CHAPTER VI

POVERTY-SCHOOL DROP-OUTS-WORKING CHILDREN NEXUS

Introduction

In Haryana, 14% of the children in 10-14 years age group are deprived of education and as has been observed earlier, a low proportion are child labourers (2%) a slightly higher proportion (5%) are children engaged in household chores and the maximum are ‘nowhere’ i.e. these children are neither labourers nor work in household chores nor go to school (7.5%).

A high proportion of children neither go to school nor work in economic activities nor in household chores and thus, are out of schooling. It also shows that work does not put an impediment in their schooling. It has also been observed that poverty and low economic status of the households seem to be the cause of children being ‘nowhere’, yet these children do not. Thus, in the case of rural Haryana the situation is much more complex and non-attendance in school is not caused by child labour or work, but can be plausibly explained by household’s inability to incur cost of schooling due to poverty and other non-economic reasons. A few of the studies have emphasised the role of the direct (rather than opportunity) costs of schooling (Tilak, 1996) and dysfunction of the school system in rural north India in explaining non-enrolment (Drèze and Kingdon, 2001; Drèze and Sen, 1995, Leclerceq, 2001a; PROBE 1999). Further, a few of the studies have also pointed out that ‘child labour’ maybe the consequence rather than cause of non-enrolment (PROBE 1999, Thorat; 1999) Lieten in his study of two village in UP concluded that ‘child labour, it appears, is not the reason which keeps the children out of school and the appropriation of child labour power to augment family income is generally rejected by the parents. The importance of school but dissatisfaction with the school functioning may induce the child and the parents to forego ‘education’ of their children, enforcing them to start earning’. (Lieten, 2000, p2177).

Thus, a child starts ‘working’ or in case of ‘nowhere’ category, ‘hanging around’ the farmyard mainly through the process of drop-out at various stages in the school education. The drop-out factor is likely to be associated with the push factor internal to school or the poor economic and social condition of the household. As it will be seen in the subsequent sections, the drop-out rates are relatively higher among the SC segment compared to the
OBC and the ‘others’ segments. Thus, economic deprivation and poor social condition along with inadequate support from the government and other agencies at the school level create extremely unfavourable conditions for children from these sections of the society to continue studies at the school level. The objective of this chapter is to examine the ‘poverty-school drop-outs-child labour/ work nexus” and undertake a comparative analysis of this phenomenon across social groups. The chapter has been divided into 4 sections viz; Section I examines the status of school attendance and the work/study status of children, Section II analyses drop-out rates and educational level of child labourers, child workers and ‘nowhere’ children. Additionally this section also examines the nature of employment of child labourers by school attendance, Section III examines the relationship between the MPCE and school attendance and finally Section IV examines the reasons of non-attendance in school.

Section I

Status of School Attendance in Rural Haryana

Table 6.1 shows the distribution of children by their status of school attendance in terms of those attending school, drop-outs and who have never attended school at the aggregated level. It may be noted that at the aggregated level, school enrolment in Haryana is relatively high (86%) as against the proportion of ‘never attended’ (5%). The drop-out rate, on the other hand, is about 9% in rural Haryana. Across regions, the drop-out rates are higher in the Eastern Haryana Plains (11%) and the Aravalli region (9%) as compared to other regions, while in Western Haryana Plains 11 per cent of the children have never attended school. The school drop-out rate is relatively high (13%) among the schedule caste social group and the proportion of children who have never attended school (10.7%) is also relatively higher. Across regions the drop-out rate among the SC children is as high as 15% in the Eastern Haryana Plains while in the Western Haryana Plains 22% of the SC children have never attended school. The ratio of school-drop out, as well as, the ratio of those who have never attended school in rural Haryana for the other backward caste is lower than the SC social group. As against this, the ratio of OBC children who attend school (87.2%) is higher than the SC social group. Across regions, for the OBC the Aravalli region had the highest drop-out rates and the ratio of children who never attended school was also very high. With respect to the ‘others’ social group, table 6.1(c) clearly indicates that the school attendance rate is the highest (92%) for this social group as compared to the SC’s and the OBC’s in Haryana. As a result, the drop-out rate is also lower (5.6%) among them as
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compared to the SC and the OBC social group. Across regions as well, more than 90% of the children from the ‘others’ group attend school and the drop-out rates are very low. The Eastern Haryana Plains have the highest drop-out rates (7.1%).

Thus, it has been observed that at the aggregated level the school attendance rates in rural Haryana are relatively higher than the drop-out rates. A comparison of the data clearly indicates that the ‘others’ social group has the highest school attendance rates and the lowest drop-out rates as compared to the SC and the OBC social group. Conversely, the SC segment has the highest drop-out rates and the lowest enrolment ratio as compared to the OBC and the ‘others’ group. A relatively high drop-out rate among the SC social group indicates that ‘economic deprivation and poor social conditions coupled with inadequate support from the government and agencies at the school level has created extremely unfavourable conditions for children from these sections of the society to continue studies at the school level’ (Thorat 1999, p167).

