

Factors Responsible for Students' Dropout at Primary School Level in Swabi

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Abstract

Factors responsible for students' dropout at primary school level in Swabi was the topic of research study. Objectives of the study were to explore the factors responsible school for students' dropout associated with school, to identify the factors responsible for students' dropout associated with parents and to find out the factors responsible for students' dropout associated with students. A total of 30 head teachers and 30 teachers which form 42% and 13% of the total population were randomly selected. The main research instrument to be employed in this study was questionnaire. Finding of the study concluded that school related factors that mainly contribute to pupils' dropout included shortage of teachers and grade retention, whereas factors that included uninteresting curriculum, corporal punishment, and distance from school had been noted to contribute either less or no contribution at all. In the family related category of variable factors, the study identified that unlike school related factors, where some factors contributed more and some less, each one of the factors in family related factors contributed to their extreme level. In school related factors, the study found that class repetition was widely practiced as a remedy for poor performance. When forced to repeat classes, students chose to drop out. It was also found from the study that absenteeism made students miss lessons and thus ended up performing very poorly in examinations. Due to which they were being forced to repeat classes, and hence made them to take the decision of leaving the school. Based on findings, it was recommended that effort might be made to aware parents about the significance of education through different seminars and workshop. Poverty is responsible for students' dropout So, government may try to provide free education and facilitate students through stipends. To reduce or eliminate absenteeism teacher may inform their parents about students' attendance and sort out solution for improving students' attendance. Teachers may give individual attention to the weak students to eliminate the cause of grade retention. Parents might be aware about the effect of domestic work on their children learning. School heads may ensure a conducive learning environment for the students that they may come to school with a smiley face.

Keywords: Factors, Responsible, Students, Dropout, Primary School Level, Swabi

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the only source to improve the living individual in a society. The development of a country is dependent on the development of its youth and the quality of education is dependent on the quality of primary education (UNESCO, 2005). According to Alvares (2003), education serves as a source of generating financial resources in form of Gross National Product (GNP). Developing Countries who have invested in education earn 20% of GNP. Education plays a pivotal role in enhancing productivity of human beings. Through education

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knowledge is transmitted, attitudes are transformed, and skills are cultivated. Culture can be transmitted, reserve and preserve with the light of education (Lazear, 2002).

Education promotes harmonious development of individual, effective citizenship, population control, nutritional adequacy, healthy living, and child upbringing. (Psacharopoulos, 1985). UNESCO described that education plays a significant role in reducing poverty and creating opportunity for people to become productive citizen of the nation (UNESCO, 2005). Considering the importance of primary schooling in economic development of a country, every government tries to open the door of primary education for every child and declared it as a right of every child under Article 25-A (Wils, 2006). The efforts of Education for All (EFA) and MDGs made it possible to concentrate on issue occurred in the completion of education. According to UNESCO (2012), it was reported that development of nation is directly proportional to the quality of its primary education, and it is utmost important that every nation must ensure primary education as a right of every child by 2015. Students get admission in schools are maximum in number, but to lack proper planning and facilities several students dropped out in their early years of schooling. The most important thing is to find out the issues in our education system due to which dropout rate is increases day by day. Keeping in mind the pivotal role of primary education for national, economic, social, and moral development, government of Pakistan has given importance to strengthening the quality of primary education and made efforts to achieve goal of universal primary education. But no government has achieved this milestone yet. The unsatisfactory literacy rate is responsible for low quality of education in Pakistan. According to the economic survey of Pakistan, literacy rate stood at 62.3 percent in 201718 (as compared to 60.7 percent in 2014-15), with male literacy increasing from 71.6% to 72.5% and female literacy rate going from 49.6% to 51.8%. Area wise analysis suggests that literacy rate increased in both rural (51.9% to 53.3%) and urban areas (76.0% to 76.6%). It is also observed that male-female disparity is decreasing with time. The literacy rate increased in most provinces with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa going from 54.1% to 55.3%, Punjab 61.9% to 64.7% and Balochistan 54.3% to 55.5%. Sindh was the only province which registered a marginal decline (63.0% to 62.2%). One of the major reasons for low literacy is the dropout of students at primary level in Pakistan. "A dropout is a pupil who leaves the school for any reason except death before completion of education programs of studies and without transferring to another school" (Kamal, 2002). A child who gets admission in a primary, middle, secondary or tertiary level and could not complete that level due to leaving the school is called dropout. The ratio of admission in primary level is greater than other level, but due to certain reasons they could not complete primary education and left the school before its completion.

Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is for behind in achieving 100% enrolment at primary level and reducing gender disparities as compared to other provinces. KP province also did not meet the millennium development goals (MDGs) target in given deadline. It was found that the literacy rate in Khyber Pakhunkhwa province is less than the rate of other provinces. Students left schools due to numerous factors, like poverty, overloading, failure, outdated curriculum, repetition of grades, obsolete method of instruction, barefoot teachers, unconducive school environment, inadequate salaries, frustrated, demotivated and unprepared teachers, parents' negligence, child labor, school phobia, girls' early marriages, lack of medical treatment, and no guidance services. These factors were associated with

National Education Policy (1972-80)

To conclude there is no single factor that can be attributed to be the root cause of dropout. In Pakistan, it is a widespread issue, which is most serious at primary level resulting in substantial depletion of resources. Students' dropout at different level of education is considered as a social problem which leaves undesirable effect on individual as well on society. Dropout leads to invite several problems like increase in crime rate, decline in literacy rate and creating disturbance in communities. To reduce the dropout rate and improve literacy rate government laid emphasis on primary education in every education policy.

1.2 Problem Statement

Dropout of students is a universal phenomenon in Pakistan educational system and is a big social problem. In the study, the researcher is concerned with identification of those factors that bring about dropouts of students in primary boys' schools in Tehsil Swabi. Among those places that are having this critical issue of dropout, Tehsil Swabi is one. Due to this reason, the current study aims to investigate those factors that may influence the dropout in the said tehsil's primary boys' school. The present study was design to explore the factors responsible for students' dropout at primary school level in Tehsil Swabi.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study were

1. To explore the factors responsible school for students' dropout associated with school.
2. To identify the factors responsible for students' dropout associated with parents.
3. To find out the factors responsible for students' dropout associated with students.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Which factors are responsible for students' dropout associated with school?
2. Which factors are responsible for students' dropout associated with parents?
3. Which factors are responsible for students' dropout associated with students?

1.5 Significance of the study

With the results of this study, the researcher may be able to provide necessary data to the concerned departments, policymakers, and related educational stakeholders for the future implementation of dropout-prevention strategies at local level.

2. Literature Review

This part of the paper provides a broad review of literature on the relationships between school dropout, which is also sometimes called as early school leaving, and its main predictors related to individual student, family, and school. Dropout has been discussed in different ways in literature based on various contexts of the countries and educational systems (Adam, 2016), (Ouma, 2017), (Markussen, 2011), (Prakash, 2017), (UNICEF, 2016), (Li Q. Z., 2013), (Nolan, 2013), (Petrick Jr, 2014), (Chagh, 2011), (Tas A. S., 2013), (Quinn, 2013), (Fan, 2014). In this chapter, factors responsible for dropping out from school in

different settings and educational systems of both developed and developing countries have been discussed in various portions. The different portions encompass student-, family-, school-, and community-related factors which affect the decision of early school leaving. Additionally, a brief review regarding the negative effects of dropping out of school on economy, society, and the individual along with a literature review on the dropout scenario in Pakistan followed by a conclusive framework has been provided.

