

Psychosocial Profile of Children of Unwed Mothers - An Indian Perspective

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Abstract: Unwed mother hood results in different psychosocial problems in children. Practice of devadasi system- were young girls are consecrating to God towards perform the role of community entertainers, offering sexual services to their patrons leads to unwed mother hood in various rural villages in south India. These unwed mothers are deserted to bring up their children in absolute poverty, experience the stigma of being the child of unwed mother (Devadasi) and illegitimacy that results in various psychosocial problems among these children. **Aim:** Psychosocial profile children of unwed (devadasi) mothers, single parent and children with both parents. **Methodology:** A descriptive cum comparative study was conducted among 180 children (60 children each of devadasis, single parent and both parents category) of 10 to 16yrs, in 36 villages of Bagalkot District, Karnataka, India through simple random sampling. **Results and discussion:** A checklist on 15 psychosocial domains was developed, standardized and administered among the samples. The results revealed psychosocial problems among children in the areas of basic needs; family support; social support; personal safety, conflicts in family and child marriage. **Conclusion:** The psychosocial issues identified above were prevalent among the children in the population studied though there is no significant difference between children of unwed mothers(devadasis), single parent and both parents.

Keywords: Psychosocial profile, Children of unwed mothers, Rehabilitated devadasis, Indian perspective

1. Introduction

Families in India are understood for its ideal homogeneous unit with strong coping mechanisms. Modernization, urbanization and industrialization wiped out the traditional extended family system in South East Asian countries. Indian families though continue to be patriarchal, increase in divorce and separation rates, domestic violence, inter-generational conflicts, social problems of drug abuse, juvenile delinquency etc is reported (Sonavat 2001). The 2011 census reports that 11 % of Indian families are women headed and 14.91% of households in Karnataka are headed by women (GOI 2011). One of the reasons for single parenthood in rural villages of southern India is Devadasi system. This refers to the practice of dedicating young girls to the village deity to entertain the community as well as offer sexual services to their patrons leading to unwed mother hood in various rural villages in south India. Devadasis who enjoyed prestigious status in the society as wife of God lost her status due to invasions from West Asia and colonial rule where the power of temples fell forcing these women in to poverty and misery and in many cases prostitution (Chawla 2003).

Devadasi system a historical view

Practices similar to Devadasi system are reported across the world by N.K.Singh (1997) in his book "Divine Prostitution". The sacred prostitution in Babylonia, mother goddess and cult of sacred prostitution in Syria Phoenicia and Cannan and similar practices in West Africa and places such as Peru, Mexico Japan etc. is reported in the book. Goswami (2000) reports that origin of Devadasi system can be traced to 3rd century A.D. Chawla (2002) reports that beginning of Devadasi system around 6th century A.D. and reached its glory around 10th and 11th century A.D. Morgan (1877) explains that the civilization evolved in seven stages from hunting and gathering stage of savagery to a settled agricultural stage (Barbasism) which is divided in to 3 stages each followed by more advanced stage of agriculture (civilisation). Morgan explained that family advanced for lower form of promiscuity through various

forms and culminated in to monogamy. Frederick Engles (1884) reported similar practices in various parts of world during the middle and upper stages of barbarism and hence conclusion can be made that devadasi system is part of an evolutionary process in the society. At present men from higher class use this system to exploit lower class people especially the poor and illiterates. Sankar (1990) reports in his study conducted in village of Yellamapura that devadasi practice is followed among three main back ward class (Holers, Madars and Samgars). The practice of devadasis system is social and caste based and in addition to religious faith economic factors also contributes to this as all the devadasis come from poor land less families. Sankar (1990) reports 39% of devadasis are involved in commercial sex work where as others are employed in other jobs. Their marital status shows that 65% of them are single, 12.3% had single patrons 2.7% are married and 20% had visiting patron and 82% of patrons/husbands were coolies. Present status of devadasis can be concluded as illiterate women from lower class suffering from extreme poverty and unwed mother hood with poor support form family, patrons or society. Devadasi practice lead to unwed motherhood and their children experience traumatic life incidents such as illegitimacy, poverty, stigma etc.

