DISCREPANCY BETWEEN HIGH AND LOW LEVEL OF OPINION AMONG PARENTS OF MATIALI AND MALBAZAR BLOCKS OF WEST BENGAL TOWARDS UNIVERSALISATION ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Various organizations of the Globe have initiated various schemes and programmes to encourage and educate in each and every corner of the world. Education is a fundamental right of human development; hence the present study was conducted on the tea garden parents of West Bengal. This study analyses the roles, responsibilities and functions of parents in the education of their children and also study the perception of the parents and experiences of the participating children, dropouts and school completers in this education process. For the purpose of the present study, the information/data collected from the sample households based on the parents of dropout children and their opinion towards the present day system of education. This study conducted in two blocks (Malbazar & Matiali) of Jalpaiguri, a Sarva Shiksha Mission (SSM) district of West Bengal since 2002 to evaluate and assess the reasons behind Dropout Children. To identify the effects, we use structured schedule containing sixteen independent variables viz. Age of Father (X_1), Age of Mother (X_2), Father's Education (X_3), Mother's Education (X_4), Father's Occupation (X_5), Mother's Occupation (X_6), Family Size (X_7), Monthly Family Income (X_8), Home Environment (X_9), Climatic Factor (X_{10}), Monthly Expenditure on Education (X_{11}),

Attitude towards Education (X_{12}), Financial Condition (X_{13}), Social Interaction (X_{14}), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) and Use of Mass media($X16$) were found to bear substantial impact against dependent variable Reasons behind the Dropout (Y) of the guardians of students. This study is to construct a scientific, effective and very operational statistical model to analyses the roles, responsibilities and functions of parents in the educational process of their children with the Correlation Coefficient, Multiple and Step down Regression Analysis. This study confirms that such model would be one of the good diagnostic prescriptions for the segregation between high and low level of opinion among parents.

Keywords: Parents' Literacy, SSA, Mid-day meal, Dropout, UEE, and Regression Effect.

Introduction

Education plays a significant task in building of the Nation and is an instrument in bringing about a change in the society as a whole. For quality improvement in education for mass, every citizen has to be covered, without any disparity between the haves and the have-nots, the rural and the urban, the linguistic and geographical regions and more importantly between the genders. Although the number of schools has increased since independence, the number of dropouts at the end of schooling is still quite high. If illiteracy has to be eliminated, the school drop-out rate has to be minimized and quality education has to be imparted, then correspondingly the No. of schools and teachers has to be increased multifold. The constitution of India was framed in 1950 with an objective to guarantee social, political and economic justice to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. It was well visualized that, development in education along with other allied sectors would play a vital role in bringing about desirable changes in the country. It was planned that the backward sections of the Indian population i.e. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes must be provided opportunity in education to develop critical thinking and self determination and contribute to the progress of the country. These promises laid the foundation for the attempt of Universalization of Primary Education in India. In 1950, target was set to universalize primary education among the entire eligible category of children within the age group of 6-14 years of age within a span of 10 years. During that period a great deal of expansion in education facilities was achieved. However, universalization was still a distant dream.

Education is the cornerstone of development. The Indian Constitution identifies for special consideration certain ethnic minority groups, traditionally referred to as tribes who constitute around 8.2 per cent of the total population of the country. Education among tribal is given highest priority for the simple reason that it is key to socioeconomic development of the tribal. Education enables them to perform their role to be useful citizen in democracy. Despite the sincere and concerted efforts by the government for the overall development of the scheduled tribes, they are still far behind in almost all the standard parameters of development, including education. The reason for the educational backwardness of tribal people are varied and complex. There have been many studies and reports on different aspects of tribal education in India, using both primary and secondary data. A brief review of some of the studies undertaken in the recent past is presented below.

