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Managing the socioeconomic and cultural factors of primary school dropout and effects on industry productivity levels in District Kech, Balochistan

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Abstract
School dropout is known to be a major issue individually, socially, educationally and economically. Primary school dropout has been increasing in Pakistan in general and in Balochistan in particular. The determinants of primary school dropout vary across province to province and district to district. This study finds the determinant of primary school dropout in district Kech of Balochistan. Primary data has been collected randomly from the all tehsils of the district. Data was collected from 100 respondents using the Z-score method of sample size selection. Moreover, the study uses frequency distribution and charts to represent the data and applies Cronbach's Alpha for reliability of the responses. The findings of the study showed that there are many economic, social and cultural factors that are causing the primary school dropout in the district such as distance of school from home, uneducated parents, cultural issues regarding female education, lack of transportation, child labor issue, non-availability of teachers, high number of dependent children and unemployed parents. Thus, it is recommended that the Government should take into consideration the aforementioned factors to improve human capital and business productivity across the industries.
Key words: Primary school dropout, Socioeconomic factors, cultural factor, Kech.

Introduction

Children and youth are considered the human capital and key to future development and backbone for the progress in the society. Development and progress in society and country level is very important. Children education and human capital gain from education is one of the important determinants of development and progress in society and country level. School education is the initial phase of this progress. A child with better education or an educated child will contribute positively to the society and to the country in general. Societies need effective youth and children for progress and to contribute socially and economically. Education is the reason for effective child and youth in the society (Al Graini, 2021).

National education policy, 1998-2009, recognized education to be power full tool which

provides mental, physical, ideological and psychological training to children and youth. Furthermore, it also recognizes that free and quality education is only the reason for human resources which is very much important for progress and development. Uneducated children in the societies are one of the major reasons for a decline in progress in the society and in the country (government of Pakistan, National Education policy, 1998-2012). The unemployment rate leads to a non-availability of skilled labor in the market which in turn affects the productivity levels of the corporate sector (Dosi, *et al.*, 2018).

Primary education is known to be the starting and most important stage of the education for child's future, (Pakistan Economic survey, 2017). By strengthening the primary school Pakistan can achieve the many of the development goals like equity. One of millennium development goals provided by united nations is primary education. Education in primary level i.e. from age five to sixteen is considered to be compulsory in constitution of Pakistan in Article 25 (A) (Rauf, 2021). majority of the provinces has been implementing this policy successfully but many of the districts has been failed to implement this policy yet.

According to National Institute of Population Studies projection, (NIPS,2016) there are 54 million in Pakistan aged from 5 to 16 years, and out of this total only 29 million children are attending the school either in public sector schools or private sectors schools. while, the remaining 23 million children whose ages are from 5 to 16 are out of the school. There are many reasons for this like, economic reasons, social reasons and so on. Children not attending the school vary across the provinces and then in the provinces it varies across the districts (NIPS, 2016).

Research Objectives

The study intends to fulfill the following objectives:

- ✓ To determine the predictors of primary school dropouts in the district Kesh of Baluchistan.
- ✓ To provide recommendations to the policy makers to address the issues of Primary School Dropouts and improve human development and productivity levels across industries.

Overview on District Kech

Kech was notified as a separate district on 1st July 1977 when Mekran was declared one of the divisions of Balochistan, Mekran division include three districts, Kech, Gwadar and Panjgur. Turbat is head quarter of District Kech and it is second most populous city in Balochistan after Quetta. The district is situated in the south-west of Balochistan Province, sharing its borders in the east by District Awaran and Gwadar on the south. Iran is in the north-west and Punjgur in the north-east. The total area of district Kech is 22, 539 square kilometers. Figure 1.2 is showing the map of district kech, there are four tehsils in the dostrics, namely; Buleda, Tump, Dasht and Turbat. Furthermore, these four tehsils are divided into 37 union councils. According to the census of 1998 the total population of district Kech was 414,000 Kech District with 53% of male and 47% of females, Education Plan (2016-17 to 2021-22). The main economic sources in districts is agriculture sector. 5.2% of the area in the district is agricultural land. The main Rabi crop was Wheat charted by vegetable 46 % and 28 % of the whole Rabi yield area. The main Kharif crop was fruit followed by Food taking 84 % and 10 % of the entire Kharif crop area.

