

**A STUDY ON SCHOOL DROPOUT AT KEEZHAKASAKUDY  
VILLAGE, KARAİKAL DISTRICT, U.T. OF PUDUCHERRY,  
INDIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

Students face with many academic and social challenges especially when they move on to middle school level. It is in this stage the students are to learn variety of multifarious stuffing and making it more challenging and this demands problem solving skills. Those students who find it difficult to cope up with the situation and those who give it a try and fail consider dropping out of school. The situation in fishing village is very common especially the scope of being employed is very high. There are a few schooling issues also related to the cause of dropout.

Keywords: Dropout, Academic challenges, problem solving, fishing village.

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## INTRODUCTION

### What Is Drop Out?

In the 1960s, "dropping out" was used to mean withdrawing from established society, especially because of disillusionment with conventional values. It is a term commonly associated with the 1960s counterculture and with hippies and communes.

**School dropout** can also be termed as **Early School Leaver** which means leaving a group for practical reasons, necessities or disillusionment with the system from which the individual in question leaves. Most commonly, dropping out refers to a student quitting school before he or she graduates. It cannot always be ascertained that a student has dropped out, as he or she may stop attending without terminating enrolment.

Reasons are varied and may include: to find work, avoid bullying, family emergency, poor grades, depression, bad environment, lack of freedom, and boredom from lack of lessons relevant to the world of work. There are many other reasons why students leave school early. Family problems are one cause. If parents are divorced, no-one may be taking responsibility for the child. If parents are uneducated, there may be little encouragement to do homework or to stay in school. Financial factors are also important. Some students want to work in order to support their families. In contrast, others may have family businesses and not see any benefit in obtaining a high school certificate. Perhaps the main reason why students drop out is for academic reasons. For many students, school is stifling and boring. The curriculum does not challenge them or grab their attention and they are unable to be creative. Others have learning difficulties that need specialist help.

The problem of school drop-out can be reduced by using several strategies. First, educational authorities have to work closely with parents to monitor attendance. They need to follow up and determine the reasons for a student's absence. In some countries, parents are fined if the children are not attending. Schools also need social workers who can respond to family problems. A second approach is to implement changes in the curriculum so that school is more interesting for students at risk of dropping out. This could mean new methods of teaching or new subjects and facilities in the school. Thirdly, some financial help could be made available to encourage students with financial problems to stay in school.

As can be seen, there is no one solution to the problem of school drop-outs. Educational authorities, parents and schools need to work closely together to find the reason for each student's decision to leave school and to try to do as much as possible to encourage them to stay in the system.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

The Field Work trainees were placed in Keezhakasakudy village in Karaikal District. It is a fishing village dominated by nothing but only fishing and related activities. When the trainees went and had discussions with the village panchayats, senior citizens, women, men, middle aged resident, adolescent girls and boys came across school dropout among all of them. The trainees felt bad about the situation. The Government of India and the state Governments are spending a huge sum of money to educate the future citizens of our nation.

The easiest way to bring the dropouts to school is through the Back to School Programme – Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. The National Policy on Education (1986) placed high priority on early childhood care and education (ECCE). It was considered as a feeder and support programme for primary education. It suggested integration of ECE with other child development programmes, particularly ICDS. ICDS thus, has become a major plank for providing pre-school education to the poor. In spite of all efforts, the problem of school dropout continues to exist.

Since, the researchers are from Social Work background and were placed in the village for field work activities, strongly believe in the proper identification of the problem to deal with it.

So, the need of this study is from the point of view of genuine concern to address the problem of school dropout in this village. Though the study has been done in a small scale and methodologically may not be representative but certainly would throw some light on the real causes of dropout among school children and would give a basic socio-economic profile of them. Thus, the need for the study arises.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A study conducted by Jayachandran and Usha in 2001, on Taking schools to children: Bhonga Shalas in Thane and Nashik districts came out with the following few remarks. Most child labour of Thane and Nashik districts work in the brick kiln industry. During the slump period, these children would stay at home and were unable to pick up their education. Keeping this in view, mobile schools, run by Vidhayak Sansad (constructive parliament) in association with Shramjeevi Sangathana, were set up at the site of brick kilns near bhongas (temporary huts built by migrant labourers). Examinations are conducted at the end of the session by the Zilla Parishad and certificates are given to these children who were unable to continue their education in regular schools due to the migratory nature of their parents' lifestyle. The teachers mainly reside in the bhonga schools, and besides education they also look after the hygiene of these children.

