REVIEW ARTICLE

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE CAUSES OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS AMONG LAMBANI STUDENTS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL IN VIJAYAPUR DISTRICT, KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

The Lambani community, one of India's largest traditional, nomadic, and de-notified tribes, is known by various names such as Bhanjara, Lamani, Sugalis, Lambada, Gypsies, and Gourmatti. Historically identified as a nomadic tribe, migration has been a primary means of livelihood for the Lambanis. Vijayapur District in Karnataka hosts the highest population of Lambanis in the state. This study aims to investigate the causes of school dropouts among Lambani students at the primary level, a critical issue that continues to challenge both advanced and developing nations. The dropout phenomenon affects societal prosperity and advancement, as uneducated and low-qualified personnel can significantly impede state functionality and development. The research seeks to assess the various factors contributing to dropouts among Lambani students, including ineffective curricula, stringent school discipline, inadequate physical and educational facilities, lack of parental support, poor socioeconomic conditions, domestic issues, parental illiteracy, unfavorable school environments, poor attendance, student behavior issues, lack of motivation, teacher discrimination, and frequent teacher absenteeism. The study highlights that dropout rates increase as students progress to higher grades, with primary-level dropout rates at 0.38% in Vijayapura's government schools, escalating to 23.68% at the upper primary level and 43.3% at the secondary level. Notably, girls have slightly higher dropout rates than boys, especially at the secondary level, where dropout rates are 43.9% for girls and 42.67% for boys. This study underscores the urgency of addressing the dropout issue among Lambani pupils in Vijayapur District, with the aim of developing effective interventions to improve retention rates and support the educational advancement of this marginalized community.

INTRODUCTION

The present study is an empirical inquiry into the realities of school dropouts among the Lambani community in North Karnataka, with a specific focus on Vijayapur District, a region still characterized by significant socio-economic backwardness within the state. Despite primary education being made free and compulsory for all children up to the age of 14 years, achieving the goal of full retention remains a challenge. Motivational issues and qualitative aspects of school dropout have attracted the attention of many researchers. This study aims to identify the causes of dropout among Lambani students and explore responsible factors, while also proposing solutions to improve the existing educational system for more effective learning outcomes. The researcher intends to undertake a thorough investigation to uncover the specific causes of dropouts and suggest actionable strategies to reduce this problem in the broader society, with particular emphasis on the study area. Although numerous studies have examined different aspects of school dropouts in India, there has been a lack of comprehensive research specifically addressing the dropout issues among Lambani students in North Karnataka. This gap has motivated the researcher to conduct the present study, which aims to provide a detailed and empirical investigation into the dropout problem faced by Lambani students in Vijayapur District.

Significance and Relevance of the Study

Addressing Critical Issues in Developing Countries: This study is particularly significant for developing countries and emerging economies where dropout rates among primary school children, including Lambani pupils, remain critical issues. Understanding these challenges is crucial for implementing effective educational policies that target marginalized communities.

Resource for Future Research and Policy Development: The study serves as a reservoir for further research and holds tremendous scope, with implications for researchers, policymakers, educationists, teachers, and government bodies. Insights gained from this study can inform the design of targeted interventions and policies aimed at reducing dropout rates among Lambani children.

Exploring Differential Pathways and Social Backgrounds: The study attempts to trace the differential pathways leading to dropouts and examines the social backgrounds of Lambani pupils, including factors such as age, gender, and occupation. By doing so, it aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the various causes of dropout among Lambani pupils in the Vijayapur District.

Pioneering Research in the Region: This study is one of the first to explore the specific causes of dropouts among Lambani pupils in the Vijayapur District. Its findings will contribute to the body of knowledge on educational challenges faced by the Lambani community, offering valuable insights for developing tailored solutions that address the unique needs of these students.