Education in district Kech

Education system in district Kech are similar to the education system in other district of the provinces. The quality of education in district Kech are weak, the district suffers from many issues regarding the quality and accessibility of education, (Kech district education plane

2016-2017 to 2021-2022). There are total of 616 schools in the district which include primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary schools operated by the public sector. Out of total 86% of the schools are in rural areas and only 14% of the schools are in urban areas, (Kech district education plane 2016-2017 to 2021-2022). Table 1.1 shows the primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary schools in district Kech. Moreover, the table also shows the male and female schools in the district. The grand total of the schools in the district are 616, (Kech district education plane 2016-2017 to 2021-2022). Quality of education is the key factor to economic growth and development of the nation because skilled human capital and social capital has a direct link with firm productivity levels and performance (Tran and Vo, 2020).

Table 1: Public Sectors School in District Kech

	Urban			**Rural**			**Total**		
Schools	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**
Primary	41	8	49	265	156	422	306	164	470
Middle	11	8	19	38	28	66	49	36	85
High	17	4	21	21	15	36	38	19	57
H/S		2	2	3		3	3	2	5
Total	69	22	89	328	199	527	396	220	616

Source: BEMIS

The literacy rate in the district is not promising. The data of PSLM in below table are showing that the district ranked at number six in the province after Quetta, Gwadar, Sibi and Mastung. The literacy rate in the district is 40 percent in 15+ population and 48 in 10+ population. From the PSLM data below it can be concluded that the literacy rate is quite low in the district and the gap between male and female education is also wide as the female literacy rate is decreasing over time for population in 10+ and 15+ both from 2009 to 2011 the female literacy rate in population of 15+ has decreased from 23% to 9% only and it has gone down from 31% to 18 % for the population of 10+ in the same years. Additionally, there is a decreasing trend in male literacy rate as well in population of 15+. From the table it is clear that the literacy rate of male in 15+ decreased from 65% to 54% from the year of 2009 to 2011 and slightly increase from 2011 to 2013 but less than the previous year 2009.

Table 2: Literacy Rate in Kech

Years	10+			15+		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005	64%	28%	48%	61%	17%	41%
2007	67%	25%	48%	61%	16%	40%
2009	71%	31%	52%	65%	23%	45%
2011	64%	18%	43%	54%	9%	33%
2013	68%	27%	48%	61%	18%	40%

Source: PSLM

Out of school Children in district Kech:

According to the report of P&D population projection and BEMIS, 2015, out of 132,945 it is estimated that 55,902 children are out of school which means more than 42% of the children in the district are out of the school. The below graph is showing the percentage of the children out of school in different ages i.e. from 6 to 10, 11-13 and 13-15 which are 31%, 48% and 74% respectively.

Table 3: Out of school children in Kech

	6-10 year age	11-13 year age	13-15 year age	Total
Total population	79,287	29,230	24,437	132,945
School enrollment	55467	15116	6464	77047
In public schools	43374	15115	6464	64953
In private schools	6505	0	0	6505
In Madrasas	5585	0	0	5585
Out of School	23,811	14,114	17,973	55,902

