



HOW SOCIO-CULTURAL-ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECT THE TRIBAL EDUCATION IN NOTIFIED/AGENCY AREA OF ADILABAD-TELANGANA

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ABSTRACT

Education is an important component in socio economic development of tribal societies; however, there are several socio-cultural and economic impediments that impede in education of tribal children in the notified (Agency) areas of Adilabad district, Telangana. This study aims to study the role of these barriers in tribal education. Descriptive cross sectional quantitative research methodology has been followed to investigate the problem. Primary data collected from 150 respondents by employing simple random sampling technique through structured questionnaire. Secondary data were also collected from government reports and literature. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 26 through descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage. Socio-cultural impediments like unawareness of the parents about education (74.0%) and language problems (68.0%) stood to be the highest impediments. Whereas, in economic impediments; family poverty (78.7%), government dependence for financial aid (69.3%) and funds to purchase study materials (64.0%) stood highest barriers in tribal education performance. Also, poverty and economic struggle (30.7%) stand to be the most determinant factors in their education.

Keywords: Tribal Education; Socio-cultural Factors; Economic Factors; Scheduled Tribes; Educational Attainment; Adilabad; Telangana; Agency Areas.

1. INTRODUCTION

Educational opportunities are one of the basic human rights and an important instrument of socio-economic development. Education is a very essential factor in poverty reduction, social inclusion, and improved standard of living. Yet, there is no equal access to high-quality education among the tribal populations of India, especially for those living in Agency Areas, where the issues of geographic remoteness, poverty, and poor infrastructure of educational facilities make it difficult to receive education.

In the notified Agency areas of Adilabad District in Telangana, Scheduled Tribes form the main population and they have their own unique social and cultural backgrounds and economic conditions. Such aspects as low literacy among parents, linguistic barriers, seasonal migration, poor family economic background, child labour, lack of proper infrastructure in schools, and other cultural aspects have an impact on school attendance and performance of children.

In this context, the current study attempts to understand how socio-economic and cultural conditions impact tribal education in the notified (Agency) regions of Adilabad in Telangana. Using the analysis of both primary and secondary data, the objective is to ascertain what are the major issues that impact the educational performance of tribal children. The results of this research will be beneficial in formulating appropriate strategies by the policymakers and government agencies towards educating the tribal population.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Madhukar (2023) focused on the educational problems of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) residing in Adilabad district, Telangana. According to the study findings, although many government programs were implemented, the tribe still struggled with the issues of illiteracy, inadequate educational facilities, geographic location, language problem, and lack of awareness among parents, impacting enrollment and education of the children. The author opines that an improvement in the education system can be achieved through better support and involvement of the community in the process.

Gugulothu and Korra (2025) studied the inequality in terms of education and employment among the tribes in Telangana. It has been observed that socio-economic inequalities, poor economic status, lack of proper facilities for education, and disparity in quality education are the main reasons behind educational inequalities among the tribes along with their employment. The authors have pointed out that there is a need for focused efforts to minimize the educational inequality among the tribes.

Korra (2019) discussed the socio-economic and historical background of the de-notified tribes in the state of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. It has been found out from the study that these marginalized groups have been subjected to social exclusion, educational deprivation, poverty, and lack of access to various government welfare schemes. It is evident from the observations of the author that poverty and lack of education have hampered the educational and social progress of these tribes.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a descriptive quantitative design where a total of 150 participants were sampled using simple random sampling technique. The analysis was done using SPSS version 26 using frequencies and percentages.

3.1 Research Design

This current research study used a descriptive cross-sectional research methodology that will investigate the impact of socio-economic factors on tribal education in Agency Areas of Adilabad district in Telangana state. This research study used quantitative research methodology to investigate the issues that arise from education among tribes.

3.2 Study Area

The survey was carried out in the Agency areas of the district of Adilabad, Telangana, which consist of a sizeable population of the Scheduled Tribe communities. These regions are economically and socially disadvantaged areas, geographically isolated and have low availability of educational institutions. Thus, they serve well for studying the influencing factors on tribal education.

3.3 Sources of Data

Data used for the study included both primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained using a structured questionnaire that was distributed among the respondents. Secondary data included government publications, Census publications, publications from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, educational publications in Telangana State, scholarly journals, books, and other published material.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study involved a total number of 150 respondents. The respondents were randomly sampled through the process of simple random sampling method from the households belonging to tribes from the notified (Agency) areas of the Adilabad district. The respondents belonged to various ages, genders, and levels of education.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed and interpreted using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) Version 26. The descriptive statistics, such as frequency distribution and percentages, were applied in analyzing the data to bring out the major socio-cultural and economic factors that are associated with the tribal education system.