2.1 Students related factors

2.1.1 Dropout with Respect to Gender

Recently, an extensively increasing literature has shown distinctive findings about whether male or female students drop out more. It has been found that male students drop out is more due to employment and household-income issues in some countries (Ananga, 2011), (Markussen, 2011), (Traag, 2011). A recent study on school dropout in Tanzania and Ghana showed that male students had higher risk of dropout than female students in all grade levels (Ananga, 2011). It has been argued that that 68% of the participants who dropped out of school were male students in Tanzania, while female dropouts accounted only 32%. Thus, male students have higher probability of dropping out of school than female students in African context (Ouma, 2017). The findings of these studies tend to be in contrast from most studies in the US, where more male students drop out, they can find the jobs easier than female students even though they do not graduate and obtain a diploma. However, majority of jobs they are offered are likely to be only the labor-force and lowpaid jobs (Li Q. A., 2017). Thus, from the discussion it is clear that the dropout in gender scenario varies from country to country.

2.1.2 Relationship of Dropout with Late School Entry

Students' experience of schooling at the early or later age have been found to significantly influence the choice of staying or leaving school early throughout their academic progress. Many prior studies have shown that those students' dropout more, who enroll schools later in any stage of their education (Colclough C. R., 2000), (Colclough C. , 1993). Likewise, students who are older than the official enrollment age have been found to drop out early for various reasons (Li Q. Z., 2013), (Branson, 2014). Students who grow older and enter the schooling are likely to maintain pressure to leave school earlier than those enroll in prior level at the official age, and there are some reasons which lead them to quit school such as how education is perceived in some families and communities (Colclough C. R., 2000). Among students who enrolled at primary school at the age of 6, secondary school at the age of 11, and high school at the age of 16, students between 11-15 years old had higher likelihood of dropping out of school about 53% compared to those who were between 6-10 (23.5%) and 16-up (23.5%). Children who were older and reentered the schools were found to have high dropout rate because they were likely to seek for job opportunities rather than remain in school for education (Li Q. Z., 2013), and they felt so shameful to be as the oldest students in the classroom compared to the other students at the same grade (Colclough C. R., 2000). The findings showed that students who were two years older than the official enrollment age for their grade level were at higher risk of dropping out of school compared to their classmates who were at the age of their grade level. About 24.3% of over- age students dropped out

without completing their degree, certificate or diploma in 2010 (Branson, 2014).

2.1.3 Effect of Disability on Dropout

Apart from normal students, there are other students with disabilities and special education needs (SEN) who need special support to get access to. Some students with SEN and disabilities in some countries have access to special schools or inclusive schools based on their level of disabilities, while some others have been ignored or neglected by the schooling system, parents, teachers, peers, and communities. Especially, children with disabilities in developing countries have encountered various difficulties to access and complete their education (Filmer, 2008). A survey study of some countries such as Bolivia, Indonesia, Romania, Cambodia, Colombia, Jamaica, Mongolia, South Africa, Zambia, Burundi, Chad, and Mozambique revealed that people with disabilities living in poverty resulted from the fact that they never attended the school at all, and it was found that about 20% of the results from the two surveys in Cambodia significantly explained schooling deficits which were associated with the disabilities (Filmer, 2008).

Apart from the physical disabilities and special education needs, a study on school dropout and disabilities in Mexico revealed that in dropping out of school, students were also mainly found to have a mental disorder. School dropouts were also found from the group of students who had impulse control disorders and anxiety disorders. For instance, anxiety disorder significantly influenced students' choice to leave school early in Mexico, yet it was less risky compared to mental and impulse control disorder. However, anxiety disorder and seasonal effect disorders occurring in developing countries were found to have no significant effect on school dropout compared to developed countries (Borges, 2011).

2.2 Family Related Factors of Dropout

Over the past decades, most researches on school dropout has emphasized that factors at family level have large influences on students' educational choices, especially the decision of dropping out of schools. Success at schools does not only rely on differences in individual characteristics but also on their family backgrounds (Traag, 2011). Some of the factors identified by researchers regarding the family related backgrounds are briefly discussed here as follows.

