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**Factors Influencing Primary School Dropouts
In REACH-Supported Boarding Schools in South
India As seen by Teachers, Peers and Principals**

presented by

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of the requirements for

**Ph. D. _____ degree in Comparative and Inter-
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Major professor

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FACTORS INFLUENCING PRIMARY SCHOOL DROPOUTS
IN REACH SUPPORTED BOARDING SCHOOLS IN SOUTH INDIA
AS SEEN BY TEACHERS, PEERS AND PRINCIPALS

By

Narasimiah Peter Jacob

A DISSERTATION

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A B S T R A C T

FACTORS INFLUENCING PRIMARY SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN REACH-SUPPORTED BOARDING SCHOOL IN SOUTH INDIA AS SEEN BY TEACHERS, PEERS AND PRINCIPALS

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Narasimiah Peter Jacob

The Purpose

The main purpose of this study was to determine the causes of elementary school dropouts among REACH sponsored children in nine boarding schools in South India from the perspective of teachers, principals and peers. A second purpose was to collect demographic data about the schools to assist in interpreting teachers', principals' and peers' responses.

Procedures

First, one hundred thirty-four dropouts during the school year 1980-1981 were identified and matched with their teachers.

Second, teachers and principals were requested to fill out a questionnaire to determine the reasons for dropping out. The first part called for demographic data. The second part contained 29 items on home, school

and student factors judged to be influential in dropping out. The third part consisted of eight open-ended statements requesting teachers' opinions. Peers were requested to write a paragraph on the reasons for their school mates dropping out.

Findings

Teachers disagreed with most of the questionnaire items as being related to dropouts. But their disagreement on three crucial home factors was weak; they linked nearly 50 per cent of the dropouts to them. Teachers also linked four school variables to dropouts. Their written comments, moreover, related most of the questionnaire items to dropping out.

Six principals did not give any reason for dropping out. Three stated that "the children did not return" and that they "did not know their whereabouts."

Dropouts' peers reported that poverty, students' lack of interest and the need to earn money influenced dropping out.

Conclusions

In nearly 50 per cent of the cases teachers related three important variables to dropping out.

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In over 50 per cent of the cases they related four school variables to dropping out. In their informal responses they provided strong evidence of the relationship of home, school and student variables to dropping out.

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CHAPTER I THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The failure of a substantial numbers of poor children to take advantage of the opportunity to be fed, clothed, housed and educated in private, parochial boarding schools assisted by REACH (Render Effective Aid to Children) International posed an enigma to REACH officials. Since such behavior on the part of the poor children seemed to imply a waste of effort and means, especially, in view of an alarming number of children leaving school even before they completed primary education. The matter was of serious concern. The loss of such human resources not to mention the considerable investment in their educational expenditures, was disheartening. REACH officials were fully aware that "a nation as well as an individual suffers when a boy or a girl does not prepare himself as fully as possible to live and make a living" (Van Dyke, 1958, p. 2). Furtherore, as Sapra observed in his book Educational Wastage and Stagnation in India:

Educational wastage as commonly understood in terms of grade repetition and school-dropout, is a serious problem, particularly in developing countries where available resources are meagre (Sapra, 1967, p. 9).

The problem of disadvantaged children withdrawing from school prior to successfully completing the primary level of education, at least, therefore needed investigation so that proper measures may be taken to alleviate, if not eradicate it.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the causes of elementary school dropouts among REACH sponsored children in nine boarding schools in South India from the perspective of teachers, principals and peers of dropouts. And by obtaining demographic data on the dropouts and information about schools, the study sought to find out how factors associated with home, school and students might be related to the dropout problem. The ultimate purpose was to arrive at some possible approaches to reducing the dropout problem.

Significance of the Problem

The importance of the investigation cannot be over-emphasized since there are many vital social and economic issues at stake. These include dissipation of human resources, waste of school expenditures, reduction of school efficiency and dilution of effective use of funds.

Officials at REACH wondered what could be done to reverse the disheartening dropout trend. REACH was committed to a program of alleviating hunger and ignorance by educating the poor children in developing countries like India. The agency recognized that education was essential for release from poverty and entrance into a life of usefulness, productivity and self-reliance. REACH also believed that once a young person was educated, he in turn would provide for his family a better way of life.

To accomplish this objective, REACH set out at its inception to find persons in the United States to sponsor poor children in private, parochial boarding schools. The boarding school environment, REACH believed was suitable for providing the sorely needed structure, discipline and direction for poor children so that they could rise above the grinding poverty in which they were born and to which they were otherwise destined.

But the failure and/or withdrawal of a discouraging proportion of poor children in REACH schools was a disturbing factor the REACH program had not reckoned with. Therefore, to understand the problem, to remedy it and justify the efforts and funds spent on behalf of the poor children, it was necessary to obtain, first of all, the reasons for the dropout problem.

Second, the sponsors who provided the necessary funds had to be placated. Having received a picture and a brief biography of the child upon committing themselves financially, they got quite upset, often displaying a lack of interest in the aid program when offered a substitute child within a few months or a year. Naturally, they were puzzled why an impoverished child would turn his back on food, clothing, shelter and the means for a better life. They needed, therefore, to be offered reasonable explanations so that their confidence was retained and their support continued.

Third, an investigation of the problem was also necessary to provide insights into appropriate measures for improving the situation.

Emphasizing the serious nature of the dropout problem, Susila Bai, the education minister of Kerala, India, indicated that a considerable portion of the expenses incurred in school was wasteful on account of the imbalance in the ratio of cost and benefit. In this connection she made the following remarks:

It should be the concern of the society, educational planners, implementing authorities to avail the desired benefits of education by holding intact the children from dropping out at least in the primary schools, and generate schemes or programs at different levels of society and governments promoting healthier environment in school to enable children grow physically, mentally and learn systematically for purposeful and profitable career future (Susila Bai, 1979, p. 30).

Finally, but importantly, the building up of a scientific problem-solving attitude is essential for liquidating problems of illiteracy, dropout, stagnation and wastage in elementary education (Myrdal, 1970, p. 117).

The recognition and awareness of both national and local problems involving dropouts and their undesirable consequences by teachers and principals and especially by people at the grassroots were crucially essential for both initiating and implementing effective remedial processes.

Thus the seriousness of the dropout problem, its ill effects, and the national cry for programs to alleviate it were adequate reasons to warrant this study.

Definitions of Concepts

This study uses the following terms as defined below.

Socio-economic factors

This term refers to the pupil's background, including the parent's education, income and social strata, and the number of brothers and sisters in the family from which the dropouts come. Other terms such as home environment, family background are interchangeably used in this study. Ultimately, these terms denote the poverty level of the family as set by the government of India which was Rs. 300.00 (roughly \$38.00) per month.

School Factors

These words referred to the conditions that existed in a school climate that either hindered or enhanced a student's staying in or dropping out of school. Factors such as discipline, rigorous examinations, mistreatment on the part of teachers or peers, the nature of the curriculum and humaneness of the school atmosphere are some of them.

Student Factors

These words refer to those elements that have to do with the student's disposition and involve his academic ability, motivation, interest, health, degree of homesickness, behavior and adjustment to school life.

Seventh-day Adventist Boarding Schools

This term refers to schools established and operated by a protestant denomination called the Seventh-day Adventist Church, so named because of its belief in Church worship on the seventh day of the week and in the imminent return of Christ.

Boarding schools are those schools which provide lodging, meals and education for children on the school premises. The schools are parochial and private. They are funded and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Since they do not receive any support from

public funds from the government agencies, they are fee-levying schools.

Dropout

This term indicates the premature withdrawal of a child from school before completing the last grade of the stage of education in which he or she was studying. Thus, at the primary stage of education it refers to every child who withdrew prematurely from school before completing sixth grade. Other terms such as wastage, school leavers and school withdrawals are interchangeably used.

Persisters

This term is used to refer to that boy or girl who continues to stay in school until he or she finishes the primary level of schooling--sixth grade, or as designated by Indian schools, "standard."

REACH International

REACH International, as indicated earlier, is an acronym for Render Effective Aid for Children. The term International signifies the scope of work envisioned by REACH in developing nations. The abbreviated form, REACH, has been used throughout this study.

To present a preview picture of REACH International a short description of its background, purposes and

functions is included under a separate heading in this chapter. A detailed description appears in appendix B.

Assumptions

1. A basic assumption in this study was that teachers, peers of dropouts and principals, who had been in close contact with the dropouts would be able to supply information about dropping out.

2. Socio-economic components such as poverty, illiteracy and indifference of the parents of the disadvantaged children contributed to the dropping out problem.

3. School factors such as strict discipline, rigorous examinations, overly populated classes, inhumane treatment and maladjustment of poor children, and the irrelevance of the current curriculum influenced the withdrawal of the children of the poor.

4. Lack of motivation and interest and academic deficiencies in the children of the poor induced dropping out.

Research Questions

Grounded in the assumptions stated, the following research questions were asked.

1. Did the economic factors of the family influence

disadvantaged poor children to dropout of school?
(Questionnaire items 1, 5, and 6).

2. Did the non-economic factors of the family influence disadvantaged children to dropout of school? (Questionnaire items 2, 3, 7 and 8).

3. Did school factors influence disadvantaged poor children to dropout of school (Questionnaire items 13, and 16-25).

4. Did student factors influence disadvantaged poor children to dropout of school? (Questionnaire items 10-15).

Limitations of the Study

The following were the major limitations of this study:

1. Because of time and cost constraints, the research was limited to finding out the perceptions of teachers, principals and peers of dropouts. These informants were more readily available for interviewing or filling out questionnaires. The dropouts and their parents were unavailable.

2. The investigator could not be present at the school to administer the questionnaire; he cannot therefore be certain of the manner in which the responses were arrived at. The teachers were asked to fill out the questionnaires

independently, but this could not be monitored to assure independent responses.

3. The number of responses was small, 63 out of 134, or 47 per cent.

4. The distance factor was a limitation, causing delay in the return of the questionnaires, and the loss of some in the mail. How this altered the results, if it did, is unknown.

5. This study did not examine the extent of grade repetition or stagnation.

6. Finally, the research was limited to the elementary school dropouts in nine REACH-aided private boarding schools in South India.

Background of REACH

History and Nature of REACH

In 1973 the writer and his wife volunteered to conduct workshops for elementary school teachers in India. During the workshop sessions, held in different areas of the country, the sight of hundreds of children hopelessly wandering the streets motivated the writer and his wife to conceive of a program that would send at least some of the poor children to school. REACH came into existence in the fall of that year as a result of the support of friends interested in the concept of helping impoverished

children in India and possibly in other countries. It was organized formally in October 1973.

REACH is a voluntary, charitable and tax-exempt organization. It is operated and staffed largely by Seventh-day Adventists lay volunteers. It is funded from donations to the organizations. None of the administrative staff is paid by REACH. Funds received as sponsorship donations are used for the care of the children.

Philosophy

The philosophy stems from love and compassion for the unfortunate children condemned by the accident of birth to a lifelong poverty. It is Christian in its ideological orientation.

Objective

The objective of REACH is to provide food, shelter, and care, along with formal education, through Seventh-day Adventist boarding schools so that destitute children can become productive and useful citizens.

How REACH Secures Sponsors

Initially, sponsors were secured by talking to friends and former missionaries to India. Later, the local, regional and national Adventist journals were

solicited for advertising space. Because of the fund-raising nature of the organization, however, the church papers soon denied this privilege, though not denying the fundamental value of such a lay organization. Currently, in addition to word-of-mouth publicity, a 15-minute slide presentation of the work of REACH in India has been produced and is circulated upon request by sponsors past and present. The majority of the present sponsors (99%) are Seventh-day Adventists.

Securing Children for Sponsorship

In general, pastors, principals and other school authorities in India and in other countries where REACH operates, take children into their schools in the hope that they will be sponsored. They send to the REACH office pictures and a brief biography of these children. Only children below the age of 14 are eligible for first time sponsorship.

What REACH Sponsorship Provides

For the \$15.00 collected monthly from sponsors for each child, REACH expects the schools to provide three meals a day, school uniforms, books and school supplies, lodging and simple medical care.

Overview

This first chapter has presented the statement of the problem and its significance, the purpose of the study, the terms used, the assumptions involved, the research questions asked, the limitations of the study and the background of REACH International.

In Chapter II, a review of the related literature, dealing primarily with the elementary school dropouts in developing countries like India, is presented. It includes the primary causes of dropouts--the family background, the school influence and student characteristics. The survey also notes the various tried and workable strategies for solving the dropout problem.

In Chapter III, the research setting describes the environment, function and demography of the schools; and the methods and procedures describe the population, instrument used and procedures for developing and mailing the questionnaires.

An analysis of the data collected is presented in Chapter IV. It deals with the questionnaire returns, analysis procedures, perceptions of principals, teachers and peers. Tabular form presentations are made of the findings on the following items: REACH boy-girl rate of dropouts, entry and exit grade of dropouts, home variables, school variables and student variables. Along with

with these the perceptions of principals, teachers and peers are described and discussed.

Finally, conclusion and recommendations is described. The recommendations are suggested as possible remedies for alleviating the problems of dropouts. This also includes implications of this study for REACH, the sponsors and the school personnel.

CHAPTER II PRECEDENTS IN LITERATURE

This literature survey sought to identify factors which could provide a basis for the items in the questionnaire. It reviewed factors influencing dropouts in developing countries generally, but focused on primary school dropouts in India. The reason for this dual approach is the fact that most developing countries share similar problems. Not only do they face the serious problems of wastage and stagnation, but they also seem to have similar contributing factors, such as the poverty of the family, the lack of educated parents, and inadequacy and inefficiency of the schools.

Four items which appear frequently in the literature deserve clarification. They are wastage, stagnation, retention and holding power. Commonly wastage is used for dropping out, and stagnation for grade repetition. Retention and holding power are also used interchangeably. Here are more precise definitions:

Wastage

Wastage is generally understood to connote the premature withdrawal of a child from school before completing the last grade or stage of education in which he is studying. Thus, at the first level of education every child who is withdrawn from school before completing the last grade VI or VII is a case of wastage.

Stagnation

Stagnation, also known as retardation or grade repetition is defined as the retention of a pupil in a grade for more than one year on account of unsatisfactory progress. Thus, if a child passes a grade in two or more years, he constitutes a case of stagnation (NECERT, 1971, p. 23).

Retention or Holding Power

These terms refer to all children who enter primary school in grade I and are retained in the process of education in school till class VI, that is, a pupil entering first grade finishes the first stage of schooling which is at the sixth grade level (ACRC, p. 23).

The Purpose of Primary Education

The purpose of primary education in India has always been to reduce illiteracy. This was one goal of the liberation movement during the drive for independence. Since independence in 1947, reducing illiteracy has been consistently retained as the goal of education at primary level in India. All other South Asian countries have at several regional conferences joined in expressing the same goal (Myrdal, 1970, p. 117).

For a long time UNESCO and most underdeveloped countries, among them those in South Asia, have continually had as one goal of national development universal literacy through free and compulsory education for children of ages 6-14. They have, in other words, seen that

national development requires an increase in the number of children who attend primary schools and become literate (Myrdal, 1971, Vol. 3, p. 1657). Within this frame of national and developmental objectives, "the attainment of permanent literacy and citizenship training are the twin objectives of primary education"(Sapra, 1967, p. 7).

Universal Literacy an Unfinished Business

The post independence effort in India to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 has been impressive. Enrolments have increased and facilities have been added so that there is at present a primary school located within 1.5 kilometers of 93 per cent of rural population (Kurian, 1981, p. 410). During the four years of the Fifth Plan the levels of enrolment reached were 85 per cent in the age-group 6-11, 40 per cent in the age-group 11-14 and 69 per cent in the age-group 6-14 (Naik, 1965, p. 30). Thus, while the coverage of urban area is incomplete, the coverage of rural area is practically complete.

The brave 1950 stipulation of the Indian Constitution to provide for compulsory education within ten years has, however, been a frustrating affair in spite of increased provision of primary education. The reason for

the frustration are many. Some of these reasons for the frustration are the population explosion, the poverty of the masses and the apathy among the people toward education. These factors have stymied the policy of universal literacy.

The Indian Education Commission has taken note of this serious lapse and insisted that the government make necessary funds available for executing the policy of free and compulsory education. It has also urged the state governments to achieve, by 1985, the goal of universal education. But the Commission in 1966 concluded that the system of

primary education in India continues to be wasteful; and many children who pass through it either do not attain functional literacy or lapse into illiteracy soon afterwards. If we are to continue dependence on this program for the liquidation of literacy, we may not reach our goal even by 2000 A.D. (Naik, 1965, p. 32).

