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Educational Motivation and School Dropout among Tribal Girls in Jharkhand: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Education is an important means of improving the social, economic, and personal development of tribal girls. Even today there are tribal girls in other parts of India who face educational disadvantages due to the elements of poverty, geographical isolation, violence against women, internal migration, socio-cultural barriers and weaknesses in institutional support mechanisms. This review combines studies published from 2020 to 2025 and examines principal socio-economic, family, cultural, institutional and motivational factors that could positively impact tribal girls' educational participation. Different studies have shown that low household income, child betrothal (early marriage), domestic work, limited transport opportunities and knowledge of alternative role models lead to school dropout through the interaction of poor parental education and substandard education provisions. However, such factors as parental support, competent teachers, local-language teaching, culturally relevant curricula, stable family income and infrastructure and institutional assistance bolster educational motivation and retention in school.

Keywords: *Tribal Girls, School Dropout, Educational Motivation, Socio-Economic Factors, Parental Involvement, Jharkhand, Tribal Education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in individual empowerment, social development, economic mobility, and reduction of inequality. Education is of special importance to tribal communities since it can help alleviate historical social, geographical and economic disadvantages. Though there are various provisions in the Constitution, special provisions for government programmes and educational schemes aimed at strengthening them, as also a few institutions here and there to help improve the educational status of tribal communities in India, the truth is that even today the educational position of tribals continues to be low compared with other sections of society. Tribal

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learners have been reported with low literacy, enrolment and retention problems, Department of Public Education in India. Educational challenges related to the education of tribal girls is compounded by the intersectionality of gender with other disadvantages, based on economic deprivation, social marginalization, geographical seclusion and cultural oppression. They are generally disadvantaged by the non-availability of resources, lack of equal treatment in society; restricted choices and ineffective educational opportunities right from when they are born. ***(Ranjithkumar, 2023).***

Thus, school dropouts among tribal girls cannot be treated as a single issue. Economic crises may compel girls into household or income-earning work; distance between home and school may deter geographical isolation from maintaining educational connection; cultural practice may favour early marriage; whilst poor educational infrastructure weakens the mind of students to continue in education. Educational motivation is also significant as students from lower socio-economic circumstances may experience a decrease in self-efficacy, perseverance, engagement and interest in educational tasks. Tribal girls have also been a significant focus of public policy and academic interest in light of the substantial tribal population present in Jharkhand. Earlier research in the state has found that even as access to schooling for girls improves there are still disparities in education quality. Thus, this review aims to provide insights from previous work on some of the predictors of school dropout propensity and educational motivation in tribal girls, with recommendations for future research ***(Sengupta, 2024).***

2. OBJECTIVES

To examine the major socio-economic, familial, cultural, and institutional factors influencing school dropout tendency and educational motivation among tribal girls in Jharkhand.

3. EXTRACTION OF METHODS AND TECHNIQUE OF REVIEW STUDY

The present paper adopts a descriptive and thematic review approach. The literature provided for the research of this study consists from articles published between 2020 and 2025. The studies under review include but are not limited to quantitative surveys, qualitative studies, ethnographic research, phenomenological studies, mixed-methods studies, secondary-data investigations and time-series analyses. The studies have been compiled according to significant areas such as socio-economic factors, parental involvement, family environment and processes (e.g. gender discrimination) cultural constraints, school infrastructure access and betterment opportunities for education at large, reasons behind the school dropout etc. The review further includes studies on Jharkhand as well as those based on tribal population from West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir; Odisha and Tamil Nadu, with the aim of deriving a more general theorization related to educational experiences of tribal girls.

3.1 Socio-Economic Factors and School Dropout

Socio-economic conditions represent one of the most important determinants of educational participation among tribal girls. The economic concerns may directly impact on the family whether they can maintain studies. Families living in poverty may struggle to afford educational-related costs

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and rely on children for domestic responsibilities, such as performing household chores, and assist agricultural or earn a living. 02 Patel (2025) 119 while investigating educational deprivation among Sahariya adolescents, found very serious educational disadvantages. Only 51.7 percent [of respondents] had studies at least sixth standard, and nearly half (50.3 percent) had dropped out of school. However, educational disadvantage among females is clearly visible as well (female illiteracy = 17.6% and male illiteracy = 7.1%). Though many, including lack of personal motivation among parents to get their children educated, high drop-out rates due to poverty induced child labour, early marriage or schools that do not function properly and/or teachers who attend classes irregularly. In another detailed study on socio-economic characteristics and school dropout among tribal girls, Saravanan et al. (2022) also examined socio-economic characteristics and school dropout. Low household incomes, poor economic Conditions, working mothers, family dependency and household chores had a great impact on house school dropouts according to their study of 126 tribal families. Regular schooling was disrupted by economic strain, putting children especially girls in great danger of dropping out. They show that poverty directly as well as indirectly impacts school participation. This limits access to educational resources, whilst also exacerbating the expectation for girls to take on family responsibilities. In this regard, the socio-economic development and educational retention should be combined together.

