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Problems And Challenges Related To Education Faced By Slum Children; A Sociological Study Of Slums Of Chandigarh

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ABSTRACT

Education is the most important means by which people can develop their innate abilities, overcome obstacles, and broaden their range of options and possibilities, all of which contribute to their long-term success. It gives people the information and abilities needed to contribute to society in a meaningful way. It is not just a financial investment. It is essential for the process of integrating people to societal standards and for producing the next generation of leaders. It helps create common values, which maintains social equilibrium and continuity. To lessen socioeconomic, gender, and regional gaps, the Indian government has launched a number of initiatives, policies, and programs. Nevertheless, these initiatives have frequently ignored the difficulties encountered by urban slum people. Despite the tremendous efforts made by the Central and State governments, India's primary education system still faces a number of difficulties. In order to improve educational opportunities, accessibility, and equity especially by addressing social, gender, and regional disparities many educational policies and initiatives have been put into place. Nonetheless, there is still no solution to the enduring problems that urban slum dwellers endure. To understand the educational conditions of slum children, the present study attempted to explore the different problems and challenges related to education faced by children in Bhaskar Colony, Sector 25 of Chandigarh.

KEYWORDS: Education, Slum, Children.

INTRODUCTION

India's present rate of urbanization is expected to increase over the next several decades, according to Seabrook (2007) the lack of housing and infrastructure in India contributes to extremely high levels of urban deprivation even at the current level of urbanization. According to Nayak (2005) a slum is a poor community that is at risk from environmental, economic, and demographic factors. Severe overcrowding, high population density, and elevated fertility and mortality rates are characteristic demographics of a slum. The typical economic characteristics of these places are a sizable unorganized sector, low productivity, and extreme poverty; also, the absence of access to necessities like clean water, sanitary facilities, and a clean environment renders these areas environmentally dangerous. Education is one of the most effective strategies to lessen inequality in any community. It can help a person acquire values,

attitudes, abilities, and knowledge. It is essential for both men and women in all areas of life. It leads to an improvement in women's standing. It is the most important tool for guaranteeing the growth and general power of any country. The main limiting factors for low levels of education among slum children are survival necessities and financial load, even though parents believe that education will help their children overcome the cycle of poverty. Financial limitations also lead to gender discrimination, as boys are given precedence for education and access to resources for further education (Bhuimall, 2001). To understand the educational conditions of slum children, the present study attempted to explore the different problems and challenges related to education faced by children in Bhaskar Colony, Sector 25 of Chandigarh.

Defining Education

According to Durkheim (1922) “the activity taken by elder generations on individuals who are not yet prepared for social life is known as education. Its goal is to help the kid discover and develop the physical, intellectual, and moral states that are expected of him by his environment and society at large.”

According to Roser (2014) “Better education aid in changing the class to which individuals often belong. The standing of members of socially disadvantaged groups, such as women and members of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, or backward classes, has also transformed as a result of education.”

Defining Slum

Depending on each nation's unique socioeconomic features, the definition and notion of slums differ from one another. Slums have widely been defined regardless of their location, whether they are in the center of the city as decaying buildings or on the outskirts as squatting. A slum is defined as a section of the city with inferior housing, poor amenities, traffic, and overcrowding.

According to the 2011 Census, a slum in India is defined as “residential areas where buildings are unfit for human habitation due to factors such as overcrowding, decay, poor building layouts and designs, narrow streets or poorly laid out streets, a lack of light, ventilation, or sanitary facilities, or any combination of these that are harmful to people's safety and health.”

The NSSO (2003) defines a compact settlement as “a collection of poorly constructed housing units, mostly of temporary nature, jammed together, usually with poor sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions.”

As to the 2011 Census, 17.4% of India's urban population lived in slums (Slum Population, Census of India, 2011). According to a 2016 UN-HABITAT assessment, there were 880 million slum dwellers in developing nations in 2014; compared with 689 million in 1990 (World Cities report 2016).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Baite et al. (2017) examined how children living in slums are affected by their socioeconomic circumstances in terms of their education. According to the study, parents' financial situation and lack of literacy had a long-term impact on their kids' schooling. Social norms, early girl marriage, an adverse environment, and a lack of interest in study were some of the additional factors that were identified as contributing to not enough education.

