

Understanding Educational Disconnect at Primary School Level
Precursor, Factors and Causes

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Abstract

Education is portrayed at the high on political agenda of all the democratic and dictatorship regimes in Pakistan but the figures related to literacy and enrollment rates at compulsory primary education level are still very low. After 70 years of independence, the homeland is still striving to achieve the millennium development goals. To meet the international standards and targets of literacy, access to compulsory quality education and 100% enrollment for the school age children different efforts have been made time and again. The enrollment has become better than previous times but the serious problem of the system is low retention rate and high dropout rate at primary school level. The dropping out of students from compulsory education level is a universal phenomenon for almost all the developing nations. To retain the students at school it is needed to explore that why the students leave school before completion of primary education level. This study was an effort to unfold the experiences of dropouts' parents and teachers about the factors that lead students to drop out. This qualitative inquiry was conducted through interviews of 104 dropouts' parents and teachers identified through snow ball sampling technique from a district of Punjab-Pakistan. The data were collected by following the research ethics through interviews conducted by using two interview schedules. The interviews were then transcribed and tabulated for thematic analysis. The analysis of data revealed that school related, family related and individual related causes are the most prevalent than others that force the students for dropping out. It is suggested that this phenomenon can be controlled by improving existing schools physically and operationally for transforming it into an attractive, safe and healthy place of learning. The vulnerable students should be timely identified for individual level remedial measures and their families may be involved and supported ethically and financially.

Keywords: Educational disconnect, dropouts, retention, dropping out, dropouts' teachers, dropouts' parents, financial assistance, school improvement.

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Introduction

Worldwide there is no disagreement on the need and value of primary school level education. However the nature and worth of this need and value varies from culture to culture and time to time. It is considered by all means that it is a good thing but the analysts have derived different dimensions of its worth. Although it is need of the society to train its young ones to adorn them with the local norms and cultural values, albeit the primary school level education also provides foundation for transformation of a traditional human being to an economic human being. It not only offers pedestal for higher level education but also makes an individual able to take part in the economic activity for contributing to the national economy.

Being part of UN Declaration of human rights, basic education has become the universal basic human right of all individuals and its an obligation for the states to create and provide opportunity of free, easy accessible and quality compulsory education irrespective of all belongings and biases. Pakistan being the signatory of all such international commitments and declarations is affirmed to provide its school age boys and girls everywhere in the country an opportunity of free and easily accessible good quality education. Achieving the targets of universal primary education is also at the agenda of UN's Millennium Developments Goals (MDGs) by stating that "Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling". By the end of 2015 the net enrollment rate for primary schools in developing regions has been raised from 83% in 2000 to 91% in 2015; whereas the school aged out of school children's number has dropped from 100 million in 2000 to 57 million in 2015 (UNDP 2003; United Nations, 2015).

In 2015, the world states have adopted the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development by following its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDG targeting education bounds all the countries that "by 2030, ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning" (United Nations, 2015a). As the situation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Pakistan is concerned, it seems that too much has to be done to achieve this goal and much is in progress such as Govt. of Punjab province has launched different drives for 100% enrollment as well as literacy and numeracy drive. Despite of all serious efforts the retention of all admitted students till the completion of primary schooling cycle is still a question. The high dropout rate of primary school students is a question yet to be answered. This question can't be answered unless and until the causes of primary school dropout are not explored at a large scale. Further a large scale census for estimating dropout rate of all male and female students in all areas is also needed for comprehensive planning to address the problem of dropping out (Farooq, 2010; Farooq, 2013; Farooq, 2016).

Children are getting enrolled more than ever in primary schools due to the implementation of different policies to achieve MDGs but still leaving at a high rate and causing lower completion rate of primary school level in many countries. As a consequence of this early years dropout deprives the young learners from learning of necessary basic skills needed for life. Their early school leaving limits their learning opportunities to a very little because in developing countries they experience in overcrowded classroom with low qualified teachers (Alexander, 2008). Such poorly trained teachers are not properly aware of the instructional adaptation techniques keeping in view the specific learning needs of the students in miserable learning conditions with insufficient materials (Little, 2008).

