The Study about the Factors and Agencies that Creates the Reason for School Dropouts and the Impact of the School dropouts to their Family and to the Society in the Urban area of Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Abstract: **This sociological study is done based on Children who are considered to be the School Dropouts of Adolescents in the Urban area of Colombo, Sri Lanka. These Children live under the care of their Parents, grandparents, and with other care givers. The school dropouts in the Urban area of Colombo are found to be the victims of a society which is corrupted strongly due to Socio-Economic factors. The main objective of this Research article is to look into the main causes for students to dropout halfway of their schooling. The primary and secondary data were collected by providing questioners, interviews, and observations using accepted data collecting methods. The collected data are presented using most suited methods to analyze data by charts, tables and descriptive methods. The Parents, Teachers and Key Informants are being questioned as to why the percentage of School dropouts in this area is high and vulnerable. In order to achieve this objective, the questioners have been used particularly with School Dropouts and with their Parents further conduct interviews with Teachers and Key-Informants.**

Keywords: **Adolescent, Dropout, Factors, Agencies, Poverty, Family.**

I. INTRODUCTION

It is observed that in every nation Education for the young generation is much highlighted. It encourages the individual to develop his mental, physical, emotional and spiritual talents to the full. Understandably, the word Education derives from the Latin word e-ducere, which means to lead out. In advance industrial societies Education is provided by the state as a matter of right for all its citizens. Formal institutions, schools, Colleges and universities are organized for this purpose. (M. Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011, P.172). The technical understanding in other words is to transmit the stored knowledge, values and skill from one generation to another. The Global publication of human rights and the act of child rights state that the education is a universal human need. This is also a very powerful human right including freedom and democracy. They are staffed by fulltime professional practitioners, Teachers and Lecturers. Attendance at schools is compulsory; it is upheld by legal sanctions. Education is provided free of charge, though ultimately it is paid for by the tax payer. Although free compulsory state Education is largely taken for granted today and regarded as a perfectly normal and natural state of affairs, it is important to remember that it is a very recent development in the history of man.

The word education has a complex meaning in a broader sense. Further, Education is always on the development process with new adoptions in any country. (Reddy, 1979). Education for human beings and animals has a different meaning. That means, the human beings could be educated always while animals are being trained. French sociologist Emile Durkheim saw the major function of education as the transmission of Society's norms and values. He maintained that "Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands". Durkheim argues that in complex industrial societies, the school serves a function which cannot be provided either by the family or peer groups. Further he says that Education teaches the individual specific skills necessary for his future occupation. (M. Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011, p. 175).

According to the "Sustainable Development" introduced in Brunt Land Report – 1972 of United Nations and Millennium development goals suggested to start in 2000 up to the end of 2015 and its annexure, the younger generation should be provided with a meritocratic education because many issues faced by the present society can be solved through it. Researches done by many of the recognized international organizations including UNESCO, state that most of the children who are in the schooling age, have not received their primary Education. Education is the basic foundation of a person's life. Therefore, not providing proper education causes to bring bad results to children as well as to the whole society where they live. American sociologist Talcott Parsons argues that after primary socialization within the family, the school takes over as the focal socialization agency. School acts as a bridge between the family and society as a whole, preparing the child for his adult role. Parsons sees the

Educational system as an important mechanism for the selection of individuals for their future role in society. According to the UNESCO report in 2016, 52% of the world population is urban population (8 billion). One billion of the world population belongs to the urban community who receive low income according to the same report and they live in slums. This slum population has a very low economy and their poverty has become their culture. Therefore, this community is the source of many social issues that are directly affected to the co-existence and the development of the human society. socialist states that many deviant and delinquent behaviors such as prostitution, suicides, drug addiction, begging as a profession, underworld criminality, family problems, child abuse etc. have been created by its community.

Use of alcohol and other drugs among school children is a current global problem giving rise to many health hazards, psychosocial problems and reduced school performances, both in academic work and in sports. These problems are also seen in Sri Lanka and very few studies have been done to estimate their prevalence. Furthermore, no not worthy actions have been taken to improve this situation. (National Dangerous drugs control Board, RESEARCH MONOGRAPH, 2006, p. 146). In the first place, need to discuss the vast amount of resources provided on Education. The highlighted fact is that in Sri Lanka, it is free Education and not only that even government provides free provision of textbooks, uniforms and mid-day meals. It records that the literacy rate of Sri Lanka stands as 92% for adults and 97% for youths. (Perera, 2012). This is a major drawback in schools located specially in the urban areas of Colombo. Thus, the literal meaning of School dropouts can be noted as "A student who leaves the school before completing the education for any reason other than death or without transferring to another school". (Perera, 2012). It has been revealed that the highest numbers of school dropouts are from low-income families in urban areas and them quitting education halfway through has a disastrous effect on society. (Ministry of Education, 2017). Even among them, school dropout is frequent among adolescent children (11-18 years of age).

II. METHODOLOGY

Research refers to a search for new knowledge. It is a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. To Redman and Mory, "Research is a systematized effort to gain new knowledge". (Sminatharatnam and Chandra, 2004). Methods are methods of data gathering and interpretation, whereas methodology is concerned with the theoretical assumptions about methods. (Uyangoda, 2011). This research followed a mixed method design including both qualitative and quantitative research designs. Quantitative research analysis will be utilized to gather ground data of the school dropouts where qualitative research design will be employed to follow the narratives of the other entities related to the subject. The quantitative research design will allow the researcher to understand the family structure, economic structure and their societal relationship towards the community through their relationship among various community organizations of their social setting. Qualitative research design permitted the researcher to identify the unique stories of each and every school dropout regarding the real-life situations that they live.

The School dropouts and their families in Modara and Mattakkuliya of Sri Lanka are taken as the study population of the study. There are 50 families with students who do not attend schools and they are considered as school dropouts. (Field Survey, 2020). It will be non-random methods in selecting the sample of the study. Particularly 5 "Gramasevaka Areas" will be monitored. It is observed that Modara has 3 "Grmasevaka Areas" while Mattakkuliya has 2 "Gramasevaka Areas". The key informant such as School Teachers, Principals, and Gramasevakas (Headman of the Village) will be selected purposively.

The researcher employed a structured questionnaire which will be followed by interview. The first interview will be done with children and second interview will be with their parents and Guardians. Thirdly, the Teachers will be interviewed and the key-informants as well. The questions of the questionnaire were ninety percent designed with close ended questions whereas researcher will interview each and every dropout selected from purposive sample in filling the answers to all the questions.

III. MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

According to Functionalism, the society is studied as a system, that is as a set of interconnected parts which together form a whole. The basic unit of analysis is society and its various parts are understood primarily in terms of their relationship to the whole. The early functionalists often drew an analogy between society and an organism such as the human body. They argued that an understanding of any organ in the body, such as the heart or lungs, involves an understanding of its relationship to other organs and in particular, of its contribution towards the maintenance of the organism. In the same way, an understanding of any part of society requires an analysis of its relationship to other parts and most importantly, of its contribution to the maintenance of society. In order for these essential services to be maintained, individuals must be sufficiently motivated to perform their roles. If they were totally apathetic, the social system would collapse through lack of effort. These socio-economic variables are an ideal descriptive cross-cutting which illustrate the realistic and profound circumstances of students who are living in a specific area. This phenomenon is studied under the topic of "School Dropouts of Adolescents in the Urban Area of Colombo, Sri Lanka and possible Strategies towards Continuous Education" and for this Colombo Divisional Secretariat of Sri Lanka is selected because in which it is visible that in the urban areas which exists the large number of school dropouts.

TABLE I. Number of Sample selected for the study

Police Division	GS Division	Sample Size			
		Students	Parents	Teachers	Key Informants
Modara	Modara	10	5	5	2
	Aluth Mawathe	10	5	5	2
	Lunu Pokuna	10	5	5	2
Mattakkuliya	Mattakkuliya	10	5	5	2
	Samithpura	10	5	5	2
Total		110			

In aiming and focusing the objectives of the study, five GS divisions namely Modara, Aluth Mawatha, Lunu Pokuna, Mattakkuliya and Samithpura in Colombo Divisional Secretariat division of Sri Lanka were selected. During the background analysis the researcher observed that the urban area of Colombo recorded the highest number of school dropouts (Perera, 2012).

3.1 Family Related Factors.

Many sociologists have regarded the family as the cornerstone of society. It forms basic unit of social organization and it is difficult to imagine how human society could function without it. Although the composition of the family varies, for example in many societies two or more wives are regarded as the ideal arrangement, such differences can be seen as minor variations on a basic theme. In general, therefore, the family has been seen as a universal social institution, as an inevitable part of human society.

In a study **"Social Structure", George Peter Murdock** Examined the institution of the family in a wider range of societies. Murdock took a sample of 250 societies ranging from small hunting and gathering bands to large-scale industrial societies. He claimed that some form of family existed in every society and concluded, on the evidence of his sample, that the family is Universal. Murdock defines the family as follows, 'the family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually co-habiting adults. Thus, the family lives together, pools its resources and works together and produces offspring. At least two of the adult members conduct a sexual relationship according to the norms of their particular society.

The smallest family unit is known as the nuclear family and consists of a husband and wife and their immature offspring. Units larger than the nuclear family are usually known as extended families. Such families can be seen as extensions of the basic nuclear unit, either vertical extensions or horizontal extension.

The primary socialization probably, the most important aspect of the socialization process, take place during infancy, usually within the family. By responding to the approval and disapproval of its Parents and copying their example, the child learns the language and many of the basic behavior patterns of its society. The young child, by interacting with other and playing childhood games, learns to conform to the accepted ways of a social group and appreciate the fact that social life is based on rules. Socialization is not however, confined to childhood. It is a lifelong process. Without socialization, an individual would bear little resemblance to any human being defined as normal by the standards of his society. Thus, after the Primary socialization the school take over the secondary socialization. (Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011).

3.1.1 Age of the Student when Admitting to the School and the Person who is Interested in Educating the Child.
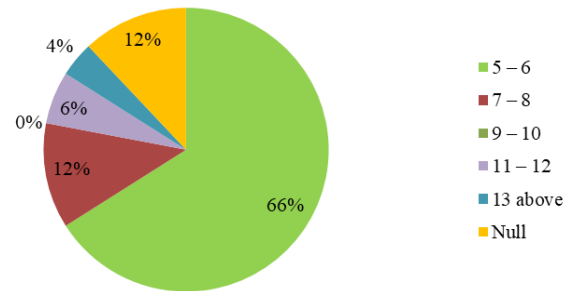

Fig. 1. Age of the student when admitting to the school
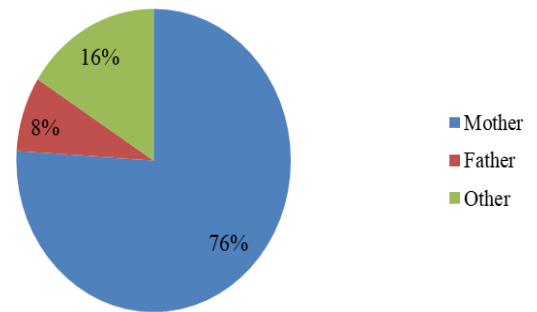
Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 2. Person who is interested in educating the child

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

In every society there is a recommended age for a child to be admitted to a school for primary education. Thus, in Sri Lanka it stands as age 5 and 6. The researcher finds that in this area of study, children are admitted to the school at different ages due to many reasons. (66%) of children age between 5-6 have been admitted to schools, (12%) of children age between 7-8, (0%) of children age between 9-10, (6%) of children age between 11-12, (4%) of children age 13 and above and (12%)

children are not aware of their age when admitted to the school. Understandably, the admittance of children to schools has proceeded at different ages.

The researcher identifies that Mother of these children most of the time have been interested in schooling the child. The field data highlights that (76%) of Mothers have tried to school the child anyhow. It is pathetic that (8%) of Fathers have tried to school the child while (16%) by someone else.

3.1.2 By whom the student is Admitted to the School and Education Status of the Parents and Guardian.

The most important aspect of a child is the beginning of the school life after completing the life in the family and in the nursery.

Fig. 3. Person who is admit the child to school
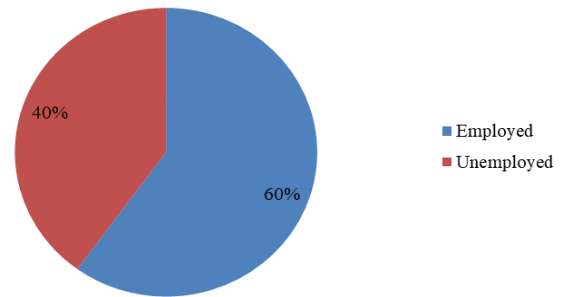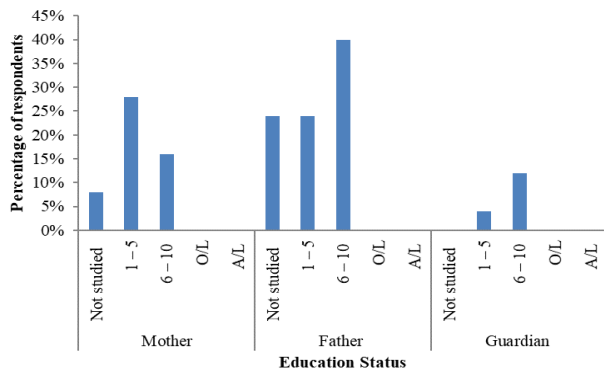
Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 4. Education Level of the Parents / Guardian

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The students confess that during the field survey that (36%) of Mothers have admitted their child to the school, (20%) of children have been admitted to schools by their Father while (44%) of children were being admitted to the schools by their Guardians or by someone else in the family. What is highlighted here is, majority of children have been admitted to schools not by their parents but by someone else.

