

Analysis of Student Dropouts in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract—As we know education plays a key role in human resource development and it leads to nation development. Students should aware that the only option to develop their self is education. Higher Education system in India provides various courses like management, engineering, social science, medical science etc. students have more choices to select their course of study. The students who are joining in Higher Education Institutions such as Universities, Colleges and other institutions are not completing their degree course on time. This situation happens mostly in Government Degree colleges, Universities and other institutions as well due to several reasons.

When teachers or mentors ask students about their irregular attendance, the majority of them cite financial problems as the main reason. Through our survey on student irregularity, dropouts, and related issues, we discovered that many students are indeed working daily wage jobs. They attend college on alternate days, while working on the others. This pattern continues for a short period, but eventually, many of these students completely drop out of their degree courses

In some cases, parents either directly or indirectly support their children dropping out, mainly due to a lack of awareness. Parents need to be made aware of the importance of education and should maintain regular communication with educational institutions. Only then can we hope to reduce the student dropout rate from higher education institutions

In this paper, some of the issues are discussed along with their counter measures to promote the students in higher education institutions in completing their degree on time.

Index Terms—students, HEIs, Parents, case study, Analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is the foundation of a prosperous and empowered society. Education plays a vital role in the development of a nation. However, the dropout rates in Indian HEIs have been a major cause of concern for policy makers and educations. It is also a significant issue in many countries worldwide, especially in developing countries like India. Student dropout is a complex phenomenon that not effects students whose aspirations are cut shorts, it also impacts families who invest their resources in their children's education and whose investment without a guarantee of return. Students' dropouts also effects HEIs because it leads to decreased enrolment income, impact society because its social capital does not increase as required, affects productivity, social relationships and the performance of citizenship skills.

HEIs aiming to support their students and enhance student retention on governmental, academic or theoretical models, base their performance and timely graduation plans and their early warning systems, on their academic information systems, official platforms and on their conception of dropout and students' retention. This approach underscores how a culture of institutional information serving as a tool promote performance is routed in the availability of reliable quality information for planning, formulating, evaluating and monitoring polices to mitigate student dropouts.

Student's desertion affects the sustainability and stability of HEIs as it drains the necessary resources for their academic and education production in terms of their activities of teaching, research and social projection. India has a high college dropout rate according to the national university of educational planning and administration (NUEPA), the dropout rate for higher education in India is 25%. This means

that one in four students who enrolled in colleges do not complete their degree. Over the years A.P state has seen varying dropout percentages, which have been influenced by factors such as:

1. Financial Difficulties:

The cost of colleges has been rising steadily in recent years, and many students find it difficult to afford tuition fee and living expenses. This can lead to student dropping out of colleges in order to work and earn money.

2. Academic unpreparedness:

Some students may not be academically prepared for the rigors of college course work. This can be due to a number of factors such as poor high school preparations or inadequate academic support services.

3. Lack of motivation:

Some students may simply lack the motivation to success in their college life. This can be due to number of causes such as personal problems, family obligations or lack of interest in their chosen field of study.

4. Mental health challenges:

College student experiences mental health challenges such as Anxiety and Depression. These challenges can make difficult to succeed in their college life and they can lead to student dropouts.

5. Medical Problems:

Some students may force to drop out of college due to medical issues. This can be due to a chronic illness, accident or a family member's illness.

6. Single Parent:

Generally, the students who have single parent especially from rural background usually suffer with many financial problems and this leads to student drop out.

7. Lack of Support:

Insufficient guidance from advisors or family members or friends or a general lack of support can make it difficult for students to navigate college life.

8. Academic struggles:

Difficulty with particular courses or overall poor academic performance can lead to discouragement.

9. Social challenges:

Feeling isolated, experiencing bullying, or dealing with issues with roommates can contribute to a student's decision to leave

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are multiple models and definitions of higher education dropout. For example, Spady (1970) relies on institutional data in order to conceive dropout as soon as a student has cancelled a registration, even if the same student enrolls in another course and/or institution. We cannot conclude that the student is dropped out based on the above definition because now a day's more than one phase of counselling is provided by the Government for the students who join in their first-year course.

Focusing solely on the reasons presented for dropout from higher education, Cabrera, Bethencourt, Pérez and Afonso (2006) emphasize psycho educational causes (e.g., academic self-efficacy), evaluative (e.g., the student's personal development), familiar (e.g., parental expectations), economic (e.g., financial commitments), institutional (e.g., interaction with teachers) and social (e.g., exercise of citizenship).

The model by Tinto (1975, 1993), since its introduction to clarification in 1993, was also conducive to four sets of variables that, as time passes by, influence the process of higher education dropout: (a) attributes that preceded the entrance into higher education; (b) goals and commitments that preceded and succeeded the entrance into higher education; (c) institutional experiences referring to the academic system or the social system; (d) social and academic integration.

