EFFECTS OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS ON THE DROPOUT RATE OF CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT BADIN, SINDH PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The educational status of Sindh, Pakistan is not very promising despite the huge expenditure on education, various incentives to the families and children to increase the enrolment in primary education and reduce the dropout rate in primary schools but the goal of universal primary education has not been achieved. In the study, socio-cultural factors and belief are explored using previous research works and their relationship on the dropout rate was assessed using scatter plots and Pearson's Correlation. The impact of these factors was also measured on the dropout rate in the study area using multiple linear regression. It is found that socio-cultural factors as determined by the study are significantly related to the dropout rate of children in the primary education in study area. To improve the condition of enrolment and dropout rate in Badin socio-cultural factors pertaining to local community must be considered along with the economic factors.

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Keywords: Primary education, Dropout rate, Social and Cultural Factors.

INTRODUCTION

Every person in the world is alike, while during the process of evolution of the societies, cultures are formed and different norms and beliefs come to existence. These social, cultural and religious beliefs have strong effect on the everyday decisions of a person. The study aims to find out these factors and assess their effect on the enrolment/dropout rate of the children in primary education. District Badin of province Sindh was selected to for its poverty and below average living conditions of the people.

District Badin has an area of 6270 square kilometres, as per census the population of Badin in 1998 is 1,296,304 and 84 percent of this lives in rural areas. Literacy ratio in Badin during 1998 is 24.63 percent (male 35.01 percent, female 12.9 percent). The population that takes admission in primary school is 65 percent while only 33 percent

completes the primary education (PSLM 2014-15). Public and private sector organizations are working hard to increase the enrolment and decrease dropout ratio in the study area. They are offering free education with no fee, free books, monthly stipend and edible oil for female students, but these initiatives are not paying off.

UNDP (2016) Badin is a poor district, during 2014-15, 77.2 percent people are identified as multidimensionality poor, with the intensity of 53.8 percent. Detail in table-1.

TABLE-1
MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX BADIN

Year	Multidimensional Poverty Index	Incidences (H)	Intensity (A)
2004-05	0.410	76.70%	55.20%
2006-07	0.468	89.70%	55.80%
2008-09	0.436	84.30%	61.40%
2010-11	0.460	58.90%	47.50%
2012-13	0.477	93.00%	59.40%
2014-15	0.433	77.20%	53.80%

Source: Multidimensional Poverty in Pakistan (2016), P&D, Pakistan, UNDP
H=% of people who are identified as multi-dimensionally poor or the poverty headcount
A=average % of dimensions (Education, Health, Standard of Living) in which poor people are deprived

Government of Sindh through Reform Support Unit disbursed from 2400 to 3600 PKR per student per annum as stipend1 during 2009-10 to 0.37 million girl students. Moreover, a bill namely "Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013" is passed during February 2013 under this bill, all the children aged five to sixteen are to provide free and compulsory education[2] but the dropout rate at primary level in Sindh is 50 percent (Boys 49 percent and Girls 50 percent)[3]. There are organizations like "The Citizen Foundation and Sindh Education Foundation" etc. are working in Badin and giving primary education along with free books, schools bags and stationery to students but dropout rate is still alarming.

The net enrolment rates at the primary level show that Badin is still far from the target. The policy failure of the past fifty years in attaining universal primary education justifies a careful review, one aspect of

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[1] http://www.rsu-sindh.gov.pk/units/girlsStipend.php
[2] http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.XIV%20of%202013.pdf
[3] Alif Ailan District Education Rankings 2016, SPDI

which is to analyze the socioeconomic factors that determine enrolment in primary schools, and, with their help, come up with policy options and a viable strategy to achieve the objective. Socio-cultural factors and general beliefs of the people must be explored and assessed to find out their influence on the decision making of local people while enrolling their children to primary schools.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study is planned to identify and assess cultural and other social factors, influencing dropout rate of children in primary schools in District Badin. This study also plans to analyze the interdependence and correlation of these variables with dropout rate using different statistical techniques to find out how these factors affect the enrolment and dropout rate of school going children at primary school level in district Badin.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE
1) To identify and assess cultural and other social factors, influencing enrolment and/or dropout rate of children in primary schools in the study area.
2) To analyze the impact cultural and other social factors on enrolment and drop-out rates of children in primary schools in the study area.
3) To suggest policy recommendations regarding education policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies carried out during the last two decades have isolated several economic factors influencing school enrolment but the effect of social and cultural factors on enrolment /dropout of children in primary education in context of District Badin has seldom been addressed.