Tsujita (2009) Crime, interpersonal violence, neighbourhood violence, and threats of bodily harm are some of the things that might make kids feel insecure. Children may exhibit these anxieties by feeling uncomfortable in their homes, on the school grounds, or even on the walk to school. Even though there are schools close by in slum neighbourhoods, the educational engagement of slum children is poor, over 60%, with significant rates of overage and dropouts.

According to Agarwal and Chugh (2003), there are a number of frequent reasons why children avoid education, including poverty, poor health, the necessity for them to help out around the house, living in underprivileged areas with limited access to education, etc. Slum dwellers frequently work in manual labor and odd jobs, and education is sometimes seen as unnecessary.

According to Goswami and Kedia's (2010) research, slum regions had extremely low literacy rates, a high prevalence of alcohol and tobacco addiction, and several health problems.

According to Gul, Gulshan, and Ali (2013), academics thought that a student's education was impacted by the parents' ignorance and illiteracy as well as the home environment. The answers indicate that in over half of the cases, parents' involvement in their children's education has had a significant impact on them or even caused them to drop out. Lack of motivation to go to school is caused by the parents' low educational attainment. Dropout rates from domestic violence are frequently linked to parental neglect and a lack of enthusiasm.

According to Azim (1983), who performed a study on slums, found poverty is a major contributing factor, the second and third most significant causes of school dropouts were found to be poor academic performance and a lack of enthusiasm in learning.

According to Chugh (2004) the most vulnerable and economically disadvantaged members of urban communities are slum dwellers. Children who live in slums suffer from serious educational disadvantages, both in terms of the quality of education they get and the accessibility and availability of educational facilities. In terms of education, children who live in slums are the least likely to be enrolled in school. Additionally, their kids show the worst academic difficulties, such as high failure, grade-repeat, and dropout rates.

Khokhar, Garg, and Bharti (2005) studied Delhi's urban slum dwellers' school dropout rates. According to their findings, no girl above the age of 14 continued her education past middle school and left school after completing primary school.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Credentialing Theory: Max Weber's writings are credited with giving credentialism its classical beginnings. It is among the main topics of Weberian analysis in the field of educational sociology. Credentialism is the term used to describe the need to meet certain educational requirements in order to become part of specified status groups (Brown, 2001). In the Indian context, these are the minimal requirements needed to sit for the recruitment tests for different positions. Without official credentials, those with real-world experience but lacking the necessary degree are not eligible. So, getting a university degree becomes crucial for both getting a job and improving one's position. The phrase "credential inflation," which Collins created, describes how the value of a certain degree of education declines over time. The employment that a bachelor's degree used to be able to get are no longer available (Collins, 1979).

Social Capital Theory: Three forms of capital that assign a person to a certain social category were defined by Bourdieu (1986). (a) Economic Capital: Cash and assets make up the majority of economic capital. (b) Social Capital: Assets derived from connections, support systems, and networks of influence. (c) Cultural capital is made up of a person's numerous degrees of education, training, and knowledge as well as their many benefits that elevate them in society. The three forms of capital that a child has access to in the context of schooling are financial resources, parental support, and community networks. Low academic achievement is a result of the slum children's lack of social, cultural, and economic capital. This idea also explains why there are so large differences in the performance of various students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To evaluate the socio-economic status of children living in slum.
2. To determine the reasons for children's non-enrolment and dropout rates in slum.
3. To determine the problems and challenges related to education that children living in slums face.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

Respondents in Bhaskar Colony, Sector 25 in Chandigarh, ranging in age from 10 years to 15 years, were included in the present study. Since, quantitative method with survey method was used; a sample of 50 individuals (25 males and 25 females) was selected based on age and gender utilizing quota sampling in 50 cases. The sample was drawn using snowball sampling. In simple terms, to understand the educational conditions of slum children, the present study attempted to explore the different problems and challenges related to education faced by children in Bhaskar Colony, Sector 25 of Chandigarh, using interview schedule to investigate the various issues pertaining to education that children encounter.

AREA OF STUDY

The suggested study was carried out in residential area of Bhaskar Colony in Sector 25 of Chandigarh in order to achieve the aforementioned goals.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The quality of schooling that people from different socioeconomic backgrounds can access reflects the stark differences between poverty and plenty that define India's urban areas. The elimination of systemic disparities in educational access is necessary for education to operate as a potent tool for social transformation. Education must be made available to everyone in order to meet the objectives of sustainable development. In view of this function of education, the present research in an effort to better comprehend the various educational issues that children encounter, the present study attempted to explore the educational conditions of slum children in slum areas of Chandigarh.

