

Causes of Primary School Students' Dropout in Punjab Primary School Teachers' Perspective

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Abstract

The educational choices available to the people of any country guarantee the human and economic wellbeing of the country. This right of easy access to educational opportunities is safe guarded by the states across the globe. In addition to the focus on increasing the participation rate of Pakistani students in educational activities, their retention at school has become a serious concern for the authorities. The dropout of primary school students in schools is also a very common phenomenon. A lot of efforts are made to cope with the alarming situation of dropping out but in vain. This study was planned to explore the causes of primary school students' dropout by documenting the views of primary school teachers. Although, students of primary school age group are unable to participate in any kind of economic activity, but they are dropping out continuously. This descriptive inquiry was based on a survey of opinion of 379 male and 402 female primary school teachers (N=781) of public sector schools from eight districts of the biggest province Punjab of Pakistan. Data collected were analyzed by using the Green's Successive Categories Scaling Method and other statistical measures. The class repetition, out of school friendships and difficulties in learning came out as major causes of dropout. The male and female teachers fixed the responsibility of dropping out on parents and the children. The authorities should show their will to minimize the dropout rate by improving schools and ensuring the compulsory primary education to all children in the province.

Key words: Access to education, primary school dropout, causes of dropout

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Primary Education is always considered very essential for any society because it guarantees learners' cognitive, affective, social, psychomotor developments as well as their readiness not only for elementary but for the higher levels of education. It produces the sound basis for the education system. The developed and the developing nations are offering free and compulsory educational services to their new generation. It is considered as a basic human right for all the individuals irrespective of their any sort of discriminations and belongings (United Nations, 1948). Education being the key to success and prosperity, it is envisaged in the National Education Policy 2009 of Pakistan that basic education is the right of every child. Realizing this responsibility, the Government of Pakistan is trying hard to pull over this sector and use it as an instrument for poverty alleviation and socio economic uplift in the country. In different times the educational policies were being given that show the intentions of the state towards development of knowledge based society.

Primary education was recognized as a fundamental right of every Pakistani child. It was affirmed that for achieving compulsory enrollment by the end of the decade, primary education will be made free and compulsory (Ministry of Education, 1992). The Universal Education from grade one to five was especially emphasized in The National Education Policy 1998-2010. All children aged 5-9 years throughout the country will have to complete the primary education cycle. In spite of all these efforts the Universal Primary Education (UPE) is a dream yet to be realized. It has a special focus of different policies and action plans. The low literacy rate, high dropout rate, limitation in access to primary education, low participation of girls, lack of educational and financial resources are the major constraints to achieve the goal of this universal primary education. The population of primary age group (5-9) was 17.9 million. This may rise to 19.6 million till 2007 and for few years remains constant, will turn down to 17.5 million in the last year of the plan (Ministry of Education, 2003).

The dropout rate of boys and girls for primary education level in Pakistan was 43% in 2001-02, 31.3% in 2005-06 which again jumped to 41% during 2007-08 (Ministry of Education, 2009). The overall school attendance (age 10 years and above) is 57 percent (69 percent for male and 44 percent for female) (Federal Bureau of Statistics, 2006). The factors contributing to dropout are poor economic status of family, attitude of parents towards education of their child, illness associated with child, ignorance of parents about their role in connection of education of their kids, unattractive environment of schools, poor quality teaching and irrelevance of curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1992).

Pakistan has a special geo-strategic place in South and Central Asia. Being an active member of this region, the Government of Pakistan aspires that it must occupy a prestigious position in terms of educational performance. Pakistan stands at 102nd position out of 130 in the world for education spending of 2.3 percent of GDP. Government expenditure on education was not in accordance with needs and demands (UNESCO, 2005).

Basic education is associated with the literacy because basic education is a fundamental right to every human being whereas the literacy is the first step towards basic education. The literacy rate in Pakistan is growing at the rate of one percent annually. The literacy rate as reported by the Pakistan Population Census 1998 and the *Pakistan Standard and Social Measurement Survey 2007* is increasing during the last couple of decades but the growth rate is very low. It increases from 43.9 % (Female= 32% & Male= 54.8%) to 55% (Female= 42%, Male= 67%) from 1998 to 2007. Among all the provinces Punjab (58%) has greatest value than the others Balochistan (42%), KPK (47%), and Sindh (55%) (Federal Bureau of Statistics, 2007; Ministry of Education, 1998; Ministry of Finance, 2003; Pakistan Census Organization, 1998).

