

Causes of Drop out and Student's Perception at Secondary School Stage of Punjab

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Abstract

School education is the major factor responsible for the growth in the education system. Secondary education plays a very important role, including all the children between 14-18 years in the age group. Number of illiterate children has been increasing; this may be due to school dropout and non-participation of children in primary as well as secondary stages. The present study aims to understand the causes of drop out and student's perception at secondary stage. Descriptive research method was used. Questionnaire cum interview schedule was used. The present study was carried out on two districts of Punjab namely- Amritsar and Patiala. The sample size includes 10 students (both boys and girls) from each district who dropped out after class 8th on the basis of purposive sampling. Chi Square Test was used to find out the association between the variables. The results showed that poor economic conditions, helping parents in household chores and lack of interest in studies are more significant causes of Amritsar and Patiala districts. Nearly one third of the students are found to be dropouts due to lack of transport facilities, lack of infrastructure in schools, take care of siblings at home, distance of school and parents illiteracy. Further, it is found that perception of dropout students' on their engagement in work after leaving the school, their parents' attitude after leaving the school and in case if they get a chance to get admission again in school of both the districts- Amritsar and Patiala are found to be same.

Keywords: Dropout, Secondary Education, Causes.

Introduction

Education is the base for the development of any nation. School education is the major factor responsible for the growth in the education system. When there is a question of nation's growth and development, then, secondary education plays a very important role, including all the children between 14-18 years in the age group. A Punjab government is aiming continuously to increase the number of education of Punjab so as no child left behind in acquiring education.

It is a fact in India that although the percentage of literacy is rising but the number of illiterate children is also increasing. This may be due to school dropout and non-participation of children in primary as well as secondary from the rural areas of Punjab.

Exclusion in India takes into account "Out-of-school children" or "dropouts" as well as all those who have never been to school and also those who are not in a position to attend school regularly. As per NUEPA report (2013), the Gross Enrollment Ratio of Punjab at the primary level is 111.2, at secondary level the GER is 84.61 and at the secondary level is 60.66. Despite overall growth in enrollment and retention, there is still a cause of worry, why number of children goes on decreasing in completion of school education. School dropout simply means early departure from school. Those students who leave their schools without completion their secondary school, have no certificate. There are number of reasons which lead to early dropout of the students such as poverty of parents, lack of interest, distant schools, migration of parents, household workload etc.

Need of the Study

An eminent goal of India is to enhance the standard of living of the people and also to achieve other goals like, overcoming the problem of poverty and unemployment; social inequality, equal income distribution etc. also go hand in hand. No doubt, there is expansion in the education system, but still, there remains a gap in retention rate of dropout students. In the present study, the researcher aims to understand the causes of dropout students that obstruct the process of universalization of secondary education as well as the students' perception regarding dropouts at secondary stage has been taken into account.

Statement of the Problem

The problem for the study is "Causes of Drop Out and Student's Perception at Secondary School Stage of Punjab".

Review of the Related Studies

The researcher had studied certain literature related to the problem of investigation. Schneider (2002) argued that there is a direct relationship between the school's amenities and the student's attitude. In his research, Schneider suggested that the regularity of students depends on facilities provided by the school for the overall development of students. According to him, school factors play an important role to reduce the absenteeism of the students.

Shadreck (2013) recommended in his paper that the infrastructure of schools and teaching qualities of teaching staff must improve as earliest as possible so that the level of the school should be boost up as per the worldwide education norms. He also suggested in his paper that to reduce the dropout rate a well-managed teacher and parents association must be performed in each and every school from the overall development of the students by keeping follow up on the activities of the students.

Kaur (2018) conducted a study to determine the causes of dropout amongst the school going children in the state of Punjab. It was tried to explore the reasons or causes of dropout and also suggested the strategies to reduce the dropout rate in the school especially in the secondary classes. The data was collected from 48 Government Schools of urban as well as rural locations, belongs to 7 major districts of the Punjab State. Various reasons of dropouts have been explored like forced children by parents to join family business, poor economic conditions especially of children belongs to schedule casts or scheduled tribes, lesser employment opportunities after completion of education, drug addiction amongst the youngsters, for the precaution of girls child from sexual harassment at far-away places from the home, absent of qualified and dedicating teaching staff, poor infrastructure facilities in the government schools as compare to private schools, corrupt and unsystematic education system.

Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To study the causes of dropout among students in secondary schools.
2. To study the students' perception regarding social, economic and locational factors for the exclusion in secondary schools.

Delimitation of the Study

The proposed study is limited to ten government secondary schools (five from each district) covering two districts Amritsar and Patiala only.

Methodology

Descriptive research method is used to find what exists at present. Questionnaire cum interview schedule is used for students to find out the perception of students dropouts covered under study. The present study was carried out on two district of Punjab namely- Amritsar and Patiala: from each district 5 schools were taken for the study. The sample size includes 10 students (both boys and girls) from each district who dropped out after class 8th on the basis of purposive sampling.

In the present investigation, the research tool "Questionnaire Cum Interview Schedule for Students' Perception" was prepared by the investigator herself.

Administration and Procedure

From Amritsar and Patiala districts, students who dropped out after Class 8th from government secondary schools were identified. Questionnaire Cum Interview Schedule for Students' perception regarding causes of dropout and its relation to social, economic and locational factors were distributed to the students of government secondary schools. The purpose of the study was explained to the government educational administrators, teachers, parents and students. The data obtained from 20 dropped out students were used for the analysis purpose.

Statistical Analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 22. Chi Square Test was used to find out the association between the variables.

Findings of the Study

After collecting the data, analysis and interpretation of the data are made in accordance with the objectives of the study. The dropout students were asked to give their views on their perception regarding causes of dropout as well as students' perception regarding the social, economic and locational factors for their dropping out of Amritsar and Patiala districts are shown from Table 1 to Table 5. The causes of dropped out secondary school students was computed and are shown in the following Tables:

Table 1
Perception Regarding Causes of Dropout among Students

REASONS	Amritsar		Patiala	
	Number (10)	Percentage	Number (10)	Percentage
Poor economic conditions	8	80.0	9	90.0
Helping parents in household chores	6	60.0	6	60.0
Lack of interest in studies	6	60.0	4	40.0
Lack of family support	4	40.0	3	30.0
Lack of transport facilities	3	30.0	2	20.0
Lack of infrastructure in school	3	30.0	2	20.0
Take care of siblings at home	2	20.0	2	20.0
Distance of school	2	20.0	2	20.0
Parents illiteracy	2	20.0	2	20.0
Failure in studies	1	10.0	1	10.0
Health problems	1	10.0	1	10.0
Friends are not going to school	0	0.0	0	0.0
Migration of parents	1	10.0	0	0.0
Parents' divorce/separation	0	0.0	0	0.0

Death of parents or any one either father or mother	0	0.0	1	10.0
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From the Table 1, it is clearly indicating that 80.0% secondary students from Amritsar district and 90.0% secondary students from Patiala district dropout the school due to their family poor economic condition.

60.0% secondary school students left the school because they have to help their families in their household works of both the districts.

60.0% students from Amritsar district and 40.0% students from Patiala district reported that they don't have interest in studies, so they dropout.

Further, 40.0% and 30.0% students don't get family support in continuing their studies of Amritsar and Patiala district.

Along with these, lack of transport facilities, lack of infrastructure in schools, taking care of siblings at home, distance of school, illiteracy of the poor- all are prominent causes of students' dropout, having percentage (30-20) % in each district.

Further, it is revealing that failure in studies, health problems, friends are not going to schools, migration of parents, parents' divorce/ separation and death of parents or death of any one either father or mother as other reasons for dropout among students. Hence, it shows that there are number of causes for the dropout among secondary school students but poor economic conditions, helping parents in household chores and lack of interest in studies are more significant causes of Amritsar and Patiala districts.

Table 2

Student's Perception on Engagement in Work after Leaving the School

REASONS ↓	Amritsar		Patiala	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Household Work	4	40.0	5	50.0
Working at Shop	2	20.0	2	20.0
Doing Nothing	2	20.0	2	20.0
Doing Labour Work	2	20.0	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0	10	100.0
p value	0.931			
Significance	NS			

It is shown in Table 2 that majority of the students are engaged in household work after leaving the school. Thus, there is no significance difference in the students' perception on engagement in work after leaving their school of both the districts as the p value (0.931) is greater than 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3

Student's Perception on Parents Attitude when they Left the School

REASONS ↓	Amritsar		Patiala	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Didn't pay attention	4	40.0	4	40.0
To learn some work for earning livelihood	4	40.0	3	30.0
To continue with studies	2	20.0	3	30.0

Total	10	100.0	10	100.0
p value	0.842			
Significance	NS			

Table 3 reveals that majority of the students stated that their parents don't pay any attention after they left the school. There are only one fourth percent of students shows that their parents asked them to continue with their studies and not to leave the school. So, it can be concluded that clear that there is no significant difference in the students' perception on parents' attitude when they left the school on both the districts as the p value (0.842) is greater than 0.05 level of significance.