The students' attributes that preceded the entrance into higher education include the family context, individual characteristics, and previous educational experiences (Tinto, 1975, 1993). All the above attributes play a vital role in student drop out or student remains continue the course. Many students who dropped out from their courses are from rural areas only and few students from urban areas.

Despite the potential and the limitations of the model by Tinto (1975, 1993, 2010), nowadays, this model is still recognized in the scientific literature on dropout from higher education (Ambiel, 2015; Bernardo et al., 2017; Hjorth et al., 2016; Jenó, Danielsen, & Raaheim, 2018; Sosu & Pheunpha, 2019). Researchers have demonstrated this model as useful to investigate the process, which can serve the purpose of theoretical reference for empirical studies and recommendations for psychological interventions for the operations of

higher education institutions, and for socio political decisions

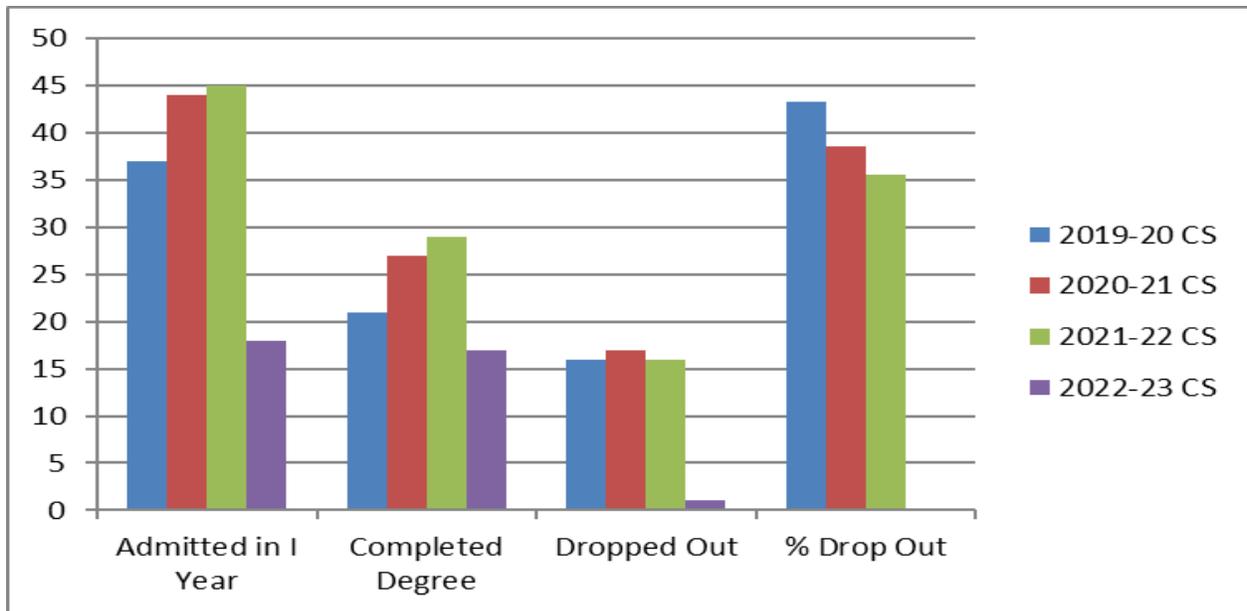
The institutional goals and commitment before and after the entrance of students into higher education were related to the dropout/permanence of students (Chryssikos, Ahmed, & Ward, 2017). The above statement is valid because newly joined students have many expectations on the institution (Facilities offered by the institution such as class rooms, library, sports, internet, laboratory and most importantly teaching faculty). So, the institution has taken care of all those things and follows up the new students

III. OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this work, we collected data set from a degree college located in rural are to analyse academic year wise drop out ratio for different stream lines offered by the college. In this paper, we also include the necessary precautions that an institution can implement to reduce the drop out ratio

Academic Year Wise Computer Science student's data

Academic Year	Specialization	Admitted in I Year	Completed Degree	Dropped Out	% Drop Out
2019-20	CS	37	21	16	43.24
2020-21	CS	44	27	17	38.63
2021-22	CS	45	29	16	35.55
2022-23	CS	18	17	1	0.05