The overall dropout rate from Grade I to V is 31.3% (Male=40.2%, Female= 19.2%). The dropout rates between Grade I to II is 14.1% (Male= 16.1%, Female= 11.2%), Grade II to III is 3.7% (Male= 8.6%), Grade III to IV is 5 % (Male= 7.4%, Female= 1.5%) and between Grade IV to V is 8.5% (Male=9.9%, Female= 6.5%) (Ministry of Finance, 2006). The net participation rate is about 66%. The student teachers ratio is 48: 1. The marginalized school age children are 34% of the total school age population. The persons with special needs are 2.54% of the total population. Only 531 organizations are working for the welfare and education of persons with special needs in public and private sector (Hameed, 2005, 2006; Ministry of Education, 1998).

Out of 105 districts only seven districts are with participation rate more than 60% and 30 with less than 20%. Whereas, Khyber Pakhtunkhah (KPK) and Balochistan are with less than 60% participation rate at primary school level. The primary enrollment rate in Pakistan (50%) is lower than Bangladesh (75%), India (77%) and Sri Lanka (100%). In terms of literacy it ranks at the 185th of the 202 and for compulsory primary education it lies at the 169th out of 181 (UNESCO, 2003, 2005a).

Despite all the efforts, there is no remarkable increase in participation rate. Six million children 5-9 year age group were out of school and half of the enrolled may dropout before completion of primary school (Hussain, 2005). The broad problems of educational development in Pakistan are mass illiteracy, high dropout rate, low school attendance, underpaid and under trained teachers (Ministry of Education, 2002; Ministry of Finance, 2003; UNESCO, 2003a; Wheeler, 1966).

Human development is the key to progress and prosperity of a country. It is based on the innovative strategies for social transformation and poverty mitigation programs. People are the real wealth and asset of a nation. They deserve up-to-date and latest opportunities to reach their maximum potentials. Education is most essential and the best driver for change and solution to human development issues. It uplifts the deprived and unprivileged sections of society in their living and roles. Productive citizenry and economical wellbeing depends upon the choices of education offered by the state. The goal of the Universal Primary Education and the Education for All cannot come in to reality without addressing the problem of dropout and out of school children (Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability, 2005).

Dropout problem is a burning question all over the world. Advanced and developing nations all are worried about the future of their nation. Progress and prosperity can't be obtained and maintained without the educated personnel in the society. If the majority of the people are illiterate or have low qualifications then the affairs of the state can't function properly. The dropout phenomenon is neither a problem of the past nor it is for present but if it is not properly addressed it becomes a serious problem for future generations. This problem is not originated today but historically it dates back to the history of education. The out of school and out of job youth is an explosive issue for society. It serves as dynamite for socio-economic stability of a nation. For addressing this problem it is needed to define the problem before moving towards its solution.

Different studies reported different causes and rates of dropout in Pakistan. Rural girls dropout from early classes as compared to their urban counterparts. There is not a single reason which caused the student to dropout but it is a combined effect of different causes. Dropout rate is the percentage of students who dropout from primary school before reaching to 5th grade. This rate is not only high but having a distressing situation (Bhatti, 2007; Malik, 2002; Shami & Hussain, 2005; Zeba, Haque, Faizunnissa & Sultana, 2002).

There are numerous factors which lead school students to make decision for termination of their education. High dropout rates are caused due to poor quality of education especially in public sector schools and rural schools. The main causes of high dropout are “low level of economic development of the country, low per capita income of the people, inadequate provision of physical facilities in schools, shortage of funds especially to meet the recurring expenditure, poor standards of health and nutrition, costly text-books/exercise books, in-adequacy of audio-visual aids, poor condition of school buildings, poor motivational level of parents to send children to schools, punitive measures adopted by the teachers and loss of self-respect, non-conducive atmosphere of schools, heavy load of school bag, practice of forcing children to repeat classes, induction of formal education from the very first day in school, learning problems of children, unattractive/unfamiliar environment of the school, over-crowded classes, scattered pattern of population in large parts of the country, long distances of schools from homes, natural calamities in the hilly areas, poor communication facilities, lax supervision and weak administration, meeting the learning needs of all, indifferent attitude of administrative and supervisory personnel towards teaching community, teacher absenteeism, undue political interference, curriculum not in harmony with the needs and cognitive abilities of children, lack of relevance of curriculum to the needs of the community, poor quality of education, rigid system of examinations, non-availability of textbooks on time, rigid formal system of education, shortage of teachers, hesitation of female teachers to go to schools located in remote areas, inadequate/improper residential facilities especially in far flung areas compelling them to remain absent from school to attend to family problems, low morale of primary school teachers and harsh treatment of pupils, high student-teacher ratio especially in urban schools and inadequate knowledge of child psychology” (Ministry of Education, 2003). Different studies which were concerned with the causes of school dropout in United States concluded that student’s dissatisfaction with school, class repetition, and parental poor economic conditions are the major causes of school dropout (Bhatti, 2007; Malik, 2002; Millard, 1966; Shami & Hussain, 2005).

