

# Dropout Cases from the Lower Secondary Schools in Bhutan: A Case Study

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**Abstract:** This paper unveils the factors supporting school dropouts through a case study. It presents a case study which investigated the experiences of the five school dropouts, their parents and five teachers including a school principal. It includes respondents who had dropped the school from 2012 to 2015. It involved semi-structured interview and the school documents such as minutes of the staff coordination meeting, parent-teacher meeting, disciplinary meeting, and annual education statistics were used to generate findings. The study presents five major themes such as parental factors, socio-economic factors, home and cultural factors, peer pressure and immaturity including school/academic factors. Thematic analysis was done to gather precise understanding of the problem of school dropouts. The modus operandi was to trace out the causes of dropouts and present an advocacy so that students can find better career prospectus.

**Keywords:-** dropouts, academics, factors, peer-pressure.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The present case study was carried out to clearly understand why there were frequent school dropouts at a lower secondary school. This lower secondary school is situated in southern Bhutan in a remote setting. The identity of the school is protected as confidential as per the research ethics. The school is under Chhukha District. It was established in 1991 as a primary school and later up-graded to a lower secondary school in 2005. Until 2013, it was about 6 hours walk to the north of Phuntshogling.

The IE in its Annual Education Statistic (2015) showed that the percentage of school dropouts was high in grades four, seven, eight, and ten, with 5.14%, 4.89%, 4.57%, and 13.9% respectively. As per the lower secondary school's annual school dropouts reports (2013, 2014 and 2015), the figure of dropouts percentage was noted as; 2.6%, 1.7%, and 1.3% consecutively. Although there was a decline in the number of school dropouts, it was still alarming to notice the occurrence of school dropouts from the school.

A yearly publication by ministry of education titled The Annual Education Statistic (AES) presents the percentage of school dropouts across the schools in Bhutan. However, the publication does not present the remediation and follow-up strategies to either curb or minimize the trend of school dropouts. Unless the factors affecting school dropouts in a different school setting based on its geographical differences are specifically understood, the predicament of school dropouts is expected to remain as crises in all the times to come, everywhere. Therefore,

concerned schools must take precautions or create better strategies to slowly improve the school dropout problem.

IE pointed out that lower the repetition and dropout rates, and higher promotion and survival rates would indicate that the education is efficient. The logical praxis is however correct with just the quantitative information of the quality of system. On the other hand, the AES did not point out school dropouts as problem factor that deteriorated the quality of education. It is evident from the statistics below that everywhere in the country, school dropouts remains a matter of concern.

With improved school's physical ambience, transformed teaching pedagogy in the classrooms, curriculum embedded with values of GNH, teacher-parent meetings and professional development programs for both administrators and teachers, school dropouts issue still persisted.

In the similar view, United States Agency for International Development [USAID], (2011) stated that, "school dropout is a major educational challenge both in developed countries and developing countries, although the pattern of school dropout sometimes vary by developmental status of the country, the result is the same".

## II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

From the school's result analysis of the previous academic performances, the overall pass percentage of the lower secondary school was learnt as dissatisfying besides the human and material resource, and professional input made by the school and teachers in educating them. Therefore, the main problem for the researcher to carry out present case study was; Firstly, children who are part of the school in the beginning of the academic session claimed to dropout after two-three weeks, with reasons such as health problems and need to meet their parents. While most of these children continued to stay as school dropouts, a few of them only returned to the school. School and Gewog administration frequently coordinated to inform and convince these school dropouts and their parents about the importance of the education and need to get educated in the society.

However, for many of them, the advices and consultations did not transform their mindset to come back to school. Further, these children neither came back to school nor were enrolled in any other schools or institutions. They did not even get a job to earn a meager salary for their living. Most of these school dropouts stayed home and worked with their parents. However, their absence greatly affected the school while calculating the overall academic achievement percentage of the school.