Schooling and Work Status of Children

The basic objective of this sub-section is to examine whether the working children combine school with work. For this purpose six mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories have been formulated.

(i) Only studying (full-time);
(ii) Only working in economic activities;
(iii) Working and studying;
(iv) Participating in domestic work;
(v) Participating in domestic work and studying and
(yi) Neither working nor studying

From table 6.2 is evident that at the aggregated level in Haryana, an extremely small proportion of children engaged in economic activities or in domestic duties, combines school with work. Thus, majority of the working children in paid or unpaid jobs do not go to school. From the discussion it emerges that work and study are mutually exclusive categories. As table 6.1 shows, the majority of children (85.5%) only study. The second largest category (7.5%) is that of children doing nothing followed by the category of children who are
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engaged in domestic work (4.7%) but do not go to school. The rest work only (2.4%) or attend school or work at the same time (0.4%). Similarly, across regions majority of the children only study followed by the category of children doing nothing. The third largest category at the regional level is that of children engaged only in domestic work followed by child labour category. At the regional level as well as a negligible proportion of children combine work and study.

A comparative analysis across social groups indicates that the SC social group has a lower proportion of children which studies only (76.2%) as compared to the OBC (87.2%) and the ‘others’ (92.2%) social group. On the other hand, the proportion of children who are engaged in labour activities is higher among the SC (4.7%) as compared to the OBC (1.5%) and the ‘others’ (1%) social groups. Similarly proportion of SC children engaged in domestic duties only and no studies (10.2%) is higher as compared to the OBC (3%) and the ‘others’ social group (2.5%). It is important to mention here that the proportion of children doing nothing is similar among the SC (7.5%) and the OBC (7.8%) social groups. The ‘others’ on the other hand, have the least proportion of children doing nothing (4%). In fact from the ‘others’ social group 92% of the children only study. Across regions, the Western Haryana Plains has a higher proportion of children who work only (i.e. work in paid or unpaid activities). This is true at the aggregated level and for the SC social group. This also means that the Western Haryana Plains is the region where school attendance is the least in Haryana (Table 6.1, 6.2) at the aggregated level and for the SC social group. Further, the Aravalli region has the highest proportion of children doing nothing. This holds true at the aggregated level as well as for the SC and the OBC social groups.

Section II

Educational Level of the Full-Time Child Labour

It is evident from the earlier section that majority of the child labourers are drop-outs from the schools and hence do not combine school with work. The following section has been devoted to examine the proportion of child labour amongst the drop-outs and the educational level attained by the children before discontinuing their studies.

At the aggregated level, 26% of the drop-outs joined work after discontinuation of studies while 27% of the children who had never attended school worked as labourers. If one looks at the regions, one finds that about 77% of the drop-outs in the Western Haryana Plains
joined the labour force after discontinuing their studies. This region also has the highest proportion of children listed as labourers compared to other regions.

A discussion on the attainments of educational level of the child labour presents the following scenario. Table 6.4 (a) shows that at the aggregated level, about one-third of the child labourers are illiterate and about 50% of them dropped-out after completing only primary level education while 17% of the child labourers completed middle level education. Hence, majority of the child labourers in rural Haryana have very low level of education. The highest proportion of illiterates among the child labourers (65.2%) is found in the Western Haryana Plains. Further 9.4% of the entire child labourers have completed three years of pre-primary schooling while 15% completed the primary stage and just 10.5% studied further and completed middle schooling in this region. In the Eastern Haryana Plains, about 23% of the child labourers were illiterate (see Table 6.4). However, 51% of the children had only completed three years of pre-primary schooling and 26% had studied till the primary stage. The Aravalli region has all the child labourers as literate but with very low level of education. About 75% of the child labour in this region had studied up to pre-primary and primary stage while the rest had completed middle level schooling.

In case of the schedule caste social group, about half of the drop-outs in rural Haryana went in for employment. In Western Haryana Plains all of the sample population of child labourers are engaged in work after discontinuing their studies. Among the child labourers in the SC group, half (51.3%) were illiterate while the other half had dropped out even before completing the primary level stage of schooling. The educational level of the SC child labour seen regionally is similar to that observed at the state level [Table 6.4(a)]. Majority of the SC drop-outs in the Western Haryana Plains who opted for work had completed only pre-primary stage of schooling. Hence, among the SC child labourers, none have been able to even reach the level of primary education.

Among the other backward caste social group, about 29% of the drop-outs opted for employment while only 3% of the children who have never attended school joined the labour force. In the Eastern Haryana Plains 38% of the drop outs among the OBC social group joined labour force. Additionally, the difference in the literacy rate is very sharp between the children of the OBC and the SC social group. 96% of the OBC children involved in economic activities are literate as against 49% for the SC social group children. About 57% of the literates among the OBCs in Haryana have studied up to primary stage and 39% have
completed middle level schooling. The proportion of illiterates is extremely small among the OBC child labour and majority of the literates have crossed the glass ceiling of primary stage of schooling. In the ‘others’ social group 9% of the drop-outs in Haryana joined the labour force (Table 6.6). Further, the sample population of child labour has studied up to the middle level schooling. This sample population of child labour is present only in the Siwalik region where 48% of the drop-out opted for employment.