Karanu *et.al.,* (2015) studied the socio-cultural and economic factors effecting primary school enrolment in Kenya found that socio-cultural and economic factors have significant effect on enrolment rate and causing parents not to enroll the children to primary schools and withdrawing them from primary schools before completion of education.

Bilqees & Saqib (2004) studied the dropout rates and interschool movement and expressed that though there was some betterment in the adult literacy in Pakistan but the goal of universal primary education could not be achieved due to high drop-out rates and low enrolment rates. The enrolled students could not be retained despite many programs and efforts of the government. The government's educational system had flaws and weakness that were never been addressed for the improvement in the primary education in Pakistan especially in Sindh, like teachers' absenteeism and incompetency, poverty and other socio-cultural factors.

The study analyzed the factors that pressurize students to leave regular education, their movement from private to public schools and back by using data from Pakistan Socio-economic survey. Logit regression model was used and found that the children from lowest income quintile of the sample has the highest dropout rate which was 24.2 percent, children of the second income quintile has drop of 22.9 percent, children of the third income quintile has dropout of 23.7 percent, children of fourth income quintile has dropout rate of 23 percent while the richest income quintile has dropout rate of 18.8 percent. These results shatter the belief that poverty is the only main reason for the children to leave primary education. Gender, geographical location and socio-cultural norms have their own importance in the decision of a family to get the children out of school leaving education and put them to work either at home or to any employment to support the family. The studies observed that dropout rate from private schools are much lower than of government schools. The reason may the environment, quality of education and many other. Children of the educated parent have lesser chance to dropout from school education than the children of low or uneducated parents. There are higher chances of children to move from government school to private school with increase in parents' income.

This study has explored many areas but social and economic factors remain unexplored which need to be further studied.

Memon, J. A. (2006) explored the social factors influencing girls' primary education in rural areas of Sindh collected data from of 384 teachers from 125 schools of using questionnaire and interview. The data was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative techniques like frequency tables, t-test, chi square. The study found that teachers' gender, age, marital status, experience, medium of teaching, residence has no difference of views. The parents have positive effect on the education of their girls if they are encouraging, literate, and help their girls toward education. Societies like political and influential persons have positive effect on the enrolment of the girls in primary education. The study further discovered that facilities moderately positive trend the opinion on the girls' primary education availability of playground, academic freedom, teachers' parents' relations, female trained teachers, distance between residence and school. The study observed negative trend on girls' primary education of unavailability of electricity, drinking water. Further the study concluded that in the province of Sindh female primary education is facing problems of lack of facilities and trained teachers in primary schools. The location of these schools is distant from the students

and curriculum taught doesn't fulfill the requirements of these female students of rural areas. The socio-cultural factors like early marriage system, feudal system, religious obstacles influence that low enrolment and high drop-out rate.

G. F. Laghari, A. Abro & M. Y. Jamali (2013) states that on the issue of dropout, the stake holders hold each other responsible. 80 percent of the Parents blame teachers and education officers for high dropout rate. They say that harsh attitude of teachers and weak supervision of officers of education department made the children leave the school. 88 percent of the Teachers believe parents of the students have no or are less interest in education of their children that cause the children to leave schooling permanently, instead the parents prefer their children to work for earning than learning in school. 66 percent of the Education Officers claim that school teachers and parents of students are equally responsible for de-motivating students from higher education which cause high dropout rate. 99 percent of the Students were of the view that parents, teachers and education officers were not or less cooperative with students that resulted into dropout of students. The researchers in their efforts could not analyze the causes / reasons of high dropout rate prevailing in Sindh.

On the same time the education has many dimension as various studies describe, educating people brings a positive change in the social issues like terrorism, child labour and other crimes by lowering poverty when people are unable to fulfil their basic need of life they turn to crimes to get what they want (Kruger & Malečková, 2003; Fabre & Augersaud-Veron, 2004).

Babatunde & Adefabi (2005) Education has economic targets along with many other targets, education has positive effect on the economic growth of any society, it increases the employment opportunities, improves health facilities, reduces fertility and poverty level, improves technological development and helps in political stability.

METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional study based on primary and secondary data, the secondary data is used to establish the socio-cultural factors and beliefs of the people of study area. It is also used to find out the prevailing conditions of primary education and socioeconomic condition of the people. Sample size for primary data is determined by using method expressed by Poate & Daplyn (1993). Sample size of 150 is used to collected data using questionnaire from parents of children of school going age, using multistage cluster sampling. Interviews of the teachers,

students and public of the study area were also conducted to have in-depth knowledge of their socio-cultural and economic conditions.