Secondly, frequent attempts from the children to drop out were seen to be nuisance to the school administration and teachers throughout the year. Most of the time, teachers, and administrators held meetings to discuss about strategies to bring back the school dropouts to the school. Often, because of the ruggedness of the village and remoteness of the villages, school had to correspond with the Gewog administration to meet the parents of the child. Sometimes, letters had to be written to the parents. The school dropouts' problem also disturbed the coverage of the syllabus for teachers while having to attend meetings. Moreover, teachers and administrators felt irresponsible for having failed in providing basic education for the school dropouts, till class ten

Thirdly, the Ministry of Education demanded the school to keep track of school dropouts. It was possible for the school dropouts who were enrolled in other institutions such as monasteries, Non-Formal Education, Royal Academy of Performing Arts. For some school dropouts, who were neither enrolled in any schools nor in any institutions, made schools difficult to track their whereabouts.

Fourthly, the school experienced declining number of dropouts over the years; however, the trend seems to be in continuous occurrence. While the school provided half-yearly report to the district education offices, certain reasons expressed by school dropouts seemed to be genuine and unavoidable, but it was never known how actually true it was. Unless a study is conducted to find the actual factors affecting school dropouts, it was expected to remain as recurrent problem to the school. Such problems in a school may also affect the economy of the country, at large.

Fifthly, as a school administrator, it is the greatest challenge to understand what might have caused the school dropouts. As an educator, there is dire curiosity to understand and learn the factors that compelled school dropouts from the school. Persistent school dropout problem in the working environment disturbed the personal mood to efficiently work for the school.

#### A. Aim and Objectives

The modus operandi of this research is to unveil the factor that causes the students to drop out of the school.

The other objectives are;

- To explore how home setting and socio-economic background contribute to school dropout.
- Ascertain how cultural and the school practices affect school dropouts.

#### B. Significance of the Study

Over the years, the school system in Bhutan has been witnessing a rapid increase in the number of students dropping from the school. So the first objective of this case study was to find out what practices in the school compelled school dropouts.

Secondly, most of the studies pertaining to school

dropouts were studied quantitatively. Moreover, the statistics of school dropout in the Annual Education Statistics were based on the quantitative approach; therefore, the purpose of the research is also to study through a qualitative approach to understand the lived experiences of the school dropouts, parents, and school staff.

Thirdly, the Royal Government of Bhutan's expects the school to produce productive citizen and GNH graduates to sustain children's life in the future. In order to fulfill and live up to the expectation of the nation, school dropout problem is a major concern in the school.

Fourthly, with school ranking systems in Bhutan, it has become important for the school to bring school's academic achievement from bottom ten in the national ranking. Moreover, the ministry of education and district education offices expected the school to produce 100% academic result and create possibilities to send all the children to the next higher grade.

The lower secondary provided Out Door Education (ODE) to incrementally improve student's choice to go to school. The ODE included guidance and counseling, life skills education, school health sessions, and scout programs. Besides ODE, the school also consistently provided education on parenting to parents to help them in understanding their children better and improve their role as a parent. The parents of the school children at a lower secondary school were mostly illiterate. Some of the parents of the school dropouts were also school dropouts themselves.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A school dropout problem was a concern for the school administration, society, parents, and teachers. In Bhutan, the Ministry of Education's objective and perhaps the inclusive education's plan were to provide children with basic education, pursue higher studies, and become productive citizens of the country. However, in this regard, the country could only assume that inclusive education was provided, although, it actually did not take lasting effect. Rumberger (2001) asserted that school dropouts have less probability to get a job to earn for leaving and leave self-sufficiently to keep up with daily expenses.

Dorji&Kinga (2005) stated that in the Bhutanese context, school dropouts were at different levels that were based on the differences in the characteristics of school dropouts. Each school dropouts required different programs that could positively respond to the individual difference and need.

