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UNDERSTANDING THE CORRELATES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: A CROSS SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT:

Universal access and retention in primary education are two major objects through which every nation committed to achieve Education for All which is also central to the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Universaliation of primary education has remained the decisive component of human development and realisation of the same no doubt will have influence to achieve other Millennium Development Goals. But in the era of globalization and privatization of education, the wastage and drop out of children has been the real challenge in the way of attainment of universalisation of primary education before all the nations, specially the marginalised. In this context, the present paper tries to investigate the extent of wastage and dropout of students at primary level and to find out its correlates for relevant policy prescription in global perspectives. For cross-section analysis, the present study has investigated the data of the year 2013 covering 188 nations world wide collected from Human Development Report 2015, UNDP. The study concludes that policies and programmes should be initiated to curb the effect of negative shocks of dropout like over burdened agricultural engagement, ruthless growth, child labour, excess population etc. Similarly, stimulants compliance to reduced dropout rates like, employment in non-farm sectors, improved purchasing power of parents, women autonomy and gender development, increased use of internet for digital learning etc should be encouraged and addressed properly to reduce the wastage of human resource and achieve the Millennium Development Goals of sustainable human development all over the world.

KEY WORDS: Primary School Dropouts, Wastage, Universalization of Primary Education, Capability Expansion, Millennium Development Goals

1. INTRODUCTION:

Every society must ensure that education is the birth right of every child irrespective of caste creed and religion. For removal of ignorance and illiteracy in our society primary education should be the minimum education for an individual. Primary education envisages capability expansion of human being ensuring reading-writing skill and knowing the surrounding environment in which he lives. Education also inculcates in them the values of humanism, democracy and national integration

(Saikia: 2014). Moreover, effective utilization of education helps the individuals in improving their personality and possessing the traits of morality and ethics (Samuel: 2017). Mentionable to quote Swami Vivekanand here, "Education, can unlock all doors of progress". Capability expansion through primary education not only helps the individual to make proper adjustment but also ascertain progressive development in society. This education can identify and unfold the native potentialities of an individual for development (Bhattacharjee: 2015).

Education being the birth right, each and every child should get the opportunity out of it.It becomes the obligatory duty and bounded responsibility of the society to make this education available to every child. Universal access and retention in primary education are two major objects through which every nation committed to achieve Education for All which is also central to the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Universaliation of primary education has remained the decisive component of human development and realisation of the same no doubt will have influence to achieve other Millennium Development Goals. Universal access to primary education will greatly help to resolve the issues like, problems of the right to development, to peace and security, for gender equality, and eradication of the poverty in its all form and to promote sustainable human development (Bhat: 2013).

But in the era of globalization and privatization of education, the wastage and drop out of children has been the real challenge in the way of attainment of universalisation of primary education before all the nations, specially the marginalised. Dropping out of children from school has turned into a difficult issue in many places around the world (Young & Chavez: 2002).UNESCO (2003) indicated that children around the world fail to gain access to primary schooling. Even large numbers among those who do enrol leave prematurely, dropping-out before the skills of numeracy and literacy have been properly gained. This initiates for a close investigation of the degree of educational wastage of primary schools (Kebede et al. 2015). Although significant progress has been made in increasing the number of children enrolled in school in developing countries, these gains are undermined by the persistently large number of pupils who take more than one year to complete a particular grade and/or who drop out of school before completing even the primary cycle (Fiske: 1998; Ekka & Roy: 2014). Therefore, how to integrate them in the main stream and make universalisation of education successful is the immediate call of the hour.

Keeping the above context in perspective, the present paper tries to investigate the extent ofwastage and dropout of students at primary level and to find out its correlates for relevant policy prescription in global perspectives.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To provide an overview of dropout rateof students at primary level of schooling across the nations of the world.
2. To identify the correlates of dropout of the students at primary level of schooling.
3. To suggest relevant policy measures to eliminate the dropout rate at primary level of schooling.

3. DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY:

The present study has been based on Secondary data of the year 2013covering 188 nations world wide collected from Human Development Report 2015, UNDP. The study is based on cross-section analysis.

For analysis purpose Karl Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis have been used.

4. CONCEPTUAL NOTES:

Wastage: Wastage means dropout of pupils i.e. leaving the schools before completing theprimary course. All students who enterthe educational system do not complete the full level of the system for which they are enrolled andleave or drop out somewhere in the middle. This is known as wastage. When students leave the schoolbefore the completion of stage of education, the time, money and energy spent on his education is agreat national wastage.