In another study by Bhutia and Tashi Yangzo in 2006, on Corporal punishment in Chennai schools came out with the following findings that Corporal punishment is a method that has been implemented by schools since times immemorial to enforce discipline among students and it is also used as a means to deter students from committing similar offences in the near future. The present study was done to assess the corporal punishment given in Chennai schools. Data was collected from more than 20 schools by interviewing teachers, students, parents, journalists and school principals in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Interviews with students revealed that corporal punishment was still used in spite of instructions not to use it. But some senior students mentioned that corporal punishment was justified because they felt that most of the juniors were ill disciplined and corporal punishment was the only means to discipline them. Majority of the school principals and teachers mentioned that they did not use corporal punishment at all which was not true. Corporal punishment should be removed from schools and other alternatives like counselling, parents' teacher meetings, making the student learn lessons, and etc. should be preferred.

A study was conducted by Mehta, Salial et al. 2006 entitled The Impact of corporal punishment on school children: a research study in New Delhi. More than 20 schools the team visited, the students actually showed or pointed out the stick with which they were beaten. The most common forms of punishments were hitting with hands and stick, pulling hair and ears, and asking the children to stand for long periods in various positions.

Threatening to be physically violent is also used as a punishment to create fear among children. The team also came across more severe forms of corporal punishment afflicted on children such as being kicked severely, making them starve, tying them with a rope to chairs/ poles followed by beatings, assigning physically, strenuous work both at home and outside, etc. A child often faces a series of punishments for the same / single 'offence'. The team came across a number of cases where the sequence of punishments started with the teacher. The same child was then punished by the head teacher for having 'invited' the punishment. Yet another round of punishment – generally, beating – awaited the same child at home if the parents came to know that she/ he had been punished in school.

Suriakanthi, A., Swaminathan and Mina, in the year 2000 conducted an explorative study in Tamil Nadu on understanding the relationship between qualities of early childhood education and learning competencies of children. The study explored the relationship between various components of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and other family and socio-economic factors on the learning competencies of children, such as perceptual and motor skills, language and cognitive skill, and socio-emotional development. Results revealed that four family characteristics had a significant positive association with children's competencies

(i) fathers' education, (ii) mothers' education, (iii) fathers' occupation and (iv) housing quality.

Kothari, V N in the year 2004, conducted a study on the Challenge of Universalization of elementary education in India. The study was conducted by National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) to explain the elementary education scenario in India through the use of a variety of data sources such as Census, the NSS, NCERT and NFHS surveys. The overall development situation was assessed with respect to gender, age, rural-urban divide, expenditure groups, village amenities, and health status of children. India was classified in the medium human development category. Adult literacy rate was found to be extremely low in India 55.7% in 1998, youth literacy rate was 71%, and enrolment ratio in primary education (1997) was found to be 77.2%. To conclude, it was emphasized that we are far from attaining the goal of universal enrolment of children 6 to 14 years of age. It is even possible that under-nourishment, severe morbidity and physical disability are delaying their entry into school. For girls and for first generation learners school has to become more attractive. Unless we take adequate steps, we as a country are likely to remain stuck at 80%-85% enrolment rates, while most of the developing countries would be heading towards 100% enrolment.

A Study of the extent and causes of dropouts in primary schools in rural Maharashtra with special reference to girl dropouts in Pune came out with the findings that the problem of school dropout has been continually troubling the primary education system not only in India but in other developing countries too. The present study was done to assess the factors that resulted in dropout of school children with gender differentials. The study was conducted in 3 districts of Maharashtra viz Akola, Beed and Bhandara and covered 24 schools in 24 villages. Data was collected through survey and by interviewing parents and community people. All the schools were from Standard I to VII. A majority of schools had enrolment up to 300 or above. Only some schools of Beed district showed an enrolment of 101 to 200. All the schools had a school building which was owned by them as was stated by the headmasters of the schools. Almost all schools had 5 or more classrooms. Of the total 24 schools, only 16 had a playground, 17 schools reported having drinking water source facility, and 14 schools had toilet facilities, of which 10 reported that the condition of toilets was good. All schools

except 4 had benches for the children to sit on, and medical check up had been conducted in all the schools. Medical first aid was available in 18 schools and not available in 6 schools. All schools gave a very good response to the availability of educational and teaching material. Books, charts, posters, science kit, mathematics boxes, graphs, sports material and blackboards were available in all the schools. Only 12 schools reported having recreational material. There was a library in all the schools except 2, and the total number of books varied from 54 to 442. Almost all schools were implementing the schemes of providing mid day meals, uniforms and free text books.

