



A Study on Dropout at Elementary Level with Reference to Tribal Children

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Abstract: *The present study is an attempt to study dropout at elementary level with reference to tribal children. The sample comprised fifty-eight families and two elementary schools of Mitrapur Panchayat. The objective of the study is to study the dropouts at the elementary level with reference to tribal children in Mitrapur Panchayat of Balasore district. The researcher employed a survey method and a self-made questionnaire; an information sheet was used as a tool for the collection of data. The collected data were analysed by using percentages and accordingly, interpretation was made. The study found data on dropouts by class reveals that 20% of children dropped out at Class I, 21.81% at Class II, 29.62% at Class III, 25% dropped out at the IV Class, 18% at Class V, and a total of 22.83%. Analysis of the responses given by dropouts themselves regarding causes for leaving school reveals that some causes are prominent in terms of their frequency, and some may be considered minor from the point of view of their frequency. The major causes reported by dropouts for leaving school are working at mine area (17.24%), poverty (13.79%), uncongenial doing domestic work (8.62%), lack of interest go to school (8.62%), parents' inability to pay fees, books, stationary (8.62%), prolonged illness of others members (8.62%), low intelligence (8.62%), to help in their parental profession (6.89%), taking sibling care (6.89%), personal illness (6.89%), and repeated failure (5.17%).*

Key Words: *Dropout, Elementary Level, Tribal Children, Education.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Education in modern society has become an important instrument in nation-building and economic development. The Planning Commission report on India vision 2020 observes that a successful education policy would play a major role in the fields of national development in the political, economic, technical, scientific, social and environmental fields. Education is the foundation for a vibrant democracy, growth of productivity income and create employment opportunities. The constitution of India's preamble indicates the vision and commitment of the nation to the ideas of democracy, socialism and secularism through securing all citizens' justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. Article 46 of the Indian Constitution declares that 'The State shall have special regard to the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and particularly of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall secure to them social justice and all other rights exploitation.' This study throws out dropouts at the elementary level with reference to tribal children in Mitrapur Panchyat under the Nilagiri block. Although Odisha is not underdeveloped in primary education, progress is still awaited in this segment. The real problem lies behind the ray of hope.

2. RATIONAL OF THE STUDY:

Scheduled Tribes are one of the most backward classes in our country. The literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes has no doubt increased over the years, but the level is still very low. A large number of Scheduled Tribe children discontinue their studies before completing the level for which they were enrolled. However, the drop-out rate is another crucial indicator in the field of educational development. The problem of drop-outs happens to be a common feature for both general and ST students. However, the problem still appears to be worse concerning STs as they have a comparatively higher drop-out rate. Therefore, there is a need and urgency to make efforts to reduce the drop-out rate from the Scheduled Tribe community.



3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The researcher stated the current study as “A Study on Dropout at Elementary Level with Reference to Tribal Children”.

4. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS:

Elementary Level: Elementary education covers primary (6-11 years), and upper primary (11-14 years) age groups. In most Indian states, this means successfully completing the prescribed educational requirements by the eighth grade.

Dropout: Dropout means leaving school, college, university, or any other group for practical reasons, needs, or disillusionment with the system from which the person concerned emerges.

Tribal: A social division of a people, esp. of a preliterate people, defined in terms of common descent, territory and culture, etc.

5. OBJECTIVES:

- i) To study the school dropout rate of tribal students at the elementary level.
- ii) To study the views of parents about the causes behind school dropout of tribal children.
- iii) To study the causes of tribal students' dropout with regard to teachers' views.
- iv) To study the social causes for tribal students' dropping out of school at the elementary level.
- v) To study the economic causes for tribal students' dropping out of school at the elementary level.
- vi) To study the educational causes of tribal students' dropout at elementary level.

6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- i) What do tribal students “dislike” about the school?
- ii) What factors are responsible for dropout from studies about the views of parents of tribal children?
- iii) What are the factors responsible for dropout of tribal children with regard to teachers' views?
- iv) What are the characteristics of the dropouts?
- v) What are the factors causing dropouts presented by dropouts?
- vi) What is the socio- economic background of the school dropout students?

7. METHOD OF THE STUDY:

A qualitative research approach was adopted, in which a descriptive survey method would be adopted to find out the problem of dropout among tribal students.

8. POPULATION AND SAMPLE:

The population of the study included all the tribal children at the primary level of Balasore district of Odisha, and the samples are fifty-eight families and two primary schools of Mitrapur Panchayat. A simple random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of samples.

9. TOOLS OF THE STUDY:

A self-administered questionnaire tool was used for teachers, and an interview tool was used for dropout students and their parents.

10. PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION :

The present research is a descriptive survey-type study, designed to obtain accurate information related to the present study, and attempt to study dropouts at the elementary level in the context of tribal children. For the completion of the proposed study, the researcher collected data from fifty-eight families and two schools. The researcher proceeded to different schools and families for data collection after due permission and developing rapport with the Headmaster/ Headmistress and Parents.

11. STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES TO BE USED:

The researcher used simple percentages to analyze and interpret the data.



12. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The study was delimited to only fifty-eight families and two schools of Mitrapur Panchayat. The study was further limited to a self-made schedule.

13. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

A School Information Blank was given to the sample schools to collect information on lower primary schools of the sampled block of the district information about class-wise enrolment, school leavers, teachers, and other facilities during the period 2019-2020. This information blank consisted of five main questions. It was given to the Headmaster/Head mistress of two government primary and U.P. schools.

Table 1- Class-Wise Dropout Rate of Both the Schools Among the Scheduled Tribe Children from Class I to V

Class	ST Students Enrolment	ST Students Dropout	ST Students Dropout Rate
I	50	10	20%
II	55	12	21.81%
III	54	16	29.62%
IV	40	10	25%
V	55	10	18%
Total	254	58	22.83%

In two school, there are a total of 254 ST students enrolled across five classes from I to V. However, there have been 58 students who dropped out across these classes. The dropout rates for each class are as follows: In Class I, out of 50 enrolled students, 10 dropped out, resulting in a dropout rate of 20%. In Class II, out of 55 enrolled students, 12 dropped out, leading to a dropout rate of 21.81%. In Class III, out of 54 enrolled students, 16 dropped out, resulting in a dropout rate of 29.62%. In Class IV, out of 40 enrolled students, 10 dropped out, leading to a dropout rate of 25%. In Class V, out of 55 enrolled students, 10 dropped out, resulting in a dropout rate of 18%. Overall, the average dropout rate for all classes combined is approximately 22.83%.

Table 2- Causes for Dropping Out of School Given by Dropout Students

Causes for Dropping Out	No. of Dropout	Percentage
To help in their parental profession	04	6.89%
Doing domestic work	05	8.62%
Taking sibling care	04	6.89%
Lack of interest go to school	05	8.62%
Poverty	08	13.79
Parents inability to provide fees, books, stationary	05	8.62%
Prolonged illness/others members	05	8.62%
Personal illness	04	6.89%
Works at mine area	10	17.24%
Repeated failure	03	5.17 %
Low intelligence	05	8.62 %
Total	58	100%

An analysis of the responses given by dropouts themselves regarding causes for leaving school reveals that some causes are prominent in terms of their frequency and some may be considered minor from the point of view of their frequency. The major causes reported by dropouts for leaving school are working at mine area (17.24%), poverty (13.79%), uncongenial doing domestic work (8.62%), lack of interest go to school (8.62%), parents' inability to pay fees, books,



stationary (8.62%), prolonged illness/ others members (8.62%), low intelligence (8.62%), to help in their parental profession (6.89%), taking sibling care (6.89%), personal illness (6.89%), and repeated failure (5.17%).

Table 3- Causes for Dropping Out of School Given by Parents

Causes	Parents/Guardians	Percentage
To help in their parental profession	04	6.89%
Doing domestic work	05	8.62%
Taking sibling care	04	6.89%
Lack of interest go to school	05	8.62%
Poverty	08	13.79%
Parents inability to provide fees, books, stationary	05	8.62%
Prolonged illness of others members	05	8.62%
Personal illness	04	6.89%
Works at mine area	10	17.24%
Repeated Failure	03	5.17%
Low intelligence	05	8.62%
Total	58	100%

The causes for students dropping out of school, along with their respective percentages, are as follows: Parents or guardians needing their help in their parental profession: 4 cases, accounting for 6.89% of the total. Engaging in domestic work: 5 cases, representing 8.62%. Taking care of younger siblings: 4 cases, also 6.89%. Lack of interest in attending school: 5 cases, making up 8.62%. Facing poverty: 8 cases, comprising 13.79%. Parents' inability to provide fees, books, and stationary: 5 cases, or 8.62%. Coping with prolonged illness of other family members: 5 cases, also 8.62%. Dealing with personal illness: 4 cases, accounting for 6.89%. Working at mine areas: 10 cases, representing 17.24%. Experiencing repeated failure: 3 cases, making up 5.17%. Having low intelligence: 5 cases, representing 8.62%. Overall, these factors collectively contribute to the 58 cases of student dropout, with each reason comprising a percentage relative to the total.