The researcher interviewed the Parents of these children during his field survey and found the education level of them

as noted in the above chart. (8%) of Mothers of these children are not gone to any school and (24%) of Fathers of these children are not gone to schools anyhow. (28%) of Mothers have studied only between grade 1-5, (24%) Fathers have studied between grade 1-5 while (4%) of Guardians have studied between 1-5. Then about (16%) of Mothers have studied between grade 6-10, (40%) of Fathers have schooled between grade 6-10 while (12%) of Guardians have schooled between 6-10. What is highlighted here in this interview was the researcher found that none of them have studied up to O/L and A/L. there is no any single parent who has studied up to O/L.

3.1.3 Nature of the Occupation of the Parents or the Guardian and the Nature of the Income.

Fig. 5. Employment Status of the parents

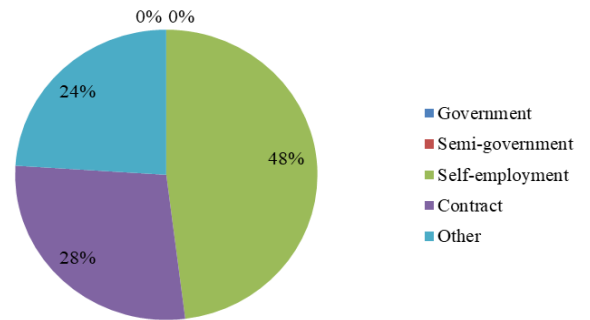Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 6. Nature of the occupation of the parents

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

When it comes to the occupation of the parents and guardians the researcher finds that (60%) of them are doing something to earn for the living and (40%) of them are not at all doing anything.

The researcher finds that there is no anyone working in the government sector and in the semi-government sector. (48%) of parents and Guardians are engaged in self-employments and (28%) of them are on contract while (24%) of them are engaged in quick jobs that they find in and around them.
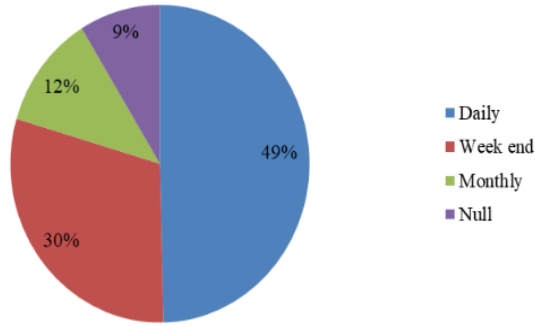
Fig. 7. Nature of the salary of the parents

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The salaries of these parents and Guardians vary and (68%) of them are daily wages, (41%) them receive their salary on weekends. There is (16%) who receive their salary on monthly basis and (12%) of them receive nothing.

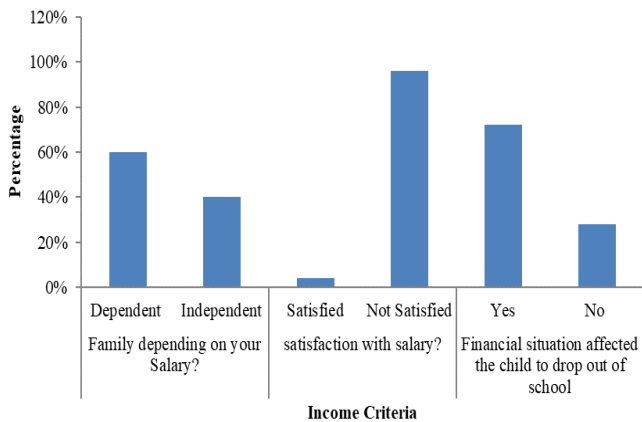*3.1.4 Poverty, Low level of Income, Economic instability and Job insecurity.*

Fig. 8. Poverty Status

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher finds that (60%) of families depend on the salary of their own and (40%) of them confess that not on their salary only. The question raised by the researcher about the satisfaction of their salary, (96%) of them said that these parents are not satisfied with what they receive and only (4%) of them are satisfied with the salary they receive.

Thereafter, the question raised by the researcher was the affection of their financial situation to their child to dropout of school. It is highlighted that (72%) of them say that their financial situation has affected the child to terminate his or her schooling.

3.1.5 Family Relationship and Contribution of the Parents and Guardians.
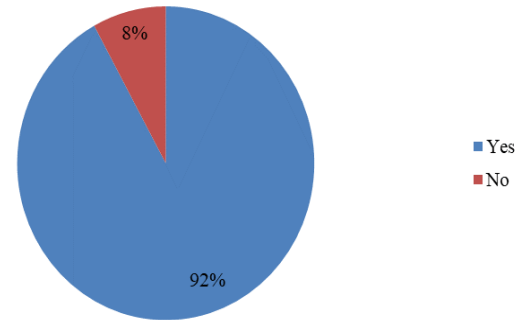

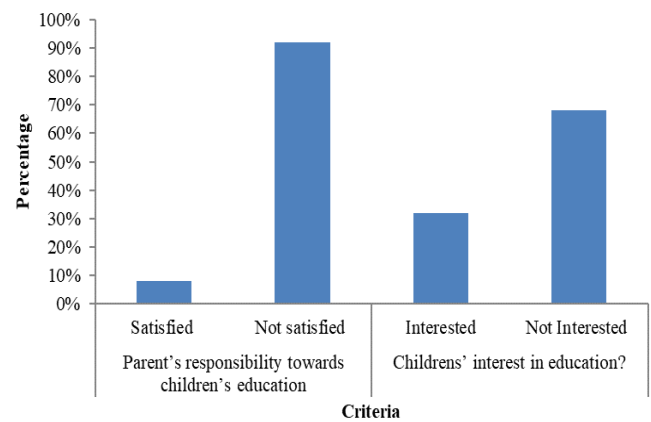Fig. 9. Relationship Status of the family

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 10. Parents Contribution to the Children's Education

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher interviewed the school Teachers (25) of this study area and other ten (10) key informants for his study. The Teachers were interviewed basically on few questions and one of them is to find whether the family of the child has affected the child to dropout of school. (92%) teachers' response is "yes" and (8%) says "No". likewise, the key informants answered the same question and from them (100%) say that family has affected the child to terminate from schooling.

The school teachers who were interviewed by the researcher expressed themselves about the Parents interest towards their children. (92%) not satisfied with the interest of the parents towards the education of their children and only (8%) of them are satisfied. Accordingly, the for the question whether children are interested on education, responded (32%) positively and (68%) negatively. The researcher understands this a serious issue to the society of the future.

