

A Study on School Dropout Status in Koshi Region of Bihar

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ABSTRACT

Education is the passport to accelerate economic growth. It is the key to build a nation. In India, under various constitutional provisions and five year plans educational facilities have been expanded at all levels. According to article 45 of the constitution of India, the state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years. As per 93rd amendment to the constitution, now elementary education has become the fundamental right of every child, but still millions of children are out of school. The top most reasons for dropping out are lack of interest in studies, economic conditions of the parents, migration of the family and to help the family in domestic work. After dropping out, the children are involved in helping their parents in household work, field work, working to earn money, most of students are also sitting idle and doing nothing more or less the students after dropping out from upper primary classes are helping the parents in earning the money, either by getting them involved in the agriculture and allied activities or directly by doing work to earn money. The present paper tries to analyse the school dropout status in Koshi region of Bihar.

KEYWORDS: Dropout issue; Status in Bihar; Quality issue; present scenario; Discussion; Findings

INTRODUCTION

Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or equivalent credential such as a General Educational Development certificate as defined by the National Centre for Education Statistics. The drop-out issue in India is of particular importance and interest. India has made extra-ordinary education, now reading 96 per cent of school-age children. Having brought so many children into school, particularly those from the most vulnerable cycle. The 2009 Right of Children to free and compulsory Education Act will ensure that the norms, standards and compulsory Education Act will ensure that the norms, standards and conditions essential to accessible, quality elementary education are in place. Few countries have introduced such for- reaching reforms or demonstrated such commitment to education for all children, including those from the weakest and most disadvantaged groups. Currently, India is leading player in the UNICEF – UNESCO out of school children initiative, which includes children at risk of dropping out of school as a focus.

According to the education statistics give in the Plan document for the year 2004-05 Bihar lagged behind other states and stood almost at the bottom in terms of most of the parameters. Against the national GER of 93.54 (I-VIII) Bihar has achieved only 65.16, second lowest in the country. Drop out for Classes I-X was a steep 83.06% against the all India figure of 61.92%. While the no. of elementary schools was low (57 per lakh of population against national average of 97), the availability of secondary/Sr. secondary schools was still worse (only 4 against the national figure of 14). Despite

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such a bleak educational scenario per capita Tenth Plan SSA expenditure was much lower at Rs. 1319/- compared to the national figure of 1813/-.

Bihar showed a 10.42% per cent increase in number of primary school in 1993 and 2002 as against the national increase of 12.91%. The eager 1.12% increase in the number of upper primary schools stands, however, in sharp contrast with 50.6% increase at the national level. This shows that while nationally efforts are on to move from UPE to UEE target, in Bihar the efforts did not for quite some time move beyond primary level. (Kantha, Vinay K. and Narain, Daisy 2008)

According to recent claims of government the access and enrolment related problems have been nearly tackled and the number of children out of school has come down to 5-6%. In 2008 ASER gave a figure of 5.7% for out of school children in the 6-14 age groups, which went up to 17.0% in 15-16 age-group. ASER figures register a further improvement in 2009: out of school children came down to a mere 4.1% for 6-14 age-group and 14.7% in 15-16 age-group. (Annual status of Educational Report, 2010)

Whatever be the actual situation in terms of enrolment, the low average attendance and the indifferent learning achievements of children in the government schools is a greater source of worry, more so at the present juncture. ASER uses a standardized simple tool for all grades in its 'dip-stick' surveys on learning levels. Even as these tools are

modestly designed, asking for a minimal level of learning, the poor performance across the nation brings out the gravity of the problem. In grades I & II only 68.2% children can read letters or words or perhaps a little more, implying that the remaining 31.8% children have learnt practically nothing in the language part. Likewise only 70.0% children of these grades can recognize numbers from 1 to 9, leaving substantial 30% non-learning children. At the higher levels also the situation is by and large similar. Thus about one-fourths to one thirds of children attending classes learn next nothing in schools which is quite a bit of quality-deficit in our schools.

In Bihar majority to primary school (93.96%) are situated in rural areas. However, the fact that most of the school are located in rural areas, has not been appropriately factored in the planning and curriculum design of school education there, and the performance are many, which include both a resource crunch and the mind set of planners, among other things. Regarding the coverage of primary schools in average about 77 per cent of the rural population was having primary schools within their habitation in 2002. The position has improved further since then. A habitation is defined as "...a distinct cluster of houses existing in a compact and contiguous manner with a local name, and with population not having less than 25 people in plain area, and not less than 10 people in hilly/sparingly populated area" (NCERT 1996). About 98.7 per cent rural population was served by a primary school within a distance of 2 kilometres from their place of living, which considered as a good coverage when compared with the national figure.