Source: P&D population projection and BEMIS 2015

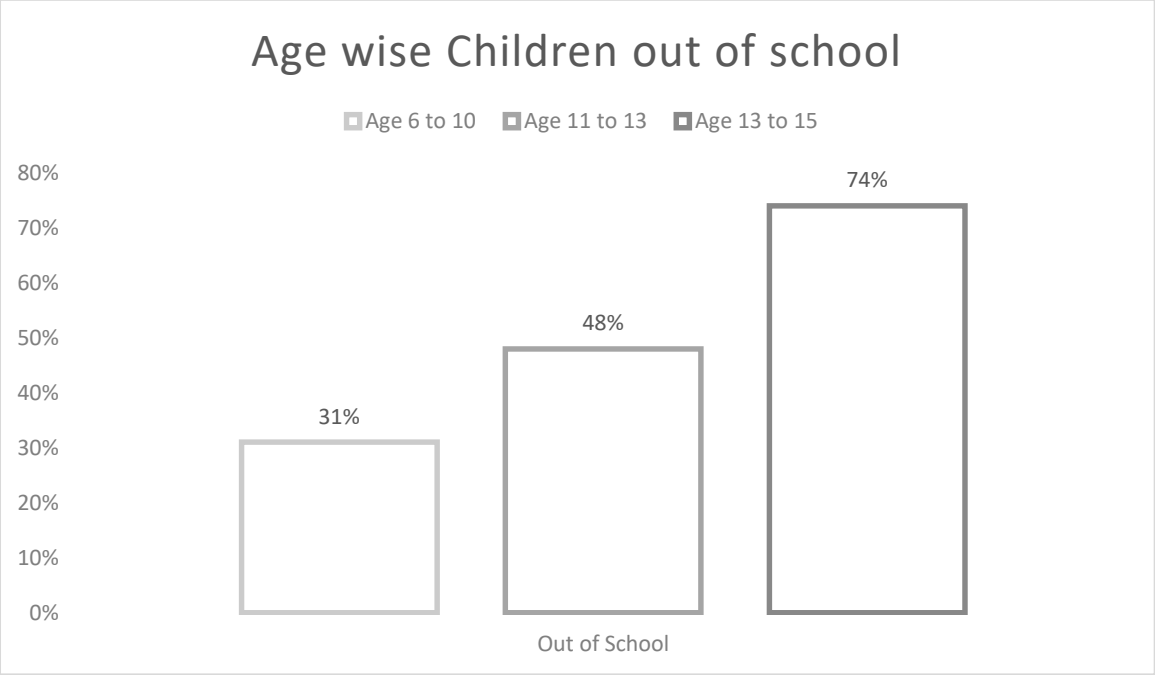

Figure 1: Age wise children out of school in percentage

Brief literature review

When disabled children intend to take admission in schools, they face many problems to go to school; suppose those students who belong to lower income families, their parents cannot bear or adjust their children transportation facilities due to limited resources also there is no clear school planning or rules for disabled children (Nor, 2013). Similarly, (Lu, *et al.*, 2020) claim that all around the world only 5% disable children complete their primary school; many of them never enroll or dropout very in early ages.

Poverty is defined as a lack of fundamental needs such as shelter, food, education, and health care. Poverty is a major concern in many countries, including African and Asian societies. Parents are unable to send their children to schools to receive a quality education due to poverty. The United States Department of Education (2008) reported findings that "clearly established that student and school poverty had a negative impact on student attainment." The US Department of Education (2001) did a research on third and fifth grade students from 80 percent high-poverty schools and discovered the following major findings about the effect of poverty on student achievement.

Earning potential refers to a person's ability to earn the highest compensation in a given sector or profession. Earning potential plays an important part in dropout prevention; most pupils

believe that there will be more options to earn rather than study in school. In Western countries, it is normal for students to work and earn money while studying, and some students even drop out of school as a result of the benefits of earning. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Many difficulties in society contribute to dropout, such as large families, dysfunctional families, and poor families who cannot afford to pay for their children's education expenses such as clothes and books. They occasionally send their youngsters to work in the fields (NCES, 2008)

Furthermore, while family income is important for a society's prosperity, many families around the world are struggling owing to low income. Families with lesser incomes cannot afford to pay for their children's education and prefer to send their children to work rather than educate them, resulting in their children dropping out of school (Azevedo, *et al.,* 2021). This dropout behavior results in a decline in the availability of quality human capital in the market which increases unemployment rates and reduces productivity levels in the industry (de Zubielqui, *et al.,* 2019).

Early marriages are common in rural areas. Due to early age marriages female students become pregnant and single parents. As a result, it will be difficult for them to continue their education and they become dropout from schools. Similarly, when boys marry, they also become parents and they have to support their families. Holmes, a well educationist, in (2003) found out that females receive less education than the males and they tend to dropout. The study furthers claims that the opportunity cost of sending female children to school in rural areas, where girls are married in early age rather than boys because of benefits of their schooling will not accumulate to their parental household.

