

**INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTORS CAUSING
DROPOUT OF GIRL STUDENTS AT THE SECONDARY
LEVEL IN DISTRICT JAFARABAD, BALUCHISTAN,
PAKISTAN**

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ABSTARACT

The study was carried out to investigate the factors causing dropout of girls students at the secondary level in District Jafarabad, Baluchistan. Dropout means those students who leave their institutes before completion their studies. Normally it happens in poor families. Many researchers have investigated why children dropout their studies. Baluchistan is the most neglected province in Pakistan in educational development. The researcher has interviewed few experts in district Jafarabad and it was found that many girl students do not complete their final Secondary Education. The respondent grieved several issues for this educational problem. Researcher has selected this topic to resolve the issue on scientific bases.

In order to search the factors of drop out girl students, survey method was adopted. Female teachers who teach at secondary level, girls who dropout from schools and their parents constitute the population of the study. As the population was diverse and mature, therefore stratified random sampling design was adopted. Two structured questionnaires were designed to collect data from respondents. One questionnaire for teachers and parents and second for the dropout girl students was prepared. A total 150 respondents were selected (50 each from teachers, parents and students). The data was analyzed in two groups. Data collected from teachers and parents and students was analyzed collectively item by item. Data was analyzed by applying Mean method.

Key Words: Dropout Students, Secondary School, Jafarabad, Baluchistan.

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Introduction

Education is the only thing which makes the country towards development. It always has been the first step for every country government to put the people of their country in better education to compete with other developed countries. It plays a vital role for every nation to put them in success and advancement. Education is the most important factor for every developed country of this world. China, Japan, America, Europe and some Asian countries spend a huge amount of their yearly budget for education sector. In Pakistan education at very minor level and children are not being educated properly and when we talk about women then the situation is even worse. People do not send their children to school and rather educating them they prefer their boys to learn how to work and their girls to learn the work of house so that the earning and working hand might increase.

Importance of Women Education

Women contribute half of our population. They have the uncertain distinction of maintaining a lower profile in many social, educational and financial features across the world. Women have been treated as lesser contributors to society in term of social and economic progress matters (Rao& Gupta, 2006, p. 84-85). In this regard, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India said:

“To awaken the people, it is the woman who must be awakened and if she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the village moves and the nation moves”.(Rao& Gupta, 2006, p. 94).

Women are the important part of a society. No society can exist without women. In the same, women education is considered as a primary predictor for a number of development indicators including national fertility rates, infant mortality, family income and productivity. World Bank economists have recognized girl's education as a single development intervention with the greatest individual and social return (Amadi; Role & Makewa, 2013. Unfortunately Pakistani women are very behind in education field. Parveen, 2006, write in her essay that the education status of Pakistani women is among the lowest in the world (Parveen, 2006. Hashmi; Zafar; Kanwal& Akhtar (2009) put light on the importance of women education in their article. Women are the central part of development process in a country. They contribute in development process

by presenting economic prosperity, enhancing child health and enhanced women empowerment in making domestic decisions with in marital relation (Hashmi et al, 2009).

Causes of Women Illiteracy

Shahidul (2013) writes in his article why girls drop out in schools. He is of the view that the common preference model is founded on the idea that the single decision maker act for the good of the whole household activities. He expected that all the household resources are allotted by a household head that represents the distributor's taste and preference. Consequently, in the male dominated society, decision regarding the well-being of children, including their education, become gender biased. In this situation girls may receive less preference relatives to boys by the father. According to researchers those fathers prefer to finance their assets in their sons rather than their daughters. Studies show that when mothers take part in the household decisions, these decisions are less gender biased than fathers. Scholars explain their arguments that women are more unselfish and less gender biased than man (Shahidul, 2013).

Dropout

Ali et al, 2013 give the definition of dropout in their article "Dynamics of Dropout of Students in Government Schools". They write that a student leaving school for any reason except death will be termed as dropout. Advanced countries face dropout problem due to social factors whereas developing countries confront it mainly due to economic reasons (Ali et al, 2013, p. 421). Gul et al, 2013 say about dropout. School dropout simply means early departure from school. These pupils, who leave their institutes without completing their secondary school, are called dropout students. School dropout is an international issue facing by education department throughout the world (Gul et al, 2013.) Rana; Chaudhry (2011) have proved in their article that other than the family, schools are the largest source of driving children to the streets. It is high rate of dropout children due to useless teaching methodology and boring curriculum. These types of educational institutes are producing useless youth without any basic skills that were important for earning in the society. These dropout children are filling up the streets with selfish and immoral people (Rana; Chaudhry, 2011).

Girl Students' Dropout Factors

There are many factors causing girl students' dropouts. Mawere 2012 put light on some factors in this regards. He wrote that the real cause of girl children dropouts has been a contested subject. The problem of dropout has been attributed to various factors ranging from abject

poverty, economic hardship, early marriages and the mistaken religious and traditional beliefs. Some people believe that educating a girl child is waste of resources (Mawere 2012). There are many factors responsible for the high rate of student's dropout and low enrollment rate. The poverty, traditional and cultural values, community behavior, lack of facilities, unaffordability of education expenditures by the parents are the various factors of student's dropout (Ali et al, 2013, p. 431-432).