Children living in such circumstances are exposed to vulnerabilities in life and can be termed as children in difficult circumstances as per the definition of UNESCAP (2008) "Children in especially difficult circumstances are those children who are for shorter or longer periods in their lives, exposed to intense multiple risks to their physical and mental health. A common characteristic of these children is that they lack proper adult care and protection and that they lead their lives outside mainstream society". Vulnerability factors among children in difficult circumstances as reported by Skinner(2006) are multiple that include economic factors, lack of access to amenities, lack of basic needs, sexual abuses and violence's, illness etc.

Children of unwed mothers due to Devadasi system, grow up with their single mother where resources are limited and this makes their life even more difficult. Sekaret. al (2012)

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identified twenty four various difficult circumstances experienced by children in South India were , single parent children and children from poor families also falls in to the category of children in difficult circumstances. A majority of these children live in abject poverty, exploitation and abuse that undermines child hood and has significant damaging effects on chances of survival and development. They are exposed to intense multiple risk to their physical and mental health. Kavitha, Sekar& Raj (2012) reports faulty family atmosphere leading to multiple problems among children in difficult circumstances such as running away and being in streets for begging, involving in high risk behavior, child labour, health complications, desertion discrimination and problems at schools. Financial difficulties, demands of employment and work experienced by deserted women compel them to neglect their children. Financial problems limit their children chances of getting primary education. (Asagi & Kazi, 2013)

Children in single parents families faces problems such as poverty, poor quality and quantity of parental contact and support as well as monitoring which is a threat in growing single parent families(Amato, 2000; Amato & Keith, 1991). The impact of single parent status among children has varied dimensions such as mothers neglecting children (Asagi & Kazi, 2013) poor educational performance Barry et. al (2003), runaway and sexual abuse (Khurana et. al., 2004) girls being more likely to attempt suicides(Lizardi et.al., 2010) and boys showing more delinquency (Spruijt & Duindam, 2010). A study on children of desertees showed that only 30% of children of desertees attended schools. More boys (36%) than girls (20%) attended school(Asagi & Kazi, 2013).

Profile of children of unwed mothers (Devadasis)

EveryChild India (2008) reported 6668 children of mothers dedicated to the devadasi system in 6 districts of Karnataka. Profile of these children as explained in the report show 62.6% of children were of age group 6 to 14 years, 66.7% of the children belonged to Madiga caste and 55.4% were boys. Majority of children of unwed mothers (Devadasi) 85.3% (5689 children) were being looked after by their mothers. Availability of basic amenities was reported by 63%, 52% of children attended school, 45.45% of children were out of school and 2.7% were irregular to school. Torri (2009) reported that children of unwed mother(Devadasi)do not have legitimacy to father, experience stigma and their daughters are vulnerable to dedication. Therefore children of unwed mother(Devadasi) growing up with single mother and various other social, cultural and economic factors inversely affects' their psychosocial development. Growing up in single parent family has it disadvantages in education of children. Amato (2005) explained that most children living with single parents are economically disadvantaged. Poor single parents cannot afford the books, home computers, private lessons that make it easier for their children to succeed in school. They cannot afford clothes, shoes, cell phones and other consumer goods that give their children status among their peers. More over many live in rundown neighbour hoods with high crime rates, low quality schools and few community services.

The previous studies conducted among children of unwed mothers describe individual and social profile and social problems which is similar to that experienced by Children in difficult circumstances. Hence there need for identifying and profiling of psychosocial problems specific to children eof unwed mothers towards developing community based psychosocial intervention.

