

SCHOOL DROPOUT AMONG JENUKURUBA TRIBAL CHILDREN IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the problem of school drop-out among Jenukurba tribal children in the Chamarajanagara district of Karnataka, India. The tribal people are distinct cultural groups, legally categorized as the Scheduled Tribes. Drop-out rates of tribal children are higher than children from other social and economic groups in India. The article examines the reasons for tribal children drop-out of school education. A qualitative and quantitative method has been employed in this research to study the problem holistically within a district as a single social unit.

*A school drop-out survey was conducted among households to ascertain the nature and extent of drop-out from primary and high school. Subsequently, 92 school drop out children were selected for an intensive study. This paper is based on studies conducted on **Jenukuruba Tribe of the Chamartjangar district of Karnataka state India***

KEYWORDS: *Schedule Tribes, Jenu Kuruba, Dropout Student, Occupation, Education*

INTRODUCTION

A conspicuous trait of Indian culture is the survival of tribal society and culture in the midst of a rapidly changing society. Scheduled Tribes who inhabit isolated mountainous regions were not appropriated into the agriculture based kingdoms of the plains, in the absence of easy communication and transport facilities. They are spread over the entire country, but are most heavily concentrated in central, eastern and north-eastern India. Two broad types of scheduling viz. area based and community based exist for tribes. Areas under the Fifth Schedule belong to nine major states of western and central region extending from Maharashtra on the West to Jharkhand in the East. Vulnerable tribal populations of some states are left out, however, such as in West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The Sixth Schedule applies to tribal areas in states of the North East. Population of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the country is 10.45 crore as per Census 2011. ST Population is 8.6% of the total population of the country. Population of ST males is 5.25 crore and ST females is 5.20 crore. Decadal growth of ST population is 24% in 2011 as compared to 2001.

Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is in fact, an input not only for economic development of tribes, but also for inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. It is the single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. Professor Amartya Sen recently emphasized education as an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy. But the tribes lag behind not only the general population, but also the Scheduled Caste population in literacy and education.

The male-female gap in literacy and educational attainment among the scheduled tribes is significant. Education, especially in its elementary form, is considered of utmost importance to the tribals because it is crucial for total development of tribal communities and is particularly helpful to build confidence among the tribes to deal with outsiders on equal terms. Despite the sincere and concerted efforts by the government for the overall development, but they are not able to participate in the process of development, as they are not aware of most of the programs and policies made for their upliftment. This is mainly due to the high incidence of illiteracy and very low level of education among the tribal people. (Sahu, 2014)

Government planners see education as indispensable for helping tribal peoples cope with national integration. Education will also determine their prosperity, success and security in life. The tribes which remain either deprived of or negligent toward education will suffer the consequence. Compared with the literacy rates of 73.00% for the general population, literacy among tribal peoples in India is at most 59%. As per 2011 Census, literacy rate for STs in India improved from 47.1% in 2001 to 59% in 2011. Among ST males, literacy rate increased from 59.2% to 68.5% and among ST females, literacy rate increased from 34.8% to 49.4% during the same period. Literacy rate for the total population has increased from 64.8% in 2001 to 73% in 2011. Thus, there is a gap of about 14 percentage points in literacy rate of STs as compared to the all India literacy rate. ST female literacy rate is lower by 15 percentage points as compared to overall female literacy rate in 2011. The Union and the state governments have spent considerable sums of money for tribal children education, but the results are meager. (Census of India, 2011)

Tribal Scenario in Karnataka

Tribal communities constitute a significant segment of Indian society and civilization. The Scheduled Tribe population in the State has increased from 34, 63,986 in 2001 Census to 42,48,987 in 2011, registering a decennial growth rate of 22.66 per cent. The proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population to total population of the State is 6.95 per cent. Bellary has the highest population (10.6%) of Scheduled Tribes (ST) as a percentage of the ST population in the State. Raichur (8.6%) has the second highest percentage of ST population followed by Mysore (7.8%) Chitradurga (7.1%) and Belgaum (6.9%). Bellary (4,51,406), Raichur (3,67,071), Mysore (3,34,547) and Chitradurga (3,02,554) are also the districts where the maximum number of tribals reside. Raichur has the highest population of the STs as a percentage of the total population of the district (19.03%), followed by Bellary (18.41%) and Chitradurga (18.23%) districts. The ST population of Karnataka is primarily rural (84.7%). District-wise distribution of ST population shows that the tribal population is present in all 30 districts of the State. However, most of these ethnic groups are mainly concentrated in the districts of Bellary, Raichur, Mysore, Chitradurga, Belgaum, Davanagere and Tumkur. These seven districts account for 52 per cent of the ST population of the State. The remaining 48 per cent of the ST population is distributed in the other 23 districts (Census of India, 2011)

The sex ratio for Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka is 990 females per 1000 males which is higher than the all-India average of 964 for STs as well as the State overall average of 973 females per 1000 male population. The sex ratios of ST population in rural and urban areas of Karnataka are 990 and 993 females per 1000 males, respectively which increased from 975 and 960, respectively in 2001. There has been a perceptible improvement in the sex ratio of STs since 1991 when it was only 961 females per 1000 males.