Nadia (2010) has indicated some cultural and social obstructions for girls to get education in Pakistan. Some of them are in the following lines. Pakistan is a developing country. Literacy rate is very low. High illiteracy among parents who do not realize the importance of education for girls is the main cause of girl dropouts in Pakistan. Poverty leads parents to prefer boys for schooling the girls. Pakistani women have low status in some tribal societies. They are regarded as less intelligent than men. They are considered responsible for house work and serving the men folk of their family. Early age marriages are common in Pakistani society. Therefore girls are prepared for housekeeping rather than for school education. In the above are the some barriers, which are deeply rooted in centuries old customs (Nadia, 2010).

Zarif 2012 is of the view that it is evident that the number of children enrolled in school has increased over time. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of children who start primary school are not completing this cycle. There are many factors associated with dropouts, some of which belong to the individual, such as poor health or malnutrition and motivation. Some other factors from students' household situations are child labor and poverty. Some school level factors also play a role in increasing pressure to dropout. Some of them are teachers' absenteeism, school location and poor quality educational provisions (Zarif, 2012).Jackline&Tikoko 2014 give some home based factors that caused dropout. Teenage pregnancy and early marriages are the main cause of girl students' dropout. Addiction to drugs, peer group influences, financial issues, discouragement at home and discrimination among siblings are the other factors, which affect dropout (Jackline&Tikoko, 2014).

Methodology

The purpose of the research was to investigate the factors causing dropout of girl students at the secondary level in district Jafarabad, Baluchistan. In order to search the factors of drop out girl students, survey method has been adopted. Structured and closed questionnaires were designed to collect the data for the study. In these questionnaires, closed-ended items arranged the range

of responses from which the respondent may choose. One questionnaire for teachers and parents and second for the dropout girl students was prepared. A total 150 respondents were selected (50 each from teachers, parents and students).

The scoring procedure was mentioned for quantitative part of the study. The devised questionnaire was composed of structured questions having five point Likert scale format. The marked option denotes the degree of agreement against each question. The scale given below was used to interpret the total responses of all the respondents against each question by calculating the weighted Mean.

Five Likert Scale Instrument

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Range	0.01-1.00	1.01-2.00	2.01-3.00	3.01- 4.00	4.01-5.00
Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Data was collected by personnel visits to different schools and locations. Personal visit helps to reduce the students' hesitation and help to motivate the students

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed in two groups. Data collected from teachers and parents was analyzed collectively item by item. Data collected from drop out students was analyzed separately item by item. The reason why students' data was analyzed separately is that both students and teachers-parents questionnaires were separate. Quantity of items was also different. Data was analyzed by applying Mean value method.

Findings

After research it is found that there are many factors which become the cause of drop out in Pakistan. For easy understanding these can be categorized in the following categories:

a. Parents' Financial Factors

Children are not sent to school due to serious financial issues as fares of transport and non-availability of books and learning aids. Parents avoid enrolling their daughters in schools due to a lot of distance. Children don't attend school due to parents' lack of interest. Mothers engage their daughters in domestic jobs. Parents are illiterate therefore they do not send their children to get education. Parents do not send their daughters to school because they believe that one day they will marry, therefore it is useless to send them to schools.

b. Students Related Interest Factors

Students are least interested in education.

c. Teachers Related Factors

Students drop out of school because they don't find any attention in school. Students drop out of school due to old and conventional teaching methodology. Students drop out because of teacher's behavior. Girls don't take classes because of teacher's favoritism in the class.

d. Social Factors

Social barriers restrict girls to attend schools. Early engagement/marriage affects female education as their in-laws object on their going to school. Girls are not sent to school due to veil.

e. Curriculum Related Issues

Curriculum is not interested and according to the needs and psyche of students. Girls believe that children are given too much homework from school.

f. Failure in Examinations Factors

Failure in exam becomes the cause of girl students 'dropout from the school.

Conclusions

This study can be concluded that if we want to check the dropout in Pakistan, we must have reviewed our education policy. Curriculum must redesign for our students and society requirements. It should be interested enough to draw the attention of our students. Importance of education must be disseminated to all the parents through print and social media. We are to make more schools and our teachers must be trained in accordance with modern teaching technologies. Many students drop out due to financial issues, so the government should give stipend to needy students. The rich may be encouraged to help the poor and intelligent students. In conclusion, it can be said that a lot needs to be done if Pakistan is serious in improving its education and wishes to make schools effective. This comprises addressing the problems of resources, access and enrolment, preparing heads for academic and transformational leadership, bringing attitudinal change in parents, tribal leaders and other traditional features regarding female education and providing learning environment for teachers and students to promote learning. If

the government wants to solve the huge problem of dropout, policy makers need to look at the factors which compel children to leave school at various stages.

Recommendations

After a deep and continuous study of the girl dropout in district Jafarabad, Baluchistan, the following recommendations are made on the basis of those findings and conclusions:

- Curriculum should be reviewed and redesigned according to the psyche of students. Government should introduce activity based curriculum and should discourage rote memorization.
- Parents must be literate for importance of education. It is recommended that government should investigate the parents to give proper attention and care to their children.
- Extra-curricular activities should be encouraged in schools at secondary level. Students' participation should be ensured.
- Most of the parents are very poor in the area of district Jafarabad. The government should give scholarships in greater numbers and should control the prices of stationary items, school uniform and shoes. So that the lay men can easily afford the education expenses.
- Early engagement and marriages must be banned in Pakistan especially for girls.
- Teachers should be trained in accordance with modern teaching techniques.
- Evaluation method needs improvement. Pass-fail concept should be finished up to fifth class.
- Wealthy and influential people of the society are to be encouraged to provide financial assistance to the poor and needy students to continue and complete their education.
- Government should provide basic facilities as drinking water, toilet, furniture, electricity and others teaching aids.

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