2.2.1 Poor Socioeconomic Status and the Risk of Dropping out

A number of studies in developing countries have found that children from poorer households are at the highest risk of dropping out of schools because they need to involve in labor work to support the expenses of their families (Adam, 2016), (Branson, 2014), (Chagh, 2011), (Quinn, 2013), (Tas A. S., 2013), (Nolan, 2013), (Hussain, 2011) (Petrick Jr, 2014).

2.2.2 Parental Education and its Correlation with Dropout

At family level, education of parents is important and commonly links to students' academic motivation and success. It is also a strong predictor for achievement and the likelihood of dropping out of schools. A large growing literature has shown that living with parents who have high educational attainment; students are likely to have lower likelihood of dropping out of schools before graduation (Branson, 2014), (Li Q. Z., 2013), (Lloyd, 2009), (No F. T., 2016). A study on early-school leaving in Netherland provides a concrete finding of parents'

education and the likelihood of dropping out of students from schools. Using a large longitudinal survey, Secondary Education Student Cohort 1989 (VOCL'89), consisting of 19,254 students from 381 schools, Traag and Velden rigorously examined not only factors related to individual student but also family, and school based on the large data set (Traag, 2011). They carefully selected samples from the VOCL'89 to observe four distinctive characteristics of students who dropped out. According to the results, this study found that students from low social statuses were found to dispose to higher risk of dropping out of schools by 50% more than other social-status families. A strong correlation between parental education and the dropout rate was found, and dropout rate significantly decreased by 7% for each additional year of education parents of each student gained.

2.2.3 Significant Effect of Parental Migration on Dropout

Quite a handsome amount of parents, especially fathers in Pakistan have been migrating to work abroad by leaving their children behind with their older siblings, grandparents, or other guardians. In most cases, Pakistani parents do not bring their children with them because the intention of migrating is to earn money to support their children's schooling and improve family socioeconomic status. Therefore, there have been positive and negative consequences falling on the well-being of the family and the left behind children. On the positive side, family's economy is improved, yet it negatively influences children's psychological well-being and schooling (Lee, 2010). Several studies have found that parental migration has significant effects on not only family but also children's education, and especially it causes high risk of dropping out of schools (Lee, 2010), (Li Q. Z., 2013).

2.3 School Related Factors of Dropout

Dropping out of school has become a long-term process which makes students disengage from school and results in negative social and economic consequences for individual students, their families, and communities. Even though minimal numbers of research have investigated on school factors which might have impacts on school dropout, yet the results of such studies have revealed that dropout has relationship with school related factors as well. For example, in Slums of Delhi, students found the curriculum too difficult for them to cope with in the public schools, especially Mathematics and Science, so some of them decided to leave school because they did not want to repeat the grade and faced with failures in their academic performance (Chagh, 2011).

2.3.1 Influence of School Teachers on Dropout

Teacher quality has become an important key discussion and is perceived as a factor influencing students' learning outcome. Using students' test scores and administrative data from the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) to identify the effects of teacher quality on school dropout, teacher quality had great influences on students' educational outcomes, especially dropout. The results of Keodel's study suggested that students who studied with more educated teachers had higher likelihood to remain at school as compared to other students. It has also been indicated by Koedel indicated that teacher-quality improvement was a way to promote students' learning and reduce dropout rate. Both urban and rural schools could improve quality of education by recruiting and retaining highly qualified

teachers in schools. To recruit and retain highly knowledgeable people to teaching profession is difficult because the benefit earned from teaching job is relatively low compared to some other jobs, and working condition is also challenging. However, increasing teacher's salary has been found to play a vital role to attract and retain qualified teachers in teaching. This indicates that the need to provide decent incentives for the qualified teachers and dispatch more newly recruited teachers to work in the disadvantaged areas should be considered.

