

A Study of School Dropout in Rural Districts of Darjeeling & Its Causes

Sulagna Chakrabarti

Assistant Professor, Seacom B.Ed College, Howrah, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

Education is the only the key to socio-economic growth and transformation for any rural area. The dropout rate has serious economic, social, and political effects on our nations and has become a global issue and a common phenomenon in most of the developing countries including India, specifically in rural areas. In this study, the magnitude, effects and causes responsible for dropout in Darjeeling rural areas are trying to find out. The research approach conducted for the study is Qualitative Descriptive Survey type and Random Sampling Technique has been adopted for the study. The primary data is collected from dropout school students (21), school teachers' (22), and dropout parents (15) through structured Questionnaire. Secondary data has been obtained from Census India 2011 and other relevant published documents. The study sought the age between 12 to 20 years or specially adolescence period is crucial to check students from being dropout from school. The findings reveal that parents with low income & education, school environments, family issues, early marriage, difficulty level of syllabus, school management, principal's behavior, lack of guidance and counselling, awareness program, parent teachers' association, community involvement, lack of motivation and family support among students are all such factors that have either directly or indirectly affected the drop out cases.

KEYWORDS: Dropout, Global Issue, Adolescence, Rural

1. INTRODUCTION

NEP 2020 states ('Education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society, and promoting national development. Providing universal access to quality education is the key to India's continued ascent, and leadership on the global stage in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, national integration, and cultural preservation...')

One of the major obstacles in acquiring the above-mentioned goals is considered to be a dropout issue amongst the students. According to UNICEF, there is often confusion around what dropout means, leading to different interpretations by schools and inaccurate reporting. A clear and precise definition of dropout is therefore needed, which specifies the age range it applies to, the dates on which schools are required to report enrolment and dropout, a list of exclusionary conditions (e.g., migrating abroad, completed compulsory education), and optionally a period of

How to cite this paper: Sulagna Chakrabarti "A Study of School Dropout in Rural Districts of Darjeeling & Its Causes" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-8 | Issue-2, April 2024, pp.452-469, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd64670.pdf



Copyright © 2024 by author (s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)

and urban areas, several first-generation learners who do not get any support from their parents at home, lack of schools nearby, lack of guidance and counseling, early marriage, child labor, etc. are still the relevant factors for dropout's rate. In most cases, the political, regional, demographic, cultural aspects are also key factors regarding the deterioration of educational values. The negligence of proper administration, organization, leadership, lack of institutions highly affects the socio economic conditions minimizing the quality of education and vice versa. Education is considered as a basis for the development of society and a necessity of this unpredictable world. The level of education has tremendously gone high mostly in urban areas whereas rural areas are still lagged.

As per the Census 2011, the district stands in the sixth position in literacy rate with 79.56% excluding 0-6 age group among 19 districts of West Bengal. The genesis of modern education in the Darjeeling hills initiated. with the Christian Missionaries, mostly the European/Boarding Schools. The spread of modern education in India and in Darjeeling took place in three sectors, Missionary enterprise, Official enterprise, and Private-Indian enterprise. With the change of economic system, traditional schools, such as Pathshala, Madrashes slowly vanished because of the disappearance of social patronage. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the monasteries provided parochial education in Lamaist-Buddhist scriptures. However, monastic education spread before the close of the decades of the 18th century was the only available educational means in Darjeeling. Most of the Indigenous education system could not stand the direct competition with Missionary activities in Darjeeling. Slowly these schools disappeared, but monastic education remained because of the patronage of the Buddhist Communities of Darjeeling. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, Christian Missionaries along with other voluntary organizations played a significant role in the Darjeeling hills in spreading education among the masses.

For the subsequent introduction of modern education, the district owes much to the efforts of Christian missionaries such as the Baptist missionary society and Church of Scotland missionary society. Many Europeans (mainly British) settled in Darjeeling town since its genesis and arrangements had to be made for the education of their children. In 1846, the Vicar Apostolic of Bengal Dr. Carew sent some Loreto nuns to establish a Convent school in the hills for the children of the European families. This school later named Loreto Convent (a Roman Catholic institution

for girls). Further, the Church. Of Scotland Mission's subsequent work became the most crucial factor in the spread of education among the local people. It is to be noted that such establishment took place in Urban regions and not in rural regions. Urban populace were highly benefited and not the rural residence. Till date, most of these minorities school exist to provide and impart high quality education better than the government schools but is not sufficient for the existing and rising population. The current phases of Globalizations, Job Competencies, Digital aggrandization, Advancement etc. should also be taken into considerations. With an increasing human intelligence and knowledge, it is the responsibility of a society to strengthen the pillars of education. Since, West Bengal's Darjeeling district has a strong educational foundation. However, it has been seen that education in rural villages is stagnant and not progressing. In rural villages where literacy rates are low and most residents have not progressed beyond primary school, quality education represents the only means for their children to access a brighter future. There is a thriving hope that the coming generation may be able to break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, un-education for a better standard of living.

1.1. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Education is vital for every individual irrespective of Gender, Caste, Socio-economic conditions, Region, Language, Religion, Class-Status, etc. Education is considered a key factor for Holistic development. Hence, it is imperative to seek the magnitude, effects, and causes responsible for dropout in Darjeeling's rural and urban communities. Also, the study may provide some help to researchers, students, educational planners, policymakers, educators, and other concerned authorities to understand and mitigate the dropouts in future days.

1.2. LOCATION OF THE STUDY

Darjeeling is a town located at the eastern Himalayas in India, the northern-most region of the state of West Bengal. It is famous for its tea industry, scenic views of the world's third highest mountain Kanchenjunga, and a narrow-gauge mountain railway, the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List and lofty Hill. Darjeeling is also known as the Queen of The Hills. Darjeeling town is the headquarters of the Darjeeling district which has a partially autonomous status called Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) within the state of West Bengal. It is also a renowned tourist destination in India.

The word Darjeeling is derived from the word "Dorje" meaning *thunderbolt* in Tibetan and "Ling" meaning *place*, thus known as "The Place of

Thunderbolt". The three major towns and the sub-divisional headquarters in the district are Kurseong, Siliguri and Mirik. Only the hilly region of the district comes under the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA), and covers three hills subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kurseong and Mirik and Kalimpong district. The foothill of Darjeeling Himalayas covers Siliguri subdivision and is known

as Terai. As the district lies on the direct path of the southwest monsoon, it receives abundant rainfall. Temperatures vary significantly with the altitude in the district. The ethnic composition of the people of Darjeeling District is itself a wonder with different Cultures, Languages, Rituals, etc. Religions are mainly Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, or Animism.



Map of Darjeeling districts: Location of Study.

Many residents in hill area of Darjeeling speak Nepali. Thus, Nepali has become a dominant language for the people of Hilly region of Darjeeling. The language (Nepali) is one of the listed languages of the 8th schedule, spoken by 28,71,749 people (Census 2001) and 29,26,168 (2011 Indian Census). The ethnic Nepali Indians include Indo Aryan, Nepali, Chettri, Bahauns, Jaises and Indo-Dravidic Kami, Damay, Sarki, Khambu Rai, Gurung, Mangar, Sunwa, Thami, Dewan, Bhujel, Newars, Schedules tribes (Bhutias, Lepchas, Tamang Limbus, etc.).