Dropout: A school leaver or pass-out is a dropout if she/he does not pursue studies inanother school during the following academic session. Dropouts are defined as

children, who enrol in primary level (Class I-V) and for some reason other than death leaves school before completing the grade without transferring to another school.

Dropout rate:The percentage of school leavers or pass-outs out of total enrolment who donot pursue studies in the same or some other school during the following academic sessiongives the dropout rate.

5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS:

5.1. GLOBAL SCENARIO OF DROPOUT RATES AT PRIMARY LEVEL OF SCHOOLING:

School dropout is an important issue for any country. For a country where school dropout rate is lasting, reducing the size of early school dropout can be achieved only through concerted action by central and local institutions and civil society. In defining important aspects of public policy to reduce school dropout one should take into account the economic, social and value system of a country, development region and county (Andrei et al., 2011).

Table 1 shows the Average Dropout Rates in Primary Education in countries grouped under the categories of very high human development, high human development, medium human development and low human development in the year 2013. According to the hierarchy of ranking, the lowest annual average rate of school dropout (primary level) is found to be in Very High Human Development countries, with an average rate of 3.8% and low intra-group variation of 4.8 standard deviation value. The Low Human Development countries recorded the highest school dropout rate with 40.2% and high intra-group variation with 14.95 standard deviation. Low human development countries due to its peculiar characteristics and issues have been found to be trapped in school dropout. World Bank (2015) states that children who are still out of school worldwide, a dominant part of these dropouts are found in developing nations (Adam et al.: 2016). In this regard, a UNESCO report (2000) on the state of the world's children, points out, that about one thirty million children in the developing world denied their right to education through Dropping out (Latif et al.: 2015). In less developed countries, school dropout is a very complex phenomenon that needs to be understood in the context of socio-economic problems and inadequacies of the educational system. It is not uncommon for children to leave school to work, or for school-age children to stay home to take care of younger siblings. Moreover, the educational system is often not adapted to meet the needs of poor children, causing a significant number to drop out from school (Graeff-Martins et al.: 2006). Studies finds that negative shocks like child labour, poverty, poor women autonomy, orthodox social framework, school supply-side constraints, low budgetary provision on health and education sector, etc., largely determine the rate of school dropout in less developed countries (Adelman and Székely: 2016)

Table 1: Dropout Rates of Group of Countries according to their level of Development based onHDIin 2013

Groups of Countries	Average Dropout Rates in Primary Education	Standard Deviation shows inter group disparity
Very High Human Development (49 countries)	3.8	4.8
High Human Development (56 countries)	8.0	6.4
Medium Human development (39 countries)	18.5	13.2
Low Human Development (44 countries) Marginalised group	40.2	14.95

Source: Estimated by Authors based on HDR 2015, UNDP Data

Table 2: Highest and Lowest Scorer of Dropout Rates at Primary level across the World

Country	Top ten Scorers with low Dropout rate	Country	Top ten Scorers withhigh Dropout rate

	(Less than 8%)		(More than 50 %)
Japan	0.2	Nicaragua	51.6
Georgia	0.2	Sierra Leone	52.2
Austria	0.3	Burundi	52.5
Finland	0.4	Central African Republic	53.4
Croatia	0.6	Madagascar	62.0
Ukraine	0.6	Ethiopia	63.4
Italy	0.7	Rwanda	65.3
Kazakhstan	0.7	Angola	68.1
Czech Republic	0.7	Mozambique	68.4
Serbia	0.8	Uganda	75.2

Source: HDR 2015, UNDP

Table 2 enlisted the highest and the lowest scorer countries of dropout rates. It is witnessed that out of selected 188 countries across the world, the countries recorded dropout rates 0.8 percent or less than that are Japan (the least scorer 0.2 percent), Georgia, Austria, Finland, Croatia, Ukraine, Italy, Kazakhstan, Czech Republic and Serbia. Again, less developed countries like,Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Central African Republic, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Angola, Mozambique and Uganda (the highest scorer 75.2 percent) are found to be the top scorers having more than 50 percent dropout rates. Unlike least scorer countries,it is found that top scorer countries in dropout rates have remained the poorest.

countries in the world, ranked in low human development categories (UNDP 2019) and witnessing more than 75 percent poverty rate. Poverty also interacts with other points of social disadvantage, with the interaction of factors putting further pressure on vulnerable children to drop out (Hunt: 2008).