This lag in elementary education is best seen in the large number of dropouts, for about 75 per cent of those enrolled dropout between Classes I and VIII. What is worse is that 60 per cent of this dropout occurs between Classes I and V (Naik, 1965, p. 30)

Naik gives the following reason:

What happens at present is that children of ages 4 to 14 are indiscriminately enrolled in class I. Although the total enrolment in Class I is about 110 per cent of the population in the age group 6-7, only about 35 per cent of these are of correct age. And the rest are either below or

above this age. The composition is thus extremely heterogeneous and appropriate for only a third of of the total enrolment. This creates several pedagogical problems in the classroom and also leads to stagnation and wastage. Wastage and stagnation are too high at present; of every 100 children who enter class I, only about 29 reach class VIII (Naik, 1965, p. 32).

Myrdal reinforces the point in this way:

This dilemma of dropouts is common to Asian countries. Irregular attendance, repeating, and dropping out represent a huge wastage of resources. The wastage is greatest where it can least be afforded (Myrdal, 1970, p. 118).

In 1975, UNICEF, in its Statistical Profile on Children and Youth reported that, of the 73 per cent of the boys and 20 per cent of the girls in the age group 5-11 in India who were admitted to primary schools during 1973, only 45 per cent of boys and 52 per cent of girls among them entered middle school. In other words, more than 50 per cent of boys and girls dropped of primary school.

The 6th Five-Year Plan of India recognizing this trend, noted, "the emphasis so far has been on mere enrollment in classes I-V and V-VIII. This has concealed large dropout rates of about 60 per cent between classes I-V and 75 per cent between classes i-VIII" (Planning Commission of India, 1980, p. 220).

The average duration of the school life of a child is only about three years instead of the usual 7 or 8 years (UNICEF, 1975, p. 7). Because of this wastage

the proportion of school-going children in India who became permanent literates is one of the lowest in the whole of South East Asia (AERC, 1971 , p. 20).

Highest Incidence of Wastage: First Level

According to Sapra (1967), there is so far no systematic nationwide study that has been conducted to assess separately the extent of wastage and stagnation at the first level of education--the primary school. But on the basis of all-India figures of enrolment available with the statistical unit of the Indian Ministry of Education for years 1951-1957 the following conclusions were drawn.

The total evidence of wastage and stagnation at the first level of education, that is standards I to 6 in India is 78.35 per cent. This incidence remained constant during that period. Further, the enrolment data revealed that the incidence is highest (42.76 per cent) in grade 1, which decreases as the pupils move from lower to higher grades. In grade 2, the incidence is fairly high, while in grades 3-5, it is insignificant (Sapra, 1967, p. 11).

The variation in the incidence among grades was found to be statistically highly significant. It would thus appear that the real problem lies in grade I and, therefore, if children could be retained in school till they pass grade I, the chances of dropping out would be appreciably reduced.

The incidence of stagnation and wastage is higher among the girls (84.79 per cent) than the boys (75 per cent). The larger overall figure for girls is due to higher incidence

in grades I and II where the classes are large and the teachers are untrained (Sapra, 1967, p. 12).

Among more than a score of studies at the Primary, Secondary, and university stages of education, four studies--The Satara Study, The Poona Study, The Gargorti Study, and the Twenty-Four Parganas Study-- are relevant to the first level of education (Sapara, 1967, p. 19). All these studies show the highest incidence of wastage to be in grade I, and it continues to decrease in the succeeding grades. All these four studies also show the highest dropouts rate of girls in the first grade.

A study by UNESCO (1974) on the retention rates in the South Asian Countries reported that

in member countries the retention rate is less than 4 per cent of all pupils who start in grade I. The stage where dropouts occur is from the first to the second grade. In general boys are better retained than girls (p. 5).

Further, a case study of India by UNESCO (1972) concluded that more than half the total dropout took place in grade I.

The magnitude of dropouts in the first grade and repetition in the first three grades are the major problems attacking primary stage of education (p. 115).

Thus, overwhelming evidence attests to the fact that the highest incidence of wastage and stagnation occurs in elementary education, and the worst occurs in the first grade.

Causes of Wastage

There seem to be a number of variables associated with dropping out at the primary level of education, the most important of which are noted and discussed below.

Home Variables

There are two main factors involved in home variables. They are poverty and illiteracy of parents.

Poverty. The single most important variable which accounts for the inability of elementary schools to retain the large number of dropouts who initially enroll, is poverty (Kurian, 1974, pp. 410-432). The majority of the students who dropout are located in the lower economic strata of society. All of them, says another source, came from poor homes (Ministry of Education, 1975, p. 5).

Swetz (1979) alleges that cultural demands, combined with financial difficulties, often prevent able students from completing their studies and thus contributing to the large amount of wastage in developing countries. The children of the poor are greatly affected by this one major factor (p. 2).

Because of poverty, asserts Lundhal (1979) in his exhaustive study of the Haitian poor, going to school is a very complicated affair for the children of the poor.

The cost of sending a child to school is presumably high for the parents and rises with the age of the children (p. 482).

A study on wastage and stagnation in Kerala State, India, the State with the highest percentage of literacy (66 per cent of men and 54 per cent of women), concludes that poverty is a main hindrance, since many children could not buy even the minimum necessary accessories including clothes and noon meals (Sivadasan Pillai, 1975, p. 32).

By and large, the causes of dropping out in this country, India, says Sapra, are economic factors which contributes significantly to the phenomenon of wastage and stagnation. It is estimated that about 65 per cent of the total wastage is due to economic backwardness of the family (Sapra, 1967, p. 12).

Poverty also creates other effects which make school attendance and pursuit of learning difficult. Malnutrition among children is one such effect. More than 80 per cent of pupils in Haiti indicated signs of poor health (Lundhal, 1979, p. 483).

Inadequate clothing is another effect of poverty. In rural areas, a great many children go naked, sometimes until puberty. In order to go to school the children have to wear uniforms and this cost has to be borne by parents. Since the dropouts' families are the poorer among the

(AERC, 1971, p. 38), the high cost malnutrition, illness, fatigue, and lack of study facilities at home interact to depress enrolment and attendance rates and to keep dropout rate at a high level.

Those who attend during the greater part of the day are often put to strenuous physical work when they come home. For this reason they lack an opportunity to do school work, both because of fatigue and lack of facilities such as lamps, a place to study and encouragement from parents.

One other significant reason is the involvement of children in domestic work for economic reasons. In a large majority of cases the employment of children is in the family itself and the child is asked to do some work that will save the employment of outside labor, such as tending cattle and taking care of younger brothers and sisters, which will enable parents themselves to go to work (Lundhal, 1979, p. 485).

The Satara Study and the 24 Parganas Study found that utilization of children for employment either outside or within the family was the most important cause of wastage and stagnation.

In Punjab, India, a study on wastage and stagnation looked at the income of the families of dropouts and non dropouts. The study concluded that children attending school were systematically in the high income brackets.

Upon this finding the study maintained the hypothesis that income level was a dominant factor in influencing the extent of retention. Children at the age of nine years and above were withdrawn from school because they became economically useful to the family among the poor (Kandeka, 1974, p. 32).

Illiteracy of parents. Wastage at the elementary level also arises from the illiteracy of parents. This creates a general apathy to education, fatalistic attitude, resistance to sending girls to school and a lack of interest in the progress of their children, all of which leads to such deficiencies as absenteeism, wastage and repetition.

The Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in India points out that under the plan of universal education, children are now being drawn to school from the lower strata of society who have very little interest or no school mindedness (Sapra, 1967, p. 32).

"All of them," says Sapra, "came from illiterate homes" (1967, p. 37).

Each educated parent tries to provide better and longer education to his children than what he received himself. The masses of India, however, are illiterates and hence apathetic to education.

The children from such parents, therefore, do not appreciate and pursue schooling and hence swell adult

illiteracy in the next generation. "The very education of parents ensures," says Naik (1965) "the attendance of children in school" (p. 10)

Thus, home factors, poverty and illiteracy of parents contribute to the problem of dropping out. We now turn to the school variables.

School Variables

The second major cause that is discussed in connection with dropout problem is the school system in which the disadvantaged children study. Those elements that are involved with the school are as follows.

Disfunctionality The external factors influencing wastage and stagnation among poor primary school children, as already noted, are essentially social and economic in origin and they arise also from the attempt to take education to social groups which are poor and culturally underprivileged. The social standing, poverty, illiteracy, and indifference of parents are characteristics that lie outside of the direct control of educational authorities, agencies, and institutions. But there are, what are called, internal factors that also have a definite bearing on the problem. These are components connected with school environment. The Ministry of Education In India attests that

It is a truism that a majority of elementary schools in India have unattractive buildings, inadequate equipment, indifferent and untrained teachers, over-crowded classes and so on. All these constitute poor environment; and as a resultant concomitant of these elements, it has been estimated that 30 per cent of total wastage is due to educational causes (MESW, 1968, p. 30).

These internal factors evoke some important questions. They are: (1) How effective are elementary schools in helping to attend regularly, those pupils who are enrolled and how efficient are they in their holding power of pupils? (2) To what extent do they prepare students for socio-economic activity? And finally (3) what role does the school play in the lives of the pupils who attend that might be contributing factors to wastage and stagnation (UNESCO, 1978, p. 9)?

Wastage and stagnation are due to a variety of school factors, chief among which are the poor quality of teachers, indifferent teaching, a rigorous system of examinations, lack of knowledge and understanding of the psychology and behavior of poor children on the part of school personnel, all resulting in the absence of concern and enthusiastic motivation for teaching. Paucity and lack of proper instructional amenities are also partially associated with dropouts (MESW, 1975, p. 152). Some of the serious and specific causes are considered next.

Faculty admission policy. A faculty admission policy is a contributing factor. In some states in grade I admission is kept open throughout the year. As a result there are those children who join the school towards the late end of the academic session and are treated as stagnation cases since they study only for a few months instead of a whole year.

Incomplete schools. While the provision of schools within 1.5 kilometers now reaches 60 per cent of habitations having 72 per cent of the rural population (MESW, 1978, p. 220), often the school in the village is incomplete in that it does not provide all six classes. Since there is no other school in the neighborhood to reach the upper classes which have not been provided in the local school, the child has no other alternative but to discontinue education.

Untrained teachers. A large number of untrained teachers are employed in the primary level. Many of them are high school graduates. These have no training incentives or inservice opportunities to become knowledgeable about the art of teaching.

Those who have teaching qualifications have had no training in special methods of teaching, particularly in teaching reading and the concepts of numbers, for these subjects are neglected in training schools and the average

teacher is not adequately prepared to handle class I (MESW, 1968. p. 153. Since a large number of teachers are unqualified and untrained, ineffective teaching is the inevitable consequence. Such teachers mainly rely on verbal teaching. However, some educators in India maintain that

When all is said and done the solution to wastage and stagnation mainly depends upon the efforts of the teachers and administrators. Because, those teachers who have nobility of faith, honesty of purpose and sincerity of endeavor in their profession; and those administrators with united and cooperative efforts can lessen the acuteness of the problem (Moorthy, 1970, p. 13).

These qualities, coupled with opportunities for teachers to learn the principles and methods of teaching, would substantially help reduce the 30 per cent dropout rate attributed to school factors.

Defective curricula The curricula are prescribed and are heavy in academics, even in class I. This emphasis is overwhelming even for a child from normal circumstances. Improvement in curricula is sadly wanting. "No area in curriculum is as sadly neglected as in class I (NECERT, 1964, p. 156). This being the case, it is not difficult to conceive of the highest incidence of wastage and stagnation at this stage of elementary education.

Wrong placement of teachers. Misplacements of teachers is another factor causing wastage and stagnation. Teaching in class I needs a carefully trained teacher. Often, a very young, weak and untrained teachers is

assigned to teach class I. The status of a teacher is correlated with that of the level he or she teaches. A wrong idea of the status of a teacher thus results in giving this most difficult of assignments to the weakest member of the staff. This practice does not enhance the retention power in class I.

Rigid examinations. Rigorous examinations, supposed to produce highly intelligent students, are regularly administered to students. The lack of such examinations is considered to be a lowering of the standards of education. Consequently, the annual promotion standards of I are as stiff as those of Secondary School Leaving Certificate (S.S.L.C.) or matriculation examinations. This practice has a very disheartening effect on young children, many of whom just leave school or stagnate even further (NECERT, 1964, p. 156).

Discriminatory and selective character. Though educational systems have expanded opportunities to the children of the poor, they have still retained their discriminatory and selective character. This fact is manifested in the so-called dropouts and repeaters, generally in the first three grades. Examinations which are selective and discriminatory, particularly to the poor children, take their toll as much as 35-40 per cent at the end of each year (NECERT, 1975, p. 6).

This system is also likely to produce attitudes of superiority and selfishness among those educated which, in turn, helps to increase the social distance between themselves and the uneducated masses.

Heterogeneous classes. As Naik says, the age admission policy of the primary school is 5 to 6. Unfortunately, this is not so firm when it comes to actual admission. In most cases the actual age of children in class 1 varies from below 5 to 15. This heterogeneity is due to two main reasons: (1) Instead of admitting children of a fixed age, say 5 plus, to class 1, children of all ages are indiscriminately admitted. In rural areas, especially, many children of 9 to 11 years of age, often, are admitted as first timers to class 1. (2) Even when children of the proper age are admitted, owing to the large extent of stagnation some of them stay in class 1 for two, three, four or even five years (Naik, 1965, p. 36). This again makes the group heterogeneous. Since it is very difficult to manage heterogeneous groups of this type, the quality of teaching in class 1 is adversely affected. Thus, the presence of heterogeneous groups results in stagnation and stagnation increases heterogeneous groups; and one feeding upon the other sets up a vicious cycle. The group becomes more heterogeneous because of the large extent of stagnation. At the same time stagnation increases because of heterogeneity.

Describing the dismal impact of school on the drop-outs, Adiseshiah says that India has successfully developed the world's most unproductive educational system which helps boys and girls to dropout of school, repeat classes and become nearly totally unemployable (1980, p. 151).

Having considered home and school variables which influence students to dropout, we now turn to variables which are associated with dropouts themselves.

Student Variables

According to Sharma and Sapra (1969), causes relating to pupil variables are academic deficiency, less or irregular attendance, higher age and lack of interest (p. 98-105). Since these variables are related to economic and school factors, they are considered as dependent variables in dropout problem.

Academic deficiency. "Academic deficiency," some writers point out, may not be due to lack of ability. It may be caused mainly due to malnutrition in the prenatal and postnatal period (Subramaniam, 1980, p. 147). Owing to this reason children generally do poorly in school, and they are branded as failures early in their school life. Thus, they are destined for jobs which require little skills and originality, simply because they were unable to succeed at school tests and exercises.

Another factor making for academic deficiency may be self-concept of dropouts.

The society reinforces through schooling and other institutions, the self-image of incompetence and ignorance for those who do not succeed in school. As a result the school system continues the most flagrant and dangerous injustice in the twentieth century. May those who want to conserve it at any cost sit down and probe into themselves and may ponder the scope of the evil and its predictable consequences (Lundhal, 1979, p. 478).

Irregularity of attendance. This is another contributing element in the dropout problem. The rural home atmosphere does not create school mindedness. Schools have very little attracting power. Consequently, the natural unwillingness of the child to leave the play and the work at home and in the fields and go to school is strengthened further. For this reason it takes six to eight months for an average child to become accustomed to attending school (NECERT, 1964, p. 154). In this transition period his attendance in class 1 is very irregular. Most children really begin studies in class 1 in the second year of their enrolment. How to provide for the transition period and how to meet the academic needs is indeed a problem.

Higher age and lack of interest. Comparatively more children of illiterate parents start education at a late stage. But the sequential character of the school system does not help those who enter school at a higher age because they are expected to complete one class every year and rise to the next higher class after passing the annual

examination. This practice, the lack of encouragement and the impoverished home background help the poor children to get disheartened in academic performance.

So far the cause for dropping out discussed in the literature have been noted. Now we turn to solutions.

Remedies Suggested in the Literature

In an overall attempt to reduce the dropout rate many possible solutions have been expressed, but most of them concentrate on improving the family background and school environment.

Suggestions for Improving the Home Environment

The Indian Educational Report of 1964 stated that the only remedy for dropping out is to improve the general economic conditions of the masses of India (NECERT, 1964, p. 150). If the family were to have income over and above the subsistence level, the parents would be more likely to let the children attend school instead of using them to augment their income. Yet, the plans and programs to improve the rural poor are not working and the wastage and stagnation continues.