Different studies have explored the causes of school dropouts according to their local cultural contexts. The major cause reported by the dropout was their household work engagements, large family size and lack of guidance in studies from parents (Baruah & Goswami, 2012). It is evident from the changing patterns of increasing population that the number of students in primary schools is increasing. However a noteworthy proportion of enrolled students are not staying at school for completion of primary school level education. There are multifaceted factors that are associated with the students dropping out. There are some school related factors such as harsh attitude of teachers, teachers' absenteeism, poor quality of teaching, rigidity in instruction and assessment, unattractiveness of school, unhealthy and unsafe school environment that force the students to take decision for dropping out. Family based factors are also associated with the phenomenon of dropout such as financial crisis, child labour, low value to education, and household engagements in non academic activities. The individual linked factors such as poor health, disability, low motivation, fear from school environment and lack of interest may also contribute for dropping out. The community related factors are also affecting the students to dropout (Sabates, Akyeampong, Westbrook & Hunt, 2010).

There is no single reason for dropping out of children from school but it is a result of cumulative effect of many causes. Dropping out of students from school is not an upshot of a single event but is a consequence of long continuous process. The prevalence of dropout varies from region to region, culture to culture and different age ranges. These causes may be different for boys and girls, urban and rural students even country to country. A range of patterns of dropouts emerges from the data collected in different contexts. In different countries different patterns are observed for drop outs such as some drops from grade one and in some other some drops from grade five (Hunt, 2008). In Pakistani context primary school students drop out from grades Nursery, One and Five (Farooq, 2016a).

Lloyd, Mete and Grant (2009) concluded that in rural Pakistani areas children whose parents are not illiterate and have some education have less likelihood for dropping out. Especially the mothers' education has positive effect for retention of girls in primary schools. Those students who seem vulnerable of dropping out are usually with difficulties in learning, grade repetition, poor performers in the class, habitual absentees, and truants during school hours or lagging behind the class in academic tasks (Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009; Lewin, 2009; Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

In the light of different studies conducted in Pakistan and world over a need was felt that there is hardly any study on the parents and teachers of dropouts being the key stakeholders with firsthand knowledge of precursor for dropping out of their children. Secondly for sound planning to raise the retention rate it is also desirable to have empirical evidence based database regarding the factors, patters and causes of drop outs. This study was an effort to serve this purpose to generate a discussion in the opinion of dropouts' parents and teachers that why the primary school students make decision to disconnect their education before completion of compulsory primary education cycle.

Statement of the Problem

It is a common phenomenon that students are leaving school before completion of their primary schooling and authorities are very conscious about this trend. Albeit the political governments have the will to control this incidence but the rate of dropping out is not yet in the controlled limits. This dropping out of young learners not only creates a social problem for the parents and family but also hinders the economic progress of the country. These dropped outs being vocationally unskilled also become financial and social burden for the masses. The educational authorities are continuously trying to cope up with this problem but couldn't get expected progress. The reason behind this poor success rate may be the identification of causes of this educational disconnect of the dropping outs. There are hardly available studies on the identifications of the causes of dropping out in Pakistani context. This study was an effort to unfold the parents and teachers of dropped outs about their situations to make decision of disconnection of their children's education.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. explore the accounts of dropouts' parents for their decision of withdrawing their children before completion of primary schooling.
2. amass the opinion of dropouts' teachers regarding the phenomenon of dropping out of their students during primary schooling.
3. document the suggestions of dropouts' parents and teachers for improving school to retain the potential dropouts from dropping out.
4. stockpile the expectations of dropouts' parents and teachers from the primary school of their children.
5. hoard the complaints of parents' of dropouts from schools of their children.
6. unfurl the similarities and differences in the opinion of dropouts' parents and teachers regarding the factors contributing towards dropping out of primary school age children.

Research Questions

The study explored the answers of the following questions:

1. What are the specific causes that strained parents for making decision of educational disconnect for their children during primary schooling?
2. What are the opinions of dropouts' teachers about the contributing causes of their students dropping out from primary grades?
3. What are the suggestions of parents and teachers of dropouts to make school attractive to retain the vulnerable students from dropping out?
4. What are the expectation of dropouts' parents and teachers from the schools of their children?
5. What are the complaints of parents of dropouts from the schools of their children?
6. What are the similarities and differences among the experiences of dropouts' parents and teachers regarding causes of dropout?

