



## An Empirical Analysis on Children's readiness to Learn and Right to Education

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**Abstract-** *In the present era, education is an essential requirement for individuals to thrive and navigate successfully in the world. There are numerous implications that can impact children's learning. The inability of individuals to meet their fundamental needs is attributed to the presence of poverty. Individuals living below the poverty threshold prioritize meeting their immediate needs rather than placing emphasis on the education of their children. Due to a lack of access to necessary educational resources and facilities, young individuals may experience a decline in their motivation to engage in academic pursuits. Consequently, this phenomenon results in the disengagement of adolescents from educational institutions. In this particular timeframe, it is vital to comprehend the rationales for and the level of readiness exhibited by young individuals in their pursuit of knowledge. Hence, the researcher endeavors to investigate the effects of poverty on children's readiness to learn in this study. The researcher has selected the Madurai slum region as the focal point for this study. The utilization of an interview schedule was employed as a means of data collection, with approximately thirty samples being obtained for this specific objective. This study aims to assess the factors contributing to increased dropout rates among children, specifically focusing on the socioeconomic demographic aspects that may influence this phenomenon. Additionally, the study seeks to examine the impact of poverty on children's willingness to learn and identify the specific needs they require in order to overcome these challenges. The researcher has proposed a viable recommendation for reducing the rate of school children's dropout.*

**Key words :** Poverty, Human rights, Education, Children

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### Introduction

Poverty is widely acknowledged as a significant factor that profoundly impacts the population of a developing nation. There exist around seven distinct types of poverty, among which economic poverty emerges as the most prominent determinant affecting children's educational pursuits. This study elucidates the impact of economic poverty on children's academic performance. Poverty refers to the condition of being significantly destitute. Individuals who are socioeconomically disadvantaged may encounter significant challenges in meeting their basic needs. Individuals living below the poverty line face numerous obstacles, such as social inequality and prejudice, as a result of their impoverished circumstances. Individuals living below the poverty line often face significant challenges in meeting their basic needs, which can lead to a lack of prioritization of their children's education. Slum communities

exhibit the highest incidence of kid school dropout. The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between students' academic engagement and their socioeconomic status, specifically focusing on the influence of poverty. In the present era, education is an essential prerequisite for individuals to thrive and navigate the complexities of our global society. Numerous repercussions exist that can impact the learning outcomes of children. The inability of individuals to meet their fundamental needs is attributed to the presence of poverty. Individuals living below the poverty threshold prioritize meeting their immediate needs instead of prioritizing the education of their children. Due to a lack of access to necessary educational resources and facilities, young individuals may experience a decline in their motivation to engage in academic pursuits. Consequently, this phenomenon results in the disengagement of adolescents from educational institutions. In this particular period, it is vital to comprehend the rationales behind and the level of readiness exhibited by young individuals in their pursuit of knowledge. Hence, the researcher endeavors to examine the effects of poverty on children's willingness to learn in this study. The researcher has chosen to focus on a slum area for the purpose of this study.

The objective of this study is to examine the effects of poverty on children's readiness to learn. There has been extensive research conducted on the impact of poverty on children's learning outcomes. Shadreck (2013) posits that a significant contributing factor to the occurrence of student dropouts is a disadvantaged socio-economic family background, which leads to pupils leaving school as a result of poverty and financial limitations. The study has additionally demonstrated that specific educational environments have the potential to result in early school disengagement. Therefore, it can be observed that educational institutions exert an influence on student dropout rates by several factors such as their organizational framework, structural design, school climate, policies, and perhaps by actively encouraging students to disengage gradually (fade-out) or to prematurely terminate their education (push-out). In their study, Maranoorand and Ashekharappappa (2012) conducted a categorization of several elements that influence individuals, including personal factors, family factors, school factors, and socio-economic aspects. Personal characteristics including self-ill health, lack of interest in academic pursuits, physical limitations, and a retirement-oriented mindset, among others. The influence of the family factor is significant in the context of female school dropouts, particularly among this demographic. The elements encompassed in this context include engagement in household tasks, familial illness, caretaking responsibilities for younger siblings, and parental indifference towards females' education. The influence of educational