4. RESULTS

The socio-demographic profile of the 150 participants involved in the research is presented in Table 1 below. The factors under consideration are gender, age, and educational level of the household head. This socio-demographic profile gives the idea about the background of the participants and enables to understand the socio-economic conditions that impact tribal education.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	82	54.7
	Female	68	45.3
Age (Years)	18–30	39	26.0
	31–40	46	30.7
	41–50	38	25.3
	Above 50	27	18.0
Educational Status of Household Head	Illiterate	51	34.0
	Primary	43	28.7
	Secondary	34	22.7
	Higher Secondary & Above	22	14.6

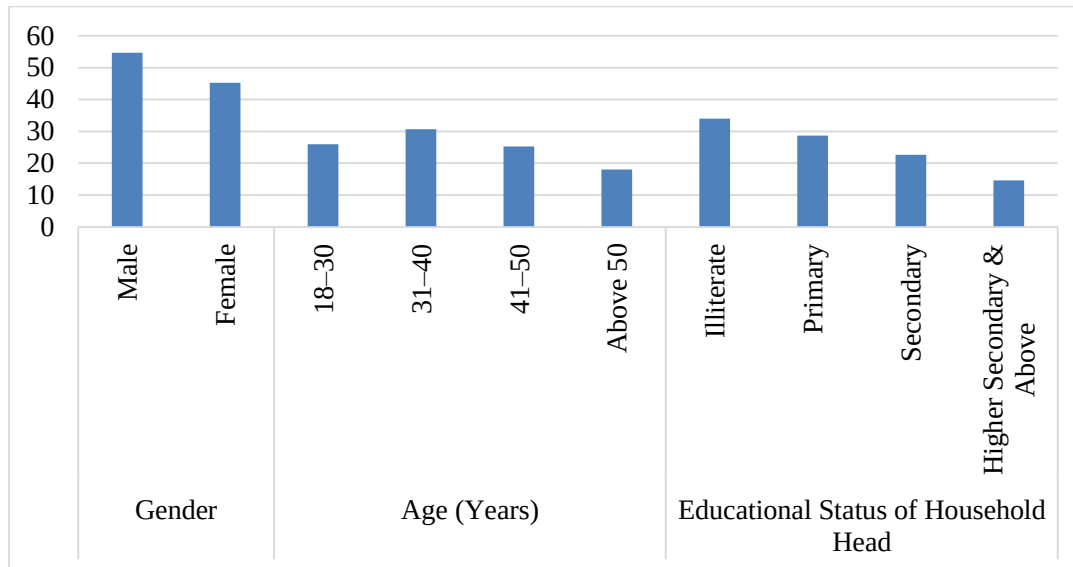


Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

According to the results, there was a slightly larger percentage of males (54.7%) compared to females (45.3%). Majority of the respondents fell within the age range of 31-40 years (30.7%), followed by 18-30 years (26.0%), and 41-50 years (25.3%), whereas those aged more than 50 years were 18.0%. In relation to the education level of heads of households, 34.0% of the respondents were illiterate, 28.7% were primary educated, 22.7% were secondary educated, and only 14.6% had higher secondary education and above. The findings show that lack of education on the part of parents is still common in tribal families.

The socio-cultural issues that influence education among tribes in the notified areas of Adilabad, Telangana, are described in Table 2 based on the responses from 150 respondents. Table 2 reveals socio-cultural issues identified by respondents which include language problems, educational awareness of parents, seasonality in migration, marriage and other duties at home and school attendance problems because of culture. This is because the respondents could mention more than one socio-cultural issue.

Table 2: Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Tribal Education

Socio-cultural Factor	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Language barrier between home and school	102	68.0
Low parental educational awareness	111	74.0
Seasonal migration affecting schooling	63	42.0

Early marriage/domestic responsibilities	54	36.0
Irregular school attendance due to cultural practices	71	47.3

