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School dropout- A study on sociological perspective

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Abstract

Human Asset is the best asset available to make a country develop. The process becomes easier if it is a quality human asset. All the nations march forward on the optimistic view that its present generation would become the best ever and effective human asset in the days to come. Education plays a vital role in achieving this. Realising that a person is incomplete without education, the Government spends huge sum of money in educating its children.

The other side of the coin is that, in spite of this there are issues of School Dropout. It can never be an issue if one or two children withdraw from the school. But, if it is rampant, it is a serious issue.

The scenario is peculiar in the fishing villages. The scope for being employed at a tender age is high in fishing villages. Though there are both push and pull factors, the author has made an attempt to find out the causes of this menace. This article also highlights the socio-economic profile of the dropout.

Keywords: Education, Dropout, Fishing Village, Socio- Economic Profile.

1. Introduction

The whole world is undergoing a sweeping change in almost all aspects. The most important is the education. Therefore, the state has very well realised the substance and is spending huge money on education to bring about the desired change.

Contrary to this we still have researches being done to find out the causes of school dropout. Isn't this a sorry state of affair?

Many researchers have used surveys and interviews to gather information about why students drop out of school. These studies typically identify reasons students give for leaving school; these reasons have been characterized as "push" effects and "pull" effects (Jordan, McPartland, & Lara, 1999). Push effects include situations or experiences within the school environment that intensify feelings of alienation, failure, and the desire to drop out. Pull effects include factors that are external to the school environment that divert students from the path leading towards school completion. Reasons for leaving school that have been identified in the literature include problems getting along with teachers, suspension and expulsion, low grades, pregnancy, financial responsibilities, disliking school, caretaking responsibilities, and employment. Students most often cite push factors as reasons for dropping out of school. The decision to drop out most often involves multiple factors (Kortering & Braziel, 1999). (Citation: **Lehr, C. A., Johnson, D. R., Bremer, C. D., Cosio, A., & Thompson, M. (2004). *Essential tools: Increasing rates of school completion: Moving from policy and research to practice.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition.**)

The dropout is much much higher with girls," UNICEF representative to India, Louis-Georges Arsenault, said on the sidelines of a national seminar on India Human Development Report 2011. (*School dropout scenario in India 'extremely high': UNICEF,PTI Mar 11, 2014, 04.59PM IST*)

Therefore, the problem of dropout has reached a point which poses a challenge to the educational experts and planners.

Background of the Study

The present study has been undertaken in a fishing hamlet called Vadakku (North) Vanjore in Karaikal district of Union Territory of Puducherry. The study was conducted with the dropouts of school after class VI post Tsunami. The aim of the study is to find out the major push and pull factors of school dropout. The study would also highlight a brief socio-economic profile of the said target group.

House to house survey was conducted to find out the number of dropouts after class VI post Tsunami in 2004. A total number of 17 dropouts were identified. But unfortunately data could be collected from 14 respondents. In spite of repeated visits, the remaining 3 respondents

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could not be met. So, in terms of percentage of sample it is 82.35%. The design of the study is Descriptive.

The Present Average Age of the Dropouts

The application of Measures of Central Tendency (Mean), it is found that the present age of the dropouts of Vadakku Vanjore fishing village is 19.72 years.

Table 1: Table Showing The Respondents' Gender And The Class Last Studied.

Gender Class Last Studied	IX	X	XII	TOTAL
Male	1 7.14%	6 42.86%	1 7.14%	8 57.14%
Female	1 7.14%	5 35.72%	0	6 42.86%
TOTAL	2 14.28%	11 78.58%	1 7.14%	14 100%

One could well understand from the table that on the whole, 57.14% of the respondents are male and the rest i.e. 42.86% of them are female completed

Among the male respondents 7.14% have studied up to class IX, 42.86% have studied up to class X, and 7.14% have completed class XII.

Among the female respondents, 7.14% have studied up to class IX, 35.72% of them have studied up to class X and none of them have studied class XII.

On the whole, 14.28% of the respondents have studied up to class IX, 78.58% have studied up to class X and 7.14% of them have studied up to class XII.

Table 2: Table Showing the Respondents' Family Members and Monthly Income.

No. of Family Members Monthly Income	Less than Rs 3000	Rs 3000-6000	TOTAL
3-4	2 14.29%	7 50%	9 64.29%
5-6	0	4 28.57%	4 28.57%
7-8	0	1 7.14%	1 7.14%
TOTAL	2 14.28%	12 85.72%	14 100%

Table 4: Table Showing the School Last Studied By the respondents And Their Assessment of The School, Academic Performance and The Teachers' Behaviour.