An article by Saroja, K. (1999) on School related factors affecting the female school drop-out phenomenon in rural areas: a case study. This article analysed the structure of school education and the factors influencing female school dropouts in schools in Ron Taluk of Gadag district, Karnataka. The sample comprised 6 schools. Personal observations and interview guides were also used. Results showed that out of nearly 50% female population, less than 20% were literate. There were 92 villages in Ron Taluk, and of them 7 were without schools. Out of a total of 162 schools, 43 were exclusively for boys, 15 were only for girls and the remaining was coeducational. This could be one reason for girls dropping out from schools. 73% of the teachers in schools were male and this could also be a reason for girls to drop out. Another reason for girls to drop out was that 4 schools were located on the outskirts of the village. In only 3 schools educational and sports material like science kit, radio, cassettes were Girl Child Education Research Abstracts on Education, 1998 – 2009 available. Data showed that boy's enrolment in schools (855) was higher than girl's enrolment (774), but the total attendance of both boys (560) and girls (534) was less than the enrolment. In 40 villages, schools offered up to lower primary education, and 45 village schools provided education up to upper primary level. Government recommended teacher student ratio was 1:40, but it was found to be 1:66 in the sample schools. To improve students' performance, two teachers of one school conducted free coaching classes after school hours. It was suggested that there is a need to open separate girls' schools in villages, appoint more female teachers, make the school atmosphere attractive; and provide necessary educational and sports material. Policy makers and concerned officials should take steps to universalize elementary education and reduce the incidence of girl dropouts.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

### **Profile of Keezhakasakudy Medu**

Keezhakasakudy Medu village is located towards the northern side of Karaikal Town. Keezhakasakudy medu village stretches 1.5 km from north to south and 1.5 from east to west (3 sq km). The village is well connected with coastal road (Singara Velan Salai Road). Keezhakasakudi Medu village consists almost of Pattrnavars, a fishing community with the exception of Muslim, Nattar and Kudipillai minorities.

### **Objectives of the study**

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To find out who is the most dropout, boys or girls.
2. To find out the major reasons for dropout.
3. To find out the educational background of the parents of dropouts.

## Working Definition

Any student who discontinues or quits his/her studies and stop going to school abruptly, can well be termed as School Dropout.

The researchers went to the village and had discussion with the panchayat leaders and a few parents and school going children to find out if there are any school dropout cases in the village. The researchers were convinced that there are many cases and the study can well be conducted in the fishing village of Keezhakasakudy Medu in Karaikal. The tool was prepared based on a few base line data obtained from the village of study. Literature was also reviewed to prepare the tool. The tool consists of 26 questions to enquire into the socio-economic profile of the dropouts. The tool used in this study is Interview Schedule. The researchers had gone for descriptive cum diagnostic design in this study. The researchers have given emphasis on diagnosing a few causes of dropout and describing the causative e factors in the analytical part. The researchers had adopted snowball sampling in this study.

The researchers had gone for primary data from the respondents through the interview schedule. The researchers had undertaken tabular analysis and statistical tool (mean) for calculating the average age of the respondents. The researchers had also gone for Chi- Square test to test a hypothesis.

## Limitations of the study

No study is free from limitations. This study has been undertaken to study the basic socio-economic profile of the school dropouts at Keezhakasakudy Medu village. The study would just give an outline of the problem to the social workers to take up this issue and deal with it appropriately. This study has been undertaken with a very small sample size of 20 Respondents. The study naturally gives a scope to take this study further and to have an in-depth knowledge about this problem. It can be said that the researcher had attempted to portray the scenario of school dropout in the village.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### APPLICATION OF STATISTICAL TOOL (MEAN)

Age	F	Mid-Point	d	fd
13-14	01	13.5	-2	-2
15-16	03	15.5	-1	-3
17-18	06	17.5	0	0
19-20	07	19.5	1	7
21-22	03	21.5	2	6
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	<b>f =20</b>			<b>fd = 8</b>

$$\bar{X} = A + (\sum fd / N) \times C$$

$$A = 17.5$$

$$fd = 8$$

$$N = 20$$

$$C = 2$$

$$X = 17.5 + (8/20) \times 2$$

$$= 17.5 + 0.4 \times 2$$

$$= 17.5 + 0.8$$

$$= 18.3$$

$\bar{X} = 18.3$  Years of age

**Findings:** The average age of the respondents in this study is 18.3 years of age.

**TABLE NO - 1**

**Table Showing The Sex Of The Respondents**

SL NO.	SEX	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Male	15	75%
2.	Female	05	25%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Fishing community is always dominated by male in all walks of life. It is interesting to see the same trend in the rate of dropout rate also. The table above shows that 75% of the respondents are male and 25% of them are females. It is inferred that boys are the majority lot in school dropout because their chances of being employed is very high especially in fishing / venturing into the sea if they are out of school.