Significance of the Problem

The available database regarding the causes and factors contributing towards dropping out of primary school children needs to be revisited and based on primary data. This study is unique in a sense that it focused on the opinion of key stakeholders who experienced this dropping out phenomenon directly in terms of dropping out of

their children and students. This study will be a scholarly contribution on being a good addition in the existing body of knowledge and database of causes of primary school students' dropping out. The key stakeholders; parents and teachers of the potential dropouts and vulnerable students may get benefit from this study to refrain their children from dropping out. Professionals of the field can also be the beneficiaries of this study because they can devise good intervention programs to eliminate the causes of dropping out. The authorities and policy makers may get guidelines from this study for developing sound policies to retain the primary school students at school. The researchers can also be legatee of this study to plan and conduct their researches in this area for further exploration and designing remedial programs. This study will also be a contribution towards the attainment of EFA and millennium development goals (MDGs).

Method and Procedure

This study was delimited, due to social, financial and time constraints to only the drop out of boys from public sector primary schools. This study was also delimited to only one district of province Punjab, Pakistan. This study was qualitative in its nature because data were collected from the respondents through interviews.

Population of this study consisted of all the parents and teachers of public sector boys primary schools dropouts in District Gujrat, Punjab-Pakistan. This population being very invisible was difficult to access because the dropouts were scattered and not accumulated on a common single place. They tend to be part of job market, labour force or any other type of apprenticeship. So usually were absorbed in the society. Access to their parents and teachers was also very convoluted. The mobility in the unfamiliar social culture was also very staid for the researcher. To have access to parents and teachers of dropouts initially one dropout was identified by wondering in streets by visiting different places. The each identified dropout was instrumental for identification of other dropouts and their parents and teachers. The district education department has divided this district into 13 small administrative units (Markaz). Eight dropouts were identified from each markaz. Replicating this practice in 13 units of three tehsils of selected district, from urban and rural areas 104 dropouts were identified. In this way with the help of those 104 dropouts their parents and teachers who taught them in the last year of their schooling were accessed.

All codal formalities for conducting a qualitative research such as informed consent for being the part of this study were taken care of by the researcher. All selected parents and teachers were interviewed by using two different interview schedules. These interview schedules were got validated by experts of the field. These interview schedules were consisted of 13 items ranging from their and dropouts' demographic information to the detailed discussion about the factors contributing in the dropping out of their children. The nature of items was different keeping in mind the nature of the respondents. Dropouts' parents and teachers' experiences regarding the dropout of the particular student were explored through detailed discussions. They were being provided the opportunity not only to explain their expectations and complaints but also the feelings and actions of the dropouts during this episode.

Results

Data collected from the parents and teachers of dropouts through interview were transcribed and tabulated accordingly. Interview schedule used for parents consisted of 13 items related to demographic information and causes of dropout, parental expectations, complaints of parents about school and their suggestions for school improvement.

Table 1
Family Size of Dropouts

Family Members	Frequency	%
5	12	11.5
6	12	11.5
7	25	24.0
8	17	16.3
9	8	7.7
10	16	15.4
11	4	3.8
12	7	6.7
14	3	2.9
Total	104	100.0

Table 1 shows that in the opinion of parents of dropouts most of the dropouts belong to families with seven members and some reported their family size more than this such as consisting of ten members. It can be concluded from here that mostly the dropouts were from large families.

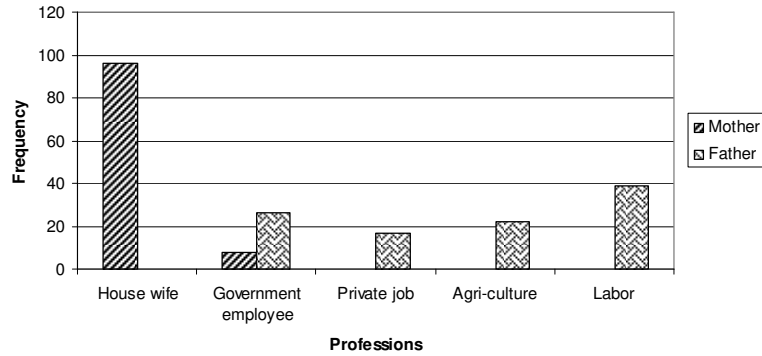


Figure 1 Occupation of dropouts' mothers and fathers

Figure 1 illustrates that mothers of the majority of the dropouts were house wives and fathers were mostly laborers and government employees. It can be concluded that the majority of the dropouts were from the family with low occupational profile.

