Impact of devolution of power plan on students' dropout rate at secondary level in Hazara division KPK, Pakistan

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Abstract

The study was conducted to assess the impact of devolution of power plan 2001 on students' dropout rate at secondary level in Hazara division KPK, Pakistan. Population of study was three districts of Hazara division (Abbottabad, Mansehra, and Haripur). One hundred and twenty secondary schools served as sample for this study. The dropout rate for the year 1999-2000 was compared with the dropout rate of 2003-2004. A questionnaire was designed to collect relevant information. The questionnaire contained 20 items. The collected data was analyzed by using SPSS version 16. In the light of analysis it was observed that the devolution of power plan has played significant role in reducing students' dropout rate at secondary level. It was also observed that devolution of power plan has reduced dropout rate of male students much more than the female students.

Keywords: Devolution of Power, Dropout

1. Introduction

Devolution is usually defined as a mean of devolving political power in order to decentralize administrative and financial authority at grass root level. The main objective of devolution is to provide good governance, effective delivery of services and transparent decision making through institutionalized participation of the local people. (Alderfer, 1964). In Pakistan, Devolution of Powers Plan was introduced in 2000 and was implemented through the Local Government Ordinance 2001.The main objective of this plan was to empower common masses at gross root-level and to facilitate them with better service delivery at their doorstep. Under this Plan, political power, decision-making authority and administrative responsibilities have been moved as closes as possible to the village, union council, tehsil and district level, with only the major policy-making, coordination, and special service functions being retained with the central and provincial governments. (Shami, 2005).The Devolution of Powers Plan was designed on the bases of five fundamentals: devolution of political power, decentralization of administrative authority, deconcentration of management functions, diffusion of the power-authority nexus, and distribution of resources to the district level. (DOP Plan, 2000).The primary objective of the devolution plan and decentralization in education was to involve and empower local community in planning, management, monitoring and evaluation of service delivery interventions at the grass-root level. (MSU, 2001).The term "dropout" is referred for a person who withdraws from school before graduating (Webster's new world

college dictionary).Colorado department of education defined drop out as students who leave school during an academic / school year (http: // www.cde.state.co.us /cdereval? rvdefine.htm retrieved on 14-5-2009).A variety of definitions can be used to reflect dropout rates and the calculation of these rates varies according to how the concept is defined (Thurlow, Johnson, & Sinclair, 2002). The media and other stakeholders often quote high dropout rate as an indicator for the success or failure of schools (US department of education, 1996).NCES, 1993 reported three types of dropout rates:

- ➢ Event rates mean the percentage of students who leave school in a single academic year.
- ➢ Status rates refer to the percentage of the population in a certain age group who have not either completed high school or are not enrolled in school at one point in time.
- ➢ Cohort rates represent the percentage of a single group of students who drop out over time.

Dropout students neither have basic skills nor vocational training and it is highly probable that they will face problems in finding a job (European Commission, 2001). Dropped out students not only waste their time but they are also a cause of wasting national money. According to Reyes and Valencia, (1995) dropping out of school is a matter of concern even in American society where attendance is compulsory and education is highly valued.

2. Statement of the Problem

Dropout is an important factor effecting qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of education. It was imperative to assess the effect of devolution of powers plan on students' dropout rate. Therefore the study was conducted with the title, "Impact of devolution of power plan on students' dropout rate at secondary level in Hazara division"

3. Objectives of the Study

Following were the objectives of this study.
1. To find out effect of DOP plan on students' dropout rate at secondary level.
2. To compare students' dropout rate before and after the DOP Plan.

4. Null Hypotheses

The following Null Hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant difference between students' dropout rate before and after the DOP Plan.
2. There is no significant difference between male students' dropout rate before and after the DOP Plan.
3. There is no significant difference between female students' dropout rate before and after the DOP Plan.
4. There is no significant difference between male students' dropout rate and the female students' dropout rate before DOP plan.
5. There is no significant difference between male students' dropout rate and the female students' dropout rate before DOP plan.

