

UNDERSTANDING THE DROPOUT PHENOMENON IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KARNATAKA: CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS

Raghu.B.L.,

Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Maharaja's College, University of Mysore,

Karnataka raghu8105@gmail.com

Abstract This paper explores the issue of school dropouts in government primary schools in Karnataka, focusing on the socio-economic, cultural, and systemic factors that contribute to this phenomenon. It also examines the existing interventions by the government and NGOs and provides actionable recommendations to address the problem effectively. The study is based on data analysis, field surveys, and reviews of secondary literature.

Key Words: Primary education, drop-outs, government, poverty

1. Introduction

Education is a critical tool for social and economic development, and primary education lays the foundation for lifelong learning. Despite significant progress in improving enrollment rates in Karnataka's government schools, dropout rates remain a persistent challenge. This paper seeks to analyze the root causes of school dropouts among children in government primary schools in Karnataka and propose strategies to mitigate the issue.

With an emphasis on North Karnataka, an area that continues to be marked by a high degree of socioeconomic backwardness within the state, the current study is an empirical investigation of the realities of school dropouts among Karnataka primary school kids. Even though all students up to the age of 14 are required to receive free primary education, reaching the target of complete retention is still difficult. Numerous scholars have focused on the qualitative and motivational components of school dropout. The purpose of this study is to determine the reasons behind Karnataka primary school dropouts, with an emphasis on North Karnataka, investigate contributing elements, and offer ways to enhance the current educational system for better learning results.

With a focus on the study area, the researcher plans to conduct a comprehensive investigation to identify the precise causes of dropouts and offer workable solutions to lessen this issue in society at large. Despite the fact that several studies have looked at various facets of school dropouts in India, there hasn't been much thorough research that focusses on the dropout problems in North Karnataka.

2. Methodology The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including:

1. Quantitative analysis of enrollment and dropout data from government sources, such as the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE).
2. Qualitative interviews with students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
3. Case studies of schools with high and low dropout rates.
4. Review of existing policies and programs addressing school dropouts.

3. Causes of Dropouts

3.1. Socio-Economic Factors

- **Poverty:** A lot of Karnataka families, both urban and rural, struggle to provide for their basic necessities, which forces kids to leave school to work and support their family.
- **Child Labour:** Many children work in Karnataka's agricultural and unorganised sectors, particularly in areas with low economic status.

3.2. Cultural and Social Factors

- **Gender Disparities:** Traditional gender roles, early marriage, and household duties present extra obstacles for girls.
- **Caste and Social Discrimination:** Children from under-represented groups frequently experience discrimination, which deters them from finishing their education.

3.3. School-Related Factors

- **Infrastructure:** Schools are inhospitable when they lack essential amenities like drinking water, restrooms, and enough classrooms.
- **Teacher Quality and Availability:** Untrained instructors and high student-teacher ratios have an impact on educational quality.

- **Language Barriers:** Lack of linguistic support causes difficulties for kids from non-Kannada-speaking families.

4. Government and Non-Government Interventions

4.1. Government Initiatives

- **Midday Meal Scheme:** Aims to improve attendance and nutritional levels among children.
- **Right to Education (RTE) Act:** Mandates free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14.
- **Scholarship Programs:** Financial support for economically disadvantaged students.

4.2. NGO Contributions Several NGOs in Karnataka focus on addressing dropouts by providing after-school programs, counseling, and community engagement initiatives.

5. Challenges in Addressing Dropouts

- **Implementation Gaps:** Despite well-designed policies, issues in execution limit their impact.
- **Lack of Community Awareness:** Parents and communities are often unaware of the importance of education and the resources available.
- **Data Accuracy:** Inconsistent data collection hampers effective monitoring and planning.

6. Recommendations

6.1. Strengthening School Infrastructure

- Ensure adequate classrooms, toilets, and drinking water facilities.
- Provide digital resources and electricity to schools in rural areas.

6.2. Improving Teacher Training and Recruitment

- Recruit qualified teachers and reduce pupil-teacher ratios.
- Conduct regular training programs to enhance teaching quality.

6.3. Community Engagement and Awareness

- Conduct awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of education.
- Involve local leaders and NGOs in promoting school attendance.

6.4. Financial Support to Families

- Expand conditional cash transfer programs linked to school attendance.
- Provide free uniforms, books, and transportation to reduce the economic burden.

6.5. Addressing Cultural Barriers

- Implement programs to encourage girls' education and delay early marriages.
- Promote inclusive education practices to reduce caste-based discrimination.

7. Conclusion

In order to lower dropout rates in Karnataka's government primary schools, a multifaceted strategy including local communities, NGOs, and government agencies is needed. Karnataka has the ability to guarantee that every child gets the education they are entitled to by tackling systemic, cultural, and socioeconomic obstacles. Building a just and thriving society requires sustained efforts and investments in education.

References

2. Bruneforth M. 2007, Characteristics of children who dropout of school, Background paper for the EFA Global Monitoring Report.
3. Choudhury, Amit (2006), "Revisiting Dropouts: Old Issues, Fresh Perspectives", Economic and Political Weekly, December 16.
4. Chug .S. 2011, Dropout in secondary education; A study of children living in slums of Delhi, National University of Educational Planning and Administration.
5. Government of Karnataka, UDISE Reports(2016).
6. MHRD, Annual Report: 1999- 2000. New Delhi: Government of India(2000 c).
7. MHRD, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan: A people movement for education for All, Draft Guidelines. New Delhi: Government of India. (2000 b).
8. Mitra. A and P. Singh 2008, Trends in literacy rate and schooling among the Scheduled Tribe Women in India. International Journal of Social economics, 35(1/2).99-110.

9. NGO reports on child education in Karnataka (2016).
10. Pandita R 2015 “Enrolment and Dropout percentage among Boys and Girls upto Secondary level in India. A comparative study”. International letters of social and Humanistic sciences.
11. Why. Paper presented at the School Completion in Standards-Based Reform: Facts and Strategies Workshop, National Research Council, Washington, DC (July 17).