Quality Issues

The national debate on quality was transformed vastly by the National Curriculum Framework 2005. The theoretical underpinning of pedagogy was revised and a national debate on constructivist began. There was a major stress on shift from rote learning to an active learning and recognition of child's capacity to construct knowledge. Understanding was the key to learn rather than mastery of information text books started getting redesigned and examination scheme was also revised. There was fuller acceptance of the idea of comprehensive and continuous evaluation which was introduced in the pattern of evaluation inaugurated by CBSE. Still there are many gaps which need to be plugged and the area of teacher preparation is quite weak and problematic.

Bihar also witnessed some changes with regard to quality issues. SCERT came out with its own version of curriculum in the form of Bihar Curriculum Framework (Draft in 2006, final version 2008). The process of text book writing got under way though the progress seems to be tardy. The area of teacher education is most neglected in Bihar and little has been done even in recent years to reorganize the system. The indifferent quality of teachers recruited recently, the lack of training, lowly salary and unsatisfactory service conditions compound the problem further. Massive efforts are called for to remove the quality deficit in school education. Apart from infrastructural up gradation as mandated RTE 2009, it will require wholesale changes in comprehensive curricular revisions at the state level and in the schools where curriculum takes its actual shape.

The Present Scenario

Notwithstanding some progress in terms of enrolment of children or expansion of school system, there are serious

systemic problems that have arisen in the education sector. Successive governments have evaded the commitment of common schooling system and introduced a hierarchical arrangement of educational institutions on the one hand and allowed private schools system to come up and grow rapidly, often on commercial lines. As feared by Kothari such a reconfiguration of school education sector has led to a neglect of quality issues in education. Social pressure and judicial verdicts have led to the passage of RTE Act but the non-committal stance of the government is betrayed by the provisions of the legislation and subsequent evasion of financial responsibilities by both the central and the state governments.

Introduction of RTE is not merely a juggling with finances as it is made out to be. Legislations, policies and programmes have to be comprehensively redesigned, though little thought is being spared for these areas. If teachers have to undertake a major responsibility, several other functionaries have to act differently, whether one thinks of the PRIs or VSS or DIETs. These institutions have to be created and meaningfully activated. For example, the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights will have to play a major role in the implementation of RTE in the right spirit.

For universal education dropout is a major challenge. It is also an imperative that could be led restore children's education. They file of leave or after school. The fifth grade and first-grade students in this ratio are an important index. Official statistics show that 93 per cent in 2014, improving from 88 percent in 2013 then but now the situation cannot be called encouraging. HRD ministry survey said primary nearly five per cent dropout rate in classes in the upper primary classes the rate is more than three per cent. But the primaries in the rate of five per cent and a half in 2013, and was more than two and a half per cent dropout rate in upper 2013 primary against it. This meant that additional increases dropout rates in primary. Why is this happening while a growing number of schools in India? According to official figures, about open two million primary school between 2003- 2014, which are about half the 24 per cent of primary schools in India. One of these is also building 95 per cent of schools. But these buildings which recently have, is the walls, rooms, doors, windows, the state of toilets that should be seen. Infrastructure of schools is poor. Everywhere holes from the classroom to the playground. Electricity, water, toilets, boundary wall, libraries, frameworks, such as computer so many issues of these infrastructures. Schools thus leaving so many directed indirect cause such as lack of teachers, more than half a million teachers on contracts, half of them are not trained. The train is a gross lack of teachers. Training of teachers in private hands and in this case it is the world's only job training where teachers are told in private hands. Teacher is on course to reduce the effect of student-teacher ratio. As a result, it should be for all children to school for six to 14 years, but nearly half million still out. Poverty is also of the biggest reasons to leave in the middle of study. Older children are our family compulsions and simple job turned due to social circumstances. Shops, eateries, garages, small hotels, street vendors, such as can be seen by children of this age in small businesses. In fact, in addition to better structure also needs policies which can be used to remove barriers at different stages of a period of learning. One such human need transparent and

conscientious monitoring system which brought not only school children but they also ensure to that they go out and completed.

