

# NEXUS BETWEEN INCOME, PARENTAL EDUCATION AND GENDER OF DROPOUTS AT GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FAISALABAD CITY

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## ABSTRACT

Education plays a crucial role in any nation's development, directly impacting its people's advancement and progress. This study highlights concerns surrounding education significantly influencing a country's growth and development. The inability to finish their education negatively affects students' futures and overall progress. Hence, it is important to examine the primary reasons behind student dropouts in the nation and to devise strategies to address these challenges. The high number of students leaving school in Pakistan is troubling, indicating that social and public policies need to be adapted to tackle this critical problem. The current research aims to investigate the key reasons for students dropping out of government secondary schools in Faisalabad. A multistage sampling method was used for selecting the sample. In the first stage, four union councils were randomly chosen. During the second phase, one secondary school was selected at randomly from each union council, and during the final phase, a total of 180 respondents were selected, with 45 students from each school using a convenient sampling approach. Data regarding various demographic and socio-cultural factors were gathered through a structured interview schedule. The information collected was analyzed with the help of SPSS. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized during the data analysis process. Based on the research results, several valuable recommendations have been made for policymakers to address this challenge.

**Keywords:** Dropouts, Causes, Socio-economic, Education, Development.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important factor for the growth of both individuals and society, and children are seen as the future workforce. Primary education is the foundation for all schooling and personal development. It gives children a basic understanding of the world and the tools to progress in various areas of life. Unfortunately, the primary education system in Pakistan is in poor condition. The public schooling system is also inadequate, while the private education system

often exploits parents instead of addressing the real issues.

Countless children are unable to attend school, those engaged in child labor who manage to attend school often receive a substandard education. Numerous challenges, including insufficient facilities, few qualified teachers, an uneven student-teacher ratio, no labs, lack of teachers, and limited resources are to blame. Additionally, modern teaching methods and poor

communication between parents and teachers exacerbate the situation.

The UNICEF and Regime of the country Pakistan (2000) carried out a collaborative study, focusing on students who leave educational institutions before primary school. They also explain that leaving school refers to a situation in which a student who fails to enroll in school for any reason before completing a particular program or level of education is considered a dropout. According to a report from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2009), 45% of students drop out at the primary level. Of these, 33% are male, and 20% are female. This indicates that 75% of male pupils and 80% of female pupils in Pakistan leave school before completing their primary education. In some developing Asian countries, income is a significant factor contributing to school dropout rates. Students from lower-income backgrounds are approximately seven times more likely to drop out, as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010).

Pakistan faces a significant challenge in its education system, with an alarming number of high school students dropping out each year. Research suggests that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Peshawar city alone, around 5,000 students withdraw from education annually (Zahid, 2019). One of the major contributing factors to dropout rates is income disparity, which forces many children from low-income families to leave school in favor of work. Studies indicate that students from lower-income backgrounds are far more likely to drop out due to financial constraints and the need to support their families.

According to Sehrish (2018), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) launched the National Human Development Report of Pakistan, shedding light on the economic barriers to education. The report reveals that 76.9% of adolescents abandon education due to financial difficulties. This economic strain is particularly evident in rural areas, where families struggle to cover the cost of school supplies, uniforms, and transportation. Moreover, children from impoverished families are often pressured to contribute financially by working in industries such as agriculture, construction, or domestic labor. The cycle of poverty further limits their educational opportunities, as these children lack

access to resources and support systems that could help them continue their studies.

Farooq (2018) emphasizes the role of parental education in shaping children's academic success. Research suggests that children of educated parents are significantly more likely to complete their education than those whose parents have little to no schooling. Parents who lack formal education often fail to recognize the long-term benefits of schooling, leading to higher dropout rates among their children. In contrast, educated parents tend to prioritize their children's academic achievements, actively encouraging them to pursue higher education. A study conducted across eight districts in Punjab found that parental awareness and involvement played a crucial role in student retention, with mothers' education being a particularly strong factor in ensuring children stay in school.

Sami and Tahira (2018) investigated secondary school dropout rates in Punjab, emphasizing the need for better financial assistance programs to support low-income students, especially girls. Their study found that providing scholarships and reducing tuition fees could help alleviate the economic pressures that lead to school dropouts. Additionally, they stressed the importance of creating a more inclusive and gender-sensitive educational environment, which would encourage parents to send their daughters to school.

