SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN INDIA: REASONS AND PROSPECTIVE SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Every year, a substantial number of kids in our country drop out of school. This has an adverse impact on country's economic and social well being, as well as lowering the country's literacy rate and creating a non-innovative environment. In India, the topic of school dropout is of great concern and attention. A dropout is a "everenrolled person" who did not complete the last level of education for which he or she enrolled and is no longer enrolled in any educational institution. The government's Right to Education Act and National Policy on Education may have been inspiring in providing education to all, but it's also critical to assess the education system's long-term viability and efficiency. Dropout rates are widely seen as a substantial loss of educational resources; not only do many children leave school without learning basic skills, but their early departure also constitutes a significant waste of valuable educational resources. The present research paper aims to analyze the causes behind the increasing dropout rates in India and also suggest some prospective solutions to it. Dropouts are nothing but wastage of human resource which can be more productive in the coming future. The paper also brings out the data related to school dropouts in India state wise and also gender wise.

KEYWORDS: *Everenrolled Person, Non-Innovative Environment, Literacy Rate, Long-Term Viability, Dropout.*

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Introduction

According to a poll done by the Indian government's National Statistical Office (NSO), one out of every eight students enrolled in a school or college drops out before completing their education, with school dropouts accounting for nearly 62 percent of all dropouts. High school is where 62.9 percent of all dropouts occur. The Right to Education of the Indian Constitution empowers every child to receive free primary education. There are many students who are studying under the right to education. This right has no doubt done wonders in the field of education and the number of enrolled students has considerably increased. The government has done wonderful work by providing free education in the government schools, where apart from education they provide free meals, uniforms and books. But talking about the other side of the coin we find that there is a large number of student mass Who drop out of the school at secondary level, at senior secondary level and also at primary level. These dropouts can be because of various reasons prevailing at a personal and national level. We cannot shift the burden of everything happening in our country to poverty but still poverty too indirectly forms a factor behind the school dropouts. There are evidences which reveal that school dropouts of females is more at primary level and talking about males it's more at secondary and senior secondary level. In the present article we will be talking about the school dropout rate in India in general, will be trying to analyze the dropout rates as a

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whole and also in terms of gender. We will try to bring out the prospective reasons behind the dropouts and would bring some suggestions which can reduce dropout in the country. Education forms the very basis of development of any nation, and talking about India which has a large mass of productive population education can be nothing but a cherry on the cake to enhance the efficiency and productivity of the people. While talking about the females education is an important tool of women empowerment.

Main Content

The reasons for dropping out of school differ.

Some students drop out of school freely, while others are forced to do so due to a variety of fact ors. School dropout is a common occurrence.

Whatever the reason, a child's failure to complete his or her school education is not virtuous.

Due to their inability to contribute in any form, such youngstersfrequently fail to be a benefit to th e nation. There can   be   nothing   which   is   as significant enough to   serve as a substitute for formal education.   It is the foundation of a person's life, allowing them to be effective in all areas. Let us first exam in some of the major reasons behind school dropouts in India:

- **Poverty:** The very first reason that most of the children drop out of school in India is poverty. Most Indian parents as a family do not have that level of income which can support their children's education. The people who are below the poverty line and also just above that strive hard to get two Square meals in a day. In such condition when their basic needs are not fulfilled they cannot think of anything above and beyond that. I agree that government schools offer free education but still majority of the families are already under so much financial crunch and other societal pressure that sending their children to school for them doesn't matter. Talking about the senior secondary thing, schooling till class 10th is free but after that there is enormous competition and also private institutions charge a lot of fees that might also be a reason for the increasing drop outs another reason for the increasing dropout rates after class five is that a child reaches an age of 10 to 12 years and that is suitable age to get him into child labour. The family which is already under the financial crunch wants every family member to work and earn for the family so that they can keep their body and soul together. Also at times the distance of school is too much and the parents find it not safe to send their children to school..

- **Accessibility:** in some regions of India the schools are not available at the vicinity and that also dissipates the family to send their children to school. But this reason is valid only for a very small area because the inclusion of government schools in villages has increased considerably and according to the data of all India school education survey 70.3% rural children have been enrolled in government schools in 2021.

- **Increasing Unemployment Rates:** it's basic perception, though some people might not agree that a child studies or completes his or her education in order to get a proper job and become financially independent. But the ever increasing unemployment rate has change the perception of people specially of the poor and willing class. They have lost hopes that their children will get jobs even if we complete education. So they prefer dropouts for their children so that they can engage in some other work and earn money for the family and support it.