It is here both governmental and non-governmental agencies should concentrate their efforts by improving the general economic condition of the family, village and town. They should do this, some educators advocate, not

by handing out hard cash but by providing productive and gainful jobs through cooperative societies, small cottage industries and so on. The educators also advocate the idea that the initiative and effort must be made by locally educated and concerned people and those with financial means.

It is strongly believed that the child must be reached though his parents in his home during the very earliest stage of his development. If one were to be serious about doing something about the intellectual development leading to productive life for the underprivileged children, it would have to be done by encouraging parents to change their intellectual expectations and aspirations for their children. For change, says Shukla (1976), must come through changed minds resulting changed attitudes of people (p. 127). There is much truth in this idea but it would take an enormous amount of concern and dedication on the part of those who wish to do this. To be successful it must be initiated and implemented by locally concerned people.

Suggestions for Improving the School Environment

The following suggestions are advocated by educators in India to improve the environment of the schools.

Part-time Education. Realizing the fact that general economic improvement will take a long time, it is suggested in the mean time, that a system of part-time education, particularly for children in the age group 4-9 and 10-14, be provided so that they would be able to work for their families and also, at the same time, receive education. The latest (1980) Five Year Plan of India states this intention as follows:

A system of part-time, nonformal continuation education will be designed for children who enter the primary school but drop-out later, generally in the age-group 9-14. The rule will be that every child in the age-group 6-14 shall attend school, on a part-time basis, if necessary for those who cannot, mainly for economic reasons, attend full-time education. This will reduce drop-outs and wastage very greatly (MESSW, 1980, p. 220).

Multiple-entry system. Having understood that the present system of singlepoint entry and exclusively full-time education has the two serious weaknesses of encouraging dropping out and lack of provision for grownup children to join school, it has been proposed to produce a multiple entry system so that children of the poor could enter school at different times during the school year and at different age levels. Again, the latest Five Year Plan states:

A multiple-entry system will be adopted and special condensed course of non-formal education will be laid on programmes for children in the age-group 11-14. It has been the experience that these children can be taken to the level of class 5 in 12-24 months (MESW, 1980, p. 220).

Adult education. Adult education is deemed to assist effectively in reducing wastage and stagnation. It is argued that an educated adult, especially a mother, is the best insurance for the proper education of her children. Emphasizing this aspect of the contribution of adult education in liquidating illiteracy and dropouts Ranjan Roy (1971) says:

The educational backwardness of the nation will have been nearly solved if the women were educated first. The reason is simple. An educated mother seldom allows here children to go uneducated. The father is not as much effective in this respect (p. 114).

Liquidation of adult illiteracy, which in turn facilitates universal literacy, would be less expensive (Naik, 1967, p. 10) in comparison to the vast amount of money that are now lost year by year, through wastage and stagnation at the elementary level.

Teaching and curriculum. One of the most effective, fairly feasible and immediate programs for the reduction of wastage is to increase the attracting and holding power of the school by providing enthusiastic, dedicated, qualified and well-paid teachers and adequate facilities and instructional materials for teaching.

A teacher is an individual who in the name of teaching conducts herself-himself in such a manner as to induce, facilitate and maintain other's explorations of the world and self. The presence of an interested adult for

children to feel secure and to grow by interaction with such an adult is important.

And teaching must be based on the proposition that 1. Children best learn when involved in self-centered activity; 2. learning is best when it is experiential; and 3. the whole child is involved in learning not just his intellect. In this perspective teaching will put students in a questioning frame of mind, give them tools of analysis, use problem solving approach, make students explorers, inquirers, interactors and discoverers (Yamamoto, 1969, p. 45).

Thus while "teaching is the art of leading students to discover, the learning should be the activity centered activity engaged in the life about them" (Brembeck, 1962, pp. 58 and 90).

The curriculum must be related to providing useful knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are relevant to the lives of students.

An excellent example of what has been done in relating the school to the every day need of students is found in the comprehensive rural development program at Comila, Bangladesh.

It resulted in a series of innovative programs such as :

Farm or home-related projects, cooperative school stores, small rural museums, preparation of booklets on agriculture, health, sanitation, and other subjects related to the lives of the students, and preparation of a booklet on the "Modern Village Teacher" (Hanson and Neiof, 1976 p. 34).

Nonformal education. Regarding curriculum change Shukla says, "The crying need is to drastically modify the existing system of formal education so as to meet

the dire need of life oriented skills (Suklar, 1976, p. 127). With such a keen perception of expanded education as indicated above, the Central Advisory Board of Education laid special emphasis on the development of nonformal education. As a general strategy, it urged that the exclusive emphasis on the formal system of education should be given up and a large element of nonformal education should be used within the formal school system. Multiple entry and programs of part-time education have to be adopted in a big way for those children who cannot attend school full time. The board urged that every state should prepare a concrete and realistic program which should be made financially feasible through the introduction of a nonformal element within the existing system (Shikla, 1976, p. 128).

Nonformal education is to cover various educational needs of nonschool going children or dropouts. It is oriented to improve their work, earning power, health, family life, and understanding of social and natural surroundings. These programs are to use different learning and instructional materials and methods (NECERT, 1976, p. 1).

The National Council on Education in India suggested that primary teachers and schools should be the agencies for implementing part-time programs, multiple-entry schemes and various nonformal education.

Organizing of these programs needs the support of the local community. Particularly, the support will have to come through the provision of learning facilities, not only in the school building, but also in the community (NCERT, 1976, p. 2).

Metha (1970) says that the primary responsibility for conducting nonformal education is that of the local and central governments, although the local communities have to bear the initial and functional responsibility. The venture would have to rest on community support for its success. The central and local governments should have educational and moral responsibility and interest for part-time and nonformal education as they do for full-time formal education. The modalities for these life-oriented education are not to be second-rate facilities. Therefore, it is strongly advocated that the full responsibility for this type of program should rest with the central and local governments (p. 123).

Raise the school-going age. Naik (1967) suggested that the children should be brought to school after they are 9 years old. For instance, he says, it has been shown through practical experimentation that grownup children of 11 to 14 years of age were able to complete studies of classes 1-5 in about two years. Very often grownup children of 14-18 years of age were able to complete the course

prescribed for classes 1-7 in a period of 2-3 years and pass Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations creditably (Naik, 1967, p. 117). Programs of this type are obviously very useful and suitable for conditions of a developing country like India. But these have never been fully developed, except in a few experimental projects.

Work-oriented education. The present trend in India to eliminate wastage is to introduce work-oriented-education. Adisesiah emphasizes that work-oriented education should be productive education. He deplores the reluctance of the government to introduce such a program to combat wastage and stagnation. He explains productive work-oriented education as follows:

Productive work in education, first and foremost, is an individual learning process. To counter it must be harnessed to social ends, so that it can be individually purposeful and socially meaningful. It is any activity which produces good which can be marketable. Productive education is then any learning activity where the skills of production are acquired through actual productive activity (Adisesiah, 1980, pp. 145).

The Education Abstract further clarifies work-oriented education as follows:

Work-experience is not just learning to work. It is natural part of general education and aims at including the habits of inquiry, careful observation, and experimentation; and developing self-reliant attitudes toward manual labor. It provides opportunities for creative self expression through the exercise of mind muscles. The student is encouraged to participate in the world of work intelligently and non-mechanically. It is in these respects that work experience differs from basic and craft education (MESW, 1978, p. 25).

Caution in work-experience education. In spite of the values of work-oriented and productive education, a caution is expressed especially by international experts who have observed scores of various work education programs in developing countries. Manzoor Ahmed (1975) for example, gives the following caution.

The well-meaning attempts to ruralize primary schools fail to make a distinction between (a) giving the primary curriculum a rural flavor and making it meaningful to learners by relating it to the immediate environment, which all good primary schools should attempt to do and (b) trying to make "little farmers" out of primary-school children which the primary schools cannot do and for which neither the students nor their parents are prepared (p. 55).

Ahmed adds that such education ignores the flight of youngsters from rural areas to towns and cities because of the inability of farming and other rural occupations to offer young people reasonable pay and standard of living. The issue in work-oriented education, therefore, is how to teach reasonable income producing skills.

Ahmed very strongly asserts that

there should be no training for jobs which do not exist or cannot be foreseen and no expectation that once a skill is taught, some how the learner will find faithful employment (p. 59).

Commenting on the rural skill programs for dropouts and out of school youths ICED (1974) notes the following:

There is one reason why many rural skill programs do not easily merge with the rural economic milieu and remain as intrusion from outside is that they fail to take sufficient cognizance of the already existing various essential life skills. Rural boys and girls begin to participate in the world of work at an early age and learn various skills throughout this apprenticeship process. Seldom are attempts made to explore the possibilities of these processes to broaden and upgrade them by the infusion necessary outside financial and technical resources which would offer a better prospect for the learners to fit into the total economy than would a new superimposed program (p. 68).

In view of all these complexities, it is agreed that the most important contribution primary and secondary schools can make is to prepare youngsters for productive work by giving students a solid general education and helping them to build a foundation of basic learning skills so that they can continue to learn.

Children should be oriented, says Stanley, to the physical, social and biological world in which they have to perform their productive role; they should acquire attitudes and values conducive to being productive members of a society. As part of this general education process it should be underscored that earning a living through productive work is a fundamental human need and that various work-oriented elements should find a place in the primary curriculum (Stanley, 1975, p. 23).

Additional suggestions. Two educators in India offer lists of things that the schools could do to reduce the dropout problem. Since they are different than those

discussed above, we offer them here. Metha (1970, p. 125) makes these suggestions:

1. Employ attendance officers.
2. Arrange better teacher-parent relationship.
3. Have contact with community and its interest.
4. Appoint best available women teachers in grades 1 and 2.
5. Eliminate late admission in the tail end of the school year.
6. Provide inservice training for teachers.

Devaraj Moorthy offers these ideas for reducing dropouts (1970, p. 15).

1. Change school hours. Hold school after children have assisted parents or worked.
2. Close school during peak agricultural seasons.
3. Make provisions for looking after younger siblings at home.
4. Create the urge to educate the children by propaganda films, cultural activities, lectures and night classes for children.
5. Implement ungraded teaching for lower grades.
6. Arrange special programs for the children of the masses: group games, story telling and songs.

Summary

Three causes contributing to dropping out have been noted. The first is the soci-economic background of the student's family--poverty of the home. Poverty and its resultant illiteracy and apathy of parents figures prominently in causing dropouts, according to the literature.

The second cause is the school system. The ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the schools stem from faulty admission, incomplete schools, untrained teachers, rigid examinations, discriminatory and selective character of the schools, heterogeneous classes and inadequate educational facilities due to lack of funds.

The third cause, is the student factors. These are academic deficiency, irregularity of attendance, higher age and lack of interest.

In order to remedy the problem of dropouts, a number of suggestions are advocated. These are: part-time education, multiple-entry system, adult education, teaching and curriculum improvement, nonformal education, raising school-going age, work-oriented education, and additional but different helpful suggestions.

Other educators and development experts like Ahmed, however, point out, how self defeating some of the remedies could become, if they are not judiciously employed.

Such a caution is sounded against unproductive, non paying and irrelevant programs if they are not adapted to the local initiatives and needs.

For this study, the literature review helped to strengthen the significance of the research. It enabled the writer to understand the seriousness, universality and persistence of the problem. And it isolated home and school factors as critical. Student factors are important, but they do not loom as large as the other two. Thus the literature survey not only gave a preview of the problem, but also helped to focus on specific factors around which questionnaire items could be grouped.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH SETTING, METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In order to understand and interpret the findings of this study, it is essential to understand the context in which the information was collected. Therefore, this chapter presents descriptive data of the nine schools and methods and procedures used in this study.

Research Setting

The research setting is the environment of the nine boarding schools in which dropping out took place.

Data Sources

The information regarding the research setting was derived from three sources, the writer's on site observation of all but one of the nine schools during the summer of 1979, information provided by principals' letters and their responses to the first cover letter that appears in appendix and REACH files.

The notes taken during the observation of the nine schools, the information supplied by principals and REACH files provided material on the following topics: background of the schools, school sites, school buildings, boarding and lodging facilities, diversity of student population in the nine schools, curriculum and instruction, work program

the school day, language characteristics, class size, data on teachers and REACH students.

Observation Data on the Schools

Prior to the collection of demographic data from principals and teachers, the writer made a visit to all but one of the nine schools selected for this study during the summer of 1978 with a view to gathering information to determine the effectiveness of REACH program in all REACH supported schools in India. This on-site visitation involved interviewing principals, teachers and those who were closely connected with the students, the dormitory deans and those corresponded with REACH on behalf of the poor children. The following topics are derived from the observation data.

Background of the schools. The history of these nine schools is brief and recent. All nine, except Nuzvid, came into existence within the last twelve years as a result of the promise of financial assistance to poor students by aid agencies such REACH International or similar organizations and the increasing demand for English education by the Indian population.

All these schools are called Seventh-day Adventist English Schools because they were established and operated by the Seventh-day Adventists Church in India.

In all nine schools church services are conducted either on the school premises or in the hostels. In two cases, the children go to worship in regular but simple church buildings.

Since these nine schools are owned and operated by the Seventhday Adventist Church, they neither seek nor receive government grants or subsidies. This is so because the Church wants to maintain its religious philosophy and objectives in the schools. The schools are fee levying institutions. They charge each day scholar a sum of 12 to 15 rupees (\$1.00 to \$2.00) per month. This fee covers only the tuition charge; parents also provide school supplies such as books, pencils, slates and other items. The boarding students are charged nearly ten times as much.

At the Kottiyam school, situated in Kerala State, there are boarders whose parents are earning a living in the Middle Eastern Countries. These children are charged a much higher fee than the other boarders since they stay at the school right through the year. The school has become a home to them, and their parents visit them at the school once every two or three years.

School sites. All the nine schools are located in South India. Politically and linguistically South India is divided into four major States or Provinces. These four States are Andhra (Telugu language), Kerala (Mala

Yalam language), Madras (Tamil) and Mysore (Kannada) language. Each language is distinct in its own right. Three schools: Chittode, Planiyappa Puram, and Puliankudy are located in Madras. Robertson Pet and Bidar in Mysore State. Nuzvid and Khurdha are located in Andhra State. Kottiyam is situated in Kerala State.

These schools are situated in semi-urban areas, each of them within a hundred miles of a major city. Both bus and train services are available for travel and transportation. Despite their relative closeness to big cities, there were no major industries in or near the school areas. The primary occupation is agriculture which is generally carried out by primitive methods. The poor cultivate the arable land for the landlords for an income that barely supports subsistence livelihood. Mostly, these poor people live in shanty villages segregated by their inherited occupational categories.

School facilities. In all these schools the physical facilities are meagre and inadequate. Nuzvid school, the one not visited by the writer, was established thirty five years ago. According to one of its alumni, with whom the writer conferred, it is old and dilapidated. The school looked to this former alumnus about the same as it did when he was a student 15 years ago. There had been no appreciable change or improvement in physical facilities. The lodging and dining facilities are neither

modern nor adequate enough to meet the needs of the students. Recently, Nuzvid school principal requested money to renovate the buildings.

The other eight schools started to function in makeshift buildings. They are gradually expanding or improving their physical plants. However, these additions and improvements are by no means adequate enough to provide for the anticipated yearly growth. Owing to the shortage of funds the inadequacies will likely continue. Three of these 8 schools started with modest buildings and are already overcrowded. There is no immediate plan to provide for the lack of building facilities.

There are no library facilities in any of these schools, nor are there any plans for them in the future.

The walls of the nine schools are made out of bricks, while the roofs are made out of burnt clay tiles, zinc or asbestos sheets. Such roofs, absorbing and transmitting the heat of the sun, can make the pursuit of learning uncomfortable.

The thinly spread cement on the floors have worn out in many places, creating potholes. In some schools these potholes have been filled with concrete, giving the floor a patched look.

In five schools, shelters made out of bamboo poles and thatched roofs are used as additional classrooms.

The children in these shelters have no protection against wind and rain and in some cases sand storm.

No school has more than seven classrooms. The classrooms are not well ventilated. As many as fifty to sixty children are crowded into them. Classrooms have built-in blackboards on the walls. Seats are made of wooden benches attached to desks which have no space for books or other learning materials. These benches could comfortably seat four students; instead six to eight students occupy the space of four. Such accommodation is possible because of the small stature of the children. The crowded conditions reflect both the explosion of the school population and the low level of the economic status of the region.