Nepali has been the key language than any of the Tribal language like Lepchas, Bhutias or Tibetan as far as it is concerned here in the hill area of Darjeeling. Nepali composed of several races and the ethnic group is taken as dense population here in Darjeeling. Although each of these races have its own dialect and sub-dialect yet the link language is Nepali which is also known as Gorkhali. The present position of the language as per Sahitya Academy of New Delhi recognizes the Nepali language as one of the 15 major languages of India and it has been recognized as one of the official languages for the district of Darjeeling since 1961 by West Bengal. The people living in the Hill area of Darjeeling District, shares the amalgamation of different culture and race.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND JUSTIFICATION

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW ON SCHOOL DROPUTS

In May 2020, the World Economic Forum's *CO¹VID-19 Risks Outlook* warned of a "next lost generation". According to the Global Risks Perception Survey (GRPS), "youth disillusionment" is a highly neglected risk that will become a critical threat to the world. Hard fought societal wins could be obliterated if the current generation lacks adequate pathways to educational and job opportunities.

(Jordan et al., 1994; Watt & Roessingh, 1994), developed framework to seek. reasons why students drop out such that they can be pushed, pulled, or fall out of school. These accounts can be adopted to explain the overall dropout experience. Jordain et al. (1994) reveals pressure on students of push and pull dropout factors. A student is pushed out due to adverse situations within the school environment like tests, attendance, discipline policies,

and even consequences of poor behavior resulting in dropout. However, students can be pulled out when factors inside the student divert them from completing school. Factors, such as financial worries, out-of-school employment, family needs, marriage, childbirth, illnesses, pull students away from school.

Watt and Roessingh (1994) added a third factor called falling out of school, which occurs when a student does not show significant academic progress in schoolwork and evades or get disillusioned with school completion. It is not necessarily an active decision, but rather a "side effect of insufficient personal and educational support' Also, more than push or pull factors, falling out factors highlight a process in school dropout whereby the student gradually increases in behaviors or desires of academic disengagement, yet without being forced out by the school (by push factors) or lured out by things they need or want (by pull factors; Finn, 1989; Finn & Panno, 1995).

Various characteristics associated with dropout risk have been identified in literature in varied domains such as school, family, community, and the students themselves (Suh & Suh, 2007). Coley (1995) found school-related problems such as student disliking school, receiving poor grades among others as school-related causes of dropout. Devine (1996) found parents' low educational attainment, the number of household members and lack of motivation as reasons why students with a low socioeconomic status drop out of school. Pittman (1986) and Tidwell (1988) posited that student's resistance and resentment toward the school community was a major variable in their decision to drop out. Caraway, Tucker, Reinke & Hall (2003) identified students' low level of engagement in their education as a principal factor leading to higher dropout rates.

Erkan Acar (2011) concludes that social factors benefit for education can be seen as higher achievement on tests, higher graduate rates, lower dropout rates, higher college enrollment, and greater participation in school and community organizations. Mostly, factors related to dropout fall into three categories, which are like the types of social domains: school, social, and family-related factors.

School-related factors include school size, school climate, policies, practices, location, programs, teacher quality, curriculum, absenteeism rates, and grade retention rates (Allensworth, 2005 Bryk & Thum, 1989; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Pittman & Haughwout, 1987; Roderick, 1994).

Social-related factors include substance abuse, race, sex, and language (Bryk & Thum, 1989; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Krohn, Lizotte, & Perez, 1997; Mensch & Kandel, 1988; Rumberger, 1983; Steinberg, Blinde, & Chan, 1984),

Family-related factors include socioeconomic status, mobility, family structure, parental education, and parental involvement (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Rumberger, 1983; Rumberger & Lawson, 1998; Swanson & Schneider, 19)

Ignorant and illiterate parents also influence the dropout rate. Unlike educated parents, ignorant and illiterate parents do not constitute for their children's regularity at school. However, most of the illiterate parents aspire big for their children. A considerable amount of them is still responsible for school dropouts. This might be due to a lack of information about formal school education which they have never been subjected to. The involvement of parents in school academic affairs plays a magnificent role. The more a [Parent intervenes in his or her child's education, the less are the chances of child dropouts (Syed Rooquiyya Tabassum, 2019).

2.2. RESEARCH GAP

Research related to educational status, especially the dropout rates and its causes in Darjeeling Districts is vivid and limited to the 2011 censuses. Till date, there are only a few published research papers on Darjeeling districts educational status especially in rural areas. The study is conducted on this present knowledge/research gap.

2.3. RESEARCH QUESTION.

1. What is the dropout status of students in rural schools of Darjeeling Districts?
2. What are the factors that have caused the dropout?

2.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the dropout status in rural Districts of Darjeeling.
2. To examine the factors that has caused Dropout in rural Districts of Darjeeling.

2.5. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study is an attempt to examine the issue of dropout and its responsible factors in rural areas of Darjeeling Districts. The problem has been stated as: "A study of school dropouts in rural districts of Darjeeling and its causes."

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on the primary and secondary data that has been obtained from structured questionnaire, Census of India 2011, and other relevant published documents. An online Google Forms questionnaire was utilized for the collection of Primary data.

3.2. SAMPLE:

The sample for the study is a School Dropout, Dropout's Parents, and School Teachers, a populace from Darjeeling.

3.3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

A purposive random sampling technique has been adopted for the study. Altogether 58 samples were taken, Dropout Students=21, School Teachers=22 and Dropout's Parents=15. The respondents were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality for their responses.

3.4. TOOL:

The tool used for the study consists of three sets of Google Forms Questionnaires for School Teachers, Dropouts and Dropout's Parents, where each sets contained 12, 23 and 11 items, respectively. Online Interviews and phone calls were conducted. The 2011 Census and Observation were also made.

3.5. RESEARCH APPROACH:

The research approach conducted for the study is Qualitative Descriptive survey type.

The primary data is collected from Dropouts, Dropout's parents, and School teachers through structured questionnaire.

4. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

Student 1	Gyanpith High School, Mungpoo.
Student 2	Rambi High School, Rambi Bazar
Student 3	Saraswati Higher Secondary school
Student 4	Maharani Girls High School, Darjeeling
Student 5	Dr Gharams Homes Kalimpong, block A1
Student 6	Mangal Dara kalimpong
Student 7	Sunrise English School
Student 8	Lebong, Darjeeling. west bengal.734101
Student 9	Himali Boarding School, Kurseong, Darjeeling 734203
Student 10	Takdah High School
Student 11	Maharani Girls High School
Student 12	Pokhrebung High School, Sukhia Pokhari
Student 13	St. Mangal Academy
Student 14	Takdah High School, Darjeeling.
Student 15	Darjeeling, Takdah
Student 16	Turnbull School Darjeeling
Student 17	Kalimpong Girls High School
Student 18	Takdah Mission School
Student 19	Lopchu Peshok .Darjeeling.
Student 20	Jungpana.

Table 4.1. a. Name of the School/Address of dropout's students.

4.1.A. General And Demographic findings of Dropouts:

This section represents a demographic and general information of a dropouts.

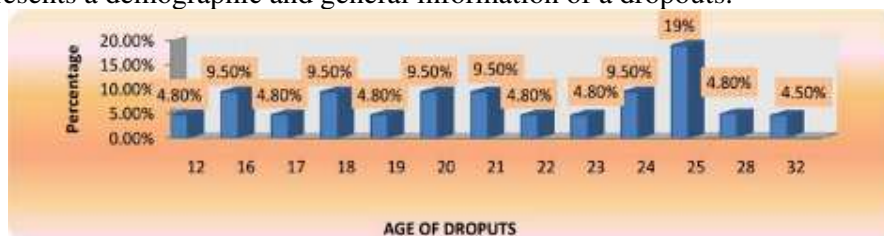


Figure 1. Age of Dropouts.

Figure 1 findings depict the current age of dropouts. Majority of them were 25 years old, i.e., 19% of them responded to be 25 years old in age. The above data shows that the smallest age of dropouts is 12 years old and the highest 32 years old.