2.3.2 Effect of School Climate on Students' Dropout School climate is an important mediator raising students' motivation and interest to come to school and enjoy learning in such friendly environment, but poor school climate can have large influences on students who are at risk of dropping out of schools. In a study, instead of only focusing on the individual student and family level as the dominant predictors of school dropout, the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) integrated school climate as a thorough strategy for dropout prevention and suggested in practice guides in education (Dynarski, 2008). The study offered effective practices that school and districts might implement to prevent to reduce dropout rate.

2.3.3 Impact of Distance to School on the Odd of Dropout

In developing countries, school distance is one of the important predictors for school dropout. The insufficient provision of schools, especially in rural areas, increases the high chance for students whose households are distances away from the schools to leave school early. Many studies have found a significant correlation and prediction between the school distance and school dropout. For instance, Okumu et al. found that the odd of dropout increased as the increase of the distance a pupil travel to school in Uganda. In their logistic regression models, they also found that pupils of the urban households had no connection with the risk of dropout (Okumu, 2008). The results showed no significant influence of distance to school on the odd of dropout. Students of the urban households already had access to nearby schools since there were more schools in the urban regions compared to the rural regions.

3. Research Methodology

This section entails the research methodology which will be employed for the performance of the current study. The various subheadings pertaining to this section of the write-up are briefly discussed here as follows:

3.1 Nature of the study

The present study was descriptive in nature and researcher collected concerning the current status of the subject of the study with the help of questionnaire.

3.2 Population

The larger group from which a researcher selects a representative sample for the research study is called population (Omari, 2011). All the head teachers and teachers of 70 boys' primary schools in tehsil Swabi. According to the data taken from the ASDEO, there are a total

of 55 PSHTs, 78 SPSTs and 165 PSTs currently serving in the aforesaid schools.

3.3 Sample

Head teachers and teachers were selected through simple random sampling as well. The reason for their selection was because they would give data on the cohorts and since they have stayed long enough in their station, therefore their observation of the students would be to the point and exact. A total of 30 head teachers and 30 teachers which form 42% and 13% of the total population, respectively, were selected.

3.4 Research Instrument

The main research instrument to be employed in this study was questionnaire. The researcher found this instrument adequate for two categories of study subject namely head teachers and the teachers. With the questionnaires, the researcher sought to elicit information from the respondent on the cases of dropout of the students from boys' primary school, the measures to be taken to curb the trend and what else may be done to arrest the dropout phenomenon.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

Collected data were presented in tabulated form and percentage was used as statistical tool for data analysis.

4. Analysis of Data

This part of the paper presents the findings on the responses in the research instruments. The findings have been analyzed based on the study objectives.

Table 4.1 School Related Factors Influencing Dropout

S#	Items	Very Likely		Likely		Rarely		Not at All	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Uninteresting Curriculum	3	10	5	16.6	13	43.3	9	30
2	Punishment	0	0	3	10	9	30	18	60
3	Shortage of Teachers	21	70	6	20	2	6.6	1	3.3
4	Distance from school	25	83.3	0	0	0	0	5	16.7

Table 4.1 elaborated 43.3% of the participants believed that Uninteresting Curriculum rarely responsible for the students' dropout at primary school level in Swabi. 60% of the respondents viewed that punishment practices offered in school is not responsible for students' dropout. 70% of the subjects believed that shortage of teachers is very likely responsible for students' dropout. 83.3% respondents argued that distance from school is very likely influence students' dropout.

Table 4.2 Family Related Factors Influencing Dropout

S#	Items	Very Likely		Likely		Rarely		Not at All	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Poverty	21	70	5	16.6	4	13.4	0	0

2	Parental Education	26	86.7	4	13.3	0	0	0	0
3	Negligence of parents	21	70	7	23.3	2	6	0	0
4	Domestic chores (economic activities)	17	56.7	10	33.3	2	6	1	3

Table 4.2 explored 70% of the participants believed that poverty is very likely responsible for the students' dropout at primary school level in Swabi. 86.7% of the respondents viewed that low or no parental education is very likely responsible for students' dropout. 70% of the subjects believed that negligence of parents is very likely responsible for students' dropout. 56% respondents argued that domestic chores is very likely influence students' dropout.