5.2. CORRELATES OF DROPOUT RATES AT PRIMARY SCHOOLING IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:

Table 3 outlines the correlates of dropout rate in primary level of schooling in global context. Educational factors like, proportion of trained teachers, Pupil-teacher ratios have been found to be the significant determinants of dropout in primary education having usual correlation signs. Respective correlation co-efficient ofTrained Teacher (-0.313) and Pupil-teacher Ratio (0.785) show that former is negatively and later is positively associated with dropout rate in primary education. The study shows that lack of sufficient number of qualified Teachers leads to lack of interest among the students which ultimately leads to dropouts. Higher Proportion of trained teachers and less pupil-teacher ratio are likely to ensure individual attention to dull student and meet the psychological needs of children and thereby reduce dropout and wastage at primary level. The study found that crowded classrooms, among others factors, largely increase dropout rates in primary level of schooling (Mpyangu et. al, 2014).

Economic factors have also been largely responsible for increasing dropout rate all over the world. Negative correlation co-efficient of GDP per capita (-0.499) and Proportion of Employment in Service Sector (-0.665) imply that better economic opportunity helps to reduce dropout and wastage in primary education. Table 3 shows that employment ratio in agriculture (0.745) and income inequality (0.337) has been positively related to dropout rates. Higher employment ratio in agriculture and more income inequalityimplies more downtrodden people which are going to aggravate the wastage of student in primary education. The studies find that weak financial position of families as the most common reason of dropping out from school at primary education level (Latif: 2015; Adelman and Székely: 2016). The financial constraints leading to inability to afford school related expenses such as transport fare, school uniforms and shoes, books and stationery, pocket money and food have been found to largely affect the dropout rates (Mwinzi: 2017). The study of (Kebede et. al.: 2015) shows that most parents have been unable to give necessary support for their children in

schooling. And as such parents' economic deprivation has remained one of the potential factors for early leaving of school of children at primary level. Economy predominantly agrarian and dominant part of the general population is labourer agriculturists who still rely upon simple strategies for creation bringing about low yield. Consequently, low household income and widespread poverty causes basic school dropouts (Cardoso and Verner: 2007; Mpyangu et. al.: 2014; Saeed et al.: 2016). Moreover, agricultural work often clashes with school schedules, leading to high absenteeism or seasonal withdrawal from school, which can affect children's school performance and motivation, and lead them to drop out (Subrahmanyam: 2016).

Table 3: Correlates of Dropout Rates at Primary Education

Sl. No.	Correlates	Dropout Rates
1.	Trained Teacher in Primary Education	-0.313**
2.	Pupil-teacher Ratio in Primary Education	0.785**
3.	Population with Secondary education (% ages of 25 & older)	-0.784**
4.	GDP per capita	-0.499**
5.	Employment in Agriculture (% of total employment)	0.745**
6.	Employment in Service (% of total employment)	-0.665**
7.	Child Labour (% ages 5-14)	0.649**
8.	Annual Average Growth rate of Population in %	0.351**
9.	Gender Development Index	-0.509**
10.	Internet User (% of Population)	-0.716**
11.	Income Inequality (Gini coefficient)	0.337**
12.	Public Expenditure on Education (% of GDP)	-0.106

Source: Estimated by authors
Note: ** indicates correlation is significance at the 0.01 level

In present study, child labour and dropout rate have been found to be moderately positively associated (correlated co-efficient 0.649). It has been found that in many cases the children are admitted in schools at the age of six plus and at about the age of nine they are withdrawn from schools in order to help the family by doing some work, like seeking some employment etc. here poverty directly or indirectly induces dropout rate. The studies (Saeed et al.: 2016) claim that students leave school to engage in farming activities so as to get quick money. It is better to engage in agriculture to earn some income than wasting time in schooling (Saeed et al.: 2016). It is witnessed that children of age 10 and above are found to be engaged in activities like farming, quarrying, pretty business among others in order to earn livelihood and when a child gets used to earn money, they see no use of struggling with school which leads to school drop outs (Mpyangu et. al: 2014; Cardoso and Verner: 2007).

Positive correlation coefficient (0.351) between annual average growth rate of population and dropout rate implies that higher growth rate of Population brings per capita income to subsistence level which is not conducive for the attainment of universal primary education. The similar study brings forward the effects of population growth on school dropout. When high population growth is compared to the economic growth it is found that a very little fraction of national budget goes into education. Hence, the main bottleneck in education is the meagre finance flows from government which escalates the out of school phenomena (Mpyangu et. al.: 2014).