5. Research Methodology

This study was an evaluative study for which survey research methodology was adopted. Population of the study comprised of principals, headmasters and headmistresses of secondary schools of Abbottabad, Mansehra and Haripur districts. The total number of secondary schools in these districts is 270. One hundred and fifty schools were randomly selected as sample for the study. A descriptive research methodology was used for the study during which a questionnaire consisting of twenty items was developed. The questionnaire was comprised of two parts. The first part was concerned with figures about dropout before and after the implementation of devolution of powers plan while the second part was mainly consisted of questions regarding information about effectiveness of DOP plan. In order to check the validity of the research instrument, the researcher got opinion of experts and specialists in the relevant field. In the light of feedback, instrument was improved and refined. The reliability of the instrument was measured by means of split half techniques and Pearson product-moment raw score method and Spearmen-Brown Prophecy formula.

6. Conclusions

The study revealed that devolution of powers plan has played vital role in enhancing and developing education at grass root level. After the implementation of devolution of powers plan 2001, drastic changes have been observed in education department. Post devolution, it was become easy for administrators to run their institutions in an effective and efficient way. After devolution, significant decrease has been observed in Students' dropout rate at secondary level. Findings of the study reflected that as compared to females' dropout rate, much more control has been observed in males' dropout rate.

7. Recommendations

On the bases of findings and conclusions, the researchers have made following recommendations that may help educationists and policy makers to get an insight regarding devolution arrangements and to rethink and remodel their opportunities. Government functionaries and administrators at district level should be provided awareness with regard to their role and job description. Officials at district level should truly be made empowered and in order to ensure better and focused performance, their job description should clearly be laid down. Unnecessary political interference in education department must be controlled but local community involvement in schools' affairs should be encouraged and made meaningful. Parents Teachers Associations should be made more effective and empowered. Parents and other community members should be taken in confidence while schools affairs are being discussed. Parents should be given incentives for sending their children to school.

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Table: 1 Comparison of Students' Dropout Rates (Male and Female) Before and After Devolution of Powers Plan

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Before DOP (Male and Female)	120	15.28	5.26		
After DOP(Male and Female)	120	9.1	4.7	9.60	0.0001

Table: 1 shows the comparison of cumulative dropout rate of male and female before and after the implementation of devolution of powers plan. The mean of dropout before the DOP was 15.28 with S D 5.26, while mean of dropout after DOP was 9.1 and S D 4.7. The calculated value of t is 9.60 which are greater than the tabulated value (1.96) at 0.05 level. Thus the H_{01} was rejected.

Table: 2 Comparisons of Students' Dropout Rates (Male) Before and After Devolution of Powers Plan

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Before DOP (Male)	60	17.22	5.12	8.21	0.0001
After DOP(Male)	60	10.13	4.3		

Table: 2 shows the comparison of dropout rate of male students before and after the implementation of devolution of powers plan. The mean of dropout before the DOP was 17.22with S D 5.12, while mean of dropout after DOP was 10.13and S D 4.3. The calculated value of t is 8.21 which is greater than the tabulated value (1.96) at 0.05 level. Thus the H_{02} was rejected.

Table: 3 Comparisons of Students' Dropout Rates (Female) Before and After Devolution of Powers Plan

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Before DOP (Female)	60	13.34	4.69	6.05	0.0001
After DOP(Female)	60	8.07	4.9		

Table: 3 shows the comparison of dropout rate of female students before and after the implementation of devolution of powers plan. The mean of dropout before the DOP was 13.34 with S D 4.69, while mean of dropout after DOP was 8.07 and S D 4.9. The calculated value of t is 6.05 which is greater than the

tabulated value (1.96) at 0.05 level. Thus the H_{03} was rejected.