1. Demographic Information

Table 1 showing Demographic distribution of respondents

Age category	Male	Female	Total
10 year old -12 year old	12(48)	10(40)	22(44)
13year old -15 year old	13(52)	15(60)	28(56)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)
Family Income (Monthly in Rupees)	Male	Female	Total
Up to 15,000	12(48)	16(64)	28(56)
15,001 to 30,000	9(36)	7(28)	16(32)
Above 30,001	4(16)	2(8)	6(12)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of respondents. There were 12 male respondents and 10 female respondents who belonged to 10 year old to 12 year old age category. While, 13 male respondents and 15 female respondents belonged to 13 year old to 15 year old age category. The table shows that there were 48 percent of male respondents and 64 percent of female respondents whose monthly family income were up to 15,000.

2. Details regarding the Regularity of Slum Children in school

Table 2 showing Absentees (Monthly) of respondents in school

No. of Days	Male	Female	Total
Less than 7 days	5(20)	4(16)	9(18)
7 to 14 days	8(32)	7(28)	15(30)
14 to 21 days	8(32)	9(36)	17(34)
More than 21 days	4(16)	5(20)	9(18)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 2 shows the regularity of Slum Children in school. It was found that 20 percent male and 16 percent of female respondent's remains absent for less than 7 days per month. There were 32 percent male and 28 percent of female respondents who remains absent for 7 to 14 days per month. There were 32 percent male and 36 percent of female respondents who remains absent for 14 to 21 days per month. There were 16 percent male and 20 percent of female respondents who remains absent for more than 21 days per month. As a total of 34 percent remains absent for 14 to 21 days per month, the study supports the findings of Tsujita (2009) who stated that the educational engagement of slum children is poor, over 60%, with significant rates of overage and dropouts.

3. Reasons behind the Absentees of respondents in school

Table 3 showing reasons behind the Absentees of respondents in school

Reason	Male	Female	Total
Health problems	11(44)	17(68)	28(56)
Lack of interest and motivation	19(76)	10(40)	29(58)
Poor academic performance	20(80)	17(68)	37(74)
Looking after other sibling	12(48)	6(24)	18(36)
Teacher's attitude	6(24)	4(16)	10(20)
Bad habits like alcohol, drugs, etc.	10(40)	2(8)	12(24)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

***The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both male and female respondents separately (i.e., 25 each).**

Table 3 shows the reasons behind the Absentees of respondents in school. It was found that 44 percent of male respondents and 68 percent of female respondents suffers 'health issues' which is one of their reasons for being absent from school. The study supports the findings of Agarwal and Chugh (2003), who stated that poor health is one of the reasons why children avoid education. There were 76 percent of male respondents and 40 percent of female respondents who mentioned 'Lack of interest and motivation' as their reasons behind the Absentees. While, there were 80 percent of male respondents and 68 percent of female respondents who mentioned 'Poor academic performance' to be their reasons behind the Absentees. The study supports the findings of Azim (1983) and Baite et al. (2017) who found that poor academic performance, lack of interest in study and lack of enthusiasm in learning to be the most significant causes of school dropouts. There were 48 percent of male respondents and 24 percent of female respondents who said they miss their classes as their other sibling does the same. There were 24 percent of male respondents and 16 percent of female respondents who mentioned 'Teacher's attitude' to be their reasons behind the Absentees. There were 40 percent of male respondents and 8 percent of female

respondents who mentioned about their 'Bad habits like alcohol, drugs, etc.' to be their reasons behind the Absentees. Some children mentioned about their bad habits of alcohol and other drugs but some hesitated talking about it and refuse to answer such question. The study refutes the findings of Goswami and Kedia's (2010) who stated that, slum regions had a high prevalence of alcohol and tobacco addiction, as the respondents were not comfortable with this question.