- **Backward Thoughts (in case of girls):** education for girls has always been a topic of argument for many people. Some people have this orthodox thought that females should be kept inside the four walls of a house and they are only meant to produce children and look after the family. Such thoughts firstly prevent enrolling a girl child to school and even if it happens it later results in the school dropouts as generally girls are married at the young age. This reason was very prevalent earlier but now this thought is slowly being changed for good.

- **Lack of Interest:** in a survey conducted it was found that 30% of the children under study showed a lack of interest in studies. They prefer to drop out because whatever was taught in schools didn't attract them or didn't grab their attention. In such cases also some children drop out of the school. In my personal opinion completing education till secondary or senior secondary level should be encouraged and only after that in whatever field a child wants to pursue his own interest he should be motivated for that. But again in such cases it's the personal choice of a child if there are no other pressures.

- **Help In domestic work:** there are many children including boys and girls who dropped out of the school in order to help in domestic work or continue the work that they parents do. Girls drop out of school at times in order to help in the household work. Doing the domestic course is not a problem for a boy or a girl but studies should be continued. Many a times boys drop out of the school because they feel that there is no point in studying if they had to do the same job as their parents.

- **Physical Disability &Health Issues:** Many children drop out of school because of their physical disabilities. And at times even if they want to continue they face hostile behavior from their peers which makes them feel uncomfortable and takes a toll even on the mental health.

Many a times children get some major health issues and fatal diseases because of which they can't further continue their studies and this results in school dropouts.

- **Current scenario:** according to a report by ABP news bureau, the dropout rate at the secondary school level in India is more than 17%, while the dropout rate at upper primary and primary level is 1.8% and 1.5%. The report further revealed that the dropout rate among boys is quite high at secondary level as compare to the primary level it has been revealed by the report that there are 19 states where the dropout rate at secondary level is much higher than all India rate which is 17.3%. The dropout rate is more than 25% in Tripura, Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. In fact the four states have registered a dropout rate of more than 30% it was also revealed that dropout rate is more than 20% even in the organized Delhi. In Punjab it was 1.5% the study further revealed a shocking fact that the dropout rate of girls is less than boys it said that the overall dropout rate of girls is 2% less than that of boys

Below given is the data collected from a government website which reveals the dropout rates in India state wise. The chart below shows the dropout rate based on the level of education that is primary level (1-5),secondary level (6-10) and senior secondary level (11-12).:

Dropout Rate by level of education and gender, 2019-20

India/ State /UT	Dropout Rate								
	Primary (1 to 5)			Upper Primary (6-8)			Secondary (9-10)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
India	1.7	1.2	1.5	2.2	3.0	2.6	17.0	15.1	16.1
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.1	12.3	15.7
Andhra Pradesh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.3	17.2	12.2	14.8
Arunachal Pradesh	7.8	4.6	6.2	7.7	7.2	7.5	37.6	30.9	34.3
Assam	5.1	3.6	4.3	4.8	2.1	3.4	31.5	32.9	32.3
Bihar	3.0	1.5	2.3	8.6	9.2	8.9	20.0	22.7	21.4
Chandigarh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.3	5.9	3.3	4.7
Chhattisgarh	1.4	0.6	1.0	4.6	3.1	3.8	19.4	17.2	18.3
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	22.8	17.3	20.3
Daman and Diu	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	23.2	16.5	20.0
Delhi	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	15.6	11.8	13.8
Goa	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.0	12.8	7.2	10.2
Gujarat	1.0	0.9	1.0	3.5	7.2	5.2	26.0	20.7	23.7
Haryana	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	2.5	1.8	14.4	12.0	13.3
Himachal Pradesh	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.2	1.0	0.6	8.4	5.9	7.2
Jammu and Kashmir	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.1	3.4	3.2	16.7	16.6	16.7
Jharkhand	7.3	5.3	6.3	9.0	7.9	8.5	16.2	17.0	16.6