To sum up, it has been found that at the aggregated level, about 26% of the drop-outs opted to work while a similar proportion of the children who had never attended school joined the labour force. Further, one-third of the child labour is illiterate, while among the literates majority have studied up to pre-primary or primary stage. Among the social groups it is observed that proportion of drop-outs who joined labour force is higher among the SC social group as compared to the OBC and the ‘others’ social group. Similarly, the proportion of illiterates who joined the labour force is also the highest among the SCs than the OBCs and the ‘others’ social groups. Further, the data indicates, that half of the SC children in the labour force are illiterate while the other half joined work with only three years of pre-primary education. As against this, in the OBC’s and ‘others’ group, majority of the child labourers are literates with at least primary level education. Thus, the comparative analysis indicates that the retention of SC children in school is lower than the OBCs and the ‘others’ children and, educational attainment of child labour from the SC social group is lower than that of the OBC’s and ‘others’. It is observed that the Western Haryana Plains had the highest percentage of drop-out (77%) joining the labour force after discontinuing their studies. This region also has the highest proportion of children working as labourers compared to other regions. Again in the Western Haryana Plains all of the sample population of SC child labourers opted for work after discontinuing their studies.

**Type of Activities Pursued by Child Labour by School Attendance Status**

It has been observed in the earlier section that majority of the child labour do not combine work with school. Further, majority of the child labour is illiterate i.e. who have never attended school or discontinued studies at a particular level of education. In this section, the type of activities pursued by child labourers who have dropped out of school or never attended school has been analysed.
Table 6.7 shows that at the aggregated level, about 80% of the drop-out child labour opted for wage employment i.e. worked for daily (44%) or regular wages (37%) while less than 20% of the child labour worked in household enterprises. Similarly, the proportion of hired workers among the illiterates is higher as compared to proportion of unpaid helpers at home. The proportion of drop-out child labourers working for wages was higher than those working as unpaid helper in household enterprise. The Western Haryana Plains is the only exception where proportion of drop-out child labour working in household enterprises is slightly higher (53%) than those working for wages. This region, as has already been observed earlier, also has a very high proportion of drop-outs joining the labour force. Hence, it is found that half of these drop-outs work in the household enterprises while the other half work for daily wages. Similar, is the case for those children who have never attended school.

It has also been recorded earlier that the drop-outs rate as well as the proportion of drop-outs joining the labour force is high among the schedule caste social group. Table 6.7 (a) indicates that more than 90% of the drop-out child labour as well as all the illiterate sample population among the SCs in Haryana work for wages. A similar type of activity is pursued by the SC child labour that have dropped out or never attended school. The only exception is the Aravalli region where all the sample population of drop-out child labour (mostly girls) work in household enterprises. About one third of the drop-out working children among the other backward caste social group worked as unpaid helpers in household enterprises, 42% worked for regular salary while 23.2% worked for daily wages. In the Eastern Haryana Plains and the Aravalli region a higher proportion of drop-out child labourers work for wages as compared to those who work as unpaid helpers at home. In the Western Haryana Plains all the sample population of drop-out child labour worked as helper in household enterprises. With respect to the ‘others’ social group majority of the sample population of drop-out child labour work as wage labourers in the Siwalik region of Haryana.

Hence, the data indicates the compulsion involved in the process of discontinuation of school as majority of the drop-out child labour opted for wage employment. The economic compulsion to discontinue school is present among the children of all three social groups but is far more acute in the case of SCs. This is the segment that has the highest incidence of child labour as compared to OBCs and ‘others’.
Educational Level of the Part-Time Child Labour

Table 6.8 shows the proportion of part-time child labourers amongst the drop-outs and amongst those who have never attended school. This table reveals that at the aggregated level about 4.4% of the drop-outs in rural Haryana opted for work on a part-time basis. Further, (14.2%) of the children who had never attended school joined the labour force. Among the child labour working on a part-time basis, 68% were illiterate while among the literates, 32% had dropped out of school after completing primary stage of schooling. Among the social groups the ratio of drop-out joining the labour force is higher among the schedule caste as compared to the aggregated average. Majority of the drop-out child labourers had completed the primary stage of schooling in Haryana [Table 6.9 (a)]. In case of ‘others’ segment, children working on a part-time basis in economic activities had never attended school and were all illiterate [Table 6.10 and 6.10 (a)].

