



Original Article

A Study on Causes of School Drop Out in A Slum Area of Jaipur Rajasthan

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OPEN ACCESS

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Received: 28-11-2025

Accepted: 16-12-2025

Available online: 31-12-2025

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Medical and Pharmaceutical Research

ABSTRACT

School drop outs are very common in children, especially in developing countries, and may occur due to many causes. This community-based descriptive observational study was conducted in a Kacchi Basti to identify reasons for school dropout among children aged 6-14 years and present their socio-demographic profile. A total of 180 school dropout children were surveyed. Findings revealed that 57.8% were boys and 42.2% girls, with the majority aged 13-14 years. Most children belonged to Hindu families with illiterate parents engaged primarily in low-income occupations. The reasons for dropout included inability to pay for education (71.1%), need to support family (37.2%), household responsibilities, parental reluctance, and disinterest in school. Boys predominantly dropped out to work for family support, while girls were mainly withdrawn due to parental reluctance and household duties. The study highlights poverty, parental attitudes, and socio-economic factors as critical contributors to school dropout and underscores the need for targeted interventions to improve retention.

Keywords: School dropout, Children, Socio-demographic factors, Poverty, Parental attitudes, Community-based study

INTRODUCTION

Education is a key driver of individual and national development, reducing poverty and enhancing socio-economic progress. Despite constitutional mandates for free and compulsory education up to 14 years of age in India, significant dropout rates persist, particularly among children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. School dropout not only infringes on children's rights but also results in wastage of educational resources and perpetuates cycles of poverty. There may be different reasons for school dropout children studied by various authors⁽¹⁻⁶⁾ at various times, in majority of cases it was related to Poverty directly or indirectly. Dropping out of school is a good example of an issue where a bio-psychosocial perspective could be useful; where there is a confluence of biological (various neuro-developmental issues), psychological (cognitive issues and issues connected to intelligence and learning), and social (issues of poverty, social opportunities, health provisions) factors that come into play.⁽⁷⁻⁸⁾ This study aims to explore the reasons for school dropout and socio-demographic characteristics of dropout children in an urban slum setting.

OBJECTIVES

1. To estimate the various reasons for school dropouts among the children aged 6-14 years school dropout children residing in the Jhalana Kacchi basti in Jaipur City.
2. To present socio-demographic profile of these school dropout children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area- Jhalana Kacchi basti of Jaipur city.

Study Design- A community based Descriptive type of observational study.

Study Period- 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

Sample Size- 25% of households residing in Jhalana Kacchi Basti of Jaipur city, will were surveyed for school dropouts; to achieve this every 4th household was surveyed by Systematic Random Sampling technique

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Children aged 6-14, who dropped out of schools for more than one year,
2. School Dropout Children, whose family had stayed in the study area for more than one year,

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Children, whose parents/guardians will not give consent
2. Seriously ill/hospitalized children,

Method of Data Collection- Data was collected using a pre-designed, Semi- structured Performa.

RESULTS

A total of 180 school dropout children were surveyed.

Socio-Demographic Profile: out of 180 children, 57.8% were boys and 42.2% girls, with a mean age of 12.41 years. Majority (88.9%) were Hindu. Most parents were illiterate (60.6% fathers, 75.6% mothers), with fathers mainly engaged in manual labor and mothers primarily homemakers. Over half of the children belonged to large families (>5 members) and nuclear family structures predominated (73.9%).

Educational Status: Most children had education up to 4th standard or beyond (72.2%).

Reasons for Dropout: The predominant reason was inability to afford education-related expenses (71.1%), followed by the need to work for family support (37.2%), household responsibilities (31.1%), parental reluctance (30.6%), and disinterest in school (30%). Among boys and girls, reluctance of Parents (23.1% boys and 40.8% girls), disinterest in school curriculum (36.5% boys and 21.1% girls) to participate in house hold activities (5.8% boys and 44.7% girls), desire to earn money (17.3% boys and 0.0% girls), to look after younger siblings (24.0% boys and 40.8% girls) and to work for supporting family (55.8% boys and 11.8% girls) were statistical significant reasons (p value <0.05). Gender differences were significant: boys mainly dropped out to support family financially, while girls were withdrawn for household tasks and parental reluctance.