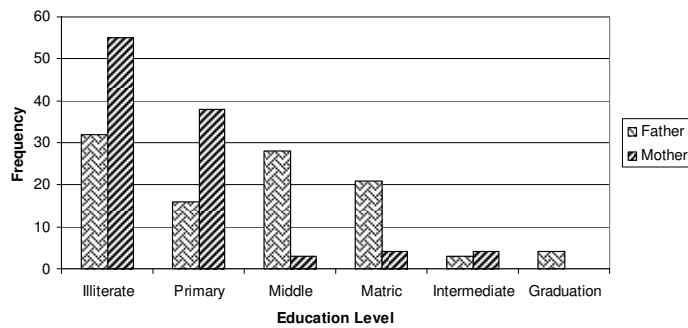


Figure 2 Education levels of parents of dropouts

Figure 2 shows that the dropouts' majority belong to the families where mothers and fathers are either illiterate or very low educated as primary school level. However the fathers' educational level is better than the mothers but is of no such high level.

Table 2
Causes of Dropout as Stated by Parents of Dropouts

Causes	Frequency	%
Lack of interest in studies	15	14.46
Lack of interest in school	12	11.56
Lack of co-curricular activities	11	10.58
Difficulty in learning	10	9.62
Class repetition	8	7.69
Harsh attitude of the teachers	8	7.69
Financial burden	7	6.75
Corporal punishment	7	6.75
Friendship with out of school children	6	5.67
Child labour	5	4.81
Family crises/ broken homes	4	3.84
Dullness	3	2.88
Inappropriate curricula	3	2.89
Preference of religious education	2	1.92
Poor health	2	1.92
Attitude of class fellows	1	0.97
Total	104	100

Table 2 signifies that most of the parents of dropouts reported school based causes as main contributing causes in dropping out of their children such as: lack of interest in studies and school, lack of co-curricular activities, difficulty in learning, class repetition and harsh attitude of the teachers. However in the opinion of some parents family based reasons lead them to make decision about the dropping out of their children such as: financial problems, child labor and family crises. Mental dullness of the child, preference for religious education, inappropriate curricula, poor health and negative attitude of class mates are also reported causes for dropout of their children. It can be concluded that school and family based causes play a significant role in decision making of parents regarding the dropping out of their children.

Table 3
Expectations of Parents from School

Factors	Frequency	%
Character building	34	38.2
Preparation of child for early employment	21	23.3
Purposeful education	11	12.4
Highly trained and motivated teachers	6	6.7
Guidance and counseling for higher education	5	5.6
Individualized teaching	4	4.5
Latest instructional techniques	4	4.5
Healthy attractive environment	2	2.4
Free from violence	2	2.4
Total	89	100

The major expectations of parents from the schools of their children were; character building, preparation of children for early employment and purposeful education. However some of them expect that school should provide guidance and counseling for higher education, individualized teaching and healthy attractive environment free of violence. The use of latest instructional techniques in schools was also their expectation from the school (Table 3).

Table 4
Primary School should Look like in Order to Retain Students from Dropping Out

Factors	Frequency	%
Full of facilities	26	27.6
Loving and caring teachers	12	12.8
Attractive for students	10	10.6
Quality education	8	8.2
Eliminating corporal punishment	7	7.3
Equal opportunities for all students	7	7.3
Violence free school environment	6	6.3
Character building	6	6.3
Teaching aids	5	5.2
Co-curricular activities	5	5.2
Improvement in curriculum	3	3.2
Total	95	100

The primary school should be attractive and full of facilities with loving and caring teachers in most of the parents' opinion. Other parents wanted to see schools with quality education, healthy environments, teaching aids and co-curricular activities (Table 4).