It is very difficult to solely identify the factor which is the main cause of dropping out because there is not only a single factor but this phenomenon is influenced by an array of different factors related to school, family, community settings and the student himself (Remberger, 2001). A lot of research has been conducted for exploring the causes and reasons for school dropouts.

Duckenfield (1998) identified 33 factors that lead students towards dropping out from school in USA. He categorized the factors in four groups. These categories are the student, the family, the school and the community where the students live. Potential dropout may possess one or more than reasons for his dropout. Sometimes one cause leads a student towards dropping out and for another may be that has no value. The spread of these causes vary from dropout to dropout. Rumberger (1986, 2001) organized causes of dropout as, demographic, individual, peer, economic, family and school related categories. In this scenario of primary school dropout it is evident from the above discussion that if these reasons are not addressed properly, the dropping out phenomenon cannot be controlled and ultimately, the goals of EFA and UPE cannot be achieved and increase in literacy rate will not be possible. Identification of factors contributing in decision making for leaving school is the basic key to respond this serious problem.

However the factors influencing student's decision to drop out from school identified in different studies discussed above were summarized for this study according to the categories given by Duckenfield (1998). These factors are; Student Related Factors; Community Related Factors; School Related Factors; and Family Related Factors. In spite of all the efforts made to decrease the dropout rate and increase the retention of students till the completion of primary education, students are leaving primary schools before completion at a constant rate. Different programs were launched time and again to improve this situation but in vain. Keeping in view the sensitivity of the problem, this study was planned to explore the dropout phenomenon in the light of views of the primary school teachers.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. identify factors of primary school students' dropout in Punjab through documenting the opinions of male and female primary school teachers who expressed the dropout phenomenon
2. unfold the differences and similarities in factors reported by the primary school teachers.

Research Questions

The study answered the following questions:

1. What are the causes of primary school students' dropout in Punjab in the opinions of male and female primary school teachers?
2. What are the differences and similarities in the opinions of respondent teachers about causes of primary school students' dropout?

Significance of the Problem

Primarily the primary school teachers and the administrative authorities can be the potential beneficiaries of the results of this study. They may benefit from the results because this study is providing detailed information regarding the dropout phenomenon that can help them in preventing the primary school students from dropping out. This research has scholarly significance because it attempted to extend the existing information database about dropouts. Without the clear understanding of this complex phenomenon the educators will remain unable to provide interventions to the students at risk. This study will also serve as a beacon for the development of right based inclusive schooling to achieve the targets of Education for All.

Method and Procedure

This descriptive inquiry was conducted through a self report survey by using a questionnaire based on five point Likert types scale. In the light of related literature review about the causes of school dropouts, a questionnaire for primary school teachers was developed. Before field administration of instruments, this was pilot tested and improved. Primary school teachers were surveyed by using questionnaire because they could give proper response to the questions. For such respondents questionnaire is the best instrument for data collection because it is the systematic, planned and disciplined way of gathering data (Gay, 1996). The basic advantage for using questionnaire as survey instrument is its ability for presenting items in a reliable consistent way (Nunan, 1992). The questionnaire was kept as brief as possible for the ease of respondents because respondents usually hesitate to fill and return the lengthy questionnaire (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2001). Likert scale is an excellent way of acquiring opinions and a five point gives the range of responses to participant (Anderson, 1990). For reliability of the questionnaire a pilot study was conducted and the value of Cronbach's alpha for this instrument was ($\alpha = .8978$). The confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, willingness, informed for purpose of data collection, respect for subjects and sound research design to avoid wastage of time of subjects involved were especially considered during the conduct of this study.

Sampling

The male and female primary school teachers from public sector schools in Punjab province of Pakistan constituted the population of this study. By using multistage random sampling technique, a total of 781 male and female teachers from eight districts of Punjab were selected as a sample. At premier stage, eight districts were selected through simple random sampling out of thirty six districts of the province. From each selected district, a Tehsil (Administrative unit of Provincial govt. that is smaller than a district) and a Markaz (Administrative unit of District Education Department) was selected randomly at second stage. At third stage three 'centers' (Cluster of primary schools) for boys and girls schools were also selected randomly. All the teachers working in the selected centers available at the time of data collection were surveyed.