All the classrooms are bare of any visual aids. They are without pictures, charts, bulletin boards or any other illustrative materials. Children use slates for writing, since paper is expensive.

All schools urgently need additional classrooms, proper boarding facilities and instructional and learning materials. Thus, they are inadequate to meet the physical and educational needs of the children. These conditions may continue to persist both in older schools as well as in newer ones for lack of necessary funds. to improve.

Illustrative of such needs, as stated above, is the list of items which the principals requested REACH to supply.

1. Teaching aids, such as pictures and games.
2. Flannel graph pictures for different subjects.
3. Pictures of flowers, birds and animals.
4. Films and film projectors for Bible, English Science and social studies.
5. Game equipment.
6. Drawing materials.
7. Record players and tape recorders.
8. Word building materials.
9. Financial help to build proper hostels.
10. Picture books for reading and writing.
11. A bore well to increase water supply.

The school principal at Kottiyam stated his needs as follows:

Now that the children are grown up, we desperately need separate dormitories for boys and girls. The children are living in rented quarters away from the school campus. They lose a lot of time and energy by walking back and forth to school.

The living accommodation is so limited that children sit on their mats to study and do their home work.

Since water is insufficient, some days the children have to walk to a distant well to fetch water. Toilets are unhygienic. Only one latrine is available for 60 children and half-dozen teachers. The landlord has given notice to vacate the building by January 1982. Thus, the very fate of REACH program is at stake (A. M. Thampi, Correspondence, dated December 4, 1981).

Boarding and lodging facilities. Except at Nuzvid, the boarding and lodging facilities are meagre. Rented quarters and temporary buildings away from school premises serve as lodging places. Nuzvid has separate halls for boys and girls for sleeping quarters. The halls are furnished with cots to sleep on and cupboards to store children's belongings.

There were no dining room facilities in any of these schools except Nuzvid. Temporary sheds, cement platforms and verandahs are used for dining purposes. Often, children eat their meals in just about any shady place they can find on the school premises.

Diversity of populations. The student population of these schools is quite varied. Children of professional parents, peasants, rich and poor, literates and illiterates, and high and low castes are all engaged in the pursuit of formal education. More than 50 per cent of the poor students are from families whose income is below the poverty level established by the government.

Curriculum and instruction. The curricula of the schools are in harmony with the local government's requirements for the elementary education.

According to the progress report sent to sponsors by the schools, all the schools teach the following subjects: Bible, reading, writing, English, regional

language, mathematics, Hindi, nature studies, drawing, dictation and physical education. The classrooms are noisy from recitation. The medium of instruction is in English, the main attraction for all students, and especially for the more affluent ones. In keeping with the prestige of learning English, the schools are called English Schools.

Work program In accordance with the philosophy of the church, work programs are provided on a regular basis. The work program at the elementary level consists of picking up trash on the school campus, transporting and piling up of fire wood for the kitchen, dish washing, cleaning classrooms and sleeping quarters, and a little bit of gardening. Whatever is produced in the gardens is used in the kitchen.

There is no systematic teaching of any skills that would contribute to learning a trade. There is no plan to make the work program productive and marketable. Lack of funds, know-how and planning, and of trained personnel to teach practical skills, seem to be the reason for the underdevelopment of the work program.

In all cases, therefore, the work program is primarily a matter of maintaining a clean school environment and such other chores as necessary for house keeping.

Teachers' and students' day at school. Many teachers live in the village and towns near the schools. They travel daily to school. Some teachers live with the children in rented boarding houses and take care of them. Those teachers who stay with the children work around the clock for no additional pay. Teachers report to school at 8 a.m. All schools begin with the school-day with a worship period for all children. Following worship, each major subject is taught in 45-minute periods. Four such periods constitute the morning session. Lunch is between 12 and 1 p.m. The afternoon session has smaller time blocks in which several other subjects are taught. There is a fifteen-minute recess both in the morning and in the afternoon.

In the evening, from 4 to 6 p.m., the children play, prepare their sleeping quarters, wash their clothes and do other similar chores in order to keep themselves and the school clean and tidy.

All schools close for vacation three times a year. They have two-to-three-week vacations twice during the school year; and a summer vacation during the months of April and May.

Language characteristics. One of the distinctive traits of these schools is the language variation. Children in five schools--Chittode, Palaniyappa Puram, Puliankudy, Robertson Pet and Thambaram--speak the Tamil

language; Bidar school children speak the Kanarese language; Nuzvid and Khurdah children speak Telugu language; Kottiyam school children speak Malayalam language. Thus, the four major languages of South India are represented. The teachers in these schools, obviously, speak the respective regional languages, besides English.

Thus far, the data collected by visitation to the schools have been described. The demographic data sent by principals are described next.

Principals' Data

A demographic profile derived from data provided by principals is given on the next page.

Table 3.1 shows the names of those schools, the number of male and female teachers in each school, the qualifications of teachers, average years of their teaching experience, average number of students in each classroom, average number of REACH students in each classroom, total student population and total number of REACH students in each school and total number of REACH students dropouts for each school. Each of these items is explained after table 3.1.

Table 3.1

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SCHOOLS

NAMES OF SCHOOLS	Teachers					Students				
	No. of Male Teachers No. of Female Teachers	No. of College Graduates No. of High School Grads.	Average of Teachers	Average Age of Teaching Experience	Average Number of Students in Classroom	Average Number of REACH Students in Classroom	Total Student Population of School in 80-81	Total REACH Students in School during 80-81	No of REACH Dropouts in 80-81 School Year	
BIDAR	2/4	2/4	22	2	49	19	276	98	23	
CHITTODE	4/5	3/6	28	3	37	16	316	146	26	
KURDHA	7/4	7/3	30	4	15	11	146	119	16	
NUZVID	3/6	7/2	31	4	22	4	200	38	18	
P. PURAM	3/10	8/5	33	4	33	7	243	168	21	
PULIANKUDY	5/9	4/10	25	6	30	10	383	140	15	
ROBERTSONPET	6/15	6/15	28	5	51	4	1063	73	13	
THAMBARAM	1/5	1/5	29	2	38	12	186	74	17	
KOTTYAM	3/6	6/3	28	4	15	11	146	121	18	
TOTAL	34 64	44 53					2957	977	167	

Teachers. Table 3.1 shows that there were a total of 98 teachers, thirty-four of whom were male and sixty-four females.

Three factors might help explain this female dominance. First, nearly half the women teachers were only high school graduates, and so, it might have been less expensive to hire them. Second, very few men want to teach lower elementary grades because of a general conception that teaching lower grades is less prestigious. Third, no other jobs were available for less qualified women teachers. Hence, inexperienced, unqualified women teachers were assigned to handle the lower grades.

Those teachers who have only Pre-University Course diploma (PUC) or high school certificates were teaching Kindergarten, first and second grades.

The average age of the teachers in the nine schools was 28.

Qualification of teachers. Of the 98 teachers, 44 were college graduates. Seven of the 44 college graduates held degrees in education, and 2 held elementary teaching certificates. The other 35 held liberal arts and science degrees. Of the remaining 54 teachers, 11 held P.U.C. diplomas and 43 had high school diplomas.

A total of 19, nearly half of those who had college degrees, were women, three of whom held M.Sc. degrees.

Twenty-five men teachers held college degrees. Three of these were principals and held M.A. degrees as well.

Teaching experience. The average teaching experience among the teachers was 3.8 years. This short teaching experience for the teachers in all the nine schools was due not only the recent establishment of these schools, but also to the fact that many of these younger teachers quit teaching for married life or further studies and were replaced by younger persons.

Class size. The class size ranged from 15 to 51 students. Classes with the least number of students were the upper elementary classes--5 and 6. Those classes with most pupils were lower level classes, Kindergarten and first grade. The class size of 40 to 50 in the lower grades was smaller than the normal size in government schools, which is 45 to 60 students to a class.

Number of students in the nine schools. Of the nine schools, only one, Robertson Pet, had a student population of over one thousand. The other eight schools were much smaller with populations ranging from 146 to 300. The total number of students was 2957. The boy-girl ratio for all the nine schools was not available.

Number of REACH students in the nine schools. The number of REACH-supported students in all the nine schools was quite varied. Three schools, Khurdha, Palaniyappa

Puram and Kottiyam, had 119, 168 and 121 students respectively. These figures represented over 50 per cent of the students in these three schools. All the other schools had less than 50 per cent. Three schools, Bidar, Nuzvid and Robertson Pet had far less than 50 per cent. Thus, except for three schools, REACH students did not constitute the major part of the student population.

Out of 2957 students, 977 students were REACH students. Of these, 167 dropped out of school during the academic year 1980-1981.

Based on the number of dropouts identified and accounted for, the nine schools had an average of 19 dropouts per school during 1980-81 academic year.

Most of the REACH students were enrolled in the lower elementary grades. About 95 per cent of the REACH student were Seventh-day Adventists by profession of faith. Only 26 students were non Christians.

Table 3.2 on the next page depicts the percentage of REACH boys and girls in each of the nine schools. The table lists the total number of students in each school and the number of REACH students, followed by the percentages of REACH students.

The four school--Palaniyappa Puram, Chittode, Khurdha and Thambaram--had significantly higher percentages of REACH students than other five schools. Nuzvid had 19 per cent and Robertson Pet had the lowest, a small 6 per cent.

The percentage of girls in each school was smaller than that of boys.

Seven of the nine school had well over one third of the students made up of REACH supported pupils. In three schools, more than half the students were REACH students. Schools with higher percentage of REACH students had a greater number of dropouts.

Table 3.2

PERCENTAGE OF REACH BOYS AND GIRLS FOR EACH SCHOOL

Schools	No. of students in 80-81	No of REACH Students in 80-81	Percen- tages of REACH Students in 80-81	Percen- tages of REACH Boys in 80-81	Percen- tages of REACH Girls in 80-81
Bidar	276	98	36%	19%	17%
Chittode	316	146	46%	28%	18%
Kurdha	146	119	81%	52%	29%
Nuzvid	200	38	19%	11%	8%
P. Puram	243	168	69%	39%	30%
P. Kudy	383	140	37%	21%	16%
R. Pet	1063	73	6%	4%	2%
Thambaram	186	74	39%	26%	13%
Kottyam	146	121	82%	69%	13%

Table 3.3 below presents the total number of students sponsored by REACH' and the total percentage of REACH students for all the nine schools.

There were a total of 977 REACH sponsored students in the nine schools during the academic year 1980-1981. This number was 33 per cent of the total student population in the nine schools.

There were 606 boys, which was 20 per cent of the REACH students. There were 371 girls which was 13 per cent of the REACH students.

Table 3.3
PERCENTAGE OF REACH BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE NINE SCHOOLS
1980-1981

ITEMS	NUMBERS	PERCENTAGE
Students in the nine school	2957	
REACH students	977	33%
REACH boys	606	20%
REACH girls	371	13%

Table 3.4 below presents the dropouts' data collected from the REACH office files.

The total dropouts for the academic year 1980-81 was 167, or 17 per cent of the REACH students. Out of 167 dropouts, there were 114 boys, which was a 11 per cent dropout rate; and there were 53 girls, which was a 5 per cent rate.

Table 3.4
REACH DROPOUTS IN 1980-1981

Schools	Number in School	Number of Dropouts	Percentage of Dropouts
Bidar	98	23	23%
Chittode	146	26	18%
Kurdha	119	16	13%
Nuzvid	38	18	47%
P. Puram	168	21	12%
Puliankudy	140	15	10%
Robertson Pet	73	13	17%
Thambaram	74	17	23%
Kottiyam	121	18	14%
Total	977	167	17%

Summing up, it might be said that the profile of the schools gave a fair picture of the background and environmental conditions. It pointed out the internal factors such as inadequate physical facilities, teaching and learning materials, and untrained teachers, which according to literature precedents, constitute the second major cause for dropping out problem. The profile also helped to understand the lack of awareness of the seriousness of the problem by school personnel and the position of teachers both on home and school factors in the main section of the questionnaire.

Methods and Procedures

The following pages describe the research methods and procedures used in this study, including the identification of the population, the gathering of demographic data from principals, the development and use of the questionnaire, and the method for analyzing and reporting the response.

Identification of the Population

The population for this study was composed of primary school principals, teachers, and peers of the dropouts in nine REACH supported private boarding and christian schools in South India.

Since the universe of population was small, this study took the whole sample approach. This meant the inclusion of every primary school teacher who had dropouts in his/her class during the academic year 1980-1981, and the principals. Of these, 32 were females and 13 were males.

The names of dropouts for the academic year 1980-1981 were identified according to their names, age, sex, the year they entered school and the year they left, entry and exit grades and the name of the school. This information was collected from the REACH office located in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Demographic Data from Principals

After identifying the dropouts, the first cover letter that appears in appendix C was written to all the nine principals. This letter not only informed the principals about the intent of the study but also requested demographic information which included the name of the schools, number of students in school, number of REACH students in school, number of teachers in school and their age, sex, qualification and the number of years of teaching experience. All the principals complied with this request and sent in helpful information which have been tabulated and explained in the previous pages.

Development of the Questionnaire

It will be recalled that in the review of the literature, two major causes, poverty in the home and inadequacies in the existing schools emerged as main causes of wastage and stagnation. These factors in turn influence student performance which has been indentified simply as student factors in this study. These three causes provided the basis for the development of questionnaire items.

A three-part questionnaire was developed (see Appendix) for collecting teachers, principals' and peers' perceptions regarding causes for dropping out. The first section called for basic information on dropouts and

teachers which the teachers supplied on behalf of each individual dropout indentified on the questionnaire. The second part contained twenty-nine statements related to the three causes stated above. Each statement called for a response on the Likert five-point scale. The third section, composed of 8 open-ended questions and/or statements, provided for free expression of feelings, observations, opinions and concerns relevant to the dropout problem.

The name of a dropout, and his/her I.D. number issued by the REACH office, were written on each questionnaire. The 134 questionnaires thus prepared were then grouped according to the teachers who had the dropouts, After inserting them in envelopes addressed to teachers, they were further grouped according to schools. The teacher envelopes also contained the second letter that appears in Appendix C. This letter requested the teachers' cooperation and participation in providing their experienced insights regarding the causes of wastage. The questionnaires were then addressed and mailed to the principal of each school.

The teachers were asked to fill out the questionnaires independently for each child that had dropped out from his or her class. Then they were to send the questionnaires to Mr. Peter Thavamony, the assistant treasurer

of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South India, within ten days after they had received the questionnaires.

In order to get the perceptions of peers, the teachers were requested to supply a plain sheet of writing paper to the friends of the dropouts in their classrooms and request them to write a paragraph about the reasons for their friends dropping out of school.

The peers were given the option of writing in their mother tongue since they were not proficient enough to express their views in English. This they did. Their written reasons were to be sent along with the completed questionnaires by the teachers.

Mr. Peter Thavamony assisted in collecting and sending the questionnaires on to the United States. He also assisted in reminding the principals and teachers to expedite the return of the questionnaires.

Questionnaire Returns

After two months of waiting no questionnaires had been returned. The third letter that appears in Appendix C was written to expedite the return of the questionnaires. Telegrams were also sent both to principals and Mr. Thavamony after the reminder letter was sent. As a result, 63 questionnaires were returned by 29 teachers.

Though the number of the returned questionnaires

were fewer than expected, the content of the questionnaires contained useful information for understanding the position of the teachers, and peers on the dropout problem

The principals, who were also supposed to fill out the questionnaires, did not do so. Instead, all of them wrote letters about their schools and students which was very helpful in determining the status of REACH children in the nine schools.

Treatment of the Questionnaires

The first part of the questionnaires containing basic information on schools and dropouts, along with the second part of the questionnaires containing 29 items were subjected to a simple frequency percentage analysis. The results of this procedure are reported in tabular form, along with discussions in chapter V.

The third section consisting of 8 open-ended questions and statements brought some important responses from the teachers. The responses were carefully read, grouped, tallied for their frequency and itemized. This itemized list for each open-ended question is discussed and reported with its relevance to the problem of wastage.

Treatment of Peers' Responses

Twenty-four students, each in his/her mother tongue wrote a paragraph describing the reasons for their friends dropping out of school. These paragraphs were translated into English and are reported in the next chapter.