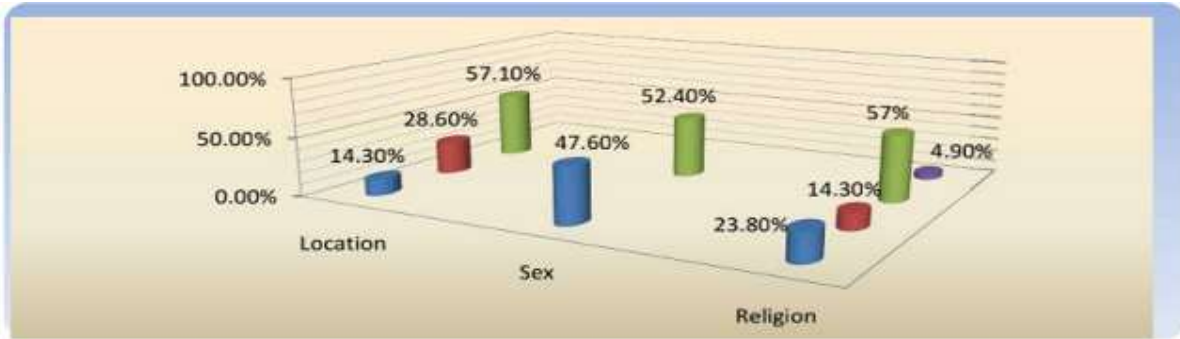


Figure 2: Location, Sex and Religion of Dropouts.

The Figure 2 findings reveal that 57.10 % dropouts belong to Rural region, 28.60% belongs to Semi-urban region and 14.30% from Urban location. The findings also show that 52.40% of them were Female and 47.60% Male. The highest dropouts belong to Hindu background (57%), followed by Christians (23.80%), then Buddhists (14.30%) and others (4.90%).

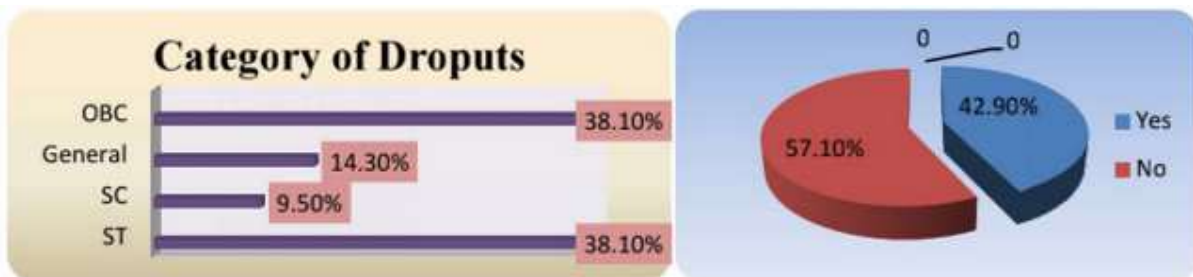


Figure 3: The Category of Dropouts and Minority percentage.

The above findings depict that the highest number of dropouts belongs to Schedule Tribe community and OBC which is 38.10% followed by 14.30% General category and 9.50% Schedule category. The percentage of Minority amongst the respondents was found to be 42.90% and 57.10% belongs to a non-minority community.

Classes in which students left school.	IV	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
No of Percentage	4.8%	4.8	4.8%	33.4%	9.5%	23.8%	14.3%	4.8%

Table 4.1.b: Dropout's measures of standard (Classes).

Table 4.1 study depicts those students usually gets dropped out in secondary level. The percentage of 33.4% respondent left school in Class VIII followed by 23.8% in class X and 14.3% in class XI.

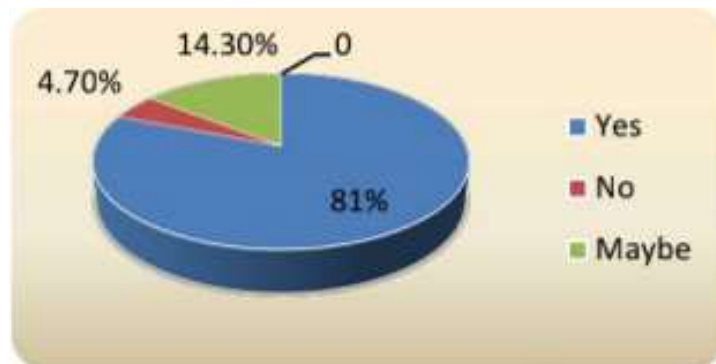


Figure 4: Safety and Security concerns at schools.

Figure 4 findings depict that 81% dropouts felt secure and safe at school where 4.70% did not feel safe and secured at their school.

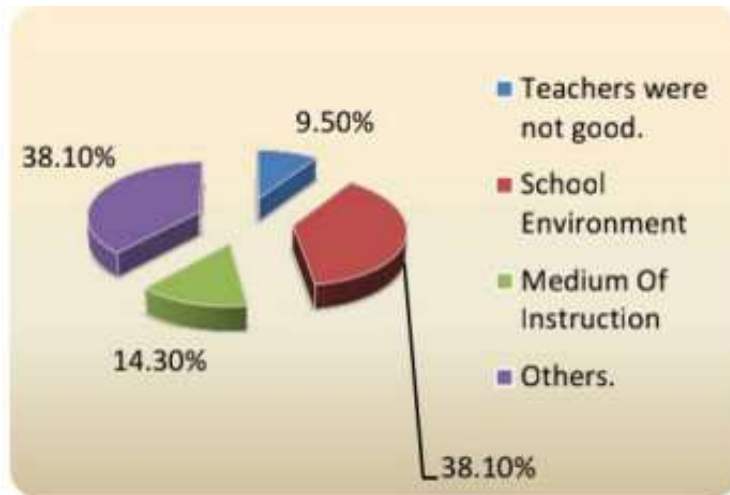


Figure 5: Problems experienced by Dropouts at the schools.

Figure 6 finding reveals about various problems experienced by dropouts at their school premises. 9.50% responded that their teachers were not good, 38.10% disliked school environment, 14.30% had hard times coping up with the medium of school instructions. The other problems include hard syllabi, lack of interest to go to school and financial crisis.



Figure 6: Educational qualifications of Dropouts parents.

Figure 6 reveals about the educational qualifications of Parents. 38.10% responded that their parent's qualification is below class X and 38.10% responded that their parent's qualification is above Class X-XII. 19.05% responded to others and 4.75% dropout's parents were found to be graduate degree holder.



Figure 7: Perception of Educational importance.

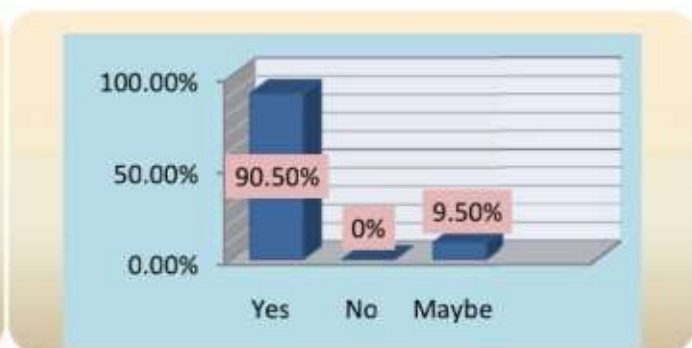


Figure 8: Dropout's working status.

The above figure 7 shows that 85.70% dropouts responded that education is important for standard life and 14.30% disagree that education is not important for a good standard of living.

Figure 8 study inquiries about the working status of dropouts, 90.50% responded that they are working in private sectors like Daily wage Jobs, Salon, Salesperson, Small Business, helping family business and working as a musician.