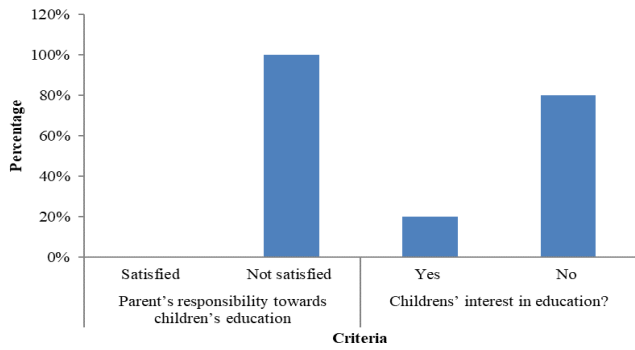### 3.1.6 Parents Responsibility and Children's Interest

Fig. 11. Parents Responsibility and Children's Interest

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Likewise, the key informants whom the researcher interviewed (100%) not happy with the parent's interest and dedication towards the education of their children. The specialty is that only (20%) of children are interested on education according to the teachers interview and (80%) of children are not interested on education. This is once again another extra burden to the society in the near future.

3.2 School Related Factors.

When searching the reasons for the children to dropout of school, the school related factors are very impotent to reflect upon. The grassroot level interviews with students could certainly provide valuable and concrete factors as to how they have caused the children to terminate their studies at schools.
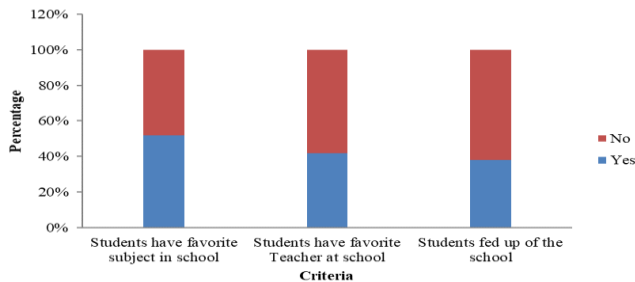

Fig. 12. Subject and Teacher Preferences

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The ground level interview with students directs the researcher to identify that (52%) of children have had a favorite subject at school and (48%) of children have been without any favorite subject.

For Children also there have been a favorite teacher during their schooling and (42%) children have had a favorite teacher at school while (58%) of children have been without a favorite teacher.

The researcher also searched whether the child is fed up of education provides. Field data highlights that (62%) of them

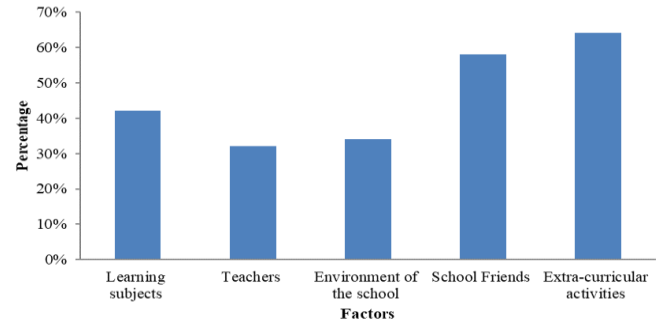confessed that they are not fed up of their schooling while (38%) of them say yes.

Fig. 13. Factors prefers by the children to go to school

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher also wants to discover the happiest factors of children during their schooling and accordingly (42%) of children liked the subjects, (32%) of children liked the Teachers, (34%) of children liked the school environment, (58%) of children liked the school friends and (64%) of children liked the school extra-curricular activities.

3.2.1 Facility issues Caused for Students to Drop out of School and Issues in the Government Education System.
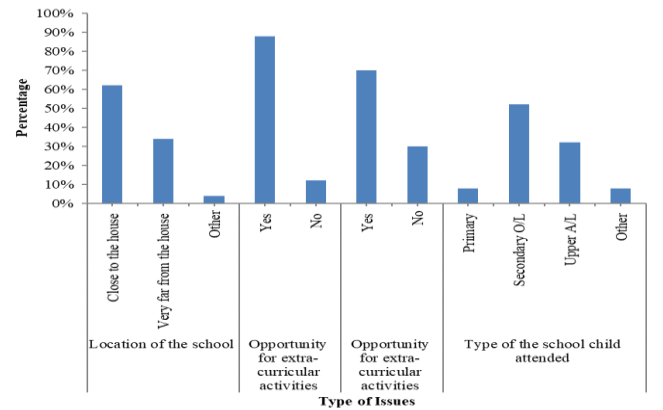

Fig. 14. Facility issues Caused for Students to Drop out of School
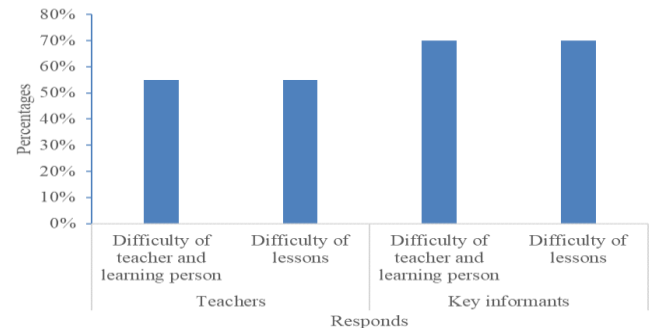
Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 15. Issues in the Government Education System

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

It is observed that (62%) of children say that their school has been very close to them and about (34%) children say that their school is very far while (4%) has been neutral.

According to teachers (88%) say that there are facilities for extra-curricular activities and at the same time according to the key informants, (70%) say that there are enough facilities in schools.

There (8%) of primary schools, (52%) of schools are up to grade 11 and (32%) of schools are up to advance level.

It is much identified that during the interview with students (68%) comment about the difficulty of Teaching and Learning process available in their school secondly, these children have the problem of the difficulty of understanding the lessons (68%). This fact is much obvious and proved by the teachers who are in school in this area. Evidently, (60%) teachers noted about the difficulty of understanding the lessons and another (60%) claims the difficulty of teaching and Learning Process of the Government Education system. This fact is much clarified by the key informants too. Convincingly, (70%) of them note the difficulty of understanding the lessons and (70%) of them highlight the difficulty of Teaching and Learning Process for these students in Modara and Mattakkuliya. Therefore, this evaluation is a serious fact for the children in school in this area.

3.2.2 The Stages where the Greatest Number of School Dropouts are Found.
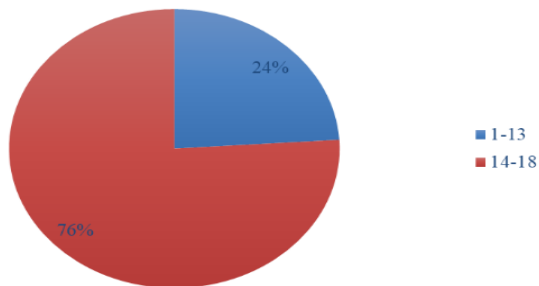

Fig. 16. The Number of School Dropouts by Age

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The field data clearly proves and approves that the age 14 is found to be the vulnerable age. This is the age much discovered by the researcher that many students begin to experiment certain things and habits available in their vicinity. It is observed that (76%) of students age 14 and above have been dropped out.