Likewise, Sagalova, Nanama, Zagre, & Vollmer, (2021) explain how early marriages influence children's dropping out of school especially as esteems the girl child as it is perceived by parents that marrying off the girl child is a discharge route from poverty. According to Tanye (2003), marriage puts girls in burden, thus it suppressed their efforts to higher education. However, in many societies' women are under the strict control of their husbands. Wives become property and slaves of their husbands and husband's families. Save the children (2005) indicated that cultural norms also prevent girls to be admitted to education in many parts of developing world (Azevedo, 2021).

In traditional societies norms and values are strong as compare to modern societies. Ironically, in traditional societies females are not allowed to go out of homes. People belonging to Traditional societies strongly believe females need not to be educated because of strong norms and values. Moreover, those people who belong to rural areas they also do not send their females for higher education because they believe if they send their females for higher education, they will face difficulties in finding shelter. Therefore, females leave schools. Moreover, parents choose to educate boys rather than to educate girls which are the reason of discrimination at household level. The girls are deprived of educational opportunities for being incapable to support the family economically in future. Such as parents' attitudes further continue stereotypes in many cultures. A harmful attitude towards women presents control of women's lives, male privilege and time restrictions as well as the multiple roles women perform are some of the cultural barriers delaying women access to education (Begum et al., 2007).

Methodology and data

Sampling and Data collection

Since it's hard to study the overall population as a whole. To represent the population a sample has taken from the population to represent the population as a whole. Sample is subset of population. In this study sample of 100 has been taken to represent the population. Moreover, the probability and purposive technique is used to collect the data. Under probability sampling

each and every student is equal chances to be selected in the study. While, in purposive sampling technique specific types of students or children who can provide the desired information, either they are the only ones who have it or conform to solve criteria by the researcher.

Tools in data collection

1. **interview schedule**

In this study the interview schedule is used to collect the data from the respondents. The interview schedule consists of set of closed ended questions which are relevant for the topic of concern and then these questionnaires are distributed to the concern respondent to be filled.

2. **Pre-testing**

Pre-testing is necessary to verify the legality and consistency of the measuring instrument. It helps to detect the mistakes and deficiency in the interview schedule. Pre-testing was experienced on 20 respondents. After pre-testing some questions were rephrased reconstructed and modified to improve the workability of the interview schedule.

Data analysis

1. **Reliability statistics**

Reliability statistics shows that how the responses from the respondent are matching and how much the opinion of the respondents for the questions are relating. This can be summarized by a single value known as Crobach's Alpha. The value of Cronbach's Alpha lies between 0 and 1. A value close to zero means the responses are not close and un reliable. While a value close to 1 shows that the response from the respondents are very close to each other or the opinions of the individual regarding the questions are matching and results are reliable.

2. **Frequency Distribution**

Frequency table is one the statistical tools to represent the qualitative and quantitative information collected from close ended question in the table forms. It includes the frequencies and percentage of the option choose by the respondent.

3. **Graphical representation**

Finally, graphs, histograms and pie chart are used for graphical representation for the demographic information of the respondents**.**

Results and Discussions

Reliability statistics

The value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.701 which is indicating that the responses are 70% matching from the different respondents. Hence, it can be concluded on the basis of Cronbach's alpha that the results are statistically reliable.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.701	20

Demographic information

Figure 2 is showing the gender distribution of the respondents. For the figure it is clear that out of 100 respondents there are 68 males and 32 females were asked. The percentage of female respondent is 32 and percentage of male respondent is 68.