**TABLE NO - 2**

**Table Showing The Class Last Studied By The Respondents**

SL NO.	CLASS LAST ATTENDED	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	6 <sup>TH</sup> -7 <sup>TH</sup>	4	20%
2.	8 <sup>TH</sup> - 9 <sup>TH</sup>	9	45%
3.	10 <sup>TH</sup> & beyond	7	35%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

The problem of school dropout has been found in almost all standards. The number of cases of dropout may vary according to the class in which the student is. The table points out that 45% of the students dropout in classes ranging from 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>, 35% of the students dropout from class 10<sup>th</sup> and beyond and around 20% of them dropout from 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> standard.

It is a fact that the students are automatically promoted to the next class up to the primary level. When the students come to the high school (8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> std.) level they find it very difficult in coping with the studies because more or less the mechanism of automatic promotion ceases and hence they fail. The problem of coping with studies becomes a serious concern among the dropout children.

**TABLE NO - 3**

**Table Showing The Monthly Family Income Of The Respondents**

SL NO.	FAMILY INCOME (Monthly)	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Rs 2,000 – Rs 6,000	3	15%
2.	Rs 6,000- Rs 10,000	7	35%
3.	Rs 10,000 – Rs 14,000	4	20%
4.	Rs 14,000 – Rs 18,000	3	15%
5.	Rs 18,000 – Rs 22,000	2	10%
6.	Rs 22,000 – Rs 25,000	1	05%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Fish catch has always been very lucrative. But after the tsunami has struck the coast of Karaikal region has become very difficult for the fishermen of this region to earn their living. Slowly and gradually, the fish catch is back to its original form. It is found that 35% of the respondents earn from Rs 6,000- Rs 10,000 per month, 20% of them are able to earn from Rs 10,000 – Rs 14,000 per month, 15% of the respondents are able to earn between Rs 2,000 – Rs 6,000 and Rs 14,000 – Rs 18,000 each, 10% of the respondents earn from Rs 18,000 – Rs 22,000 per month and only 5% of the respondents are able to earn Rs 22,000 – Rs 25,000 per month. It is to be noted that none of the respondents are found to be below the poverty line. The main reason to substantiate this view is that majority of the members in the family are earners.

**TABLE NO - 4**

**Table Showing The Type Of House Of The Respondents**

SL NO.	TYPE OF HOUSE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Rented	--	--
2.	Own	20	100%
3.	Lease	--	--
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Own house has become a craze not only in big cities but also in small towns and villages. The Government of Puducherry is also providing loans to the BPL families to own their house. The table shows that cent percent of the respondents have their own house and are living in it. The finding of this study is also supported by the fact that all families in the coastal villages affected by Tsunami were provided with individual houses built by the Government or the Non- Governmental Organisations. It could very well be said that all the respondents are living in their own houses.

**TABLE NO - 5**

**Table Showing the Respondent's Type of Family**

SL NO.	TYPE OF FAMILY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Joint Family	3	15%
2.	Nuclear Family	17	85%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

The joint family system is eroding from our society day by day. The concept of individualisation has gained lot of prominence owing to certain unavoidable compulsions. Any scheme announced by the Government is given only to a family, irrespective to the number of members in it. This has forced the people to divide the family and live separately to have a separate ration card and thereby get the government schemes. The table shows that 85% of the respondents are living in nuclear families and only 15% are living in joint families. The reason for 15% of the respondents living in joint families is because the son of the head of the family might have got married very recently, hence living together.

**TABLE NO - 6**

**Table Showing The Educational Qualification of Respondent's Father**

SL NO.	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Elementary Education	13	65%
2.	High School	02	10%
5.	Illiterate	05	25%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Fish catching is a labour intensive profession. Labourers cannot be substituted with anything. It is natural that where there is lot of earning, the head of the family intend to draw his son(s) into the profession (fishing). This has continued for many generations. So, dropping out from school was a natural practice it seems, years before. The table clearly shows that 65% of the respondent's father had education up to elementary level, 25% of them are still found to be illiterate and only 10% have studied up to high school level. It is very shocking to see that the generation before i.e. the respondent's parents (father) had never gone to college. Around 90% of the previous generation, before the respondents, are found to be both illiterate and schooling up to elementary level.