The literacy rate of STs in Karnataka is a cause for concern, as it has consistently been lower than that of the total population. The literacy rate among the tribes, which was 36.0 per cent in 1991, increased to 48.3 per cent in 2001 and further increased to 62.1 per cent (male 71.1% and female 53.0) in 2011. The literacy rate among the tribal population in Karnataka is 74.8 per cent in urban and 59.0 per cent in rural areas.

PVTGs in Karnataka

In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as particularly vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), PVTGs have some basic characteristics -they are mostly homogenous, with a small population, relatively physically isolated, social institutes cast in a simple mould, absence of written language, relatively simple technology and a slower rate of change etc. The various studies conducted by government observes that these vulnerable communities have experienced a 'decline in their sustenance base and the resultant food insecurity, malnutrition and ill-health has forced them to live in the most fragile living conditions and some of them are even under the threat of getting extinct'. Government of Karnataka has identified (i) Jenu Kuruba; and (ii) Koraga tribes as Primitive Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Jenu Kuruba tribes are originally from Mysore, Chamarajanagar and Kodagu districts and Koraga tribes are from Udupi and Dakshina Kannada (Bano, 2016).

About Studied Population

The Jenu Kuruba is one of the major tribal groups of Karnataka. The population of *Jenu Kurubas* is 36,076 in Karnataka mostly living in the districts of Mysore, Kodagu, and Chamarajanagar. A few are also found outside the State mostly in the border forests of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The prefix *Jenu* means "honey", Kuruba indicates their cast name. The kuruba is the name of large shepherd community of Karnataka Plateau (Aiyappan, 1948). They have their own dialect known as '*Jenu nudi*' and follow the Kannada script. They speak Kannada with outsiders. The literacy rate among the Jenukurubas in Karnataka 56.1 Percent. Male literacy rate (59.1%) is higher than the female literacy rate (53.1%). This statistics indicates Jenu Kurba tribal people are very backward in educationally and also socio economically.

The Jenu Kurubas are non-vegetarian. Ragi is their staple food. They prepare *sambar* (soup) with vegetable leaves. They consume milk and milk products, tea and coffee. Drinking alcohol is common among Jenu Kurubas. First cross-cousin marriages including those of patrilineal, matrilineal cross cousin and maternal uncle-niece type are common. Monogamy is the norm, if the first wife does not bear children. Junior sororate is practiced. Divorce is permitted. The eldest son succeeds to the office of his father. The Jenu Kuruba women do not inherit the property of parents. They participate in agriculture, cattle rearing and collection of herbs, roots and fire wood and contribute to the family income. They participate in social activity and also work as labourers. The first delivery takes place in the parental house of the women. They observe pollution for 12 days, during this period of post delivery pollution; the women must remain away from her husband. The naming ceremony is performed on the 12th day. In some cases, it is done after three months. Among the Jenu Kuruba a girl attaining puberty, baths on alternate days for one month. She remains outside the house for one month in a hut made up of leaves. She is given a ceremonial bath, to purify her from ritual pollution. The ceremony concludes with a feast. Marriage rituals among the Jenu Kurubas are performed in the bride's home.

The Jenu Kurubas are traditionally food gatherers and shifting cultivators. But presently as shifting cultivation is banned and many restrictions on the use of forest are imposed by the government, the traditional occupation of the Jenu Kuruba is severely affected. They have switched over from their past nomadic life, to settled life. They cultivate their lands

provided by the government was mainly in the rainy season and at other times they gather minor forest produce and work in the nurseries of the forest department under the scheme of social forestry. The Jenu Kurubas are Hindus. Their family deities are chikkamma, doddamma and handhigrayamma. The village deities are pataldamma, periyapattanamma and kammbadamma for rain and good yields respectively. They sacrifice sheep, goats and chicken to appease their deities. They celebrate festivals such as Ugadi, Gouri and Deepavali. The Jenu Kuruba had remained isolated from other groups. They have now started living in permanent settlements and have contacts with other communities at various levels, though they generally do not mix with others (Gupta, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Drop-out from primary and high school is a multifaceted problem. The nature and extent of the drop-out varies from place to place, region to region and within a region from one social group to another. While researching the problem, the specific context must be considered. The problem of drop-out from primary and high schools is discussed in the context of tribal children.