A age 14 student, according to the Government Education system of Sri Lanka, should be in Grade 09 and which means he or she has not yet sat for the O/L examination. For the Primary Education the children are anyhow connected but the crisis begins from Grade 09 and upward. Hence, it is clearly manifesting the children are dropped out without the O/L.

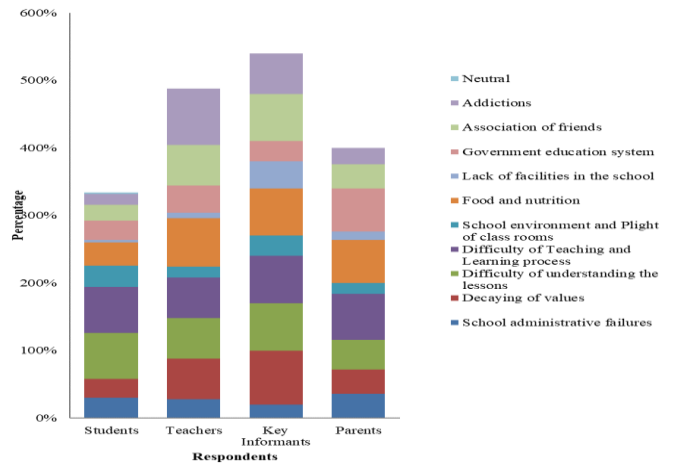*3.2.3 Closest Reasons for Students to Drop out of School.*

Fig. 17. Reasons For dropout School

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

According to the students there are number of reasons for them to dropout of school. First, the difficulty of understanding the lessons and (68%) of children have this problem. The second reason is the existing teaching and learning process that is available in Sri Lanka and again (68%) of children have given this reason. Next the closest reason is the food and nutrition and (34%) of children have this problem. Then the school administrative failures, (30%) children have confessed this. Next the decaying of values and (28%) of children have highlighted this fact. Then the school environment and plight of class rooms and this has caused (32%) of children. (28%) of government education system has caused. Association of friends also have come up as a reason and (24%) of children have observed this fact. The lack of facilities in the school stands as (4%). Involvement of addictions contains (16%) while (2%) has been neutral.

According to the Teachers the very reason is the addictions of children to various unwanted and unhealthy habits available in the society. According to them this fact contains the highest percentage of (84%). Secondly, teachers highlight the food and nutrition as (72%). Thirdly, teachers highlight four factors which contain the same percentage of (60%) such as decaying of values, difficulty of understanding the lessons, difficulty of teaching and learning process and association of friends. Fourthly, teachers note the government education system and it stands as (40%). The fifth fact is the school administrative failures, (28%) of teachers have highlighted this fact. The (16%) of school environment and plight of class rooms while 8% of teachers have said that lack of facilities have caused the children to dropout of school.

According to the key informants, (80%) of them have highlighted decaying of values and secondly four factors which contains the (70%) such as difficulty of understanding the lessons, difficulty of teaching and learning process, food

and nutrition and association of friends. Thirdly, (60%) of key informants have observed the addictions. Fourthly, the (40%) as lack of facilities. Fourthly, again two factors which have (30%) and they are school environment and plight of class rooms and government education system. Finally, key informants highlight (20%) of school administrative failures.

According to the parents, the first reason is the difficulty of teaching and learning process and (68%) of parents have expressed this fact. Secondly there are two reasons which contains the same percentage of (64%) such food and nutrition and government education system. Thirdly, (44%) of parents have highlighted difficulty of understanding the lessons. Fourthly, once again there are three reasons of the same percentage of (36%) such as school administrative failures, decaying of values and association of friends. The fifth reason, (24%) of parents have said it is because of various addictions. The sixth reason is the school environment and plight of class rooms and (16%) of parents have this fact as one of the reasons. Finally, (12%) says the lack of facilities in the school.

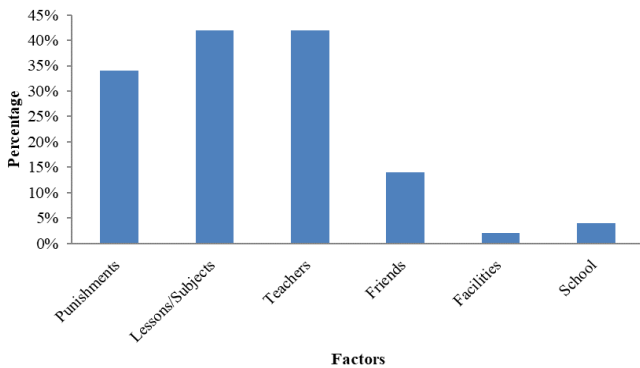### 3.2.4 Reasons to Dislike Schools

Fig. 18. Reasons to Dislike Schools

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher also interviewed the bitter experience of the children during their schooling. First of all, two factors came across as main reasons for children to drop out of school, they are subjects and Teachers. (42%) of children stated these two reasons. Secondly about (34%) of children have stopped going to school due to punishments. (14%) of children have stopped schooling due to bad friends. (4%) of children highlight the school as the reason. Finally (2%) due to the facilities.

3.3. Impact to the Family

3.3.1 Teachers Perspective.

Here the researcher focuses his attention on the impact of the school dropouts to the family and to the society. First of all, the attention is drawn to discuss as to how school dropouts affected the family. The teachers, (56%) states that school dropouts affect the other siblings of the family while (44%)

state no. The key informants (90%) states that school dropouts affect the other siblings of the family while (10%) state no.
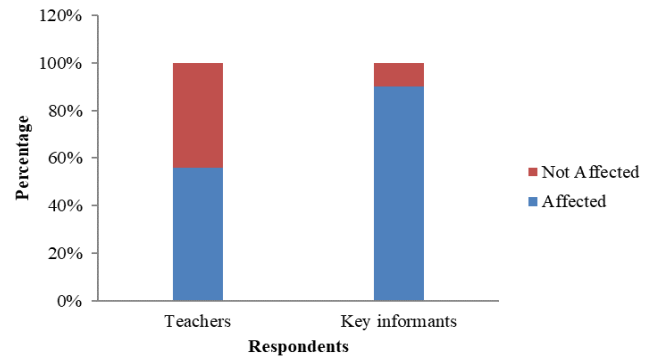

Fig. 19. Effect of the school dropouts to the other siblings

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

It is observed that school drop outs in this area is uncontrollable and these children are at times not obedient to their Parents. Therefore, the key informants highlight that they join different groups available in their vicinity. Most of the time children see swords, knives, drugs, violence, and hear filthy words etc…

"Apart from few the majority is out of the control of their parents and it contains a wicked, tough, and aggressive life situation". K/02

The culture of this area has to be changed; there are very famous three under world groups exist, such as "Samithpura, Vella, Blue Mandole" and popular figures have come out from these three units. Thus, children come from these cultures and therefore, drugs, murder, kidnaps etc…are very common for children. T/19

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher convinces himself, which means these children do not have a strong connection with the family although they live in the family. These children create aims and targets in life and this is due to the geographical area that they live. This would understand better with the following testimony by one of the Teachers.