School Last Studied Opinion	Assessment of School		Academic Performance			Teachers' Behaviour			
	Pleasant	Total	Good	Satisfactory	Total	Strict	Soft	Accordingly	Total
Government	13 92.86%	13 92.86%	1 7.14%	12 85.72%	13 92.86%	9 64.29%	3 21.43%	1 7.14%	13 92.86%
Private	1 7.14%	1 7.14%	1 7.14%	--	1 7.14%	1 7.14%	--	--	1 7.14%
TOTAL	14 100%	14 100%	2 14.28%	12 85.72%	14 100%	10 71.43%	3 21.43%	1 7.14%	14 100%

The table indicate that 92.86% of the respondents have done their schooling in Government Schools and only 7.14% of them have studied in Private schools.

92.86% of the respondents who had studied in government schools term their schooling experience as pleasant and 7.14% of them term it as unpleasant.

On the whole, 14.28% of the respondents rate their academic performance as good, 85.72% rate it as satisfactory.

On the whole, 64.29% of the respondents have 3-4 members in their families, 28.57% of them have 5-6 members in their families and 7.14% of them

It is clear that 85.72% of the respondents earn between Rs 3000- Rs 6000 per month and 14.28% of them earn less than Rs 3000 per month.

The maximum income per month being Rs 6000/- depicts the level of poverty in which the respondents live in. It can also be inferred that the fishing community is very well aware of the evils of big family and most of them have restricted their size of their families.

Table 3: Table Showing the Educational Qualifications of the Parents.

Parents	Illiteracy	Primary	Secondary	TOTAL
Father	1 7.14%	4 28.57%	9 64.24%	14 50%
Mother	4 28.57%	3 21.43%	7 50%	14 50%
TOTAL	5 17.86%	7 25%	16 57.14%	28 100%

The table indicate that on the whole 17.86% of the respondents (parents include both father and mother) are illiterate, 25% of them are educated up to primary level and 57.14% of the respondents are secondary level educated.

On the whole, 7.14% of the respondents' fathers are illiterate and 28.57% of the fathers are primary level educated and 64.24% of them (respondents' fathers) are educated up to secondary level.

On the whole, 28.57 of the respondents' mothers are illiterate, 21.43% are primary level educated and 50% of them (respondents' mothers) are educated up to secondary level.

It is **inferred** that none of the parents of the respondents (dropout) have undergone Higher Secondary level of Schooling. It is astonishing to see that on an average 17.86% of the parents are still illiterate and especially 28.57% of the mothers are illiterate. Comparatively, in this sorry state of affair, the fathers have a better level of education.

Among respondents who had undergone their schooling from government schools, 7.14% of them term their academic performance as good and 85.72% of the respondents' term it as satisfactory.

Among those respondents who had undergone education in private schools, cent percent of them term their academic performance as good.

On the whole 71.43% of the respondents assess their teachers' behaviour as strict and 21.43% consider it as soft and only 7.14% say it is according to the action of the students. Among those respondents who had done their schooling in government schools, 64.29% of them say that their teachers' behaviour is strict, 21.43% of them say it is soft and only 7.14% say it is according to the students' action. Among those respondents who studied in private schools, 7.14% term their teachers' behaviour as strict.

Table 5: Table Showing the Reasons for Dropping Out

SL NO	REASONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Disinterest in studies	13	72.2%
2.	Failed number of times in the same class	1	5.6%
3.	Non –Supportive Parents	2	11.1%
4.	Other Reasons	2	11.1%
	TOTAL	18	100%

Note: Multiple Responses

The table clearly points out that 72% of the respondents dropped out of school because of disinterest in studies, 11.1% of them discontinued their studies because their parents were non-supportive and an equal percentage of them pointed at other reasons for dropping out and 5.6% of the respondents dropped out for the reason that they failed number of times in the same class.

Table 6: Table Showing the School Related Reasons for Dropping Out.

SL NO	REASONS AT SCHOOL	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Differential Treatment by Teachers	1	7.1%
2	Lack of Understanding among Students	1	7.1%
3	Lack of Understanding of Subjects Taught	11	78.7%
4	Misuse of Students by Teachers	1	7.1%
	TOTAL	14	100%

Table 7: Table Showing the Gender Wise Opinion about School and Dropout Life of the Respondents.

Gender Quality of Life	Quality of School Life			Quality of Dropout Life			
	Good	Satisfactory	Total	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Total
Male	1 7.14%	7 50%	8 57.14%	6 42.86%	1 7.14%	1 7.14%	8 57.14%
Female	4 28.57%	2 14.29%	6 42.86%	1 7.14%	1 7.14%	4 28.57%	6 42.86%
TOTAL	5 35.71%	9 64.29%	14 100%	7 50%	2 14.28%	5 35.72%	14 100%