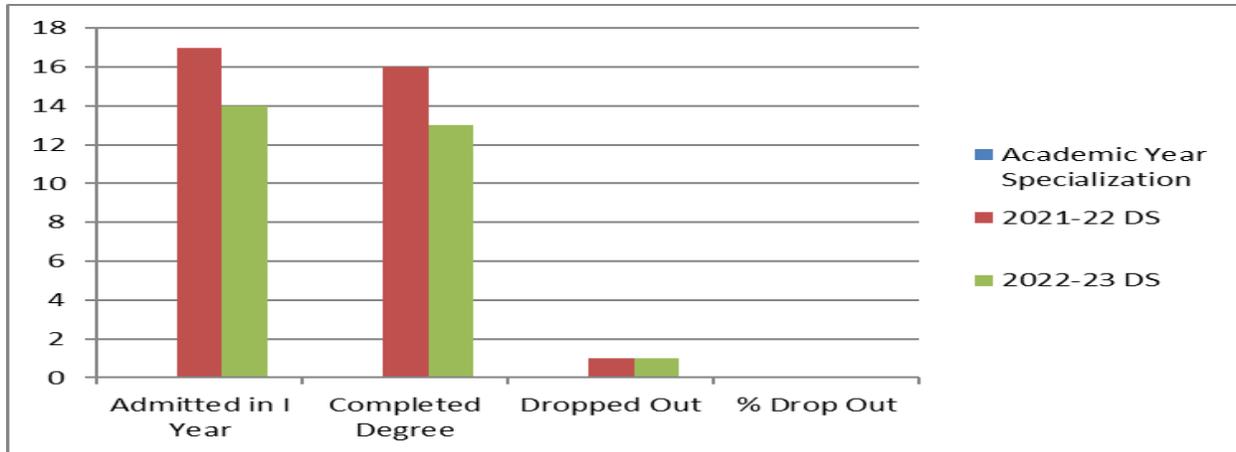


As shown in the figure, the dropout rate for the 2019-20 admitted batch is 43%, which is very unfortunate for higher education institutions since nearly half the students left the course. For the 2020-21

admitted batch, the dropout rate is almost 40%, and for the 2021-22 batch it is 35%. These high rates do not bode well for future generations.

Academic Year Wise Data Science student's data:

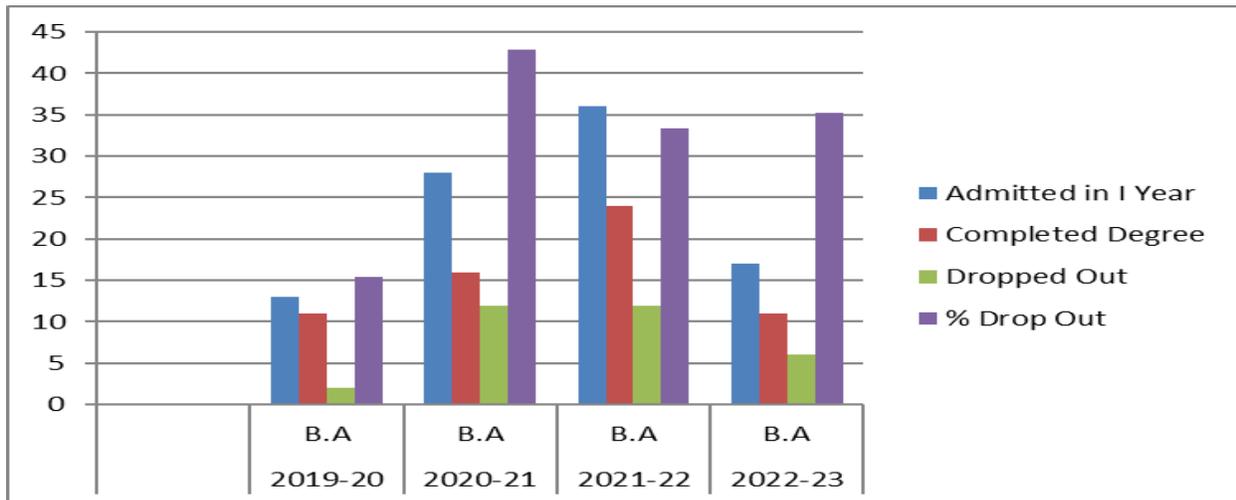
Academic Year	Specialization	Admitted in I Year	Completed Degree	Dropped Out	% Drop Out
2021-22	DS	17	16	1	0.05
2022-23	DS	14	13	1	0.07



As shown in the figure, the dropout rate for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 admitted batches is almost zero, which is very encouraging. The dropout rate also varies by course.

Academic Year Wise B.A student’s data

Academic Year	Specialization	Admitted in I Year	Completed Degree	Dropped Out	% Drop Out
2019-20	B. A	13	11	2	15.38
2020-21	B. A	28	16	12	42.85
2021-22	B. A	36	24	12	33.33
2022-23	B. A	17	11	6	35.29



As shown in the figure, the dropout rate among students admitted in 2019-20 is 15.38 %. This rises sharply in the 2020-21 batch, where almost 43 % of students dropped out an alarmingly high figure for any higher education institution. For the 2021-22 and 2022-23 admitted batches, the dropout rates are also high, at approximately 34 % and 36 % respectively. Such persistent dropout rates are deeply concerning, as they indicate not only student dissatisfaction or academic difficulty, but also systemic issues in

retention. If these trends continue, the future generation may face reduced educational outcomes, wasted potential, and increased inequality. It is therefore essential for institutions to investigate the causes of dropout (e.g., academic support, financial constraints, engagement, teaching methods) and implement effective strategies to improve retention and student success.

