

Skill Development Programs for School Curriculum Enrichment- Solution to Drop Out Problem: A Study Based on Slum Area Children of Bhopal City

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Abstract: Secondary education is, perhaps, the most important part of an individual's education as it is during these years that a student decides what he/she is going to take up for further education and how he/she is going to earn his/her daily bread. Introduction of RTE Act 2009 has increased the enrollment in schools to a great extent but at the same time problem of drop out is of serious concern. This paper is based on primary and secondary data highlighting the problem of drop out, its reasons and solution. After collecting the information from different stakeholders (based on questionnaire) regarding the problem of drop out, the possible solution for retaining the students in the school and providing right education, is ensuring them about their career and financial growth. Such growth can be guaranteed through enriching present day curriculum with skill development program. This paper focuses on the reasons for drop out in schools and attitude of Low Socio economic Status Parents towards curriculum enrichment with skill development program. The data for the purpose is collected using a self prepared questionnaire one for students (to find the reasons of drop out) and other to study the awareness and attitude of parents towards skill development program was applied. Sample includes 123 boys, 51 girls and 47 parents. Purposive sampling is applied, for analyzing the data percentage and bar graph is used. It was found that poor economic condition of the family is the main reason for drop out, also the other reasons directly or indirectly creating hurdles in continuing the studies. On the other hand when parents were asked about the skill development program, the awareness level seems to be very low. They only heard about it but are not aware of its type and importance. When explained about the career and employability scope of Skill development program in school curriculum, most of the parents are quite positive towards introducing such program. The reason behind their excitement is not surprising as their poor economic condition need guarantee of such a skilled child which not only get employed but also ready to contribute financially to the family. Thus it can be concluded that School curriculum enrichment with skill development program will definitely help in slowing down a drop out rate to a great extent. Also, for the effective and fruitful result of Skill Development Program of government, proper awareness campaign and monitoring is needed.

Keywords: Skill Development, Program, School Curriculum, Enrichment, Drop out.

1. Introduction

Education is not only an instrument of enhancing efficiency but is also an effective tool of widening and augmenting democratic participation and upgrading the overall quality of individual and societal life. Secondary education is, perhaps, the most important part of an individual's education as it is during these years that a student decides what she is going to take up for further education and how she is going to earn her daily bread. The years a students spends obtaining secondary education are very crucial for her development and are instrumental in deciding the course of her future life. In the Indian system of education, the students continue education on a single academic track up to primary education (standard 8). As they enter secondary education phase (standards 9 and 10), they are provided an exposure to work education through pre-vocational courses. When they enter higher secondary education phase (standards 11 and 12), they have an option of either adopting an academic (technical) track of education or a vocational track that prepares them for work immediately. The aim of the academic track is to prepare an individual for a professional career, whereas the vocational track aims to prepare the student for work immediately after she completes her education. Given the focus of this chapter (and the book) is on how education system prepares the student for work, we have limited the scope of this chapter to vocational education made available through the secondary and higher secondary education system existing in India.

The drop-out rates of educational institution was estimated to be 50% in the age group of 5-14 years and 86% after 15 years of age and in contrast to this the participation rate of the workforce rises rapidly after 14 years of age and it results in a semi-literate workforce which finds it difficult to absorb higher form of skills.

Dropout rate of boys is more in comparison to girls

More boys than girls are dropping out of the schools in India. As against 39% boys who dropped out before completing elementary education in 2013-14, only 33% girls did so, says the latest statistics of the Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD). Poverty, poor academic performance, substandard teaching, migration and need for employment to support the family are major factors behind the higher dropout rate of the boys.

Family economic circumstances are important to meet the hidden and upfront costs of schooling, failure of which leads to many temporary as well as permanent dropouts of children. Hidden costs of schooling include opportunity cost, travel cost, uniform, daily expenditures, while upfront costs include admission fee, examination fee, tuition fees etc. Many researches are there which link dropouts, among many other factors, to poverty.

Skill development: Skill Development means developing yourself and your skill sets to add value for the organization and for your own career development. Fostering an attitude of appreciation for lifelong learning is the key to workplace

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success. Continuously learning and developing one's skills requires identifying the skills needed for mobility at Cal, and then successfully seeking out trainings or on-the-job opportunities for developing those skills.

Developing your skills begins with assessing which skills are important for your desired career development. Knowledge and attitudes are underlying factors that shape a teacher's actions. To uphold teaching skills there is a need for continuous updating of knowledge and development of competence. An effective teacher is an excellent communicator and therefore thinks about improving his or her presentation skills.

Objective

- 1) To find the reasons behind the drop out.
- 2) To study the awareness of skill development among parents.
- 3) To study the attitude of parents towards Skill Development oriented curriculum.

Sampling technique: Keeping in mind the need and the objective of the research, the researcher applied Purposive sampling technique for collecting the information. The sample includes 123 boys, 51 girls and 42 parents.

Tools: A self prepared questionnaire one for students (to find the reasons of drop out) and other to study the awareness and attitude of parents towards skill development program was applied.

Statistical Analysis: Percentage and Graphical representation is used for the purpose of analyzing the data.