In conclusion, income inequality, parental education, and gender disparities are three critical factors influencing school dropout rates in Pakistan. Children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds often leave school due to economic pressures, while those with uneducated parents lack the necessary academic support at home. Additionally, gender norms continue to hinder girls' education, making it crucial for policymakers to implement targeted interventions that address these structural barriers. Expanding financial aid programs, raising parental awareness, and promoting gender equality in education can play a pivotal role in improving student retention rates across Pakistan.

### Rationale of the Study

All children from all groups and classes have the right to receive education, and it is the state's duty to provide this education so they can contribute to the family economy, think positively, and achieve a respectable career; this will also enhance

their lifestyle. Unfortunately, most parents, particularly in rural areas, are less educated or illiterate, and they do not understand the value of education, nor do they care if their children leave school. There should be a program to address this problem; that is why we aimed to investigate this issue so we can offer some recommendations to improve it.

### Statement of the Problem

Education is the most important factor for both individual and societal growth, and it is something we can discuss. Primary education forms the foundation on which all learning and human growth are based. It offers children a basic understanding of the world and gives them the tools to succeed in various aspects of life. Unfortunately, the state of primary education in Pakistan is very poor. Moreover, the various NGOs in Pakistan are currently facing a much more serious, systematic challenge, particularly since it is seen as the most dangerous culturally accepted way to ensure compliance in the previous NWFP. Therefore, by examining existing literature, I concluded that the reasons and cultural barriers behind school dropouts should be studied, and we also identified several gaps in earlier research that this study will address.

### Objectives of the Research

The study is structured with the following objectives:

- To investigate the socio-economic profiles of the respondents to better understand their backgrounds.
- To check the relationship between education of the head of family and Dropout students.
- To analyze the effects of environment on Dropout.
- To provide recommendations for policymakers to address this critical issue, informing evidence-based decisions.

### Research Questions

The key inquiries are these, which steer the course of the study:

- What are the demographic features of the participants?
- What is school drop out?
- What are the causes of school dropout?
- What is the implication of school

dropout?

- How this problem can be handled?

### Hypothesis

An ad interim description whose authenticity is customarily unknown (Ebony and Champion, 1976). The theory emanates from reviewing literature. The following study concepts as follows:

- 1-Income of the head of family is likely to be associated with students' poor academic performance.
- 2-Education level of the parents of respondent is likely to be associated with their interest in the children's education.
- 3-Gender of the respondent is likely to be associated with the dropout of students.

### Significance of Study

The current study "Causes of dropouts from Government secondary schools" seeks to investigate the main reasons for dropout in government secondary schools in Faisalabad city, Punjab, Pakistan. One goal of this study is to help teachers, parents, administrators, and other education stakeholders recognize the dropout issue in terms of its extent and reasons, along with strategies that can be implemented. Additionally, the research aims to give insights on research topics that can be used to address this issue. Parents can also learn from this study how to support their children in tackling this significant problem.

### Challenges of School drop out

Bruch, (2017) Exiting high school is a lifelong and significant dilemma. Every year, over half a million students stop their education, and those who do not finish high school encounter financial and social difficulties throughout their lives. They are more likely to be jobless and earn less compared to their peers who graduated. Additionally, they have a greater chance of facing health issues, engaging in criminal behavior, and relying on government assistance. The resource was created alongside a group of researchers and retirement experts who have expertise in researching, developing, and applying retirement plans. It combines the insights of the group with the results of up-to-date, thorough research.