Generally, schools in Bhutan are still in struggle to minimize the school dropout crises. As per the annual education Statistic (2014) the highest school dropout rate emerged from class VII with 8.8% and least from class I with 0.0%. There was no clue from which region of the schools in Bhutan accounted for highest number of school dropouts. The figure statistically seem to be normal when it is on the total students in the nation, however, it looked alarmingly high at a school's context.

In the past, children did not feel like continuing their school because of less knowledge on sex education, traditional pedagogies, and schooling system. However, Sadker and Sadker (1988) quite contrastingly proclaimed that children's low performance in the academic, early pregnancy, not feeling bonded with the school culture, school's way of resorting to expelling and suspension were major causes of the school dropouts which are still the persistent factors even today.

Namgay and Yuden (2013) proclaimed that schools and parents lack effective communication in sharing the responsibilities about the student development. Parent's believed that it was always teachers who were supposed to know and bring up children in the school. On the contrary, many teachers had fewer competencies in understanding the learners, thereby creating the gap between the learner's expectation and demonstration of teacher's competency level.

Not many of researchers thought about how children felt broken down when they flunk. Mindy (2003) and Jerald (2006) pointed out that they became dropouts because they thought they cannot go to the next higher grade. They became entangled into dropout because they were not able to perform well in the examinations and tests. Hammond (2007) also claimed that worse performance in academic surely could pave ways for children to become school dropouts. Lumsden (2002) in similar, spelt out, "three of these four factors were individual ones and included low achievement, retention/ over-age for grade, and poor attendance.

School dropouts seemed to be amongst the children with financially less generating family. These had maximum probability for children to drop out from the school. Rumberger (2011) said that socio-economic status, parent's education, and income were powerful predictor of the school dropouts in many situations of the school dropouts. Either directly or indirectly, parental assistance, moral support and conducive home contributed to retain students in the school, which were most of the time found to be not in practice by the parents of low income-earning group.

Children who experienced safe and healthy environment at home were enthusiastic in the classes. They performed better than those who come from broken families. Education of the parents, their way of parenting and societal belief also ascertained children's interest in continuing their studies in school.

Dorji and Kinga (2005), portrayed that the economic status, illiterate and less income earning parents contributed immensely in the livelihood of children to dropout from the school. Subsequently, Children were sometimes forced by various circumstances to leave school to find jobs. Most of them drop out to earn an income to support their parents and send their younger siblings to school. These children were not matured enough to realize their future prospects while they dropped out from the school.

Chua (2008) stated that most of the school dropouts

attempted to avail positional jobs based on its prestigious and security in the future. Their thought and choice was nevertheless bad. Dorji (2005), stated that 33% of the school dropouts were because of financial status of the family. As much as 31% of school dropouts were from a broken family with cases of either divorced or abused parents. Similarly, Lham and Kinga (2005) also claimed that parents' in-affordability as a reason scored the highest number of school dropouts. Interestingly, a study by Culvert Group Ltd. (n.d) reported that children from low socio-economic profile were four times likely to drop out before completing their graduation. Further in the subsequent research.

Some school dropouts as Dorji and Kinga (2005) asserted that school dropouts also expressed their dejection for not being able to continue their studies. Some school dropouts had even expressed that school expenses were barred them to discontinue going to school. Similarly, children, whose parents could not afford to provide basic necessities for the school, were highly vulnerable to be school dropouts. To a greater degree, parents' complacency about their children's education compelled more number of school dropouts.

The cause of the school dropouts was also derived from bully and influence by the previous school dropouts. Goleman (1995) stated firmly that, children, who dropped out from school were social rejects. The dropout rates for children who had been rejected by their peers were between two and eight times greater than for children who had friends. In another case, it was the desire of the child to obtain the status of adult roles. An excerpt taken from the research interview in Yangden (2009) said that most of the boys dropped out because of the need support their aged parents at home. In some cases, they also dropped out because they were bullied by the seniors in the school.

#### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper presents a qualitative design of research. Case study has been conducted to have the better understanding of the ongoing crises of drop-outs. 15 respondents were selected comprising 5 dropouts, their parents and 5 teachers. Semi structured interview was conducted to collect the data Data triangulations were done to substantiate the findings. The data collected was then put under thematic analysis.

##### Sampling

The present study employed the purposive sampling tool to understand the natural behaviour of the school dropouts. The sampling was chosen basically to draw the participants' experience on the school dropout case. The research also attempted to discover the meaning out of factors that affected school dropouts. The respondents chosen for the interview were the school dropouts from 2008 to 2014.

The samples were from a lower secondary school. The parents of the school dropouts and school dropouts themselves were from the locality. The sample also included the school's principal and teachers for the study. The ages of

the samples were in the age range of 15-24 years for the school dropouts. Four samples were from the school; a school principal, who served the school from 2008 to 2014 and four school teachers; two males and two females, who had served the school from 2010 to 2014.

Five school dropouts, who dropped out from the same school were chosen based on the purposive sampling method. Five parents of the school dropouts were also recruited as the participants. The immediate parents of the school dropout samples were chosen to develop a case and also to authenticate the data.

## V. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

### A. Semi-structured interview

The questions in the semi-structured interview were open-ended. The semi-structured interview tool was employed to interview the respondents on their experience and knowledge about the factors supporting school dropouts at a lower secondary school in southern Bhutan. Several times during the interview, the researcher had to probe and explain explicitly until the respondents were clear enough to reciprocate. Perhaps, probing and frequent clarification of the phrases helped in getting satisfying and rich experience on school dropouts' story.

### B. Documents

The documents related to school dropout case in a lower secondary school are presented in the present case study to validate the interview data. The documents used in the present study are permitted by the school authority. The case study used the documents selectively. Some of the important documents used were minutes of the staff coordination meeting, minutes of the disciplinary meeting and school dropout reports. These documents were used in the case study to interpret the validity of the data.

In detail, the present case study research had employed the following documents which qualified the Scott's four criteria. The documents were;

- Disciplinary meeting
- School annual school dropout report
- Monthly coordination meeting
- Disciplinary sanction and charge sheet
- Parent-teacher meeting
- School dropout summary
- Annual education statistics of the ministry of education

The present case study used the school documents with the prior consent of the school principal and the in-charges concerned. Documents used were to understand how a lower secondary school managed and handled the school dropout cases and what initiatives were taken to minimize the school dropouts' cases in a lower secondary school.

## VI. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Department of School Education under Ministry of Education permitted to carry out the study at the school level as a partial fulfillment of the Master's Degree in Leadership and Management Studies. The Dasho Dzungda of District administration Chhukha and Chief District

Education office also permitted the researcher to collect data. At a lower secondary school, the principal agreed to allow his teachers to be respondents for the interview. The study also got the approval for the school documents from the school principal.

Respondents in this case study were required to fill the consent form developed by the researcher. The format and style of the consent form was purely developed by the researcher. All ethically sensible components were used at the best of the researcher's knowledge. The respondents were required to fill the consent form only after they agreed to be the respondents for the semi-structured interview. The researcher explained and clarified the respondents on the format formalities and the purpose of the study. The respondents were allowed either allowed to accept or reject to be a respondent for the interview. The confidentiality of the the respondents were maintained and there was no coercion in taking part in this research.

## VII. DATA ANALYSIS

### A. Parental Factors

One of the underlying factors was the parents' lack of education and support that compelled school dropouts to discontinue education. Some teachers also viewed parent's illiteracy as one of the reasons that compelled school dropouts. A teacher respondent, for instance, articulated:

While a teacher respondent said that although they were illiterate, some parents had been trying their best to send their children to the school. Interestingly, some parent's sincerely accepted their weak support that triggered their child to drop out from the school.