District Badin of Sindh province, which is among the poorest districts of the province. The dropout ratio in Badin is 70 percent[4]. Sample was selected from all Talukas of district Badin, namely Badin, Talhar, Matli, Tando Bago and Golarchi (Shaheed Fazil Rahu).

Multistage Cluster Sampling is used to select the representative sample size. Ten Union Councils (UCs) are selected purposively from the list of 49 UCs, two from each of five Talukas of district Badin, from which 150 Parents of school going children (PSC) are selected randomly, 15 parents of children of school going age from each UC. The multistage cluster sampling method is adopted because of two reasons: (1) It is assumed that there are variations in socio-cultural factors amongst the parents of children of school going age across the UCs and (2) The study was highly constrained by limited time, resources available and poor communication and weather conditions in the study area, which may include hard weather, poor infrastructure like roads, transports, etc.

TABLE-2
DISTRICT BADIN MULTISTAGE SAMPLING

Talukas	No of Union Councils selected	No of PSC Selected	Total Sample Size proposed
Matli	2	15	30
Talhar	2	15	30
Badin	2	15	30
Tando Bago	2	15	30
Golarchi (Shaheed Fazil Rahu)	2	15	30
	10	75	150

RESEARCH SURVEY

Data collected through journals' articles are assessed using spreadsheet like MS Excel and Word processors like MS Word. While the data collected through questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science 20 (SPSS) through scatter plots, Pearson's correlation, multiple regression and descriptive statistics. Results of the study would help the policy makers to take appropriate measure for the betterment of the poor community of Sindh.

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[4] First Five Year Education Development Plan (2005-09) BRDO.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

      Previous research studies of the local area were referred to find out the important / main social and cultural factors influencing primary education, some of these research works are summarized as under:

TABLE-3
SOCIAL/CULTURAL FACTORS IN VARIOUS STUDIES

Researcher	Research Work	Determinants of Social or cultural factors influencing enrolment/dropout rate
Jamil Ahmed Memon 2006	Determination of social factors influencing girls' primary education in rural areas of Sindh, a research studies	Poverty, shortage of female teachers, early marriage system, parents' illiteracy, feudalistic structure of society, religious obstacles, harsh attitude of teachers, absenteeism among teachers, inadequate training and salary of teachers, transportation, female teacher security, negative social attitude of society for female education,
Dawn, March 14, 2010.	Factors influencing school effectiveness in Pakistan	Inadequate resources, rapid population growth, tribal constraints, diverse languages, gender segregation,
Imran Ashraf Toor and Rizwana Parveen (2012)	Factors Influencing Girls' Primary Enrolment in Pakistan	age of the child, parents' schooling particularly the mother, income of the household head, distance to school
Iqbal Ahmad, *et.al.,* (March 2013)	Analysis of the problems of primary education System in Pakistan: critical review of literature	Parochial feudal and state politicians, corrupt bureaucracy, authoritarian regimes, fragile civil society and weak democracy
Hafiz Muhammad H.M. Inamullah (2011)	Factors adversely affecting the progress of primary education in the rural areas of Pakhtunkhwa	Lack of school facilities, lack of finances, administrative obstacles, harsh attitude of teachers, no association of parents and teachers, interest of students, lack of awareness about education, low status of primary school teacher, child labour, lack of parents' interest, political interference, no performance evaluation of teachers, high student teacher ratio,

RESEARCH SURVEY

In the interviews with the public and teachers of district Badin, they were asked the question "*What factors do you consider hinder children from going to school or influence them to drop out from school during primary school?*"

The responses of the interviews are summarized as under:

1. Awareness of Society about importance of Education.

2. System of Education (a) Schools are unable to attract kids to class, (b) Non-merit selection of teachers resulting poor quality of education delivered, absenteeism of teachers, (c) Ghost schools, (d) Ghost teachers, (e) Improper planning e.g. student/teacher ratio somewhere there are 50 students and only one teacher, on the other hand some classes only have a few students.

3. *Government's Priority:* Less allocation of budget on education.

4. *Compulsory Primary Education:* Earlier the parents who did not enroll their kids or whose kids remained absent in primary school were forced through local police.

5. No scholarships or incentives for the students.

6. Girl children are not allowed to leave home instead they are encouraged to do household chores and help with their mothers.