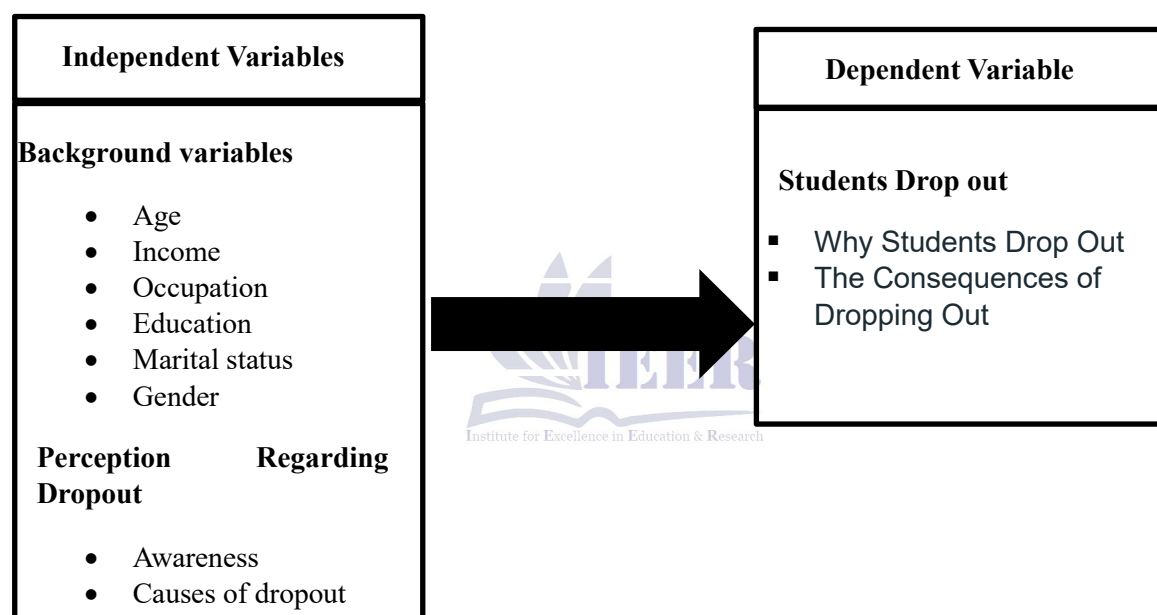
### Drop out at secondary level

Nakpodia (2010) carried out research focused on the high school dropout rate in Delta, examining students from 1999 to 2005. The aim of the research was to determine the extent of the dropout issue. The study employed an existing framework for its survey approach. Two specific research questions were crafted to align with the study's goals. The research included all students registered in 260 state high schools in Delta who did not finish their classes before leaving the educational system. A selected sample of 120 students who had dropped out from secondary schools across 25 local government areas in Delta was randomly chosen. The methods used for gathering data included a structured

questionnaire and a checklist. The analysis of the data made use of frequency, statistical means, and percentages. The findings indicated that school dropouts were common across all high schools in the area. Moreover, it was noted that male students had a higher dropout rate compared to their female counterparts.

### Conceptual Framework

A theoretical framework outlining the strategic coordination and implementation of various components has been developed to outline and categorize the factors used in this research. With a comprehensive insight, to uphold the focus of the study, the research topic concerning the primary and essential variables (social characteristics) relies on the communication between these variables.



### Methodology

A multistage sampling method was used for selecting the sample. In the first stage, four union councils were randomly chosen. During the second phase, one secondary school was selected at random from each council, and during the final phase, a total of 180 respondents were selected, with 45 students from each school using a convenient sampling approach. Data regarding various demographic and socio-cultural factors were gathered through a structured interview schedule. The information collected was analyzed with the help of SPSS. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized during the data

analysis process. Based on the research results, several valuable recommendations have been made for policymakers to address this challenge.

### RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The results & discussion chapter contains the presentation, evaluation, and clarification of the data utilized in the research. The presentation is carried out through the use of tables and charts for single-variable analysis. The data interpretation is performed with the help of Chi-square statistical test and Gamma Test for two-variable analysis.

## Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

### Consolidated Demographic Table of Respondents:

Category	Subcategories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Less than 15	4	2.2%
	15-25	49	27.2%
	26-35	97	53.9%
	36 or above	30	16.7%
Gender	Male	82	45.4%
	Female	98	54.6%
Education Level	Illiterate	48	26.7%
	Literate	34	18.9%
	Primary	45	25%
	Middle	28	15.6%
	Matric	13	7.2%
	Intermediate	7	3.9%
	Graduation	4	2.2%
	Master	1	0.6%
Marital Status	Unmarried	90	50%
	Married	90	50%
Occupation	Agricultural Activities	81	45%
	Commercial Employment	51	28.3%
	Public Sector Jobs	12	6.7%
	Self-Employment	26	14.4%
	Any Other	10	5.6%
Income Level	Less than 17,000	53	29.4%
	17,000-22,000	65	36.1%
	22,001-27,000	38	21.1%
	27,001-32,000	15	8.3%
	32,001-37,000	5	2.8%
	37,001-42,000	1	0.6%
	42,001 and above	3	1.7%
Residency	Rural	138	76.67%
	Urban	42	23.33%
Type of Housing	Mud House	81	45%
	Cemented House	47	26.11%
	Mixed Type	45	25%
	Any Other Type	7	3.89%

### Detailed Explanation of Respondents' Demographics

#### Age Distribution:

The age group distribution indicates a majority (53.9%) of respondents are in the 26-35 years age

bracket, showing a high proportion of young adults. The next largest group, 15-25 years (27.2%), reflects youthful participants, while 16.7% are aged 36 and above. A very small group,



2.2%, are under 15 years old, which could reflect underage participation in the survey.