Table 4.3 Individual students related factors

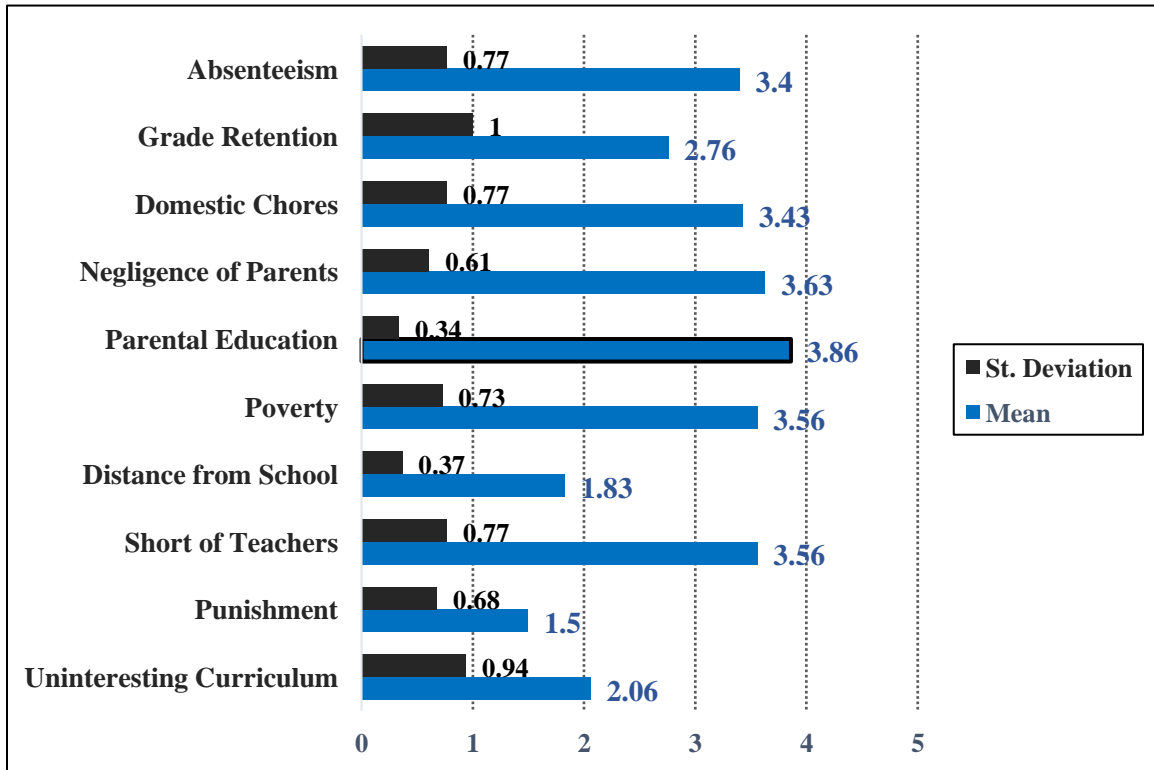
S#	Items	Very Likely		Likely		Rarely		Not at All	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Grade retention	8	26.6	11	36.6	7	23.3	4	13.3
2	Absenteeism	16	53.3	11	36.6	1	3.3	2	6.6

Table 4.3 explored 36.6% of the participants believed that grade retention is likely responsible for the students' dropout at primary school level in Swabi. 53.3% of the respondents viewed that absenteeism is very likely responsible for students' dropout.

