SYNOPSIS

The inspiration for the present research was drawn from the realization that while much had been investigated about "dropout" problem in the field of school education, the same was neglected in the field of higher education. 'Dropout' at higher education level was reported to be very high, nearly about 50 percent, but very few attempts were made to investigate the problem. Thus, the present study has sought to investigate the causative factors contributing to the dropout phenomenon. Thus the specific objectives of the present research were: (a) To ascertain the percentage of probable dropouts to the initial enrolment in colleges; (b) To determine the real dropouts, after excluding migration, transfer to other courses, all and those who even after leaving the colleges completed graduation elsewhere; (c) To ascertain the correlates of dropouts in the field of higher education; (d) To ascertain the causative factors of students dropping out of the courses concerned; (e) To ascertain if dropouts and non-dropouts differed in terms of some of the socio-demographic and personality variables; and (f) To ascertain if dropouts and non-dropouts differed in their attitude towards higher education, achievement motivation, adjustment areas and future plans.
The study was conducted in two phases. In phase-I, an attempt was made to determine the extent of dropout. In phase-II, an attempt was made to identify the correlates of dropouts and the typical nature and characteristic features related to dropouts.

For this purpose, 20 affiliated colleges of Delhi University were taken up as a sample. Tools used in the present study for the data collection were as follows:

1. A proforma specially devised to collect information on enrolment, number of students appearing in the final year examination, withdrawal and dropouts from the respective colleges.

2. An open ended questionnaire to ascertain the reasons for dropping out (devised specially for the purpose).

3. An attitude measurement scale (constructed specially for the purpose of study).

4. A questionnaire covering socio-demographic factors devised specially for the purpose.

5. Sentence completion test for achievement motivation (Shanthamani, and Hafeez 1968).

6. Personality adjustment Inventory for college students (Sinha and Singh 1972).

The statistical methods used for analysing the data included chi-square test, Mean, Standard deviation, t-test,
inter correlation matrix, and Multiple step wise regression analysis.

The results obtained were as follows:

1. At higher education level only 60 percent of the total enrolled students appeared in the final year examination in the first instance; and thus nearly 40 percent were found to be the wastage at college level.

2. Out of the 40 percent wastage, nearly 22 percent were in attrition in the sense that these students had withdrawn from the college in the beginning itself.

3. Nearly 18 percent of the total enrolled students appeared as probable dropouts. Of these, (N = 2304) nearly 69 percent of students had somehow completed their graduation else where, and thus only about 31 percent of the probable dropouts turned out to be actual dropouts in higher education.

4. The ratio of dropouts amongst males was far higher (2.7 percent) than amongst females (1.5 percent).

5. The ratio of dropout in the co-educational colleges were significantly higher than that of women's college.

6. The ratio of dropout in the rural colleges were significantly more than in the urban colleges.
7. The correlates of dropouts: - the factors that contributed to dropouts were age, sex, marital status, belonging to SC/ST category and socio-economic status.

8. Dropouts and non-dropouts differed significantly in terms of age factor i.e. dropouts were significantly older in age than the non-dropouts.

9. Significantly more students were found to be married amongst the dropouts group than amongst the non-dropouts indicating that marriage is a factor contributing to dropout phenomenon.

10. Size of the family also appeared to influence the dropout phenomenon, in the sense that significantly more number of dropouts came from joint families as compared to non-dropouts who mainly came from nuclear families.

11. The occupation of the fathers also appeared to influence the dropout phenomenon. That is, there were relatively lesser number of parents in occupations of prestige or of a professional nature such as doctor, engineer, teacher, executive etc., from amongst dropouts as against the nondropouts.
12. Majority of dropouts came from relatively lower socio-economic strata as compared to nondropouts.

13. Significantly more nondropout students had parents who were relatively more educated than those of dropout students.

14. There was a significant difference between dropouts and nondropouts in terms of the type of school they had attended earlier to joining the college. While more nondropouts were from public schools, more dropouts were from State Government run schools.

15. The educational record at school leaving level of the nondropout students were significantly of a higher achievement than that of dropout students. In other words, there were more first divisioners and merit rank holders amongst nondropouts as compared to the dropout students.

16. There was no significant difference between dropouts and nondropouts in terms of their attitude but tending-towards-favourable for higher education.

17. There was a significant difference between dropouts and nondropouts in their achievement motivation. The nondropouts were significantly more achievement-oriented than dropout students.
18. The nondropouts were significantly better adjusted than the dropouts and this was particularly noted in the area of social and educational adjustments.

19. There was a significant difference between dropouts and nondropouts regarding their plans for their future career; while the nondropouts had clearly fixed and more ambitious goals, the dropouts had none.

20. Significantly more number of nondropouts were dissatisfied with their present examination system than the dropouts. They explained a wish for non-biased evaluation system.

21. The dropouts and nondropouts both agreed that higher education should be linked with a job.