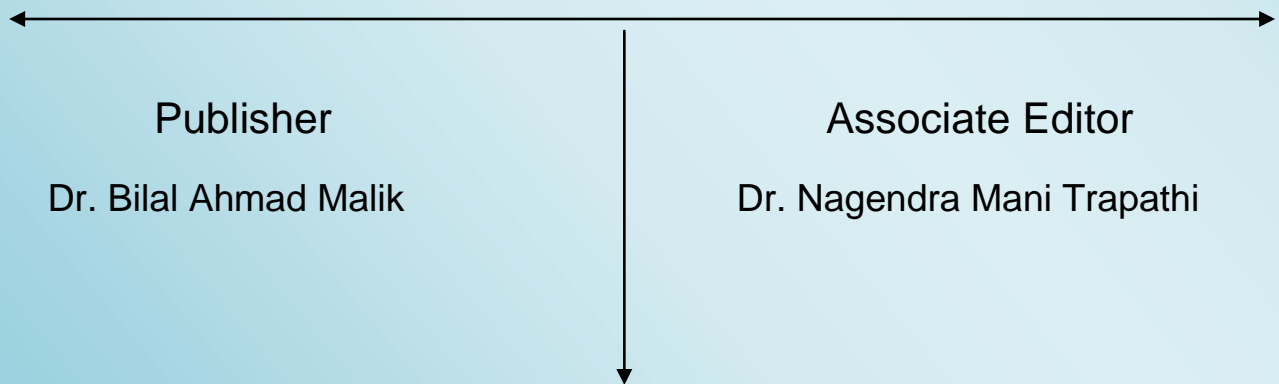


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**ISSN NO: 2454 - 9827**

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## SCHOOL DROP-OUTS RATES IN PRIMARY AND HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KARNATAKA: A STUDY OF KOPPAL DISTRICT

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Dropout is a universal phenomenon of education system in India, spread over all levels of education, in all parts of the country and across all the socio-economic groups of population. The dropout rates are much higher for educationally backward states and districts. Girls in India tend to have higher dropout rates than boys. Similarly, children belonging to the socially disadvantaged groups like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have the higher dropout rates in comparison to general population. There are also regional and location wise differences and the children living in remote areas/urban slums are more likely to drop out of school. Failure to complete high school not only produces negative outcome for the individuals, but also widens the existing social and economic inequalities. In order to reduce wastage and improve the efficiency of education system, the educational planners need to understand and identify the social groups that are more susceptible to dropout and the reasons for their dropping out. Keeping the above context in perspective, the present paper tries to examine the factors that contribute to dropping out by children at the School level. The findings reveal that both the family and school related factors were responsible and appeared to be highly correlated with each other. It was also found that adolescents dropout not merely due to poverty and financial constraints but also because the schools did not respond appropriately to their special educational needs forcing them to dropout. The paper proposes that the State needs to adopt a holistic approach to dropout issue and not treat it as merely a discrete problem that can be tackled without reference to the broader socio economic setting and poor delivery of education in which it is rooted. Preventive and restorative approaches, briefly discussed in the paper, are needed to tackle the issue of dropout for children living in study areas.*

**Keywords:** Schools, Children, Education, Family, Indian Education system.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Elementary school education generally gives students the confidence that they can improve their lives. It also has the potential to make them aware of the difficulties and obstacles that may hinder their paths. Apart from

that education has long been identified as one of the most important determinant of economic growth. It is considered to be both an indicator and instrument of economic development. Education increases labour productivity and thereby helps a nation to have a strong economic growth. It is an instrument in rising earning and reducing poverty. The Kothari Commission (1964) has beautifully said “The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms. This we believe is no mere rhetoric. In a world based on science and technology it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of people. On the quality and number of persons coming out of our schools will depend on our success in the great enterprise of national construction whose principal objective is to raise the standard of living of our people”. In terms of social returns, schooling helps to improve perception, attitudes and behavior which generates awareness and builds personality in such a way as to promote the development and welfare of a country and its people. However, India’s progress in providing access to education to its children and youth is remarkable for the last decade especially after Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Enrolment of the child in school is to be followed by retention so that child can get to learn something. Even though many of the Government programmes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, KGBV, Mid Day Meal, Distribution of Bicycles for girls and boys children etc; have played a significant role to bring the children into school but still a major portion of the enrolled children are found to be leaving the school before they complete their primary schooling and Some those haven’t ready to go school due to various socio-economic reasons.