The current study conducted among children in difficult circumstances aimed to explore the "Psychosocial profile children of unwed (Devadasi) mothers, single parent (Single mothers) and children with both parents belonging to Madiga community where the practice of devadasis system is high there by identifying specific problems of children of unwed mothers

2. Methodology

A descriptive cum comparative study was conducted among 180 children (60 children each of Un wed mothers, single parent and both parents category) of 10 to 16yrs, in 36 villages of Bagalkot District, Karnataka, India through simple random sampling. The total number of children attending the 39 child care activity centre's run by an NGO was 1881 of which 10% of the population fulfilling inclusion was selected for study. Inclusion criteria for the study were children of age group 10 to 16 years, children of single parents due to widowhood, divorce, separation and desertion. Exclusion criteria for the study were children of remarried couples, convicts, occupationally separated, children with mental sub normality and psychopathology as well as children living with father. A sample of size 60 was randomly drawn until 60 samples are reached in each of the three groups. Children belonging to all the three categories were selected for the study to better describe the problems of children of unwed mothers due to Devadasi system by comparing the results with that of children with both parents and children of single mothers. The researcher adopted qualitative and quantitative methods for the study. Parents and children involved in the study were informed about the purpose of study and informed consent was obtained. The 72nd Institute Ethics Committee, National Institute of Mental Health AndNeuro Sciences (NIMHANS) approved the study.

Developing checklist on psychosocial profile

A checklist on the psychosocial profile of the children in difficult circumstances was developed by the researcher. Key informant interview was conducted among 10 women each who were married women, single mothers and unwed mothers (Devadasi) focusing on the areas which was thematically coded.

- Personal life
- Family life
- Child rearing practices
- Upbringing of children
- Societal support
- Oppression (society and family)
- Needs and concerns of children as parents
- Personal support system

The researcher conducted two focus group discussions among 17 women, 13 children and 16 social workers and 10 case studies of children from all the three groups of children. Three more areas specific to the issues of children in difficult circumstances emerged in the process were:

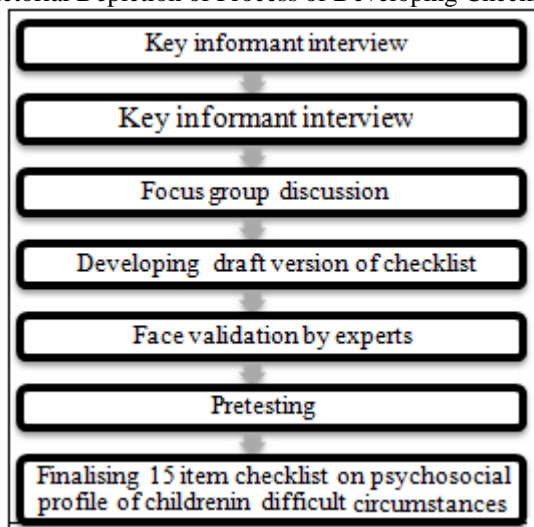
- Problems related to study
- Exploitation
- Health.

Through the Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus G Group Discussion (FGD) 15 psychosocial issues were identified.

- 1) Un fulfilled basic needs
- 2) Poor family situation
- 3) Child marriage
- 4) Drop out form school
- 5) Child labour
- 6) Discrimination
- 7) Punishment at school
- 8) Dual role
- 9) Health problems
- 10) Poor social support
- 11) Lack of safe environment
- 12) Poor parental support
- 13) Stigma
- 14) Injustice
- 15) Exploitation

A forty item check list was developed and face validated by three experts the suggestion that came up from face validation were 1) Make the questions generic 2) Cut down on repetitive items which was incorporated and the check list was pretested among 30 children (10 from each of the three categories). A checklist was modified to 15 items focusing on the 15 psychosocial problems was finalized for administration among the samples.

Pictorial Depiction of Process of Developing Checklist



Instruments used

The instruments used for the study were: Family schedule developed by Indian Council for Medical Research Centre For Advanced Research on Community Mental Health (ICMR CAR CMH, 1984), to study the demographic details and Psychosocial profile of children in difficult circumstances (PSP) developed by the researcher.