Table 4.4 Means and standard deviation of the variable factors

No.	Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	School Related
1	Uninteresting Curriculum	2.06	0.94	
2	Punishment	1.50	0.68	
3	Shortage of Teachers	3.56	0.77	
4	Distance from School	1.83	0.37	
Family Related				
5	Poverty	3.56	0.73	
6	Parental Education	3.86	0.34	
7	Negligence of Parents	3.63	0.61	
8	Domestic Chores	3.43	0.77	

Individual Student Related			
9	Grade Retention	2.76	1.00
10	Absenteeism	3.40	0.77



It is clear from the data in table 4.4 that maximum mean (3.86, with corresponding standard deviation of 0.34) is that of parental education, whereas the minimum value of mean occurs for the variable of punishment, which is that of 1.5 with corresponding standard deviation of 0.68.

5.1 Findings

1. Table 4.1 elaborated 43.3% of the participants believed that Uninteresting Curriculum rarely responsible for the students' dropout at primary school level in

Swabi. 60% of the respondents viewed that punishment practices offered in school is not responsible for students' dropout. 70% of the subjects believed that shortage of teachers is very likely responsible for students' dropout. 83.3% respondents argued that distance from school is very likely influence students' dropout.

2. Table 4.2 explored 70% of the participants believed that poverty is very likely responsible for the students' dropout at primary school level in Swabi. 86.7% of the respondents viewed that low or no parental education is very likely responsible for students' dropout. 70% of the subjects believed that negligence of parents is very likely responsible for students' dropout. 56% respondents argued that domestic chores is very likely influence

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3. Table 4.3 explored 36.6% of the participants believed that grade retention is likely responsible for the students' dropout at primary school level in Swabi. 53.3% of the respondents viewed that absenteeism is very likely responsible for students' dropout.

4. Table 4.4 elaborated that maximum mean (3.86, with corresponding standard deviation of 0.34) is that of parental education, whereas the minimum value of mean occurs for the variable of punishment, which is that of 1.5 with corresponding standard deviation of 0.68.

5.

5.2 Conclusion

The study aimed at investigation of various factors that contributed to dropout in boys' primary school in tehsil Swabi. To achieve that, the researcher examined 10 variable factors from three different regimes that included school related, family related and individual student related factors. The school related factors included uninteresting curriculum, punishment, shortage of teachers and distance from school. In the family related factors poverty, parental education, negligence of parents and domestic chores, whereas in individual student related factors grade retention and absenteeism were included. The findings showed that school related factors that mainly contribute to pupils' dropout included shortage of teachers and grade retention, whereas factors that included uninteresting curriculum, corporal punishment, and distance from school had been noted to contribute either less or no contribution at all. In the family related category of variable factors, the study identified that unlike school related factors, where some factors contributed more and some less, each one of the factors in family related factors contributed to their extreme level. In school related factors, the study found that class repetition was widely practiced as a remedy for poor performance. When forced to repeat classes, students chose to drop out. It was also found from the study that absenteeism made students miss lessons and thus ended up performing very poorly in examinations. Due to which they were being forced to repeat classes, and hence made them to take the decision of leaving the school. Additionally, the economic status of most of the families were found to be low it was found that the economic status of most of the families were found to be low, and was identified to be a prime contributor to the dropout of children from primary schools. Based on analysis of the data, the factors in terms of their contribution to the dropout, as found by the study are listed as:

1. Parental Education
2. Negligence of Parents
3. Poverty
4. Shortage of Teachers
5. Domestic Chores
6. Absenteeism
7. Grade Retention
8. Uninteresting Curriculum
9. Distance from School
10. Punishment

5.3 Recommendations

Study findings suggested the following recommendations

1. Finding reveals that parental negligence is responsible for students' dropout at primary school level, so effort might be made to aware parents about the significance of education through different seminars and workshop.
2. Findings of the study revealed that poverty is responsible for students' dropout so, government may try to provide free education and facilitate students through stipends.
3. To reduce or eliminate absenteeism teacher may inform their parents about students attendance and sort out solution for improving students attendance.
4. Teachers may give individual attention to the weak students to eliminate the cause of grade retention.
5. Parents might be aware about the effect of domestic work on their children learning.
6. School heads may ensure a conducive learning environment for the students that they may come to school with a smiley face.

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