Objective of the Study:

The main objective has been examined the drop-out in the selected districts in the Koshi region regards to:

- Extent of drop-outs and absenteeism at each standard from I-Xth with special reference to girl students.
- Cause analysis of the drop-out problem with emphasis on drop-outs by caste and gender.
- Comparative analysis of village, school and family characteristics with disparate educational profiles effecting drop-outs an absenteeism.
- Societal, parental and institutional factors that contribute towards enrolment and retention of primary school children with gender differentials.
- Factors that result in drop-out of school children.
- To examine the societal, attitudinal and socio-economic environment associated with high drop-out rates of girls at various levels of elementary school education.
- Interventions necessary for improving retention and reducing absenteeism at different levels.
- To study the reasons for drop-outs from SC/ST/OBC and minority children.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is a way to explain systematically how research was carried out. It includes not only the research methods but also the logic behind the methods used. A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. Descriptive research, which includes survey and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds, was selected for the present research. An interventional, case-control, and experimental study design was used to determine drop-out rate of Koshi region. The main purpose of the study was to Study the 'School Dropout status in Koshi region of Bihar.'

Selection of Sample

List of School

S. No.	Type of School	Name of District	No of Selected Schools	No. of Selected Respondents
1	Government	Supoul	2	30
2	Government	Saharsa	2	30
3	Government	Madhepura	2	30
4	Government	Purnia	2	30
5	Government	Katihar	2	30
6	Government	Araria	2	30
7	Government	Kishanganj	2	30
8	Government	Khagaria	2	30
9	Government	North Part of Bhagalpur	2	30
10	Government	North of Ganga	2	30
11	Total		20	300

Guardians of the students were selected as respondents from government schools of each area of Koshi region. Thus it is clear from the above table that the koshi regions are spread out in 10 different parts i.e. Supoul, saharsa, Madhepura, Purnia, Katihar, Araria, Kishanganj, Khagaria, North part of Bhagalpur and North of Ganga. These are the study area of Koshi region. It is clear that 2 government schools were selected on the basis of Tippet's lottery method of sampling method. Then 30 guardian respondents were selected on the basis of random sampling method (15 from each school areas). Thus total 300 respondents were selected as sample for the purpose of data collection with the help of interview schedule.

Data collection and Tabulation

With the help of interview schedule the questions asked by the researcher to the respondents and the collected data tabulated in the following way:

To collect primary data, a schedule was designed. With the help of observations and interview, data regarding anthropometric measurements, socio-demographic aspects, activity pattern and psycho-social background was collected. For secondary data collection Books, journals, Periodicals and newspapers were given preference.

The Socio, Psycho and self confidence measurements were taken with the help of instruments. A schedule was developed to collect necessary data.

Study Area:

The area of study is the North Eastern part of Bihar drained by the Koshi, the Mahananda and their numerous tributaries. The region is ravaged by the notorious Koshi, the Hwangho of Bihar. Almost every year the recent floods of 2003 and 2008 have left their scar of poverty and deprivation on the face of the region. The area is a well defined geographical region showing internal homogeneity.

Sample Size

This refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. With the help of practical manual for sample size determination, sample size was determined.

Finally, it was decided to have 300 respondents from the Koshi region as the present study sample on the basis of stratified random sampling method.

Selection of Schools

List of all schools from Koshi region was obtained from the related area of education office. Government Schools were selected using by purposive sampling method. Total twenty schools from Government were finalized with the school authorities' consent. The school authorities were given letters to seek their permission by education officer.

Table no.1.1 is there dropout and absenteeism of students in each standard?

S. no.	Age group	Responses		Total (%)
		Yes (%)	No (%)	
1	18-27	57(19.00)	21(07.00)	78(26.00)
2	28-37	63(21.00)	09(03.00)	72(24.00)
3	38-47	40(13.33)	20(66.67)	60(20.00)
4	48-57	33(11.00)	18(06.00)	51(17.00)
5	58 & above	30(10.00)	09(03.00)	39(13.00)
6	Total	223(74.33)	77(25.67)	300(100.00)

Figure no. 1.01 is the 'Bar graph' showing the clear picture for the data in table no. 1.1

Figure no. 1.01 On the basis of dropout and absenteeism of students in each standard