institutions is also a noteworthy determinant in the occurrence of student attrition. The features of the institution are deficient in terms of facilities, the teaching methods employed by the instructors are inadequate, there are concerns regarding the behavior of certain teachers, and the school is situated at a considerable distance from residential areas. Socio-economic factors significantly influence school dropout rates, particularly among male students. The aforementioned features encompass financial constraints, paternal demise, premature matrimony, and societal disapproval. Based on the research conducted by Naseer Ahmad Salfi and Khan (2011), it can be inferred that the reasons for individual dropout rates at the primary level are diverse. However, these causes may typically be categorized into two main components that contribute to student attrition. There exist external variables beyond the school environment, referred to as out-of-school factors, as well as internal factors within the school environment, known as in-school factors. The out-of-school causes encompass various elements, including parental poverty, parental lack of motivation and awareness of the need of education, the opportunity cost faced by parents when deciding to send their child to school, parental relocation, and the considerable distance between houses and schools. In the educational setting, several issues might contribute to suboptimal conditions for students. These elements encompass inadequate school facilities, flawed textbooks and curricula that surpass kids' comprehension abilities, and teachers who exhibit a harsh demeanor towards their students. Rumberger (2011) discovered that the presence of acquaintances involved in illegal activities or affiliated with gangs is positively correlated with an increased likelihood of school dropout. It is observed that, in a comprehensive manner, the variables of location, such as median family income and industrial structure, exert an influence on dropout rates. Furthermore, it is noted that these influences vary in terms of quantity and direction in rural and urban locations. In general, family-level factors exhibit a significantly greater degree of predictive efficacy in determining graduation outcomes compared to regional attributes.

## **Methodology**

A school dropout refers to an individual who voluntarily withdraws from a course of instruction prior to its completion. Based on a survey conducted by the National Center of Education Statistics, it has been observed that children hailing from low-income families exhibit the greatest rates of dropout, reaching 9.4%. According to a poll conducted in June 2016, there were 37,000 instances of individuals discontinuing their education in Tamil Nadu. The survey was done by A. Ragu Raman of Deccan Chronicle. Therefore, the researcher aims to study the impact of poverty on children's willingness to learn and identify the factors that influence their

learning outcomes. The researcher aims to investigate the effects of poverty on children's readiness to learn. One of the primary aims of this study is to examine the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. The researcher is also endeavoring to comprehend the underlying factors contributing to the phenomenon of children disengaging from formal education. Another primary aim is to provide appropriate recommendations to mitigate the issue of kid dropout. The study was done with the assistance of social work trainees in India. Data was obtained from five prominent slums in Tamil Nadu, specifically in the cities of Chennai, Madurai, Coimbatore, Salem, and Vellore. The researcher employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for data analysis in this study.

### **Result And Discussion**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the effects of poverty on children's preparedness for learning. The researcher administered a survey questionnaire pertaining to the familial composition of the participants. According to the survey data, 63.3% of the participants reported having a family size of 5 individuals, while 20% reported having 4 members, 13.3% reported having 6 members, and a further 3.3% reported having 3 members in their family. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of the participants had five family members that rely on income earners for financial support. The subsequent survey inquiry pertained to the individuals responsible for providing financial support to their families. According to the data, 50% of households are comprised of two individuals who are employed, while 36.7% consist of a single working member. Additionally, 6.7% of households include four individuals who are employed. Therefore, it may be concluded that around 50% of the respondents' families consist of two working individuals. The researcher created a survey question in order to ascertain the individuals who contribute to the household income. This inquiry aims to investigate the extent to which the student's family possesses sufficient income to sustain their household. According to the survey data, it was found that 50% of the respondents' families have a monthly income ranging from 5000 to 10000. Additionally, 40% of the respondents' families reported a monthly income between 10000 and 15000, while the remaining 10% indicated a monthly income falling within the range of 15000 to 20000. Therefore, it can be concluded that approximately 50% of the participants' household income is between the range of 5000-10000. The researcher administered a survey questionnaire to investigate the means by which individuals obtain educational help. This inquiry pertains to the investigation conducted by the researcher with the objective of ascertaining the extent to which pupils receive educational support from their families. The data reveals that a significant majority of the respondents,