The researcher has made an attempt to analyse the gender wise quality of school and dropout life of the respondents. On the whole 35.71% of the respondents (male & female) say that their school life was good and 64.29% of them say it was satisfactory. On the whole 50% of the respondents (male & female) say that their dropout life is good, 14.28% say it is satisfactory and 35.72% say it is poor. Among the male respondents only 7.14% of them say that their school life was good whereas 42.86% of them say that their dropout life is good. Among the male 50% of them say that their school life was satisfactory and only 7.14% say their dropout life was satisfactory and an equal percent (7.14%) say that their dropout life is poor. Among the female respondents 28.57% of them say that their school life was good whereas only 7.14% say that their dropout life is good. Among the female respondents 14.29% of them say that their school life was satisfactory whereas only 7.14% of them say that their dropout life is satisfactory and another 7.14% say it is poor. On an average 50% of the respondents (male & female) opine that their dropout life is good. With regard to dropout life, it is found that 42.86% of the male say that their dropout life is good and only 7.14% of the female say it is good. And with regard to school life, 28.57% of the female respondents say it was good and only 7.14% of the male say it was good.

Hence, it is inferred that the main reason for dropping out of school is disinterest in studies. The male dropout find their dropout life as good because they are relieved from studies which they hate and are involved in fishing activities which also yield them an earning. Contrary to this, in the case of female dropout, 28.57% of them say that their school life was good compared to 7.14% of them saying that their dropout life is good. The reason is because, after having dropped out of school, they are totally involved in household activities where there is little rest. Now, they feel that their school life was full of leisure, though they did not like studies.

Statistical Analysis – Testing Of Hypotheses

1. Girls do not seek advice before dropping out.

It is found that the Calculated Value is 2.17 and the Table Value is 3.84. Since the calculated value is less than the table value, the hypothesis is accepted.

2. Most of the boys dropout because of dislike in studies.

It is found that the Calculated Value is 6.05 and the Table Value is 7.81. Since the Calculated Value is less than the Table Value, the hypothesis is accepted.

3. Friendship with the dropout does influence in developing bad habits.

It is found that the Calculated Value is 3.17 and the Table Value is 5.99.

Since the Calculated Value is less than the Table Value, the hypothesis is accepted.

Summary and Conclusion

The author would like to summarise in nutshell that the average age of the dropouts of Vadakku Vanjor Fishing Village is 19.72 years. Majority of the dropouts are male and it is also very shocking that none of the female have reached class XII.

It is clearly understood that the fisher folk are well aware of the benefits of small family and this is why it is found that 64.29% of them live in a family consisting of 3-4 members. Though they have a small family they find it difficult to manage their family with a meagre average monthly income of Rs 6000. This economic backwardness can be linked to the institution in which they study. 85.72% of the respondents have studied in Government schools because of the high school fees structure in Private schools. Union Territory of Puducherry, being a small region, the government schools is functioning in a better manner and they compete with private schools. This is why it can be said that, though being dropouts, cent percent (100%) of them say that the schools in which they had studied in Pleasant.

The mothers of the respondents are backward in education compared to the fathers of the respondents. 28.57% of the mothers are still found to be illiterate.

When analysed with the reasons for dropout, 85.72% of them assess their academic performance as just satisfactory and 71.43% of them say that their teachers were Strict. The main reason for the dropout as found in other studies, here also it is seen that 72.2% of them have discontinued because of dislike in studies. When further enquired, they went on to say that lack of understanding in the subjects is the core reason for dropping out for 78.7% of them. The author definitely does not want to attribute this to the quality of teaching because this requires further study.

When asked about the overall school life experience, 64.29% of them say that it was just satisfactory whereas 50% of them say that their dropout life is good. Among the male respondents 42.86 % of them say that the dropout life is good whereas 28.57% of them say that their school life was good.

Testing of hypotheses shows that the girls do not seek advice before dropping out and secondly, most of the boys' dropout because of dislike of studies and thirdly it is also found that friendship with the dropout does influence in developing bad habits.

The researcher would like to add and say that 100% percent of the respondents are Hindu by religion and 57.14% of them are Scheduled Caste and 42.86% of them belong to Other Backward Castes (OBC). 85.72% of the respondents reside in concrete houses. The main reason is because most of residents have given their land for the construction of Karaikal Port and moreover this fishing village was affected by Tsunami. So, the money received in compensation from the Government of Puducherry and Karaikal Port was utilised in construction of (Concrete) RCC Houses.

The problem of School Dropout continues to be a big headache for the planners or experts of education. So, to combat this menace, we can begin with creating awareness on the importance of education to the parents. Adult literacy programmes can also be initiated to literate the illiterate.

The Social Workers and Social Work imparting institutions in Karaikal can also come forward to do their bit. NGO's or Government can appoint a person in charge to follow such

(dropout) cases just like Auxilliary Nursing Midwife is appointed for different areas by the Health Department.

The school and teachers rather than playing a preventive role, proactive role would certainly extend a helping hand in waging war against the social evil called School Dropout. Regular feedback can also be obtained from the students as a precautionary step.

In the fishing villages of Karaikal, the Village Panchayat is found to be very strong as an institution of Social Control. So, they can also evolve a system suitable to them to correct this threat.