When parents fail to be involved in education of their children to specified levels, the law considers that to be parental negligence. According to **Kafas (2009),** parental negligence is the failure of a parent in meeting a child's basic, physical or psychological needs likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Kafas (2009) argues that if a parent fails to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing plus offering protection for the child from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment then that particular parent has neglected his or her duty. A parent should be able to meet educational, emotional, psychological, physical, material, social and spiritual needs of the child under his or her care **(Chrispell & River, 2001).**

Fredenberg and Ruglls (2007) postulated that the factors that lead to drop out also include low parental education, disruptive behaviour conduct, not liking school, harsh disciplines and having friends and siblings who are dropouts. The plight of poverty stricken students is exasperated by stringent school policies that pertain the payment of fees, attitudes by teachers and fellow students, shortage of food, school wear and stationery, (Moyo, 2013). Sometimes pupils' emotions are shattered by experiencing such harsh and unsupportive environments and will finally opt to drop out of school. In addition research has this to say, dropout rates particularly correlate with high poverty rates, poor school attendance, poor academic performance, grade retention (i.e., being held back), and disengagement from school **(Hammond, Linton, Smink & Drew, 2007).**

Hountenvilli and Conway (2008) conducted a research on how parental involvement impacts on academic achievement. The results showed that parental involvement in education has a strong positive effect on student achievements.

(Hara & Burke, 1998) Says that Parent involvement in a child's early education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance,

Bogunovic Blanka and Polovina Nada (2007) found in a study that the family stimulation is the resultant of the influence of cultural and educational profile of the family and active parental attitudes regarding education and attainment of their children. They examined the students' attitudes towards schooling, and to obtain answers to the question: which stimulating aspects of family context are the most predictable for the development of educational aspirations, i.e. attitudes towards school and gaining knowledge, educational interests and plans for further education. The sample consisted of 1.464 eighth-grade sample students, aged 15, from 34 primary schools in Serbia. The data were collected by the use of questionnaires filled in by the students and school principals. The results indicated a trend of interrelatedness of cognitively and educationally favorable conditions within the family and positive attitudes towards school, attainment, high aspirations and cognitive and intellectual interests for out-of school activities.

Huisman, Rani, and Smits, (2009) studied the role of socio-economic and cultural factors, and of characteristics of the educational infrastructure on primary school enrolment, The sample constituted 70,000 children living in 439 districts of 26 states of India. The results indicated that most of the variation in educational enrolment (around 70%) is explained by factors at the household level, of which socio-economic factors are most important. And the result also indicated that, in the cities schooling decisions are hardly influenced by supply-side factors. In rural areas, however, these factors do play an important role. If there are fewer schools or teachers, or if the local culture is more patriarchal, rural children (in particular girls) participate substantially less. The major finding of this respect was that in rural areas inequalities between socio-economic status groups are lower if more schools and teachers are available.

From the study of Das and Deb (2016) in relation to the isolation between high and low level of opinion among parents about Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan conducted in Uttar Dinajpur and Kolkata Districts of West Bengal, it revealed that Out of the 18 variables measured, simply Additional boost up given by RMSA (31.14 per cent), Achievement of UEE (31.03 per cent), Role of Mid-day meal (14.30 per cent), Sizes of family (8.34 per cent), Age of the respondents (5.94 per cent), and Reasons behind private tuition (5.35 percent) in a cluster

contributed more towards the total inequity in order to differentiate high and low level of opinion among parents about Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, a step towards universalisation of secondary education.

Methodology and Area of Study

The present study is based on intensive individual survey conducted during June – Decembre, 2014, in one block of the district of Jalpaiguri of the State of West Bengal. The block, namely Malbazar was selected at random, out of 13 blocks in the district (Now 07 Block in Jalpaiguri and another 06 Block in newly setup Alipurduar District). With the help of random sampling method **100 parents** of dropout students were selected from 6 Gram Panchayat (GP) viz. Rungamuttee, Oodlabari, Damdim, Kumlai, Tesimla, Bagracote of the Malbazar (North Circle) Block.

Similar study is based on intensive individual survey in other blocks namely Matiali was selected at random, out of 07 blocks in the district. With the help of random sampling method **100 parents** of dropout students were selected from 5 Gram Panchayat (GP) **viz**. Bidhan Nagar, Indong Matiali, Matiali Hat, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II of the Matiali Block.