Finally, a summary of the research findings with suggestions for reducing the dropout was prepared.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS

The findings of this study to determine the causes influencing dropouts as perceived by teachers, principals, and peers of dropouts are presented in this chapter. The order will follow the three parts of the questionnaire described in the last chapter, namely basic data about the dropouts, the responses of the teachers to the 29 questionnaire items--these are stated in tabular form under three categories: the home background, the school factors and the student factors--and a summary of teachers' opinions on the open-ended portion of the questionnaire. The perceptions of peers of dropouts and principals' comments are described next. Finally, a section about the relationships of findings to the precedents in the literature concludes this chapter.

Basic Data Dropouts

The basic data gathered in the first section of the questionnaire, reported in tabular form, describes the rate of dropouts among REACH supported students from whom the questionnaires were returned and the entry and exit grade status of the 63 dropouts.

Rate of Dropouts

A total of 167 boys and girls dropped out of school during the 1980-1981 school year. Of this total 114 were boys and 53 were girls. Thus among the 167 boy-girl dropouts, the boys rate was 68 per cent and the girls rate was 32 per cent as depicted below

Table 5.1

REACH BOY-GIRL DROPOUT RATE AMONG DROPOUTS

Items	N	Percentages
Total boys dropped	114	68%
Total girls dropped	53	32%
Total boys and girls dropped	167	100%

Entry Grades

The entry grade table below points out that 80 per cent of the dropouts entered school in Kindergarten and first grade and 85 per cent of them were enrolled in the first three divisions of elementary education.

Table 5.2

DROPOUTS ENTRY GRADE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES

Grades	Frequency	Frequency %	Cumulative %
KG	26	41%	41%
1	24	39%	80%
2	3	5%	85%
3	4	6%	91%
4	3	5%	96%
5	1	1%	97%
6	2	3%	100%

Exit grades

Table 5.4 on the next page indicates that 41 per cent of the dropping out occurred in Kindergarten and first grade. Nearly half (47%) the children whose questionnaires were returned dropped out before finishing second grade. The table also shows that another large per cent (43%) dropped out during fifth and sixth grades.

Table 5.3

DROPOUT EXIT GRADE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES

Grades	Frequency	Frequency %	Frequency Cume. %
KG	17	28%	28%
1	8	13%	41%
2	4	6%	47%
3	1	1%	48%
4	6	9%	57%
5	18	29%	86%
6	9	14%	100%

Summary

Summing up this section, it might be stated that nearly a third of the REACH students dropped out of the nine schools; most of the dropouts were enrolled in Kindergarten and early grades; more than half the dropouts spent not more than two years in school; and another sizable number of dropouts left during fourth and fifth year of their schooling.

response of the Teachers to the
Questionnaire Items

The responses of the teachers to the questionnaire items were submitted to a simple frequency percentages analysis, the result of which are presented in tables according to the research questions raised for this study.

Home Variables

According to the literature on dropouts, the home variables were considered as the number one cause for wastage. Table 5.5 groups together the seven statements on home variables. They include: parent's poverty, lack of interest, lack of education, using children to improve family income, inability to pay extra money to school, attainment of puberty by their daughters and illness or death in the family.

The table shows how 29 teachers returning 63 questionnaires perceived these seven items as being related to the problem of dropouts.

Table 5.4

PERCENTAGES ON DROPOUT HOME VARIABLES

Questionnaire Items	N	Agree	Dis- Agree	Unsure
1. Parents, being poor, were not interested in their children's education.	63	41%	49%	10%
2. Parents, being uneducated, did not appreciate education.	63	44%	47%	9%
3. Parents changed residence and moved away.	63	6%	84%	10%
5. Parents needed the child to help increase family income	63	15%	43%	42%
6. Parents were asked to pay for their child's education	63	44%	44%	12%
7. Parents removed their daughter from school upon reaching puberty.	63	21%	79%	0%
8. There was illness or death at home.	63	9%	84%	7%

On item one, 29 teachers judged that 41 per cent, dropped out because the parents were poor and uninterested in education. On the other hand, 49 per cent of the dropouts were seen to have been uninfluenced by it.

On item two, the perceptions of teachers indicated that uneducated parents and their lack of appreciation for education was the reason that 44 per cent of the students dropped out. The teachers' perceptions disassociated this reason in 47 per cent of the dropouts. They were uncertain in 9 per cent of the cases.

On item three, only 6 per cent of the students dropped out were seen affected by the change of residence by parents.

On item five, 15 per cent of the dropouts were linked to the need for increased family income.

Teachers' perceptions on item six, regarding parents paying for their children's education, showed an even 44 per cent on both agreement and disagreement category, and they were not sure in 12 per cent of the cases.

On item 7, 21 per cent of the girls were seen to have been influenced by the attainment of puberty.

Finally, on item 8, only 9 per cent of the dropouts were judged to have been influenced by death or illness at home.

Discussion. It is significant to note that on three primary home variables, (items 1, 2, and 6), the disagreement differences in percentage points were only 8 and 3 on the first two items, and on item 6, were even with agreement points. In other words, by a narrow margin of

difference in key items, teachers seemed to say that these key home factors played a significant role in nearly 50 per cent of the dropouts cases. The other four items, apparently, were seen as less influential in the dropout problem.

In summary, it might be observed that the perceptions of teachers consistently disagreed that all 7 items of the home factors were influential in dropping out. But the percentage point differences between agreement and disagreement on three key home factors were small. Viewed from this perspective, the perceptions of teachers on these three important home factors indicated that nearly 50 per cent of the dropouts were affected by them. Such perception is an affirmation of the findings of previous research in India as noted earlier in the literature.

The second major research question was this. Did the dropping out occur due to some internal school factors? The findings about the perceptions of teachers on this aspect are described next.

Student Variables

According to the literature on dropouts, the school variables were ranked as the second major cause for wastage in Indian schools. Table 5.5 contains the school

factors that were assumed as reasons for dropping out in this study. These factors were: rigid examinations, strict discipline, teacher-student relationships, inability of the schools to meet the needs of the students, English medium instruction, difference in religious views of parents differing from that of the schools, schools' interest in converting students to Christianity, principals' efforts to retain students, teachers' counsel, tutorial help for individual pupil, inability of teachers to counsel parents, large class size prohibiting individual help, lack of attractive and varied teaching methods.

Table 5.5

PERCENTAGES ON DROPOUT SCHOOL VARIABLES

Questionnaire Items	N	Agree	Dis- Agree	Unsure
13. Student failed because of rigid examinations.	63	9%	90%	1%
16. Discipline was too severe for this student.	63	14%	81%	5%
17. Teacher could not get along with student.	63	8%	90%	2%
18. It was the fault of the school that student left.	63	27%	73%	0%
19. School unsuited to meet the needs of of poor students.	63	65%	29%	6%
20. Student found it difficult to study in English medium.	63	69%	27%	4%
21. Student dropped out because his parents' religious views differed from that of the school	63	12%	87%	1%
22. Parents disliked schools' encouragement to become a Christian.	63	47%	50%	3%
23. Student left even after every possible effort was made by the principal to keep him in school.	63	7%	90%	3%
24. Student dropped out even after teacher's counsel to remain in school.	64	53%	44%	3%

Table 5.5 Continued

PERCENTAGES ON DROPOUT SCHOOL VARIABLES

Questionnaire items	N	Agree	Dis- Agree	Unsure
25. Student dropped out even after special efforts to help him/her in academic subjects.	63	15%	81%	4%
26. I could not give my individual attention because of too many students in my class.	63	25%	66%	9%
27. As a teacher I was unable to contact and counsel parents.	63	4%	93%	3%
28. Student would have stayed if teaching methods were different and attractive.	63	15%	73%	12%
29. Student leaving school didn't matter much since there were many others who can take his place.	63	63%	36%	1%

The frequency percentages of these items as depicted in this table show some factors as being related to dropping out. But most items were perceived by teachers as unrelated to the problem.

Teachers disagreed on the following items: failure due to examination (item 13), strict discipline (item 16) poor student relationship (item 17), difference in religious views of parents and that of the school views (item 21), principal's effort to retain students (item 23), tutorial help to students (item 25), and inability of teachers to contact parents (item 26). In others words, seven out of fifteen, nearly half the school factors, were seen as un related to 80 to 90 per cent of the dropouts.

Teachers perceived two other items listed in table 5.6 as inconsequential to the problem of dropping out. These were: no fault of the school (item 18) and lack of attractive and different methods of teaching (item 28). They indicated that in over 70 or more per cent of the dropout cases, these two reasons were not influential in dropping out.

However on item 18, 29 per cent, nearly one third of the dropouts, were linked to this school factor. That is to say, nearly one third of the dropouts, according to teachers' perceptions, left school because of the fault of the school; and nearly two thirds left school because of seeming indifference to the problem of dropping out since there were other students who filled in the dropouts' vacancy.

Item 28 referred to attractive and varied teaching methods. Teachers associated only 15 per cent of the dropouts with this item. It seemed to say that the process of education to which the students submitted was not a primary reason in the majority of dropouts. It further seemed to affirm the effective teacher-performance in these schools.

But on item 19, which stated that schools were unsuited to meet the needs of the students, the teachers perceived 65 per cent of the dropouts leaving school for this reason. Such perception of teachers needs to be further investigated to determine the observable and measurable evidences that contribute to the dropping out.

It should be noted there, however, that it was quite possible that when the teachers observed that schools were unsuited to meet the needs of the children, they meant boarding facilities rather than those school variables which were closely connected with themselves and the process of education, because this explanation was clearly expressed in their written comments.

On item 20, which said that instruction in English was a reason for dropping out, the teachers' perceptions indicated that this could be one of the reasons for 69 per cent of the dropouts withdrawing from school. It was altogether possible that studying in English was just much for these disadvantaged children. To study in one's language, which has more than 240 characters

(a characteristic common to all four major South Indian languages) is an onerous task in itself even for those who are motivated with a good home background. But, beyond this, to learn through the English medium, with an additional language--Hindi, the national language--over and above their native language, must have been a tremendous linguistic hurdle to the poor children. Frustration and defeat might have been inevitable and dropping out the unavoidable outcome for many.

Item 21 and 22 were related to religious issues. In 87 per cent of the cases of dropouts, the teachers perceived that different religious views of the parents from those of the school were not a factor inducing the dropout problem. This posture is understandable since most of the students came from Christian homes.

The home situation just mentioned sheds light on item 22 which referred to the interest of the school in conversion of students to Christianity. On this point, the teachers noted that it was inconsequential to the dropout problem in 50 per cent of the dropouts. Another 47 per cent, nearly half of the dropouts, was related to this reason. Thus the perception of teachers was about evenly split.

According to teacher's perceptions, the principals had taken time and effort to counsel 90 per cent of the

dropouts (item 23) prior to the withdrawal from school. The teachers further agreed that 58 per cent of the dropouts left school in spite of their counseling.

It is interesting to note that teachers indicated that giving individual help to students was not hampered by large class size (item 27). This problem has been perceived as related to dropping out in 63 per cent of the cases. The implication may be that the problem or wastage was not perceived as a noteworthy one for either the school or the teachers. This perception seemed, however, to contradict their stated affirmation of concern and care in counseling and tutoring students before they withdrew from school.

Finally, item 29 which said that dropping out did not matter since others filled in the places of those who dropped out, was perceived as related to dropping out in 63 per cent of the cases. The implication may be that the problem of wastage was not perceived as a noteworthy one either for the school or the teachers. This possible perception seemed, however, to contradict again their stated affirmation of concern and care in counseling and tutoring students before they withdrew from school.

Summing up this section, it can be stated that while, on one hand, teachers perceived several of the

crucial school factors as inconsequential to droppin out, on the other hand, they perceived several other items, some to a lesser degree and other to a greater degree, as responsible for the problem.

Having reported the findings on the school variables, the third research question regarding the student factors will be considered next.

School Variables

The third research question was this. Did the student factors cause the dropout problem? The following factors were included as student variables in this study: homesickness, illness, lack of motivation, low academic ability, poor peer relationships, disruptive and discouragement.

In the literature review it was pointed out that student factors were classified not as a major cause for dropping out of school for the poor childrne. But they were noted and discussed as the outcome of poverty and inefficient school environment. In this study, however, they have been isolated for separate consideration.

A table showing the percentages of student factors as they related to dropouts in this study appears on the next page.

Table 5.6

PERCENTAGES ON DROPOUT STUDENT VARIABLES

Questionnaire Items	N	Agree	Dis- Agree	Unsure
4. The student was home sick and left school.	63	17%	82%	1%
9. The student was sick and left school.	63	22	77%	1%
10. The student showed very little interest in school activity.	63	31%	61%	8%
11. The student was low in his academic ability.	63	26%	63%	11%
12. The student failed in exam, discouraged and left school.	63	17%	82%	1%
14. The student was not getting along with other students.	63	14%	74%	12%
15. The student was disruptive, disrespectful and disobedient. So was sent home.	63	2%	96%	2%

On each of the above stated student factors, teachers consistently perceived no association between them and dropping out. Apparently, except for the items 9,, 10 and 11, none of the above items had been highly instrumental in contributing to the problem of dropouts.

Students' illness, lack of students' interest and low academic ability were perceived as reasons for close to one third (items 9, 10, and 11) and one half of dropouts quitting school. These three factors were also expressed in teachers' comments.

Often, in conversation, teachers placed at least some blame on the students. But in this case, it is quite intriguing to note that no such blame has been placed on the students. In this perception, teachers were in harmony with the literature findings that the major reasons for dropping out lay outside the students themselves.

Summary

In summary, the analysis of the 29 items of the questionnaire, indicated that home, school and student factors, put together, were not overriding reasons for dropping out.

However, responding teachers did feel that these factors were influential in a substantial minority of cases of dropouts. The teachers failed, however, to discern that all other items were inextricably associated with both home and school factors and dropping out. But teachers in their hand written comments clearly associated home, school and student factors with dropping out. We turn to this third part of the questionnaire now.

Teachers' Opinions on Open-ended Questionnaire

There were eight open-ended questions or statements which asked teachers to express their opinions, observations and concerns regarding the problem of dropout. Their responses to these eight items contributed much to the perspective of this study. They are listed and discussed in this section.

Main Reasons for Dropping out

Question 1 asked: What do you think was the one main reason the student left school? Answers to this question covered the entire spectrum of the questionnaire items and a few additional ones. Though worded differently, they reflected the content of the questionnaire.

Below are 17 items, listed according to their frequency. The number of responses are listed in parenthesis. It will be noted that the first item was mentioned 29 times, while the others were mentioned three times or less.

1. Student was too young and immature to be away from home (29)
2. Students' parents expected a great deal of help besides education for their children (3).
3. Students failed because of English language (3).
4. Student did not come back due to illness (2).

5. Student, being overaged, found it difficult to study (2).
6. Parents wanted the child at home to work (2).
7. Parents moved away from the school area (2).
8. Students adjustment to school takes time but they were unable to take the transition period (2).
9. Students were slow to learn and were frustrated due to lack of progress and success (2).
10. Grown up daughters were not allowed by parents to stay in school (2).
11. Students were needed at home to increase family income (1).
12. Student wanted to be home to take care of sick parents (1).
13. Parents changed their religious belief (1).
14. Conditional promotion could have helped retention (1).
15. Sponsorship was not on time; so student was sent home (1).
16. Student accidentally drowned (1).
17. School took strong disciplinary action against the student (1).

Discussion. Many of the responses to the questionnaire listed before are repetitions of the questionnaire items. They are, therefore, consonant with previous research findings. However, items, 1, 2, 14, and 15 will be discussed since they seem to reveal critical reasons for dropping out. They are not only different but indigenous to the situation of the school. Hence, they are relevant to the understanding and determining of the reasons for dropping out.

Item 1. This item says that student was too young and immature to be away from home. It was mentioned by every teacher who responded to the questionnaire, and obviously leads the list of concerns. It also raises the question about the admission policies and the ability of the schools to provide for and retain such young immature children.

Item 2. Another reason for dropping out was that the parents of these dropouts expected more than they got. Such expectations by parents might have been inevitable for two reasons. First, they were poor and naturally they wished to receive as much as they could get. Second, the sponsors themselves aroused such expectations. From time to time, after they had built up an amiable relationship with their children through correspondence and had been made aware of the sorry conditions of the parents some of them sent extra gifts and financial help.

This extra money and gifts were used strictly for helping the family. In some cases it was a substantial help.

Not all parents received such additional gifts and financial assistance, however, since all sponsors did not or could not quite indulge in this extra largesse. Further, this supplementary help was not regular; those who received did not necessarily continue to receive. Often both those who received and those who did not, assumed that the school was withholding gift funds from the intended recipients. Thus the supplemental aid, given on worthy and generous impulse, became a thorny issue, a bone of contention, often between the parents and the schools. The unfortunate consequence was the unwise withdrawal of some children from school by the parents.