Some school dropouts also emerged as their parents were illiterate. When parents were illiterate, they could not facilitate in providing required development of physical, mental, emotional, and psychological and interest of the school dropouts. Quite interestingly, some parents had no option but to obey school dropouts' choice to drop out from the school. The school received parents support in the form of manual work for the physical development of the school. Thus, parents weakness in providing moral and motivational support, greatly affected children to drop out from the school. Three out of five teacher respondents agreed that when parents were least bothered about their children's education, they compelled more children to be school dropouts, sooner or later. Some parents strongly held a belief that if their children did not do well in education, they were happy to have them as farmers.

When school dropouts were going to school, their parents never bothered whether they went to the school or not. In three out of five cases, parents did not turn up even when the school inquired about their children who were absent for many days. Thus, parents' reluctance to attend the meeting in respect of school dropout's absenteeism made them learn their parent's disapproval towards education. Development of such attitude by the parents signaled their children to easily plunge into being school dropouts. One of the teacher respondents said:

When children were back from the school, some parents did not provide time with children to do their academic homework at home. They were made to work at home. When children did not do home works and study on time, they could not cope up with their mates back in the school. They either did poorly or flunked, which either of the ways made them feel ashamed and disinterested. Thus, development of such attitude also made them school dropouts. A school dropout respondent noted: "I failed four times and I am ashamed of failing it again.

#### *B. Socio-economic Factors*

Past research on school dropouts pointed out socio-economic issue as the strong predictor of the school dropouts. This research also presented how parent's socio-economic status compelled school dropouts from the school.

The lower secondary school is also a feeding school that provided meals, supported by WFP for day scholars and RGoB feeding program for the boarder students. Further, all the text books and writing materials were issued free from the school. Further, the school also had Gyelpoi Tozeys; who were supported by His Majesty the King of Bhutan. One of the teacher respondents accented:

Three out of five teacher respondents and two parent respondents believed that one reason for students to dropout from the school was because of the socio-economic stability of the parents.

When school dropouts had no other siblings at home to look after their aged parents, they were genuinely forced to drop out from the school. Three out of five school dropout respondents decided to drop out to earn and look after the old aged parents. On the other hand, some of them dropped out from the school as they saw other students drop out. Most of the parents depended on the seasonal cash crops.

In the southern Bhutanese context, if a girl attained the age of marriage, the bride had to go to the groom's home. However, for a groom, he could bring the bride home. In which case, if all the siblings were girls, the parents had no one to look after them. A school dropout respondent said:

Some school dropouts were forced to look after the family at home. Parents believed that when children attended teenage, they were expected to be morally sound and live successfully. Many parent respondents expected children above the age of 15 years old to be capable of taking care of a family.

#### *C. Peer Pressure and Immaturity*

All parents, school teachers, and school dropouts themselves considered peer pressure as paramount agent that impelled school children to be school dropouts. The frequent cause of school dropouts in the school were because of the influence of the past school dropouts who were in the village. School dropouts' strong bond and attachment towards their peers in the village made them disinterested in the studies and the school became disturbance for them.

Children were frequently seen with their village peers. Most of the school dropouts were influenced by their past school dropouts. Even while going to school from their homes, they got diverted into playing with the peers in the village and became absent for several days. In this regard, parents and teachers blamed each other for the cause of the child's absenteeism in the school. When school dropouts were not cared by their parents with desired motivation and moral support, they easily got their attention diverted from the school academic activities.

School children were most likely to be school dropouts if they did not get moral support from the teachers and continuous guidance from the school as well.

#### *D. School Factors*

Many a time, the school allowed the past school dropout and village peers to play games in the school without restriction. In such case the school dropouts were carried away by the freedom that these peers in the village enjoyed. This perception triggered them to attend such freedom. Certain school practices such as strict rules for children to attend morning studies, attending regular social works, detention works for low graded misdemeanor, high academic expectations, teacher's negligence in understanding the child and resorting to physical manhandling were reasons children attempted to drop out from school.