The sample size of this study is 200 among parents of primary students. During selection of parents, those guardians were selected whose children were dropped either occasionally, seasonally, or permanently. 05 dropout students were selected from each school on random basis whose parents are the respondents. A structured schedule containing 32 different questions / statements / views / opinion were placed before each respondent parent separately to measure educational standard of parents, their occupation, Family size, Monthly Family Income, Monthly expenditure for education, attitude towards education, use of mass media and to assess the reasons behind the dropout. These set of 32 questions were ultimately formed 16 consequent variables and 01 predictor variable. Here, in order to explore the problem, different statistical methods like correlation, mean, and Mahalanabis D-square analysis method are used to understand the *Reasons behind the Dropout.*

Objective of the study
1. To assess the level of perception on *Dropout* (Y) of guardian.
2. To examine the role of parents' socio-economic and educational background on the Educational process of their children.

3. To assess the socio-personal and attitudinal casual variable viz. Age of Father (X_1), Age of Mother (X_2), Father's Education (X_3), Mother's Education (X_4), Father's Occupation (X_5), Mother's Occupation (X_6), Family Size (X_7), Monthly Family Income (X_8), Home Environment (X_9), Climatic Factor (X_{10}), Monthly Expenditure on Education (X_{11}), Attitude towards Education (X_{12}), Financial Condition (X_{13}), Social Interaction (X_{14}), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) and Use of Mass media(X_{16})

4. To estimate the nature of interdependency between and among the causal and consequent variable as postulated in the above segment.

5. To isolate the causal variable's substantial effect on the Reasons behind the Dropout (Y) out of these 16 causal variables for formulating a strategy of intervening Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE).

6. To assess the level of perception among parents of Malbazar Block of West Bengal from some socio-economic, socio-cultural, and other factors associated with primary school education system.

7. To assess the level of perception among parents of Matiali Block of West Bengal from some socio-economic, socio-cultural, and other factors associated with primary school education system;

8. To identify the factors responsible for the high and low level of perception.

Statistical analysis

To assess the nature and extent of causal factors viz. Age of Father (X_1), Age of Mother (X_2), Father's Education (X_3), Mother's Education (X_4), Father's Occupation (X_5), Mother's Occupation (X_6), Family Size (X_7), Monthly Family Income (X_8), Home Environment (X_9), Climatic Factor (X_{10}), Monthly Expenditure on Education (X_{11}), Attitude towards Education (X_{12}), Financial Condition (X_{13}), Social Interaction (X_{14}), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) and Use of Mass media(X_{16}) were found to bear substantial impact against dependent variable Reasons behind the Dropout (Y), the data as collected through structured schedules were quantified and subsequently statistically analyzed by adopting Mean, Correlation, Discriminatory analysis method and ranking method.

Result and Discussion

Table I: Values of linear discriminate coefficient against 16 causal variables

Variables	Linear Discriminant Coefficient (D^2)
X_1 Age of Father	0.1645786
X_2 Age of Mother	1.8354358
X_3 Father's Education	-1.6243682
X_4 Mother's Education	0.4380219
X_5 Father's Occupation	13.4056236
X_6 Mother's Occupation	-1.2685900
X_7 Family Size	0.1597505
X_8 Monthly Family Income	-.0016620
X_9 Home environment	6.7377958
X_{10} Climatic Factor	73.3072693
X_{11} Monthly Expenditure on Education	0.0660903
X_{12} Attitude towards Education	15.1790410
X_{13} Financial Condition	-2.8182121
X_{14} Social Interaction	3.5974856
X_{15} Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship	16.7630002
X_{16} Use of Mass media	-2.9958799

The Table I shows the D^2 based statistics and its corresponding Linear Discriminant Coefficient of the eighteen variable viz. Age of Father (X_1), Age of Mother (X_2), Father's Education (X_3), Mother's Education (X_4), Father's Occupation (X_5), Mother's Occupation (X_6), Family Size (X_7), Monthly Family Income (X_8), Home Environment (X_9), Climatic Factor (X_{10}), Monthly Expenditure on Education (X_{11}), Attitude towards Education (X_{12}), Financial Condition (X_{13}), Social Interaction (X_{14}), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) and Use of Mass media(X_{16}).

Table II: Means, their differences and 'r' values of variables with respect to perceptional levels.