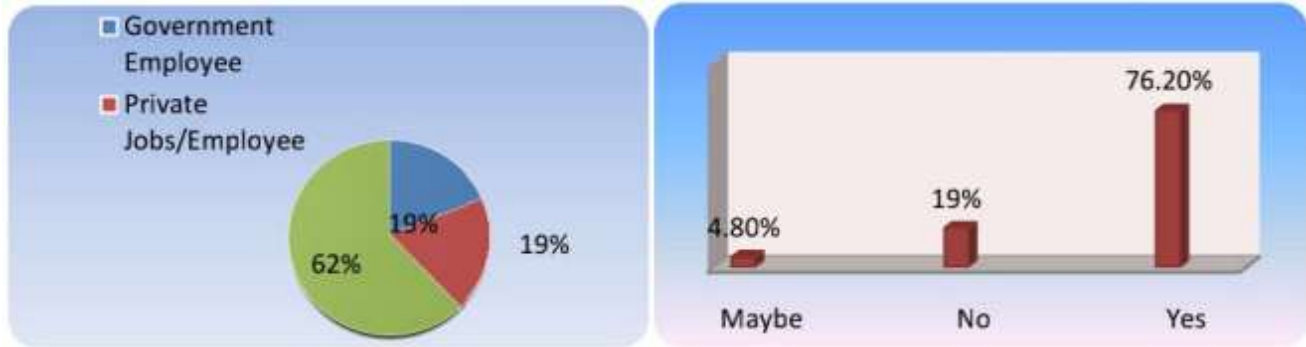


Figure 9: Occupation of Dropouts Parents. Figure 10: Parental Supports in school related work.

Figure '9 findings depict that only 19% of dropout's parents were Government Employee which includes Tea Plantation worker. 19% of them hold Private Jobs and 62% responded to other profession which includes Farmers, Darjeeling Tea Plantation workers, Cinchona Plantation workers, small business holders etc. Figure 10 findings reveal that 76.2% parents supported and helped during school related problems whereas 4.8 % responded 19% parents did not support their children in school activities.



Figure 11: Financial Issues and Dropouts.

Figure 11 reveals that 71% agreed that their dropout reason was a financial issue and 19% disagreed with financial crisis whereas 10% responded to maybe.

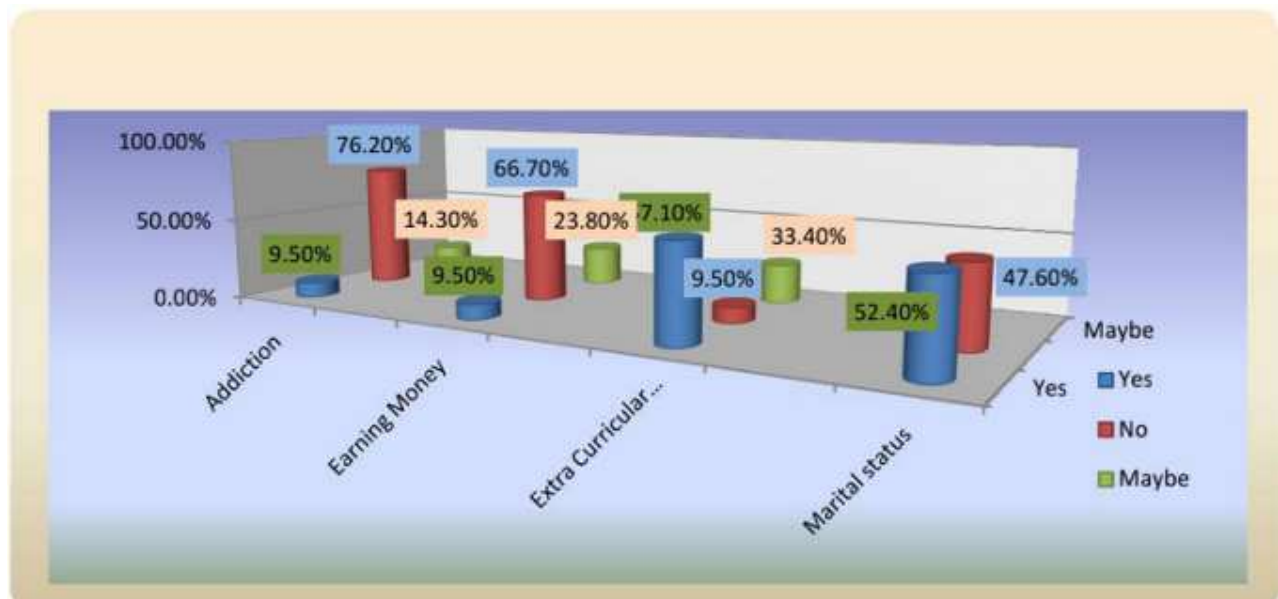


Figure 12: Relationship of Dropouts with Addiction, Money, Extracurricular activities in previous school and marital status.

The above figure 12 data findings show that 9.50% of dropouts have addiction of drugs or other hazardous substance. 76.20% respondent did not have any kinds of addictions and 14.30% responded to *Maybe*. When asked about the ease of earning money only 9.50% responded to *Yes* whereas 66.70% dropouts responded earning money is not easy and 23.80% responded to maybe. 57.10% dropouts enjoyed Extra-curricular activities at their previous school, 9.50% did not and 33.40% responded to *Maybe* because some schools do not have such facilities. The findings also shows that 52.40% of them are married and 47.60% are not married.



Figure 13. Difficulty level of a School Syllabus.

Figure 13 findings show that 61.90% dropouts found the level of school syllabus hard and 38.10% responded to mediocre.

4.2. TEACHERS PERSPECTIVES.

Name of the School and Address.

Champamaya Junior Basic School	Saraswati Vidya Daan Academy, Lebond (Darjeeling)	Gyan Vikash Academy, Upper dalepedong S.V.D.A,
St Milarepa Academy	Darjeeling Government High School, R.N Sinha Road, Darjeeling	Apatan Primary School, Mungpoo, 734313
Saraswati Higher Secondary School, Mungpoo.	St. Mangal School.	Sarda High School, Mungpoo.
Rungbee Jyanpith H.S School	Sunrise School Darjeeling	St. Johannes School, Jaigaon.
Langurdang Junior High School	Kalimpong Girls High/Higher Secondary School.	Blue diamond English Boarding School
Mount Zion School, Sittong.	Takda Junior High School.	Sonada High School.

4.2.A. Table: Name of the Schools from where the Teachers responses were collected.

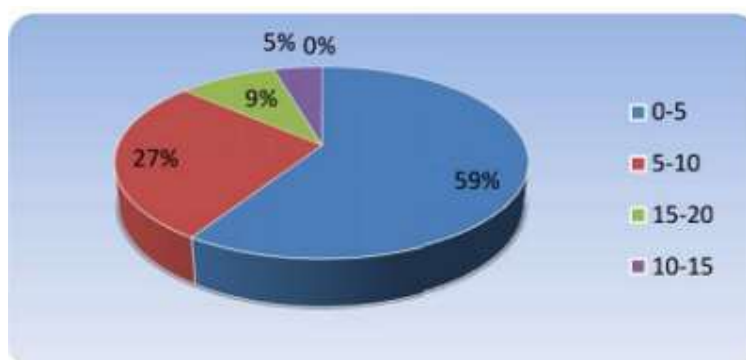


Figure 14: The number of Students dropout as per the Teachers Response.

Figure 14 finding depicts that 59.1% of teachers agree that minimum 5 numbers of students get dropped out from their schools every year. Likewise, 27.3% responded 5-10 students, 9.1% responded 15-20 students, the highest number of students getting dropped out and 4.5 % responded 10-15 numbers of students.