Table 5
Facilities Expected by Parents of Dropouts at School

Facilities	Frequency	%
Facilities like electricity, toilet, building, garden and provision of drinking water	28	28.50
Proper furniture	26	26.60
Highly qualifies teachers	13	13.20
Sports and excursion	11	11.20
Co-curricular activities	9	9.20
Attractive in all respects	5	5.20
Free books	3	3.05
Teaching aids	2	3.05
Total	97	100

Table 5 shows that the majority of parents expressed their views that they expect basic facilities such as; electricity, toilet, building, garden, drinking water, proper furniture, qualified teachers, sports and excursion at school. Whereas others said that school should be attractive for students with facilities such as free books and suitable teaching aids.

Table 6
Improvement in the School to Retain Students from Dropping Out

Suggestions	Frequency	%
Sympathetic and competent teachers	12	22.3
Character building	11	20.4
Provision of school building	5	9.2
Sports facilities	5	9.2
Teaching aids	4	7.4
Friendly school	4	7.4
Appointment of new teachers	4	7.4
Furniture facility	3	5.6
Parental cooperation	2	3.7
Elimination of corporal punishment	2	3.7
In service teacher training	2	3.7
Total	54	100

The majority of the parents of dropouts suggested that existing schools can be improved by providing physical facilities and making arrangement for character building of students with the help of sympathetic and competent teachers. Some other respondents gave their opinion that this improvement can take place by making primary schools child friendly through teachers’ professional development and parental involvement (Table 6).

Table 7
Complaints of Dropouts’ Parents from School

Complaints	Frequency	%
Governmental lack of interest	8	15.6
Frequent absentees of teachers	7	13.4
Financial assistance	6	11.8
Non motivated teachers	6	11.8
Corporal punishment	5	9.8
Improper school building	5	9.8
Unsafe schools	3	6
Insufficient number of teachers	2	4
Poor furniture facilities	1	2
Lack of individual attention	1	2
Total	51	100

Table 7 reveals that most of dropouts’ parents said that their complaints from existing school are such as: governmental lack of interest, teacher’s frequent absentees, non availability of financial assistance to needy students, incompetence of teachers and teacher’s lack of interest in child’s education. According to some other parents a few complaints are such as: insufficient number of teachers, improper sitting arrangements and lack of individual attention towards students.

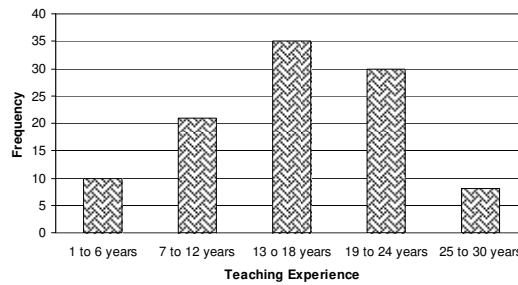


Figure 3 Teaching experience of teachers of dropouts

Figure 3 shows that the majority of the respondent teachers of dropouts were with teaching experience of 13-18 years. It also shows that the teachers belonging to teaching experience 7-12 years and 19-24 years experience group are also more in number. It means that the respondent teachers were with handsome teaching experience to share their experiences regarding the drop out of their students.

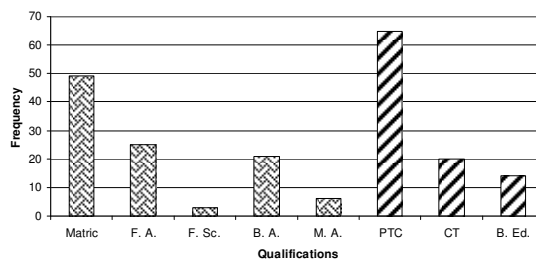


Figure 4 Qualification of teachers of dropouts

Figure 4 shows that the terminal qualifications of respondent teachers were mostly with Secondary School Certificate and Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC) It means that they have the lowest level of academic and professional qualifications.

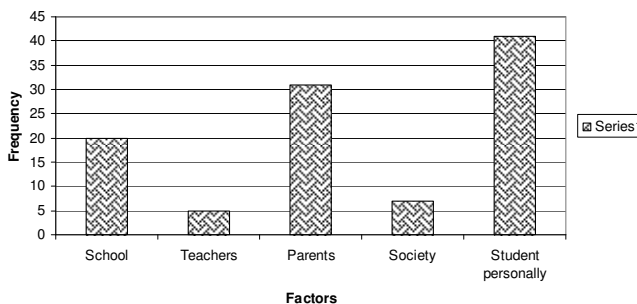


Figure 5 Responsible for dropping out of student from school

Dropouts’ teachers stated that the main responsibility of dropping out of students from school lies on the students, their parents and then school. It means that according to them students and parents are mainly responsible for the decisions of dropping out of children (Figure 5).