Gender Development implies up-gradation of female over male in developmental perspective and that too are interestingly conducive to cease wastage and dropout of students. Negative correlation co-efficient (-0.509) put the same significance in the present study. Many studies witness that more educational consciousness among women as

well as more empowerment of women in decision making are greatly helpful to restrict wastage of students in education. A mother's level of education has been found to be a determining factor in both school access and retention for girls (Sabates et. al.: 2010). Similarly, research from Bangladesh shows that girls with mothers who have decision-making power in the household are more likely to attend and remain in school (Shahidul: 2013).

The level of parental education measured through population (ages of 25 and older) with secondary education are found to be conducive (correlation coefficient -0.784) to reduce the number of school leavers. It is believed that being illiterate, parents fail to understand the social-cultural as well as economic importance of the education. Consequently, even they admit their children in some schools, they take them out of these schools after some time, because from their point of view this is a wastage of time. The study (Kebede et. al.: 2015) also witnesses that the low level of family education may have a crucial effect on the survival of the students in the education system. Parents' educational level is more important in determining repetition and drop-out of students than with whom the students living.

Increasing number of internet user has also been found to be negatively correlated (-0.716) to increasing number of dropouts. Here the benefit of communication can be realised to build up educational awareness. The internet has become an important tool and required by the knowledge-based society present the contemporary for information management, information search, communication, and research and learning. Online media usage for education helps students in improving their academic achievement. The internet has the potential of making teaching more fun and interesting, and thus to increase students' motivation to learn and improve their academic achievement (Shahibi and Rusli: 2017).

6. Implied Policy Prescription:

1) Child centric teaching method and curriculum should be adopted. Emphasis should be put on teachers training so that they can impart even unattractive curriculum in the most pleasant manner. Vigorous change should be brought into curriculum and in the method of teaching. Along with reducing pupil-teacher ratio, activity based method as well as digital learning technique should beencouraged so as to develop an inquiring mind capable of liking manual and technical work. Moreover, the government should start teacher welfare programmes to reduce the problems of the teachers, in this way the teacher would be able to give due attention to their duties and students. By doing so children might get interest in learning and as such dropout rate would be controlled.
2) Problem of child labour, poverty, income inequality and over burdened agriculture, should be addressed immediately. Along with increasing employment opportunities in non-farm sectors, inclusive growth strategy should be stepped forward in less developed countries. Moreover, the specific short-term strategy should be adopted by the governments of less developed countries in the form of nourishing food to poor students, scholarship to the poor students, provide basic facilities like drinking water, electricity, toilet, furniture,black boards as well as digital learning infrastructure on priority basis.
3) Changes in the home, society and school atmosphere should be made in order to stop wastage. The changes made should aim at improving and making the atmosphere healthy. To achieve this, it is desirable that the public, the teachers and the government should co-operate. It is necessary to remove the evil social practices and false values. It is the prior duty of the government to inform the parents about the value and importance of education. Educational awareness programs should be introduced for adults.
4) Specifically, gender developmentprogrammes should be initiated. Economic autonomy of women through micro finance, SHGs, training on employment and livelihood programme for women, skill development programme for women should be put forward. Initiative for women education and women participation in political affairs should also be encouraged.

5) Problem of over population in less developed nations should be addressed immediately. Population education programme should be encouraged so as to popularise the 'small family and high quality of life' slogan. Direct population control measures should be adopted to reap the benefit of sustainable human development.

7. CONCLUSION

This study deals with the causes of wastage and dropouts and the corrective measures prescribed to eliminate it in global context. Only through the implementation of government schemes it may not be possible to completely eliminate dropout and wastage. Teachers are in collaboration with parents and the government machinery to make sure there are no instances of wastage and stagnation. The teacher as manager of the teaching-learning process must plan, organize, lead and control the effects of all the new available material resources that intervene in the teaching-learning process in such a way that the teaching-learning objectives are achieved and dropout be eliminated.

Moreover, policies and programmes should be initiated to curb the effect of negative shocks of dropout like over burdened agricultural engagement, ruthless growth, child labour, excess population etc. Similarly, stimulants compliance to reduced dropout rates like, employment in non-farm sectors, improved purchasing power of parents, women autonomy and gender development, increased use of internet for digital learning etc should be encouraged and addressed properly to reduce the wastage of human resourceand achieve the Millennium Development Goals of sustainable human development all over the world.

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Annexure 1