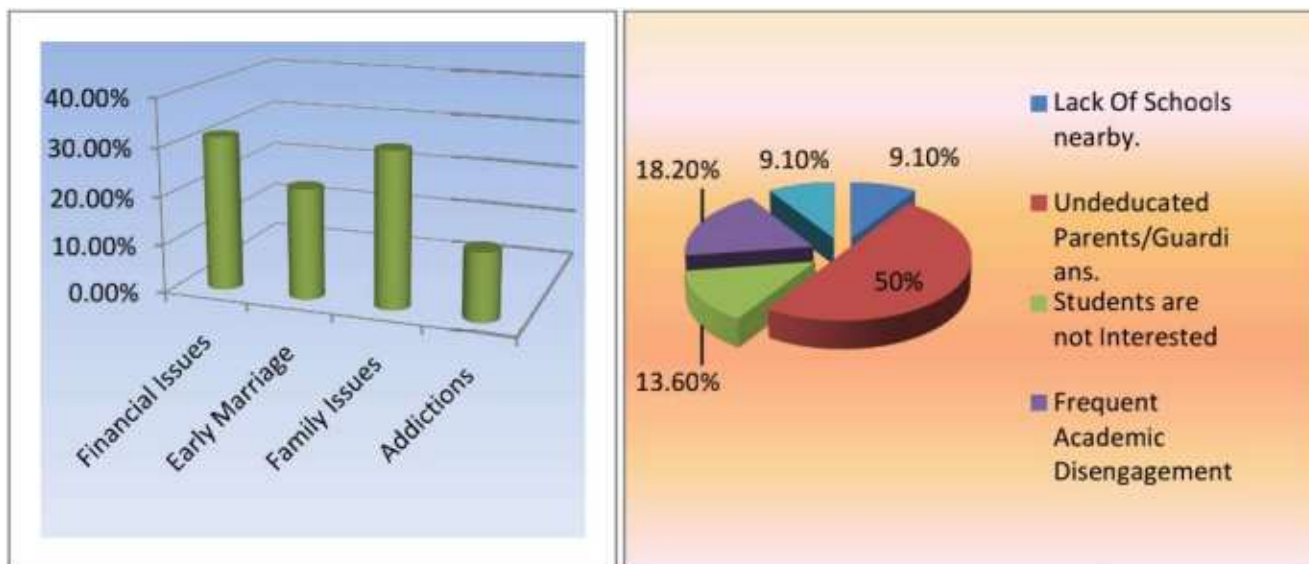


Figure 15: School status and family issues. Figure 16: Issues related to Dropouts rates.

Fig 15 findings reveals about the four major causes behind the dropout cases in school as per the teachers’ perspectives that includes Financial Issues, Early Marriage, Family Issues and Addictions of Drugs, Alcohol etc. amongst the students and their respective family.

Fig 16 findings reveal that 50% of teachers agree, uneducated parents are the main cause behind student dropouts. 9% teachers agree with the lack of schools near child residence and 9% students are not interested to go to the school and 18% teachers agree that frequent academic disengagement amongst the students also lead to dropouts.

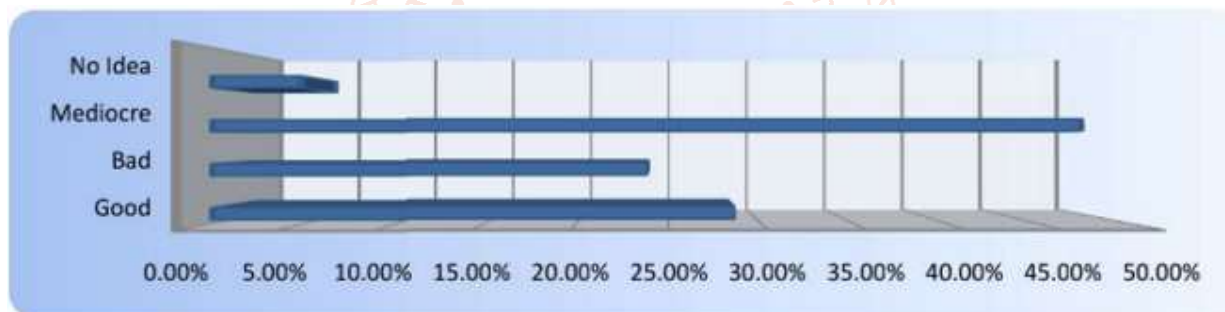


Figure 17. Educational Level of Rural schools.

From above figure, the finding reveals that 47.6% teachers responded that educational status of rural schools are mediocre, 28.6% teachers responded that schools are Good, 23.8% teachers responded that schools are Bad and 4.8% have no idea regarding educational status of rural Schools.



Fig. 18. School strategies to mitigate Dropout rates.

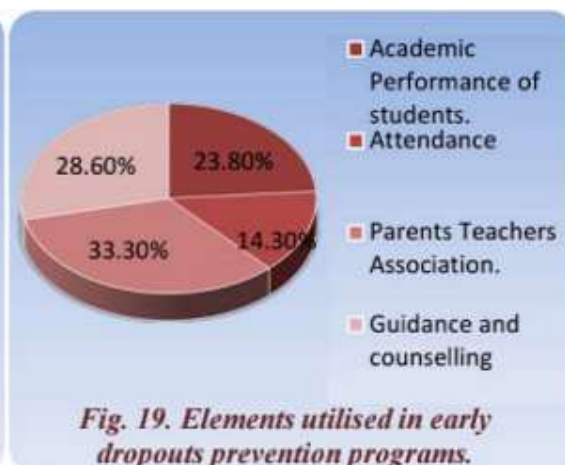


Fig. 19. Elements utilised in early dropouts prevention programs.

Figure 18 and Figure 19 findings reveal that schools have adopted different strategies to curb and prevent Dropouts rates. 43% teachers responded that communication with child's parents or Guardians is an effective

measure either through Parents Teachers meetings or personal meetings and 33.30% school's teacher utilize PTA as an early prevention program to mitigate dropouts from their respective schools. Well, 29% Teachers responded that engaging students in Extra-curricular activities not only benefits psycho-motor domains but is also a good measure to check dropout cases. 19% of Teachers agrees that analyzing student class attendance helps to curb dropout rates and 14.30% of teachers check student attendance as an early sign of causes for dropout, 5% of Teachers provides recognition prizes and 28.60% of Teachers conduct Guidance and Counseling session in their respective schools.

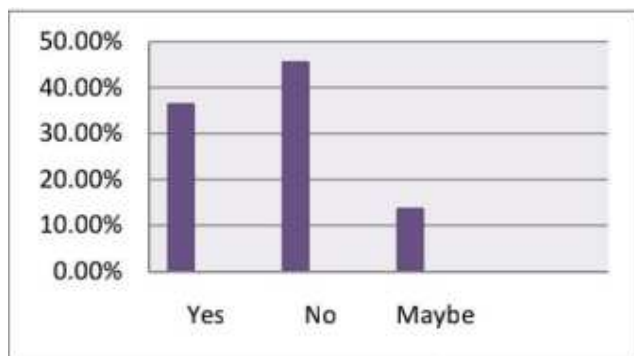


Fig. 20: Facilities to contact dropout.

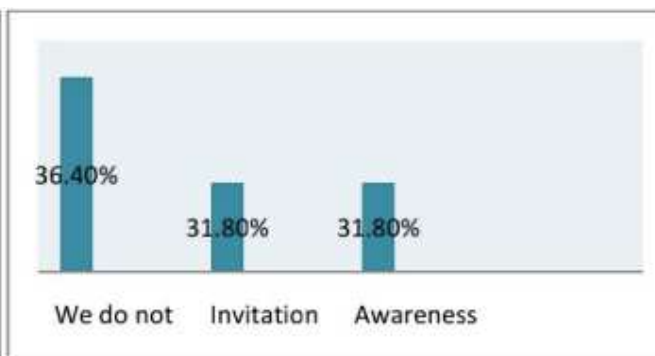


Fig. 21: Awareness programs.

