

An Investigative Study on School Drop-outs in Tribal Settings A Case of Three selected Tribes in South Karnataka

Manjunatha B.R.¹ and Annapurna M.²

Abstract

The NPE, 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA), 1992, recognized the heterogeneity and diversity of the tribal areas while underlining the importance of instruction through the mother tongue and the need for preparing teaching/ learning materials in the tribal languages. A working group on Elementary and Adult Education for the Xth Five Year Plan (2002-07) emphasized the need to improve the quality of education of tribal children and to ensure equity as well as further improving access. In general, the tribes that remain geographically isolated are able to retain their traditional cultures and religions longer. On the other hand communities that are either nomadic or live in the periphery of civilized life are prone for drastic changes. Karnataka has a sizable population of tribal people. There are 34.64 lakhs tribals distributed in various regions of Karnataka as per 2001 census. Their education level still in pathetic condition. This paper is based on study conducted on three important tribes viz; Soliga, Jenukuruba and Betta Kurubas Tribes of Chamartjangar district of Karnataka state India

Key words: Soliga; Jenukuruba; Betta Kuruba School Dropout; Occupation

Tribal Education

Karnataka has a sizable population of tribal people. There are 34.64 lakhs tribals distributed in various regions of Karnataka as per 2001 census. Raichur and Bellary contain large number of tribal communities. Toda, Beda, Soliga, Hakki-Pikki, Konda Kapu, Koraga, Bhils, Chenchu, gonds, maleru, badaga, hasala, meda, iruliga, jenu kuruba, yarava and siddis are some important tribes of Karnataka. The literacy rate of STs in Karnataka is a

1 Senior Research Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Mysore, Mysore-06.
Email-manjuanthropology@gmail.com

2 Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Mysore, Mysore-06.

cause for concern, as it has nsistently been lower than that of the total population. The literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes, which was 6.0 per cent in 1991, increased to 48.3 per cent in 2001, while the state average moved up from 56.04 to 66.64 per cent. The gap between the literacy rate of the total population and the ST population is very wide, although there has been a marginal decline of about 1.6 percentage points in the last decade. The decennial literacy rate of the ST population has increased at a faster pace (12.3 per cent) than the rate for the total population (10.6 per cent). The literacy rate of urban STs (64.6 per cent) is higher than the overall literacy rate of STs and compares quite favorably with the state average. All of them profess some religious beliefs and practice many rituals. A series of monographs published by Karnataka Sahitya Academy under the stewardship of Baraguru Ramachandrappa provide ample information about these tribes. Tribal religions and rituals are under constant pressure from the major organized religions. Some of this pressure is imposed deliberately and the rest is a consequence of exposure to the forces of modernization. In general, the tribes that remain geographically isolated are able to retain their traditional cultures and religions longer. On the other hand communities that are either nomadic or live in the periphery of civilized life are prone for drastic changes. Most of the tribal beliefs and rituals are highly localized and they are not influenced by the major religions. Attempts to influence them are foiled by changing the very fabric of the legends and stories to suit the tribal world. Consequently one finds tribal versions of Ramayana and Mahabharata scattered all over the country.

Objectives

1. To study about socio economic status of studied tribes
2. To find out reasons for dropouts among tribal students

About the Studied Tribes

This study is mainly conducted on the following tribes of Karnataka state

Soliga Jenukuruba and Betta Kuruba.

The Soligas are an aboriginal forest tribe inhabiting the state of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In Karnataka they are mainly distributed in the interior of the forests skirting the slopes of the Biligirirangan (BR) hills and other hilly part of Chamrajanagar and Mysore districts.

The Jenukurubas are premative tribes of karnataka they are non vegetarians, Ragi and rice are their staple cereals. Collecting hunny, hurbs, roots and fruits are the tridutional ocupation of Jenu Kurbaa tribes. There languvage locally called “Jenunudi” a dialect of Kannada.

The Betta Kuruba an endogamous population in Karnataka, who on the other side of the border in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, are called as Urali Kurman. Their number is roughly not more than 10 to 12 thousand, but enumerated 63,218 persons in Karnataka alone, under the name Kadu Kuruba in the Census of India 1991whereas no separate census is available for this endogamous population in any of the state.

Methodology

Sampling: a Total of 300 families have been selected by using simple random method in Chamarajnager Disitric of Karnataka state. Out of which 198 dropout children (6-18 years) were involved in this study

Tools for collect data:

The study conducted both on quantitative and qualitative method to improve the quality, reliability of the information collected from Survey, Interview and focus group discussion.

Result and Discussion

Table-1 Class wise dropouts of the Students

Level	Tribes			Total
	Soliga	Bettakuruba	Jenukuruba	
Lower primary	8 14.5%	15 24.6%	42 51.2%	65 32.8%
Higher primary	24 43.6%	35 57.4%	30 36.6%	89 44.9%
High school	20 36.4%	10 16.4%	10 12.2%	40 20.2%
PU/College	3 5.5%	1 1.6%	0 .0%	4 2.0%
Total	55 100.0%	61 100.0%	82 100.0%	198 100.0%

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.382	.000
N of Valid Cases		198	

In case of class wise dropouts, majority of 51% Jenukuruba children are being dropouts at primary level. However, 57% Bettakuruba children are being dropouts at higher primary level. Almost 36% Soliga children are being dropouts at High school level. 5% Soliga children are discontinued their Education at P.U level.