When the misconduct of the child was extremely high, the school suspended the student. The third degree felony from severe disciplinary issues terminated children from the school. There were few cases of children who plunged into suspension but there were no history of terminations. One of the school documents revealed that a child (name hidden in the interested of the child) was made to write the statement and parent was made to write the undertaking letter. In which the resolution was that the child should be sent for fourteen days suspension. (Discipline meeting, 2013).

Persistent practice of such school activity de-motivated children. It also provided space for children to opt to drop out from the school. Although school had a written policy on the positive disciplining strategy, it was not sure whether the school was fair and just, and consistent in the implementation of the policy. Many a time, the sanctions on misdemeanor were not in accordance with the positive disciplining policy. For instance, some teachers were considerate in certain misdemeanor made by the child. While on the other hand, some teachers were strict and sanctioned them to carry out the detention work as felt by the concerned teacher. Having to carry out frequent detention works in the school literally made them feel ashamed in front of their school mates. Subsequently, they developed hatred for both the teacher and morning studies. Slowly, these children missed academic classes, performed poorly in the tests. Thereafter, they opted to drop out from the school.

### E. Academic Factors

The school is located in a remote setting. Although, it had never been in the top ten lists of the performing schools in the county, it did have lots of academic practices to bring about academic performance of the school in the top ten lists. School dropout's performance in the academics remained a serious concern for the school. The school has lot of academic activities for the children to keep them engaged. School dropouts were also likely to occur, if the school environment exerted heavy homework and academic pressures for the children.

Many school dropouts flunked the examinations and class tests several times. As they study in the same grade for two years and more, they felt older to their grade mates and instantly drew conclusions to drop out from the school. A teacher respondent pointed out: "Failing from the exam is also a reason.

Most often, day scholars did not do their home works because of the challenges at home and in the locality. Thus, students preferred to be boarders over being day scholars. However, interestingly, just because they were near school, the opportunity to get enrolled was a challenge. The school experienced good number of children who flunked exams every year. Because of their inability to do well in the examination, tests prepared them feel that they would definitely fail.

Thus, child's low achievement in academic resulted through the hatred they developed towards disciplinary sanctions and parent's poor guidance intensified the school dropout trend causing more school dropout turn outs every year. A document from the school also revealed that, children who were academically challenged and were frequently problematic in the school became school dropout.

### F. Employment Opportunity Threat

Many school dropout children developed a feeling that their cognitive competency and skills may not fetch them an opportunity in the job market in the future. They already knew the danger of not getting job in the market while at the same time they did not want to remain still and lose the place of seat for the future. Most of them had planned to plant cardamom, ginger and orange orchard to save their future. They wished to earn from these cash crops and accumulate the income in the bank account to be used latter on when they the time came. Although there was a teacher counselor in the school, school dropouts displayed apathetic knowledge about the career options and knowledge scopes. School dropouts felt that it was right decision for them to be school dropouts.

## VIII. KEY FINDINGS

Even though, the research site was located in a remote geographical setting, living standards of the people were not found to be too poor. All the parents of the school dropouts, who were respondents in the research, lived their life working on the seasonal cash crops such as cardamom, orange and ginger. The study understood that, although, the parents owned enough cash through sell of the seasonal cash

crops and the livestock products, their money management was found to be poor. Most of them spent their hard earned money on the alcohol.

Two of the parent respondents in the research earned their living mostly from the livestock products related to rearing poultry and cattle. However, parent's habit of the miss-management of the hard earned money was the only the main problem to most of the families during off seasons. Most of the parents and children in the schools were financed by the Kidu office of the His Majesty. Two parent respondents said that it was quite challenging for them to provide children with the requirements demanded by the school.

Moreover, most of the parents of the school dropouts were illiterate. Their illiteracy greatly impacted the school dropouts. Parents spent little time with the children at home. It was understood that parents demonstrated poor concern and care for the children's education at home. Parents never guided them in their children's academic learning. On the other hand, children dropped out whenever they felt like. This points out that parents could not make any positive decisions over the decisions made by their children.