Figure 20 illustrates that 36.9% of teachers contact dropout students or their parents/guardians whereas 45.5% teachers do not and 13.6% of teachers are not sure whether the school does contact those dropout students or not. From the findings of Figure 21, 36.40% teachers responded that school does not communicate or generate awareness in the community/society regarding the significance of education and consequences of dropouts. 31.80% teachers responded that they invite community members at schools related programs and 31.80% teachers responded that school does generate awareness within a local community.

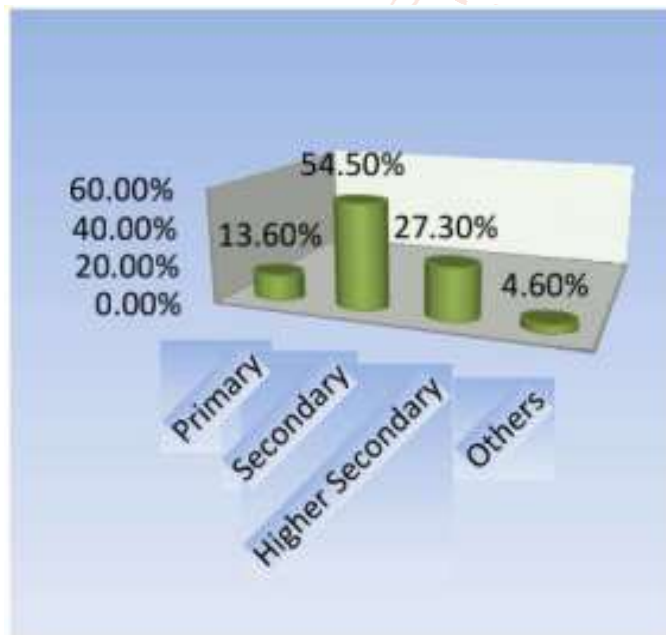


Fig:22. Dropouts level at school.

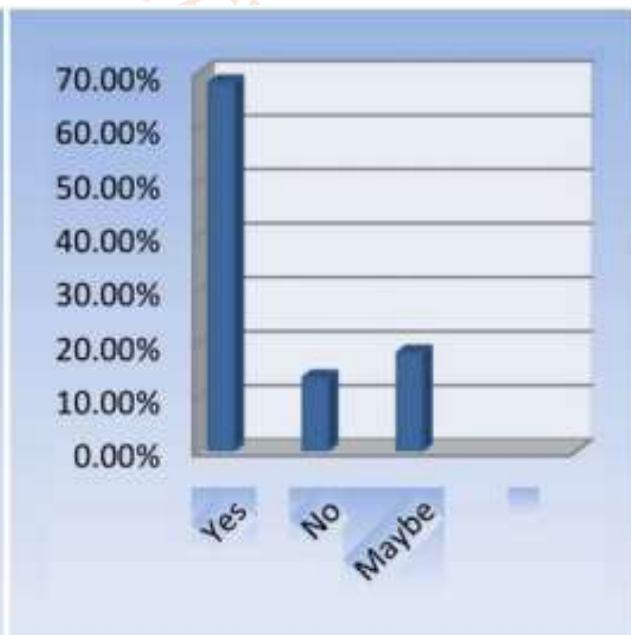


Fig 23. Detention in Board exams.

Figure 22, from the above findings it shows that most of the student's dropout during secondary education. Here, 54.50% teachers responded Secondary Education, 27.30% responded higher secondary education, 13.60% responded primary education and 4.60% responded to others.

Figure 23 findings shows that 63.60% teachers agree that detention in Board Exams is also one of the main causes for dropouts, whereas 18.2% teachers responded maybe it could be the reason and 13.6% does not agree.

4.3. PARENTS PERSPECTIVES

4.3.A. Demographic and General Information of Dropouts Guardians/Parents.

This section represents a demographic and general information of a dropouts Parents.

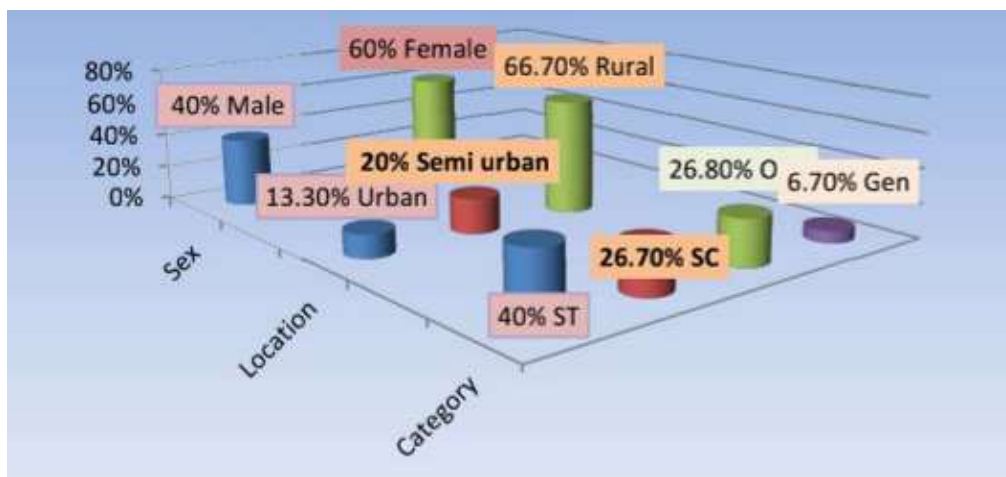


Figure 24: Sex, Location and Category background of dropout family.

Fig 24: The above findings reveal that 60% of the respondents (Dropouts Parents) were Female and 40% were male. The finding reveals that 66.70% of dropout student's family belongs to a rural community, 20% from a Semi-urban region and 13.30% from an urban region. When

sought for their categories, 40% of dropouts belong to a Schedule Tribe background, 26.70% from Schedule Caste background, 20% from OBC and 13.30% from a general background.

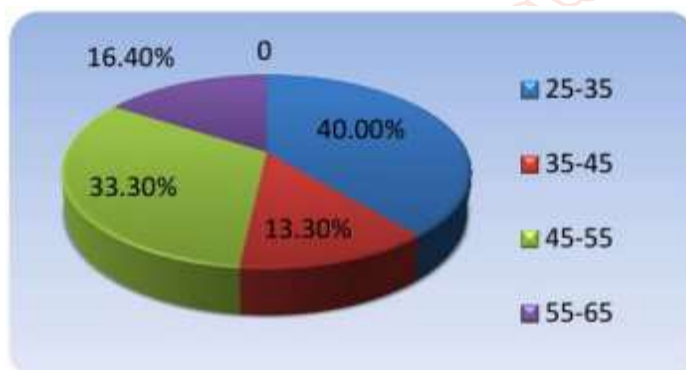


Fig 25: Age of a Dropout's Parents.



Fig. 26. Religion.

Fig 25: The above findings shows that majority of the Dropout's parents were between 25-35 years (40%), 33.30% were between 35-45 years, 13.30% were between 35-45 years, 16.40% were between 55-65 years.

Figure 26 findings shows that most of the dropout's family belongs from a Hindu Community i.e. 40% respondent were from Hindu religion, 26.70% from Buddhist religion, 26.80% from Christian family and 6.70% belongs to other religion.



Figure 27: Monthly Income of dropout's family.

Figure 27 data depicts that 40% of family income are between 10-20 thousand, 33.30% have income below 10 thousand and 26.70% income is between 20-30 thousand per month.



Figure 28: Importance of Education to Dropouts Parents.

The above findings show that 53% of parents responded that education is extremely/ most important for their child welfare, 26.7% parents responded that it is more important, and 20% parents responded to important.



Figure 29: Educational qualification of Dropouts Parents/Family.

Fig 29: The above findings reveal that most of the dropout's parents have not completed their basic educational degree. 40% parent's educational qualification is below Class X, 20 % of parents' educational qualifications range from X-XII, 33% were graduated degree holder and 7% are well qualified and possess post-graduate degree.