#### Gender Composition:

The gender breakdown reveals a slightly higher number of females (54.6%) compared to males (45.4%). This suggests that the study's participant pool is slightly female-dominant, which might be reflective of gender dynamics in the region or the willingness of females to participate in such surveys.

#### Educational Background:

The education distribution shows 26.7% of respondents are illiterate, which is a significant portion. 25% have primary education, while 18.9% are literate but haven't received formal schooling. 15.6% have middle education, with 7.2% completing matriculation. 3.9% have intermediate schooling, and only a small proportion hold higher qualifications: 2.2% with graduation and 0.6% with a master's degree. This highlights that most respondents have basic or no formal education, pointing to an area for educational intervention.

#### Marital Status:

The marital status shows an equal split: 50% of respondents are unmarried, and 50% are married. This balance between unmarried and married participants ensures that responses related to household responsibilities and family structures are well-represented, offering insights into different family dynamics.

#### Occupation:

The majority of respondents (45%) are engaged in agriculture, indicating the rural and agricultural background of the participants. The next largest group works in commercial employment (28.3%), including retail or service sector jobs. Self-employment (14.4%) and public sector jobs (6.7%) are less common. A small number (5.6%) are involved in other sectors. This occupational

distribution illustrates a heavy reliance on agriculture and local commerce for livelihood.

#### Income Levels:

The income distribution reveals a low-income majority: 29.4% earn less than 17,000 PKR, and 36.1% earn between 17,000 and 22,000 PKR. Only 8.3% of respondents earn between 27,000-32,000 PKR, while higher income earners, such as those making above 42,000 PKR, represent a small fraction (1.7%). This suggests that the survey largely represents lower-income groups, indicating the need for economic interventions.

#### Residency:

The survey predominantly features rural respondents (76.67%), with only 23.33% living in urban areas. This highlights the rural-centric nature of the study population, which could influence responses related to infrastructure, access to education, and economic conditions.

#### Type of Housing:

A large proportion of the respondents live in mud houses (45%), reflecting a traditional and non-durable housing situation. About 26.11% live in cemented houses, which are more permanent, while 25% reside in mixed housing types. The remaining 3.89% report living in other types of housing, reflecting diversity in living conditions within the study population.

This table summarizes the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, providing insight into their age, education, gender, income, housing, and other demographic features. The majority of respondents are young adults, with a relatively high proportion of females. Most respondents are engaged in agricultural work, have basic or no education, and live in low-income rural households. This profile can help in understanding the socioeconomic challenges faced by the respondents and can be useful for tailoring interventions aimed at improving their living conditions and access to education.

#### Association between Respondents' Income and Students' Poor Academic Performance

	Value	Df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.127(a)	24	.512
Likelihood Ratio	24.290	24	.445

Linear-by-Linear Association	.779	1	.378
N of Valid Cases	180		

significant relationship between the income of

	Value	Asymp.Std. Error(a)	Approx.T( b)	Approx.Sig.
Ordinal by Gamma Ordinal N of Valid Cases	-.188 180	.166	-1.110	.267

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant correlation between the income level of the respondents and the poor academic performance of their students.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant correlation between the income level of the respondents and the poor academic performance of their students  
Level of significance: 0.05  
Significance Value or P. Value: 0.512  
Degree of freedom: 24  
Chi-Square Value: 23.127

Gamma Value: -0.188      Approx. Sig. 0.267

The results of the chi-square test indicate a lack of

respondents and the academic performance of students. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted, suggesting that income does not have a substantial impact on students' academic performance. Notably, the Gamma test reveals a negative weak association between income and academic performance.

#### Respondents Income:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant correlation between the Education level of the parents of respondent and their interest in their children's education.

#### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	35.114(a)	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	36.677	7	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	25.119	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	180		

#### Table: Gamma Test

	Value	AsympStd. Error(a)	Approx.T( b)	Approx.Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal      Gamma N of Valid Cases	-.457 180	.096	-4.399	.000

Level of significance: 0.05  
Significance Value or P. Value: 0.000  
Degree of freedom: 7

Chi-Square Value: 35.114(a)

Gamma Value: 0.457      Approx. Sig. 0.000

The results of the chi-square test reveal a highly significant relationship between Education level of the parents of respondents and their children's

interest in education. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating that education has a profound impact on children's education. The Gamma test shows a negative association, suggesting that higher educational attainment among respondents is associated with greater interest in education among their children.