Results

Data were collected from the sample teachers across the province. The collected data were tabulated accordingly. Data were analyzed by using Descriptive and Inferential statistics. Perceptions of male and female teachers about factors influencing dropout of a student from school were compared by using t-test, Cross Tabulation, and Green's Successive Categories Scaling Method. Following findings, conclusions and recommendations were made on the basis of results of data analysis.

Table 1
Distribution of Subjects

District	Tehsil	Total no. of teachers in Tehsil	No. of Selected Teachers			% of Population
			Male	Female	Total	
Chakwal	Chakwal	1299	35	43	78	6.0
Sheikhupura	Sheikhupura	1436	54	39	93	6.5
Hafizabad	Pindi Bhatian	644	43	52	95	14.8
Multan	Mumtaz Abad	1354	41	60	101	7.5
Gujrat	Kharian	1305	67	51	118	9.1
Bahawalpur	Bahawalpur	1245	47	38	85	6.9
Sargodha	Silanwali	438	52	67	119	27.2
Okara	Renala Khurd	2027	40	52	92	4.6
Total		9748	379	402	781	8.2

Table 1 shows a sample distribution from the selected districts. The sample size (781teachers) is 8.2% of the total population and is sufficient enough to make generalizations (Gay, 1996). Limited time and financial resources did not permit to enlarge the sample size.

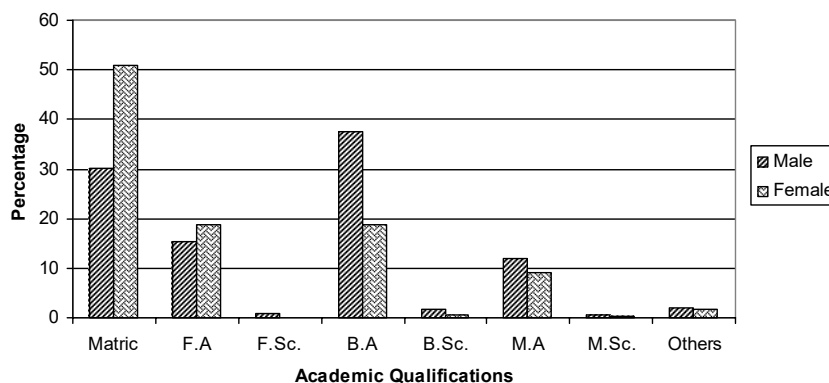


Figure 1. Academic qualifications of teachers

The mode of education level for male teachers is B.A whereas for female teachers is Matric, which shows a wide disparity in their educational level. It is evident that male sample teachers were with better academic qualifications than the female sample (Figure 1).

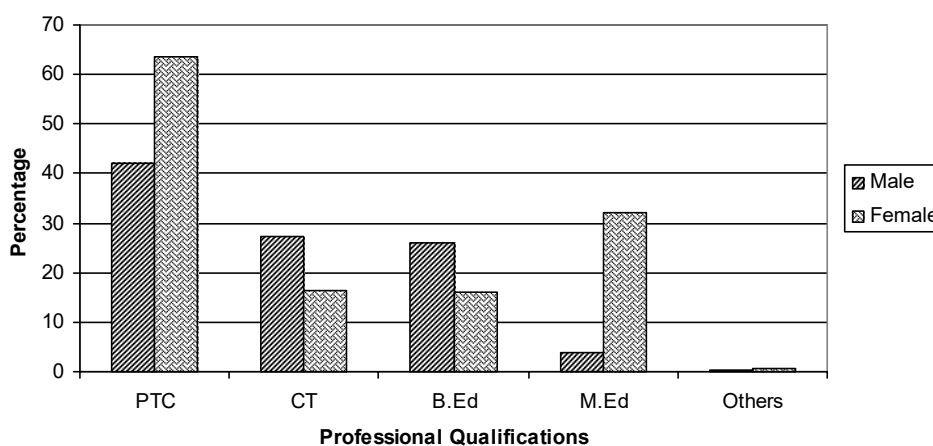


Figure 2. Professional qualifications of teachers

The majority of the male and female teachers were with PTC as their terminal professional qualification. This is the minimum level of teacher education (Figure 2).

Table 2
Teaching Experience of Male and Female Teachers

Years	Frequency	
	Male	Female
1 to 5 years	53(14.0%)	41(10.2%)
6 to 10 years	36(9.5%)	33(8.2%)
11 to 15 years	97(25.6%)	110(27.4%)
16 to 20 years	92(24.3%)	92(22.9%)
21 to 25 years	51(13.5%)	68(16.9%)
26 to 30 years	33(8.7%)	34(8.5%)
31 to 35 years	14(3.7%)	21(5.2%)
36 to Highest	03(0.8%)	03(0.7%)
Total	379(100%)	402(100%)

Table 2 shows that the majority of the male and female respondents were with teaching experience of 11 to 15 years. The majority of the respondents were well experienced.