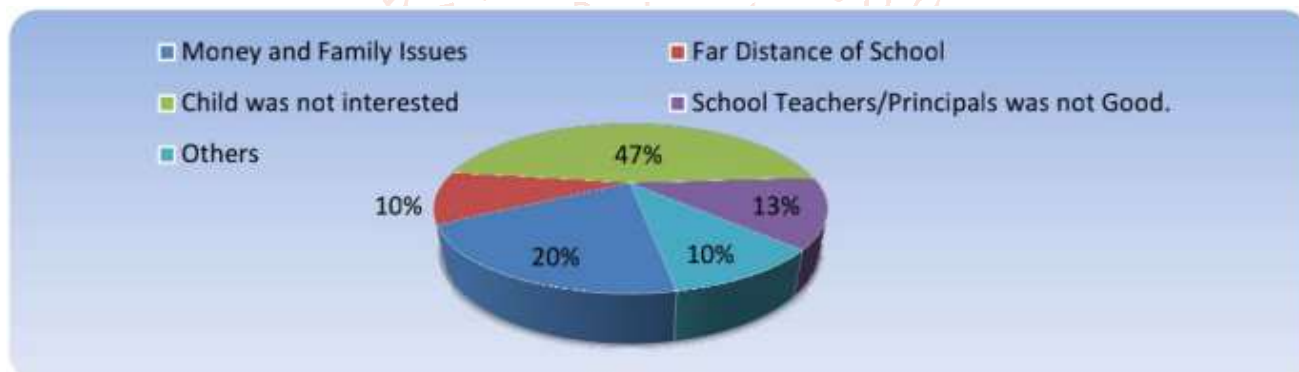


Figure 30: Reasons for dropouts as per their Parents perspectives.

Figure 30: The above data shows that 47% of parents agree that their child was not interested to go to the schools, 20% of them had financial and family issues due to which their children could not attend school, 13% parents blame for School Teachers/Principals faults, 10% parents says that the school were far from their residence and 10% could not provide a specific reason.

5. DISCUSSION

Dropout issue is one of the most serious concerns in the field of Education. It relates all the aspects of National development as well as the wastage, loopholes and drawbacks of a society itself and the educational administrations. The current Pandemic situation has severely affected the cases into a worst condition but also innovations of various equipment's and facilities towards advancement of educational sectors.

S. No.	Indicators	Persons	Males	Females
1	Population	18,46,823	9,37,259	9,09,564
2	Child Population	1,93,169	98,933	94,236
3	Scheduled Castes	3,17,275	1,61,495	1,55,780
4	Scheduled Tribes	3,97,389	1,97,251	2,00,138
5	Literate	13,15,585	7,17,673	5,97,912
6	Illiterate	5,31,238	2,19,586	3,11,652
7	Workers	6,83,726	4,79,586	2,04,140
8	Non Workers	11,63,097	4,57,673	7,05,424
9	No. of households:	3,91,234		

Table 5.1: Source: Primary Census Abstract, 2011, West Bengal, Darjeeling District

The above Table shows that illiteracy in Darjeeling District is still prevalent and a matter of concern in today's era. It's a big challenge towards Administration to mitigate unemployment and illiteracy rates for betterment of State in terms of GDP and the Nation. The study sought that the age between 12-20 years is crucial to check students from being dropouts from the school. The adolescence period of students should be taken care with proper guidance and counseling. Most of the dropout students belongs to a Rural community and parents with low education and income. The findings reveal that dropouts do not like their school environments. Financial issues, Early Marriage, Family Issues and school related environment were some of the major reasons behind the causes of Dropouts.

Student 1	Father's death
Student 2	It was difficult for me to study and I was not interested.
Student 3	Due to financial problem
Student 4	I was not interested in studies
Student 5	My health was very weak when I was in class 10 so after that I didn't do my exam well that's why I got compartment (Fail).
Student 6	Because i have many problems
Student 7	Money problem
Student 8	I had to stay with my parents large family.
Student 9	My parents decided
Student 10	Could not study well
Student 11	I changed the school twice but despite of that i was not interested in studies
Student 12	Seeking for a better school
Student 13	Family issues
Student 14	To earn money
Student 15	I had to work at Home. Help parents.
Student 16	To help my family
Student 17	I was not interested with schooling system. I believe most important part of learning is self-learning
Student 18	Because of my family problems
Student 19	On that time my family were suffering from financial problem and other domestic problem
Student 20	School syllabus was very Hard. I failed in 10
Student 21	I was not interested
Student 22	School was very far. So many difficulties.
Student 23	School was far. Health Issues

Table 5.2 Reasons behind leaving the schools as per the dropouts.

The findings sought that despite of Government universal access towards basic education, people have failed to understand that a quality education still exists in Government/Public schools and not only in Private Schools where cost of expenses is very High. Financial issues and Family issues are two major concerns for policy

makers and educational leaders. Besides these two factors School related factor also plays a major role. The environment of school, Teacher's competency, Curriculum, Difficulty level of Syllabus, School management, Principals behaviors, Guidance and counseling, Awareness programs, Parents Teachers Associations, Community involvement are all such factors that have either directly or indirectly affected the dropouts' cases.

Different views of School Teachers towards the Dropouts:

Teacher 1	I feel due to the lack of motivation and the bad influence the rate of dropouts are increasing in Darjeeling hills.
Teacher 2	During the Pre-Covid time the reason for dropout was either financial issue or lack of interest, post-covid its the pressure of the syllabus of the board exam. The students who were studying in class 7 before Covid are directly preparing for Board exams that has created a lot of mental stress.
Teacher 3	Desire to earn money, Bad politics, Influence of social media
Teacher 4	Student desire to earn money quickly
Teacher 5	I would say politically.
Teacher 6	Students do lose focus due to a lots of strike and rally etc. And apart from this Students are involved in earning money at early age where they have a rare knowledge about money and it's philosophy.
Teacher 7	Social media.
Teacher 8	Political Reason
Teacher 9	Teach them the value of education. Help them have a dream and work hard to achieve it. Give them attention and encouragement.
Teacher 10	Political reasons, Lack of competencies in teachers
Teacher 11	No idea
Teacher 12	They fail in their academics .
Teacher 13	Financial issue , family pressure
Teacher 14	Due to weak governance of GTA, Education department and district school board.
Teacher 15	Influence of Social media
Teacher 16	Political reason, Lack of Good teachers, Desire to earn money
Teacher 17	Politics
Teacher 18	Lack of interest in Studies, Lack of Transportation system
Teacher 19	Lack of Guidance and Counseling, Family Issues, Lack of Schools nearby and interest.
Teacher 20	Influence of social media. They want to become social media influencer even before they pass higher secondary.
Teacher 21	Education system, Lack of proper guidance
Teacher 22	With the lack of educational sector especially in rural areas and also not providing proper guidance and counseling at school in early stages. Especially when children are at minor age, they should be given proper guidance and counseling. Other such major issues are family illiteracy, financial problems, sex discrimination where girls don't get any support from parents, which leads to early marriage and hence, effecting the drop outs cases and desire to earn money quickly, Influence of Social media etc

Table 5.3 School Teachers view regarding the Dropouts Cases in Darjeeling.

The Political situation of Darjeeling Districts is also a large factor for dropouts. The oldest ongoing demand for the separate state "Gorkhaland" and "Gorkhaland Territorial Administration" has severely affected the status of education in different ways. Besides, Political reason, the role of Schools and teachers also affects Dropouts level. The lack of interest amongst the students to go to school and lack of proper guidance has also been a major cause for the dropouts' rates. The study also reveals that frequent academic disengagement, low attendance as a result,

they don't get promotion in school exams and in board exams, thus, accelerates dropouts' rates and to leave the school. It is also to be noted that existing syllabus of Primary Government schools are not up to the mark when compared with Private school syllabus. The findings reveals that the difficulty level of education causes detention in Board exams and students are compelled to leave the school and involve in private work like Salon, Daily wages, Salespersons, small business, etc.