3. Results

The information on the family profile collected using ICMR Family schedule (1984) gives the family and socio economic details of children identified for the study. The family profile of children participated in the study showed that there is no significant difference between the number of girls and boys selected for study. Presence of child marriage follows same pattern in all the three groups and there is no significant difference between the groups (10% (n=6) in single parent families and 11.3% (n=7) among children of unwed mothers and children with dual parents). The presence of devadasis in the families is reported by 46.25% of the total population identified for the study. The presence of child labour in the family did not show any significant difference between three groups (18.3% (n=11) in single parent families and 19.4% (n=12) among children of unwed mothers and 17.7% (n=11) among children with dual parents). Presences of child labour is reported in 18.3% of single parent families, 19.4% of dual parent families and 17.7% of devadasi families). No significant difference between mother's age, age of children and family income between the groups was observed between the three groups. Significant difference between the groups in the family type of children was observed where 66.7% of children of single mothers and 61.3% of children of unwed mothers lived in single parent families with their mothers where as 74.2% of children with both parents lived in nuclear families (p value < .05). Family income between the three groups not show major difference between the three group, where majority of them lived below poverty line.

Psychosocial problems among children in difficult circumstances- a comparison between single parent children, children of dual parents and children of unwed mothers

Table 1: Psychosocial Problems of Children-A Comparison

#	Area	Single parent children	Children Of dual parents	Children of unwed mothers Devadasi	Total	χ^2	df	P Value
1	Basic Needs	21(35%)	20 (32.2%)	20 (32.2%)	61 (33.15)	.137	2	.934
2	Family situation	20(33.3%)	33(53.2%)	29(46.8%)	82(44.4%)	5.069	2	.079
3	Child marriage	8 (13.3%)	7 (11.3%)	11(17.7%)	26(14.1%)	1.110	2	.547
4	Dropout	15(25%)	12(19.4%)	9(14.5%)	36(19.6%)	2.132	2	.344
5	Child labour	16(26.7%)	14(22.6%)	8(12.9%)	38(20.7%)	3.737	2	.154
6	Discrimination	8(13.3%)	13(21%)	12(19.4%)	33(17.9%)	1.336	2	.513
7	Punishment at school	17(28.3%)	11(17.7%)	5(8.1%)	33(17.9%)	8.513	2	.014
8	Dual role	11(18.3%)	13(21%)	16(25.8%)	40(21.7%)	1.034	2	.596
9	Health	18(30%)	6 (9.7%)	12 (19.4%)	36(19.7%)	8.005	2	.018
10	Social support	16(26.7%)	13(21%)	19(30.6%)	48(26.1%)	1.521	2	.48
11	Safety	16(26.7%)	19(30.6%)	12(19.4%)	47(25.5%)	2,137	2	.344
12	Parental support	10(16.7%)	11(17.7%)	14(22.6%)	35(19%)	.792	2	.673
13	Stigma	5(8.3%)	8(12.9%)	5(8.1%)	18(8.6%)	1.034	2	.596
14	Injustice	9(15%)	7 (11.3%)	4(6.5%)	20(10.9%)	2.317	2	.314
15	Exploitation	5(8.3%)	7(11.3%)	4(6.5%)	16(8.7%)	.929	2	.628