Table 6.11 further shows the type of activities pursued by the children after they dropped-out or never attended school. At the aggregated level, 95.5% of the drop-out working children in Haryana and its regions worked as hired workers on a part-time basis. As against this part-time child labourers who have never attended school, work as unpaid helpers at home. Among the schedule caste, all the children working on a part-time basis are drop-out work as hired labourers. On the other hand, all the children from the ‘others’ social group work as helpers at home. These children have never gone to school and are illiterate. Thus, the above analysis indicates that the economic need to discontinue school is far more acute in the case of the children belonging to schedule caste as compared to ‘others’.

Educational Level of the ‘Child Workers’

In section I, it has been observed that majority of the children (mostly girls) engaged in household chores did not combine work with school hence these child workers are either drop-outs or have never attended school. This section examines the proportion of child work amongst the drop-outs and the educational level attained by these children before discontinuing their studies.

At the aggregated level about 55% of the drop-outs in rural Haryana opted for working in domestic chores. 69% of the girls, who have never attended school at all, joined

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1 Since only girls work in household chores, their proportion in drop-out among girls has been calculated.
domestic work. About 50% of the girls who dropped-out helped in household chores in all the regions as well. The level of education attained by the school drop-out girls and working in household chores is being discussed below. Table 6.12(a) shows that at the aggregated level, about one-fourth of the girls engaged in household chores dropped-out after completing only three years of pre-primary schooling and about one-fifth could complete primary stage. Further about 50 percent girls working in domestic chores were illiterate. A majority of the girls engaged in household chores are illiterate or have a very low level of education at the regional level too.

In the schedule caste social group, 72% of the school drop-outs in rural Haryana worked in household chores after discontinuation of their studies. A very high proportion of girls taking up domestic work after dropping out the school have been observed at the regional level as well (Table 6.13). Further, about 65% of the SC girls who have never attended school and are illiterate in Haryana work in household chores. In the Eastern Haryana Plains about 81% of the illiterate girls who are illiterate work in domestic work. Table 6.13(a) shows the low level of education of girls who work in the household chores. About 30% of the girls working in domestic work had discontinued their studies after completing three years of pre-primary schooling and a similar proportion (30%) had dropped out of school after primary stage. Higher illiteracy rate and lower level of educational attainment among the girls engaged in domestic duties is observed at the regional level as well. Only in the Aravalli region about 50 percent girls engaged in household chores discontinued their studies after completing middle level school.

The proportion of girls helping in household chores after discontinuing their studies in the other backward caste social group was lower (about 30%) as compared to the SC as well as the ‘others’ group. Further, 60% of the girls who had never attended school were engaged in household chores. The Aravalli region somewhat mirrors the state pattern where one-third of the drop-out girls work in domestic work. Table 6.14 (a) shows that at the state level 65 percent of the girls engaged in household chores are illiterate while the rest (35%) dropped out after completing three years of primary schooling. A high illiteracy rate and an extremely low level of education among the OBCs girls engaged in household chores have been observed at the regional level as well.

Table 6.15 shows that in the social group termed as ‘others’, 47% of the drop-outs in rural Haryana helped in household chores. The proportion of girls helping in domestic work
who had never attended school was highest (77%) as compared to the SCs and the OBC group. Further, 13% of the girls engaged in household chores had discontinued their studies after completing pre-primary level of schooling while 25.6% of girls in this group had dropped out after the primary stage of schooling. A high level of illiteracy and low level of educational attainment is observed at the state level is noticed at the regional level as well.

In a nutshell we can say that at the aggregated level and across social groups in Haryana and its regions, a high proportion of girls who have discontinued their studies and/or never attended school work in domestic duties. This proportion is comparatively higher in the SC social groups to OBCs and 'others' social groups. A high level of illiteracy rate and extremely low level of education are the main characteristics of all the girls engaged in household chores.

**Educational Level of 'Nowhere' Children**

The following section examines the proportion of the 'nowhere' children amongst the drop-outs and their level of education before they discontinued studies. Table 6.16 shows that about 60% of the drop-outs at the aggregated level were neither engaged in economic activities nor in household chores. The educational level of such children termed as 'nowhere children' is extremely low. Table 6.16(a) shows that about 37% of the 'nowhere' children in Haryana were illiterate, 40% had dropped out after completing pre-primary stage of schooling while 23% had studied till primary level. High drop-out rates at low stages of schooling for such children has been observed at the regional level as well. It is interesting to note that 73 percent of the male drop-outs were doing nothing, while only about 26% had joined the labour force. On the other hand, among the female drop-outs, 45% were doing nothing while 56.2% were engaged in household chores. Table 6.16 further indicates that 41% of the illiterate children were 'nowhere children'. Proportion of such male’s illiterates is higher than the proportion of such females. An important distinction between male and female illiterate is that among the males, about half of the boys never attending school opted for work while the other half was neither in school nor joined the work-force. As against this, among females who have never attended school, majority (about three-fourth) are engaged in household chores while the rest were apparently doing nothing.

