

A Study of Dropout Children of MCD Primary Schools of North District of Delhi

*B.K. Pal**

R. K. Srivastava **

ABSTRACT

The constitution provides for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years. Taking this into account, the study of dropouts at the primary level has been carried out in the 17 M.C.D. Primary Schools randomly selected out of 170 M.C.D. schools falling in the civil lines zone of North District of Delhi. To achieve the purpose, a survey proforma regarding the dropout children was developed and administered in the respective schools of the study area. Efforts were made by the investigators to know the reasons for children leaving school before completing the academic session. This study presents the causes of children dropping out. The findings will help educational planners, administrators, and teacher educators in analysing the reasons and taking some measures.

With the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, education has now become a fundamental right. As per this act, children falling in the age group of 6-14 years must have access to free and compulsory education.

Significantly, as per the latest data, 39 per cent of children still drop out from schools after studying upto Class V and 55 per cent before reaching Class VIII. Thus, the target of providing elementary education to all children still remains

unfulfilled. Due to low level of teaching, inadequate school infrastructure, teacher absenteeism, large number of teacher vacancies, lack of use of TLM, additional work on teachers, and inadequate funds, etc. are responsible for the high rate of dropout children. The target cannot be achieved unless children are brought to schools from the poor socio-economic strata and the parents' perception becomes more positive towards the importance of education. The education system should provide

* Senior Lecturer, (IFIIC) DIET, Karkardooma, (SCERT), Delhi-110092.

** Lecturer, (CMDE), Keshavpuram, (SCERT), New Delhi-110035.

quality education and develop creativity among the children. The aim of education should be to build character and inculcate human values and positive attitude among children.

Programme Related to Dropouts

The policies on education in 1968, 1986, and 1992 have strongly recommended strategies for the implementation of the universalisation of elementary education. For this, a number of programmes have been launched over 55 years of independence. For instance:

- (i) Operation Black Board (1987) for improving human and physical resources in schools.
- (ii) Teacher Education Scheme (1987) for teacher training and providing academic support.
- (iii) District Primary Education Programme (DPEP, 1994) for achieving universal primary education.
- (iv) Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM 1995) to enhance nutritional status of children.
- (v) Janshala Programme (1998) for community participation in schools.
- (vi) The Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative Innovative Education (EGS/AIE, 2000).
- (vii) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, 2001-02) for achieving UEE i.e. to reach every child in every village of the country in a prescribed time.

Study Area

The present study of dropout children at the primary level is focused in the civil lines zones of North District of NCT, Delhi. The total population of the zone is 5,26,476 out of which 2,86,743 are males and 2,39,733 are females. The zone is densely populated with 12,996 persons living per square km. The literacy of the zone is about 83.0 per cent, higher than the overall literacy of the district i.e. 79.88 per cent (2001).

The zone has 170 MCD primary schools including boys', girls' and co-education (2004). The total students enrolled in the MCD schools were 72,505 and the number of teachers working in the schools were 1636 only (2004).

Need of the Study

The constitutional provision is to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years. The democratic society implies the availability of equal opportunities to all people, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, and religion to develop their personalities.

Significantly, it has been observed that a large number of female children in the zone are either yet to be brought into the fold of school education or drop out sooner or later as compared to boys owing to their socio-economic and cultural reasons. The children, that enroll in the various MCD primary schools in the zone, basically belong to the poor socio-economic background. Therefore, the dropout ratio is comparatively higher in the zone i.e. 32.90 per cent.



In view of the above facts, the civil lines zone has been selected as the study area in terms of children leaving schools early, without completing their primary education.

Operational Definition of the Term 'Dropout'

The term 'dropout' means pupils who leave school during any part of the academic year without completing the class in which he/she is studying. In this



regard, the Hartog Committee defined it as 'the pre-mature withdrawal of children from school at any stage before the completion of primary course'. American studies have defined the term

'dropout' as 'any youth who for any reason, except death has left the school before completing the requisite grade from the school and without transferring to another school'.

The problem of enrolment and dropout at the primary school level is very vital in the field of education. Therefore, it has drawn the attention of educational planners, administrators, and parents from time to time.