Item 14. The third item that deserves discussion has to do with lack of conditional promotion in the schools. By conditional promotion the teachers referred to the promotion of those students who could not do well because of the English language barrier, along with those who were overaged for the grade. These, they thought should be promoted with the condition that they improve through additional help in English language and tutorial help for the over aged children.

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Item 15. The final item isolated for discussion is the late arrival of sponsorship money. This factors, though mentioned only once, probably played a definite role in the problem. An explanation, therefore, is necessary. The primary reason for this problem has been the lack of communication and the length of time involved because of distance and slow mail services. Another reason may have been the following.

Church pastors and principals for name and fame and income, hastily enrolled children in school. Then the principals took pictures of the admitted pupils, prepared brief biographical sketches and sent them to the mission headquarters in India. By the time these were processed at the mission office and in turn sent to the REACH office, two to three months had generally elapsed. After the photographs and data were received in the REACH office, another similar time period was needed to process them and to find sponsors for those children. Meanwhile, the principals, bearing the expenses of the newly admitted children, found their budget depleted and were faced with the only choice of dismissing the children.

In summation, the list of 17 items mentioned by teachers, though worded differently, were the same as the content of the questionnaire items. They were, therefore, in agreement with the major reasons for dropping out.

The four items that were selected for discussion reveal some probable additional reasons for the problem of wastage in the nine schools.

Teacher-Principal Efforts to Retain Students

Statement 2 on the open-ended section of the questionnaire said; list all the things that you can think of that you as a teacher or principal could have done to help the student remain in school.

Most teachers' responses to this statement were not direct replies to the request to list what they could have done. Instead, they gave suggestions, most of which, would not involve their personal initiative and activity. However, three items (items 1, 2 and 4) did indicate activities that they could have or could not have done.

The following 11 items were the responses of the teachers. Statement 1 was mentioned 14 times and 2 was mentioned 11 times. Others were named less than 10 times. They are listed here in order of their frequency.

1. Principals and teachers could have counseled parents and students (14).
2. Nothing could be done (11).
3. The school needs accreditation by the government (8).
4. Use translation in teaching.

5. Provide extra instructional material (7).
6. Help parents financially (7).
7. Provide sufficient care for sick children (5).
8. Provide everything for the child, as in an orphanage (4).
9. Support Vernacular schools (4).
10. Do not give Adventist education (3).
11. Provide better boarding facilities (3).

Discussion. As indicated above, only three of the eleven items (1, 2, and 4) related to the things that the teachers could have done by themselves to reduce the number of dropouts. All other items, except 3 and 10, clearly related to both the economic depravity of parents and children, and the inefficient and inadequate school factors. Therefore, items 1, 2, 4, are first discussed below. Items 3 and 10 are discussed next because they seem to go together.

Item 1. Teachers' response to item one in statement 2 said that teachers and principals could have counseled parents and students. Such a response is not affirmation of either their own effort or their principals' effort to counsel. The response simply stated what they could have done in answer to the question. From this perspective, it is difficult to reconcile the teachers' position in the second section of the questionnaire where they

indicated that both they and their principals counseled not only the students but their parents also.

Item 2. The response of the teachers in item 2 which said that nothing could be done to help retain students, seems to show that the teachers and principals were really at a loss to do anything by themselves to prevent dropping out. This is more so in view of the fact that nearly all other responses were those that needed attention by someone else, probably REACH or church leaders.

Item 4. The fourth item in the list was a response that indicated what the teachers could have done in making instruction meaningful and understandable to the students. They suggested that the English instruction could have been translated into local languages. This, the teachers could have implemented if they so desired, since there is no restriction to doing so.

Items 3 and 10 In these two items some teachers referred to Adventist education and government recognition of the schools. These two go together as stated before because the Adventist Church runs its schools from primary school to undergraduate level in India without accreditation by the Ministry of Education. This has been a problem for young people, especially at the high school and college levels. However, this is not a

not a problem in primary education. There is no strict regulation that prohibits children from entering unaccredited schools. In fact, currently, just about any person or group of people can open primary schools and serve the educational needs, especially, of the poor children. Therefore, Adventist education and recognition by government might not have been the real issue in dropping out.

To sum up the responses of the teachers on the second open-ended question, it can be said that the teachers did not find very many things that they themselves could have done. All other items not discussed here revealed the economic conditions of the schools. Thus, in the open-ended section of the questionnaire the teachers clearly linked home and school factors to dropping out.

Question three was related to the possible third party referred to above. This question is described and discussed next.

Church Leaders' Effort to Retain Students

Question three stated: list all the things that the church authorities could have done to help the student to remain in school.

Responding to this request, teachers stated some important suggestions. The first two suggestions listed below were mentioned 26 and 21 times respectively. The others were named three or four times each.

1. Parents need to be educated; so church leaders should go to parents and explain and emphasize the value of education (26).
2. Provide the physical needs of the family (21).
3. Make personal visit to home of parents (4).
4. Parents should not be given the impression that the school would provide everything to the students, which leads to disappointment and bitterness (4).
5. Support the child till sponsorship comes (4).
6. Support school administrators and teachers (4).
7. Provide jobs for the family (3).
8. Retain local language as medium of instruction (3).
9. Church authorities badly neglected their responsibilities (3).

Discussion. It is significant to note the recurring emphasis by teachers on economic, jobs and educational needs of parents (items 1, 2, and 7). Such emphasis clearly answers the basic research questions of this study about poverty of the home and its consequence.

In four items (1, 3, 4, and 6) teachers identified some of the most simple, practical and inexpensive ideas which they thought the church leaders could have performed in order to lessen the dropout problem.

In item 9 they frankly expressed the lack of any action on the part of the church leaders.

There are three items (3, 5, and 7) that need particular explanation here, since they seem indirectly related to the major causes.

Item 3. By saying that church leaders should make a personal visit to the homes of parents, teachers seemed to have perceived the value of personal contact with the poor people by important people like church leaders. They indicated that such contact could have helped retention.

Item 5 In item 5 teachers said that the school should support the child till sponsorship for him/her arrives. This aspect has been discussed on the 92. It was pointed out that because of the delay in securing sponsorship and communication due to distance, the children were dropped out of school for lack of funds. But it is interesting to note that teachers believed that if church leaders were concerned they could have done something about it, since they knew that money was sure to come.

In conclusion, it might be stated that teachers perceived that improving the economic, physical and job situations of parents through personal interest and contact by church leaders the problem of dropouts could have been minimized.

Another thirdy party that could have done something to reduce the dropout problem is REACH. The next statement relative to this point brought the suggestions discussed below.

What REACH Could have Done to Reduce Dropouts

Statement 4 said: List all the things you think of that REACH could have done to reduce dropouts.

Teachers responding to this statement gave 8 suggestions that are listed below.

1. Give more money to the family (21).
2. Teach parents the value of education (16).
3. Sponsor students ten years and older (5).
4. Select students according to their academic ability, since many are academically poor (5).
5. Enrol students who really like to study and want to become somebody (4).
6. Give gift money to every child (4).
7. Write letters to students encouraging them to study (4).
8. Visit parents and students (4).

Discussion. Teachers overwhelmingly named the first item listed above, namely, giving more money to the family. Thus, once again, they emphasized unequivocally the economic needs of the family which, according to literature, was the number one cause of wastage.

This emphasis not only runs through but also dominates their written responses. Therefore, the teachers clearly perceived that improving the home background and especially its economic status would be essential for minimizing dropouts.

Items 3, 6, 7, 8 are singled out below to see what teachers might have meant by each item.

Item 3. When teachers said that sponsorship should be given to children over ten years of age, they were expressing an important suggestion made in the literature on wastage and stagnation. They saw that sponsoring such children might help reduce dropouts and retain them in school until they became literates.

Items 6, 7, and 8 These items are different from the suggestions made in the literature review. The teachers perceived that REACH writing to and visiting students could have given some encouragement to students to stay on in school.

In conclusion, the teachers made several suggestions that REACH could have done to reduce dropouts. While some of them were related to the basic causes of wastage, some were different and unique.

The next question is about how the parents could be educated.

How and Who Should Educate Parents

Question 5 stated: Describe how parents could be educated in order that they might inspire their children to value education. Who should do this?

Teachers expressed the following opinions in their written responses:

1. Reach should make arrangements to educate parents (3).
2. Church and government agencies should provide adult education (3).
3. Local pastors and teachers should educate parents (3).
4. Each one teach one (2).
5. Hold parents meetings and teach them the value of education (2).
6. Teach parents through children (1).
7. Enlist local volunteers to educate parents (1).

Discussion. These seven suggestions to educate parents seem to indicate that teachers and those close to the people ought to take responsibility for adult education. These ideas, further, seem to underscore the concept that when people were mentally stimulated with a problem, they would produce their own strategies to solve their own problems.

They also explicitly suggest the use of local personnel and local resources for implementing adult education.

An educated adult, a parent, especially the mother, as the literature pointed out, is an insurance for the education of her children.

The next question deals with funds for educating parents.

Should Sponsorship Money be Used to Educate Parents

Question 6 asked: Do you think part of the sponsorship money should be used to educate parents? Please explain your answer.

Discussion. All the responses to this question said that no part of the sponsorship money should be used to educate parents, since it was not even enough to educate the children. The teachers were unanimous in asserting that the teachers should be used to educate parents and that REACH should make separate arrangements for additional funds for this purpose. Three teachers said "No" and gave this reason. They said, illiterate adults would be ashamed to be taught by young teachers.

The next question deals with the reasons for REACH students continuing to stay in school.

Reasons for REACH Students Staying in School

Question 7 asked: Please list some important reasons for REACH students whom you or other teachers now have, have not dropped out of school.

In response to this request, the teachers were unanimous in saying that children who were continuing to stay in school did so because their uneducated parents did not wish them to go through life by the same route--poverty and misery--that they were traveling. Whether the teachers realized it or not, their observation presented a paradox; Lack of education works both to cause dropouts and to prevent them. Apparently, some parents themselves uneducated, arouse that motivation in their children which helps them to continue in school, while others resign themselves to cultural and religious fatalism.

Teachers listed the following additional reasons for children continuing to stay in school.

1. REACH aid has lessened the home financial burden (9).
2. Children were academically fit for learning (7).
3. Children were anxious to learn (7).

Discussion. Once again, the teachers confirmed that the home background involving parents' better economic status, education and interest were the reasons for children persisting in school.

The last two items focus on the student factors that helped the children to continue schooling. The teachers did not, however, mention their classroom or their school environment as reasons for REACH children staying in school. School efficiency is a factor that the literature review points out as a second major helpful factors in retention of students. Yet teachers were silent on this matter.

The final question requested the teachers to express any other concern they might have regarding the problem. Their responses and discussion of those responses are described next.

Teachers' Other Concerns and Opinions

Question 8 said: Please describe any other concerns and ideas you have about REACH children dropping out before they complete their schooling.

Nearly twenty concerns were expressed by teachers, most of which were similar to the suggestion already discussed. Four concerns, however, were not previously mentioned. These are:

1. REACH children were asked to work on campus, while other boarders were exempted.
2. Important areas were neglected, such as lack of facilities for training in music, typing, and farming.
3. A number of students in standards 4 and 5 were put back into lower standards because for their lack of understanding in English.
4. Baptisms of parents and children took place upon the assurance that the children would attend English school, where they would receive all they needed. This disturbing trend would defeat the very purpose of the sponsorship program.

Discussion. The four concerns singled out here probably played some important role in the dropping out. Thus, another set of additional reasons were perceived by teachers as contributing factors to the problem.

Summing up the open-ended section of the questionnaire responses by teachers, it might be said that teachers unfettered responses not only confirmed the major questions of this study but also brought out some crucial reasons for dropping out that are unique to the context of the schools and their philosophy.

They also enumerated a number of variables and important suggestions for alleviating the dropout problem.

Principals' Correspondence Data

All nine principals were requested to fill out the questionnaire. But they chose not to do so. Instead, they wrote letters. In general, their letters stated that they did their best to retain or bring back the dropouts. Their opinions are summarized below.

While all of them avowed that they did their best to retain the students, only two said that they prayed and counseled with both students and parents. Five of them stated that "They (the children) have not informed us as to their reason why they dropped out. They did not return to school after summer vacation."

Three principals said that "Parents being new converts, expected a great deal of help and since such help was not forthcoming, they took their children out of school." One principal said, "We are following a different method of selecting children. We take only those who realize the value of education." Finally, another principal wrote, "We do not know their whereabouts, therefore, we are not in a position to fill the questionnaires."

Discussion

The above excerpts from the principals' letters seem to speak for the lack of concern for the dropouts.

They also appear to verify the lack of concern that the teachers expressed when they said that children dropping out did not matter since others were substituted in place of dropouts. Thus two important items; lack of concern and lack of awareness of the problem seem to emerge from principals' and teachers' comments.

Peer Perceptions

Teachers in the upper grades, the fourth and fifth, were requested to hand a sheet of paper to the friends of dropouts, or to their entire class if they desired to make it a class project, and ask them to write a paragraph explaining the reasons why their friends or classmates left school. The students were given the option of writing in their mother tongue, since they were likely to be more proficient in that than in English.

Only two teachers responded to this request and one of those did not comply. The one that did not comply wrote to say that the children were not in a position to articulate their thoughts, even in their vernacular, and therefore they could not do the writing.

The other teacher complied by having 24 students write in the Tamil language. Upon reading the 24 responses one became immediately aware that they were quite uniform.

Apparently, the teachers had written several questionnaire items, which the children had copied. Incidentally, the teacher had picked seven items that dealt with family and student factors. These were: 1) The parents were very poor, so they stopped their son from coming to school. 2) Parents did not appreciate education because they were poor. 3) Parents wanted the student to work at home. 4) Parents wanted the student to care for his younger brothers and sisters. 5) The students did not come back to school because they were not interested in education. 6) Students went to cities and towns to earn money. 7) The parents were poor, so the went to work.

While most of the reasons given by peers were very similar to the questionnaire items, it will be noticed that the last two items are new. They throw additional light on why fifth and sixth graders dropped out. Perhaps, having found formal education unsatisfying and unrewarding, eager and curious adolescents sought to fulfill their need to be independent in towns and cities. It is quite possible in an urban area for a boy of 12 to 15 years of age to earn about Rs. 400.00 to 600.00 and for a boy of 16 to 18 years to earn Rs. 700.00 to 9.00 a year, roughly (\$50 and \$75 to \$87 to &112) a year).

Since the uncertain rewards of formal education were in the distant future, the tempting attraction of immediate

reward was not only real but was inherent in their adolescent need of freedom and financial independence. The lure to leave school, even for lower primary school children, was therefore greater than the desire to remain in school.

Some Unique Findings

There were some unique perceptions which the teachers expressed in the open-ended section of the questionnaire. These perceptions were also meaningful in understanding the problem because they came out of the particular context of these nine schools. The following are those perceptions: 1) Parents changed their religious belief and took the child away. 2) Adventist education might have been repelled some dropouts. 3) Hasty baptism parents by pastors and their undeliverable promises of financial help to them led to unrealistic expectations and ultimate withdrawal of children from school. 4) Receiving of gifts from sponsors by only a small number of children caused jealousy and discord which some times caused the withdrawal of children from school. And 5) lack of contact with parents by school personnel and others involved in educating children caused a gulf in communication and understanding. Collectively, these factors might have aided in some degree the dropping out.

The teachers' suggestion on solving the problem of dropouts are also valuable. These are: 1) School personnel or church pastors should conduct meetings to encourage and educate parents to appreciate the value of education. 2) Teachers, pastors, students and volunteers should be enlisted to provide basic literacy and numeracy to adults. Each educated person should teach another person.

Another valuable idea suggested by teachers is that REACH should write personal letters to sponsored students.

Such ideas, the teachers seemed to be saying, if nourished, developed, supported and executed could prove to be invaluable tools for minimizing the dropout problem. Such genuine concern for the oppressed and powerless poor could improve their concept of personal worth, their self-image and their personal dignity. Recognizing them as important human beings can be the first step toward improved lot in life.

These humane concerns, the teachers perceived as helpful factors in reducing dropout problem.

The following section relates these findings to the findings brought out in the literature review.

Relationship of Findings to
Precedents in Literature

How are the findings of this study similar or different from previous studies as reported in the literature? A look at that question will be helpful to place the current study in its proper perspective.

Homebackground

The literature survey indicated that poverty was the single most important variable which accounted for a majority of students dropping out before they finished their education at the elementary school level. The socio-economic backwardness with its consequences--illiteracy, indifference toward education, inability to motivate children and keep them in school--played a primary role in contributing to the dropout problem.

