

UPPER PRIMARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN INDIA & DROPOUT: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE ECONOMIC CONSTRAIN AND ILLITERACY OF PARENTS

Chandraprabha Nath

Research Scholar

Mahatma Gandhi University

Meghalaya.

Abstract

The standard of a country depends upon various factors like the educational facilities, rate of literacy, economical resources, soundness in Science and technology etc. In the world wide scenario till today India has been placed in the category of developing country. Assam as a state under the Indian Territory is also caring the concept equally. As the growth of Education of a country depends upon the annual budget spend by the country, like that the growth of education for the upcoming generation depends upon the economic & literacy status of parents. A major setback of Indian education is Dropout, which has been seen almost in all levels of Education. In the domain of formal education, the Government spends a significant share of its annual budget. But it is very unfortunate to observe the fact that till date the issue of dropout in different levels of education has not been solved till date. Upper primary levels of education is also been facing this issue. In this study attempt is being made to focus on the economic constrain and illiteracy of parents as reason of existence of drop out in upper primary level of education in Assam as well as in India. For the study, Balijana educational block under Goalpara district of Assam is considered as the area of study.

Keywords: *Economic, literacy, Dropout, Upper Primary.*

Introduction:

Education is a lifelong process through which the human being learns from various ways during their life time. Human may learn from several aspects or agencies they face in their life. Different scholars expressed their views regarding education time to time considering their society and the time they lived in.

With the passes of time the concept of Education has been changing according to the demand of the era. Concept of Education is something different in present context. Experts in this field consider two meaning of Education. In one, Education is a continuous process of human being which begins from the day of birth and

ended at the end of life. In another, it is just the bookish education starts with the book and end with the book. The first one is named as 'informal' education and the second one as 'formal' education'

Formal education develops through planned system controlled by specific authority. Now-a-days some new trends have been included in the formal education viz Montessori Method, Kindergarten Method, ProjectMethod etc. etc. These new methods give importance on the development of the child according to the potentialities in the 'formal' education because education is for life of human being and it is vitally related to the way of living and experiencing.

Formal education provides certificate after completion of certain level of education. It signifies as well as stand as a proof of level of educational qualification of individuals. Formal education begins with the Lower Primary level and it gradually goes up. Informal Education is a continuous process of human being which begins from the day of birth and ended at the end of life hence it includes all the step, process etc of life.

Schooling is the other terms of meaning of education. In other words, education is considered as factor or process which takes place in a school. Teaching in the class room, teacher-pupil relationship, games, co-curricular activities and many other such things are the necessary parts of schooling.

The first milestone in the development of education in independent India is the enactment of Indian Constitution. Under the Directive Principle of State Policy, it was defined that for securing the right to education, the state shall provide effective provisions. Literacy in hundred percent was the dream of the framers of the constitution but as it would take long time and the present finance could not cope up with the gigantic problem, the clause within the limit of the present resources was added to the article. It is the obligation of the state to provide provisions and arrangements of education to its citizens as education is the right of every Indian.

From time-to-time Attempts has been made in various ways to achieve the goal of universalization of Primary education, but till date due to various obstacle the problems are being remain same and as a result such attempts fail achieve the goal. Hence, both Lower Primary and Upper Primary Education are under the threat of Dropout, wastage & stagnation.

Government has set the target of universalization of Primary education through constitution. But unfortunately till date Primary education is facing hurdles in its development. Observation and record says that the introduction of "*Sarva Siksha Abhiyan*" was one of the significant policy to resolve the problems of Primary education and practically "*Sarva Siksha Abhiyan*" tried from its utmost level to wipe the problems of Primary education so that it may touch the milestone of universalization and fulfill the noble dream of the framers of the Indian Constitution.