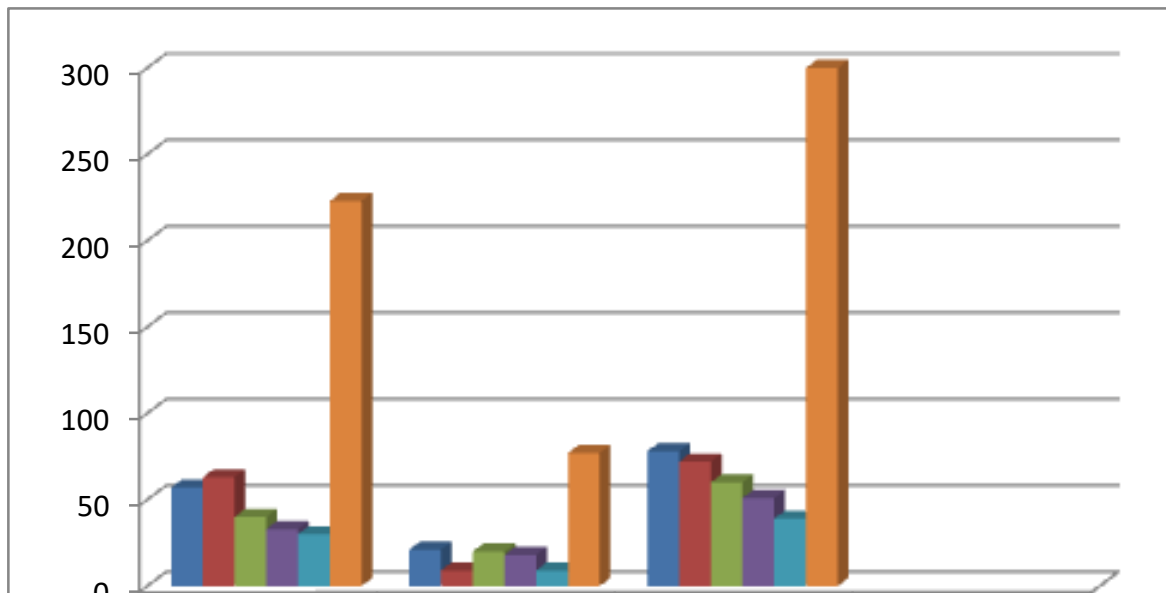


Table no. 1.2 Is there gender differentiation main reason for the drop out of the students?

S. no.	Social Class	Responses		Total (%)
		Yes (%)	NO (%)	
1	Upper	42(14.00)	18(06.00)	60(20.00)
2	Middle	120(40.00)	30(10.00)	150(50.00)
3	Lower	75(25.00)	15(05.00)	90(30.00)
4	Total	237(79.00)	63(21.00)	300(100.00)

Figure no. 1.02 is the 'Cylindrical graph' showing the clear picture for the data in table no. 1.2.

Figure no. 1.02 On the basis of gender differentiation main reason for the drop out of the students