Table 3
Association of Teacher Gender and the opinions about "Who Plays Vital Role in Pushing Students out of School?"

Gender		Who plays vital role for making students drop out of school?				
		Parents	Teachers	School	Students themselves	Society
Male	Observed Count	225	19	6	113	16
	Expected Count	232.0	23.8	5.8	101.4	16.0
Female	Observed Count	253	30	6	96	17
	Expected Count	246.0	25.2	6.2	107.6	17.0
		$\chi^2=4.850, df= 4, Sig=.303$				

The cross tabulation indicates that there is no significant association between gender and the response on the question "Who plays vital role for dropping out of student?" ($\chi^2=4.850, P=.303$). In other words the gender of the teacher does not affect the response about the said question. The observed values, however, indicate that parents and students themselves are the main cause of drop out in the opinion of male and female teachers (Table 3).

Analysis of causes of dropout in the opinion of primary school teachers (N=781) was done with the help of Green's Successive Categories Scaling Method. This method is capable of scaling more items than other unidirectional techniques. It helps in estimating the *distance or interval* between the two responses. In this method the frequency for all the responses (Strongly disagree=1, Disagree=2, To some extent=3, Agree=4, Strongly agree=5) was calculated for all the respondents (Table 4). Using this frequency table the cumulative frequency distribution was created (Table 5). Cumulative proportions for all the categories were calculated and unit normal score deviates (z scores) were assigned to each category (Table 6). Each deviate was subtracted from the boundary and in this way the rank of each statement in accordance with the responses came out and the statements got their place according to the preference given by the respondents (Table 7).

Table 4

Frequency of Responses of Primary School Teachers about Causes of Dropout (N=781)

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Difficulty in learning	18	101	419	163	80	781
Parental carelessness	4	40	363	254	120	781
Class repetition	12	112	287	281	89	781
Friendship with out of school children	13	91	328	278	71	781
Poor attendance of student	167	260	146	159	49	781
School truancy	9	133	333	250	56	781
Lack of facilities	123	356	215	63	24	781
Child labor	15	144	342	216	64	781
Lack of interest in school	167	260	146	159	49	781
Psychological problems	26	200	318	171	66	781
Hatred from studies	33	218	286	174	70	781
Parental illiteracy	27	236	295	148	75	781
Financial burden	6	121	283	242	129	781
Inability to handle heavy workload	29	255	288	156	53	781
Parent's low social status	34	247	326	146	28	781
Corporal Punishment	60	330	254	118	19	781
Teacher's non supportive behaviour	83	179	342	136	41	781
Being behind in grade level	31	269	372	93	16	781
Poor relationship with teachers	98	279	230	112	62	781
Large class size	147	392	180	47	15	781
Harsh attitude of teachers	51	230	329	124	47	781
Family crises	13	130	333	231	74	781
Physical characteristics of student	94	343	251	70	23	781
Poor health	26	232	308	154	61	781
Long distance between home and school	57	293	297	107	27	781

The boundaries of the intervals were located by assuming that the responses for each item were distributed normally. In order to analyze the items under the normal distribution, the categories were numbered from least to most favorable and the frequency distributions were found in Table 4.

Table 5

Cumulative frequency Distribution of Responses of Primary School Teachers about Causes of Dropout (N=781)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Difficulty in learning	18	119	538	701	781
Parental carelessness	4	44	407	661	781
Class repetition	12	124	411	692	781
Friendship with out of school children	13	104	432	710	781
Poor attendance of student	167	427	573	732	781
School truancy	113	142	475	725	781
Lack of facilities	123	479	694	757	781
Child labor	15	159	501	717	781
Lack of interest in school	167	427	573	732	781
Psychological problems	26	226	544	715	781
Hatred from studies	33	251	537	711	781
Parental illiteracy	27	263	558	706	781
Financial burden	6	127	410	652	781
Inability to handle heavy workload	29	284	572	728	781
Parent's low social status	34	281	607	753	781
Corporal Punishment	60	390	644	762	781
Teacher's non supportive behaviour	83	262	604	740	781
Being behind in grade level	31	300	672	765	781
Poor relationship with teachers	98	377	607	719	781
Large class size	147	539	719	766	781
Harsh attitude of teachers	51	281	610	734	781
Family crises	13	143	476	707	781
Physical characteristics of student	94	437	688	758	781
Poor health	26	258	566	720	781
Long distance between home and school	57	350	647	754	781

The frequencies calculated in Table 4 were then converted to cumulative probabilities, as shown in Table 5.