Objectives

- To know the year-wise and school-wise dropout ratio of North District of civil lines zone.
- To find out the socio-economic status of the parents and its co-relation with the ratio of dropouts.
- To study the causes of non-enrolment and dropout ratio at the primary stage of the North District of civil lines zone.

Methodology

A survey proforma regarding the dropout children was developed for this study. Data was collected during the months of November and December 2005 in the 17 MCD primary schools selected randomly as sample from the civil lines zone of North District of NCT Delhi. The investigators visited the homes of the dropout children to know their reasons for leaving school before completing their academic session.

Analysis and Interpretation

School-wise Status of Dropout Children

The school-wise status of dropout students is based on total enrolment in Class I in the year 2001, as given in Table 1. It was observed that the MCD school Adarsh Nagar No.II has the highest rate of dropouts with 51.2 per cent followed by Rana Pratap Bagh and Lancer Road

No. 1, MCD primary schools having 47.7 per cent and 47.2 per cent respectively. The lowest dropout rate has been observed at the MCD primary school Roop Nagar (6.25%) and Kamla Nagar R-Block (6.80%). Most of the MCD primary civil lines zone selected as sample lies in the poor socio-economic area, explaining the high dropout ratio that has been recorded in the same areas. The main reason for

Table 1
School-wise Status of Dropout Children

S.No.	Name of MCD Schools	Total enrolment in Class I, in the session 2000-01	No. of dropout children in 2005 upto Class V	Percentage of dropout children during 2000-2005
1.	Tulsi Nagar I	53	14	26.40
2.	Tulsi Nagar II	54	11	20.30
3.	Kamla Nagar, E-Block	29	02	6.80
4.	Rana Pratap Bagh	157	75	47.70
5.	Roop Nagar	32	02	6.20
6.	Jahangirpuri, B-Block	134	59	44.02
7.	Sarai Basti	96	26	27.10
8.	Anand Nagar	29	11	37.90
9.	Indira Nagar I	32	11	34.40
10.	Jahangirpuri, A-Block	191	73	38.20
11.	Wazirpur Ind. Area	115	50	48.30
12.	Azadpur Village	252	118	46.80
13.	Timarpur I	57	24	42.10
14.	Lancer Road I	108	51	47.20
15.	Adarsh Nagar I	261	96	36.80
16.	Adarsh Nagar II	203	104	51.20
17.	Timarpur II	73	27	36.90
	Total	1876	618	32.90

Source: M.C.D. primary schools, Civil Lines Zone, North District, 2005



the high dropout ratio in the zone was the shifting of factories and migration of the families thereof.

The total analysis indicates that 1876 students had been enrolled in Class I in the year 2001 and 618 students out of the 1876 students

high dropout rate with more than 40 per cent dropout while 5 MCD schools come within the 30-40 per cent category of dropout rate in the zone. Low dropout rate in the zone is only in 2 schools which have below 20 per cent of the enrolled children in the MCD schools.

Table 2
Rate of Dropout Children

S.No.	Categories of Dropout Rate Percentage	Rate of Dropout Percentage	No. of MCD Schools
1.	Low	Below 20	02
2.	Moderate	20-30	03
3.	High	30-40	05
4.	Very high	40 & above	07

dropped out of Class V (2005) which means 33 per cent of the children from the schools under study dropped out.

Dropout Rate

It is evident from Table 2 which indicates the rate of dropout children in the MCD schools of the civil line zone, there are seven MCD schools which have a very

Class-wise Dropout Rate

Table 3 depicts the picture of class-wise dropout children w.e.f. 2001 to 2005. It is clear from the table, the highest dropout rate of children in 2001-2002 was in Class II i.e. 29.6 per cent of the total dropout children whereas 21.5 per cent in the Class I (2000-01) and

Table 3
Class-wise Dropout Children (w.e.f. 2001)

S.No.	Classes	Session	No. of Dropout Children	Percentage of Total Dropout Children
1.	I	2001	133	21.50
2.	II	2002	183	29.60
3.	III	2003	124	20.10
4.	IV	2004	99	16.00
5.	V	2005	79	12.80
	Total	-	618	100.00

20.1 per cent in the Class III (2002-03). The least dropout was in Class V (2004-05) with 12.8 per cent of the total dropout children of the total sampled schools in the civil lines zone of the North District.