While the rest of the world frets about the economic effects of an increasingly aging population, India is increasingly growing young. By 2050, it is estimated that the present billion populations will hit 1.57 billion. According to India’s Census, 40% of the populace is below the age of 18. By 2015, 55% will be under 20. The bad news is that India could easily squander its demographic edge. Despite the success of a few world class businesses, medical and engineering schools, India’s education system is in dismal state. India spends just 3.5% of its gross domestic product on education, way below China’s 8%. Of its one million schools, most are state-run and sub-standard. It is alleged that the teachers just sit around talking and children learn nothing. While 96% of India’s children enroll in primary schools, by the age of 10 about 40% have dropped out. Out of the 20 crore children between 6 and 14 years, three crore do not go to school while another 8.5 crore are dropouts who discontinued their education (Census of India 2001).

Schooling has been made compulsory for all children under fourteen. The government spending on education is being raised to six per cent of the GDP. Incentives are being given to schools with best student and teacher attendance. The Government sponsored Sarva Sikhana Abhiyan (Universal Elementary Education),

focuses on increasing enrollment rates and reducing drop-out rates. There is widespread prevalence of poor quality of education at the primary and secondary levels across the country. Even though children are promoted to the next grades based on sheer attendance, they are unable to comprehend material taught to them three grades below. The good news is that there are more kids going to school than ever before! The annual 2006 child census figures show that out-of-school children in the 7-14 age group in the state of Karnataka has dropped from 1.05 lakh in 2005 to 75,825 this year. With the introduction of several incentive schemes, the drop-out number has shrunk from 59,002 in 2005 to 50,569 this year.

In the 'never enrolled' category, the figures are down from 46,035 to 25,166. One of the main reasons for children dropping out of school is migration. Within Karnataka, the highest number of drop-outs are in Gulbarga (57.15%), followed by Belgaum (20.73%), Bangalore (14.41%) and Mysore (7.71%). According to the census, 60% of the out-of-school children are in 10 districts-Yadgir, Gulbarga, Bellary, Raichur, Bijapur, Koppal, Bidar, Bagalkot, Bangalore South and Uttara Kannada. Yadgir has the highest number of out-of-school children (13,258), ahead of Gulbarga (8,733) and Raichur (7,560) respectively. The Government insists on schools maintaining registers of out-of-school children and monitoring their status through School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMCs) and Gram Sabhas. Figures show that there are more girls, who have remained out of school than the boys. Of the 75,825 children, 39,084 are girls and 36,741 in the 7-14 year category (Kanhere 1987).

Out of school (Arun 2000; Anupreet 1999). Many of them are those who do not get enrolled at all. Some of them are those who drop out at one stage or other. The reasons for dropping out may be many like, failure in academics, non-availability of schools, inaccessibility of schools, pushing out due to teachers' behaviour/school environment, financial problems etc. (Roderick 1993; Kronick and Hargen 1998; Khokhar et al. 2005; Bhanpuri and Ginger 2006).

Pratinidhi et al. (1992) identified 172 school drop-outs from 16 schools in an epidemiological survey covering rural Maharashtra. A home visit was paid and information about socio-economic and cultural aspects was collected and a psychological screening was undertaken. Although there was no significant difference in overall drop-out rates for both sexes, it increased sharply at 11 years of age in girls. The majority of children dropped out due to financial problems or unsatisfactory scholastic performance.

As per Selected Educational Statistics, 2000-2001, given by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, the dropout rate for classes I to VIII is 54% and for classes

I to X it is 69%. In this way, only 31% children appear for class X public examination. Of these children, only 40% pass this examination. It is visualized that some of the students who drop out from their studies at different stages may be talented and their talent needs to be explored. Going by these observations, it was deemed appropriate and necessary to undertake an in depth exploratory survey on the phenomenon of school drop-outs in rural areas. Subjective reports of the teachers, parents and drop-outs themselves constitute an important dimension to the problem of school drop outs than mere governmental reflections and attributions about the same.

**Table 1**  
**Dropout Rates of All Categories of Students in Classes I-VIII Karnataka**

<b>Year/Boys/Girls</b>	<b>Karnataka</b>	<b>India</b>
<b>2001-02</b>		
Boys	50.80	52.91
Girls	51.20	56.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.99</b>	<b>54.65</b>
<b>2002-03</b>		
Boys	47.46	52.28
Girls	49.61	53.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>48.46</b>	<b>52.79</b>
<b>2003-04</b>		
Boys	50.29	51.74
Girls	50.94	52.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.59</b>	<b>52.22</b>
<b>2004-05*</b>		
Boys	49.81	50.10
Girls	50.21	50.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.99</b>	<b>50.39</b>
<b>2005-06</b>		
Boys	44.34	48.67
Girls	45.37	48.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>44.83</b>	<b>48.80</b>
<b>2006-07</b>		
Boys	38.75	46.58
Girls	38.83	45.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.79</b>	<b>46.03</b>

<b>2010-11</b>		
Boys	14.65	34.50
Girls	15.00	33.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.85</b>	<b>33.80</b>

**Note:** \*: As on 30th September, 2004.

**Note:** As on 30th September, 2010.

**Source:** Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. (ON300)

The above table reflects the dropout rates class I-VIII in Karnataka and India.

### CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY & THE EFFORTS:

Article 45 of the constitution proposes to provide free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14. By ratifying the UN Convention of other Rights of Children (CRC) in 1992, the government of India also committed to create an appropriate environment for survival, protection and development of children. The 83<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment bill, 1997 seeks to provide free education for all children up to the age of 14 years as a Fundamental Right. National Policy on Education (NPE) 1992 redefined the educational priorities and made an attempt to address the issue of access, quality and equity in educational processes. Program of Action (POA) 1992 has emphasized that enrollment by itself is of no importance if child does not continue education. Hence, retention of a child in the school till elementary education is completed assumes importance.

The recent Education Bill proposed in the Parliament intends to raise the issue of covering all the eligible children through compulsory education. Inspire of many schemes and programs, the goal of universalization of elementary education is still elusive and yet to be achieved. The target of 100 percent literacy in the country is far away, as there are dropout children from the schools. Of those who have been enrolled through special enrollment drives, a countable number of children are unable to continue education due to various reasons. Continuous absenteeism and the dropout are certain pertinent issues to be addressed before providing quality education. Thus, dropout of children is a matter of concern.

### NATURE OF DROPOUT:

Dropout is influenced by a series of independent factors (variables), namely school environment, socio-economic and socio-psychological factors, prevalence of child labour, age of the child, negative attitude of parents towards education and need to earn livelihood at an early stage of life among certain sections of children.

Coupled with the above, family migrations, changes in residence are also responsible for dropout. Among the measures to reduce the rate of dropout and wastage, non promotion of children, repetition of admission (double admission), migration and change of residence are important.

Adopted Definition of dropout (Conceptual understanding for the study) Under normal circumstances, dropout indicates continuous absenteeism of a child to school. But the duration of absenteeism varies according to the adopted frame of time. For the present study, it is understood and considered that any child who is absent to class continuously for one calendar month (30 days) for any reason is a dropout. However, the reasons like child health, parental or child disinterest to attend the school for a period of more than 30 days is required to be verified by the local teachers and corrective measures are to be initiated to make the child attend the school regularly. Presuming that the teachers initiate such action to address dropout and by providing allowance to various other factors like migration, change of residence and issuance of TC by the teachers, any absenteeism is considered voluntary and requires to be addressed.

There are number of ways through which retention and dropout are measured. Hundred minus retention rate is termed as gross dropout rate which includes repeaters. Separating the repeaters (Failures and those taken TC, assuming that those who have taken are within the system) total dropout is arrived at. Total dropout has two parts (i) Manageable Dropout and (ii) Net Dropout. The former is being addressed by the department through certain alternative education programs including tent schools. Whereas net dropout is voluntary and requires measures to sensitize and mobilize the community. Enrollment, attendance marked by the teachers and actual attendance of children in a class are important and provide some basis to estimate the level of absenteeism of students in a school. If enrollment in a class during a specified year is 'X', reduction in number of children would have occurred due to transition. The following factors are largely responsible:

#### **Factors responsible for dropout:**

- 1) When a child does not attend the school regularly and fail in a class at primary level because of lack of required attendance in an academic year.
  - i) Within the above, the child would have been absent for the school as a result of health problems, temporary migration of family to other place or change of residence.
  - ii) When a child is entangled with subsidiary or family occupations, continuous absenteeism to school may also occur.



- 2) When a child takes Transfer Certificate and joins other school, it is presumed that the child is within the system, left the present school and joined the other school.
- 3) When a child is absent to school due death.
- 4) Besides the above reasons, any dropout to school by the child is considered voluntary and is described in the analysis as Net dropout, because dropout due to the above factors can be addressed in one way or the other by designing a specific program of action.

Absenteeism by children from schools, especially in a class is characterized by Non retention which includes Dropout also. Retention of children is as important as enrollment, as it indicates school effectiveness. But all the children in a class may not be promoted to subsequent higher class due to failure and lack of attendance, if it is at the primary level. The listed reasons above include both Internal as well as External factors to the system. Retention can be ensured by managing the internal factors and can be controlled by initiating action within the system. Dropout consists of internal as well as external factors.