Precautions and strategies to reduce student drop out in higher education institutions:

Precautions

The following are things that HEIs should monitor or safe guard against to prevent dropout before it happens.

1. Early caution of risk signs
 - Monitor attendance, grades, assignment submission and participation in regular intervals of time.
 - Look for sudden drops in performance or engagement or interaction.
 - Check for non-academic signs too (financial hardship, family issues, mental health).
2. Clear, accessible information
 - Make sure students understand degree requirements, costs (tuition, materials, extra fees), and deadlines.
 - Transparent policies (grading, leaves, re-examinations).
3. direction and evolution support
 - Many dropouts happen early (first semester). Provide orientation programs to help new students adapt academically, socially, and culturally.
 - Peer mentoring, be friendly with the students, “buddy” system, necessary bridge courses for weaker skills to full fill the gap.
4. Financial issues
 - Financial issues are a big cause of dropout. Students likely to default should be identified early.
 - Make sure support (scholarships, loan/fee concessions, emergency grants) is available and easily accessible.

5. Academic support structures
 - Tutoring, remedial classes, make up classes, study skills workshops, seminars, conferences (time management, note taking, exam preparation).
 - Faculty office hours, availability faculty.
6. Mental health and comfort services
 - Counselling, stress management, support groups.
 - Reducing stigma and ensuring students feel comfortable seeking help.
7. Flexible learning options
 - For students with other obligations (work, family), offering evening classes, hybrid/online courses, part-time options can help.
8. Strong faculty & advisor relationships
 - Frequent interaction between students and faculty / academic advisors.
 - Advisors, who check in regularly, guide course selection, warn when students are falling behind.
9. Institutional culture & sports
 - Foster inclusion, diversity, student engagement.
 - Students who feel they belong are more likely to stay.
 - Clubs, societies, student communities, co-curricular activities, peer networks.
10. Efficient administrative processes
 - Reduce bureaucratic barriers: simplify registration, scholarship application, fee payment, leave of absence, rejoining.
 - Clear communication channels, minimal red-tape.

Strategies

These are proactive programs or policies HEIs can implement to reduce dropout and support student retention.

Strategy	What it Involves	Why It Helps
Early-Alert Systems & Predictive Analytics	Use data (attendance, assignments, LMS usage, grades) to flag students at risk; intervene early.	Prevents small problems from escalating; more timely support. EDMO+2The Conversation+2
Academic Success Programs	Tutoring, peer-mentorship, remedial skill courses, study groups. studentclearinghouse.org+2Higher Education Marketing+2	
Flexible Course Delivery	Hybrid/online classes, evening/weekend classes, flexible deadlines, part-time enrolment. Mentor Collective+2Higher Education Marketing+2	
Financial Support Measures	Scholarships, emergency micro-grants, flexible fee payment plans, financial literacy training. Higher Education Marketing+1	
Student Engagement & Belonging	Orientation programs, peer buddies, cohort programs, co-curricular activities, clubs/societies. Full Fabric+2Labster+2	

Strategy	What it Involves	Why It Helps
Career Guidance & Skill Development	Workshops for employability, internships, linking curriculum to real-world job skills, exposing students early to career options. Times Higher Education (THE)+1	
Holistic Student Support Services	Counseling services, wellness programs, mentoring, help for non-academic issues (family, housing, health). Engineerca+2Quadc+2	
Regular Feedback & Course Monitoring	Frequent formative assessments, feedback to students, allowing course corrections. The Conversation+1	
Ease of Administrative/Procedural Tasks	Simplify deadlines, scholarship / financial aid paperwork, re-enrollment. Use technology where possible. ConexED+1	
Continuous Assessment of Strategies + Data Collection	Evaluate which interventions are working; collect data on dropout reasons; adapt policies accordingly. EDMO+2Classe365+2	

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Reduce student dropouts in higher education institutions requires a involved approach involving students, parents, educators, and policymakers. Financial constraints, lack of awareness, parent’s educational qualifications and limited support systems are some of the key factors contributing to student dropouts. Addressing these issues through targeted financial aid, counselling services, flexible learning options, and strong parent-institution engagement can significantly reduce dropout rates. Creating an inclusive and supportive academic environment, along with awareness programs for parents about the long-term value of education, is essential. A collaborative effort can ensure that more students not only enroll in higher education but also complete their courses successfully, contributing to both personal growth and societal development

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