Table 4

Dropout Student Feelings After they Left the School

REASONS ↓	Amritsar		Patiala	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Very Sad	2	20.0	2	20.0
Sad	1	10.0	3	30.0
Happy	3	30.0	2	20.0
Satisfied	2	20.0	1	10.0
Don't know	2	20.0	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0	10	100.0
p value	0.821			
Significance	NS			

As the above Table 4 shows that dropout students of both the districts- Amritsar and Patiala are found to be same in their feelings after they left the school. Hence, it is resulted that there is no significance difference in the comparison of the dropout student feeling after they left the school as the p value (0.821) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 5

Student's Perception on Getting a Chance of Being Admitted to School Again

REASONS ↓	Amritsar		Patiala	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Very Happy	3	30.0	4	40.0
No Interest	3	30.0	2	20.0
It Will Be Useless	2	20.0	2	20.0
It's Very Late	2	20.0	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0	10	100.0
P value	0.952			
Significance	NS			

From the above Table 5, it can be inferred that students' perception on getting a chance of being admitted to school again of both the districts Amritsar and Patiala has almost the same responses. As the p value (0.952) is not significant at 5% level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that students' retain the same perceptions in getting a chance of being admitted to school again.

Discussion of the Results

The results of the present study show that:

1. It is found that poor economic conditions, helping parents in household chores, lacking of interest in studies, lacking of family support were the major causes behind the dropping out of the students.
2. Nearly one third of the students are found to be dropouts due to lack of transport facilities, lack of infrastructure in schools, take care of siblings at home, distance of school and parents illiteracy. In this way, it is found that numbers of causes are liable for the dropout in secondary schools of Amritsar and Patiala.

3. It is found that perception of dropout students' on their engagement in work after leaving the school, their parents' attitude after leaving the school and in case if they get a chance to get admission again in school of both the districts- Amritsar and Patiala are found to be same. It is also evident that pressure of household work, lack of parents' attention, tension of earning livelihood, students' negative approach towards studies and their unnecessary happiness in leaving the school has become the determinants causing dropout among students. The results of the present study are in accordance with the results of Chugh (2011) who has concluded that in most of the dropout cases only an individual factor is not the determinant but it happens due to various interrelated factors. So, it is essential to identify and analyze each and every factor which leads to dropouts by students.

Conclusion

- On the basis of the analyses of the data, it can be concluded that there are various reasons of dropout like parents unnecessarily forced their children to join their hands in earning livelihood, poor economic conditions, far away schools from home, poor infrastructure facilities in the government schools as compare to private schools.
- Household work and taking care of siblings after school hours are also the main reasons indicated by the majority of the students. That is why the children are not able to spend time on studies at home.
- Lack of interest in studies and their friends are not going to school are one of the major causes of dropout among secondary school students. But still a majority of the dropout students' parents want to send their child back to school again. More of this view are from Patiala district.

In nutshell, it can be concluded that in both the districts- Amritsar and Patiala, a wide number of causes of dropout have been identified and a list of different views and feelings of students' dropout on the type of work in which they were engaged after leaving the schools have been recognized.

Recommendations

1. Mass poverty is the great hurdle in bringing all children of the target group to schools. Progressive steps need to be taken for attracting the children to schools and enabling them to continue their studies at least up to their secondary age (14-18).
2. It is recommended that there must be improvement in the transportation system to drop out and pick up to the children from school to their respective location.
3. Certain interrelated studies like the relationship between parental encouragement and academic achievement, studies on students- teachers' relationship etc. must be considered simultaneously.
4. It is recommended that government should also take steps forward to reduce the dropouts. More attempts and programmes should be brought forward to solve the problems of dropping out from schools.

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