Among the schedule caste social group a lower proportion (37%) of the drop-outs were not working. The Aravalli region had a higher proportion (62.7%) of the drop-outs
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doing nothing as compared to the State’s average. 54% of the SC children apparently doing nothing had discontinued their studies after completing three years of pre-primary level of schooling. The rest of the ‘nowhere’ children were illiterate. Among the SC social group, a higher proportion (33.0%) of males were ‘nowhere’ children as compared to females (28%). This pattern has been observed at the State as well as the regional level. Further, among the SC children who have never attended school, 37.4% were idle. A higher proportion of illiterate boys were ‘nowhere’ children as compared to the girls. This is observed at the state as well as at the regional levels. It is interesting to note that in the Eastern Haryana Plains all the illiterate boys were employed as child labourers.

With respect to the other backward caste social group, 71% of the drop-outs were listed as ‘nowhere’ children (Table 6.18). About 76% of the drop-out in Eastern Haryana Plains to 85% in the Aravalli region were apparently idle. Majority of these children dropped out after only completing primary stage of schooling. The rate of idleness among OBC drop-outs is similar between boys and girls. A very high proportion of OBC children among drop-outs doing apparently nothing has been observed at the regional level as well. Furthermore, 40% of the OBC children discontinued their studies after completing pre-primary stage while 24% dropped out after completing primary level [Table 6.18 (a)]. Table 6.18 shows that about 60% of the OBC children who had never attended school, majority (60%) were not working. Moreover, 96% of the boys who never attended school did not join work. As it has been observed earlier, only 4% of the OBC boys in Haryana joined the labour force. As against this 56% of SC boys joined the labour force indicating the economic compulsion involved in the process for the SC social group.

Table 6.19 shows that 75% of the drop-outs among the ‘others’ social group were neither working in the labour force nor they were helping out in household chores. The proportion of such children among this group is higher for boys (91%) as compared to girls (53%). About 9% of the boys joined the labour force after discontinuing their studies. These boys who work on a full-time basis were found only in the Siwalik region, while boys from this group who became ‘nowhere’ children after discontinuing their studies were found in all the regions. In fact, majority of the sample population of drop-outs boys are doing nothing in all the regions. As against this, about 50% of the girls from the ‘others’ segment do nothing after discontinuing their studies while the rest help in the household chores. On the other hand, table 6.19 also shows that only 25% of the children who have never gone to school do
nothing. Among such boys 30% are doing nothing while about 60% work on a part-time basis as unpaid helper in household enterprise. Among girls who have never attended school, 23% do not work while the rest are engaged in household chores. The educational level of ‘nowhere’ children among the ‘others’ social group is similar to that of the SC and the OBC groups. Table 6.19 (a) shows that 46% of the children from this group are illiterate. About 45% dropped out after completing only three years of pre-primary stage of schooling while 9% discontinued their studies after completing the primary stage.

In summary it can be said, at the aggregated level in Haryana, a higher proportion of children who drop-out neither engage themselves in economic activities nor help in household chores as compared to the proportion of drop-outs who join the labour force. Majority of the ‘nowhere’ children who have been a part of the formal educational system in rural Haryana have been unable to cross the ceiling of primary education. The proportion of drop-outs who apparently are neither in school nor in employment is higher for boys than girls. It also means that girls instead of doing nothing work in the household chores after discontinuation of their studies. Thus, both boys and girls are deprived of education but the disadvantages girls are faced with, cannot be ignored. The indirect evidence obtained in the preceding analysis suggests that majority of the girls start working at home after discontinuing their studies. It is hard to decide which is the cause, whether pressure of household chores is the cause of drop-out or drop-out causes the girls to join the household chores. In either case girls are deprived of the education. It is difficult to guess the ways in which the boys spend their time of discontinuing their studies.

Across social groups, incidence of ‘worklessness’ (Deshpande, 2002) in Haryana is lower in the Schedule caste group as compared to the OBCs and the ‘Others’. This also means that a higher proportion of SC children especially boys join the labour force after dropping out from school as compared to their counter parts in the OBC’s and the ‘others’ group. Across all social groups the educational attainment of the ‘nowhere’ children is very low. Among the children who are illiterate or who have never enrolled in school, incidence of ‘worklessness’ is slightly lower as compared to the incidence of worklessness among the drop-outs at the aggregated level in Haryana. This also means that in case of children who were never enrolled in school, a relatively higher proportion of them work (either in the labour force or in the household chores). The incidence of worklessness among the illiterate children is higher for boys as compared to girls. Majority of the girls who have never
enrolled in school work at home in household chores and this feature is common in all the three social groups.

Section III

Relationship between MPCE and School Attendance

The inter-linkage between economic deprivation or poverty and the drop-out rate is more directly confirmed by the data presented in table 6.20 and 6.20 (a). These two tables show the distribution of the children attending school and drop-outs by monthly per capita expenditure class (MPCE) and by poverty level of the households. Poverty is estimated on the MPCE of Rs. 362.81, hence, households which fall below this expenditure are termed as ‘poor’ and all the households with MPCE more than Rs. 362.81 are termed as ‘non-poor’.

