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## **SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF CHILDREN IN URBAN SLUMS (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HASSAN DISTRICT)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the educational conditions of children living in **urban slums of Hassan district**, Karnataka, India. It investigates school enrollment, attendance, literacy, socio-economic influences, gender disparities, and barriers to educational access. The research highlights how poverty, migration, parental education, and inadequate infrastructure shape educational outcomes. Based on primary field data (surveys, interviews) and secondary research from studies on slum education across India, the paper identifies critical challenges and proposes sociological interventions to improve education among slum-dwelling children.

Key words ; urban slum, socio-economic, education, children

### **INTRODUCTION**

Urban slums are densely populated settlements with inadequate housing and limited access to basic services such as education, sanitation, and health. Education is a fundamental right and a major factor in social development, yet children in urban slums often face significant disadvantages. In Hassan district of Karnataka, slum populations constitute a notable share of the urban poor, many of whom face socio-economic barriers to schooling. Census data indicate multiple slum areas in Hassan city with tens of thousands of residents living in substandard conditions. Urban slum populations are among the most **marginalized groups in urban India**, facing multidimensional deprivations including poor housing, limited services, and restricted access to education. Slums in cities such as Hassan in Karnataka house thousands of low-income families who often struggle to ensure consistent schooling for their children. As per **2011 Census data**, slums form a significant proportion of the urban population in Hassan city, with around **25,069 residents living in slums (about 16.17 % of the urban population)**.

Education is a fundamental determinant of social mobility and development; however, children residing in slums frequently exhibit lower enrollment rates, irregular attendance, and high dropout rates due to socio-economic pressures and lack of supportive environments. This study examines these issues from a **sociological perspective**, emphasizing the contextual realities in the slums of **Hassan district**.



## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Sujita (2009)** examined the educational deprivation of slum children in urban Delhi. The study reveals that:
  - Attendance ratios among slum children (ages 5–14) are significantly lower than the general urban child population.
  - Parental perception and the financial burden of schooling were major deterrents to regular attendance.
  - Even when enrolled, many children were over-aged for their grade level — highlighting delayed entry and grade repetition.
  - Slum children tended to attend government schools more than private low-fee schools
2. Research on educational deprivation among urban slum children in India highlights multiple systemic barriers affecting schooling outcomes. Studies show that a **large proportion of slum children aged 6–14 are either never enrolled or drop out before completing elementary education** due to economic hardship and social exclusion. *European Journal of Education*
3. Other research on slum education identifies **bureaucratic and administrative hurdles** – such as lack of documentation required for school enrollment – which disproportionately affect migrant and informal-sector families residing in slums.

## Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To assess **school enrollment, attendance, and literacy levels** among children in urban slums of Hassan.
2. To analyze **socio-economic and cultural factors** influencing educational participation.

## Methodology:

For this study is based on the primary data which is collected from the 30 children in the age group of **6–14 years** in Hassan dist through random sampling method. Interview schedule is the tool used in the present study. The primary data was collected through telephone interview from the respondents. Secondary data were collected through books, journals, periodicals, newsletters, Government and Non-Government Reports, internet etc. For this study applied Neo functional theory to study the specific area. Our study have limitation such has in this study only **6–14**age group are selected. It special reference to Hassan district in Karnataka. We studied only 30 children in the Hassan district at micro level.

### **Topographical features of the study area:**

Hassan District is one of the 30 districts of Karnataka state located in the southwestern part of Karnataka in India. The geographic area of the district of Hassan is 6845 Square Kilometers. District has 8 Taluks, 38 Hoblies & 2369 Villages. Alur Taluk (432 Sq Km), Holenarasipura (602 Sq Km), Arakalagud Taluk (675 Sq Km), Belur Taluk (845 Sq Km), Hassan Taluk (942 Sq Km) Sakaleshapura Taluk (1034 Sq Km), Channarayapatna Taluk (1044 Sq Km) and Arasikere Taluk (1271 Sq Km). The population of the district is 17, 76,421 according to 2011 Census Data, and the average rainfall is about 1031 mms annually. Coffee, Black Pepper, Potato, Paddy and Sugarcane are the major agricultural crops of the District.

### **Assessment of School Enrollment, Attendance, and Literacy Levels among Children in Urban Slums of Hassan**

The assessment of school enrollment, attendance, and literacy levels among children living in urban slums of **Hassan district** reveals important insights into their educational status and access to schooling.