"The connection with the family is less. Most of the boy's aim is to buy a three-wheeler anyhow. And girl always try to get married to a taxi driver and this act has been a big show in this context. For boys also, it is a giant work if they could buy a three-wheeler and then to hang around wearing a big neckless around the neck". T/02

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The Teachers note that this area is famous for drugs and at least one in the family deals with drugs or uses drugs. In many occasions, time to time at least one or both live in prisons. Thus, children from these families naturally drop out of

school and not only that these children openly say that their Parents are in Prison.

"In these areas where children live are very famous for drugs and there is at least one in the family who uses drugs who deals with drugs. Therefore, you find at least one or both in the Prison or else at least once they are caught dealing with drugs. Thus, children from these families drop out of school easily since they don't have boost from the parents to continue schooling". T/18

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The children are not continuous for the education and the reason is once the child receives an opportunity to earn something on a particular day, then the child stays at home and engage in doing the work for money.

"When it is questioned; the younger child used to say that his Brother is not coming to school these days because he is engaged in a little work to earn something". T/02

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The next factor that the researcher identifies is that there are families who move from place to place seeking jobs. This causes children lack of protection at home and children move out of the house and without their knowledge, they are thrown into unnecessary activities.

"Parents move place to place in search of jobs and thus Children do not have protection at home. Thus, children get out of house and get involved in many other activities". T/10
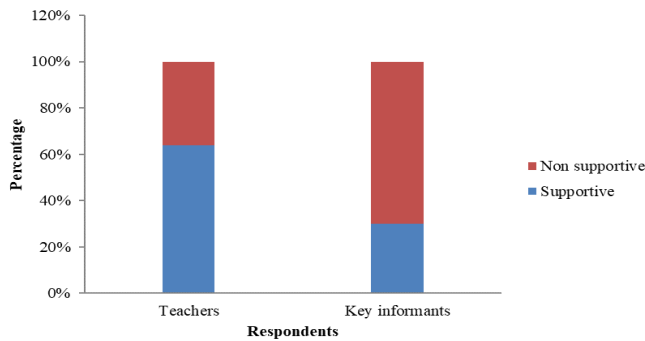
Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 20. Issues in the Government Education System

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

According to teachers (64%) say that these children help the parents in their home affairs but this evaluation different when it comes to the key informants. (70%) of key informants express that these children do not support the parents.

The researcher also come across the Parents who are genuinely concern about their children. There are Parents who even try to join the child for vocational training if he or she is not schooling.

"There are Parents who actually concern about their children. Even child does not go to school they try to bring the child to another vocational training institute thinking that their child would be abused being at home". T/11

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

There are also Parents who are fed up of encouraging their child to continue schooling. At times these Parents reprimand the child but parents have not been successful in their attempt. This fact is discovered by school teachers, in this area.

"There are Parents who say that there is no any strong connection with the family. What they say is; 'useless of reprimanding the child Teacher he doesn't listen to me'". T/09

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

There are also school dropouts who genuinely confess and wish their own brother and sisters' good education because they do not want to see their brother or the sister getting into the same problem.

"There many children who say that their Brother or Sister should not be fallen into the same well that I have fallen. So, they wish something better for their own Brother or Sister". T/14

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

There is a pathetic fact that came out from the Interviews of school teachers that many a time when there is a school dropout at home the other siblings try to go the way that his or her brother or sister has gone.

"Yes, the way the elder brother or the Sister goes will be definitely followed by the younger brother or by the younger Sister in the Family". T/05

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Understandably, one excited fact that reveals is, there are families the Mother has a baby and at the same time her own Mother too has a baby living together at one house. This is a vulnerable situation that finds in this study area.

"There are families where we find children from mother and from her own Mother as well living together". T/17

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The ignorance of the Parents on sexual life and the weight of the family, they fall into difficulties and accordingly children also fall into the same difficulty since they do not have a proper guidance at home and area around they live.

"Most of the time the ignorance of the Parents has caused the children to drop out of school". T/04

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Therefore, the researcher understands that most of the time the children take their parents as example and role model in their rest of the life. These people do not know that there is a life out of their territory.

> "What Parents do and what they have done in life will be followed by their children and definitely they would also do the same one day". T/01

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

3.3.2 Parents Perspective.

It is very essential to evaluate the perspectives from Parents in this regard. The Parents confess that the school dropouts used to spend the time just lying at home and Parents could be happy at least if they do something to earn something.

> "Child spends the time at home and does not do any job. This child anyhow did not go to any school". P/01

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher finds that parents brings up few concerns about the schools of their children that have been attending. The complaint is the lack of pleasant environment in schools. The second fact that is highlighted is the discipline of children.

> "School is not good and there is no any conducive learning experience for children to learn. Saddest point is there is no any discipline in the lives of children schooling there". P/02

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher finds an Institute called "Samata Sarana" at Mattakkuliya, built basically for the poor children in the urban area of Colombo. The service is enormous and commendable because this institute teaches the children till Grade 05 and the institute produces the basic needs during their school. Once the students complete Grade 05, these children are admitted to the other schools around. During the time at this institute, these children are properly looked after and these children are given love and concern which sometime children do not experience in their own homes.

The tragic factor that causes is, once these children are admitted to Grade 06 in other schools, children find it difficult to cope up with the situations at the new school. Most of the time, these children are not welcomed by the students and Teachers in these schools. Then the confusions start between children and Teachers and these confusions have led the students to dropout of schools.

> "My child studied at Samata Sarana, Mattakkuliya up to Grade 05 and then child had to move to another school. There Teachers were not helpful to the child and gradually stopped schooling". P/03

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher finds few administrative failures in some of the schools that their children joined after the primary education at a different place and these highlighted facts could be analyzed for further action and review. One such problem that is visible is the lack of discipline.

> "The school is not good and the students in the school do not have disciplines". P/08

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

In some of the schools there is no protection specially for girl students and majority of parents send the students specially girls because they know their daughter is safe at school.

> "My child moved to a school when reaching Grade 03 and this school is not good. There is no protection for students in the school". P/10

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The other fact is days' time table does not function well and Parents comment that students go to school to spend the time at Grounds.

> "There was no any proper education at school. Child spent the time playing and dancing at school". P/21

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

3.4 Impact to the Society.

3.4.1 Teachers Perspective.

Many researchers assume that society has to be well organized and be well balanced. Otherwise, there can be problems in the function of the society. Likewise, if society does not function well there is always problems and difficulties for its members. Therefore, if any entity in the society does not function well, that would affect the smooth functioning of the whole system of the society.
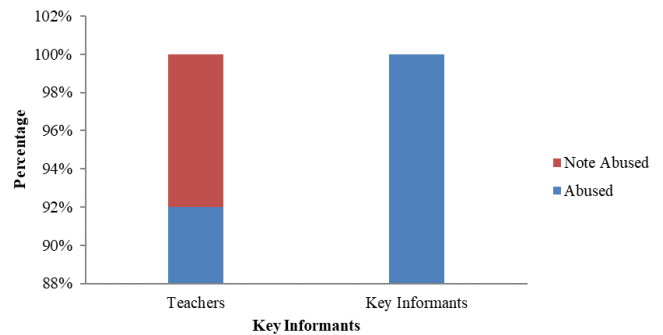

Fig. 21. Issues in the Government Education System

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The considerable proportion of Teachers (92%) state that these school dropouts are being abused and not only the Teachers but the Key informants (100%) approve the same opinion of the Teachers.