The high dropout ratio showed up in three consecutive years 2001, 2002, and 2003 because industries had been shifted to other areas. Thus, a large number of families also migrated from the area with the shifting of industries, leading to high dropouts.

It is evident from the table that about 26 per cent of the dropout children belong to parents doing manual labour followed by about 20 per cent dropout children of families doing private jobs. Likewise, 17 per cent are from families of rickshaw drivers, 18 per cent parents had their own business and about 11 per cent parents were hawkers. It is worth mentioning that 1.6 per cent children who dropped out of schools had their parents in government jobs. Therefore, the result indicates that socio-economic

Table 4
Socio-economic Status of the Parents of Dropout Children

S.No.	Categories	No. of Parents of Dropout Children	Percentage of the Total Dropout
1.	Labourers	162	26.20
2.	Private jobs	123	19.90
3.	Rickshaw drivers	104	16.80
4.	Small shopkeepers	108	17.6
5.	Hawkers	67	10.90
6.	Washerman	18	2.90
7.	Farmers	08	1.20
8.	Government jobs	10	1.60
9.	Barbers	18	2.90
	Total	618	100

Socio-economic Status of the Parents of Dropout Children

The socio-economic backwardness of the families has been a very important factor for the children leaving schools before completing their education. In this connection, Table 4 shows the socio-economic status of the families of dropout children.

backwardness is one of the major factors for the high dropout rate in the civil lines zone of North district of Delhi.

Causes of Dropout

The causes of drop-out of children in the MCD schools of the civil lines zone are given in Table 5. It is observed from the table that the two prominent causes responsible for children dropping out

from MCD schools in the civil lines zones (i) the migration of parents i.e. 47.4 per cent and (ii) the irregular attendance of students (21.4 per cent of the total dropouts).

The percentage of children who leave their schools for earning a livelihood is 7.4 per cent, due to illness is 5.2 per

2. The highest percentage of dropout children were in the MCD primary schools Adarsh Nagar No. II, and Rana Pratap Bagh and Lancer Road No.1, with 51.2 per cent, 47.7 per cent and 47.2 per cent respectively.

3. The lowest dropout cases were recorded in the MCD schools Kamla

Table 5
Causes of Dropout Children

S.No.	Causes of Dropout Children	No. of Dropout Children	Percentage of the Total Dropout
1.	Migrated	293	47.40
2.	Illness	32	5.20
3.	Weak in studies	28	4.50
4.	Irregular attendance	132	21.40
5.	Earning livelihood	46	7.40
6.	Shifting the residence	24	3.90
7.	Social causes	37	6.00
8.	Looking after children at home	26	4.20
	Total	618	100.00

cent as compared to 6.0 per cent due to social causes. The children who were weak in studies and left their schools were only 4.5 per cent while about 4.0 per cent parents of the total dropouts shifted their houses to other places.

Findings of the Study

1. Most of the dropout cases are found in re-settlement colonies, industrial area, and slums as compared to posh areas. The total dropout is 32.9 per cent in the civil lines zone that is based on samples taken for the study.

Nagar E-Block and Roop Nagar with 6.8 per cent and 6.2 per cent respectively.

4. It was observed that most of the children who left their schools before completing studies belonged to parents doing manual labour, private jobs, driving rickshaw and running small businesses. They comprised 78 per cent of the total dropout cases. Significantly, only 1.6 per cent children whose parents had government jobs dropped out of school.

5. The maximum number of dropout cases were observed in the 2002 session in Class II i.e. 183 children (29.6 per cent) of the total dropout as compared to the lowest in Class V (2005) with 79 children (12.8 per cent) in the zone. The reason for the high dropout in the 2002 session was shifting of industries to other areas, which led to the migration of families.
6. The major causes for leaving schools before completing their course were migration of the parents (47.4 per cent) and irregular attendance (21.4 per cent). Whereas 5.2 per cent and 4.5 per cent children dropped out due

to illnesses and disinterest in studies respectively.

Conclusions

As the study was restricted to one particular zone of North District, which happens to be one of the large districts of NCT Delhi, there was a need to study the problems of children dropping-out from MCD schools in other zones too. This would definitely bring out the total scenario of the district in terms of the causes of children dropping out. Also, a holistic approach is needed to provide remedial measures to bring all the children falling in the age group of 5-14 years to the fold of education.

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