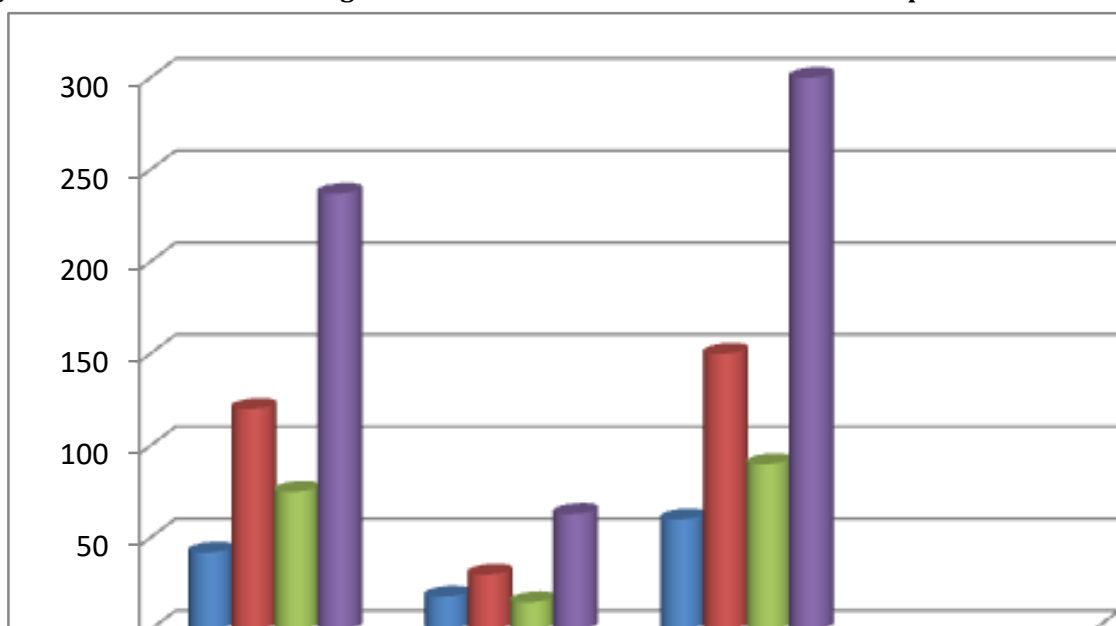
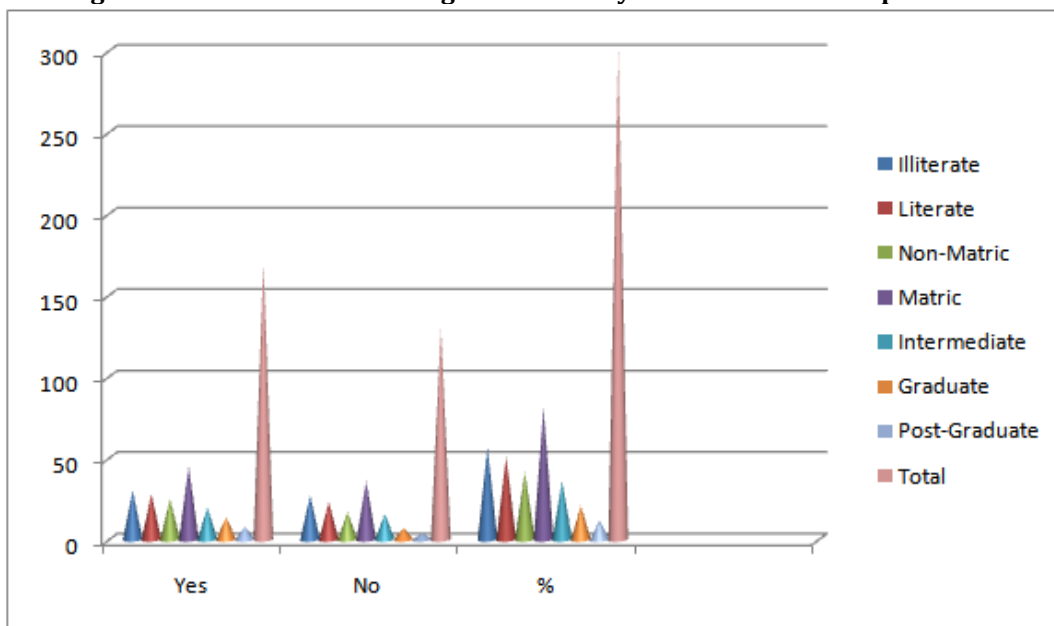


Table no. 1.3 Does the government try to check out the dropout ratio?

S. no.	Ed. Qlf.	Responses		Total (%)
		Yes (%)	No (%)	
1	Illiterate	30(10.00)	27(09.00)	57(19.00)
2	Literate	28(09.33)	23(07.67)	51(17.00)
3	Non-Matric	25(08.33)	17(05.67)	42(14.00)
4	Matric	45(15.00)	36(12.00)	81(27.00)
5	Intermediate	20(06.67)	16(05.33)	36(12.00)
6	Graduate	14(04.67)	07(02.33)	21(07.00)
7	Post-Graduate	08(02.67)	04(01.33)	12(04.00)
8	Total	170(56.67)	130(43.33)	300(100.00)

Figure no. 1.03 is the 'Conical graph' showing the clear picture for the data in table no. 1.3.