Table 1: Distribution of the school dropout children according to the reasons leading to their school dropout

Reasons for school dropout	Girls		Boys		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Reluctance of Parents	31	40.8	24	23.1	55	30.6
Disinterest in school curriculum	16	21.1	38	36.5	54	30.0
To participate in house hold activity	34	44.7	6	5.8	40	22.2
Desire to earn money	0	0	18	17.3	18	10.0
To look after younger siblings	31	40.8	25	24.0	56	31.1
Inability to pay for education	52	68.4	76	73.1	128	71.1
Poor school/home environment	13	17.1	14	13.5	27	15.0
To work for supporting family	9	11.8	58	55.8	67	37.2
Death of parents	12	15.8	15	14.4	27	15.0
Others	7	9.2	9	8.7	16	8.9

DISCUSSION

A study on causes of school dropout in urban slums was undertaken in Jhalana Kacchi basti of Jaipur city. Children who after enrolment had stopped going to the schools for at least one year were selected for the study. Children of age less than 6 years and more than 14 years were excluded from the study. 180 such children were studied.

It was observed in the present study that majority, 104 (57.8%) children were boys and 76 (42.2%) were girls. This observation is similar to that in the study by A Khokhar et al., in which boys constituted 54.23% of the study population and girls 45.77%.²

It was observed that out of 180 school dropout children, majority, i.e., 50 (27.78%) were 14years old, followed by 48 (26.67%) aged 13 years, 39 (21.67%) aged 12 years followed by 20 (11.11%) aged 11 years, 14 (7.78%) aged 10 years and 9(5.00%) aged 9 years. This observation matches with that of the Executive Summary published by the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in which also it was observed that school dropout rate increases with the age group.⁹ In this study also the number of school dropout children increases with the age of the children. In majority, i.e., 102 (56.7%) children both the parents were illiterate. Only in cases of 37 (20.6%) children neither parent is illiterate. In rest of the children, either of the parents is illiterate. This shows the association between the illiteracy status of the parents and their children dropping out of school. This observation matches the Public Report on Basic Education (PROBE) 1996. This report observed that parent's attitudes towards education have a major effect on the education of their children. It seems that when either of

the parents is literate or especially when women are literate, they are more willing to send their children, especially girls, to the school.¹⁰

Out of the 180 children studied, inability to pay education was given as a reason by majority, 128 (71.1%) followed by to work for supporting family 67 (37.2%), to look after younger siblings 56 (31.1%), reluctance of parents 55 (30.6%), disinterest 54 (30.0%), to participate in house hold activities 40 (22.2%), poor school/home environment 27 (15.0%), death of parents 27 (15.0%), desire to earn money 18 (10%), and others 16 (8.0%). Inability to pay money for education meant that these children and their family could not afford the extra burden of the schooling like expenditure for books, fees of the schools, money for transportation to and from school, uniforms etc. In the absence of this extra burden associated with schooling, the family had probably adequate money for meeting the basic daily expenses. Maithly B and Vartika Saxena made similar observation. The main reason for dropping out was financial difficulties for both girls and boys. Besides this reason, 31% boys and 13% girls reported that they are not interested in further studies.⁵ These reasons match with those identified for school dropout by the Centre for Business and Economic Research (CBER), USA, like poverty, problematic social environment (like broken families) and behaviour (like juvenile delinquency), poor academic performance, search for work and difficulty with English language.¹¹

Among boys and girls, reluctance of Parents (23.1% boys and 40.8% girls), disinterest in school curriculum (36.5% boys and 21.1% girls) to participate in house hold activities (5.8% boys and 44.7% girls), desire to earn money (17.3% boys and 0.0% girls), to look after younger siblings (24.0% boys and 40.8% girls) and to work for supporting family (55.8% boys and 11.8% girls) were statistical significant reasons (p value <0.05). Maithly B and Vartika Saxena made similar observations. The main reason for the school dropout in boys was poverty (in 40%), followed by no interest in studies (in 31%) and absence of facility for further studies nearby their homes.⁵

Similar observation was made by A Khokhar et al that nearly 42.85% of girls were pulled out of the schools by their parents as compared to only 15.10% of boys.²

Findings of this study align with previous studies highlighting poverty, parental attitudes, and socio-economic factors as primary causes of school dropout. Boys are more likely to leave school to contribute economically, while girls face additional cultural and domestic barriers.

CONCLUSION

School dropout in Jhalana Kacchi Basti is driven mainly by economic hardship and parental reluctance, with gender-specific factors influencing dropout reasons. Interventions to improve school retention must address financial barriers, enhance parental awareness, and integrate health services targeting this vulnerable group.

LIMITATIONS

The study's findings are limited to one urban slum and may not be generalizable. Parental reluctance to disclose income and dropout reasons may have influenced data accuracy.

COFlicts OF INTEREST: There are no conflicts of interest.

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