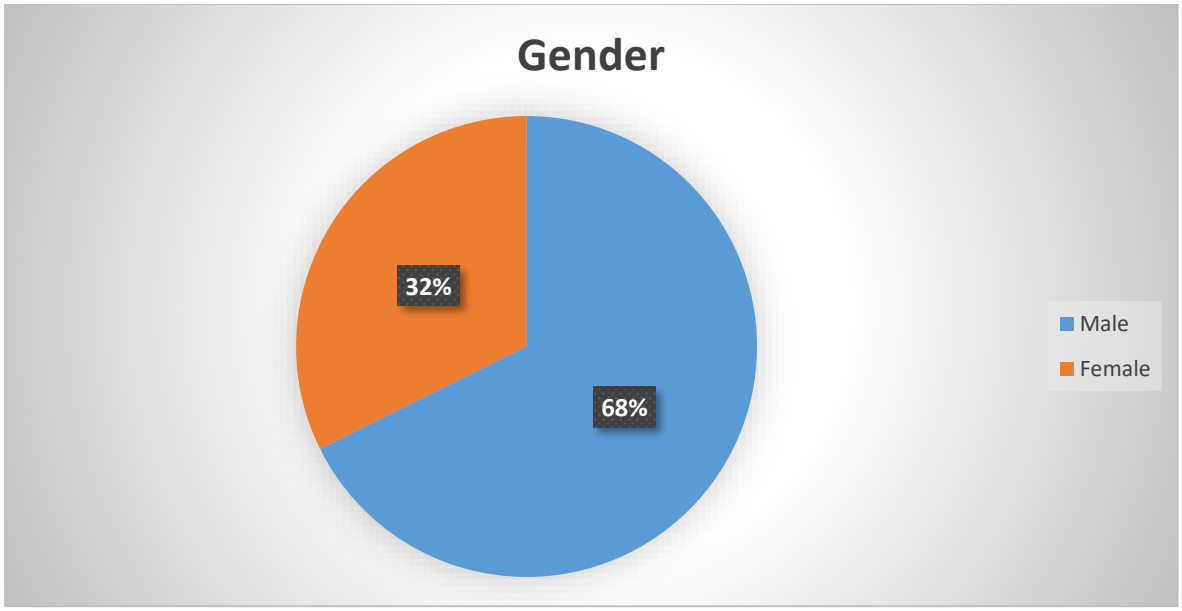

Figure 2: Source author calculation

The ages of the respondents are depicted in table 4. there are total of 100 respondents who were asked question. 27 of the respondents are from the age of 10 to 20 years as shown in the frequency table below. From age 20 to 30 years 60 respondents were asked out of 100 which is indicating that the highest number of respondents age lie between this range. Finally, only 13 respondents of the respondents aged from 30 and above in the study.

Table 4: ages of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10 to 20 years	27	27.0	27.0	27.0
	20 to30 years	60	60.0	60.0	87.0
	30 and above	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 represents the total family member of the respondents. From the frequency table it is clear that the majority of the family members are 8 and above members. 62% of the respondent are living in the family of 8 or more than 8 members. 29 out of 100 respondents have family member of 5 to 7. And only 9 respondents have the family member if up to 4.

Table 5: Total Family Members

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Up to 4	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	5 to 7	29	29.0	29.0	38.0
	8 and above	62	62.0	62.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 represent the family pattern information. The data indicating that majority of the respondents belonged to Nuclear family which is 69%. Secondly, 22% of them belonged to joint family pattern and remaining only 9% of the respondents belonged to extended family pattern.

Table 6: Family Pattern

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Nuclear Family	69	69.0	69.0	27.0
	Joint Family	22	22.0	91.0	87.0
	Extended Family	9	9.0	100.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

3.2 Question related to education

The information regarding education attainment are depicted in table 7. results are indicating that education attainment of the majority of the respondent is middle with the percentage of 44, which is followed by matriculation with 32% and 24% of the respondents have primary education only.

Table 7: Education attainment

Education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	24	24%
Middle	44	44%
Matriculation	32	32%
Total	**100**	**100.0%**

Table 8 is regarding the father's education level. Interestingly majority of the father are illiterate which is 24%. From the information in the table it is quit cleat that illiteracy is one of the causes of dropout issue as the majority of the fathers are illiterate. Almost 50% of the father in the table given below only have matriculation education attainment. 11% of the respondents' fathers have middle education. 17% have matriculation. 13% are had the intermediate degree in total. And finally, only 10% and 9% of the respondents' father have bachelor and master's degree. Which can clearly show one the reasons of unawares of children education in primary level and higher level as well.

Table 8: Father's education attainment

Education	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	24	24%
Primary	16	16%
Middle	11	11%
Matriculation	17	17%
Intermediate	13	13%
Bachelor	10	10%
Master	9	9%
Total	**100**	**100.0%**

Table 9 reveals that 46% respondent's mothers were illiterate, 24% of the respondents' mothers had passed their primary level, 13% of the respondents' mothers had passed their middle level, 10% of the respondents' fathers had passed their matriculation level, 3% of the respondents' mothers had passed their intermediate level, and 4% of respondents' mothers had passed their bachelor level.