At the aggregated level, with an increase in the MPCE category from less than Rs. 225 to Rs. 950 and above, the proportion of those attending school also increased from 36% to 94% and the proportion of drop-outs declined quite systematically from 39% in MPCE of less than Rs. 225 to 1.3% in the MPCE of Rs. 950 and above. Among the relatively lower MPCE categories the drop-out rates were generally of a high order. Considering the poverty line limit of Rs. 368.81 MPCE in 1999-2000 for rural Haryana, we find that about 23% of the children were drop-outs among the poor households as against 5.7% in non-poor households. Similarly non-enrolment rates were higher among the poor households as compared to non-poor households [Table 6.20 (a)]. Across regions as well enrolment rates were higher in the non-poor households as compared in the poor households. Drop-out rates and non-enrolment ratios were also higher in the poor households as compared to non-poor households thus, indicating an inverse relationship between the MPCE of the household and drop-out rates. [Table 6.20 (b) to 6.20(i)]. The exception to the rule is the Siwalik region where the relationship between school attendance and poverty of the household is not very clear [Table 6.20 (b) and (c)].

Table 6.21 shows the distribution of the schedule caste children attending school and drop-outs by MPCE in rural Haryana. It reveals that among the SC group at the state level, the attendance rates increased from 36% in less than Rs. 225 MPCE category to 85% in the MPCE category of Rs. 950 and above. It is important to mention here that the drop-out rates among the SC group in both poor and non-poor households is similar i.e. 11%, hence, an inverse relationship between drop-out and MPCE is not observed. Across regions in Haryana,
the inverse relationship between MPCE and drop-out rates for the SC social group is observed only in the Western Haryana Plains [Table 6.21 (h) and 6.21(i)] while in the rest of the regions this relationship is not observed.

In the other backward castes social group, the inverse relationship between MPCE class and the drop-out rates is far more pronounced and systematic as compared to the SC segment. Table 6.22 shows that drop-out rates increased from 0.1% in the MPCE class of Rs. 950 and more to 14.4% in the MPCE class of Rs. 300-Rs.340. Further, there is heavy concentration of drop-outs in the lower MPCE classes. About 38% of the children dropped out in the poor households as against 5.5% in the non-poor households [Table 6.22 (a)]. A clear and systematic inverse relationship between the poverty of the household and drop-out rates is observed in all the regions. [Table 6.22 (b) to 6.22 (i)]. Similar to the OBC social group, in the ‘others’ group we observe a strong inverse relationship between the MPCE and drop-out rates at the state as well as at the regional levels. The drop-out rates in rural Haryana increased from 3.4% in the MPCE category of Rs. 950 and above to 60% in the MPCE class of Rs. 255 to Rs. 300 (Table 6.23). Similarly the non-enrolment rates increased from 2.6% in the MPCE class of Rs. 950 and above to 20% in the MPCE class of Rs. 255 to Rs. 300.

It has been observed that at the aggregated level in rural Haryana, a strong inverse relationship exists between the MPCE of the household and drop-out rates. Attendance rates increase with an increase in the MPCE of the household. Across social groups, the inverse relationship between the MPCE and the drop-out rates is observed in the OBC and ‘others’ social group while in the SC group the high drop-out rates has been observed in the higher MPCE categories also. Among the non-poor households the drop-out rates for SC is higher (12%) as compared to the OBC (5.5%) and the ‘others’ (3.9%). This indicates that besides economic deprivation, poor social conditions that create unfavourable environment to study are also responsible for the discontinuation of studies for children from this section of the society.

Section IV

Reasons for Not Attending School

A further search for reasons for not attending school indicated that these differ in each category of children who are deprived of their education. The following section analysis
the reasons for not attending school by 'child labourers', 'child workers' and 'nowhere' children.

**Reasons for Not Attending School by Child Labourers**

The specific reasons for not attending school by the child labourers have been examined in this section. It has been observed that at the **aggregated level** about 45% of the working children in Haryana opted to work in order to "supplement household's income" while 55% worked for 'other reasons' (non-economic compulsions - to meet the labour shortage in the household, to acquire skills, lack of school facilities, to meet own expenses etc.). The proportion of children working to supplement household's income has been observed to be higher among the poor households as compared to non-poor households. In fact, all the working children among poor households worked to supplement household income indicating economic pressure on the poorer households to send their children to work. Similarly, at the regional level, all of the employed children in poor households indicated economic reasons for working and not attending school.