Objectives of the Study

- To study about in which class Jenukuruba children left school
- To find out the causes of Drop-out among Tribal Children, especially in Jenukuruba
- To give suggestion to improve the education for tribal children

Methods of the Study

The present study is based on primary data collected from 100 sample households from 10 Tribal settlements of Gundlupet taluk of Chamarajanagara district. Following the purposive sampling method. A schedule is used to collect data and also used Interview, observation, group discussion, case study methods. The study considered both quantitative and qualitative method of data collection. To improve the quality and reliability of the information collected from the sample survey.

Review of Literature

There are a good number of studies, explaining the causes and consequences of educational backwardness, low level literacy rate and dropout among the tribal children. Such studies are related to a general enquiry of tribal education. These studies have identified how impact socio-cultural, economic and other factors on tribal education problems like absenteeism, stagnation and dropout among tribal children.

Jay & Srihari (2014) conducted a study on Paniyan tribes of Kerala. This study finds out Most of the dropped out children are living with their family. As per the study signifies, majority of their parents do not have proper education and they are early dropouts. The reason their dropout were subjected to poverty and unemployment. But now the situations changed a lot. The parents of the dropped out assert that poverty and finance are no more the issues for their children's drop out. The parents are aware that the project plans that are being implemented for the benefit of tribal uplift. As far as the parents are concerned, the reasons for the dropping out are purely related to individual attitude on education.

Basumatary (2012) highlighted that School dropout depends upon various factors such as poverty level, distance of school from home, transport facilities, quality of teachers, social environment and many other factors. This study is a quantitative analysis of school dropout rate, which is regressed on various variables referred to as factors here. This study found statistically significant impact of state poverty level and the rural populations.

Chugh, (2011) Found that risk factor being to add up even before students enroll in school that is poverty, low educational level of parents the weak family structure, pattern of schooling of sibling and preschool experiences, family background and domestic problems create an environment which negatively affects the value of education and responsible for children dropping out. Children's from unhealthy family environment are very prone to school dropout, alcoholism of parents and family schism are some of the negative factors.

Jayachandran (2006) indicate that the major factor of dropout are child and parents are not interested in studies, unable to cope, work for wages, salary, participation in other economic activities, attend to domestic duties and financial constraints

Pradhan (2001) conducted a case study on problems of educating children in tribal communities. Main objective was to study the ground realities, through case study approach, pertaining to the factors that de-motivate tribal children and their parents from pursuing formal education. The major finding is that there is less enrolment and high rate of dropout cases in the primary school among tribals. Lack of pre primary system of 25 schooling in the community and inadequate infrastructure in the village schools are the additional difficulties.

One of the important works done by Naidu (2000) He finds out that dropouts are very high in number in the interior and distant tribal villages, Female dropouts are more in number than the male dropouts, and in Tamilnadu, female dropouts are high compared to other states. In Kerala, percentages of rural dropout children are more than the Kurumbar and Mudugar areas. In Andhra Pradesh, majority of dropout children belong to Kondora, Bagatha and Porangi Praja. In Karnataka, the female dropout is less than male dropout. The percentage of dropout is more in the age group of 10-15 years. Economic necessity and parent's compulsion, absence of Mid-day Meals schemes, improper provision of uniforms and textbooks lead to large scale dropouts in all the states.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Gender of Dropout Children

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Boys	39	42.4
Girls	53	57.6
Total	92	100

Education is the single most important factor to ensure gender equality and empowerment. But, across the country, females are more likely than males to be out of school. Among total dropout children, girls dropout rate (57.6%) higher than boys (42.4%). The reasons why females are more likely than males to be out of school relate to social power structures and socially-constructed norms that define the roles that boys/men and girls/women should play. These gender roles affect the rights, responsibilities, opportunities and capabilities of males and females, including their access to and treatment in school. Mainly because of gendered perceptions of adolescent girls' roles and responsibilities, in most tribal settlements, girls' enrolment rates fall when they reach lower secondary school age and then decline further when they

reach upper secondary school age.

Table 2: Age of the Dropout Children

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
6-10	7	7.6
11-14	36	39.1
15-18	49	53.3
Total	92	100

The above table shows that 7.6 dropout children are in age group between 6-10, 39.1% of children age group between 11-14, 53.3% of the children are come 15-18 years age group.

Table 3: Class Wise Dropouts of the Jenukuruba Children

Level	Frequency	Percent
Lower primary	37	40.2
Higher primary	41	44.6
High school	14	15.2
PU/College	0	0
Total	92	100

In case of class wise dropouts, majority of 44.6% Jenukuruba children are being dropouts at Higher primary level. However, 40.2% at Lower primary level 15.2 % of Jenukuruba children are discontinued their Education at high school level.