Table-2 Parents Education Level of the Drop outs Students

Education Level	Tribes			Total
	Soliga	Bettakuruba	Jenukuruba	
Illiterate	24	20	55	99
	43.6%	32.8%	67.1%	50.0%
Lower primary	21	37	13	71
	38.2%	60.7%	15.9%	35.9%
Higher primary	3	2	6	11
	5.5%	3.3%	7.3%	5.6
High school	4	2	8	14
	7.3%	3.3%	9.8%	7.1%
PU/College	1	0	0	1
	1.8%	.0%	.0%	.5%
Degree	2	0	0	2
	3.6%	.0%	.0%	1.0%
Total	55	61	82	198
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	.473	.000
N of Valid Cases	198	

In case of parents education level 43% Soliga parents are illiterate. Among Bettakuruba, 32% of studied parents of illiterate and in Jenukuruba it rises up to 67%. It shows illiteracy is most common among Jenukuruba a primitive Tribe in Karnataka .Next, 38% of Soliga parents have studied up to lower primary, 60% of Bettakuruba and 15% of Jenukuruba parents have studied up to the lower primary. More than 5% of Soliga, 3% Bettakuruba, and 7% Jenukuruba parents have studied up to the higher primary. 7% Soliga, 3% Bettakuruba and 9% Jenukuruba parents have studied up to the high school only. 3% have studied up to graduation level.

Table -3 Parents occupation of the Drop outs Students

Occupation	tribe			Total
	Soliga	Bettakuruba	Jenukuruba	
Daily wage	20	36	67	123
	36.3%	59.0%	81.7%	62.2%
Agriculture	29	21	2	52
	52.7%	34.4%	2.4%	26.3%
Minor product	0	0	7	7
	.0%	.0%	8.5%	3.5%
Govt. Jobs	3	4	6	13
	5.5%	6.6%	7.3%	6.6%
Unemployed	3	0	0	3
	5.5%	.0%	.0%	1.5%
Total	55	61	82	198
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	.511	.000
N of Valid Cases	196	

In case of parents occupation majority of Jenukuruba are working for daily wages. 52% Soliga parents are dependent on Agriculture. 8% Jenukuruba families are dependent on minor forest products. 5% Soliga, 6% Bettakuruba and 7% Jenukuruba are having govt Jobs. It is found that unemployment of most common of Soliga.

Table-4 Reasons for Dropouts of the Studied Tribal Students

	Soliga	Bettakuruba	Jenukuruba	Total
Poverty	11	10	8	29
	(20.0%)	(16.4%)	(9.8%)	(14.69%)
Disinterest and illiteracy of parents	7	8	16	31
	(12.8%)	(13.1%)	(19.5%)	(15.7%)
Not interested students	3	1	10	14
	(5.5%)	(1.6%)	(12.2%)	(7.0%)
Economic activities	6	8	8	22
	(10.9%)	(13.1%)	(9.8%)	(11.1%)
Household work	4	6	2	12
	(7.2%)	(9.8%)	(2.4%)	(6.0%)
Learning disability	3	8	12	23
	(5.5%)	(13.1%)	(14.6%)	(11.6%)
Illness	2	3	6	11
	(3.6%)	(4.9%)	(7.3%)	(5.6%)
Lack of Transport	8	4	5	17
	(14.6%)	(6.6%)	(6.0%)	(8.6%)
Migration of parents	4	4	7	15
	(7.2%)	(6.6%)	(8.5%)	(7.6%)
Socio-cultural factor	4	2	2	8
	(7.2%)	(3.3%)	(2.4%)	(4.0%)
other	3	7	6	16
	(5.5%)	(11.5%)	(7.3%)	(8.0%)
Total	55	61	82	198
	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)

In case of Reasons for dropouts, 20% Soliga, 16% Bettakuruba and 9% Jenukuruba students are being dropouts because of poverty. 12% Soliga, 13% Bettakuruba and 19% Jenukuruba students have left the school in between because of disinterest among the parents. 5% Soliga, 1% Bettakuruba, 12% Jenukuruba students are being dropouts because of not interested in the study. 10% Soliga, 13% Bettakuruba and 9% Jenukuruba students have left the school. Because of shortage of the income at their respective families. Learning disability is also a causing factor for being dropouts in all studied Tribal children. Health issue is also a common factor for being dropouts. Transportation problem also become one of the factors for being dropouts. Migration is most common among the Tribes. It is also affecting on children. 7% Soliga children are being dropout because of various Socio – cultural reasons.

Conclusion

Tribal education is not altogether a different kind of education. It is education to suit the special needs and aspirations of tribal groups who are in different stages of development. Tribal identity is not a matter of shame. It is true that many groups who are completely acculturated wear it as a badge of privilege. But there is no reason to expect or demand that the tribal should either wholly retain or lose all of his culture. If the educated go through a basically western education but retain something which can be recognized as Indian, there is no reason why the tribal, no matter how highly educated he becomes, could not retain something of the tribal heritage. The education system offers little by way of tribal culture in the school curriculum. It has not recognized diversity as a basis of educational planning for the tribal and evolved any strategy which will ensure a smooth transition from the home language to the school language by the end of the primary school. The plea here is for ameliorative planning which will make education relevant to the life of the tribal and help him take advantage of the mainstream education as equal without a sense of deficiency and social oppression.

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