Table 1: Problems with slum area children of few places of Bhopal city (N=174, including 51 girls) are as follows:

S.no.	Reasons of Dropout	Boys	Girls	Percentage (Total)
1	Lack of interest	24	10	Boys-19.51% Girls-19.6%
2	School timings	15	5	Boys- 12.2 % Girls-9.8%
3	Social Restriction	0	6	Boys-0% Girls-11.76%
4	Insufficient Family Support	16	11	Boys-13.01 % Girls-21.57%
5	Financial Barrier	54	17	Boys-43.9% Girls-33.33%
6	Other	14	2	Boys-11.38% Girls-3.92%
	Total	123	51	

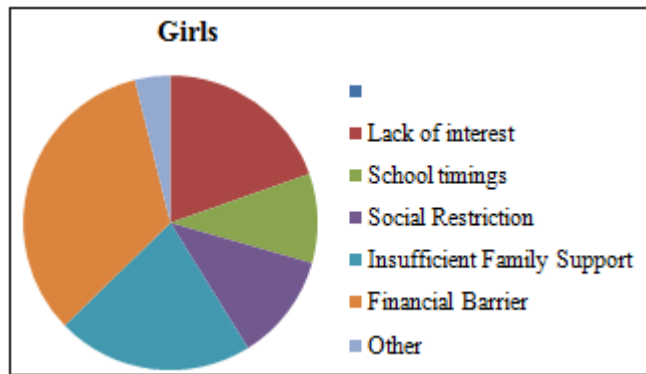
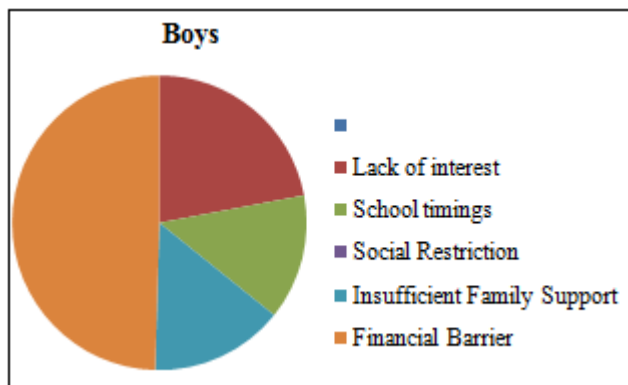


Table 1 clearly indicates that most of the students left the school (almost 73%) because of family restrictions or poor economic conditions. When parents were asked about not allowing the children to continue the education they showed less interest in doing so because of the belief that education is the wastage of time and for the survival one need to earn some money. This belief of parents is originated from their struggling life and poor economic condition.

Table 2: Parents awareness towards skill development program and their attitude towards skill education

S. No.	Item	Yes	No	Cannot say
1	Do you believe that school should give training to your child instead of knowledge?	27 (64.29%)	15 (35.71%)	0
2	Do you have any idea about the Vocational courses are introduced in the school in higher classes?	07 (16.67%)	35 (83.33%)	0
3	The govt. has introduced number of skill development programs which ensures employment of the child?	11 (26.19%)	9 (21.43%)	22 (52.38%)
4	If skill oriented education is provided to your child you will again allow your children to continue their education?	18 (42.86%)	4 (9.52%)	20 (47.62%)
5	Skill oriented education of the child will be helpful in uplifting the economic condition of the family	11 (26.2%)	27 (64.29%)	4 (9.52%)
6	School should arrange evening classes for Skill development program	30 (71.43%)	10 (23.81%)	2 (4.76%)

Table 2 reveals that more number of parents (64.29%) is not interested in sending their child to school just for bookish knowledge or for better result, instead they are concerned more about skill development of their child in school so that he/she can contribute financially to their family more effectively. Regarding the awareness about the skill development program policy of govt. and the purpose of introducing it, more than half of the parents are not aware about such program. Moreover they are not clear about the scope of such program but they are ready to allow their child to rejoin the school if evening classes are arranged for skill development program as well as school should give training in the areas like – fabrication, welding, weaving, stitching, denting painting etc.

2. Suggestion

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It is clear from the above two tables that the problem like drop out from school is a serious issue and even RTE is not the only way of enhancing the education of the country. RTE undoubtedly has increased the enrollment but at the same time failed to put a check on problems like drop out. Such problem can be solved by enriching school curriculum with skill development program. Also, the govt. agencies should run an awareness campaign about skill development programs. Proper monitoring and execution will definitely be helpful in reducing the dropout rate.

Not only this, private Participation from Industry and other players must be encouraged and is critical for the success of the skill development program in India. Industry participation must be at all levels especially in Governance, Curriculum Design, Placements and Funding, Monitoring Outcome. Industry participation is also required for creating production oriented Research and Innovation Labs. A PPP Model can be also created where GOI and Industry can come together to invest in infrastructure and train students in latest skills.

Secondary school curriculum to be enriched with skill development program, specially in rural area schools and schools where majority of the students belonging to low/poor socio economic status studies.

Interdisciplinary approach (combining traditional subjects with skill development program) in school curriculum will not only be helpful in avoiding the overloaded curriculum but also will be helpful in achieving the objective of skill development and make in India. As a result of which students and parents from low/poor socio economic status will start taking interest in school education and drop out problem can be solved to a great extent.

Skill development is important not only to reap the benefits of India's demographic dividend, but also to fuel inclusive growth. For that we need to have policy consistencies. There should not be a disconnect between the skill development programmes and employment policies of the government.

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