Karnataka	1.4	0.9	1.2	2.7	2.3	2.5	19.4	14.1	16.8
Kerala	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.8	5.9	7.9
Ladakh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lakshadweep	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	10.6	2.7	6.7
Madhya Pradesh	0.9	0.7	0.8	3.6	4.7	4.1	24.4	21.8	23.2
Maharashtra	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.7	1.5	1.1	16.2	14.0	15.2
Manipur	8.8	8.7	8.8	4.4	3.6	4.0	9.3	9.2	9.2
Meghalaya	7.9	6.1	7.0	9.5	6.6	8.0	22.8	21.8	22.2
Mizoram	8.0	7.6	7.8	3.8	1.2	2.5	23.2	17.5	20.4
Nagaland	4.9	3.5	4.2	6.9	3.9	5.4	21.7	20.7	21.2
Odisha	0.8	0.8	0.8	4.9	4.1	4.5	25.2	21.9	23.6
Puducherry	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.8	4.9	7.9
Punjab	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	1.6
Rajasthan	2.9	2.8	2.9	1.1	2.1	1.5	12.5	12.1	12.3
Sikkim	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.6	21.1	23.2
Tamil Nadu	1.4	0.8	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.4	13.4	5.6	9.6
Telangana	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.1	14.0	10.6	12.3
Tripura	2.2	1.8	2.0	3.8	3.2	3.5	27.0	26.4	26.7
Uttar Pradesh	2.8	2.5	2.7	0.2	4.0	2.1	14.6	14.2	14.4

Prospective Solutions

Awareness Programs by Govt., NGO's and Individuals: Awareness programs should be run in city's, villages in order to spread awareness and knowledge about the ill effects that illiteracy and unemployment can cause.In cases where the dropouts are due to clash of thoughts and children are forced to drop the school just because people think that education is not important or because they think that females should not be educated, this is something which is not physical but it is related to the perspective of people. Such problems and reasons of dropouts can only be cured by spreading awareness on a one to one basis so that such parents and families can become aware.

- **Infrastructure:** there are many areas where children have to travel a lot so that they could reach to school or colleges, this also becomes a reason for dropout in such areas. The national education policy of 2020 mentioned that in order to reduce this problem the government will be providing efficient and sufficient infrastructure to all students and also they will set up innovative education centers for the children of migrant laborers.

- **What parents can do?:** there are times when students want to drop out of school even if they are provided all the facilities. There can be various reasons behind this. As such times parents can play a very important role by having a very good communication system with a child trying to understand the reason as to why a child wants to leave the school, the parents can encourage the child to study further by making him understand the career realities but not pressurizing him. Parents can also persuade the child to take a break rather than quitting or help himself to consider a different school. All the steps by the parents give the child a psychological and emotional support and he comes out stronger.

- **Skill focused education:** there are times that students dropout at various levels of their studies because they feel the basic education cannot help them to secure a proper job. To tackle this problem education should be made more skill focused. Such a curriculum in education can make the child abled till he reaches his college, this can help him become self dependent and grab a proper job. But this solution really requires a lot of hard work from the side of government, the private boards and also the students themselves but still it can be given a chance.

- **Early warning system:** The early warning system which is already in operation under the UNICEF UNESCO out of school children initiative, can be further strengthened. Under this system the school level data on attendance performance and behavior is identified in order to

understand the risk of dropping out of the school. Such a step can help School enhance the capacity to address to the needs of at-risk students. It also helps to reduce absenteeism in schools.

- **Increase attractiveness of education:** there can be introduction of recreational activities in order to increase the attractiveness of education to the students and motivate them to come to school. There are many such cases that the parents of some children work as daily wage earners and the children room in the streets while their parents are on work. Such children can be motivated to attend schools if schools offer attractive education, maybe by offering them a times meal or helping them to participate in some entertaining activities like art craft sports games etc.

Conclusion

Thus, Drop out from school is really an important issue. No doubt the government of India has done marvelous work in the field of education but still in order to make this work even fruitful we need to work on school dropouts. In India the access to elementary education is now reaching 96% of schoolchildren. So it really takes a lot of hard work to bring this much percentage of children to school so we also need to work really hard to retain this much population in schools so that they can reach towards higher education. The reasons for school dropouts are many, like the parents can't afford school expenses or for marriage or because children need to work to earn money or due to some physical disability or health issues or because the children need to work in the household course. The reason is related to financial expenses till School level can be overlooked because government schools provide free education and also needed things free of cost. But the other issues can only be cured and handled once we are able to change the perspective and the mindset of the people in the society and this is only possible through awareness programs. We cannot put the baggage of all the bad happening in the country on the shoulders of the government because I personally feel government has done and is doing a lot of good in this field, it's also a moral responsibility as educated people on us that we can have a one-to-one discussion with such families and parents and motivate them to send their children to school and even at times can help them financially if we are able to do that.

घर घर शिक्षा का दीप जलाएँ
आओ भारत को और महान बनाएँ।

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