The study drew three findings; firstly, parents were careless and showed poor concern on the children's educational matters. The result of carelessness and poor concerns hampered the relationship between the school dropout and the parent. Secondly, parent's consumption of alcohol at home indirectly aggravated children's disinterest towards learning. Thirdly, parents' illiterate background did remain as supportive factor for children to easily drop out from the school.

There were strong evidences of peer pressure as solid and genuine triggers that obligated the present school dropouts from the school. Some evidences drawn during the interview and while talking to the school dropout respondents were; most of school dropouts spent their time with the peers in the village. Even while they were in the school, the school dropouts spent most of their leisure time with the peers in the village. Four out of five school dropouts showed strong attachment with the peers in the village. This clearly pointed out that one of the causes of the school dropouts was because of the peer pressure and influential peers in the village.

Most of the school dropouts in this research developed disinterest in learning. The very cause of the disinterest in the academic learning was shadowed by the peers. The research site was dominated by uneducated personals. There were fewer personals that they looked up to. The school dropout's thoughts and philosophies in the life were governed by the uneducated parents and peers.

This case study research reveals that most of the school disciplinary issues were related to absenteeism. However, there was a weak strategy to motivate and advice the children to come to school. Thus, study came to an understanding that teachers lacked motivating strategy to curb the disruptive attendance of the children. The school

documents showed that all the disciplinary decisions were taken as per the directives of the positive disciplining strategy guidelines endorsed by the Ministry of Education. However, certain changes were accommodated in view of the context of the school. Nonetheless, it was learned that the school needed to give enough time for children to change and transform their thoughts, behaviours and attitudes to slowly align towards the school's norms. Whenever there were disruptive behaviours, immediate meetings were held and resolutions were drawn.

Many school dropouts were also compelled by failures in their academic achievements. The school document on the promotion meeting minutes witnessed more number of children failing in exams. Some of triggers for children to flunk in their exams and test were absenteeism, without textbook and notebooks, non-compliance to the homework activities, long walking distance from home to the school and poor reading habits in children.

### IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Revitalization of Non-formal Education:** The District needs to establish at least an institution or revitalize Non-Formal Education (NFE) scheme to gain literacy rate of the parents. This strategy may acquaint parents to support their children's education at home. The NFE syllabuses need to include fundamental literacy and parent-child attachment module to enhance the parent's understanding of the children's growth and development.
- **Expansion of Vocational Trainings:** Ministry of education and Dzongkhag Administration also need to outsource budgets and draw program plans to re-educate the schools dropouts in the village. The organizations could also direct the schools with financial assistances to provide outdoor education, so that the school dropouts' thinking and responsibility will have a positive impact in the attainment of the national mission and goals.
- **Advocacy Programmes:** At the community level, the school could coordinate frequent educational awareness on modules such as children's learning and understanding the children to help parents gain enough knowledge and understanding to cope up with the daily educational challenges. Moreover, it might help parents bring up their children and transform the parental care.
- **Enhancing Gewog and School coordination:** The school-parent teacher meeting needs to involve Gewog administration and entrust them to discuss on strategies to enhance parent-students relationship and bonding and also to bring about positive discussions on school dropout problems.
- **Amendment of school Policy:** The study also recommends parents' need to grow attachment to their children and need to spend good enough time with their children. Some insightful and strategic actions need to be drawn by the school to curb the school dropouts. Certain school rules and students management procedures need to be amended to suit and cater to the need and benefit of the children.
- **Positive Disciplining Strategy:** Schools need to use positive disciplining strategy wisely and consistently by all

the teachers. The study revealed that the teachers in the school were not consistently using the disciplinary policy. Some teachers used it stringently, while others used it leniently. The school administration needs to emphasize importance on orienting school positive disciplining strategy to the teachers, students, and parents frequently. Similarly, students need to be given enough time to transform their habits and behaviours before taking the disciplinary decisions.