METHODOLOGY

The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data collection through surveys of Lambani families,

teachers, and school records, with qualitative insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions with parents, teachers, and students. The sample will include primary schools within the Vijayapur District that have a significant enrollment of Lambani children

Tools used for the study

As per the need of the study following tools are prepared and used for the purpose of data collection. They are as follows:

1) Interview Schedule for dropouts

Population and sample

Population: Different technique has been used in several studies of Education and development among the causes of dropout of Lambani pupils at primary school and population is the key factor for any kind of geographical study and other study too. Man is responsible for emerging issues and problems of their own difficulties. These difficulties are created by man himself. The population of the present study includes only Lambani pupils of Vijayapur District. As per Demographic Indicators the total number of Tanda in Karnataka is 2757 and Vijayapur district has 281 with total population of 4,05,00 as 7% literacy rate.

Sample: It is impossible and impracticable to study the whole population to arrive at generalization. For the present study the investigator has selected 200 Students, 100 Households of the Lambani pupils Community and 50 Teachers of primary school .So our sample size is350.

Analysis and Interpretations

The data analysis and the interpretation, are obtained by the Questionnaire. It is the analysis done by the techniques of tabulation and counting, which are converted into percentage.

Student's viewpoint for Dropouts

Table 01. Age of Leaving at the School

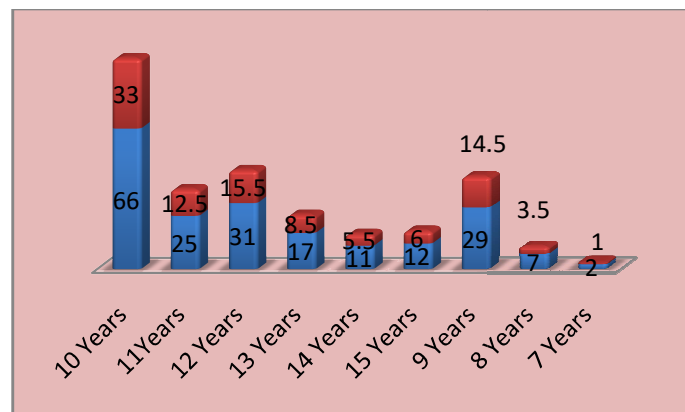| Sl.No.	Age of Leaving the School	Frequency	Percent
1.	10 Years	66	33.0
2.	11Years	25	12.5
3.	12 Years	31	15.5
4.	13 Years	17	8.5
5.	14 Years	11	5.5
6.	15 Years	12	6.0
7.	9 Years	29	14.5
8.	8 Years	7	3.5
9.	7 Years	2	1.0
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No.1 and the graph illustrates the ages at which respondents left school, revealing a concerning trend of early dropouts. The highest

proportion of respondents, 33%, left school at age 10, making it the most common age for leaving. Other ages include 11 years (12.5%), 12 years (15.5%), 13 years (8.5%), 14 years (5.5%), and 15 years (6%). Additionally, 14.5% left school at age 9, 3.5% at age 8, and only 1% at age 7. This pattern suggests that many students leave school before completing even the most basic levels of education, likely due to socio-economic factors, lack of access to education, or other personal and systemic challenges.