specifically 96.7 percent, receive educational support from their families. Conversely, a smaller proportion, amounting to 3.3 percent, rely on self-employment as a means to finance their education. Therefore, it may be concluded that a majority of the participants receive educational assistance from their families. This inquiry pertains to the investigation conducted by the researcher in order to ascertain the presence of educational assistance provided by family members. Ninety percent of the participants reported a lack of support from their relatives towards their educational pursuits, while the remaining ten percent acknowledged receiving educational assistance from their family members. Therefore, it may be concluded that the majority of the respondents did not receive any educational assistance from their families. The subsequent inquiry pertained to the duration of time allocated by the participant on a daily basis for academic pursuits. A total of 26.7 percent of the participants reported dedicating 2-4 hours to their studies at home, while 23.3 percent of the participants reported spending 0-1 hour on their studies at home. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of the participants allocated a daily study time of 2-4 hours. The researcher inquired about the spatial separation between the educational institution and the residential dwelling. In this inquiry, the researcher aims to determine the distance in kilometers that students traverse in order to commute to their educational institution. A majority of the participants, specifically 60 percent, reported commuting to their educational institution at a distance of less than 1 kilometer. Approximately 23.3% of the participants indicated that their commute to school exceeds a distance of 2 - 4 kilometers. According to the survey data, a total of 10 percent of the participants reported traveling distances greater than 4 to 5 kilometers for educational purposes. A total of 6.7% of the participants reported commuting more than 5 kilometers each day for educational purposes. Therefore, it can be concluded that a majority of the participants walk a distance of less than 1 kilometer to reach their school. The subsequent inquiry pertained to the means of transportation utilized for commuting to school. A majority of the participants, specifically 66.7 percent, reported commuting to school on foot due to the close proximity of their residences to educational institutions. Approximately 33.3% of the respondents utilize either government or private vehicles as a means of transportation to commute to school due to the considerable distance separating their residences from the educational institution. Therefore, it may be concluded that a majority of the participants are commuting to school on foot. The researcher prepared a survey inquiry pertaining to the manner in which educators interact with pupils inside an educational setting. In this inquiry, the researcher seeks to determine the extent to which teachers are providing equitable treatment to students. A majority of the respondents, specifically 66.7 percent, reported that teachers exhibit a high level of kindness towards students inside the school environment. Conversely, 33.3 percent of the

respondents indicated that teachers maintain a neutral stance when interacting with students in the school setting. Therefore, it can be concluded that a majority of the respondents perceive that teachers exhibit a high level of professionalism in their interactions. The researcher administered a survey that inquired about the level of income necessary to cover family expenses. This inquiry pertains to the researcher's investigation into the sufficiency of the student's family income in meeting their familial expenditures. According to the responses of thirty percent of the participants, it was found that 63.3 percent of the respondents' families experience financial difficulties due to inadequate income, while 36.7 percent of the respondents' families had sufficient income to meet their family's demands. Therefore, it may be concluded that a majority of the respondents' families experience inadequate income to cover their household needs. The survey question posed by the researcher pertained to the experience of encountering financial difficulties during the course of one's studies. In this inquiry, the researcher aims to investigate whether students experience financial difficulties during their academic pursuits. A total of 53.3 percent of the participants indicated that they experience financial difficulties within their families while pursuing their studies, whereas 46.7 percent of the participants reported not encountering any financial challenges during their academic pursuits.

Therefore, it may be concluded that a majority of the respondents have financial difficulties while pursuing their studies. The researcher prepared a query to ascertain whether the pupils possess an adequate supply of study materials and appropriate attire. This inquiry aims to ascertain whether the students possess enough study materials and attire. All of the participants in the survey expressed satisfaction with the quantity of study materials and attire provided for their academic pursuits. Therefore, it may be concluded that all of the participants possess an adequate supply of study materials and clothing. Respondents were queried regarding their preference for attending school. This inquiry pertains to the researcher's investigation into the students' attitudes towards their educational institution, specifically focusing on their preferences or lack thereof. A majority of 73.3 percent of the respondents expressed a positive inclination towards their school for academic pursuits, while the remaining 26.7 percent indicated a lack of satisfaction with their educational institution. Therefore, it may be concluded that a majority of the respondents hold a favorable opinion of their school. The researcher administered a survey question pertaining to the regularity of class attendance. This inquiry pertains to the researcher's investigation on the regular attendance patterns of students in their classes. According to the survey results, 86.7 percent of the participants reported regular attendance at their educational institution, while the remaining 13.3 percent acknowledged inconsistent attendance, characterized by frequent absences.