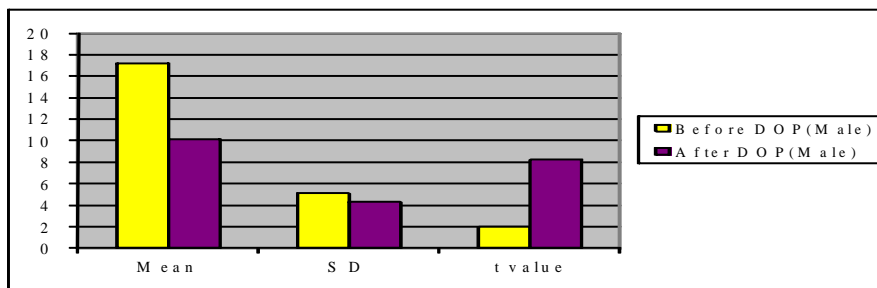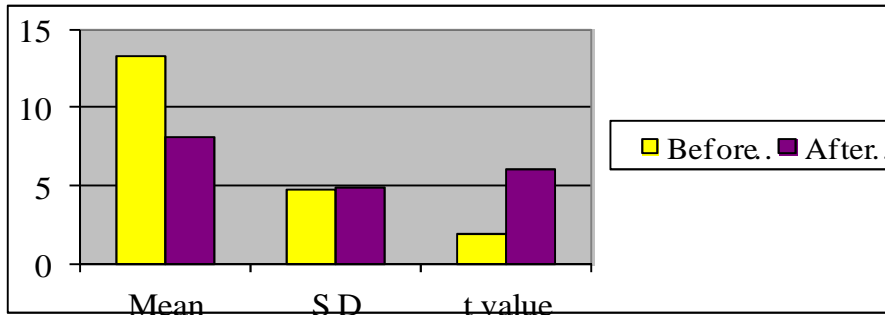**Table: 4 Comparisons of Dropout Rates (Male) with Dropout Rates (Female) Before Devolution of Powers Plan**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Before DOP (Male)	60	17.22	5.12	4.32	0.0001
Before DOP (Female)	60	13.34	4.7		

Table: 4 shows the comparison of dropout rate of male students with female students before the implementation of devolution of powers plan. The mean of dropout of male students before the DOP was 17.22 with S D 5.12, while mean of dropout of female students before DOP was 13.34 and S D 4.7. The calculated value of t is 4.32 which is greater than the tabulated value (1.96) at 0.05 level. Thus the H_{04} was rejected.

Table: 5 Comparisons of Dropout Rates (Male) with Dropout Rates (Female) After Devolution of Powers Plan

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
After DOP (Male)	60	10.13	4.3	2.45	0.016
After DOP (Female)	60	8.07	4.9		

Table: 5 shows the comparison of dropout rate of male students with female students after the implementation of devolution of powers plan. The mean of dropout of male students after the DOP was 10.13 with S D 4.3, while mean of dropout of female students after DOP was 8.07 and S D 4.9. The calculated value of t is 2.45 which is greater than the tabulated value (1.96) at 0.05 level. Thus the H_{05} was rejected.
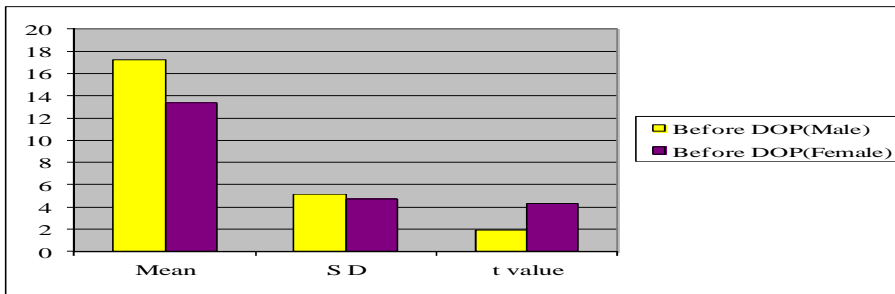
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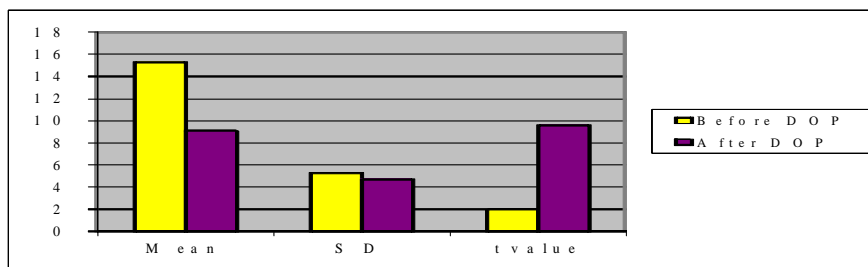
Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5