

Relationship between Socio-Economic Characteristics and School dropouts of tribal girls: An Exploratory study

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to examine the socio-economic characteristics of the tribal families and factor affecting school dropouts among tribal girls. Data were collected from 126 tribal families randomly in Kolli hills taluk of Namakkal district, through the individual survey method. A simple table, percentage analysis and regression analysis were used. The study concluded that the positive resilience coefficient for school dropouts, working mothers, adolescents going home alone, and the economic status of the family affected school dropout rates with low income and high dependence. Students' schooling is affected by the load.

Keywords: Tribal, Dropouts, Regression equation, Namakkal

1. INTRODUCTION

A student who leaves school before graduation without being transferred to another school for any reason other than death. Leaving school is a well-documented social problem, and it often presents difficult situations for young people. Leaving school is associated with crime and low school achievement. One of the main reasons why children do not come to school is the illiteracy of their parents. The Public Report on Basic Education sought to find out the reasons for child suspension and non-enrollment in five states (Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar). Parental attitudes towards education were found to have a major impact on education. If one of the two parents is literate, or if the girls in particular are literate, they seem to be more willing to send their children, especially the girls, to school. However, it does indicate that children, especially girls, are more likely than boys to care for other siblings, such as helping with household chores and farm work. Parents play an important role in getting young people to school. The amount and nature of family support is determined by factors such as stressful or unstable home life, socio-economic status, minority enrollment, sibling high school, single-parent families, poor parenting education, and other non-English primary languages. The proportional denial of educational opportunities for women compared to men shows clear discrimination in family behavior. In most Indian cultural contexts, parental and social attitudes tend to equate women on their way to marriage as unstable members of the family and men as an important factor in the favour of ageing parents. The obedience of adult women at home runs parallel to that of the child, socialising the latter in a pre-appointed role of accepting them as adults. The implications of such unequal treatment limit the opportunities and choices available to girls in the present and in the future. Amartya Sen quotes, "Women's abilities will be severely limited by the denial of education," which is an excellent line. If freedom is the goal of development, it will be significantly curtailed by the fact that illiterate women will become illiterate women. One way to empower women is to bring them from the confines of the family to the wider world of social and political relations. Education plays an important role in treating women as men deal with the outside world. On the other hand, women are not

going to be helped to leave their homes and enter the world of the city (Cladwell, J.C., Reddy P.H., and Pat C, 1985; Saravanan. A, 2015).

It is rare for children to drop out of school for just one reason. In most cases, a combination of factors prevents the child from going to school. Access-based roadblocks include lack of schools in residential or rural areas, distance to school, geographical barriers, inadequate school infrastructure, lack of basic facilities, etc. There are various social factors that do not allow children to participate. These include practises that limit social, cultural, and religious beliefs and participation; lack of social norms; social neglect; poor social status; low parental awareness; and so on. Various economic factors did not participate, including income or spending poverty, lack of families due to food insecurity, illness, compulsory livelihood options, lack of choices and the impact of the crisis. Children's wage work; Unpaid or home farm, family and household chores; Sibling litigation responsibility, collection of small forest products, grazing of cattle, etc.; Family relocation; Higher education costs; and many more (Nidhi Kotwal, Neelima Kotwal & Sheetal Rani, 2007). The current study was done to find out why girls in hilly areas stop going to school at the halfway point.

2. OBJECTIVES

The current study is an attempt to identify the socio-economic characteristics of tribal families and factors affecting school dropouts among tribal girls in the Kolli hills taluk of Namakkal district in Tamil Nadu.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sujatha (1995) studied in Andhra Pradesh and found that the girls did not attend school more in the 1st and 4th classes than in the 2nd and 3rd classes. For reasons such as these, found that very young children and adults of helping age were irregular in coming to school. Unni (1996) found in a study in Gujarat that the enrollment of girls between the ages of 10 and 11 increased to a maximum and then decreased. The most likely reason for this is puberty, after which parents drop them out of school. A study by Dreze and Gazdar (1996) based on a survey conducted in UP supports this argument. The remoteness of schools, which is behind girls' dropout rates, is also understood to be a major factor. Nambisan (1994) and Majumdar (1996) cite apathy in children as the main reason for suspending education. Shivalli R. et al. (2010) study in rural Karnataka and found that most out-of-school girls came from low-income families. Khan S. et al. (2012) found that the education level of dropout parents was very low because most mothers and fathers were illiterate, and mostly women belonged to the middle income groups.

Baysaki, Sarkar (2015) found that the main reason for school dropout is the distance from school to home. Saravanan (2015) found that parental education, especially mothers' education, plays an important role in reducing girls' school dropouts. Vungngaihulun et al. (2018) show that the main reasons for children dropping out of school are parental education, family income, number of family members, child's age, type of school and distance to school, participation in school activities, absenteeism, parental homeschooling assistance, and housework assistance. Akoyjam Prajamani Singh (2021) found that the major factors influencing school dropouts are distance from home to school and lack of transportation.

4. PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

Kolli hills taluk is located in the southern part of the Eastern Ghats of Namakkal District. It is bounded by Salem and Tiruchirappalli districts on the east, Erumaipatti block on the south, Chendarmangalam block on the west, and Namagiripettai block on the north. The geographical area of the taluk is 371.3 sq. km, of which more than 65 percent is covered by

forests, which is 11.02 percent of the area of Namakkal district. According to the 2011 census, the total population of the Kolli hills taluk is 40,479 rural people. The sex ratio of the block population is 974 females per 1,000 males. Caste and tribal populations in the constituency list are 668 and 38,678, respectively. The working population of the constituency is 26,081, which is 2.90 percent of the total population of the district. The total literacy rate in the Kolli hills taluk for the last two decades was 8,772 and 21,073 in 2001 and 2011, respectively. The dropout rate in Kolli hills taluk in 2013-14 was 1.50.

5. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Namakkal district in Tamil Nadu. Namakkal district comprises of 7 blocks among that Kolli hills taluk was selected for this study. Data were collected from 126 tribal families randomly, through the individual survey method. A simple table and percentage analysis were used to study the socio-economic characteristics of the tribal families in the area. The regression equations were evaluated to assess the impact of various factors affecting girls who drop out of school in the village of Kolli hills taluk. The regression equations applied to the cross-sectional data are as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + b_3 X_3 + b_4 X_4 + b_5 X_5 + b_6 X_6 + b_7 X_7$$

Where,

Y = No's of drop-out of girls in a family

X₁ = Education status of Father (in years)

X₂ = Education status of Mother (in years)

X₃ = Family size

X₄ = Income of the family (in Rs.)

X₅ = No's of working women in a family

X₆ = Distance from home to school (in km)

X₇ = Earner dependent ratio

a = Constant

b₁..... b₇ = regression co-efficient

6. THE LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The current nature of the study includes the primary data collected from the sample respondents at a given time. Therefore, the generalisations derived from the study may or may not reflect the future of this region. A survey system usually involves recall dependencies, so test accuracy cannot be expected in the data generated by this survey (Saravanan. A, 2015). Although, the present study is the first in Kolli hills taluk, the results of the study are applicable to this area only and not to other tribal areas in the taluk.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The main findings of this study are presented in the following two main parts;

Part-I: Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Sample Tribal Households

The socio-economic characteristics chosen for analysis are the type of family, family size, parent's occupation and education, annual family income among sample tribal families.

Table I - Socio-Economic Characteristics

Socio-economic characteristics	Number (N=126)	Percentage
Type of family		
Joint	53	42.06
Nuclear	73	57.94

Family Size		
Below 3 members	25	19.84
3 – 6 members	84	66.67
Above 6 members	17	13.49
Occupation of Parents		
Agriculture	29	23.02
Agricultural labour	82	65.08
Others	15	11.90
Annual income of the family		
Below 25000	22	17.46
25000 - 50000	71	56.35
Above 50000	33	26.19
Education of father		
Illiterate	53	42.06
Primary level	60	47.62
Secondary and above level	13	10.32
Education of mother		
Illiterate	88	69.84
Primary level	29	23.02
Secondary and above level	9	7.14
Total	126	100

Source: Survey data

Table 1 shows that most of them belong to nuclear families. Their family consists of 3–6 people. Their parents were mainly agricultural workers, and the annual income of a small family ranged from 25,000 to 50,000 rupees. The level of education of their parents was low, as most of the mothers were illiterate and their fathers had only a primary education.

Part-II: Factors Influencing School Dropout of Tribal Girls

This section looks at the impact of certain socio-economic variables affecting school education, such as parental education, family size, annual income, number of women working in the family, distance from home to school and income ratio in Kolli Hills taluk.

Table-II: Estimated Regression Co-efficients

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	5.855	2.462		2.378	.019
Education Status of father	.090***	.046	.212	1.967	.051
Education Status of Mother	.147*	.051	.318	2.897	.004
No. of Family Members	-.127*	.043	-.174	-2.926	.004
Monthly Income	.742*	.271	.156	2.732	.007
No's of working women in family	.495*	.135	.237	3.679	.000
Distance from home to school	-.266**	.114	-.132	-2.328	.022

Dependent ratio	-.140*	.085	-.820	-13.377	.000
R	.820				
R ²	.673				
Adjusted R ²	.654				
F	34.686*				.000
No. of Sample	126				

Source: Primary data

*Significant at 1% level, **Significant at 5% level, ***Significant at 10% level

The estimated regression coefficients of the variables associated with the sample data, i.e., (X1) father's education level, (X2) mother's education level, (X3) family size, (X4) monthly income, (X6) number of working women in a family, (X6) distance from home to school, (X7) earner-dependent ratio given in Table-II clearly indicates that the coefficient of multiple determination (R²) value is 0.673 if the girl's school is suspended. All of these coefficient values indicate that the regression pattern can explain much of the variance in the level of educational dropout among girls. All co-efficient has the expected symptoms. The educational level of the father and mother co-efficients was positive and significantly between 10% and 1%. When the father and mother's level of education rises by one year, the chance that that girl's will get an education rises by 9 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively.

The number of family members of the coefficient is negative and is significant at 1%. The size of the co-efficient indicates that if the family size is large, the probability of the woman's dropping out of school increases by 12.7 percent, and vice versa. The family's monthly income of 1% is positive and statistically significant. The amount of cooperation indicates that if the family income increases by 1 percent, the probability of the woman dropping out of school decreases by 74.2 percent. The number of women working in the family is positively and statistically significant at 1%. The level of cooperation indicates that if working women increase by 1 percent, the probability of that woman dropping out of school decreases by 49.5 percent. The distance from home to school is negative and significant at 5%. Co-efficiencies indicate that if the distance from home to school increases by one kilometer, the probability of that girl dropping out of school increases by 26.6 percent. The relative ratio of parallel performance is negative and significant at 1%. The co-efficiency level indicates that if the probability rate increases by one percent, the probability that the girl will drop out of school will increase by 14 percent.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that the positive resilience coefficient for school dropouts, working mothers, adolescents going home alone, and the economic status of the family affected school dropout rates with low income and high dependence. Students' schooling is affected by the load. The study recommended that teachers with knowledge of the languages and dialects of the tribe and the socio-cultural values of the tribe should be selected. Priority should be given to employing local, educated people who are willing to stay and serve in tribal areas, and massive and special efforts should be made to include tribal women in education.

9. REFERENCES

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