#### **1. School Enrollment**

The study indicates that a majority of children in the age group of **6–14 years** in the slums of Hassan are enrolled in **government primary schools**, largely due to compulsory education policies, free textbooks, uniforms, and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. However, enrollment at the **secondary level** shows a noticeable decline, particularly among children from economically weaker households.

#### **2. School Attendance**

Although enrollment figures appear encouraging, **regular attendance remains inconsistent**. Many children attend school irregularly due to factors such as:

- Economic pressure on families requiring children to engage in income-generating activities
- Household responsibilities, especially for girls
- Seasonal migration of families
- Health issues linked to poor living conditions

Irregular attendance negatively affects academic performance and increases the likelihood of dropout.

#### **3. Literacy Levels**

Literacy levels among slum children in Hassan are **lower than the district and state urban averages**. While basic reading and writing skills are present among primary school children, a significant number struggle with grade-appropriate literacy due to:

- Poor learning environments
- Overcrowded classrooms
- Limited parental support at home

Children of illiterate or semi-literate parents are particularly vulnerable to low learning outcomes.

## **Analysis of Socio-Economic and Cultural Factors Influencing Educational Participation**

Educational participation of children in urban slums is strongly influenced by a range of **socio-economic and cultural factors** that shape family decisions, access to schooling, and learning outcomes.

### **1. Economic Condition of the Family**

Low household income is one of the most significant barriers to education. Parents engaged in informal or daily wage labor often prioritize immediate income over schooling. Children are frequently involved in child labor, domestic work, or sibling care, leading to irregular attendance or dropout.

### **2. Parental Education and Occupation**

Parents with low educational attainment often lack awareness of the long-term benefits of education. Limited literacy among parents restricts their ability to guide, motivate, or support their children academically. Irregular work schedules further reduce parental involvement in schooling.

### **3. Family Size and Structure**

Large families with many dependents experience financial strain, reducing the resources available for each child's education. In nuclear families, absence of extended family support increases household responsibilities for children, especially girls.

### **4. Housing and Living Conditions**

Overcrowded living spaces and lack of electricity or quiet study areas negatively affect children's ability to concentrate and complete schoolwork, lowering academic performance and motivation.

### **5. Migration and Residential Instability**

Seasonal or permanent migration disrupts schooling continuity. Children often miss classes, change schools frequently, or drop out due to lack of transfer certificates and documentation.

### **6. Cultural Attitudes Towards Education**

In some slum communities, education is viewed as less valuable than immediate economic contribution. Traditional beliefs may discourage higher education, especially for girls, due to expectations of early marriage and domestic roles.

### **7. Gender Roles and Discrimination**

Girls are more likely to be withdrawn from school to assist with household chores, care for siblings, or due to safety concerns. Cultural norms often prioritize boys' education over girls'.

### **8. Social Exclusion and Marginalization**

Caste, class, and social identity can lead to discrimination and low self-esteem among children, discouraging school participation. Lack of social capital limits access to educational support systems.



## Findings

### 1 Enrollment and Attendance Gaps

Preliminary survey findings show that while **primary enrollment is relatively high**, regular attendance is inconsistent. Families often **prioritize short-term income over schooling**, sending children to work or care for siblings during peak work seasons.

### 2 Dropouts and Barriers

High dropout rates were common among children transitioning from primary to higher grades. Principal reasons included:

- **Economic constraints** forcing children into informal labour.
- Frequent **family migration** disrupting educational continuity.
- **School distance** and lack of safe transportation.

These issues reflect broader patterns observed across urban slum contexts in India, where socio-economic hardship directly limits school participation.

### 3 Socio-Economic Influences

Parents in slum households often have **low educational attainment themselves**, which influences attitudes towards schooling and limits the academic support they can offer their children at home. Financial instability and large family sizes further strain resources, reducing educational prioritization.

### 4 Administrative and Systemic Barriers

Lack of key documents necessary for school enrollment, such as birth certificates or residential proof, prevented many children from regular attendance at government schools. Families who recently migrated to Hassan slums faced additional challenges navigating school admissions.

## CONCLUSION

The assessment highlights a gap between **school enrollment and actual educational achievement**. While access to primary education has improved in the slums of Hassan, challenges related to attendance and literacy continue to limit meaningful educational participation. Strengthening retention strategies, improving learning quality, and providing academic support are essential for enhancing educational outcomes among slum children.

Socio-economic deprivation and cultural norms collectively limit educational participation among slum children. Addressing these factors requires not only educational reforms but also poverty reduction, community awareness, gender-sensitive policies, and inclusive social support systems.

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