Figure no. 1.03 On the basis of government try to check out the dropout ratio



Discussion

Generally it has been found that in each standard and class the number of dropout and absenteeism of children is in more numbers. Girls become engage in house work and they also contribute in work with mother. So there is more dropout ratio among girls. It is evident that the lower caste of students doesn't give more importance to the education. They don't understand the benefits of education. Thus by the deficiency of knowledge they drop out the school. There is also seen a matter of gender differentiations. By the cause of this there is more numbers of boy children enrolments. Girls go to school in groups to the remote areas of Koshi belt for the purpose of safety. Every time it is not possible to join the group in time. After some days the dropout of the children starts. It becomes more in girls in respect of boys. The guardians at village level don't give more importance to the education; they don't care of their children's education. They engage them in different works of their household. The people and guardians of this community don't give more importance to educate their children. They engage their children in other works. Due to this reason there become dropout rates among this community. It is found that the low female literacy of the household doesn't know the importance of education of their ward. Thus they don't compel their children to go to the school, due to this there become more literacy among girl student in respect of the boy student. It is clear that in rural and remote areas there become so many difficulties to reach the school and

gradually become the reason of dropout. The guardians of girl child show the insecurity about their children. These days' time and environment is not favourable for the girl child. There occur different incidents with the girl. By this reason the girls are prohibited from going to school. The teachers' who teaches in their respective school are not being regular. Their more absenteeism becomes the major cause of the dropout of the students in the school. This is the vital problem in running the school.

Absenteeism becomes a practice for the children for not going to school. After a long duration the students don't like to go to school. Due to this reason absenteeism lead to drop-out of the students. The villagers think that girls have to do kitchen work after the marriage, so there is not necessary to teach her more and more. It is only for boy students. The boys have to do jobs after study. Thus it is said that the gender differentiation is the reason of drop-out. The family members who think that educating the children will make them good mannered and some family members think it useless. These both things affect the drop-out and absenteeism. The parental factor is main reason in enrolment and retention of primary school children. The gender differentials also become a main factor in this concern. The thought of society makes the environment in positive and negative about studying the girl child at various level of elementary school education. Accordingly there varies in drop-out rates of the girls children. People think so

many times on spending money on girls. This is the reason about dropout among girls at various level of elementary school education. Female is the key of driving the expense of the household. So it is necessary to be literate of the female, otherwise they couldn't think about education of the girl children. The drop-out rates depends upon the characteristics of village and school. It means their attitude determines high or low rates of drop-out. The parents' educational level also affects the educational level of the children. They give importance accordingly. High educated parents can think about higher education of their children. But the low educated parents may not think about higher education of their children. The low socio-economic status of the family show significant characteristics in causing drop-out, but the high statuses family does not show significant characteristics in causing drop-out. Most of the people ask about the caste of the person. Even teachers of the school make differences among the children on the basis of caste. They see the lower caste children in the school with hate and behave with them accordingly. Gender differentiation also comes under this category. Mostly people don't take care about the education of the girl child. These all things humiliate those who want to send their children in the school for education. Thus we can say that gender and caste variables effect on school drop-out. Attitudes of the children and also of the guardians are the causes of the drop-out. Narrow minded persons of the society make hindrances about the progress of the children. The economic reasons affect the poor family who want to educate their children. These all the factors are responsible for drop-out of the students. Regular illness of the children deviate them from the interest of education. Ultimately this deviation causes the drop-out in the school. Child marriage is prohibited by the government, but in rural areas even now and then this system is going on. Those girl students who got married in early childhood become engage with her new family. Thus there become drop-out for them from the school. Generally it is seen that there is lack of toilets in the school. It creates the problem to the girls generally. If there is availability of toilets, then it is seen that it is not clean. The unclean and dirty toilet is house of disease. The generally feel unsafe due to lack of toilets. These reasons causes to drop-outs in the schools. The good academic performance enhances the students' interest in education, but the poor academic performance deviate the children from education. Thus gradually this leads to drop-outs in the school. The availability of school in remote and rural areas creates a problem for students' reaching in time. The schools which at a long distance from the residential areas becomes a problem for the children in reaching the school. This problem leads to drop-out of the students.