Psychosocial problems among children in difficult circumstances were assessed through a 15 item check list. Lack of basic needs was reported by 33.2% (n=61) of children. More children from single parent families (35%, n=21) reported lack of basic needs. Conflicts and fights at home was another major concern of children in difficult circumstances reported by 44.43% of children. The incident was more reported by children from dual parent family (53.2%, n=33). One in every third child reported higher chances of getting married due to the family conditions. Chances of becoming drop out of the school due to conditions at home were reported by 19.63% of children. The problem is reported more by children from single parent families (25%). Every 5th child in difficult circumstance reported higher chances of becoming child labour due to economic conditions at home. The problem was reported more by children from single parent families (26.7%). The results of the study brought that 17.9% of children reported discrimination in their life which was more among dual parent families. Children in difficult circumstances perform multiple role and they do not get enough time to study due to work to support the family which was reported by 21.7% of children. The problem was reported more among children of unwed mothers (devadasis- 25.8%). Poor social support was reported by 1/4th of children in difficult circumstances. Poor support from neighbors towards their family was reported more by children of unwed mothers (devadasis - 30.6%). Lack of personal safety at home was reported by 25.56% of children. More children from dual parent families reported lack of personal safety at home (26.7%). Every 5th child in difficult circumstance reported lack of parental support which was reported more among children of unwed mothers (Devadasi- 22.6%). Stigma was reported by 8.66% of the children. Among the three categories dual parent children reported higher stigma (12.9%). One out of every 10 children reported injustice happening to the family which was reported more among children from single parent families (15%). The results show that 8.7% of children in difficult circumstances experience exploitation. Exploitation was reported more by children of dual parents (11.3%). Chi-square test carried out brings out that there is no significant difference between the groups in the areas of psychosocial problems mentioned above. However in the area punishment at school 17.9% of children reported punishments at school which is higher among single parent children (28.3%)

followed by children from dual parent families (17.7%). Chi-square test carried out brings out that there is a significant difference between the three groups on punishments at school by teachers were children from single parent families reported higher rates of punishments as compared to children from dual parents and children of UNWED MOTHERS which is much lesser (8%), ($X^2=8.513$, $df=2$, $p<.05$). Poor health was reported by 19.7% of children where they reported to fall sick often. More children from single parent families (30%) reported poor health as compared to children of unwed mothers (19.4%) or children of dual parents (17.7%). Chi-square test conducted revealed that health problems are significantly higher among single parent children ($X^2= 8.005$, $df=2$, $p<.05$).

Age and psychosocial problems among children

Children of unwed mothers above 13 years reported significantly higher chances of dropping out from school (n=6, 28.6%) as compared children of younger age group 10-12 years ($\chi^2=5.056$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). The problem of punishments at school is higher among children of single parents of age group 10-12 years (n=12, 29.3%). The problem was reported less by children of unwed mothers of age group 10-12 years. (n=3, 7.3%), where as children of dual parents above 13 years did not report punishment at school. Children of unwed mothers of age group 13 years and above reported significantly higher problem due to dual role performed (n= 10, 47.65%, $\chi^2=7.891$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). Lack of safety at home was reported significantly more among children of dual parents of age group 10- 12 yrs (n=19, 39.6%, $\chi^2=7.990$, $df=$, $p<.05$).

Gender and psychosocial problems

Among children of unwed mothers lack of basic needs was reported more by male children of unwed mothers (n=14, 51.9%, $\chi^2=8.403$, $df = 1$, $p<.05$) as compared to females. Among children of single parents lack of basic needs was reported more by females (n=13, 34.2%). Among dual parent families equal number of male and female children reported lack of basic needs (n=10, 32.3%). Female children showed higher chances of getting married in all the three groups of children and there is no significant difference between males and females in chances of getting married. The chances of being drop out from school due to conditions at home was reported more by females of dual parent

families $n=11$ 35.5%, $\chi^2=10.333$, $df=1$, $p<.05$) as compared to males. Among children of single parents and children of unwed mother the female children reported more chances of dropping out from school due to conditions in the family though the difference is not significant.

Family income and psychosocial problems

The lack of basic need was mainly reported by children from families with lower income in all the three groups (Income below Rs. 6000/- per month). Children who reported chances of child marriage predominantly belonged to lower income group among single parent children ($n=5$, 15.2%) and children of dual parents ($n=7$, 20%). Among children of unwed mothers the chances of child marriage was reported in higher income group also. Children who reported family income below Rs. 3000 a month reported problem of dual role among single parent children ($n=5$, 15.2%), children of dual parents ($n=7$, 20%) and among children of unwed mothers ($n=6$, 15.85%).