Table 4: Parents Education Level of Dropout Children

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	62	67.4
Lower primary	13	14.1
Higher primary	9	9.8
High school	8	8.7
PU/College	0	0
Degree and Above	0	0
Total	92	100

The relation between drop-out and parental education is significant, as most children in the tribal area are first generation school-goers. Table 4 shows that while the parents of most of the drop-out children were illiterates. In case of parents' education level 67.4% Jenukuruba parents are illiterate. Illiteracy is most common among Jenukuruba, a primitive Tribe in Karnataka. Next 14.1% of Jenukuruba parents have studied up to the lower primary and 9.8% Jenukuruba parents have studied up to the higher primary. 8.7% Jenukuruba parents have studied up to the high school only. No one has studied up to graduation level.

Table 5: Parents Occupation of Dropout Children

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Agricultuer labour/ daily wages	74	80.4
Agriculture	3	3.2
Collection of minor forest product	9	9.8
Government employfy	6	6.6
Self employe	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	92	100

In case of parents occupation majority of Jenukuruba are working as agriculture labour and daily wages. Only 3.2% are dependent on Agriculture. 9.8% Jenukuruba families are dependent on minor forest products and 6.6% Jenukuruba are having govt Jobs.

Table 6: Family Income of the Drop Outs Students

Income Level	Frequency	Percent
Below 10000	44	47.8
10001-20000	39	42.4
20001-30000	2	2.2
30001-40000	0	0
Above 40000	7	7.6
Total	92	100.0

In case of family income, only 47.8% Jenukuruba family found below the income level of Rs.10,000.. Next 42.4% of Jenukuruba families income varies from Rs. 10 to 20,000/. Next, 2.2% Jenukuruba families income varies from Rs.20 to 30,000. Further, 7.6% Jenukuruba family's income is more than Rs.40, 000

Table 6: Reasons for Dropouts of the Jenukuruba Tribal Students

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Poverty	9	9.8
Disinterest and illiteracy of parents	17	18.5
Disinterest of students	11	11.9
Economic activities	8	8.7
Household work	3	3.3
Learning disability	13	14.1
Illness	7	7.6
Lack of Transport	6	6.5
Migration of parents	8	8.7
Socio-cultural factor	7	7.6
other	3	3.3
Total	92	100

In case of reasons for dropouts, 9.8% Jenukuruba students are the dropouts, because of poverty. 18.5% Jenukuruba students have left the school in between, because of disinterest and illiteracy among the parents. 11.9% Jenukuruba students are dropouts, because of disinterest in the study and 3.3% Jenukuruba students have left the school. Because of household work, learning disability is also a causing factor for the dropouts in all studied Tribal children. The health issue is also a common factor for the dropouts. A transportation problem has also become one of the factors for the dropouts. Migration is the most common among the Tribes. It is also affecting the children. 7.6% jenukuruba children are the dropouts, because of various Socio – cultural reasons.

Table 7: Teachers Opinion on Reasons for Dropouts

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Poverty	2	9.5
illiteracy and dereliction of the parents	5	23.8
Migration of the parents	3	14.3
Medium of instruction	1	4.8
Lack of interest of the students	1	4.8
Economic activities / Household work	5	23.8

Lack of transport	4	19.0
total	21	100

In the present study, data collected from 21 teachers who are working in schools of tribal area. In case of Teacher opinion, 9.5 teachers felt poverty is the main reason for dropouts. 23.8% of them felt illiteracy and dereliction the parents may be the main factor for dropouts. 14.3 of have cited migration and 4.8% teachers have cited medium of instruction could be one of the reason for the dropouts. 23.8% teachers opined local of opined economic activities and household work also a common reason for being dropouts among tribal students. 19.0% of them felt lack of transport is also one of the reasons for being dropouts-at-all-level.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the present study have significantly supported the previous studies and reject certain traditional factors of school dropouts especially in regard to the tribal children. The study shows that a large number of school dropouts can be prevented by better family education, awareness and creating better livelihood conditions. The economic aspects of the family is not a direct factor for school dropouts as there is no financial implications or expenditure need to be spent for schooling, but the economic situations of the family makes barriers to proper atmosphere for schooling. A number of students in this study dropped out of school to take care of their household matters and their younger siblings. There were no collaborated efforts were happening in between teachers and parents in this regard. (Pratibha J. M and Abdul A, 2014), Parents personal, educational and economic backgrounds have a significant effect on their child's education. However, if parents are a positive influence in their Children everyday lives, and most importantly in their everyday education.

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