3.2 Parental Involvement and Educational Achievement

Parents influence children's educational aspirations, academic discipline, learning activities, and motivation. The level of academic results and financial condition of the parents could define how much support a parent feeds their daughters. Bhattacharjee and Pradhan (2025) also analyzed parental involvement in male students among the tribal/female students/non-tribal female students. His research found tribal parents had less education and more time constraints due to engaging in agricultural and other livelihood activities. Non-tribal parents were arguably even more involved, leading to greater motivation and school performance overall. The other study highlighted the gender aspect and used tribal and non-tribal students where Bhattacharjee and Pradhan found differences in parental participation between these 740 female students. Similarly, since the study loss/medium miss — many stakeholders interviewed revealed that their support system for both study-related as well as co-curricular activities for tribal girls were quite lower. COMPARING PARENT-SUPPORTED LEARNING. The significant role of parental involvement as a valuable educational resource, rather than simply an emotional factor is also highlighted by these findings. Parents who pay attention to where children are academically, motivate them to participate in school and create home environments that foster learning can therefore reinforce these motivators and lessen the chances of drop-out.

3.3 Family Environment and Educational Motivation

Family conditions strongly influence whether tribal girls remain connected with formal education. Saha and Chattopadhyay (2025) elaborated family dynamics for tribal children, by analysing the relations between parental education, household income, family structure and cultural practices with enrolment attendance educational motivation retention and academic success Adverse family situations may further

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exacerbate the impact resulting from insufficient infrastructure and limited educational opportunities. For example, there is a girl that lives in poor family house without learning equipment and also must do household chores like cooking or cleaning. In contrast, a home environment conducive to learning can bolster educational aspirations. Families who believe education is important are more likely to keep girls in school. Thus, tribal education interventions should be based on family-centred approaches and parental awareness rather than on school facilities alone.

3.4 Gender Discrimination and Cultural Barriers

Gender inequality remains another important factor influencing tribal girls' education. In contrast, traditional gender roles may prioritize boys' education while girls are pressured to take up domestic responsibilities and prepare for marriage. Khan et al. Poverty, the responsibility of domestic work, co-education problems, cultural restrictions, early marriage and economic exploitation are common forms of barriers faced by tribal women. (2024) For years, culture dictated that priority was given to ensuring the education of males whilst women were confined to household tasks. Such horrible conditions were responsible for occurrence of child marriage, labour and exclusion, social backwardness and decision making power followed by alienation from schools. Social identity and gender oriented disadvantages faced by tribal women had also been observed by Ranjithkumar and Dimitrov (2023). Discrimination based on gender and socially-imposed barriers to resources limited avenues for growth, both social and economic. So, for educating tribal girls, adjustments are needed at various levels– in educational institutions and also in social attitudes about women's education, movement, marriage, employment and decision-making.

3.5 Early Marriage and Household Responsibilities

Early marriage frequently appears in research as an important reason for discontinuation of girls' education. Parental economic hardship and early arranged or love marriages contribute to the low value and relevance of education as reported by Nayak and Kumar (2022) among tribal girls. Attendance and academic engagement are also affected by household obligations. Girls may be expected to care for younger siblings, handle domestic chores, work on farms and carry out other family responsibilities. Orphan and casual migrant workers were again another large group who represented a group of children who had no outlet to education. Saravanan and Ramesh observed: Family workload & economy pressure disrupted regular schooling among tribal girls Girls, especially from economically weaker households faces the worse scenario as their education suffers at the cost of homemade responsibilities.