7. Female children have to face violence or kidnapping or harassment on their way to school.

8. *Feudalism:* Landlords bond people by lending money and then their kids have to work for the landlord to pay off debt.

9. *Cultural* Societal Beliefs.

   a. Only boys /girls are not allowed to get an education.

10. *Population*: If a family has more children then only one or two get education while the rest stay at home and work.

11. *Societal Pressure:* Relatives and neighbours discourage parents of the   kids to withdraw their kids from education.

12. *Awareness of Society:* Society in general is not aware of the importance of modern education.

13. *Awareness of individual:* People of the society don't provide any help or encouragement to the parents or kids getting education.

14. No follow up from the school about absent students.

15. Carelessness of the parents not following up if their kid is attending school/classes or not.

16. Elders of the village and privileged class do not want the peasants to follow education and their children not allowed to keep.

From the study of various previous researches, interview of the parents and teachers and other members of society various issues were highlighted mostly related to economy and financial constraints, at some

times the administrative issues were also highlighted, but the study is more concerned about social and cultural factors and beliefs of people influencing primary education.

Due to time and resource constraints, it is not possible to test all the factors which are pointed out in the previous studies and interview thus the nine variables are chosen which are considered important, and are turned into questions and a survey is carried out.

TABLE-4
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES SELECTION PROCESS

IVs	Description	Remarks
IV-1	Are you in favour of education	Attitude of the respondent toward education
IV-2	Do you feel safe sending your child to school	Safety of children, security situation of the surroundings and environment of school. Etc.
IV-3	Educated Person in neighbourhood	Social composition, as educated neighbourhood is a motivation and encourage to get educated
IV-4	Community in favour of education	Community's attitude toward education promotes enrolment and discourages families to quit education.
IV-5	Influential persons in favour of education	In Sindh Waderas (Landlords) with feudalistic structure strongly influence the people of their area.
IV-6	Culture permits you to send your children to school	Badin is an area of diverse cultures with Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Ahmadis and each has its own traditions and cultures, how do these effect the decisions about education.
IV-7	Feel hindrance in sending Children to school	Any particular irk in family's decisions about education of their children.
IV-8	Belief allows you to send your Children to school	Belief is very important factor when it comes to deciding about education of girls.
IV-9	Societal pressure while sending Children to school	Extended family have a very strong influence on the decision making in Sindh.

RESEARCH STUDY

This study is planned to analyze if each of the independent variable (IV) i.e. social, cultural factors and beliefs have a linear relationship with the dependent variable (DV) i.e. number of children dropout. Linear relationship between IVs and DV is analyzed using a scatter plots analysis with the help of SPSS. A scatter plot is generated separately using one independent variable and dependent variable. The Pearson's

correlation coefficient is also measured for linear correlation between IVs and DV and results of both analyses are summarized below in Table-5.

TABLE 1
SCATTER PLOT ANALYSIS OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLE SOCIAL & CULTURAL
VARIABLES AND DEPENDENT VARIABLE NO. OF CHILDREN DROPOUT

IVs	Independent Variable	Scatter Plot Analysis				Pearson's Correlation		
		Linear Relation	+ve / -ve	Weak/ strong	R2	Confidence Level	Pearson's correlation	Sig: 2 tailed
IV-1	Are you in favour of education	Yes	+ve	Weak	0.018	95%	0.133	0.105
IV-2	Do you feel safe sending your child to school	Yes	-ve	Strong	0.071	95%	-0.267**	0.001
IV-3	Educated Person in neighbourhood	Yes	-ve	Strong	0.075	95%	-0.274**	0.001
IV-4	Community in favour of education	Yes	-ve	Weak	0.049	95%	-0.220**	0.007
IV-5	Influential persons in favour of education	Yes	-ve	Weak	0.03	95%	-0.175*	0.033
IV-6	Culture permits you to send your children to school	Yes	-ve	Strong	0.074	95%	-0.273**	0.004
IV-7	Feel hindrance in sending Children to school	Yes	+ve	Strong	0.085	95%	0.291**	0.000
IV-8	Belief allows you to send your Children to school	Yes	-ve	Strong	0.056	95%	-0.236**	0.004
IV-9	Societal pressure while sending Children to school	Yes	-ve	Strong	0.134	95%	-0.366	0.000

Research Survey
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The **TABLE 1** represents the summary of scatter plots, it explains that respondents' attitude towards education which is IV-1 has a weak relationship with DV in the same manner the IV-4 and IV-5 have weak relationship with DV while rest of the variables have a strong relationship with DV.