Table 6

Cumulative Proportions of Responses of Primary School Teachers about Causes of Dropout (N=781)

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Difficulty in learning	0.02	0.15	0.69	0.90	1
Parental carelessness		0.06	0.52	0.85	1
Class repetition	0.02	0.16	0.53	0.89	1
Friendship with out of school children	0.02	0.13	0.55	0.91	1
Poor attendance of student	0.21	0.55	0.73	0.94	1
School truancy	0.14	0.18	0.61	0.93	1
Lack of facilities	0.16	0.61	0.89	0.97	1
Child labor	0.02	0.20	0.64	0.92	1
Lack of interest in school	0.21	0.55	0.73	0.94	1
Psychological problems	0.03	0.29	0.70	0.92	1
Hatred from studies	0.04	0.32	0.69	0.91	1
Parental illiteracy	0.03	0.34	0.71	0.90	1
Financial burden		0.16	0.52	0.83	1
Inability to handle heavy workload	0.04	0.36	0.73	0.93	1
Parent's low social status	0.04	0.36	0.78	0.96	1
Corporal Punishment	0.08	0.50	0.82	0.98	1
Teacher's non supportive behaviour	0.11	0.34	0.77	0.95	1
Being behind in grade level	0.04	0.38	0.86	0.98	1
Poor relationship with teachers	0.13	0.48	0.78	0.92	1
Large class size	0.19	0.69	0.92	0.98	1
Harsh attitude of teachers	0.07	0.36	0.78	0.94	1
Family crises	0.02	0.18	0.61	0.91	1
Physical characteristics of student	0.12	0.56	0.88	0.97	1
Poor health	0.03	0.33	0.72	0.92	1
Long distance between home and school	0.07	0.45	0.83	0.97	1

Table 6 shows that the probabilities that are greater than .98 or less than .02 were rejected.

Table 7

Unit Normal deviates (z scores) of Responses of Primary School Teachers about Causes of Dropout (N=781)

Statements	1	2	3	4
Difficulty in learning	-2.05	-1.03	0.69	0.9
Parental carelessness		-1.55	0.52	0.85
Class repetition	-2.05	-0.99	0.53	0.89
Friendship with out of school children	-2.05	-0.99	0.55	0.91
Poor attendance of student	-0.84	0.55	0.73	0.94
School truancy	-1.08	-0.91	0.61	0.93
Lack of facilities	-0.99	0.61	0.89	0.97
Child labor	-2.05	-0.84	0.64	0.92
Lack of interest in school	-0.84	-0.55	0.73	0.94
Psychological problems	-1.88	-0.84	0.7	0.92
Hatred from studies	-1.75	-0.46	0.69	0.91
Parental illiteracy	-1.88	-0.41	0.71	0.9
Financial burden		-0.99	0.52	0.83
Inability to handle heavy workload	-1.75	-0.35	0.73	0.93
Parent's low social status	-1.75	-0.35	0.78	0.96
Corporal Punishment	-1.4	0	0.82	0.98
Teacher's non supportive behaviour	-1.22	-0.41	0.77	0.95
Being behind in grade level	-1.75	-0.3	0.86	0.98
Poor relationship with teachers	-1.17	-0.05	0.78	0.92
Large class size	-0.87	0.69	0.92	0.98
Harsh attitude of teachers	-1.47	-0.35	0.78	0.94
Family crises	-2.05	-0.91	0.61	0.91
Physical characteristics of student	-1.17	0.56	0.88	0.97
Poor health	-1.88	-0.44	0.72	0.92
Long distance between home and school	-1.47	-0.12	0.83	0.97

The cumulative proportions were converted into normal deviates by referring to areas of normal distribution. Normal deviates (z values) were found for all the cumulative proportions (Table 7).