#### Association between Respondents' Gender and Lack of Facilities as a Reason for Student Dropout at the Secondary Level

	Value	df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
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Pearson Chi-Square	19.047(a)	4	.001
Likelihood Ratio	19.377	4	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.543	1	.033
N of Valid Cases	180		

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between respondent gender and dropout.

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error(a)	Approx T(b)	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.424			
N of Valid Cases	180	.120	-3.263	.001

Level of significance: 0.05

Significance Value or P. Value: 0.001  
Degree of freedom: 4

**Chi-Square Value: 19.047**

Gamma Value: 0.424 Approx. Sig. 0.001

The results of the chi square test indicate a significant relationship between the gender of respondents and student dropout at the secondary level. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis is accepted, suggesting that female respondents are more likely to agree that lack of facilities is a reason for dropout, compared to their male counterparts. The Gamma test reveals a negative and moderate association between respondent gender and the identification of insufficient facilities as a factor contributing to student dropout.

## SUMMARY, FINDING, CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

### Summary:

The research titled "Reasons for Dropouts from Government Secondary Schools" aims to explore the key factors leading to student dropouts in government secondary schools in Faisalabad city. This study is structured around five main objectives: identifying the socio-economic background of students, understanding the reasons behind school dropouts, assessing the impact of leaving school on students' lives, exploring potential solutions to reduce dropout rates, and providing recommendations for policymakers to address this issue.

### Findings:

The following are the primary conclusions drawn from the research:

- A significant portion of the participants, specifically 53.9%, aged 26 to 35, indicated that age influences the reasons behind student dropouts.
- Age was identified as a significant factor influencing student dropouts. 53.9% of participants aged 26 to 35 stated that age plays a role in the reasons students leave school.
- The study found that 54.6% of respondents were female, indicating a notable gender imbalance in the dropout statistics.
- Nearly 97.8% of participants reported that children live in their households, emphasizing the importance of family dynamics in relation to education.
- 55.6% of respondents stated they have three to four children at home, which may contribute to the financial strain that leads to school dropouts.
- A remarkable 97.8% of respondents showed strong concern for their children's education, highlighting that many parents prioritize academic achievement despite facing challenges.
- 59.4% of respondents expressed a preference for formal schooling for their children, underscoring the importance of structured education.
- 37.2% of participants reported that one to two male children from their households are attending school, whereas 68.9% stated that one to two female children are enrolled.
- Financial constraints emerged as a major contributing factor to student dropouts, with 27.8% of respondents citing income as a barrier to continuing education.
- In terms of school facilities, 87.2% of participants expressed satisfaction with the



infrastructure, suggesting that physical resources are generally not a major issue.

- 81.7% of respondents acknowledged that frequent absences were a key reason for students eventually dropping out of school.
- Similarly, 87.2% noted that poor student performance often leads to dropout, indicating that academic struggles can heavily influence the decision to leave school.
- 87.2% of participants also agreed that a family's low economic status, or income, plays a critical role in dropout rates, as it impacts students' ability to stay in school.
- 85% of dropouts were reported to be engaged in work activities, highlighting the economic pressures students face after leaving school.
- 43.3% of respondents reported that their children's monthly income falls between 5001 to 7000 PKR, further illustrating the link between family income and the likelihood of dropouts.

This study indicates that age, income, and education are crucial factors affecting school dropout rates. While socioeconomic conditions remain a dominant cause of school attrition, the role of early academic engagement, teacher support, and parental involvement cannot be overlooked. The research suggests that targeted interventions focusing on these aspects could help reduce dropout rates and improve educational outcomes for students.

#### Suggestions:

- Raising awareness about the consequences of dropouts and promoting education at the secondary level can lead to collective action at the community level. Schools should integrate these topics into their curriculum to equip students with the knowledge they need to address the issue early on.
- Religious leaders play a vital role in their communities, and their influence can help spread the message about the importance of education. The government should involve religious figures in campaigns to reach a broader audience and encourage families to prioritize education over work.
- Teachers must be equipped with the right tools and training to understand the root causes of dropouts and be better prepared to help students stay in school. Understanding the gender dynamics and challenges specific to male and

female students will allow educators to address the unique needs of each student group.

- The government and social organizations should organize workshops and community forums to address the causes of student dropouts, especially those related to education of parents, financial constraints, and gender biases. These forums can create a platform for discussions on how to reduce dropout rates at the secondary school level.
- Finally, the government should encourage families to actively support their children's education, especially in areas where income is a major barrier. Families can be motivated to view their children's education as an investment in the future, contributing to the well-being and development of society. In turn, this will reduce dropout rates and ensure that more children benefit from education, breaking the cycle of poverty.

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