**TABLE NO - 7**

**Table Showing The Educational Qualification of Respondent's Mothers**

SL NO.	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Elementary Education	07	35%
2.	High School	02	10%
3.	Illiterate	10	55%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

The scope for becoming an earner in fishing community is very high among the men folk paves way for early marriage. This results in dropout of girls from school. The table clearly shows that 55% of the mothers of respondents are still illiterate, 35% have had education up to elementary level and only 10% of them had education up to high school level. But the most important reason for the girls dropping out from school is that the head of the family go for fishing and the son go to school or fishing. The wife of the head mostly goes for fish vending. So, there is a need for someone to look after the house and cook food.

The only option available or the scapegoats are the girl children of that family. Hence they are dropouts.

**TABLE NO - 8**

**Table Showing The Occupation of Respondent's Mother**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>MOTHER'S OCCUPATION</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Fish Vending	11	55%
2.	Member of SHG	02	10%
3.	Petty Shop	01	5%
4.	Home Maker	06	30%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Fishing community is said to be very lavish in spending. So, to maintain this identity, they do need income. This could be the reason why the female members also eagerly engage in earning for the family. It is understood from the table that 55% of the respondent's mothers are fish vendors, 30% are home makers, 10% of them are members of Self Help Group and 5% own petty shop.

**TABLE NO - 9**

**Table Showing The Respondent's Opinion On The Level Of Family Income**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>LEVEL OF FAMILY INCOME</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	High	00	--
2.	Moderate	14	70%
3.	Low	06	30%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

No human being will ever say that he is satisfied with the amount of money he/she has. The money in hand is always felt as insufficient and they crave for more. The table shows that 70% of the respondents feel that they have a moderate level of income and 30% have opined that their income is low. Even though 50% of the respondent's family earn between Rs 2000 – 10,000 per month which is well above the poverty line mark and another 50% of the respondent's family earn between Rs 10,000 – 25,000 per month, none of them consider their income as high.

**TABLE NO - 10**

**Table Showing The Nature Of Respondent's Childhood**

<b>SL. NO.</b>	<b>CHILDHOOD – NATURE</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Miseries & Pain	03	15%
2.	Struggle Free	16	80%
3.	Mixture of Pain &Pleasure	01	05%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

An individual's life is always filled with both miseries and pain. One would recollect his/her childhood as struggle free only on the basis of economic strength and the struggle

faced in academic activities. The table clearly shows that 80% of the respondents are of the view that their childhood was struggle free, 15% opined it as filled with miseries and pain and only 5% consider their childhood as a mixture of pain and pleasure. It could be inferred that those 80% who had struggle free childhood because of their family's economic strength and did not care about their studies and thought there is always a job (fishing) waiting for them. Those (15%) who had portrayed their childhood as miseries and painful, it might be because of the low family income. The same trend for these families seems to continue / exist because the same 15% of them have portrayed their family income as the lowest in this study.

**TABLE NO - 11**

**Table Showing The Respondent's Opinion About School**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>OPINION ABOUT SCHOOL</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Pleasant	17	85%
2.	Unpleasant	02	10%
3.	Both	01	05%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

All those who had been to school, must have experienced both pleasant and unpleasant events at school. The tabular analysis indicate that 85% of the respondents have had pleasant experiences at school, only 10% had unpleasant experiences and 5% had a mixture of both experiences.

**TABLE NO - 12**

**Table Showing The Respondent's Opinion About Academic Performance**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Good	02	10%
2.	Satisfactory	13	65%
3.	Poor	05	25%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Academic activities are the main areas where one feels very frustrated with and could cause a reason for dropout.

It is clearly understood from the table above that 65% of the respondents rate their academic activities as satisfactory, 25% of them rate as poor and only 10% rate their academic activities as good.

**TABLE NO - 13**

**Table Indicating Respondent's Opinion About Teachers Behaviour**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>TEACHER'S BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Strict	08	40%
2.	Soft	05	25%
3.	According to my action	07	35%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Teacher's behaviour plays a very vital role in shaping the personality of a student. The teachers are always at risk to strike a balance between strict and lenient. A slight deviation could prove problem for them and for the student. The table shows that 40% of the respondents say that their teachers were strict, 35% of them say that their teacher's behaviour were on par with their behaviour and 25% of the respondents say that their teachers behaviour was soft towards the students.