- **Parent Teacher Meetings:** One of the method to curb the problem of the school dropout is to increase the frequency of the meeting between the teachers and the parents. It is time in conscience that there is close acquaintance and collaboration between the teachers and the parents. They must come close and discuss the matters that would benefit the students at the end.
- **Career Counselling:** One of the effective methods that can minimize the cases of school dropouts is through the career counselling. Many students are oblivious about the future career prospectus compounded by the insecurity of the jobs in the future owing to more educated population and less jobs available in the market. So giving career education and counselling can be beneficial to the students.

### X. LIMITATIONS

Some of the hardships encountered while conducting this research were time, space and finance. Thus, readers must critically analyze and understand the study's scope and its applicability.

First, as the study was carried out as winter residential Education Leadership and Management Masters, the "observation" as study tool could not be used because of the limited time and space of the study. However, if the observations tool was used in a similar study, it would have provided added meaning during the data interpretation. Further, inclusion of observation as research tool would have provided scope of understanding complete home culture behaviour and parent-school dropout's behaviour. More so, it would also provide scope for the research to derive authentic and reliable data from the observations of classroom teaching and teacher's aptitude in student's management and motivational skills. For instance, in this study, when parents said that their children did not stay at home but always went out with their friends, the research analysis was greatly hampered because of the lack of observation documents to authenticate.

Second, the study was done in a remote school, with only fifteen respondents. Hence, the findings may not necessarily help understand the nature of the school dropout's beyond the context of the research study site. If the study had scope of including more number of school dropouts and parents, the study could have given rich source of understanding and analysis. It would also have been better, if at least all thirteen schools under the Dungkhag Administration were sampled for the study. However, the scope of including more schools as sample in the study was greatly disadvantaged because of the time constraint.

The study also should have included all the school dropouts in the village. There were lots of school dropouts from various schools and grades from different school. However, the study did not include them as respondents as the present study was designed to understand how a particular school compelled school dropouts. Further, the research included only five school dropouts who dropped out from the school from 2012-2015.

Furthermore, the study was also greatly limited by the researcher. Had the researcher been a southern Bhutanese, it would have been efficient. The research experienced tough time during the interview especially while transcribing the data from Lhotshamkha to English. Most of the parents and school dropout respondents could not understand Dzongkha and speak Dzongkha clearly.

## XI. CONCLUSION

School dropout was not an emerging issue anywhere in the world and especially in the context of Bhutan. It was really an educational and social crisis. Although the trend and the scale of the school dropout was not too alarming, it was an important issue to be discussed anywhere in the educational and social forums. As it was an important issue, it had called on the interest of many educationists, school leaders, teachers and researchers to better understand the case. Any published research would point out same yet peculiar in the nature of the problem. As the supporting factors of the school dropouts were multifaceted, it may not be possible to point out one single solution of eradicated the problem.

The problem was a nation's concern; all the bureaucracies, diplomats, educationists, parents and school institutions know it is a genuine problem. The initiatives were also been taken to consider and to facilitate less school dropouts. But the nature and problem itself was multidimensional, the actions drawn to curb the incidence of school dropouts did not matter too much. The strategies implemented rather did not hit the target. Firstly, it was based in the context, the community, the school, and cultural beliefs and thoughts, the strategies that were brought into the system had done no better job. The school dropout problem was unlikely ever to go away. But concerted and cooperative efforts by educators, policymakers, and educational researchers can improve our understanding of the problem and help reduce incessant occurrence.

The future research efforts need to move beyond the earlier efforts while building on them. Many recent research papers on school dropouts were simply the descriptive nature of earlier studies with recent data. The future research efforts should focus on developing multivariate, longitudinal, and comprehensive models of the causes and consequences of school dropouts across the school grades. Additional research effort may be needed in conducting systematic evaluations of dropout prevention and recovery programs.

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