Among the non-poor household, 65 percent of the children were not attending school for 'other reasons' which are non-economic in nature, as compared to 35 percent working to 'supplement household's income'. Reasons for non-attendance by the children among the non-poor households varied at the regional level. In the Siwalik and the Aravalli regions, a higher proportion of working children indicated economic reasons for non-attendance in school. In fact, in the Siwalik region, 97% of the children opted to work in order to 'supplement household income'. In the Eastern and the Western Haryana Plains, proportion of working children indicating non-economic reasons was higher as compared to those indicating economic reasons for non-attendance in school. In fact, in the Western Haryana, all the working children from non-poor households indicated non-economic reasons for non-attendance in school.

This analysis reveals that in the agriculturally less developed regions of Haryana (Siwalik and Aravalli) the working children belong to those non-poor households, which have relatively low income, which compels them to send their children to work in order to supplement household income. On the other hand, in the agriculturally developed regions of Haryana (Eastern and Western Haryana Plains), the reason for non-attendance in school is non-economic in non-poor households. This means that the children do not go to school in
these regions because they do not have school infra-structural facilities; they work to acquire skills due to labour shortage at home and other non-economic reasons.

Reasons for non-attendance in schools for about 61% of the working children from the schedule caste social group was to supplement household income, while for the rest of 39% were non-economic reasons. A higher proportion of working children indicating economic than non-economic reasons for discontinuing their studies has been observed only in the Eastern Haryana Plains. In the Aravalli region and the Western Haryana Plains, a higher proportion of working children indicated non-economic as well as economic reasons for non-attendance in school. Among the poor SC households, all the working children opted for work to “supplement household income”. Among the non-poor households, about 42% of the working children indicated economic reasons while 58% indicated non-economic reasons. Reasons for non-attendance for SC working children at the regional level is slightly different to the state’s picture. In the Aravalli and the Western Haryana Plains all the working children from non-poor households were not attending school due to non-economic reasons (like lack of school, labour shortage at home etc.). In the Eastern Haryana Plains, majority of the working children among the non-poor households joined work in order to ‘supplement household income’.

Reason for non-attendance for 73 percent of the working children from the other backward castes group was non-economic in nature. Non-economic reasons for non-attendance have also been observed at the regional level except in the Aravalli region. About 96 percent of the working children in this region indicated economic reason for not attending school. Among the poor households, children work and do not attend school to supplement household income while in non-poor households, working children indicate non-economic reasons. This feature observed at the State level is noticed at the regional level as well. Only in the Aravalli region, working children from non-poor households cite economic compulsions for not attending school. Economic compulsion is the main reason to work and not to go to school for all the working children from the ‘others’ social group. This is despite the fact that these children belong to non-poor households. These households are located in the Siwalik region, which has low agricultural development; the earnings of these households may not be enough. Therefore, children of these households work to ‘supplement household income’.
In case of the part-time child labourers, the reason for non-attendance is the following. At aggregated level, 66.3% of the working children indicated non-economic reasons for non-attendance in school while the rest indicated economic reasons. Only the Eastern Haryana Plains mirrors the state pattern while in the Western Haryana, all the part-time working children do not attend school for non-economic reasons. At the social group level, all the working children from SC social group indicate economic compulsions, i.e. to supplement household income, while from the ‘others’ social group working children cite non-economic reasons for part-time work.

The above discussion indicates that economic pressure is the main reasons for working and non-attendance in school for the children in poor households in Haryana and its regions. This holds true at the aggregated level as well as for each social group. On the other hand, among the non-poor households, majority of the working children cite non-economic reasons for not going to school. The reasons for non-attendance by the children from non-poor households differ by social groups. A high proportion of schedule caste working children who belong to non-poor households cite economic pressure as the main reason for not going to school compared to working children from the OBC group. The reason for working by the children from non-poor households differs at the regional level. In the low developed regions (Siwalik and Aravalli) majority of the working children from non-poor households cite economic pressure as the main reason for non-attendance in school. In the developed regions (Eastern and Western Haryana Plains), non-economic compulsion is cited as the main reason for working by the children from non-poor households.

Reasons for Not Attending School by Child Workers

Table 6.35, shows the distribution of girls engaged in households chores by reasons for working at home and not attending school. The principal reason for working were ‘non-economic reasons’ – reported by 91.5% girls working in household chores. These non-economic reasons are labour shortage at home, lack of schools in the village and other reasons. Table 6.36 shows the distribution of girls engaged in household chores by reasons for working in poor and non-poor households. In poor households, about 70% of the girls were engaged in household chores who reported ‘non-economic’ reasons while 30% indicated economic reasons. A higher proportion of girls from poor households reporting non-economic reasons for working as compared to economic reason have been reported at the regional level as well.
Principal reason for working from non-poor households is non-economic - reported by all the girls engaged in household chores at the state as well as at the regional level. The main reason for working are non-economic in nature for girls engaged in household chores for all three social groups (Table 6.37, 6.38 and 6.39). Further, girls working in household chores from both poor and non-poor households cite non-economic reasons for working. This general State level pattern is conformed at the regional level as well. It is important to mention here that in the Eastern Haryana Plains 40.1% of the girls mentioned economic reasons for working at home. These girls are from Schedule caste social group and belong to poor households. Hence, this gives direct evidence that a sizeable proportion of girls among the schedule castes work at home due to economic compulsions.