**TABLE NO - 14**

**Table Showing The Dislikes Of Respondents At School**

SL NO.	DISLIKES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Classmates	02	10%
2.	Teacher	06	30%
3.	None	12	60%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

It is obvious that students in school would dislike the teachers, classmates or any others. As long as it is not a reason for children dropping out from school, it's not a matter of concern. The table shows that 60% of the respondents say that they did not dislike anybody at school, 30% of them say that they disliked teachers at school and only 10% say that they disliked classmates. Majority (60%) of the dropouts did not have anybody to dislike when they were students. Even though 40% of them disliked teachers and classmates, only 10% of them (Table No- 16) have stated it as a reason for dropping out from school.

**TABLE NO - 15**

**Table Indicating Respondents Opinion On The Reasons For Dropout**

SL NO.	DROPOUT REASONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Unable to cope up with studies	01	5%
2.	Unwilling to study	11	55%
3.	Teacher's negative attitude	01	5%
4.	Ill treatment by classmates	01	5%
5.	Economic Problem	04	20%
6.	Willingness to earn by force	02	10%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Research findings shows that there are numerous reasons for children to dropout from schools ranging from academic to family and what not. The intention to quit studies and unable to cope up with studies is the most prominent ones. Not to sideline the family problems. The table analysis indicate that 55% of the respondents say that they dropout from schools because they were not willing to pursue their studies further, 20% of them pointed out at economic problem, 10% of the respondents were forced to earn which they were willing too, hence dropout from school, 5% of them pointed out at unable to cope up with studies, teachers negative attitude and ill treatment by classmates each, as reasons for dropping out from schools. It is inferred that around 70% of the respondents had some or other academic reasons for dropping out from schools.

**TABLE NO - 16**

**Table Indicating Respondents Daily Income**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>DAILY INCOME (IN RUPEES)</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	100 – 200	03	15%
2.	500 – 600	11	55%
3.	Not Applicable	06	30%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

The scope of remaining unemployed in a fishing community is very remote. Once a male child is out of school, he is pulled by his father or friends into the profession of fish catch. The table shows that 55% of the respondents earn between Rs 500 – 600 daily, 30% of the respondents are idle and 15% of them earn between Rs 100 – 200 daily.

**TABLE NO - 17**

**Table Indicating Respondents Advice To Other Dropouts**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>PIECE OF ADVICE</b>	<b>NO.OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Ask them to study	16	80%
2.	Ask them to stay at home	01	5%
3.	No opinion	03	15%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

There's a colloquial saying in Tamil that advice is the only thing which is free of cost. This saying has now become an old saying because so many freebies (welfare measures) are being provided by the government for the upliftment of the downtrodden. But still people don't hesitate to give a piece of advice. When the respondents were asked what piece of advice they would like to give to other children who has dropped out from schools, 80% of them said that they would ask them to continue the studies, 15% did not have any opinion and only 5% said that they would ask the dropouts to stay home. It is inferred that 5% of the respondents would ask the dropouts to stay at home because they may belong to any of the category of unable to cope up with studies, teacher's negative attitude and ill treatment by classmates/ friends each (Table No – 16).

**TABLE NO - 18**

**Table Indicating A Few Habits Of The Respdnts**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>HABITS</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1.	Drinking	01	5%
2.	Smoking & Drinking	02	10%
3.	None	17	85%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

A child who is a dropout and if he starts earning, he easily falls prey to bad habits. Most of them may fear telling others about their habit of drinking or smoking. The table shows that 85% of the respondents do not have any bad habits as per their opinion, 10% of them do have the habit of smoking and consuming alcohol and 5% have the habit of consuming alcohol alone.

**TABLE NO - 19**

**Table Showing Respondents Views On Various Issues**

SL NO.	ISSUES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	
		YES	NO
1.	Liking School	18 90%	02 10%
2.	Failing ever in school	18 90%	02 10%
3.	Satisfied with present job	12 86%	02 14%
4.	Study if given an opportunity	07 35%	13 65%

NOTE: 6 respondents are not eligible to answer the quest (column 3)

The table shows that 90% of the respondents do like school and only 10% do not like it. It's a simple logic of disliking when you have it and start liking it when you don't have it. It's a natural human tendency. It also shows that 90% of the respondents did fail in school and only 10% did not fail. This shows the academic poorness of the dropout children. Among those employed 86% of them say that they are satisfied with the job they do and only 14% dislike it.

It is surprising to not that around 35% of the respondents still wish to continue their education if given an opportunity and 65% of them do not want to continue their studies.