4. Discussion

Psychosocial problems among children assessed showed that children in all the three groups' reported problems under various psychosocial domains. Children of unwed mothers (Devadasis) experienced higher psychosocial problem in areas such as lack of basic needs, conflicts and fights at home, problems due to dual role, poor social support and parental support though the problems were not significantly higher as compared to children of dual parents or children of single mother. All the children who participated in the study belonged to Madiga community considered as the lower most caste in the caste hierarchy and half of the families selected for the study had lineage towards Devadasi system i.e presence of a devadasi in the family. The community faces class oppression and discrimination. Poverty and illiteracy is highly reported in the community. Socio economic status of the families was also same there by confirming that statuses of unwed mother hood alone do not contribute to higher psychosocial problems among children.

The results brings out that the Madiga community has a higher lineage to devadasi system and the children in this community are exposed to intense multiple risk right from the birth through their life, lack of time among the parents, poor parenting skills in these families leads to poor parental care and protection for children. Children of Madiga community live in a section of society that is physically, geographically and functionally separated from the main society. Hence the definition of UNESCAP (2008) appropriately applies the present condition of children in difficult circumstances among Madiga community belonging to dual parent families, single parent children and children of un wed mothers (devadasis) and can be termed as children in difficult circumstances.

Psychosocial problems experienced by children in difficult circumstances and single parent children are explained by many studies. Results of the current study are supported by other findings (Sekar et al., 2008; Skinner et al., 2006; UNICEF, 2003), where higher proportion of children in difficult circumstances reported lack of basic needs of food clothing and shelter. Parental illness leading to difficulty

among children and drop out is also reported by children in the study. The villages where Madiga and devadasi community live are away from the main village and hence facilities such as transport, medical facility, school facility etc. is less and this also contributes to drop out and child labour among children. Abuses and neglect is yet another major problem identified among all the three groups of children studied that supports earlier findings.

Problems related to school such as "teachers punish me often" is reported more by single parent children, which is significantly high as compared to dual parent children or children of unwed mothers. Poor economic conditions forcing to drop out such as children working after school timing is high among single parent children and due to this many children have reported lack of time to study and do homework. These problems would have affected single parent children more than children of dual parents and children of unwed mothers leading to more problems at school. The results from the study support the results of Amato (2005) that children from single parent families have higher problems in education.

Poor health is reported significantly higher among children of single parents. Child labour especially in agricultural fields makes these children vulnerable to accidents by care less handling of tools and equipment's. Working longer hours on sun also makes them tired. The unhygienic environment, poor food intakes may result in nutritional deficiencies among children, more over the children of single parents are highly stressed due to life events. All these factors contribute to the poor health among single parent children. The results support the observations made by Mock and Buhr (2009) that orphans and other vulnerable children will have higher nutritional deficiencies and other health consequences.

Children from families of unwed mothers who reported child marriage in the family and poor social support as well as children from dual parent families who reported drop outs are at higher chances of getting married early. The results support the findings of other studies (Desai, 2012; Torri, 2013) that absence of father and poor socio economic status forces children into marriage soon after puberty. Lack of support from the neighbours and concerns about the future of the girl child due to mother's status as Devadasi (Unwed mother) is evident from the results. Poor educational facilities leads to drop out among children and increases their vulnerability to high risk. Parents especially that of young girls prefer to marry girls than letting them sit at home due to lack of safety. The results support findings (SAARC & UNICEF, 2010) that poor security as one of the reason for child marriage.