Table 8*Causes of Dropout as Perceived by the Teacher's of Dropout (N=104)*

Causes	Frequency	%
Lack of interest in school	16	15.4
Difficulty in learning	14	13.5
Lack of interest in studies	13	12.5
Child labor	10	9.6
Class repetition	8	7.6
Mental dullness	8	7.6
Financial problems	6	5.8
Friendship with out of school children	6	5.8
Poor health	6	5.8
Family crises/ broken homes	4	3.9
Inappropriate curricula	4	3.9
Preference for religious education	4	3.9
Corporal punishment	2	1.9
Lack of co-curricular activities	2	1.9
Harsh attitude of the teachers	1	0.95
Total	104	100

Table 8 reveals that in the opinion of the majority of dropouts' teachers reported school based causes such as: lack of interest in school, lack of interest in studies, class repetition and inappropriate curricula responsible for dropout of the students. Some reported family causes as child labor, financial problems and family crises. A few teachers reported mental dullness of the child, preference for religious education, poor health of student and harsh attitude of teachers as the causes for dropout of their students.

Table 9*School Improvement to Retain Students from Dropping Out*

Factors	Frequency	%
Provision of basic facilities	17	20.5
Co- curricular activities	16	19.2
In-service teachers training	13	15.7
Caring teachers	9	10.8
Teachers satisfaction	6	7.3
Improvements in curriculum	5	6.1
Eliminating corporal punishment	4	4.8
Teaching aids	4	4.8
Religious education	4	4.8
Proper school building	4	4.8
Financial assistance	1	1.2
Total	83	100

The majority of dropouts' teachers suggested that their schools can be improved by providing basic facilities to schools, making arrangements of co-curricular activities and empowering teachers through professional training. Some of the respondents gave their proposition that schools can be made attractive by taking actions such as: constructing proper school buildings, providing financial assistance to needy students, provision of relevant teaching aids and making arrangements for religious education (Table 9)

Table 10*Opinion of Dropouts' Parents and Teachers about Causes of Dropouts*

Causes	Parents	Teachers
Difficulty in learning	10 (09.6%)	14 (13.5%)
Lack of interest in studies	15 (14.4%)	13 (12.5%)
Lack of interest in school	12 (11.5%)	16 (15.4%)
Corporal punishment	07 (06.7%)	04 (03.8%)
Class repetition	08 (07.7%)	08 (07.7%)
Lack of co-curricular activities	11 (10.6%)	01 (01.0%)
Harsh attitude of teachers	08 (07.7%)	01 (01.0%)
Friendship with out of school children	06 (05.8%)	06 (05.8%)
Financial burden	07 (06.7%)	06 (05.8%)
Child labor	05 (04.8%)	08 (07.7%)
Family crises/ Broken homes	04 (03.8%)	04 (03.8%)
Mental dullness	03 (02.9%)	08 (07.7%)
Preference for religious education	02 (01.9%)	04 (03.8%)
Poor health	02 (01.9%)	06 (05.8%)
Attitude of class fellows	01 (01.0%)	01 (01.0%)
Inappropriate curricula	03 (02.9%)	04 (03.8%)

Table 10 shows the comparison of opinion of dropouts' parents and teachers regarding the causes of dropping out of their children from primary schools. In their opinion almost causes are same but differing in terms of frequency of occurrence. A fair consensus is visible between them on three main causes of dropping out such as: lack of interest in studies, lack of interest in school and difficulties in learning. It can be concluded that school factors are more contributing towards the dropping out of their children from school.