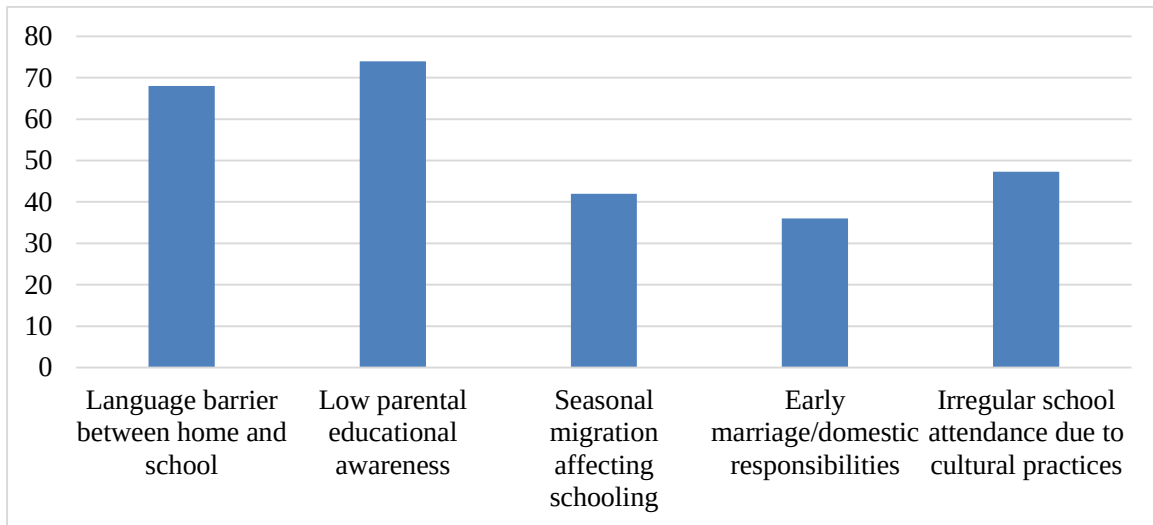


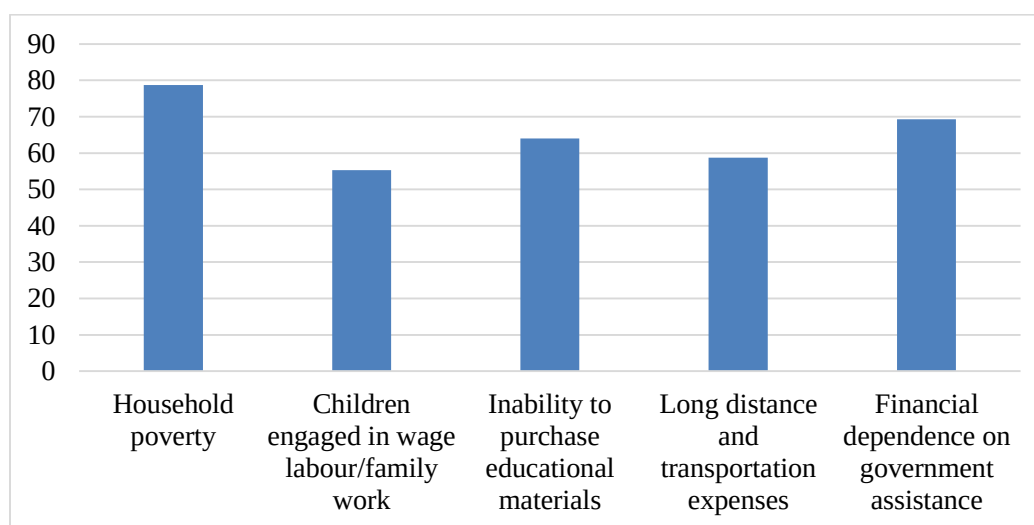
Figure 2: Graphical Representation of Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Tribal Education

The results show that low parent's education awareness (74.0%) is the most common socio-cultural determinant influencing the process of education in tribes, implying that the lack of awareness on the part of parents hinders them from encouraging their children in education. The second most prevalent problem is the problem of the language barrier between home and school (68.0%), since differences between tribal languages and the language of instruction complicate the educational process for children. Almost half (47.3%) of the respondents mentioned irregular attendance to school because of cultural traditions, and 42.0% indicated seasonal migration as an obstacle in the way of children's education. Also, 36.0% of the respondents noted that early marriages and domestic obligations hindered the process of education especially of tribal girls.

Table 3 shows the main economic issues related to tribal education of 150 respondents in the notified areas of Adilabad, Telangana. Table 3 provides information about the economic issues perceived by the respondents that influence their education. The economic issues include poverty in families, child labor, inability to buy study materials, transport cost, and dependence on government support. Since each respondent could have mentioned several economic issues, the figures for frequency and percentages indicate multiple answers.

Table 3: Economic Factors Affecting Tribal Education

Economic Factor	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Household poverty	118	78.7
Children engaged in wage labour/family work	83	55.3
Inability to purchase educational materials	96	64.0
Long distance and transportation expenses	88	58.7
Financial dependence on government assistance	104	69.3

**Figure 3:** Graphical Representation of Economic Factors Affecting Tribal Education

The results show that household poverty (78.7%) had a major impact on economic factors affecting education in the tribes, showing the financial challenges that have been experienced by the families of the tribes in paying for their children's education. The results also show that a sizable number of the participants (69.3%) relied on government aid financially, showing the importance of social welfare programs in ensuring continued participation in education. In addition, 64.0% of the participants indicated that they could not afford the necessary educational resources like textbooks, uniforms, and stationery, while 58.7% mentioned the lengthy distances and costs of transport as challenges in attending schools regularly. Over half of the participants (55.3%) also said that children were involved in labor or work in their families, reducing their chance of receiving education.

