

## **SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON DEVADASI CHILDREN** **(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BALLARI DISTRICT)**

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### **Abstract**

Its been long back devadasi practice has been outlawed and the system is slowly out of the eyes or declining. Devadasi practice is not only a social evil but also a social stigma and heinous practice of India specifically in south India, more than 6 states largely practicing this hilarious culture from the centuries. For instance Karnataka, Andra pradesh , Maharashtra, Kerala, Goa , Tamilu nadu, Orissa, with different names as Devadasi , basavi, muralis, jogathi, Kuddikars etc, simply we can define devadasi as “servant of god,” in particular ‘a girl before crossing her puberty she dedicate to a deity or god and lives without marriage rest of her life. Though the practice is outlawed, some reports reveal that the dedication takes place secretly. The practice itself considered as social evil and many social reformist ,and activists fight against the system and try to abolish, at the same time no one try to understand the miserable life of devadasi children and their social life ,economic status ,educational background. However the present study intends to throw light on this special children of the society. Children of devadasis are the outcome of ignorance, lack of cultural background, and lack of their father identity. They are living in a pain full life ,frustrated in daily routine leading vulnerable life, therefore the present study try to understand socio economic life of devadasi children, With keeping the following objectives: **1.To asses the socio-economic status of devadasi children 2. To understand the problems and challenges of devadasi children in the study area 3. To analyze the**

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**educational background of devadasi children.** As purpose of the study 100 adult respondents (age above 18) were taken from Bellary district of Karnataka state using simple random sampling method.

*Key words ; devadasi, miserable, heinous, children,*

## **Introduction**

An overwhelming statement has given ‘KOTHLAMMA’ in the book ‘Beda budakattu devadasi adhyana (beda trible devadasi system) in which she reveals that 96% of the devadasis change their partners, only 04% of them confined to a single partner . The most shocking, overwhelming, and surprising information has provided by the researcher. This is hilarious, and heinous and shabby, and utterly influence by one of the most evil practice in india called as devadasi practice. The information more than enough to understand how devadasi system is going to takes place in Indian orthodox culture. But the present research is mainly concentrating on not devadasi practice but concentrating on the devadasi children.

As we carefully look in to the present situation certainly the time has been changed and the new challenge, new circumstances present new challenges and possibilities. It is absolutely true in the present scenario of typical Indian society, because devadasi practice is not so flourish in the present society often we could have been experienced that the girls were dedicated to god secretly by their parents support. But this practiced outlawed and declining gradually. this practice has been abolished due to the effort of many reformist and social activist and the extend support of social organization. Meanwhile recent stories could have been found out that there is change in devadasi system. Reformist’s social activists and sociologists fought against the system. This causes to bring many changes in the life style of devadasis. At the same time some stories reveals that the Devadasi system alive in the society changing its nature it’s a stigma of Indian social system. Keeping all these facts the study includes to find out the social life of Devadasi children. Because an information provided by a study I,e “96% of the Devadasis Change their partners. Only 4% of Devadasis would have been stick on one partner, (Kotlamna-Devadasi Budakattu adlmgana) which says the children have taken birth by elicit relation.” These children have lot of pain, Frustration, and socio-cultural Problem. Reformist’s social

activist's succeeded to bring the changes in Devadasi system but failed to concentrate on children of Devadasis.

The Problem of Devadasi children had begun before the birth. In Indian tradition getting pregnancy is an important step of women. Where as in the devadasi family the situation is totally change. If devadasi girl or women get pregnancy even her family does't look after her and the society shows irresponsibility and there is no demand for the children. Members of the Devadasi family creates unawareness about marriage. Preferably girl do not extend their interest on marriage. Further it may be pointed out that there is no future for girls no place for moral life with sexual harassment from sex maniacs. Most importantly even educated devadasi children suffered by sexual harassment, and they live without marriage.