Therefore, it may be concluded that the majority of the participants consistently attend the class. The subsequent survey inquiry pertained to the positive interpersonal dynamics among students. This inquiry pertains to the researcher's investigation of the quality of the students' rapport with their peers at the educational institution. According to the survey results, a majority of respondents, specifically 86.7 percent, reported having positive interpersonal relationships and a substantial number of friends within their social circle. Conversely, the remaining 13.3 percent of participants expressed challenges in establishing satisfactory relationships with their peers, which they attributed to the adjustment required while transitioning to a new educational setting. The survey inquiry pertained to the supplementary expenditures incurred by the student. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of the participants maintain a positive rapport with their fellow pupils at school. This inquiry pertains to the researcher's investigation on the pupils' capacity to cover additional expenditures. A majority of the respondents, specifically 93.3 percent, indicated their inability to cover supplementary expenses related to their studies, relying solely on financial support from their families. Conversely, a minority of respondents, comprising 6.7 percent, expressed their capability to meet additional study expenses through part-time employment. Therefore, it may be concluded that a majority of the respondents are unable to meet additional expenses. The researcher administered a survey questionnaire to assess the level of student interest in various disciplines for educational purposes. In this inquiry, the researcher aims to investigate the extent to which students exhibit interest in their academic subjects. According to the survey results, a majority of 80 percent of the respondents expressed their desire in studying the subjects, while a minority of 20 percent indicated their lack of interest in studying the subjects. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents exhibit a keen interest in studying their respective subjects. This study reveals that a majority of the respondents have a family size of five individuals. Fifty percent of the participants indicated that there are two individuals that are employed inside their respective households. Approximately 50% of the participants' familial earnings range from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The majority of participants receive educational assistance from their families. The participants did not receive any educational assistance from their family members. The majority of respondents, including 26.7 percent, reported dedicating 2-4 hours each day to their academic activities. More than 50% of the participants indicated that they travel a distance of less than 1 kilometer to reach school, primarily because their homes are in close proximity to the school. A majority of the participants reported commuting to school by means of walking. A majority of the participants indicated that teachers are treated in a highly favorable manner. A majority of the respondents' families experience inadequate income to cover their household needs. A majority of the participants have financial

difficulties during their academic pursuits. All participants possess study materials and appropriate attire. A majority of the participants had a positive sentiment towards their educational institution. The majority of participants consistently attend the class. The majority of the participants maintain a positive rapport with their fellow students at school. The majority of participants are unable to meet supplementary financial obligations. The majority of participants express a strong inclination towards engaging in the study of their respective subjects.

## Conclusion

The present study aims to investigate the potential effects of poverty on children's preparedness for learning. The present investigation was carried out within the Madurai slum region. The prevalence of poverty often leads parents to enroll their children in government schools. In this study, the researcher gathered data pertaining to socio-demographic characteristics, the association between the school and its students, and recommendations provided by the respondents for mitigating school dropout rates. The primary issue encountered by these children pertains to the collection of additional payments under the guise of book costs. As a result of additional charges, children are unable to bear the supplementary expenses, hence leading parents to be unable to enroll their children in school owing to financial constraints. The pupils are also dissatisfied with the infrastructure facilities given at the school. The majority of participants express a positive inclination towards the subjects taught by their educators, perceiving them as engaging and intellectually stimulating. If the government were to enhance the infrastructure of public schools and offer scholarships to students, it is likely that there would be a rise in the level of student engagement and motivation to pursue education. Additionally, parents would likely experience increased satisfaction and willingness to enroll their children in these institutions. The government should implement measures to educate the population about the significance of providing education to children and the associated advantages.

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