Table 02. Class of Dropped out

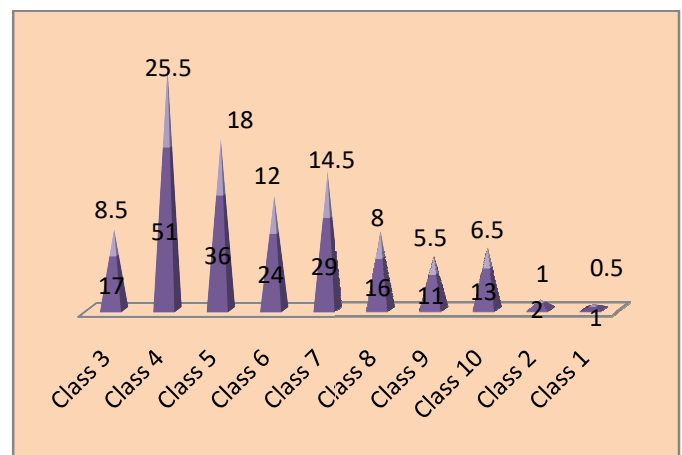| Sl.No.	Class of Dropped Out	Frequency	Percent
1.	Class 3	17	8.5
2.	Class 4	51	25.5
3.	Class 5	36	18.0
4.	Class 6	24	12.0
5.	Class 7	29	14.5
6.	Class 8	16	8.0
7.	Class 9	11	5.5
8.	Class 10	13	6.5
9.	Class 2	2	1.0
10	Class 1	1	.5
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No.2 and the graph illustrate the class levels at which respondents dropped out of school. The highest dropout rate occurred in Class 4, with 25.5% of respondents leaving at this stage. Other notable dropout points include Class 5 (18%), Class 7 (14.5%), and Class 6 (12%). Lower percentages were seen in Classes 3 (8.5%), 8 (8%), 9 (5.5%), and 10 (6.5%), while the earliest dropouts occurred in Classes 2 (1%) and 1 (0.5%). The data indicates a peak in dropout rates during the middle primary years, particularly at Class 4, suggesting that targeted interventions are needed at this critical point to retain students and support their continued education.

Table 03. Medium of Instruction

Sl.No.	Medium of Instruction	Frequency	Percent
1.	Kannada	200	100.0
2.	English	0	0.0
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No. 3 shows that 100% of the respondents indicated that the medium of instruction in their school is Kannada.

Table 04. Mother Tongue

Sl.No.	Mother Tongue	Frequency	Percent
1.	Kannada	0	0.0
2.	Hindu Lambani	200	100.0
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No. 4 shows that 100% of the respondents identified Hindu Lambani as their mother tongue.

Table 05. Regularly going the School

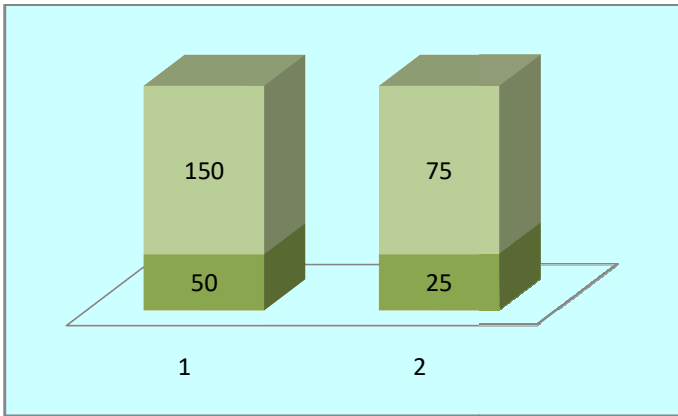| Sl.No.	Regular School	Frequency	Percent
1.	Yes	50	25.0
2.	No	150	75.0
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No.5 and the graph illustrate the percentage of respondents who attend school regularly versus those who do not. According to the data, 25% of respondents attend school regularly, while 75% do not.

Table 6. If no, Give Reason

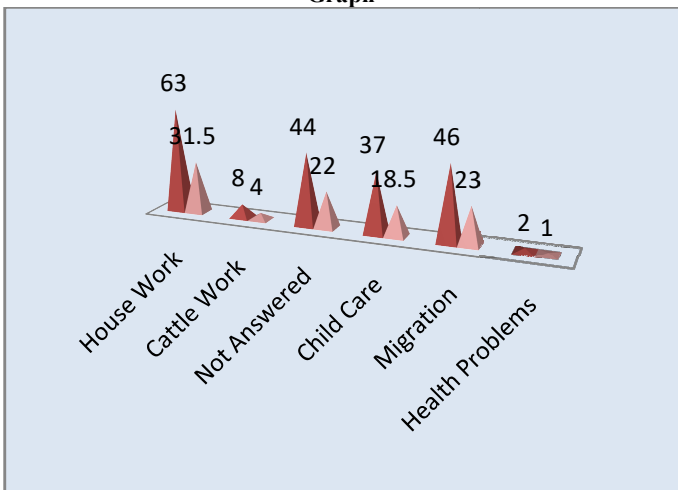| Sl.No.	If No	Frequency	Percent
1.	House Work	63	31.5
2.	Cattle Work	8	4.0
3.	Not Answered	44	22.0
4.	Child Care	37	18.5
5.	Migration	46	23.0
6.	Health Problems	2	1.0
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Graph