It is displeasing to hear that children are being abused due to lack of sex education in this area. The most vulnerable fact is that daughter is abused by his own Father and this is one of the experiences of a school teacher in this area.

"There had been issues because children are ignorant and specially on sex education. Specially, girls have been abused by their own Father". T/01

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

It is not only with the Father even there has been issues with relations too. As a reason for this, the teachers highlight that these people live together. Sometime in these houses two three families live together and aunties, uncles, brothers and sisters of Parents and Grand Parents live together. Therefore, in a situation of this nature, there is a massive chance for children to be abused by their own relations.

"There was a student in grade 09 and this girl ran away with her Uncle. Other than this there has not been any incident reported so far". T/02

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

According to a Teacher, these children what they seek most is the love, concern, attention and protection. Evidently, these children search these concerns from outside people since they do not receive them at home from their Parents. The researcher finds this fact as a danger.

"There is no any abuse as such; but these students need attention, care, love and protection. So, these children may have fallen into such difficulties while searching the above-mentioned attention, care, love and protection". T/05

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The example for the above fact is the following testimony by one of the Teachers. A girl looked for protection and love from someone and finally ended up the life with the "Mesan Bass" who came to the school to some constructions.

"Specially, girls when they reach Grade 10 they try to get out of the house. What they seek is Love, Protection and care and there was a case whom I know, this girl ran away with the Mesan Bass who came to do some construction at school". T/10

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The following dialogue will excite the reader, because one can question that in actual sense these things could take place in the urban area of Colombo. The interview with the Key informants clarified this with his experience working in this area. This act is very inappropriate and unethical but society is corrupted to this level.

"There are incidents that Father sleeps with his daughter and also there are incidents that Brother and uncle sleep with his

own sister". K/03

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The researcher understands through these evaluations that mostly the girl students face this abuse issues but for Boys the existing problem is the addictions for drugs. Thus, it is two distinct entities which lead the students to one pathetic situation in their life.

"I know female children have faced these abuse issues and boys they get addicted to drugs because they have everything freely available at home". T/11

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

One pathetic observation is that there are children knowing that they are abused, still they come to school. The Techers confess that this type of children terminate their schooling soon.

"There are children who come to school even while having abuse cases and child clearly knows that he/she is abused". T/09

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

This above fact is considered to be very vulnerable because by having known the life is spoiled and disturbed, still the child comes to the school since there is no any other option. Most of the time, it identifies that child has been very innocent. This innocence of the child is spoiled by the malpractices of the society.

The researcher identifies that due to legal family issues in the family, many children have faced difficulties at schools. The following testimony would prove this fact.

You must identify the real problem as to why children are not coming to school. Eg; There are children who do not have Birth certificates, Parents do not have Identity Cards, no marriage certificate and sometime child does not know who his or her Mother and Father. T/16

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

3.4.2 Parents Perspective.

The parents in this area express a unique concern to the question "whether their children are abused". Major proportion (92%) of parents explain that their children are 'Not' abused. This answer is bit questionable because when it comes to Teachers and Key informants, they express themselves with solid examples and experience to say "Yes". Even though, the experience and explanation from Parents positive regarding the above question, the interview with students direct the researcher to draw a picture that the society in which these children live is questionable the according to the explanation by students ascertain that there are abuses in and around.
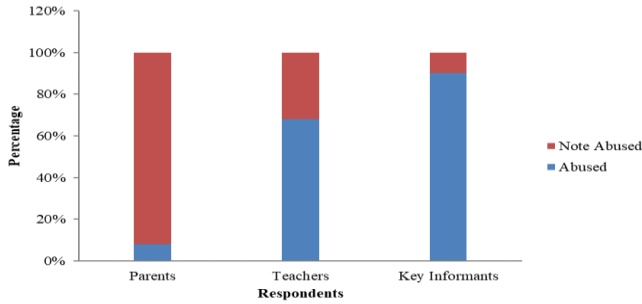
Fig. 23. Whether these Children are Abused

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

"This society and the environment are not good. We don't find anything good in the society rather than bad around us". S/01

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

It is discovered that society is bad and more than that the students confirm it as cruel. The students note this fact because what they see and experience daily is not that pleasant. There are people made personalities in this society and these personalities are much strong in the society since they act with a lot of power.

"This society is bad and very cruel and we have to be very careful in living in this place". S/06

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

This society is cruel to the extent that children experience robberies at their own house. This is due to the strong poverty existing in the society and in the earlier paragraphs, it was mentioned that in every family there is at least one in the family who is addicted to drugs. Therefore, people of this nature need money anyhow and when they do not have money in their hands, they steal things from the own house and sell, to use drugs. This is mainly done by the Father of the family.

"I am at a good place but this society is very bad and even the environment at my house is very bad because my Dad rob things from home for money". S/20

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The drug is something very common in this area and life connected to drugs bring short terms pleasure and students have become the victims of this disaster prevailing in this society.

"Around this area, the drugs are freely available and I don't hear any good word from around. To this extend the society is spoiled and corrupted". S/24

"There are many houses together and one is connected to the other. Almost every house is differentiated by single wall and its very noisy all the time. Most of the people fight and I find it very difficult to concentrate on one thing". S/26

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Therefore, it is natural that when there is no one in the family, specially the parents are away from the attention of the children, children become wanders in the society. Their day is spent loitering in and around without involving with anything profitable for them and for the society.

"There are many children just loitering around and if there is anyone to help them with necessary requirements, they would definitely continue their schooling". S/27

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Therefore, religious institutions in this area should play a major role in and around the life of these families and children. There should be an external force to control this society and its activities.

I suggest that Religious institutions in this area have got to do a major part in bringing these children on the track. The children must be taught both practical and spiritual things at our Daham Pasals. The Teachers teach at schools not from the area their capable but they are given a different stream to handle, which should not be.

The culture of this area has to be changed; there are very famous three under world groups exist such as "Samithpura, Vella, Blue Mandole" and popular figures have come out from these three units. Thus, children come from these cultures and therefore, drugs, murder, kidnaps etc…are very common for children. T/19

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The very reason is Parents are separated and children are left alone with Grand Parents. This separation may be very common in this society but these Parents do not know how this is affected psychologically to the children of divorced parents.