In 1987, a special plan was introduced as Operation Black Board (OBB). Since 1991 to 2001, the Union Government of India has introduced number of programs which were sponsored by the Central Government itself. The basic aim of those programs was eradicate the problems of Indian Education including the Drop out of students which had been identified as one of the basic problem in every stage of education in India. In 2000 the DPEP came to an end and a new program was introduced by the Government as *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) in 2001. The basic aim of launching SSA was to focus on the elementary level of education. SSA stressed on developing the infrastructure of the schools as well as to increase the rate of enrolment and up gradation the quality of education. During SSA, the Educational Management System had been strengthening and UDISE system was introduced which later became the source of official data in this regard. Since 2012-2013 it had been signified as Official Statistics. SSA took the initial target to bring all the never enrolled and dropped out children back to school by 2003 along with other two basic aim universalization of primary education (UPE) by 2007 and Universal Elementary Education (UEE) by 2010. As per the National commitment the target years of 2003, 2005 and 2010 though show some positivity but could not achieve the goal as per the commitment. With the aim and objective to enhance access to secondary education along with to improve the quality, a new scheme was launched across the nation in March, 2009 namely *Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA).

In the Union Budget of 2018-2019, a proposal came out for the holistic development of the school education covering from pre-nursery to Class twelve of Secondary education under the program of *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan*. Despite all such time to time plans and program the educational sector is still under the grab of problem like drop out of children etc.

Targeting the objective to find out the basic reason and probable solutions of occurring drop out in upper primary level of education, a study had been conducted in the Balijana Educational block of Goalpara District, Assam. After the study it was found that the illiteracy and economical constrain of parents are two major factor along with some others for existing dropout in upper primary level of education.

Area of Study:

In this paper, Balijana Educational Block of Goalpara District, Assam has been considered as the area of study to discuss the issues and challenges of Dropout in Upper Primary Level of Education from the angle of literacy and economic condition of the parents as the said area seems to be considered as the miniature picture of India from the view of various caste, creed, socio-economical condition, communication level, geographical pattern and facility and materialistic development.

Materials and Methods:

Necessary information for this paper is collected from Primary sources by following Random Sampling Method. Questionnaire and Interview technique were also applied to collect Primary data. Survey was also made for the purpose. Again necessary Secondary information relating to this study has been collected from different books, journals, statistical handbooks, different e-resources etc. Analysis of data has been made by following standard statistical methods such as Mean, Median etc.

Need of the Study:

In spite untiring effort of Governments, spending a good amount of Annual Budget, various up-dated innovative program to up-lift quality of education and drop down the problems in various level of education including upper primary level, the problem of Dropout is still exists in various level of education including Upper Primary Level as a serious challenge for the education system of India. Besides whole hearted effort made by the Government, Dropout in Upper Primary Level of education as well as in Lower Primary and Secondary level has still been remaining as unsolved question. To find out the causes of Dropout as well as to find out the justified solutions for removal of it, the need of study under the heading of school dropout proclaim its justification. Moreover, this study will try to open the real literacy and economic picture exist in the area of study in particular which can reflect the nation in general.

Objectives of the study:

- a) To find out the reasons of Dropout in Upper Primary Level reported by the School Administrator.
- b) To find out the household reasons reported by the household members of the Dropout students.
- c) To find out the reason of Dropout from the socio-economic aspect.
- d) To find out the reason of Dropout from the policy adopted by the Government.

Methodology:

In this particular study the investigator has selected the schools for survey by applying random sampling technique from the area of study and data were collected from those schools. For collecting relevant data for the purpose of this research, the investigator has applied interview and questionnaire method also and collected data from the drop out students, parents of the drop out students, head of the institutions, the block level and district level government responsible officers etc. Survey method had also been considered by the researcher as the convenient method to gather data for the present study or investigation. The obtained data gathered from every source were subjected to statistically analysis. Basically the measures of central tendency and variability of the

gathered data were conducted where necessary. The inter-correlation and percentage were also obtained as per the requirement.

Discussion and Results:

The present study on Dropout in the Balijana Educational block of Goalpara District, Assam have been basically conducted with the methodology described in the previous methods. After completion of the necessary survey, field study, interview etc, the discussion on it may be presented in the following manner.

a) Financial constrain of parents:

The financial position of the parents plays an important role in education of the school going children. It is very true that the financial position is comparatively low in average of village inhabitants then to the urban inhabitants. The scope for livelihood is also very less in village area. Most of the villagers are dependent on cultivation. It is also found during the survey that a significant numbers of families don't have their own land in adequate for cultivation and the production of crops in minimum land could not meet up their whole year needs of crops. Since long a good number of villagers used to engage themselves in the paddy field of the rich families of the village in daily wage system and the alienation of the society starts. The poor families work as wager and do hard labour in the paddy field of the rich families and get either daily wage in terms of money or the crops against their labor. The social system running since long in the remote villages push back the poor families to the poorer family.