Each IVs correlation with DV was analyzed through Pearson's correlation coefficient and results in **TABLE 1** state the all the IVs have significant linear correlation with the DV except IV-1 and IV-9.

The study has more than one independent variables that influence the dependent variable therefore multiple linear regression is the most suitable way to measure the impact between these factors drop-out rates, being independent or explanatory variables, may be affected by the multiple dependent variables of Socio-cultural factors and beliefs.

$$DOR = \beta_0 + \beta_i \Sigma X_i + \beta_i \Sigma D_i + \varepsilon_i \qquad \forall\ i = 1, 2, 3, \ldots, n \qquad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (1)$$

Whereas:

ΣX_i = the sum of '**independent or explanatory variables'** representing the impact of the multiple Socio-cultural factors and belief on the drop-out rates of children in primary schools.

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Σ Di = the sum of '**dummy variables'** representing socio-cultural constraints to primary education.

εi = the **stochastic, disturbance or error term**

The above equations (1) can be expanded and re-written as follows:

$$DOR = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \ldots + \beta_n X_n + \beta_i \Sigma Di + \varepsilon_i \ldots(2)$$

Whereas:

DOR = Drop-Out Rate, dependent variable.

X_1 =Are you in favour of education?

X_2 =Do you feel safe sending your child to school?

X_3 =Educated Persons in neighbourhood.

X_4 =Community in favour of education.

X_5 =Influential persons in favour of education.

X_6 =Culture permits you to send your children to school.

X_7 =Feel hindrance in sending Children to school.

X_8 =Belief allows you to send your Children to school.

X_9 =Societal pressure while sending Children to school.

The output of Multiple Linear Regression using SPSS to analyze the impact of IVs i.e. cultural and other social factors on DV i.e. enrolment and drop-out rates of children in primary schools in the study area is as under:

TABLE-6

MLRA IVS "SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS" DV "NO. OF CHILDREN DROPOUT"

Coefficients a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.168	1.219		2.598	.010
Are you in favour of education	.075	.110	.048	.682	.496
Do you feel safe sending your kid to school	-.298	.064	-.334	-4.662	**.000**
How many educated persons are in your neighbourhood	-.101	.049	-.158	-2.088	**.039**
Your community is in favour of sending kids to school	.359	.593	.089	.606	.545
Influential persons are in favour of sending girls to school	1.179	.524	.319	2.250	**.026**
Your culture permits you to send your kids to school	-.657	.475	-.178	-1.385	.168
Do you feel any hindrance while sending your kid to school	.294	.123	.363	2.398	**.018**
Your belief allows you to send your kids to school	-1.490	.862	-.239	-1.729	**.086**
Do you feel pressure from society while sending your kid to school	-.193	.070	-.222	-2.763	**.006**

a. Dependent Variable: No. of Kids dropout

The results also show that six independent variables "IV-2, IV-3, IV-5, IV-7, IV-8 and IV-9" have a p-value of less than 10 percent so they are significantly related to DV while the three variables "IV-1, IV-4, IV-6" have p-value greater than 10 percent so they are not significantly related to DV.

The regression equation for the model is:

$$\hat{y} = 3.168 + .075X_1 - .298X_2 - .101X_3 + .359X_4 + 1.179X_5 - .657X_6 + .294X_7 - 1.490X_8 - .193X_9$$

Each of $\boldsymbol{\beta_1}$ tells us the average change in the DV given a unit change in X_i holding all the X_j held constant.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Socio-cultural factors and belief have a significant relationship with the dropout rate.
2.   The results of the study show that *respondent attitude and community's attitude toward education of children* are not significantly related to dropout rate of the children in primary school in the study area while *"Do you feel safe sending your kid to school, How many educated persons are in your neighbourhood, Influential persons are in favour of sending girls to school, Do you feel any hindrance while sending your kid to school, Your belief allows you to send your kids to school, Do you feel pressure from society while sending your kid to school"* are significantly related to the dropout rate of the children in Badin.
3.   Awareness raising of the people living in Badin would help in improving the dropout rate of the children in primary schools.
4.   Influential persons of the local areas e.g. landlords should be involved in the process of awareness raising about primary education.
5.   Proper campaign should be carried out in favour of education to change the negative socio-cultural and religious beliefs of the masses.
6.   The cultural and traditional beliefs of the society can be diverted in favour of education only through continuous and constant media intervention.

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