Illiteracy amongst the family members or being a first-generation learner also hampers students in many aspects. Those Students who do not get emotional support, motivation, and support from family regarding school related factors are likely to leave their school. Most the teachers agree that students who have frequent disengagement with the school activities are not interested in studies where social media acts as a catalyst. It is also imperative to seek further research on students lack interest. The present study reveals that lack of co curricular activities, Lack of Parents involvement, Lack of proper facilities, far distance of schools, Family issues, etc. could have compelled students to leave the school and channelize into something that is easy and less burden.

Hence, the present findings depict that different Family Issues, Social Factors and Financial issues have been a major factor for the dropouts in the rural districts so far.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. Concluding Remarks.

Dropouts' status leads to the failure and several disintegrations of a Society and Nation. Education should be considered necessity for a standard living of life and Human development. All the aspects of social factors, Financial and Family issues, along with Teacher's perspectives, Parents perspectives and Students Perspectives should be involved while framing different Policies and Laws.

6.2. Contribution of the study.

The present study provides overall analysis of Dropouts cases and its causes in rural region of Darjeeling districts. The findings depict that different issues related to Family, Social Factors and Financial issues have been a major factor for the dropouts in the rural districts so far.

6.3. Application and significance of the study:

The reviewed literature of the topic reveals various aspects and dimensions in this domain. Significant research has been published worldwide regarding the dropout cases so far, but no such research work is available regarding Dropout cases in the Darjeeling district specifically. Hence, the study will bridge the knowledge gap and provide a piece of valuable information with an urgency to act on the causes. The present study enlightens to conduct further research work. The study directs an urgency and necessity to curbs the Dropout rates.

6.4. Suggestion:

The present study is limited to few Resources, Data collections, Sample size, etc. The study conducted is also not an exception and further lights of different avenues of research field. The data collection is

purely through online mode which might denotes inaccuracy or incorrect calibration. Therefore, the following suggestion should be considered for further research.

1. The study was delimited to a few amounts of school teacher's. The study can be further extended to larger numbers of a Private and Government schools.
2. The sample size for Teachers, Dropouts and Parents can be further increased.
3. Extensive offline and online data collection should be conducted encompassing all rural schools as well as urban schools for better insight and understanding.
4. In depth Qualitative research could be considered to further bridge the gap between known and unknown causes as well as quantitative analysis.
5. The present study does not cover the effects of Covid-19 Pandemic, thus, in depth research could be considered encompassing all the issues related to current Pandemic.

6.5. Delimitation of the study:

The sample size taken was only 58 which provide a vivid transparency of Dropout's cases, and the generation of results would be limited. The study requires in depth surveys and solid primary data collection. This is a pilot-level study that attempts to find out the dropout rates in few rural regions of Darjeeling hill's school. The drawback of the study is limited to a few C.D Block, the paucity of time, less resources, and limited number of data. The study does not encompass all C.D Block's school. A much larger and extensive study is required for better reliability, transparency, and legitimate results.

REFERENCES

- [1] Aide Memoire (2009). Sarva shiksha abhiyan (SSA), 10th joint review mission of sarva shiksha abhiyan. Government of India.
- [2] Anselm K.A, Winneba 'NY and Harriet E.O (2018). Dropouts' issues and its economic implications evidence from rural communities in ghana. Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research Volume 19, Issue 1, 1 1533-3604-19-1-120.
- [3] American Educational Research Journal Winter 1994, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 729-759 Grade Retention and School Dropout: Investigating the Association Melissa Roderick The University of Chicago
- [4] Arun .C Mehta (April 2007). Student Flow at Primary Level an Analysis Based on DISE

- Data. Published by National University of Educational Planning and Administration and Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development Govt. of India.
- [5] Barbara S, Rumberger R.W (1987) High School Dropouts: A Review of Issues and Evidence Review of Educational Research, Vol. 57, No. 2, pp. 101-121.
- [6] Chettri A, Rawat S (2013). A Study on Rural Education in Darjeeling. International Journal of Science and Research. 2319-7064. Volume 4 Issue 3.
- [7] Coley, R.J. (1995). *Dreams deferred: High school dropouts in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, Policy Information Centre.
- [8] Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, S95-S120. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2780243>
- [9] Doll JJ, Eslami Z, Walters L. (2013). Understanding Why Students Drop Out of High School, According to Their Own Reports: Are They Pushed or Pulled, or Do They Fall Out? A Comparative Analysis of Seven Nationally Representative Studies.
- [10] Erkan Acar (2011) Paper Effects of social capital on academic success: A narrative synthesis Academic Journals Full Length Research.. Educational Research and Reviews Vol. 6 (6), pp. 456-461.
- [11] Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School Engagement: Potential of the Concept, State of the Evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59-109. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3516061>
- [12] Goldschmidt, P., & Wang, J. (1999). When can schools affect dropout behavior? A longitudinal multilevel analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*, 36(4), 715-738
- [13] Hammond, C., Linton, D., Smink, J., & Drew, S. (2007). *Dropout Risk Factors and Exemplary Programs*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center, Communities In Schools, Inc.
- [14] Julie A. Drewry (February 12, 2007). *High School Dropout Experiences: A Social Capital Perspective*. Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University.
- [15] Manjeel Rai (2015). *School dropouts and its impact on the society in sikkim* "Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of master of philosophy" Department of Economics, Sikkim University.
- [16] Marcella r. Dianda, Ed.D (November 2008). *Preventing future high school dropouts: An advocacy and action guide for NEA State and Local Affiliates*. Published, copyright 2008 by the National Education association All Right Reserved.
- [17] Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education and Literacy (2009). *The right of children to free and compulsory education act*.
- [18] Moktan R (2018) Education Status of Women Workers in the Tea Industry of Darjiling: A Geographical Analysis. International Journal of Innovative Studies in Sociology and Humanities (IJISSH) ISSN 2456-4931. Volume: 3 Issue: 7, P 39.
- [19] National Education Policy 2020 Ministry of Human Resource Development. Government of India
- [20] Pittman, R.B. (1986). Importance of personal, social factors as potential means for reducing high school dropout rate. *The High School Journal*, 70, 7-13.
- [21] Pittman RB, Haughwout P. Influence of High School Size on Dropout Rate. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. 1987.
- [22] Robert Whannel and William Allen (2011). High school dropouts returning to study: the influence of the teacher and family during secondary school. *Australian journal of teacher education*, volume 36, issue 9, article-3.
- [23] Russell W. Rumberger (October 2011). *Dropping Out: Why students drop out of high schools and what can be done about it*. Published by Harvard University.
- [24] Sen P, Roy R (2020) Literacy and Employment Status of Tribal Population in Darjiling District, West Bengal. International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR), Volume 7, Issue I (E-ISSN 2348-1269, P- ISSN 2349-5138) IJRAR2001807
- [25] Tamang S (2021). Ethnic and Linguistic Identity in Darjeeling Hills and State Responses. International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (DCRT), Volume 9, 1533IJCRT2104198, Issue 4, ISSN: 2320-2882.

- [26] Watt, D., & Roessingh, H. (1994). ESL dropout: The myth of educational equity. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 40(3), 283-296
- [27] Syed Rooquiyya Tabassum (20:19). A Study of School Dropouts in India: Sensitivity at Display. *Journal of Applied linguistics and Language Research* Volume 6, Issue 3, 2019, pp. 1-10. ISSN: 23'76-760X
- [28] <http://reports.weforum.org/global-risks-report-2021/pandemics-youth-in-an-age-of-lost-opportunity/>
- [29] <https://thedarjeelingchronicle.com/?s=Education>