Children of unwed mothers become vulnerable to take up dual role at a young age. Women who practice sex work are at a higher chance of developing HIV. The child's life is at risk hence they start taking up the responsibility of their younger siblings to ensure their safety. These children will also have to drop out or take up work after school hours to support family financially. Other reasons for children of unwed mothers to drop out of school are due to poverty, labelling, lack of motivation and lack of facilities and safety

reasons children of unwed mothers especially girls drop out of school. The poor conditions at home interfere with the studies of children. Children in difficult circumstances do not have the conducive environment to study and prepare for classes. As a result they will not perform well in school. They are subjected to punishments and various other difficulties such as teasing or labelling by peers.

Lack of basic needs is predominantly found among lower income families of all the three groups. Child marriage is also reported more in lower income groups of single and dual parent families, whereas, it is more among high income families among children of unwed mothers. Problems due to dual role is reported more by children of lower income group in single and dual parent families where as it reported more in higher income families among children of unwed mothers. The results of the current study are supported by previous studies in this area (Roustit, Chaix, & Chauvin, 2007; Sun & Li, 2002; Wu, Hou, & Schimmele, 2008; Zill, Morrison, & Coiro, 1993). Parents from the poor families go to work leaving children with their old grandparents or in Anganwadis. Many-a-times children are left alone at home. Parents lack quality time with their children. Neglecting children basic needs such as providing timely food, maintain personal hygiene, proper clothing, etc., was observed among the study group. In many families children do not have breakfast and they have only two meals a day. Habits such as daily bath, washing hands before meal or wearing clean cloths was absent among children resulting in poor health and infections.

Children are left without parental supervision and they mostly roam around in the village. Younger children are taken care by the older ones. As children are mostly neglected, they lack proper guidance and routine in life. Many a times children skip school as they are not guided or monitored by parents or significant others in the family. Children are expected to work and do household jobs and younger children are responsibility of elder ones. Lack of good neighbourhood is reported by children in difficult circumstances irrespective of presence of father in the family or children of unwed mother. Fights with neighbours, lack of social support, and poor safety in the community is reported by many children and parents. Violence within the family due to alcoholism among fathers, wife battering is high in dual parent families. Children of unwed mothers also reported poor safety at home due to their parent's partners/clients visiting their house. Lack of safety for children especially for girls is a major concern for mothers. Involving in antisocial activities is also reported in few of the families. Social isolation and discrimination is again a major problem reported by these children due to their lower caste status. Various cultural practices still exist in the community that undermines the children in Madiga community. More over mother's status as Devadasi (unwed mother) itself is a label on them. Young girls of Madiga community are at higher risk of dedication even now where the girls who are dedicated and quickly trafficked to the red light areas by pimps and brokers. Parents are highly stressed and this results in parents punishing, over expectation and children distancing them self from parents. Children in difficult circumstances are exposed to various difficult

circumstances in their life that induces high level of trauma in them.

5. Conclusion

The major psychosocial problems reported by children were poor family situation, lack of basic needs, lack of social support and safety, child labour and difficulties due to dual role. Psychosocial problems when compared among the three categories of children with dual parents, children of single parents and children of unwed mothers showed significantly higher problems among single parent children in the areas of school where they reported higher punishments and poor health.

Children of unwed mothers above 13 years reported higher chances dropping out of school as well as problems due to dual role of being a student and having to work. Children from single parent families of age group 10-12 years experience higher problems at schools due to punishments whereas lack of safety was higher among the children in dual parent families of age group 10-12 years. Male as compared to females from children of unwed mother had higher difficult due to lack of basic needs. The chances of being drop out is more among female from dual parent families. The problems such as child marriage and drop out were reported higher among females in the entire three groups.

The psychosocial problems experienced by children depend on the socio-cultural, economic and political environment. Children of unwed mothers experienced a wide range of psychosocial problems that affect their psychosocial development. The current study did not show higher problem among children of unwed mothers unlike other studies in the similar line as the population selected for the study belong to the same socio-economic and cultural group. This confirms that the social and family factors influence the child's psychosocial development irrespective of the family structure.

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