#### **General Effects of dropout:**

Dropout of children from learning activities is a tremendous waste of child potential as it involves economic and social implications for future human power development. Dropout from the school has the following effects:

- a) Wastage of financial resources and child power
- b) Thereby it affects socio-economic development of the nation
- c) Child labor may get bred up without formal education to children.
- d) Provision of quality education will be elusive.
- e) Equity issues cannot be addressed
- f) Socio-economic discriminatory process may mop up.
- g) Perpetual dropout makes it difficult to reach 100% literacy (national goal).

#### **Need for assessment:**

The school administration reports the figures of attendance, enrollment and retention to the BEO usually by the end of June and July every year after obtaining the figures from school records, annual census and through special drives. It is observed that there are variations between the reported figures and those actually exist at the

school level. Hence, the enquiry is necessitated to organize it meticulously to draw certain inferences by selecting all the schools in a cluster and validate the data.

To achieve the goal of universal primary education, getting children into school is a vital first step. They must continue to attend classes till completion of primary level. Barriers preventing some children from going to school cannot be dealt with by education sector alone. Policy response need to address these overlapping barriers and must be cross-sectorial to be effective. Recognizing factors that are indicators of potential school dropout and reacting to them may prevent students from leaving school prematurely hence this study was undertaken to find out the reasons for school drop outs from students and teachers.

## **MATERIAL AND METHOD**

The present cross-sectional study is assessed to know the reasons for school dropouts in Koppal district. A pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect information on socio demographic variables and to evaluate the reasons for school dropout. A total of 404 children were approached, out of which, 169 children had migrated. Hence, the sample size was 100. A pre designed & pre tested proforma was used to interview all teachers & students to know socio demographic variables & to evaluate the reasons for school dropout. Those students who dropped out of school from 1st to 8<sup>th</sup> standard were included in the study. The data was collected and analyzed using Excel software and results were expressed in percentages.

The study was carried out on a sample of 100 children (including boys and girls) identified and designated as school drop-outs. School drop-outs as defined in this study referred to those 'subjects who had not attended the school continuously during the past one year or more'. The sample was collected by covering schools in the rural areas of the notified and so-called backward district of Koppal district in Karnataka. The children were in age group between 5-14 years. They were drop-outs in the grades between 1 and 10 respectively.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

There are lot educational programme running in India. Still some children do not complete their school years due to some casual factors. There are some casual factors that's responsible for school dropouts. Investigator divided all factors in four section namely personal factors, family factors, school factors and socio-economic factors. Personal factors included self ill heath, not interested in study, physical inability, retired minded etc. Family factor plays an important role in female school dropouts especially. Its features involvements

in domestic chores, sickness in the family, looks after for siblings, parents' disinterest in girls' education etc. School also a significant factor for school dropouts. Its features lack of facilities, teacher didn't teach properly, fears of teacher, long distance of school etc. Socio-economic factors are also playing a very important role in school dropouts especially in male dropouts. Its features lack of money, death of father, early marriage, negative attitude of society etc.

### **Analysis of Content of Responses**

For the ease of understanding, the analysis of content of responses or reported reasons for school drop-out was classified into four domains of attributed reasons: (i) Child-Centered; (ii) Parent-Centered; (iii) Teacher-Centered; and, (iv) Environment-Centered. The findings are analyzed and discussed separately for the different sets of respondents under the following headings:

- i. **Teacher Centric:** Among the various teacher-centered reasons for school drop-out elicited in this study are: neglect, poor or lack of interest in teachers, fear of teachers, misbehavior by teachers, irregular classes, poor teaching, overly strict discipline, discrimination, cruelty or punishment meted out by teachers, absence of teachers or female teachers in school, etc.
- ii. **Parent Centric:** In relation to parent centered reasons for school drop-out obtained in this study are: poor interest or neglect by parents, taking on parenting jobs and responsibilities, being left to the care of relatives or grandparents, over freedom and affection of parents, denial of school for female children, gambling, alcoholism and other vices in father, death of a parent, parent discord, illiteracy among parents, apprehension on insults to family dignity, parental force or coercion of their interests etc
- iii. **Child Centric:** With regard to child-centered reasons for school drops-outs derived in the study, include transient or prolonged illness, accidents, disabilities or handicaps in the child, early menarche or marriage of the child, age of child, disinterest in studies, distraction in play or games, inferiority feelings, problem behaviors in child, poor academic performance or achievements, preference to go for work and earn money, fear of punishment by teacher, love affairs, perception that there are no job opportunities after studying, pride and ego in children, etc.
- iv. **Environment Centric:** The environment centered reasons for school drop-outs got from this study include caste factors, poverty in family, tradition, change of schools or medium of instruction, influence by television or mass media, drought or famine in the village, tribal life, frequent shifts or migration of

family, poor or non-enriched school or home environment, distance between home to school, poor school maintenance, absence of toilets at school, intimidating system of examination, etc.