3.6 School Infrastructure, Transportation and Accessibility

Geographical isolation is another major challenge affecting tribal education. Most of the tribal populace is inhabited in rural, remote, forest or hilly areas where nearby educational institutions are hard to get too. Emayavaramban et al. Barokanje (2020) reported that poor public transport availability, shortage of teaching staff, road connectivity challenges, weak infrastructure and distance to schools posed considerable difficulties for tribal girl learners. The study recommends reliable transportation, better infrastructure facilities, additional teachers, accessible schools to the community, parent support and vocationally relevant education. In the same vein, Das (2022) also

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pointed to the necessity of infrastructure, environment that is not conducive to learning, poverty and indifference of teachers towards tribal girls as significant deterrents. It argued that policy solutions could not solve education problems without ensuring adequate and effective implementation, monitoring, accessibility to the policy and community or local participation in its formulation. Which is why physical access to education, therefore, becomes a key aspect of retention. In the meantime, even enthusiastic students find it nearly impossible to keep going to school when transport is unsafe or non-existent, schools are located far from settlements or institutions lack basic facilities.

3.7 Teacher Quality, Language and Culturally Relevant Education

Teachers can significantly influence students' educational motivation. Positive interaction with teachers may strengthen academic confidence and encourage students to continue schooling. Factors Facilitating Tribal Girls to Complete their Education Nayak and kumar (2022) reported factors like Competent teacher, respectively local languages for teaching-learning process, culturally relevant curriculum, family income stability and supportive parental support as facilitators of education for tribal girls. As stressed upon by Prajapati (2023), educational strategies for tribal learners should be based on their surrounding and different situations such as social, cultural, psychological, emotional, and economic… The study suggested that specially trained and tribal teacher, inclusive education environment, directly motivating and more opportunities for tribal students to represent their ideas etc. Literature thus indicates that for educational inclusion to be actualised, culturally-relevant pedagogy is essential. The curriculum and the manner of teaching should link formal schooling to tribal learners through language, experience, culture and the natural world.

3.8 Educational Motivation among Disadvantaged Learners

Educational motivation is closely associated with persistence, academic participation, confidence, and achievement. When family, school, or community support is lacking in the case of students from weaker socio-economic backgrounds, they may feel demotivated. In a study with 1,554 students, Sengupta and Guchhait (2024) found slow decrease in academic motivation of secondary-level first-generation learners. Poor socio-economic circumstances, weak home environments, low school quality and inadequate neighbourhood support were linked to psychological and academic problems. These have been shown to adversely affect confidence, and participation, as well as persistence and achievement in STEM-related courses. This finding bears significance for tribal girls due to the fact that a lot of them may be first-generation learners. Educational problems that go unaddressed can leave students feeling less confident and less able to see the purpose of schooling. So, reduced motivation may serve as a mediating mechanism whereby socio-economic and institutional disadvantages affect dropout ultimately.

3.9 Enrolment, Gender Parity and Dropout Trends

Bhat and Khan (2021) examined school education among tribal children using U-DISE data from 2012–13 to 2018–19. The number of schools did grow, but there were worsening patterns in tribal enrolment at both primary and upper-primary stages. Progress was made in gender parity, but full equality was never obtained. There were additional dropouts, from primary school, becoming worse

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in the upper tiers of education. This trend suggests that it is not enough to just increase the number of schools if one wants their educational retention. Besides K-12 education, family conditions, and motivation, issues such as gender equality in learning outcomes and transitions across educational levels also need to be addressed.

3.10 Tribal Girls' Education in Jharkhand

Jharkhand provides an important context for studying educational inequalities among tribal girls. In a study on barriers influencing girls education in Jharkhand, Dodrajka (2023) reported that many changes had taken place to improve school access but this effort has largely not been supported by educational quality. Educational resource, learning, institutional support and academic outcome challenges needed focused policies and effective implementation. When viewed in light of studies in other tribal regions of India, this finding has more significance. Poverty, parental education, household characteristics barriers & incentives due to cultural restrictions and infrastructure quality, as well as teacher quality and transportation frequently surface in the literature as interconnected drivers of educational engagement. Therefore, an empirical study purely exploring tribal girls of Jharkhand can be conducted to provide significant evidence on the interplay of these factors to leading motivation towards education and dropout school tendency.