➤ Problems and challenges related to Education faced by Slum Children

4. Economic and financial barriers

Table 4 showing the Economic and financial barriers that affect the education of slum children

Economic and Financial barriers	Male	Female	Total
Poverty	22(88)	20(80)	42(84)
Child labour	23(92)	15(60)	38(76)
Financial burden (like uniforms, transportation, etc.)	24(96)	25(100)	49(98)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

***The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both male and female respondents separately (i.e., 25 each).**

Table 4 shows the Economic and financial barriers that affect the education of slum children. It was found that 88 percent of male respondents and 80 percent of female respondents suffers poverty which affects their education. There were 92 percent of male respondents and 60 percent of female respondents work as child labor which affects their education. The study supports the findings of Agarwal and Chugh (2003) and Azim (1983) who stated that there are a number of frequent reasons why children avoid education, including poverty, living in underprivileged areas with limited access to education, etc. Slum dwellers frequently work in manual labor and odd jobs, and education is sometimes seen as unnecessary. There were 96 percent of male respondents and 100 percent of female respondents who face financial burden (like uniforms, transportation, etc.) which eventually affects their education. The study supports the findings of Baite et al. (2017) who stated that parents' financial situation had a long-term impact on their kids' schooling.

5. School –related issues

Table 5 showing the school related issues that affect the education of slum children

School –related issues	Male	Female	Total
Poor infrastructure	12(48)	15(60)	27(54)
Lack of qualified teachers	8(32)	6(24)	14(28)
Unfriendly environment	14(56)	8(32)	22(44)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

***The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both male and female respondents separately (i.e., 25 each).**

Table 5 shows the school related issues that affect the education of slum children. It was found that 48 percent of male respondents and 60 percent of female respondents complaints of 'poor infrastructure' of their school which affect their education. There were 32 percent of male respondents and 24 percent of female respondents who complaints of 'Lack of qualified teachers'. The study supports the findings of Chugh (2004) who stated that Children who live in slums suffer from serious educational disadvantages,

both in terms of the quality of education they get and the accessibility and availability of educational facilities. There were 56 percent of male respondents and 32 percent of female respondents who complain of 'Unfriendly environment' of school which affect their education. The study supports the findings of Baite et al. (2017) who stated that Social norms, early girl marriage, and an adverse environment were some of the additional factors that were identified as contributing to not enough education.

6. Social and family issues

Table 6 showing the social and family issues that affect the education of slum children

Social and family issues	Male	Female	Total
Parents illiteracy	23(92)	22(88)	45(90)
Family pressure	7(28)	21(84)	28(56)
Household chores	12(48)	24(96)	36(72)
Gender disparity	11(44)	23(92)	34(68)
Family migration	9(36)	11(44)	20(40)
Lack of parental involvement	9(36)	20(80)	29(58)
Total	25(100)	25(100)	50(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

***The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both male and female respondents separately (i.e., 25 each).**

Table 6 shows the social and family issues that affect the education of slum children. It was found that there were 92 percent of male respondents and 88 percent of female respondents who mentioned that their 'Parents illiteracy' affect their education. The study supports the findings of Baite et al. (2017) who stated that parents' lack of literacy had a long-term impact on their kids' schooling. There were 28 percent of male respondents and 84 percent of female respondents who mentioned that because of 'Family pressure' their education suffers. There were 48 percent of male respondents and 96 percent of female respondents who mentioned that as they have to do 'Household chores' their education suffers. The study supports the findings of Agarwal and Chugh (2003), who stated that there are a number of frequent reasons why children avoid education, including the necessity for them to help out around the house. There were 44 percent of male respondents and 92 percent of female respondents who mentioned that because of 'Gender disparity' their education suffers. The study supports the findings of Khokhar, Garg, and Bharti (2005) who stated that no girl above the age of 14 continued her education past middle school and left school after completing primary school. The study also supports the findings of Bhuimall, (2001) who stated that financial limitations also lead to gender discrimination, as boys are given precedence for education and access to resources for further education. There were 36 percent of male respondents and 44 percent of female respondents who mentioned that because of 'Family migration' their education suffers. There were 36 percent of male respondents and 80 percent of female respondents who mentioned that because of 'Lack of parental involvement' their education suffers. The study supports the findings of Gul, Gulshan, and Ali (2013), who stated that Lack of motivation to go to school is caused by the parents' low educational attainment. Dropout rates from domestic violence are frequently linked to parental neglect and a lack of enthusiasm.

CONCLUSION

An understanding of the nature and scope of the challenges that impede the realization of equal educational opportunity can be gained by studying the issue of full and equal opportunity, access, and equity for all of its children, particularly those who are less fortunate and socially marginalized. However, slum children's education is impacted by social and family concerns, school-related problems, and economic and financial limitations. Despite the government's numerous measures aimed at improving the education of impoverished children, these children still have to endure hardships in order to receive a basic education.

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