Variables	High Level N$_1$= 100 (Mat) Mean Value	Low Level N$_2$= 100(Mal) Mean Value	Mean Difference (MD) Value	'r' Value
Age of Father	40.66	**41.21**	**0.55**	-.0766
Age of Mother	**35.68**	32.78	**2.9**	-.0347
Father's Education	**2.87**	**2.76**	**0.11**	**333****
Mother's Education	**2.23**	**2.14**	**0.09**	**.1421***
Father's Occupation	**1.32**	1.19	**0.13**	-.1138
Mother's Occupation	**1.65**	0.74	**0.91**	-.0008
Family Size	**4.89**	4.13	**0.76**	-.0832
Monthly Family Income	**4951**	**4063.5**	**887.5**	**-.1428***
Home Environment	**2.96**	2.19	**0.77**	.0254
Climatic Factor	4.93	**4.97**	**0.04**	-.0874
Monthly Expenditure on Education	**74.07**	**107.75**	**33.68**	**.1710***
Attitude towards Education	3.43	**4.03**	**0.6**	-.0123
Financial Condition	1.1	**1.43**	**0.33**	.0443
Social Interaction	**2.16**	**1.95**	**0.21**	**.1464***
Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship	**0.03**	**0.19**	**0.16**	**.1492***
Mass media	**1.7**	1.59	**0.11**	-.0777

Critical value 0.05 level one tail + or - 0.125 *Significant at 5% level

Critical value 0.01 level two tail + or - 0.194 ** Significant at 1% level

Table II shows the results as above give the mean values and their differences with significance of 16 variables for high and low level of retentively among guardians of Matiali block and Malbazar block of the district of Jalpaiguri of West Bengal respectively. The high

perceptional level means the higher involvement and higher understanding about the overall activities of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and reason behind Dropout and on the other hand low perceptional level means the lower involvement and superficial understanding about the activities of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and reason behind Dropout. Here, in this table, high level of perception always does not necessarily to carry the high value and the same is true for the low level perception also and it does not always carry the low value.

Out of these sixteen variables, 06 variables viz. Father's Education (X_3), Mother's Education (X_4), Monthly Family Income (X_8), Expenditure on Education (X_{11}), Social Interaction (X_{14}), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) show their significant level of impact in differentiating the high and low level of perception among the guardians of dropout students of elementary level of Matiali and Malbazar Block of Jalpaiguri district.

The mean value of the variable like Father's Education (X_3), of two blocks Matiali and Malbazar are 2.87 and 2.76 respectively and Mother's Education (X_4) of two blocks Matiali and Malbazar are 2.23 and 2.14 respectively. It is not alone sufficient in explaining differences between high and low level of perception. Although Guardians of Matiali block have the higher mean value of their educational qualifications than their counterparts of Malbazar block. Higher educational qualifications mean the higher educational achievements which enable them in understanding the problems of Primary education system. The coefficient of correlation between the level of perception and the variables X_3 and X_4 shows the strong significance.

Guardians of surrounding Matiali block got the more opportunity due to geographical, natural and, social position than their counterpart of the other block like Malbazar. [Hence, the mean value of X_8 variable of Matiali block is 4951 and Malbazar block is 4063.5]. So, more interactional experiences make possible to perceive subjects associated with the primary education to realize the basic quandaries of elementary education system of the concerned block. Hence, the variable Monthly Family Income (X_8) has negative impact on the level of perception about dropout to discriminate between its high and low value.

The mean value of Expenditure on Education (X_{11}) in Matiali block is 74.07 whereas that in Malbazar block is 107.75 which indicate the thinking of guardians that the children of Classes primary section of Malbazar block are high income group. It means guardian of Malbazar more conscious about importance of primary education. It indicates that guardian of Malbazar block engaged in helping their children to batter education. The positive correlation value of the

variable indicates that the high mean value of need of Monthly Expenditure on Education(X_{11}), in Malbazar block would contribute the high level of perception in realizing the operational area of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Mean value variable Social Interaction (X_{14}) of Matiali block is high (2.16) than the Malbazar block (1.95). It signifies the fact of causes and availability of social issues to be addressed. That is why guardians of Matiali were socially aware.

The variables like Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) shows significant result in this point of view and the mean value for Malbazar block is high (0.19) than mean value of parents of Matiali block (0.03). This mean value shows the parents of Malbazar block is more use of forest/tea garden than the parents of Matiali block. So the parents of Malbazar block who ultimately controlling their financial hardship with the help of tea garden and forest are.   Hence, the variable (X_{15}) has positive impact on the level of perception about dropout to discriminate between its high and low value.