The male persons of the poor families used to go to the nearby urban or semi urban areas to engage themselves as daily wager. In such situation, the father of the single family goes out in the early morning for earnings and return back in the late evening with a tired body. Some of them used to consume the locally produced alcohol and get bed just after coming back. In such situation such father does not take any care for the education of their children. The mother of such family is the only care taker in every respect of their children. It has also been witnessed that in such families the number of children are also comparatively more. Moreover the mother in most of the families are illiterate and do not have the minimum knowledge about the value of education. Such families do not give stress for the formal education of their child and drop out occurs from like background.

The economically sound families send their children to the private schools of the nearby urban or semi urban area. As a result the feedback of education of such child comes into the credit of urban or semi urban area. Thus the students of the schools of village are belonging to the category of economically poor sections.

In the urban and semi urban areas also almost the same picture reflects for the family's lives under below poverty line. But there is some difference also had been witnessed by the investigator during survey. A trend has

been grown up among a section of families lives in below poverty line. They want to send their children to the private schools anyhow. For this trend many parents do hard labor to earn more money. Significant number of families under below poverty line suffers from the inferiority complex and desire to overcome from such complexity. They also want to prove that they can send their children to the private school as well as the economically sound families. They want to provide their child better education. A hidden competitive mind set up has been grown up among most of the families lives under below poverty line. For the education of their children they don't hesitate to engage themselves in more work and try to earn more to overcome their financial constrain. From the socio-economic angle, it's a good sign to uplift the economical status but from the angle of consistency, sometime it witnessed bitter position. It also happened in many families lives under below poverty line that they start the education of their children in private school with a will but unable to maintain the same position for long time. As a result, they surrendered themselves and either admitted their children to the government or provincialized school or sometime they withdraw their child from education permanently. Such untoward grown up competitive mind setup also creates a position in existence of dropout.

The investigator has visited 185 families as a whole where 120 families are from village area, 25 families from semi urban area and 40 families from urban area. The economical position of the visited families as traced in survey has been brought in tabular form in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Area	No of families surveyed	Average number of children	Average annual Income (in Lakh)	Having own land & House (in %)	Having own land for cultivation (in %)	Children reading in school (in %)		Dropout found (in number)
						Private	Govt/Prov.	
Urban	40	1.7	8.2	98%	2%	82%	18%	1
Semi	25	2.52	6.3	100%	60%	66%	34%	3
Village	120	2.75	0.98	96%	40%	28%	72%	33

TABLE 1: *Showing the number of families brought under survey along with average no of children, annual income, having own land & house, having land for cultivation, children read in schools and dropout found in urban, semi urban and village areas.*

From Table 1 it is very clear to understand and analyze that in village area the annual income is below poverty line in average. The number of children in the families is also high in average. During survey few families were found having more than 4 children. Such families are also belongs to very poor category as per their average annual income. Even they do not have their own land for cultivation also. In village area 96 percent of families are having their minimum land with a house to live which is less in comparison to the urban and semi urban area. Even in village major part of the families do not have their own land for cultivation which is a great setback for up liftmen of financial position for the villagers. The families having financial sound conditions of village send their children to the private schools and the rest send to the government schools. But due to financial hardship, good number of students give up their school and drop out occurs. Dropout found very less in urban areas. Simultaneously the dropout numbers are increased in semi urban area and found highest in village area. Out of 120 numbers of surveyed families, 33 drop out were found which is more than 27 percent.

One of the basic reason of finding high rate of dropout in village is the financial constrain of parents. The parents of urban and semi urban areas are financially found more or less sound and the number of dropout is also less in such area.

b) Illiteracy of parents:

A major point of discussion is the literacy of parents. During survey and interview the investigator has witnessed the reality of parents in terms of their literacy. The picture is definitely describes the failure of various plans and programs of the government in ground reality. Since long initiative were taken by the government to increase the rate of adult education with the motto to cover all illiterate adult and to make them literate in minimum. But it was found that a major percentage of parents basically from the village are still far behind from having minimum literacy. Non having the efficiency to read and write such parents are unable to go through any banner or poster initiated by the government for making aware the parents about the importance of education of their child. Such parents do not remain present in any discussion conducted by the schools for the academic purpose of their children. The parents having no literacy usually remain unaware about the education of their children. Even many of such only know that their child goes to school but do not know in which class their child is reading or what is the result of examination conducted by the school. It has been observed by the investigator that illiteracy of parents is high in village area in comparison to urban area. The picture of parent's literacy is tried to bring in tabular form in Table No 2.