While, on one hand, a majority of the response on the questionnaire denied that poverty and its consequences were the causes of students dropping out, a sizable minority indicated that poverty and its consequences were closely related to the problem. In addition, the handwritten comments of teachers in the open-ended section of the questionnaire linked poverty directly to wastage.

Therefore, considering the total findings, it can be said that the findings of this study did support the primary cause of dropping out cited in the literature review. Additionally, the teachers overwhelmingly and repeatedly expressed the need for financial help, job opportunities, and education for parents and the need to provide all expenses which are factors of the primary cause of wastage.

School Factors

All previous research on wastage in India concluded that the school factors were the second major cause for the withdrawal of children before they completed primary education. Some of these were: 1) Inability to provide universal education. 2) Inability to hold those enrolled. 4) Inability to set appropriate objectives. 5) Inability to achieve the objectives. 6) Inability to provide adequate physical and learning facilities. 7) Inability to provide trained and well paid teachers. And 8) inability to adapt and modify verbal instruction and rigorous examinations.

The teachers strongly disagreed with all except 4 of the 15 school factors. They perceived that 11 school factors were not the reasons for dropping out in a majority of the cases. Such response on the part of teachers was not in harmony with the literature precedents, which

labeled the school factors as the second major reasons for dropping out problem in elementary schools.

But the four school factors which the teachers strongly agreed with, the unsuitability of the schools to meet the needs of the students, instruction in English language, students dropping out even after teacher's counseling, and the fact that dropping out did not matter since there were others who replaced dropouts, clearly show the role of the school in the dropout problem. Teachers' written comments further indicated some other school factors such as the alck of instructional materials, lack of boarding facilities, lack of vocational curriculum, and conditional promotion. From the perspective of these school factors, one might say that the findings of this study upholds the literature assertion that inefficient and inadequate school atmosphere contribute to the dropping out problem.

Student Factors

Available literature on dropouts did not characterize student factors as critical to the dropout question. Often, student characteristics were reckoned as consequent and concomitant factors of low socio-economic home background and internal inefficiency of the school.

In this respect, when the teachers perceived that the students were immature, over aged, slow to learn,

and/or less motivated, they were referring to the outcomes of the children's disadvantaged home background. From this point of view, the teachers were in agreement with the findings or previous research, though not consciously or deliberately. They definitely did not blame the students.

The literature survey indicated that the highest incidence of wastage occurred in the first two grades of the elementary stage and then decreased significantly in the upper grades. The findings of this study, confirmed this fact. But denied the latter, the high rate of dropouts in fifth and sixth grades. Thus, the findings of this study that children dropped out to make money in towns and cities, as mentioned by peers, was a new phenomenon in the context of this study.

The literature supports the view that girls dropped out of school in larger numbers than boys because of cultural beliefs and customs. The findings of this study, however, conclude that boys dropped out in greater numbers than girls. The reason as pointed out earlier, could be that boys, more than girls, seek freedom and financial independence in the adult world and in the exciting , attractions of towns and cities. It is also possible that girls from Christian homes are not so much tethered to customs and traditions as those from non-christian homes.

Although the literature review classified school factors as the second major reason for wastage and stagnation it did not mention the language barrier raised by English instruction as a significant factor. Perhaps, this was due to the fact that English instruction was not a variable in elementary education where and when those studies were conducted. But in recent years English as the language of instruction has become important part of elementary education, especially in private schools since the English language has been retained as the official language in India.

The findings of this study, on the other hand, did indicate that English barrier was one of the probable reasons for wastage in these nine schools. Teachers reported that in 69 per cent of the dropout cases, English as the medium of instruction had played at least a partial role in the problem of wastage. They also stated that in several cases children from upper grades were transferred to lower grades because they could not cope with English language.

Thus, what is called "bread and butter education"--the English medium instruction schooling--was probably one of the reasons for the disadvantaged poor children dropping out of school.

In conclusion, the findings of this study upheld the major findings of previous research in India cited in the literature review. In addition, the study yielded some causes that were peculiar to the schools situations. It also brought out some practical suggestions for reducing the problem of wastage in the nine schools.

CHAPTER V SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Some interesting and helpful findings related to the problem of wastage emerged from the data collected. These were as follows.

Demographic Data

1. The total REACH student population for all the nine schools was 33 per cent. Boys' population was 20 per cent and the girls' was 13 per cent for the academic year 1980-1981.

2. The average dropout rate for all the students in the nine school during the year was 5 per cent.

3. For the 167 REACH dropouts, the rate of dropouts among boys was greater than it was among the girls. The figures were 68 per cent and 32 per cent respectively for the school year 1980-1981.

4. Forty-three per cent of the 163 dropouts spent only one year in school. More than half the dropouts (56%) spent only two years or less in school.

5. Twenty per cent of the 163 dropouts spent four years in school, and 15 per cent spent five years in school. Only 9 per cent spent 6 years in school.

Responses to the Questionnaire

An analysis of the 29 items of the questionnaires indicated that all home factors, all but 3 school factors, and all of the student factors were seen to have been un-influential in the majority of the dropout cases. However, on three key home factors--poverty, illiteracy and apathy of the parents--nearly 50 per cent of the dropouts were preceived to have been affected by these factors.

The three school variables which the teachers related to dropping out were English medium instruction, unsuitability of schools to meet the needs of the poor children and the perception that dropping out did not matter since others replaced the dropouts.

Teachers' formal written responses in the open-ended section of the questionnaire, however, clearly and unequivocally associated all three variables--the home, school and student--with the problem of wastage. The data indicated several other reasons, such as admission of immature children as a result of parent's baptism and instruction and examinations in English language, as positive contributors to the problem. Thus, the children were subjected to additional causes of wastage along with the regular causes of wastage.

Some crucial suggestions such as visiting, educating, providing economic assistance and job opportunities to parents were expressed. The need to alleviate the problem of over-aged and under-aged children, lack of instructional and proper boarding facilities, and the need to provide non academic courses through nonformal education leading to useful and gainful employment were also mentioned.

These were undoubtedly important suggestions, that may help reduce dropouts, if implemented. An expanded explanation of these points is dealt with in the section on recommendations.

Essentially, then, from the perspective of teachers this study not only helped to confirm that the major causes of wastage were poverty-ridden home background and inefficient school factors but also some other vital factors unique to the context and nature of the institutions. These reasons, probably, may have been influential in contributing to the problem of wastage in the nine schools.

Implications of the Study

There are mainly three groups for whom the study is meaningful or has some implications. These are the officials of REACH, the sponsors, and the school personnel who are intimately involved in accomplishing the purposes of REACH. Recommendations stemming from the findings of this study are enumerated separately in this chapter. Here, only the implications for these three groups are discussed.

Implications for REACH Officers

The findings of this study presents mainly two challenges to REACH officials: the acceptance of the reality of the seriousness of the dropout problem and its consequences of wastage of economic and human resources, and how to solve the problem that is continuing to persist in varied aspects.

An acceptance of the problem, poses an important question, that is, is the formal education under present circumstances in the nine schools the best way to help the poor children? It may also discredit REACH and its efforts to help poor children to become productive and useful citizens.

But the study, in fact, does not present problems that are formidable deterrents to the growth and progress of the purposes of REACH. It does not denigrate REACH, the school or those involved in the program. It simply identifies areas of weaknesses and problem causing elements which need to be corrected, improved and strengthened in order to increase the retention of the poor students in schools. Viewed in this light, the findings of this study can help REACH achieve its major objectives of helping the poor children to become productive and useful through education.

If the study, instead, presented a glowing image of the program, which is what too often those who run programs would like to see and hear, the problems that underlie it would not be detected and would continue to persist. As it is, this objective study has now identified the problems and made constructive recommendations aimed at their solution.

All this, in conclusion, raises some critical questions for REACH which need to be answered. They are: is dropping out a serious problem to REACH? How does it bear on the growth and progress of the program? Should the problem of wastage be ignored or solved? If so, how? A focus on these questions may aid REACH to refine its

existing concepts, goals and programs in order to facilitate the accomplishment of the objective of alleviating poverty through human resource development.

While the dropout problem spells out the wastage of human and economic resources, it does not pronounce the doom of the program. Therefore, closing down of the operation is not the logical or wise solution. It is not desirable to cover up the problem hoping it would correct itself and disappear. An expansion of the REACH program for the sake of making it a large and great project, or to perpetuate its existence without addressing the problem is also a grave mistake. The problem is serious and must be faced seriously. There is no short-cut or quick-fix solutions. It must be tackled slowly and step by step with the understanding that change comes slowly.

Implications to Sponsors

There are two related factors that motivate sponsors to do philanthropy, religion and its call for compassionate deeds, and closely allied to it, the feeling of moral obligation.

People who believe in God are conditioned to accept the fact that humanity is one; and because they hold that God is the Father of this family of man, they believe that it is the duty of His children to help one another.

As indicated earlier, 99 per cent of the sponsors are Seventh-day Adventists. Since REACH is working with and in the educational units of the church in which they believe and belong, there is very little that would discourage them from supporting projects like REACH.

When the problem of dropouts began to occur, and the sponsors were asked to take a substitute child in place of dropout, they were understanding enough to accept the explanation given by REACH. Practically, there was no resentment among the sponsors. The following is written by one of the sponsors in connection with this problem:

We have been impressed with the honesty, sincerity, forthrightness and uprightness shown through the years to us by REACH, and pray that God will continue to bless as you render service to mankind--Danald Kneppel. Janesville, Wisconsin, Letter dated September, 1980.

Implications for the Schools

According to the findings of this study the teachers did not come out clearly and say that school and their professional practices were responsible for the dropping out, even though they did nail down four school factors contributing to the problem and indicated some school deficiencies in their written comments. They seem

to put the blame largely on others-parents, REACH or church leaders for the problem of dropouts in their schools.

Thus, the teachers in nine schools, as teachers in any other schools would do, exempted their professional practices and their institutions from being likely contributors to the problem of wastage. While this is human and natural, it does not help them to become aware of the real causes of dropping out and its ill effects. As noted in the review of literature, more than 30 per cent of the dropouts have been linked to the inefficiency of the schools. The school personnel was also totally unaware of the tremendous efforts put forth by the Indian government to change the highly formalized educational system.

There is need for teachers and principals to realize that the deficiencies and indifferent attitude indicated in the study are detrimental to retention of the poor children in school. A continual support of such education without a realization of the school effects on the problem of dropouts is a sheer wastage of both financial and human resources. Instead of depreciating the school or school personnel, this study indicates a real challenge to tactfully help the school people to recognize, accept, and initiate solutions.

The study should be an eye opener to REACH and the school personnel to avoid continued perpetuation of an education that is inefficient and wasteful. This perspective is well enunciated by Coombs in these words.

Expenditures on the wrong kind of education or highly inefficient educational arrangements can be downright wasteful and even counter productive. The educational systems of most developing countries are not only too small but in many respects are ill-adapted to local development needs and available resources. If large expenditures on them can be fully rewarding, these systems must be drastically overhauled in structure, content, quality and methods. Such reforms and innovations are just as essential to quantitative expansion (Coombs, 1965, p. 3).

Therefore, REACH, school personnel, sponsors and church leaders need to understand that

"there is no magic in education, except as we give it magic. Education can heal or kill, build up or tear apart, lift or deprave. It is an instrument that can be used for good or evil. We must learn to use it well" (Brembeck, 1966, p. 233).

Recommendations

From the perspective of the research findings and the conclusions, the following recommendations are made not only to help understand the problem but also to carry out efficiently the goals and purposes of both the REACH programs and that of the schools involved in helping the disadvantaged children to become productive citizens.

1. To understand the nature and seriousness of the problem of wastage and stagnation, an attempt should be made by those who are concerned to disseminate research information on dropouts through reading materials, inservice for teachers, principals, pastors and other church leaders involved in educating poor children. An awareness of the problem in all its ramifications is important to initiating strategies for solving the problem.

2. It would be much helpful if REACH were to provide inservice training for teachers in elementary grades on methods of teaching to make learning meaningful, enjoyable and productive. This may improve the interest of the poor children and thereby their retention in school.

3. Reach should study the effectiveness of the formal education for the poor children in preparing them

for earning a livelihood. It may help to think, plan and implement other relevant educational programs aimed specially at poor children who do not have a rich educational home background.

4. Since most teachers expressed that parents were given false hopes and their immature children were indiscriminately admitted, REACH should provide some simple but definite and observable guidelines regarding admission procedures. This may eliminate a sizable wastage.

5. Since the teachers suggested that visiting parents would help in solving the wastage problem, REACH should enlist the cooperation of school personnel and church leaders in periodically visiting the homes of children. Such a visitation program should contribute to the growth of self-worth and positive attitude of parents.

6. Since the teachers expressed the opinion that parents should be helped financially, REACH, if possible, should explore avenues for improving economic status of the parents through cooperative societies and cottage industries. Organizations similar to REACH are determinedly turning to improve the economic conditions of the family.

7. Since most of the teachers stated that parents did not value education and that they should be educated,

REACH may want to further inquire from the teachers and church leaders as to how such education can be accomplished. Their suggestions should then be used to initiating adult education for the parents of sponsored children. Myrdal's idea of educating the whole family and community units could be tried.

8. Since the teachers pointed to the lack of instructional materials and proper boarding facilities, REACH may want to raise funds especially for these purposes.

9. REACH may want to consider the introduction of part-time education for the poor children, since it has been found to be practical and inexpensive.

10. REACH may wish to study both the short and long term results of the use of English as the medium of instruction for poor children, many of whom are over-aged and find it difficult to learn in a tongue not native to them. It is possible that many of those children would not become proficient in English and other subjects in which it is taught even if they went through long years of schooling. Perhaps, in this connection remedial programs and some sort of accountability for the progress of the poor children in these schools should be introduced so that the schools become more responsible.

11. Since it was pointed out that upper grade children were leaving school for jobs and money, REACH should study ways and means of introducing nonformal education suited to the elementary level, or modify the existing work-study program in these schools to make it productive in marketable skills. These efforts could help children to earn while they learn, and thus increase the retention power of the schools.

Another useful possibility is that of providing practical training in multigrade teaching for upper grade teachers who generally have small class size, in order to reduce lower--elementary class size. This would allow increased individual attention to younger children and saving of funds.

12. REACH should undertake a study of dropouts and their parents, since this study did not do this. Such a study is necessary for further enlightenment on the cause of dropouts and stagnation from the perspective of parents and dropouts, especially for making decisions for introducing any form of solutions for reducing dropouts.

13. To enhance the effectiveness of REACH and the schools' efforts to help poor children, a study of the extent of the stagnation in these schools would be essential. It could help target the levels at which the problem is most acute.

14. Since children of the poor are the main and the ultimate beneficiaries of the aid program, every possible attempt should be made to find out when children are most needed at home and at work and conduct schools at such times the children are available for schooling.

A P P E N D I X

A P P E N D I X A

QUESTIONNAIRE

REACH SCHOOL DROPOUT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTION: Please supply the following information as requested in each section. Complete all the questions.

SECTION I Please supply the following information.

School name _____ Class you teach _____

Your position: Teacher or Principal (Circle one)

Your age _____ Sex: Male or Female (Circle one)

Student's age _____ Standard the student left _____

Student's entry date _____ Entry class _____

Student's exit date _____

SECTION II Each of the following statements has five responses. Indicate how important you feel each statement is by circling one of the answers. Please fill one questionnaire for each child.

Circle the number 1 if you strongly disagree with the statement.

Circle the number 2 if you disagree with the statement.

Circle the number 3 if you are uncertain about the statement.

Circle the number 4 if you agree with the statement.

Circle the number 5 if you strongly agree with the statement.

The student name _____ dropped BECAUSE: .