Analysis of variables like lack of present primary education system shows significant result in this point of view and the mean value for Matiali block is high than mean value of parents of Malbazar block. This mean value shows the parents of Matiali block more aware than the parents of Malbazar block on the point of shortfall of present primary education system.

Table - III: Percentage Contribution of Individual Character to the Total Distance Measurement.

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Code No.	Variables Coefficient	Mean Difference	Coefficient x Mean Difference	Percentage Contribution	Rank
X_1	0.1645786	**0.55**	0.090518	0.26	
X_2	**1.8354358**	**-2.9**	**-5.32276**	**15.53**	**III**
X_3	-1.6243682	**-0.11**	0.178681	0.52	
X_4	0.4380219	**-0.09**	-0.03942	0.11	
X_5	**13.4056236**	**-0.13**	**-1.74273**	**5.08**	**VII**
X_6	**-1.2685900**	**-0.91**	**1.154417**	**3.37**	**IX**

X_7	0.1597505	**0.76**	0.12141	0.35	
X_8	-.0016620	887.5	-1.47503	4.3	VIII
X_9	6.7377958	0.77	5.188103	15.14	II
X_{10}	73.3072693	0.04	2.932291	8.55	IV
X_{11}	0.0660903	33.68	2.225921	6.49	VI
X_{12}	15.1790410	0.6	9.107425	26.57	I
X_{13}	-2.8182121	0.33	-0.93001	2.71	X
X_{14}	3.5974856	0.21	0.755472	2.2	XI
X_{15}	16.7630002	0.16	2.68208	7.82	V
X_{16}	-2.9958799	**0.11**	-0.32955	0.96	

Table III showed the percentage contribution of each variable to the total discrimination. Out of the 16 variables considered only Attitude towards Education X_{12} (26.57%), Home Environment X_9 (15.14%), Age of Mother X_2 (15.53%), Climatic Factor X_{10} (8.55%), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship X_{15} (7.82%), Monthly Expenditure on Education X_{11}(6.49%), Father's Occupation X_5(5.08%), Monthly Family Income X_8 (4.3%), Mother's Occupation X_6 (3.37%), Financial Condition X_{13} (2.71%) in a cluster contributed more towards the total discrimination. Hence, Attitude towards Education, Home Environment, Age of Mother, Climatic Factor, Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship, Monthly Expenditure on Education, Father's Occupation, Monthly Family Income, Mother's Occupation and Financial Condition have been found to be key discriminators and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan /reason behind Dropout should pay attention on these factors in dealing with the problem of high or low perceptional level among guardians.

Conclusion

Education has a very wide connotation as it concerns every individual in the society. The process of learning is the vehicle by which the individual is changed from a bundle of potentialities to an active organism with ideas, habits, skills, preferences and other distinguishing personality characters. The research problem of the present study was to isolate the factors which are largely responsible between High and Low Level of opinion among Parents of West Bengal about Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan /reason behind Dropout. In an attempt to search the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors resulting the perceptional level among the

guardians at the operational stage of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan /reason behind Dropout some prominent factors such as Age of Father (X_1), Age of Mother (X_2), Father's Education (X_3), Mother's Education (X_4), Father's Occupation (X_5), Mother's Occupation (X_6), Family Size (X_7), Monthly Family Income (X_8), Home Environment (X_9), Climatic Factor (X_{10}), Monthly Expenditure on Education (X_{11}), Attitude towards Education (X_{12}), Financial Condition (X_{13}), Social Interaction (X_{14}), Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship (X_{15}) and Use of Mass media(X_{16}) have been identified. It indicates while low level perception is the flamboyant consequence, observable in the micro-school environment, many more causes are enrooted into the subsystem like   Attitude towards Education, Home Environment, Age of Mother, Climatic Factor, Role of forest/tea garden in controlling financial hardship, Monthly Expenditure on Education, Father's Occupation, Monthly Family Income, Mother's Occupation and Financial Condition and even attitudinal behavior of the parents. To deeply understand positively inter-related subsystems and system of primary education, the perceptional level of the guardians and the fulfillment of the objectives as laid down in SSA, many more factors could have been emerged as path finder in such type of studies.

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