Table 11
Priority wise Comparison of Dropping Out Causes

Sr.	Parents	Teachers of Dropout
1	Lack of interest in studies	Lack of interest in school
2	Lack of interest in school	Difficulty in learning
3	Lack of co-curricular activities	Lack of interest in studies
4	Difficulty in learning	- Class repetition - Child labor - Mental dullness
5	- Class repetition - Harsh attitude of teachers	- Friendship with out of school children - Financial burden - Poor health

Table 11 reveals that there were differences in terms of response frequencies among the respondents on the causes such as: child labor, family crises, mental dullness, preference for religious education, poor health, attitude of class mates and inappropriate curricula. In terms of order of causes of dropping out there is a slight difference between parents and teachers of dropouts (Table 11).

Conclusions and Discussion

The analysis of data leads to the conclusion that key stakeholders such as parents and teachers of dropouts were at the lowest level of their qualifications. The parents of the dropouts were mostly illiterate or low qualified whereas the majority of the primary school teachers were also with lowest level of their academic and professional qualifications. The parents' low level of education leads to the low class professions and hence falls in lower income class and poor understanding towards value of their children's education. Teachers' being at minimum level of education shows that they have lower level of pedagogical and managerial skills to address the unique needs of the vulnerable students. The major complaints of parents from the school were lack of governmental interest in the affairs of primary schools, primary school teachers' high rate of absentees, non availability of financial assistance to needy students, incompetence of teachers and teacher's lack of interest in child's education. Teachers' considered students themselves responsible for dropping out and then they fix the responsibility on parents and schools. The parents of dropouts consider the school related factors more contributing towards dropping out than the other factors. They expected that schools of their children may made arrangements for character building, guidance and counseling for higher education, preparation of children for early employment and purposeful education in a healthy and violence free individualized teaching learning environment.

In the opinion of dropouts' parents and teachers, school related (lack of interest in studies and school, lack of co-curricular activities, difficulty in learning, class repetition and harsh attitude of the teachers) (Humphreys, 2006; Hunt, 2007; Rumberger & Lim, 2008), family based (financial problems, child labor and family crises, preference for religious education) (Bruneforth, 2006; Cardoso & Verner, 2007; Croft, 2002; Duryea, 2003; Grant & Hallman, 2006;) and child associated (mental dullness of the child, poor health) (Filmer (2005; Pridmore, 2007; Rose & Al Samarrai, 2001) causes played a major role in taking decision about the dropping out of their children. However, parents and teachers slightly differed on the order and frequency of the causes but agreed on the nature of causes of dropouts of their children.

Recommendations

The students' educational disconnect can be avoided by improving schools in terms of its physical uplift and operational efficiency. The existing public sector primary school can be made such a place that can retain children up to the completion of their primary school education by taking some measures by authorities and teachers. These steps will change the school into an attractive and healthy place being very responsive for the learners but needs political will of the educational authorities. Firstly school should be outfitted with the basic facilities such as; proper building, electricity, toilet, garden and play grounds, drinking water, proper furniture, sufficient number of qualified teachers, sports and excursion at school.

Secondly, the curriculum, instructional mechanism and assessment system should be made responsive to meet individual needs of the learners. It should also focus on students' character building, moral development, religious training, and awareness of the socio-cultural norms of society. The financial burden on parents can be reduced by offering merit based financial assistance in terms of free books, bags, stationery, and clothing to needy students. The governmental authorities can involve the local public representatives and volunteers for resource generation from the community for the school improvement initiatives.

The teachers' sensitivity towards the dropping out phenomenon and its eradication can be enhanced through professional trainings and mentoring. The school education department should design a comprehensive training program for the low qualified teachers. The pre-service teacher training institutions should also be sensitized to train the future teachers for coping up with such type of educational problems through latest student centered pedagogical approaches. To make parents

responsive towards the education of their children, school authorities should arrange motivational talks and awareness discussions with the parents in a regular manner. The print, electronic and social media can also be used to sensitize the masses for education and retention of children at school for the completion of their compulsory education level.

The community leaders and the motivated parents can also be used as referrals or resource persons for less or poorly motivated parents and guardians of the vulnerable children. The primary school teachers should also be given trainings and awareness about early identification of the potential dropouts, so that through early identification remedial interventions can be designed for them to avoid from dropping out. Such students with lack of interest in studies and school, and facing problems in learning should be timely identified by teachers and helped out on individual bases by involving their parents and families, so that they can be retained at school.

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