Table 9: Mother's Education attainment

Category	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	46	46%
Primary	24	24%
Middle	13	13%
Matriculation	10	10%
Intermediate	3	3%

Bachelor	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Table 10: Father's Occupation

Category	Frequency	Percent
Private job	12	12%
Labor	38	38%
Govt job	20	20%
Shopkeepers	30	30%
Total	100	100%

Table 10 shows that 38% of the respondents' fathers had done labor works, 30% respondents' fathers had run their shops, 20% of the respondents' fathers were doing Government jobs, and there were 12% of the respondents' fathers were doing private jobs.

Table 11: Mother's occupation

Category	Frequency	Percent
House wife	95	95%
Govt, private jobs	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Table 11 indicates that great majorities (95%) of the respondent's mothers were house wives and there were only, 5% of the respondents' mothers had Government jobs and private jobs. This can be another reason for the children education. An educated woman can better understand the importance of education. The is positive relationship between children education and his/her mother education.

Table 12: type of schooling

Category	Frequency	Percent
Government	81	81%
Private	15	15%
Semi government	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Table 12 shows that 81% of the respondents were studying in governmental schools, 15% respondents were studying in private schools and 4% of respondents were studying in semi-governmental schools. The outcome shows that the majority of the 81% of the respondents had studied in governmental schools and a very few 4% of the respondents had studied in semi-governmental schools because the majority of the schools were governmental and there were less private and semi-governmental schools in rural areas. That's why the maximum number of the respondents had studied in governmental schools.

Social Factors of Primary School Dropout

Table 13: Social Factors of primary school dropout

Qs	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Due to migration of family some students have to leave schools.	29 (29 %)	11 (11%)	18 (18%)	23 (23%)	19 (19%)
2	The students with disabilities are also more likely to dropout from schools.	9 (9%)	29 (29%)	17 (17%)	31 (31%)	14 (14%)
3	Sometimes the friends who have lucrative jobs without studying also cause students to leave schools.	12 (12%)	20 (20%)	39 (39%)	21 (21%)	8 (8%)
4	Involvement in delinquencies schools is a major reason I behind dropout.	7 (7%)	20 (20%)	38 (38%)	26 (26%)	9 (9%)
5	Family structure is unable to bear their children education expenditure.	7 (7%)	13 (13%)	19 (19%)	31 (31%)	30 (30%)
6	Lack of awareness also playing a role in dropping out from schools.	11 (11%)	14 (14%)	21 (21%)	33 (33%)	23 (23%)
7	Uneducated parents are also not letting their children to continue their education.	28 (28%)	10 (10%)	20 (20%)	24 (24%)	18 (18%)

Table 13 to investigate the role of social factors in dropping out from schools, the following scale was used. Scale consists of seven items. The first statement "Due to migration of family some students have to leave schools." Asked from the respondents 19% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements and 23% respondents were those who agreed that migration is the major reason of dropping out of students. There were 11% and 29% respondents who disagreed with the statements.

The second statement "The students with disabilities are also more likely to dropout from schools." questioned from the respondents, 14% were strongly disagreed statement and 30.4% those who were agreed with the statement that the students with disabilities are also more likely to dropout from schools. There were 29% and 9% respondents who disagreed with the statement that the students with disabilities are also more likely to dropout from schools.

The third statement, "Sometimes the friends who have lucrative jobs without studying also cause students to leave schools." Also asked from the respondents that 9% respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the friends who have lucrative jobs without studying also cause students to leave schools and 21% respondents were those agreed with the statements. Nearby 11% and 20.0% of the respondents were disagreed with the statement. Sometimes the friends who have lucrative jobs without studying also cause students to leave schools. The fourth statement "Involvement in delinquencies schools is a major reason behind dropout." Also asked from the respondents that 9% respondents strongly agreed with the statement and 26% respondents were those agreed with the statement that nearby 20% and 7% of the respondents were disagreed with the statement that involvement in delinquencies schools is a major reason behind dropout. The fifth statement, "Family structure is unable to bear their children education expenditure." Asked from the respondents that 30% strongly agreed with the statement and 31% respondents were those who agree that unemployment of families also cause students to leave schools.