TABLE 2

Literacy condition of parents	Area of survey	No of dropout found
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	Urban Area	Rural Area	Urban Area	Rural Area
No of families surveyed	40	145	1	37
No of literate parents (both father & mother)	36	48	0	0
No of illiterate parents (both father & mother)	2	61	1	27
No. of families where father is literate	1	10	0	3
No. of families where mother is literate	1	26	0	7

TABLE 2: *Showing the literacy and illiteracy of parents indicating both father and mother, only father and only mother including number out dropout found under each category of families.*

From the Table 2 it is very clear that number of dropout occurs in high where both father and mother are illiterate. Very significantly is also observed that number of dropout is less in figure where only father is illiterate but it is high in figure where only mother is illiterate. Educationist pronounced that education to an woman is the education to a society and education to man is the education of an individual. The thinking of the educational thinkers found as very true from the picture of Table 2.

It may bring under conclusion that the education of parents plays significant role in the education of their child. If parents are educated in minimum then they understand and become serious for the education of their children. The number of dropout among their children occurs in such families very accidentally. Moreover the dropout found in such families is not due to the ignorance of parents but due to some other issues like medical or physiological disability where the physician has declared that the child should not be forwarded for education till the child alive.

On the other hand, in the families where both father and mother are illiterate, in such families maximum number of parents are not at all aware about the education of their child. They only understand that they have given birth of child and arrangement of shelter and food for them is their basic duty. But if any of the father or mother is educated then they have minimum awareness about the education of their children. Moreover the level of education of parents also found significant in terms of education of their children.

In maximum number of families the level of education of father is high than to the mother. But it is a mixed result from the parents that in some families the mother is highly aware though having low level of education than the father. In such families the father gives full responsibility to the mother to look after the education of their children and father engaged himself for arrangement of earnings for the family. Means father tries provides all kinds of facilities needed for the family and mother becomes the real manager of the family.

Thus, finally the investigator has brought in consideration that the literacy of parents is very significant in increasing or decreasing the number of dropout in upper primary level of education. Due to illiteracy of parents a good number of instances of child marriage also took place and encouraged for occurrence of dropout in upper primary level of education which will be discussed in the next point.

From the discussion above by considering various aspects of dropout we may now proceed to the result of this study.

Result:

If we consider all the points discussed above then it comes to the point that the literacy condition and financial condition of parents are the two basic reasons behind all. Due to these two conditions the socio-economical position of the country is almost unable to move upward and such pathetic socio-economical position makes a large number of people to be unaware about the education of their children. The picture found in the area of study is almost comparable in all over the country in more or less.

Conclusion:

The study on dropout in India is quite impossible to cover in a stipulated time frame and under limitation. It needs a continuous study without limitations to find out the root of the problem and long time is required for it to move to the deep of the problem. But in this particular study it was tried to find out the causes of dropout and the measures to be taken to minimize or drop down within a stipulated time of three years. Even though the investigator has tried level best to go through the problem with dedication and found some basic factors for which the problem is creating its position of existence. The area of study carries the variety of characteristics in terms of its geographical position, socio-cultural significance, inhabitant's character, economical position etc. Hence it can be stamped that the selection of area of study is perfect one to represent India as a whole.

But, these limitations only point to the future research implications on the issue. These are pardonable considering the fact that the survey was conducted in 100 numbers of schools selected randomly and 185 numbers of families within the area of study which was though not sufficiently large but not a small figure also. Moreover, the feedback of that survey was also somehow different from each other. The mere collection of data for this research took about two years. The arrangement and analysis of data also took quite a length of time. Under the circumstances, it was not possible to cover more schools are families within the time frame allowed for this study.

The study can now be brought in conclusion with the hope that the future researcher will cover research in same issue and forward some more reasons as well as remedies to dropdown the dropout to zero level.

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