**TABLE NO - 20**

**Table Showing The Present Nature Of Work**

SL NO.	NATURE OF WORK	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Full Time	08	57.14%
2.	Part- Time	06	42.86%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table shows that 57.14% of the respondents are full-time employees and 42.86% are part time employees. It could be inferred that among those (42.85) who part time employees are, 15% are new entrants. And may be new entrants / trainees are paid a minimum wage (Rs 100-200) – Table No- 17.

**TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS**

**Most of the boys drop out from school because of disliking the teachers**

SEX \ CHOICE OF DISLIKE	CLASSMATES	TEACHERS	NONE	TOTAL
MALE	01	04	10	<b>15</b>
FEMALE	01	02	02	<b>05</b>

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>
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$$X^2 = (O - E)^2 / E$$

O = Observed value

E = Expected value

$$(O - E)^2 = (\text{Observed value} - \text{Expected value})^2$$

<b>O</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>O-E</b>	<b>(O - E)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>(O - E)<sup>2</sup>/ E</b>
01	1.5	-0.5	0.25	0.16
04	4.5	-0.5	0.25	0.05
10	9.0	1.0	1.00	0.11
01	0.5	0.5	0.25	0.5
02	1.5	0.5	0.25	0.16
02	3.0	-1.0	1.00	0.33
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>3.00</b>	<b>1.31</b>

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Degrees of freedom} &= (R-1) (C-1) \\ &= (2-1) (3-1) \\ &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

**The Calculated value = 1.31**

**Table value = 4.30**

**Since, the calculated value is less than the table value, the hypothesis stands proved. There is a significant relationship between the drop out of boys and disliking the teachers.**

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The average age of the respondents is 18.3 years of age.
2. Dropouts are found in all level i.e. primary, secondary and higher secondary. But the rate is high at high school level especially between 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> standard.
3. The least monthly income earned by 15% of the respondent's family is between Rs 2000 – 6000.
4. Cent percent of the respondents are found to be living in their own house.
5. 15% of the respondents are still found to be living in joint families.
6. Only 30% of the respondent's mothers are home makers and the rest are engaged in some or other income earning activities.
7. 30% of the respondents consider their family income as low.
8. 80% of the respondents have had struggle free childhood.
9. 85% of the respondents consider their school experiences as pleasant.
10. Only 10% of the respondents consider their academic performances as good.
11. 40% of the respondents consider their teacher's behaviour as strict.
12. 30% of the respondents disliked their teacher and 10% disliked their classmates.
13. 55% of the respondents pointed out at unwilling to study as the reason for dropout.

14. 55% of the respondents earn between Rs 500 – 600 per day.
15. 80% of the respondents would like to advice the other dropouts to go back to school.
16. 15% of the respondents are found to be having the habit of smoking and drinking.
17. a) 90% of the dropouts did like their school.  
b) 90% of the dropouts did fail in school.  
c) 14% of the respondents are not satisfied with the job.  
d) 35% of the respondent's prefer to continue their studies if given an opportunity.
18. 42.86% of the respondents are found to be working on part-time basis.

### **FINDINGS BASED ON THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. School dropout is found among both, the boys and girls but boys dominate by 75%.
2. 25% of the respondent's fathers are illiterate and 65% of them have had education up to elementary level.
3. 55% of the respondent's mothers are found to be illiterate and 35% of them had education up to elementary level.

### **FINDINGS BASED ON THE HYPOTHESIS**

There is a significant relationship between the drop out of boys and disliking the teachers.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

1. Counselling need to be given to both boys and girls separately with the aim of preventing dropout. Much emphasis needs to be given to boys.
2. Counselling to those parents whose child is in primary level is a must and counselling to students of high school and higher secondary level by professional counsellors and teachers would be better. Continuous assessment of feedback of students in class 8–9, by teachers on the academic performances should be a part of their responsibility. Since the panchayat system in fishing villages are very strong they should also be taken into confidence for the betterment of the wards belonging to their village.
3. The parents of the respondents must be inculcated with the habit of savings. The attitude of wasteful expenditure must be done away with.
4. The families of the respondents must ensure regular maintenance of their houses to prevent its damage and thereby in future course of time move to rented house.
5. Joint family is our age old traditions and need to be secured. Families living in joint families shall be appreciated once in a year and motivated by all. The village panchayat can also award the joint families in a village ceremony to upkeep the system of joint family.
6. Local NGO's working in the village can take up the issue of adult literacy programmes. The educated youth in the village can also initiate in educating the illiterate adults.
7. Local NGO's and educated girls can take up the task of literacy campaign among the women. The Self Help Group can also have a programme on literacy to educate the women folk.
8. Those housewives who are just home makers may be motivated to have an earning of their own choice and should be encouraged to be a part of Self Help Group immediately to start with. Their husband or the Social Worker visiting the village can take this responsibility.