There were 13% and 13% who respondents disagreed with statement. Sixth statement, "Lack of awareness also playing a role in dropping out from schools" Questioned from the respondents that 23% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement and 33% respondents were those who agreed with the statement that Lack of awareness is a major reason of dropping out the students from the schools. There were 14% and 11% respondents who

disagreed with statement. The seventh statement "Uneducated parents are also not letting their children continue their education." Questioned from the respondents that 18% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement and 24% respondents were those who agreed with statement that uneducated parents are also responsible of their children dropping out from schools. There were 28% and 10% respondents who disagreed with statement.

Economic Factors of Primary School Dropout

Table 14 to investigate the role of economic factors in dropping out from schools, the following scale was used. Scale consists of five items. The first statement "poverty is a major reason of dropping out of the students." Asked from the respondents that 38% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements and 21% respondents were those who agreed that poverty is the major reason of dropping out of students. There were 21% and % respondents who disagreed with the statements.

Table 14: Economic Factors of Primary School Dropout

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Poverty is a major reason of dropping out of students.	21 (21%)	9 (9%)	11 (11%)	21 (21%)	38 (38%)
Lack of transportation facilities many students leave schools.	3 (3%)	22 (21%)	17 (17%)	37 (37%)	21 (21%)
Parents prefer to send their children to work in early age rather than schools.	9 (9%)	16 (16%)	33 (33%)	25 (25%)	17 (17%)
Students from low income families are more likely to drop out in schools.	43 (43%)	20 (20%)	15 (15%)	12 (12%)	9 (9%)
Unemployment of families also causes students to leave schools.	31 (31%)	22% (22%)	17 (17%)	16 (16%)	14 (14%)

In the second statement "lack of transportation facilities are main causes of dropping out of the students from school." Asked from the respondents 21% were strongly disagree statement and 37% those who were agreed with the statement that lack of transportation is main causes of dropping out of the students from school. There were 21% and 3% respondents who disagreed with the statement that lack of transportation is the main cause of dropping out of the students from schools. The third statement "Parents prefer to send their children to work in early age rather than schools." Also asked from the respondents that 17% respondents strongly agreed with the statement that working in early age rather than going to school is a key reason of dropping out from school and 25% respondents were those agreed with the statements.

Nearby 33% and 9% respondents who disagreed with the statement that working in early age rather than going to school is a key reason of dropping out from school. The fourth statement "Students from low income families are more likely to drop out in schools." Enquired from the respondents that 9% respondents strongly agreed with the statement and 12% respondents were those agreed with the statement that students from lower income families are more likely to be dropped out from school. Nearby 20 % and 43% of the respondents who disagreed with the statement that students from lower income families are more likely to be dropped out from school. The fifth statement was, "Unemployment of families also causes students to leave schools, "Asked from the respondents that 14% strongly agreed with the statement and 16% respondents were those who agreed that unemployment of families also cause students to leave schools. There were 21% and 31% respondents who disagreed with statement.

Conclusion

In the light of this study, it is concluded that the students become dropout from the primary schools due to many factors where students won't be able to play an important role in the society and the industry. In fact, students are not only the builders of every nation but also

are the hope of tomorrow. Ironically, in poor societies students are unable to maintain their education because of their socio-economic background which in turn results in a decline in the availability of skilled human capital in the market. Consequently, the productivity levels of the industry and the nation's economic growth is negatively affected. Those students who belonged to lower income families, lack educational institutions and transportations are compelled to assist their family members in family income. On the other side some traditional societies marry their children in early ages as soon as they become parents, it would be difficult for them to continue their education even some of them did not send the females to get education in primary level as well. There were also some other reasons which also can caused primary school dropout such as migration of family, economic factors such as poverty and child labor, social factors, absenteeism from schools and the students preferred earning money rather than getting education.

Policy Recommendations:

The following suggestions and recommendations are made on the basis of the present study.

- Poverty should be reduced from every corner of area in the district.
- The families must take responsibilities of their children education.
- Transport facilities should be provided to each student.
- There should be no favoritism among students.
- Ghost schools should be functionalized at every nook and corner of the Kech.
- Society should take serious action against those elements who halt the ways of quality education.
- Everyone should bring awareness among students.

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