Table 8

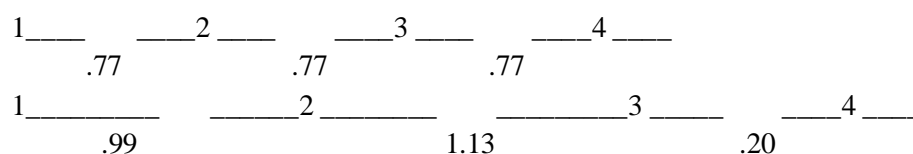
Matrix of difference in Responses of Primary School Teachers about Causes of Dropout (N=781)

Statements	2-1	3-2	4-3
Difficulty in learning	1.02	1.72	0.21
Parental carelessness	-1.55	2.07	0.33
Class repetition	1.06	1.52	0.36
Friendship with out of school children	1.06	1.54	0.36
Poor attendance of student	1.39	0.18	0.21
School truancy	0.17	1.52	0.32
Lack of facilities	1.6	0.28	0.08
Child labor	1.21	1.48	0.28
Lack of interest in school	0.29	1.28	0.21
Psychological problems	1.04	1.54	0.22
Hatred from studies	1.29	1.15	0.22
Parental illiteracy	1.47	1.12	0.19
Financial burden	-0.99	1.51	0.31
Inability to handle heavy workload	1.4	1.08	0.2
Parent's low social status	1.4	1.13	0.18
Corporal Punishment	1.4	0.82	0.16
Teacher's non supportive behaviour	0.81	1.18	0.18
Being behind in grade level	1.45	1.16	0.12
Poor relationship with teachers	1.12	0.83	0.14
Large class size	1.56	0.23	0.06
Harsh attitude of teachers	1.12	1.13	0.16
Family crises	1.14	1.52	0.3
Physical characteristics of students	1.73	0.32	0.09
Poor health	1.44	1.16	0.2
Long distance between home and school	1.35	0.95	0.14
Sum	24.98	28.42	5.23
n	25	25	25
Average	0.9992	1.1368	0.2092

The difference between the categories for each item was found and the average of the differences is equal to the boundary between the two columns. The average in the bottom row of the Table 8 is the distances between the categories of the statements. By taking the first boundary arbitrarily as $B_1 = 0$, the remaining boundaries can be computed by summing the boundaries cumulatively from left to right as follows,

$$\begin{aligned}
 B_{1=} & .00 & =.00 \\
 B_{2=} & .00+.99 & =.99 \\
 B_{3=} & .00+.99+1.13 & =2.12 \\
 B_{4=} & .00+.99+1.13+.20 & =2.32
 \end{aligned}$$

A comparison between an equal interval assumption and the boundaries obtained can be shown by dividing the sum 2.32 by 3 which yields an interval of approximately .77



This shows that the boundary between 3 & 4 is quite small whereas the boundary between 2 & 3 is fairly large.

For obtaining the scale scores, the normal deviate values (z score) were subtracted from the category boundaries. For this purpose the first boundary was taken as zero and no values were found for the column 5. The values were calculated in Table 8. The row sum was then averaged.

Table 9

Boundaries Minus Column Normal Deviates of Responses of Primary School Teachers about Causes of Dropout (N=781)

Statement	B ₁ -1	B ₂ -.2	B ₃ -.3	B ₄ -.4	Sum	N	Scale Val. Avg.
Difficulty in learning	2.05	2.02	1.43	1.42	6.92	5	1.384
Parental carelessness	0	2.54	1.6	1.47	5.61	5	1.122
Class repetition	2.05	1.98	1.59	1.43	7.05	5	1.41
Friendship with out of school children	2.05	1.98	1.57	1.41	7.01	5	1.402
Poor attendance of student	0.84	0.44	1.39	1.38	4.05	5	0.81
School truancy	1.08	1.9	1.51	1.39	5.88	5	1.176
Lack of facilities	0.99	0.38	1.23	1.35	3.95	5	0.79
Child labor	2.05	1.83	1.48	1.4	6.76	5	1.352
Lack of interest in school	0.84	1.54	1.39	1.38	5.15	5	1.03
Psychological problems	1.88	1.83	1.42	1.4	6.53	5	1.306
Hatred from studies	1.75	1.45	1.43	1.41	6.04	5	1.208
Parental illiteracy	1.88	1.4	1.41	1.42	6.11	5	1.222
Financial burden	0	1.98	1.6	1.49	5.07	5	1.014

Inability to handle heavy workload	1.75	1.34	1.39	1.39	5.87	5	1.174
Parent's low social status	1.75	1.34	1.34	1.36	5.79	5	1.158
Corporal Punishment	1.4	0.99	1.3	1.34	5.03	5	1.006
Teacher's non supportive behaviour	1.22	1.4	1.35	1.37	5.34	5	1.068
Being behind in grade level	1.75	1.29	1.26	1.34	5.64	5	1.128
Poor relationship with teachers	1.17	1.04	1.34	1.4	4.95	5	0.99
Large class size	0.87	0.3	1.2	1.34	3.71	5	0.742
Harsh attitude of teachers	1.47	1.34	1.34	1.38	5.53	5	1.106
Family crises	2.05	1.9	1.51	1.41	6.87	5	1.374
Physical characteristics of students	1.17	0.43	1.24	1.35	4.19	5	0.838
Poor health	1.88	1.43	1.4	1.4	6.11	5	1.222
Long distance between home and school	1.47	1.11	1.29	1.35	5.22	5	1.044

These scale values or scores indicate that the statements regarding causes of dropouts should be arranged as shown in Table 9. It shows the inter item distance or interval. All the statements are arranged on a scale according to their values.