Table No.6 and the graph data reveal several reasons for irregular school attendance among respondents. The majority, 31.5%, reported that house work was the main cause of their inconsistent school attendance. Another significant factor was migration, affecting 23% of respondents. Additionally, 18.5% of respondents noted that child care responsibilities at home contributed to their irregular attendance. Cattle care, both at home and outside, was cited by 4% of the respondents as a reason for their irregularity. Health problems were a concern for just 1% of respondents. Notably, 22% of respondents did not provide an answer to this question.

Table 7 Duties in Home

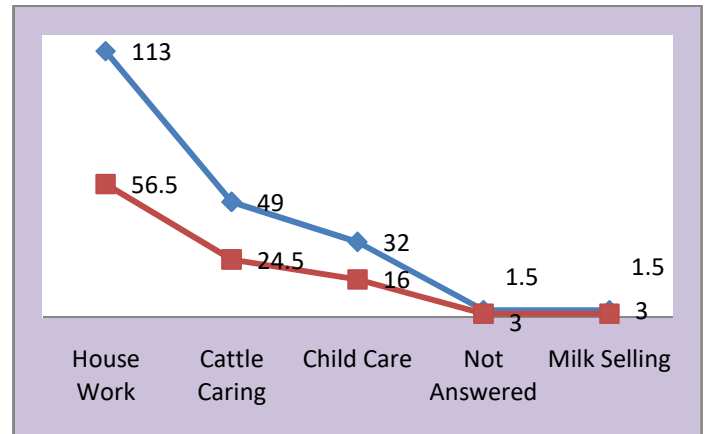| Sl.No.	Duties in Home	Frequency	Percent
1.	House Work	113	56.5
2.	Cattle Caring	49	24.5
3.	Child Care	32	16.0
4.	Not Answered	3	1.5
5.	Milk Selling	3	1.5
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No.7 and the graph data shows the details of respondents' duties at home. The data shows that a majority, 56.5%, of the respondents are primarily responsible for housework. Additionally, 24.5% of the respondents are engaged in cattle caring duties, while 16% handle child care at home. A small proportion, 1.5%, are involved in milk selling, and another 1.5% of respondents did not provide an answer to the question. Overall, housework is the predominant duty among the respondents, highlighting its significant role in their daily responsibilities at home.

Table 8. Fail Details

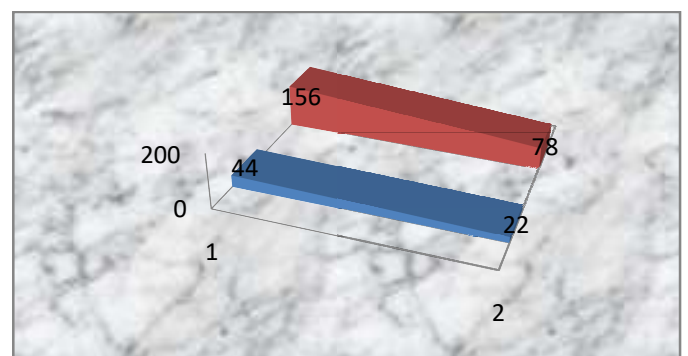| Sl.No.	Fail	Frequency	Percent
1.	Yes	44	22.0
2.	No	156	78.0
	Total	**200**	**100.0**

Table No.14 and the graph data reveals that 22% of the respondents reported failing in their classes, while 78% did not experience failure.