9. NGO's working in the village can undertake activities/ projects to improve the earning capacity of the families with less income. They can also be motivated to undertake self employment schemes if there is any scope.
10. Even after having enjoyed a struggle free childhood and still being a school dropout, the in-depth cause need to be explored jointly by the parents, teachers and the social workers working in the village. The panchayat can also play a dominant role in co-ordinating this team.
11. Even after enjoying a pleasant school experience they have dropped out from the school. The schools should be appreciated for helping these dropouts in having a pleasant school experience. But as far as the academic performances is concerned, lot need to be done. The researchers would like to suggest a sort of very special care for academically backward students by means of extra coaching / classes. This is entirely in the hands of teacher. The teachers need to study the best motivating factor(s) for such students. The parents can also send such children for additional tuition classes after school hours.
12. The teachers can be either strict or lenient according to the student's mentality / behaviour. This would facilitate the boys to accept the teacher as she is. This methodology by the teacher would prevent from being disliked by students, which could be a cause for dropout.
13. Regular feedback could be obtained from the students on their willingness to study or not without revealing their names. If any discrepancies, immediate corrective action is recommended.
14. Schools can also have programme at regular intervals to improve intimacy or friendship between students, of course with lot of caution.
15. Efforts should be made by the families concerned to do away with extravagant expenditures.
16. A group of grown up dropouts can be created and be given a role in explaining the evils of dropping out from school on the half way mark. The local NGO's can play a role along with the school.
17. Parents should keep a strict vigil on their wards to check if they are addicted to smoking and drinking. The village members can caution the parents of the concerned child, if they happen to see them smoking or drinking. The check by whole village can prove to be beneficial. Moreover, the concerned individual needs to be professionally counselled for behaviour modification.
18. Attempts should be made to explore the possibilities of finding out if there is any chance of sending those to school, who are dis-satisfied with fishing job and those who are working in fishing on part-time basis.
19. The local NGO's or the school can take immediate steps to identify who are interested to go back to school and could be admitted or be brought under the purview of SARVA SIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA).

### **CONCLUDING COMENTS**

The research has been done in a fishing village called Keezhakasakudy Medu, in the coastal region of Karaikal District, U.T. of Puducherry.

The study is about the school dropouts and it aimed to study a few causes on why students dropout from schools. The study also gives a basic socio-economic profile of the dropouts. The hypothesis of the study is - **Most of the boys dropout from school because of disliking the teachers.**

This is neither an intensive nor extensive study but an attempt has been made to study a few causes of school dropout in the village. The readers should always bear in mind that this study has been undertaken not as a pure research work but a task with a concern for the dropout lots in the village.

The researcher had reviewed a few concerned literature to have an idea about the issue. The theoretical literature was also gone through. The information gathered during the field visits and the feedback received from the dropouts helped the researchers to prepare a self structured interview schedule consisting of 26 questions. And the tool adopted in this study is Interview Schedule.

The study was carried out with a few objectives apart from a hypothesis. The design of the study is descriptive and diagnostic. And finally, the sampling method adopted in this study is snowball sampling.

The researcher had made use of primary data and analysed through simple table, statistical analysis and chi-square test. The researcher have made a genuine attempt to interpret the data accurately and have also given inference to most of the analysis.

Very carefully, the researcher had drawn a few findings from the analysis made through collected data and findings based on the study are also listed out.

The researcher would like to conclude by saying that there is no denying fact that education has no substitute and can never be any in the future too. The researchers being students realise the great importance of education and the impact it can bring upon, not only in an individual but also upon the whole nation.

In spite of long untiring efforts of the various governments the result on the grass root level is not satisfactory. Why the result is not satisfactory? A proper answer to this question needs to be found out, if the problem of school dropout needs to be addressed. So, only with this view, the researcher has made an attempt in such a task.

As a Social Worker, the researcher wish to say that, **if there is a will, there is a way.** But the will has to be from the society as a whole rather than from an individual or a group, to tackle this menace of school dropout and to do away with it as early as possible. The researchers feel proud for at least having made an attempt in this direction and wait for a much faster proactive role by those who love this society.

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