"My father left me and I live with my Grand Father. The people around, help us and they are so good. My Father sends some money because Police have reprimanded him to pay the maintenance fee to the house". S/28

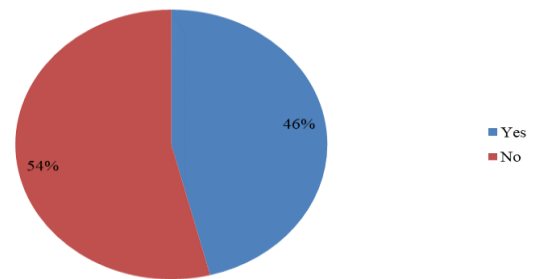Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Fig. 24. Desire to Change this Society

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The considerable proportion (46%) of school dropouts express strongly that they would change this society if they have a power. Which means these children undergo struggles in their lives and live their lives with bitter experience. The emotional statements the students make in this regard, is very important.

"Yes, I will definitely change this society for that I need to join the Police". S/13

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Majority of school drop outs consider poverty as barrier for them to stand straight in the society and further reflect that poverty has made these children powerless in this place where they live.

"If I have money, definitely I help the poor in this area where I live. The poverty is a major problem in my area". S/14

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Considerable portion of children are well aware of the destruction that brings to their families through drugs and through other calamities. This brings to the knowledge of the researcher that innocent children too have become the victims of this tragic conflict in this society.

"Yes, definitely I am going to chase these drug addicts, robbers and others who sexually abuse girls in this area". S/32

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The other highlighted fact is, according to students, the injustice prevailing in this society. In other words, the people who bear famous names in this society are dominant characters.

"I will definitely stand for the injustice of the society and I want to rescue the children who are addicted to drugs, here in this area". S/49

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

There are school dropouts who consider school life as important even though they have terminated themselves from the school. Considerably, with the movement of the time school drop outs begin to understand how important is, school life.

"If I have power, I will not allow the children to terminate their schooling because time of school is very important for any child". S/15

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

At the same time (56%) of school dropouts say that they do not want to change this society because they are happy about their life system.

"I am at home now. During my time at Madrsa School, I had to wake up at 4.00am therefore, the time I spend here is good". S/19

"This society is good and friendly because they help us when necessary". S/22

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

3.5. Key Findings of the Study.

3.5.1 Family Related Factors.

It is discovered that the school admittance has taken place at the age of 5-6 (66%), between the age of 7-8 (12%), age 11-12 (6%) and age 13 and above (4%). The admittance of children to school has proceeded at different ages.

As in many families, here in this context Mothers (76%) have taken initiatives to educate the child. Father's attention (8%) in this regard is very poor.

The Mother has studied up to Grade 1-5 (28%) up to Grade 6-10 (16%) and when it comes to Fathers, they have learnt up to Grade 1-5 (24%) up to Grade 6-10 (24%). There is no any single parent who has studies up to O/L and this is same with the Guardians as well.

The Parents or the Guardians only (60%) are employed while (40%) are not engaged in any employment.

The researcher finds that there are no parents working in the Government sector jobs. Considerable portion (48%) of parents are self-employed and (28%) of them are on contract basis while (12%) engage in other means.

Almost half percentage (68%) of parents are daily wagers, (41%) of them receive a salary at weekends. Considerable portion of (16%) parents receive a salary at the end of the month.

Majority responded (60%) depend on his or her family and (40%) is not and (96%) of them are not satisfied with the salary they receive. The financial situation (72%) has affected the child to drop out of the school.

The existing family conditions (92%) has affected the child to terminate his or her schooling. The key informants (100%) vow for it.

The researcher discovers that the responsibility of Parents towards the education of the children is not satisfactory (92%) and thus children does not show any interest towards education (68%).

3.5.2 School Related Factors.

The school dropouts even though they have terminated from school, they have had favorite subjects during schools (52%). It is observed they have had a favorite Teacher (42%) too.

Many students confess that their favorite item that has made them happy during school is the extra-curricular activities (64%) and school friends (58%). The difficulty of understanding the lessons (68%) and difficulty of Teaching

and Learning process (68%) are highlighted from the students to stop their schooling.

The Teachers comment that as major reasons, the addictions (84%) and food and nutrition (72%). The researcher further discovers, decaying of values (80%) and association of friends (70%).

Majority of Parents highlight the Government Education system (64%) as one of the Maine reasons for their children to terminate their schooling. By and large further discovers by the researcher that Punishments (34%) and Teachers (42%) have caused the children to stop schooling.

3.5.3 The Key impact to the Family and to the Society.

One risk fact is, this school dropout has affected the other siblings of the family (56%). Young brother and sisters at home many a time look up to the elder ones and follow their life style. The key informants (90%) them confirm that school dropouts affect the other siblings of the family. It is discovered that school dropouts do not support the parents (70%).

The Teachers (92%) and the key informants (100%) note that school dropouts are abused in this society. The school dropouts are considerably settled in this area of living and they do not want to see this society changed (54%). It was discovered that there are underworld groups, robberies and violence prevail as something very common.

3.6 Suggestions and Recommendations.

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations to reduce issues related to school dropouts and possible strategies for continuous education are defined as follows. First of all, the researcher would note the school related factors.

Fig. 25. School Related Factors

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

Easy access to teaching and Learning Process and with the existing system the children of this area finds it difficult to learn. Therefore, it is important to introduce a simple and understandable access to the teaching and Learning Process. Difficulty of understanding the subject matters; this has to be simplified considering the IQ level of the children in this area. Accuracy of school administration; the existing Government should refine the school administration of the schools in the urban area of Colombo. The Government Education system; has to be refreshed and refined so that every student could be able to get into the track. The association of good friends; the student must be formed in a well cultured format at schools. This help the student to respect each one equally at school. Development of Values in the school; this should be included in the school curriculum as a subject. The values cannot be expected from families in this study area and thus, school should be influenced by the Government or by the Ministry of Education to introduce this as a subject. Food and nutrition; students should be looked after in this regard and Government or the Private sector should be taken the responsibility. Before the education these children and families should be in good health. No addictions; these people should be used for the economy of the country. It is the responsibility of the Government to stop drugs, reaching people. Availability of facilities in the school and good condition of the school; every student should have equal facilities in every school. If not, it is the responsibility of the Government to facilitate the schools. The cooperation of the Parents with the school teachers should be strong and thus both entities should be able to keep the child at school.

IV. CONCLUSION

Evidently, there are family related factors and school related factors that cause students to dropout of school's half way of their lives. When it comes to family related factors, the researcher discovered the school admittance had not taken place on time, the attention of the parents in this regard had been very poor, the education of parents not satisfactory, most of the parents are self-employed, larger portion of parents are daily wagers, the family condition of parents has caused the children to dropout of school and parents are not interested on the education of their children.

When it comes to the school related factors, the researcher discovered that there had been favorite subjects and teachers for these students, children have been much interested on extra-curricular activities and friends. The teachers highlight addictions, food and nutrition as major reasons for children to terminate their school. The parents highlight the Government education system as one of the main reasons for their children to terminate their school.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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