significant difference in the views of government primary *school teachers* and *head-teachers* regarding the factors influencing the drop out.

Table 1: Application of t-test for testing the significance of Hypothesis No. 18

Respondents	n	Mean	SD	SE	t - value	Result
Teachers	150	123.833	22.922	3.794	0.982	H_0 Accepted
Head-teachers	50	127.56	23.338			

Analysis of the Problem

- $H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$
- $H_1: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$
- $\alpha = 0.05$
- Test Statistics: t
- Decision Rule: Reject H_0 If computed $t = 1.96$
- Degree of freedom (df) = $(N_1 - 1) + (N_2 - 1) = 198$
- Conclusion: See the bottom of the Table No.1

Referring to the table 't' it was found that the tabulated value of 't' = 1.96 with df = 198 at $\alpha = 0.05$ is greater than computed value of 't' = 0.982. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the views of primary school teachers and head-teachers regarding the factors influencing the drop out in government primary schools of Karachi.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that socio-economic factors (e.g. poverty, illiteracy, un caring parents, child-labour etc.), personal factors (e.g. lack of interest, learning problem, health, failing in examination, absenteeism, migration, home cinema), teachers related factors (e.g un caring and professionally less committed teachers, harsh attitude, corporal punishment, sub standard teacher, shortage of teacher) pedagogy and curricula related factors (formal and traditional way of teaching, un-attractive books, unpleasant environment of classes and school, less provision of sports and co-curricular activities, no use of instructional technology) infrastructure related factors (lack of basic physical facilities like school desk or chair, drinking water, electricity, wash room, polluted and busted buildings), administrative factor (e.g lax supervision, lack of monitoring and accountability, favoritism in posting and transfer, corruption) and political factor (low budgetary allocation, law and order situation of the city, political interference and lack of political will for the cause of education) were major factors causing the drop out in government primary schools of Karachi.

Recommendations:

- It is proposed that to minimize the financial crunch of parents. Textbooks, school uniforms should be

provided to all deserving students. Lenient policy should be followed in early classes.

- Like *Watan Card* scheme (for flood affected people) *Education and Health Card* scheme should be introduced for needy students.
- For the enhancement of professional capabilities, need base refresher courses, work shops and seminars should be organized for head-teachers and teachers.
- For over age children (dropouts) non formal curriculum should be introduced in government school. Any school which retains 80% of the enrollment intact, an advanced increment should be awarded to all staff.
- Similarly a teacher who retains his/her class up to a 95% or a certain level an efficiency increment should be awarded to him.
- An Annual School ranking list should be published on the basis of School's efficiency.
- Special or remedial classes should be introduced in government schools for weak students.
- Report and return should be prepared regarding drop out and filed to concern superior authorities regularly.
- School should develop follow-up programme to bring back dropouts children to school.

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