SD D U A SA

1. Parents, being poor, were not interested in their child's education.

1 2 3 4 5

	SD	D	U	A	SA
2. Parents, being uneducated, do not appreciate education.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Parents changed residence and moved away.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Student was home sick and left school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Parents needed the child to help increase family income either by working with them or by helping to look after younger children.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Parents were asked to pay money to share their responsibility for their children's education.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Parents removed their daughter from school upon reaching puberty.	1	2	3	4	5
8. There was illness or death at home.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The student was sick and could not stay in school.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The student showed very little interest in school activity.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The student was slow in his academic ability.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The student failed in the examination, discouraged and left.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The student failed because of tough examination.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The student was not getting along with others.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The student was disruptive, disrespectful and disobedient. So he was sent home.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Discipline at school was too strict for this student.	1	2	3	4	5

	SD	D	U	A	SA
17. The teacher could not get along with the student.	1	2	3	4	5
18. It was not the fault of the school that the student left school.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The school is unsuited to meet the needs of the student.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Student found it difficult to study in English medium.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Student's and his parent's religion differed from that of the school.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Parents disliked school's encouragement to become a Christian.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Student dropped out even after every effort was made by the principal to retain him in school.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Student dropped out even after teacher's counsel to remain in school.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Student dropped out even after special efforts to help him/her in academic subjects.	1	2	3	4	5
26. As a teacher I was unable to contact and counsel parents.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I could not give any individual attention to the student because of too many students in my room.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Student leaving school did not matter much since there were many others who can take his place.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Student leaving school did not matter much since there were many others who can take his place.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION III Please express your honest opinions, observations and comments on these questions or statements.

1. What do you think was the one main reason the student left school?

2. List all the things you can think of that you as a teacher or principal could have done to help the student remain in school?

3. List all the things that you can think of that the church leaders could have done to help the student remain in school.

4. List all the things you can think of that REACH could have done to reduce dropout problem.

5. Describe how parents could be educated to inspire their children to value education. Who do you think should do this?

6. Do you think part of the sponsorship money should be used to educate parents to value education? Please explain.

7. Please list some important reasons why REACH supported children whom you, or other teachers may now have have not dropped out of school?

8. Please describe below any other concerns, opinions, and ideas you may have that you want us to know about REACH students dropping before they finish schooling?

You may feel free to use the next page to expand your response to any of the above questions.

Thank your very much for your effort and cooperation.

A P P E N D I X B

A Description of REACH International

A Description of REACH International

REACH is an acronym for Render Effective Aid to Children. Since the founders intended the project not to be confined to India alone, the word International was added to emphasize the scope of its mission.

Conceptualization of REACH

The idea to create an aid agency came as a result of personal encounter with hundreds of children in desperate condition in India by the director of REACH and his wife. They had volunteered to conduct workshops for Seventh-day Adventist Church school teachers during the summer of 1979. Nine workshops for elementary teachers on methods and motivation were conducted in different parts of the sub-continent. During those intensive sessions, the wistful glint in the eyes and the desperate looks on the faces of deprived and disadvantaged children standing as onlooker outside the schools where the workshops were conducted arrested their attention. The question, how to provide an opportunity for those hundreds of children a way of escape from poverty and ignorance kept ringing in their minds.

The director and his wife were aware of the liberal nature of Seventh-day Adventists, especially in the

U.S.A. This knowledge inspired them with confidence that a merciful effort to assist the poor children would not go unheeded and that it would be an acceptable concept. The idea to establish REACH was thus conceived.

Concept to Concrete Action

The concept of helping the poor children became a reality by the following steps. After the director and his wife returned to the U.S.A., they articulated their idea to friends, neighbors, and former missionaries to India. The interest was keen and supportive. On a designated day, those interested were invited to a dinner meeting to discuss the matter. The discussion climaxed in an enthusiastic commitment to the proposition to create an organization. All eight husband-and-wife teams present, by virtue of their interest and commitment, constituted the original board members of the project.

At the next meeting, the by-laws prepared by the writer and his wife, were ratified. A corps of administrative officers were elected for a term of two years. Thus on October 17, 1973, REACH International was formally organized.

On that very occasion those present showed their tangible support by pledging to sponsor six children in a Seventh-day Adventist school in Puliankudy, South India.

Location

Like many other similar organizations, REACH had a small and simple beginning. For the first few years, it occupied a corner in the basement of the director's house with old furniture salvaged for office use. After three years, REACH moved to an apartment at 133 Meadow Lane, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Characteristics

According to a one-page description prepared in its office, REACH International is a volunteer, charitable, tax-exempt organization dedicated to render effective aid to children in needy countries of the world. It is operated and managed by dedicated Seventh-day Adventist lay volunteers with their means, time and effort. It is the avowed intention of REACH to operate on funds received as sponsorship money for the care of the children. None of the administrative personnel to this day has been remunerated in any way for his/her services.

Objectives

The objectives stem from the personal encounter with children earlier described. To bring those and others who are still outside the pale of schooling and to give them a chance in life by cultivating their minds

and selfhood is the paramount goal. To feed, clothe and educate them for usefulness in their environment and a better level of living are the primary objectives.

Philosophy

One of the definitions of philosophy, among others, is that it is the sum of an individual's ideas and convictions, a system of motivating beliefs, concepts and principles. These principles eventually control the conduct and quality of life of the ones who believe and practice them. Accordingly, the concept of aiding poor children and putting that concept into practice by those engaged in REACH have their inseparable and unequivocal roots in Christian principles. The sum and substance of which is contained in the principle of love to God and love of man. The latter is not only the outgrowth but also the explication and evidence of the former.

Nearly every one involved in REACH, including sponsors, is a practicing Seventh-day Adventist Christian. They subscribe to the belief that to be a genuine Christian, one must be constrained to practice disinterested benevolence and have an active concern for the welfare of all human beings, especially for the unfortunate ones. They are guided by the Christian scriptural teachings, the essence of which is "Let us love one another: for love is of God: (1 John 4:7). Thus the people who manage

the program believe that the sacred Scriptures expect and obligate Christians to function in a vertical and horizontal relationships, with duties to God and to fellow men inextricably bound together. The words of Pestalozzi, who first showed love and concern for the education of the poor children, well expressed this theistic philosophy: "Stive from your childhood to honor God in the poor, and for the sake of God to see the lowliest of man as your brethren, your friend and your neighbor."

These, then, are the bases and motivational constraints that brought the organization into operation. Such are the correlates for the concern and compassion for the unfortunate humanity.

Obtaining Children for Sponsorship

D. R. Watts, president of South India Union of Adventists, supplied pictures of children from different schools under his jurisdiction. When these were sponsored, the word got around to other church leaders in India and they in turn requested help to sponsor pupils in their schools. These requests were filled as soon as sponsors were found. By and large, this has been the only way the children have been taken for sponsorship. Obviously, great faith has been placed in church leaders to select and educate poor children.

Church leaders in several other countries such as Burma, Bangladesh, Rwanda and Haiti also heard or read about the program and requested sponsorship help for their needy children.

Criteria for Selecting Children

Despite religious orientation, REACH affirmed that children, regardless of caste, race, and religion, should be eligible for help, if, as further stipulated, they came from families that are at or under poverty level--Rs. 300.00 per month income (approximately \$35.00). Finally, REACH advocates that only children under 14 years of age should be chosen for initial sponsorship because of their helpless nature in society.

What Sponsorship Provides

The children are being sponsored into two types of schools: boarding and day schools. Those who are admitted to boarding schools receive, or are supposed to receive, three meals a day, school supplies, two sets of uniforms for one school year, and formal education. The day scholars are to be provided with a midday meal, two sets of uniforms, school supplies and formal education. All children are entitled to any and every extra curricular activity, such as field trips, camping and sports.

Minimal but necessary medical care is also expected to be provided with the funds sent to the schools.

Securing Sponsors

Because of expensive advertising costs, REACH first opted to secure sponsors by word of mouth. As stated earlier, the original board members sponsored the first sixty children. They in turn spread the news to their friends and neighbors.

As time went on, REACH eagerly sought to advertise the program in the Lake Union Herald, a weekly church newspaper for the Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which serves the four Great Lake States of Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan. Obtaining permission to do so was a very slow and painful process because of the nature of the program, that of fund raising from church members. At last the coveted permission was granted and an advertisement was printed in the Herald. It read as follows: "REACH International is a charitable, voluntary, tax-exempt organization to help sponsor poor children in Adventist schools for \$12.00 a month. Hundreds of children in Adventist schools await your sponsorship. Write to P.O. Box 34, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103 or call (616) 471-7460." Slowly but steadily, the responses came from all four states. By means of this first entering wedge in the above-mentioned church paper,

REACH was able to advertise in almost all regional church papers in North America at a nominal sum of \$8.00 to \$12 an advertisement.

Several other avenues were then opened as a result of advertising in regional papers. First, the Student Movement, a paper published by Andrews University student association, published an article that spread the word throughout the world among Adventists. Then the Adventist churches here and there invited REACH to talk about its project. These avenues exposed REACH to many people in the U.S.A.

In Canada, a friend and former teacher of the president of REACH volunteered to write two feature articles in his church paper that covered all of Canadian Adventists. The response from this was very good.

Finally, as a climax to all this publicity, the editor of the official organ of the world church, the Review and Herald, having heard of the good work, requested REACH to send in an article for publication. When this happened, nearly 400 children were sponsored within two or three weeks. Hundreds of others asked for more information.

Further advertising measures were next undertaken. A slide and cassette tape program was produced by Richard Dower and Elaine Messeraul. Currently, this has become

the sole means of advertising the program was for securing sponsors because, one by one, the editors of the Church papers mentioned above declined to print REACH advertisements. The reason for this, as stated in a correspondence from one of the editors, was as follows:

Your wrote to us regarding using your ad seven times during this year and also for the year 1981. I am sorry that at this time we are having to decline. We are bringing our policy in line with other Union papers, and based on this new approach, we will no longer be running your advertisement for fund raising. Very frankly, running your ad can be an embarrassment to me as I have to turn down other fund raising ads which were questionable in nature. However, the people interested in having those ads run cannot see the difference between their copy and yours (Ernest N. Wendith, editor, Columbia Union Conference of SDA Visitor. Letter dated, July 2, 1980.

Recently, a brochure called REACH Facts (1980) has been printed and is being circulated. Finally, REACH puts out a quarterly report which is sent to all sponsors and interested friends. These have been and are the various means by which sponsors and interested persons have been attracted to support the program.

Process of Sponsorship

The process of sponsoring children has been not only a learning-by-doing experience but also an ever growing and complicated one. Hence, it will continue to be a renewing process.

When people hear or read about the program, they usually write for information. Such inquiry receives the following attention. An address card is typed and filed. A standard thank-you letter with a tear-out section at the bottom providing application particulars is sent to the prospective sponsors. If interested, the person fills out the application and returns it to the REACH office with a check for 15.00 (the current rate) for a month or, as in many cases, \$180.00 for the entire year. The secretary pulls out the previously typed address card and codes it with "S" for sponsor and the address is fed into the computer.

The check is processed through an accounting system called the "Very Best System." The sponsor is sent a picture of the child with brief biographical data, the name of the school where the child studies and his/her address. Along with this information, the sponsor also receives a standard one-page letter containing pertinent information as to how to communicate and make it a rewarding experience both for the child and the sponsor.

A list of all the sponsored children and their sponsors is sent to the various overseas directors under whose supervision the children are placed.

Sponsors can write to their sponsored children. With the help of their school teachers, the children are

supposed to write to their sponsors at least four times a year. Regular or even occasional correspondence is the life-line of this operation and is crucial to a healthy relationship all around.

Financial Information

In the beginning, expenses were negligible. The founders and friends met these minimal financial needs.

Currently there are more than 2500 children being assisted in 18 schools and 53 children in two orphanages by nearly 1800 sponsors.

While the project is steadily growing, it is also facing knotty problems such as continuing dropouts, inability to care for the truly destitute children and the administration of assistance to render maximum benefit to those to whom it is purported to be given.

REACH is in the black and on a sound financial base. Last year funds amounted to over three thousand dollars.

REACH's potential for growth is very encouraging.

How REACH Links with the Schools

REACH was organized and is operated by a group of concerned lay Seventh-day Adventist Christians. Therefore, from its inception it looked to the church for facilities and personnel to help achieve its goal of helping the poor children.

The linkage began when the president of REACH contacted the president of the South India Union of SDA Mission in South India, Mr. Ron Watts. Watts, keenly interested in helping the poor, was primarily instrumental in starting these nine schools. He sent to the REACH office pictures of and information about children needing sponsorship. These in turn, with a biography of the children, were sent to potential sponsors when they indicated a desire to help a child through school.

The main function of REACH has been collecting funds from sponsors and sending the money to the mission office in India. Since the mission was already a recipient of financial assistance for sponsoring children from similar aid programs, REACH simply took it for granted that the school and their administrators would follow the same procedures and fulfill the same requirements for caring for the sponsored children as they did for these other aid agencies.

Furtner, owing to lack of necessary funds and personnel to monitor the program, REACH trustingly left the process of helping the poor children to the administrative machinery of the church. The organization did not and could not manage or supervise the functions of the schools. Instead, REACH kept itself away from operation, governance and process of education in these schools.

The sequel to this hands-off history was the development of an attitude on the part of those to whom the funds were entrusted that REACH would not seriously question the schools' operation and outcomes since REACH was perceived primarily as an Adventist aid agency.

Essentially, then, REACH remained merely as a fund raising entity with insignificant involvement in the processes of helping the poor children.

Each summer, however, the REACH president visited some of the schools and a favorable verbal report was presented to the advisory board, which was satisfactory to the board members.

But the alarming dropout problem and other educational perplexities came to surface from the data gathered from the nine school for this study. Because of this revelation, REACH has begun to discern a definite need to get involved in the functioning of its program in the schools more than it has been in the past.

A P P E N D I X C

Correspondence

REACH INTERNATIONAL

P. O. Box 34, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

November 10, 1981

Dear Mr. (Name of the principal)

Greetings from REACH International!

We at REACH are trying to get a clear picture of your school situation in order to understand the reasons for REACH children dropping out of your school.

Therefore, as a first phase of our inquiry into the matter, please be kind enough to send us the following information about your school:

Name of your school
Number of students in school
Number of REACH students in school
Number of teachers in your school
Teachers' gender
Teachers' qualification
Teachers' age
Teachers' experience in teaching in years

Thanking you for your cooperation and prompt attention to this matter I remain,

Very sincerely yours,



N. Jacob

REACH INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 34, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

January 25, 1982

Dear Mr. (Name of the Principal)

We wish to thank those of you who have graciously, painstakingly and promptly complied with our request and sent the preliminary information on REACH dropout study. However, several of you have not yet responded in form or fashion to our request.

A few of you have written to us acknowledging the receipt of the questionnaires we sent. We do realize that with Christmas vacation you might have been busy with a number of things. But now we are wondering if you would be kind enough to consider this matter with a sense of importance and urgency both to the continuance and betterment of REACH services and program, and give this matter your immediate attention.

Please expedite the filling out of the questionnaire and send in the requested preliminary information to us instead of to Mr. Thavamony at the Union office. This would save some time. If you have already sent them on to him, please disregard this request.

It is our sincere and earnest prayer that our Lord God might bless you and your colleagues in your most noble endeavor of training young people for a productive and useful life and service on this planet.

Very sincerely yours,

N. Jacob
N. Jačob

REACH INTERNATIONAL

P. O. Box 34, Berrien Springs, MI

December 6, 1981

Dear Teacher:

Our sincere greetings from REACH International. We believe that you are doing your best for the children under your care. May God continue to grant you wisdom and strength to meet the needs of the poor children.

It is of great concern to us, and we are sure that it is yours also, that an increasing numbers of REACH supported children are dropping out of school within a short period.

We are quite ignorant of the real causes for children leaving school; but we believe that you are in a good position to give us the reasons. Your experienced perspective, due to your personal and close contact with the student, is valuable to the understanding of this problem.

Such an understanding would assist you and your school in planning and implementing workable strategies to reduce the number of dropouts. Secondly, we will also have some factual information with which to explain the problem to the sponsors of these children who wonder why a poor child would turn his back on a rare opportunity to improve his lot in life.

We request you, therefore, to answer the attached questionnaires as candidly as you can, and to the best of your knowledge. Please think back of the students who dropped out this year from your class and respond to the questionnaire. You are free to answer, if you so choose, questions two to eight in section III on one questionnaire only since your answers might be repeats.

We also request you to hand out a clean sheet of paper to those peer-friends of dropouts in your classroom and ask them to write a paragraph as to why they think their friends left school. You may, if you wish to, do this as a class project and let your whole class write a paragraph. You might want to write the names of dropouts which appear on the questionnaire so that

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the children can recall their personal experience with their classmates.

If they cannot write in English, they may write in their mother tongue. Please treat their writing confidential. Put their writing in the self addressed envelope along with your questionnaires and send them to Mr. Peter Thavamony at South India Union Office. within ten days.

Please note that you need to answer your questionnaires yourself, individually. Your answers will be treated confidentially. No one will see your answers except REACH personnel in U.S.A.

Your prompt attention and cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Very cordially yours,

N. Jacob
N. Jacob

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