**Table 2**  
**Causal factors of male school dropouts**

Factors	Numbers of Responses	Percentage
Personal	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>
Family	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
School	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
Socio-Economic	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>
Total	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Study

Table-1 reveals the different casual factors for male school dropouts. Out of 100 responses majority of dropouts 38 % were given the socio-economic factors to leave school followed by 35% dropouts' personal and minimum 10% dropouts were given the school responsible leaving school. Socio-Economic factors are more important than any other factors. Sharma et al also reported the poverty is one of major reasons of school dropouts. Shivali R et al (2010) also reported the lack of financial resources is also an important reason for school dropouts. Children leave school in middle due to lack of money. Their parents send their son for earning in place of school. Mostly male children go to jobs for adding some supplementary income in family income.

**Table-3**  
**Causal factors of female school dropouts**

Factors	Numbers of Responses	Percentage
Personal	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
Family	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>
School	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
Socio-Economic	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>
Total	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Study

Table-2 depicts the different casual factors for female school dropouts. Out of 100 responses majority of dropouts 37% were given the family factors to leave school followed by 36% dropouts' socio-economic and minimum 10% dropouts were given the school factors responsible leaving school. It revealed the family factors play a very important role in life of female school dropouts. In Indian society a girls' role in family is often primarily linked to household, expenditure on her formal educating thus is seen as a waste of resources. It also a cause of

becoming dropout. Govindaraju R. and Venkatesan S. (2010) also revealed that family reasons as parenting jobs and responsibilities and taking care of siblings or relatives are responsible for girl's dropout in their study.

### **SUGGESTIONS:**

The following suggestions are being made for improving attendance rate of children:

1. The children should be trained in some handicraft or practical skills.
2. The teacher appointed to teach children should be given special allowances and residential facilities.
3. Children in schools for should be given food, clothing, books and stationeries free.
4. Teachers appointed for children should be trained in training colleges established in their area in order that during the training period they may get acquainted with the life style of the scheduled and tribal people.
5. Teachers appointed to teach the children should be fully conversant with their culture.
6. Primary education for children should be given through their mother-tongue. Suitable books should be published for this purpose in mother-tongue.
7. Facilities in school and school environment should be improved to make schools more attractive for the children. It should be ensured that there is no teacher shortage in schools and classrooms are not over-crowded.
8. The quality of education in schools should improve so that parents feel that the child is learning something worthwhile in school and they no longer remain indifferent about the child's education and unconcerned about whether he/she attends school regularly or not.
9. Teachers in school should be more children friendly and classrooms should be attractive so that children feel enthusiastic about going to school instead of being reluctant or unwilling.
10. The VECs and community members should assume greater responsibility for ensuring regularity of children is going to school. If children are found to be missing classes, the matter should be brought to the notice of parents and teachers who should take necessary corrective action.
11. To reduce the absence rate because of illness or poor health, regular health checkup of students should be carried out and arrangements should be made to enhance medical facilities for school going children.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Education is the important device in development to cultural values and growth of a child in preparing him to responsible, intelligent strong and healthy citizen. Despite professed equality of opportunity to all citizens, still

school dropout is present. The present paper revealed the some factors of school dropouts namely personal, family, school and socioeconomic. A Socio-Economic factor plays a significant role for both male and female school dropout. Due to lack of financial resources parents have to send their child for jobs at time of school. Negative attitude of society is also a cause of school dropouts. Family factors also play very important role in school dropouts with female school dropouts especially. Majority of female school dropout left school due to household activities, child care etc. To reduce the numbers of school dropouts, some changes must make in existing situation. The parents should be made aware of the importance of education so that they develop a desire to educate their children. Some special programmes should introduce for Indian rural society. This is a high time for everyone to come forward and take a step for reduces school dropouts. Though the study is conducted at micro level, the analysis provides useful policy insights in terms of broader educational policies aimed at improving educational equity and quality with the adoption of appropriate intervention for focused groups at the local level.

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