Government takes the data on the basis of survey then after knowing the status of drop-out, tries to implement some programmes for checking out it. It is clear from the different level of educated respondents in the above table. There are so many programmes, for example, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mukhyamantri Poshak yojna, Mukhyamantri cycle yojna etc. through which government tries to attract children towards the school. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan becomes a great boost for the improvement of education. It is the only programme which has been introduced to education for all. The government has tried to attract and attach the children by giving so many facilities through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It became the good way so that the children come to the school

and want to be attaching with the school. Mid-day meal became the great boon for the poor children. The guardians send their children to the school so that their children can take at least one time meal at the school. This is the attractive means to attract the children towards the school. Government has implemented mid-day meal yojna so that the children can take the healthy nutrient at least one time and it is good for health of the children. If the students take healthy nutrients they can proceed for further education and also for higher education. If they become unhealthy then it is impossible to proceed for further education. It is said that health is wealth. So keeping this view in mind the government has implemented this yojna and the fruitful results are being seen. The children can attend the students from far distance by bicycle. They don't have to go on foot and become tire. With the help of bicycle students can easily go to the far distance school in a short time period. This became very helpful for them. From Mukhyamantri poshak yojna one positive thing is that it provided the wearing dress to those children who come from the poor family. Second positive thing from this yojna is that all students became in equality in dress code. This omitted the gap of poor and rich. Third positive thing is that it has returned the smile on the face of those poor children who can never wear the school dress. These all things help in attracting the children towards the school. There was lack of clean toilet for the girl students in last days, but now it has been constructed in every school separately for girls. So that now there is no problem for girl students from going to school. This *abhiyan* also give responsibility to the school administration for taking clean the toilets. One positive thing of this yojna is that children can go in the clean toilet without any hesitation. Second positive thing is that children become free from catching any type of infection from this clean toilet. Third positive thing is that good health concentrates the children towards the education. Thus this is the good means of checking the drop-out. Government has given the scholarship schemes to those students who perform better in the school. One positive thing of this scheme is that it encourages the students to maintain their good performance in the above classes. Second positive thing is that students take interest in their study and try to go forward. Third positive thing is that the guardians take some economical benefits. Fourth positive thing is that teachers and the people of the society give good respect to those guardians whose students are doing well and getting scholarships. These all things work as a barricade from drop-out. *Anganwadi* centres are basically just like a play school for the little children. There has been provided healthy nutrients for the children from the government so that there can be check out the malnutrition of the children. Thus there are so many benefits from this scheme. As for example we can say that a good academic environment has been given to the children from very beginning, children can learn something in playing mode, and children become free from malnutrition by taking healthy nutrients. Lady of those household become free for some hours so that they can do some urgent works freely in the mean time. Children also become happy by making some new friends. They can get some chances to move in good environment. Thus it can be said that there become decline in drop-out due to better implementation of ICDS.

Findings

The table no. 1.1 is showing about the dropout and absenteeism of students in each standard. It is clear from the

table that out of 300 respondents, 223(74.33 per cent) respondents reply in positive of the statement. It means in each standard and class the number of dropout and absenteeism of children is in more numbers. In this table the maximum positive response comes from the age group of 28-37 years, i.e. 21.00 per cent.

The table no. 1.2 denotes that the gender differentiation becomes the main reason for the drop-out of the students. According to the table it is clear that out of 300 respondents, maximum 237 (79.00 per cent) respondents reply in positive and only 63(21.00 per cent) respondents reply in negative of the statement. The villagers think that girls have to do kitchen work after the marriage, so there is not necessary to educate her more and more. It is only for boy students. The boys have to do jobs after study. Thus, it is said that the gender differentiation is the reason of drop-out.

The table no. 1.3 has been drawn on the basis that government tries to check out the drop-out ratio or not. It is clear from the table that out of 300 respondents, 170(56.67 per cent) respondent reply in 'yes' and only 130 respondents reply in 'no'. Government takes the data on the basis of survey then after knowing the status of drop-out, tries to implement some programmes for checking out it. It is clear from the different level of educated respondents in the table. There are so many programmes, for example, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mukhyamantri Poshak yojna, Mukhyamantri cycle yojna etc. through which government tries to attract children towards the school.

Suggestions

- The drop-out in school must be checked by implementing the existing programmes effectively and by encouraging the parents who lack motivation and capacity to send their children to school regularly.
- As the primary education is the base for higher education and achieving total literacy its performance must be improved.
- The retention at primary level and high enrolment rates at upper primary and high school level are the main concern.
- Economy should be strong enough to provide good education. Specific policies are necessary to address the problem of disadvantaged groups.
- The pupils who are not interested in education must be encouraged.
- Public English medium schools must be started to attract students.
- At the same time the employment opportunities for educated youth must be improved.
- The teachers working in primary schools must dedicate their services to improve the standards of pupils.

- Financial allocations for education are to be increased to solve its problem and to improve the performance of primary education. Otherwise the performance of primary education may not be up to our expectations.

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