Table: 8. Reasons for failure

Sl.No.	Reason for Failure	Frequency	Percent
1.	Poverty	49	24.5
2.	Housework	22	11.0
3.	Cattle Care	5	2.5
4.	Not Answered	63	31.5
5.	Migration	54	27.0
6.	Family Problems	6	3.0
7.	Milk Selling	1	.5
	Total	**200**	**100.0**
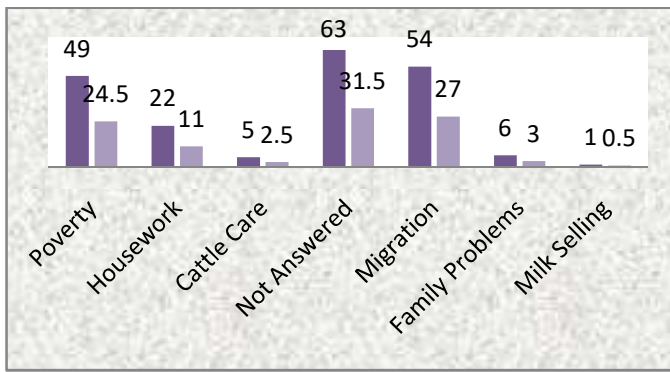
A smaller portion, 2.5%, reported that caring for cattle led to their failure, and 3% mentioned family problems as the cause. Additionally, 0.5% of respondents failed due to milk selling work. Notably, 27% of the respondents identified migration as the primary reason for their failure, making it the most common cause among the options. This migration largely involves Lambani people relocating to Maharashtra for six months to work in the sugarcane (Kabbu) industry. Furthermore, 31.5% of respondents did not answer the question, indicating potential gaps in data or reluctance to disclose reasons for academic struggles.

Findings of the study

The study reveals a concerning trend of early dropout among Lambani pupils in the Vijayapur District, with the most common age for leaving school being 10 years (33%), followed by ages 12 (15.5%) and 9 (14.5%). The highest dropout rates are observed in Class 4 (25.5%), with significant numbers also leaving in Classes 5 (18%), 7 (14.5%), and 6 (12%), indicating that the middle primary years are particularly vulnerable periods.All respondents identified Kannada as the medium of instruction in their schools, while their mother tongue is Hindu Lambani, suggesting a possible language barrier that could affect their educational engagement and contribute to dropouts. The study found that only 25% of respondents attend school regularly, while 75% do not, highlighting a significant issue with school attendance. The primary reasons for irregular attendance include housework (31.5%), migration (23%), and child care responsibilities (18.5%). Additionally, domestic duties such as housework (56.5%), cattle caring (24.5%), and child care (16%) are major factors competing with school attendance. Overall, the findings suggest that socio-economic factors, cultural responsibilities, and language barriers significantly impact the educational continuity of Lambani pupils. These insights underscore the need for targeted interventions to support these children and address the systemic challenges contributing to high dropout rates.

Conclusion

The study concludes that early dropout rates among Lambani pupils in the Vijayapur District are alarmingly high, with the most common ages for leaving school occurring at 10 and 12 years. The dropout rates peak in the middle primary years, particularly in Class 4, indicating that this stage is a critical point where students are most at risk of discontinuing their education. This trend underscores the urgent need for interventions focused on retaining students during these vulnerable years.

Language barriers, with all instruction conducted in Kannada while the students' mother tongue is Hindu Lambani, likely exacerbate the dropout rates. This misalignment between the medium of instruction and the students' native language could contribute to learning difficulties, disengagement, and eventual dropout. Irregular school attendance is another significant concern, with only 25% of students attending regularly. The primary reasons for irregular attendance include household responsibilities, such as housework, migration, and child care, which divert children from their educational pursuits. These domestic duties, deeply embedded in the socio-cultural fabric of the Lambani community, place heavy burdens on young learners, particularly affecting girls. The findings point to a complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and educational factors that contribute to the high dropout rates among Lambani pupils. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, including culturally sensitive educational policies, community engagement, language support, and targeted interventions to reduce the burden of domestic responsibilities on young learners. By doing so, it is possible to improve educational retention and outcomes for Lambani children, paving the way for their socio-economic advancement and integration into the broader educational system.

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