Table 4- Causes of Dropout Given by Teachers

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Doing domestic work	05	8.62%
Taking siblings care	04	6.89%
Lack of interest go to school	04	6.89%
Poverty	06	10.34%
Personal illness	04	6.89%
Repeated failure	05	8.62%
Works at mine area	10	17.24%
Low intelligence	06	10.34%
Parents are not conscious	10	17.24%
To supplement of family income	04	6.89%
Total	58	100%

An analysis of the responses given by dropouts themselves regarding causes for leaving school reveals that some causes are prominent in terms of their frequency, and some may be considered minor from the point of view of their frequency. The major causes reported by dropouts for leaving school are working at mine area (17.24%) and same as parents are not conscious, doing domestic work (8.62%), taking sibling care(6.89%), lack of interest go to school (6.89%), poverty (10.34%), personal illness (6.89%), repeated failure (8.62%), low intelligence (10.34%) and to supplement family income (6.89%).



Table 5- Categorization of The Causes of Dropout

Sl. No.	Causes	Dropout		Teacher		Family	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
01	Socio-Economic						
02	Domestic work	05	8.62%	06	10.34%	05	8.62%
03	Sibling care	04	6.89%	05	8.62%	04	6.89%
04	Parents unconsciousness	05	8.62%	04	6.89%	05	8.62%
05	To supplement of family income	05	8.62%	06	10.34%	05	8.62%
06	Child labour	06	10.34%	06	10.34%	06	10.34%
07	Poverty	08	13.79%	05	8.62%	08	13.79%
08	Family income	03	5.17%	05	8.62%	03	5.17%

14. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

- The total rate of tribal drop-out in the two school was found 22.83%.
- Data on dropouts reveals that 20% children dropout at Class- I, 21.81% at Class- II, 29.62% at Class-III, 25% at Class-IV, and 18% at Class- V.
- Analysis of age of dropout reveals that 17.24% children left school at the age between 5-6, 20.68% at the age between 6-7, 27.58% dropped out in between 7-8 years, and 17.24% left school in between 9-10 years.
- The highest rate of drop-out appeared in Class-III (29.62%), and lowest in Class-V (18%).
- After analysis of all the three schedules, the responses given by the drop-outs, teachers and parents regarding the causes of drop-outs were categorized under socio-economic, academic, and personal causes. There are 12 causes identified as the causes of dropouts. Out of these 12 causes of drop-outs, 7 belong to socio-economic, 3 to academic, and 2 to personal categories.
- The Socio-economic causes got the highest percentage of drop out among tribal students.
- There was complete unanimity among all the three respondents regarding the socio-economic and academic causes. But they are not unanimous regarding the personal causes of drop-outs.
- The first three important causes of drop-out according to the combined results were to supplement family income, poverty and child labour.
- The other causes of drop-out according to the importance or rank given by the three respondents are work at home, irregular attendance, do not like to read or uninterested in reading, illiterate parents, repeated failure, sibling care, low intelligence, lack of interest go to school, lack of supervision and guidance at home, medium of teaching, low intelligence, lack of interest, and illness etc.

15. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY:

- The surveyed schools in the tribal area have impoverished provision of access to schools in terms of basic infrastructural facilities and amenities. Therefore, improving physical infrastructure and basic amenities is to be taken care of on an urgent basis.
- Broader policies and programs have to be put in place to deal with opportunity costs or indirect COSB of households so that parents can afford to send their children to school.



- Causes for children's non-school participation as reported by parents relate to teacher and school-related factors. Hence, school and teacher factors are becoming one of the impeding factors of children's non-school participation. Therefore, innovative and practically viable school improvement programs have to be implemented.
- Awareness programs at the village level to sensitize the community are required as it has been noticed that SDMC members and parents are unaware of several recent developments in the field of educational programs, hence information, education, and communication needs have been identified.
- The educational status of both parents is known to have a positive impact on the many studies substantiate that schooling of children both boys as well as girls has got the linkages with parental education. Therefore, schools in general and teachers in particular should take into account the fact that the majority of the children are first-generation learners.

16. CONCLUSION:

The study aimed to investigate the dropout rates and causes for school dropout among scheduled tribal children in the tribal concentrated areas of Mitrapur Panchayat, Balasore district. The primary focus was to understand these causes from the perspectives of the dropouts themselves, their teachers, and parents. Based on the findings, the researcher draws the following conclusions: There exists a significant dropout problem within the district, with varying dropout rates observed across different blocks within Mitrapur Panchayat. Socio-economic, academic, and personal factors contribute significantly to the dropout phenomenon. Among these factors, socio-economic conditions emerge as the primary contributors to school dropout, while other causes also play a role. These conclusions underscore the multifaceted nature of the dropout issue and highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions addressing socio-economic disparities and other contributing factors to mitigate the dropout rates among scheduled tribal children in the region.

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