The majority of the primary school teachers reported the most important school and family based causes of dropout as class repetition, friendship with out of school children, difficulty in learning, family crises and child labor (Table 10). The other teachers reported student's psychological problems and physical characteristics, lack of facilities, poor relationship with teachers, lack of interest in school and large class size as causes of dropout of primary school students.

Table 10
Causes of Dropouts as Perceived by Primary School Teachers

Most Positive Effect	Statements
1.41	Class repetition
1.4	Friendship with out of school children
1.39	
1.38	Difficulty in learning
1.37	Family crises
1.36	
1.35	Child labor
1.34	
1.33	
1.32	
1.31	Psychological problems
//	
1.22	Poor health, Parental illiteracy
1.21	Hatred from studies
1.2	
1.19	
1.18	School truancy
1.17	Inability to handle heavy workload
1.16	Parent's low social status
1.15	
1.14	
1.13	Being behind in grade level
1.12	Parental carelessness
1.11	
1.1	Harsh attitude of teachers
1.09	
1.08	
1.07	
1.06	Teacher's non supportive behaviour
1.05	
1.04	
1.03	Lack of interest in school
1.02	
1.01	Financial burden , Corporal Punishment
1	
0.99	Poor relationship with teachers
//	
0.83	Physical characteristics of student
0.82	
0.81	
0.8	
0.79	Lack of facilities
0.78	
0.77	
0.76	
0.75	
0.74	Large class size

Table 11
Analysis of Factors Contributing towards Dropping out of Students (N=781)

Factors	Mean
Personal	24.30
School	21.02
Family	16.19
Community	12.44

The majority of the teachers reported that personal factors of dropout contribute more towards dropping out followed by the school factors. Family factors fall at third level whereas the community factors have the least contribution in dropping of students (Table 11).

Table 12
Comparison of Male and Female Teachers' Opinion about Factors Contributing towards Dropping out of Students

Factors	Gender of teacher	N	Mean	df	t-value
Personal	Male	379	24.09	779	1.249
	Female	402	24.50		
Community	Male	379	12.62	779	1.939
	Female	402	12.28		
Family	Male	379	16.06	776.545	1.180
	Female	402	16.31		
School	Male	379	21.05	772.111	0.141
	Female	402	21.00		

Table 12 indicates that t-values for personal (1.249), community (1.939), family (1.180) and school factors (0.141) are not significant at $P < .05$ level of significance. It is evident that male and female teachers have same opinion about factors contributing towards drop out of students from primary school.

Conclusion

The identification of causes of dropout for primary school students is a must for development of any prevention plan. This study was conducted to identify the student, school, parents and the community based factors that contribute towards the decision for termination of education by the primary school students. The teachers were considered as one of the primary key stakeholders contributing towards the phenomenon of dropping out of students. Punjab being the most developed and largest populated province can serve better in understanding about the phenomenon,

in connection to the entire country. The male and female primary school teachers seem on the same page in their opinion regarding the causes of primary school students dropping out. Both types of respondents are of the opinion that the student and parents factors play a vital role in dropping out. They reported that the most important school and family based causes of dropout are; class repetition, friendship with out of school children, difficulty in learning, family crises and child labor. Student's psychological problems and physical characteristics, lack of facilities, poor relationship with teachers, lack of interest in school and large class size are the less prevailing causes of dropout. School and personal factors emerged as the stronger components of the dropping out phenomenon. The respondents of both the genders have same opinions regarding the causes of dropout mean that the causes for male and female students in Pakistani school culture are almost same.

Keeping in view the findings of the study it can be recommended that the schools should be made more vibrant and friendly that the students can be engaged efficiently in studies. The fear of studies should be replaced by the love towards studies by applying different teaching techniques and child centered approached. The teachers and authorities should be sensitized towards the psychological, mental and physical wellbeing of the students. The parents should be provided counseling about the provision and benefits of compulsory education to their broods. The parents and teachers can also be forced through legal framework for the provision of compulsory education to children. More over the teachers should be provided trainings and incentives for the retention of students till the completion of primary cycle of their education.

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