Reasons for Non-Attendance by 'Nowhere' Children

The following are the reasons given for non-attendance by children who are neither in school nor found to be working: At the aggregated level, 93.5% of the 'nowhere' children in rural Haryana indicated non-economic factors as the main reason for not attending school while the rest gave economic reasons for non-attendance. Non-economic factors were indicated as the main reasons for non-attendance in schools at the regional level also. Similarly across all the three social groups, majority of the children who were neither in school nor working gave non-economic reasons for non-attendance in school. Hence the above analysis indicated that non-attendance in school among the children workers and 'nowhere' children is due to non-economic factors like dissatisfaction with school functioning, lack of schools in the village etc.

Conclusion

From the preceding discussion it is observed that at the aggregated level enrolment rates are relatively higher in rural Haryana but across social groups these are comparatively lower among the SCs than the OBCs and the 'others'. The SC social group on the other hand, has higher drop-out rates as compared to the OBCs and the 'others' social group, thus, indicating that economic deprivation and poor social conditions create unfavourable conditions for these sections of the society to continue their studies. The results indicate that in rural Haryana, majority of the children who work do not combine it with school. Hence, from our analysis work and study are mutually exclusive categories. Some authors (Boyden, Ling and Myers, 1998) are of the view that it is a myth that work and education are mutually
exclusive categories and challenges the efficacy of the traditional policy instruments of minimum age legislation and compulsory education. These traditional mechanisms fails "to involve working children themselves and their families in designing child labour responses that has resulted insensitive universal approaches which do not respond to their particular and complex realities" [Fyfe (2001), p.70].

It has been observed from the analysis that the proportion of children who did apparently nothing i.e. they did not work in any form after dropping out was three times that of those who opted for work. Conventionally, it is believed that children drop-out of school because they have to work. Contrary to this perception the analysis indicates that the majority of the children do not work after they drop-out. Thus, the direction of causation does not necessarily run from child labour to non-attendance. This can be other way round in the sense that ‘drop-out’ children take up productive work of their own choice or through parental pressure as a ‘default occupation’ (Dreze, 1997). This statement is further strengthened by our analysis of reasons of non-attendance in school. Majority of the children who join the labour force after discontinuation of their studies give non-economic reasons for non-attendance in school. These non-economic factors are lack of interest in school, lack of infrastructural facilities or to supplement labour shortage at home. These non-economic factors indicate the inability of the school to retain children. Further, children among the drop-outs who ascribe economic reasons for non-attendance join the labour force and take up wage work or help at home. It is important to add most of the child labourers indicating economic reasons for non-attendance in school belong to the schedule caste social group. In such cases where reasons of non-attendance in school are economic in nature we can say that child work leads to non-attendance. But as mentioned above, the proportion of children taking up wage employment after discontinuing their studies is much lower than those who do not work. Hence, in this analysis it appears that child work does not lead to non-attendance whereas the inability of the educational system to retain children in school might lead to child work. Moreover the educational attainment of all the categories of children i.e. child labourers, child workers and ‘nowhere’ children is extremely low. Majority of the ‘nowhere’ children who have been a part of the formal educational system in rural Haryana have been unable to cross the level of primary education and hence, enter adulthood with a smaller stock of human capital.
Further, proportion of drop-outs who are apparently doing nothing is higher for boys than for girls which also means that girls instead of doing nothing are working in household chores after discontinuation of their studies while a higher proportion of boys among the drop-outs are 'hanging around' the house as compared to girls. Thus, both boys and girls are deprived of education but girls are involved in 'invisible' form of work which indirectly contributes to economy of the household and hence, work might be leading to non-attendance in school.

The comparative analysis across social groups indicated that among the total drop-outs, a higher proportion of children from the SC social group join the labour force as compared to the OBCs and the 'others'. As against this a higher proportion of children do nothing after dropping out among the OBCs and the 'others' as compared to the SC social group. Further, majority of the child labour who drop out of school resort to outside wage employment and this is far more acute in the SC group than the OBCs and the 'others'. This observation points out to the economic compulsion involved in discontinuation of studies by the children of schedule caste segment. Majority of the drop-out children in the schedule caste belong to near landless households who are dependent on wages for their main income. Similarly among the OBC social group, majority of the drop-out children belong to landless or near landless households who are dependent on wages while among the 'others' majority of the drop-outs belong to marginal and small landholdings who are self employed in agriculture or non-agricultural activities. Thus, we notice that even among the upper caste household’s drop-outs belong to economically vulnerable household, still majority of them do not resort to work. The empirical evidence, thus, suggests that majority of the children who have discontinued their studies do nothing but because they belong to socially and economically vulnerable sections of the society, hence they are a reserve pool of child labour especially the boys among the schedule caste social group.