The responses of the surveyed people on the most important factors affecting the education of the tribal children have been listed in Table 4. The sample comprised 150 persons, who have mentioned only one most important factor affecting the education of tribal children. These factors include poverty, lack of literacy among parents, lack of educational infrastructure, problems of communication, and social and cultural factors.

Table 4: Perceived Factors Influencing Educational Attainment among Tribal Students

Major Influencing Factor	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Poverty and economic hardship	46	30.7
Low parental literacy	34	22.7
Poor educational infrastructure	28	18.7
Language and communication barriers	24	16.0
Social and cultural practices	18	12.0
Total	150	100.0

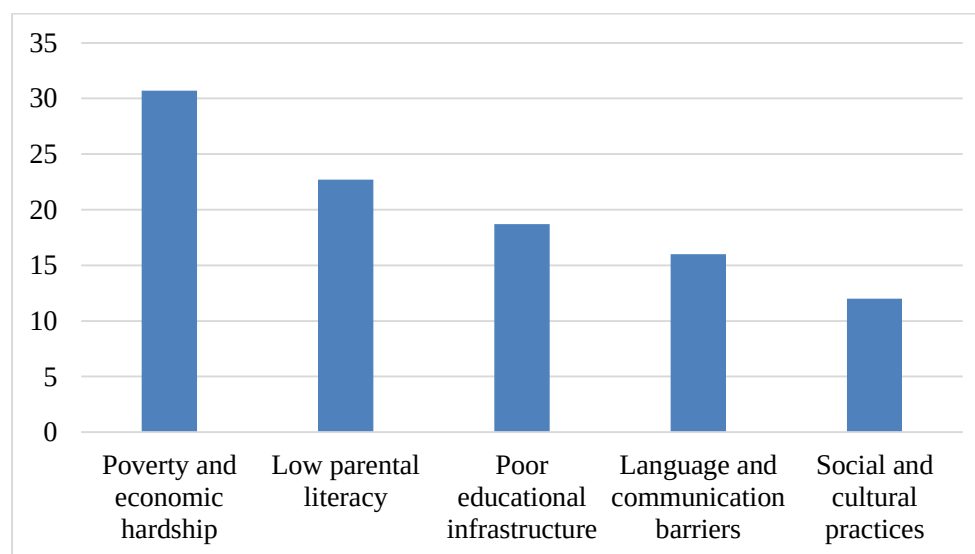


Figure 4: Graphical Representation of Perceived Factors Influencing Educational Attainment among Tribal Students

According to the results obtained, poverty and economic challenges (30.7%) have been found to be the most critical aspects that affect the educational performance of students from tribes. After that, low literacy

level of parents (22.7%) has been identified as one of the key problems because it becomes clear that poor parental educational background does not provide students with proper educational assistance and motivation. Poor educational infrastructure (18.7%) has also been indicated as one of the main challenges that include the lack of proper school facilities and educational materials. Language barriers (16.0%) and social and cultural traditions (12.0%) have been found to play a role in students' education as well.

5. DISCUSSION

The outcome of the study clearly shows that socio-cultural and economic variables have a significant impact on tribal education in the notified (Agency) region of Adilabad in Telangana. It was found out that poor educational consciousness of the parents, language issues, seasonal migration, and culture are some of the issues that negatively impact the education of children in the notified regions. Furthermore, a high illiteracy rate among the heads of households implies that parent's educational status still impacts the learning of the children.

Additionally, the study revealed that poverty among the households was the most important element determining the status of education among the tribes. Other elements that influenced the tribe's education were reliance on aid from the government, lack of ability to buy learning materials, transportation problems, and child labor. Poverty, illiteracy among parents, and inadequate educational facilities were cited as the primary elements that determine education achievement. In general, the conclusions drawn from this study indicate that improving education among the tribes will require an integrated effort.

6. CONCLUSION

This study proves that socio-cultural and economic variables play an important role in determining the level of education attained by tribal children living in the Agency areas of Adilabad, Telangana. The results show that low education awareness among parents, language problem, seasonal migration and cultural issues are barriers to education, while poverty, dependency on state support for survival, lack of money for purchasing educational tools, difficulties in commuting, and employment of children limit access to quality education. Poverty and economic distress turned out to be the most influential factors in education attainment, followed by low level of parental education and inadequate education infrastructure. These results indicate that there is a need for policies aimed at improving education infrastructure, increasing financial support, educating parents, solving language-related problems and providing education access

to tribal people. Such actions will help increase enrollment rate, retention and academic performance of tribal population in the Agency areas of Adilabad, Telangana.

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