4. FACTORS IDENTIFIED FROM THE LITERATURE

Factor	Influence on Tribal Girls' Education
Household economic condition	Poverty increases financial pressure and possibility of dropout.
Parental education	Higher parental awareness can improve educational support and motivation.
Parental involvement	Encouragement and academic participation improve achievement and retention.
Family responsibilities	Domestic and livelihood activities interfere with regular schooling.
Early marriage	Reduces opportunities for continuation of formal education.
Gender discrimination	Gives lower priority to girls' education and limits educational opportunities.
School distance	Greater distance creates attendance and safety problems.
Transportation	Poor transport and road connectivity reduce accessibility.
School infrastructure	Inadequate facilities negatively affect participation and retention.
Teacher availability	Teacher shortage and irregular attendance weaken educational quality.
Teacher support	Supportive and competent teachers increase motivation.
Local-language instruction	Improves understanding and connection with schooling.
Culturally relevant curriculum	Makes education more meaningful for tribal students.
Educational motivation	Higher motivation promotes confidence, persistence and retention.
Community support	Positive community participation encourages educational continuation.

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5. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL MOTIVATION AND DROPOUT TENDENCY

The literature indicates that educational motivation and dropout tendency should not be treated as completely independent issues. Some socio-economic, family, institutional and cultural determinants can act bidirectionally. Because poverty might encourage dropping out, if students have no books, digital tools or transport to get to school, or face a lack of academic support. In the same line, inadequate parental guidance may directly elevate dropout likelihood by concurrently diminishing support and educational ambitions. Poor school quality could both deter attendance and dampen students' desire to learn. On the other hand, motivating teachers, parental support, education in local language, improved infrastructure and a relevant curriculum can enhance motivation and reduce the tendency to drop out. Thus, a conceptual relationship can be formulated from the studies addressed as follows:

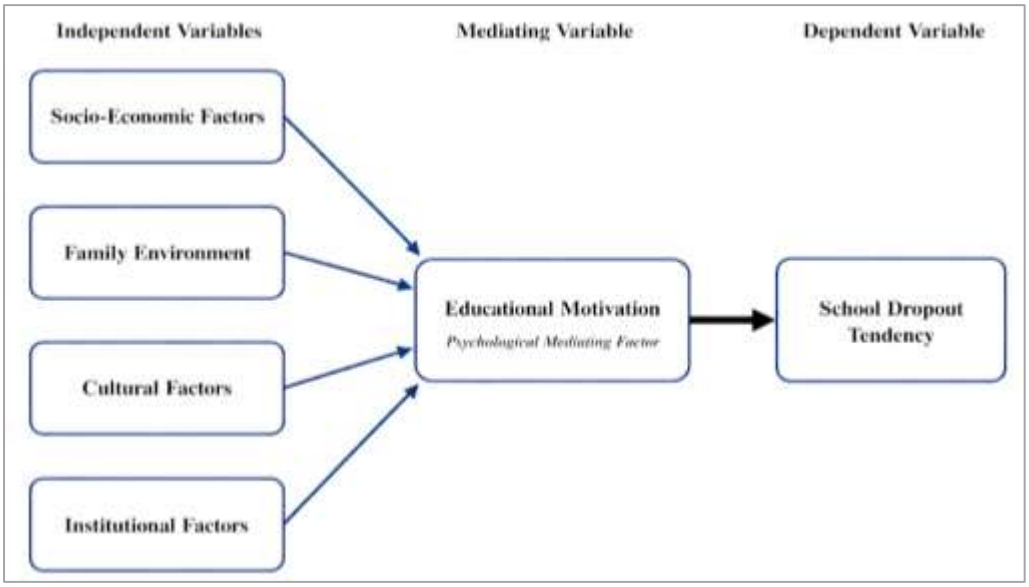


Fig: A Conceptual Relationship Emerging from The Reviewed Studies

Educational motivation may consequently operate as an important psychological factor connecting students' external circumstances with their decision to continue or discontinue schooling.

6. CONCLUSION

The review shows that tribal girls' school dropout is influenced by poverty, weak parental involvement, gender discrimination, cultural restrictions, early marriage, household responsibilities, poor accessibility, inadequate infrastructure, and limited institutional support. Supportive families, competent teachers, local-language instruction, culturally relevant curricula, financial stability and a good school climate all serve as anchor points for educational motivation. For retention, the whole community needs to participate but the parents must be aware of how important it is. Consequentially, policies should not only focus on enrolment but also tackle motivation, access as well as continued participation. In Jharkhand, integrated context-appropriate and culture-sensitive interventions are needed to facilitate educational aspiration improvement reduction dropout motivation and sustainable long-term academic enhancement.

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