An article published in E P W, has pointed out that "Most of the Devadasis realize the importance of education. Every year the government of India comes up with mass enrolment. Campaigns in schools for no-school going children and dropouts. We participate in this campaign with great interest and get out devadasi children admitted in schools. "However problems start right from the admission itself. First thing the school authorities insist on the father name though we try to educate them about the Devadasi system they never like to listen to us. This is embracing situation for both the mother and particularly the child. There have been instances where insensitive teachers asked the child "how have you been born without a father? (vimala Ramachandran and Taramani-An Article Published in EPW)This is the situation every devadasi children facing in all schools

### **History of devadasi system**

Meghadootha of Kalidasa has given information about dancing girls in temples. The sources said that dancing girls were present at the time of worship in Mahakal Temples of Ujjain. some scholars have argued that dancing girls to temple was quite common in 6<sup>th</sup> century. The puranas containing reference to it ( Anil Chawla – 2002) During the medieval period they were regarded as part of the normal establishment of temples. The Status of Devadasi can be seen to be parallel to the rise and fall of the Hindu Temple.

Many scholars are now of the opinion that the devadasi practice has no sanction of the scriptures. These scholars treat devadasi practice as “sacred or religious prostitution” and plead that Hindu scriptures do not have any mention of sacred prostitution. Various ‘Smritis’ have recognized prostitution and there are instances of being taxed. For eg, Arthasastra written during 300 Bc has a chapter dealing with “Superintendent of prostitutes” similarly kamasutra and the classic “mrichha Katika” also given examples of devadasi practicing in Temples.

### **Yallamma cult in Karnataka”**

“In the state of Karnataka the devadasi system was following for over 10 centuries. Chief among them was “Yellamma cult”

There are many stories about the origin of the yallamma cult. The most prevalent one says that renuka was the daughter of a Brahmin married to sage Jamadagni and was the mother of five sons. She used to bring water from the river malaprabha for the sages worship and rituals. One day while she was at the river she saw a group of youths engaged themselves in water sports and forgot to return home in time which made jamadagni to suspect her chastity. He ordered his sons one by one to punish their mother but four of them on one pretext or the other. The sage cursed them to become eunuchs and got her beheaded by his fifth son Parashurama. To everybodys astonishment, Renuka’s head multiplied by tens and hundreds and moved to different regions. This miracle made her four eunuch sons and others to become her followers and worship her head and a number of young girls of lower caste started to be dedicated to the goddess yallamma (Vijayakumar, Chakrapani 1993)The system of Devadasi has been mostly found in Dalit communities in India “According to the national commission of women over. 2.5 lakhs girls most of whom belong to the Dalit communities in India. Beside Karnataka the devadasi system in Maharastra Andrapradesh and Tamilunadu A 1993-94 Survey found there were 22,873 Spread across 10 districts and a re -survey 2007 revealed that there are around 30,000 Devadasi in the district. But the number of Devadasi dedication and the total number of devadasi girls in south India is difficult to obtain because most of the traditional devadasi sex worker is now home based in rural villages and these girls continue to serve where they reside. Other reason the Devadasi system has not appear in upper caste.The above mentioned information shows that the practice of Devadasi is mostly found in dalit and Bakward class communities.

**Numerical status of devadasis in Bellary district in 2007-2008 re survey**

SL NO	NAME OF THE TALUK	NUMBER OF DEVADASIS
1	BELLARY	1466
2	SIRAGUPPA	1071
3	SANDURU	1197
4	HOSAPETE	2852
5	HUVINAHADAGALI	1036
6	HAGARI BOMMANAHALLI	1952
7	KUDLIGI	1215
	TOTAL	10789

(The survey of children of devadasis is in the process for the first time in Bellary district)

**AREA OF THE STUDY**

Bellary, is one of the Twenty nine districts of Karnataka state. Historical sites form land and Rich minerals characterize Bellary district. Also the home of famous vijayanagara empire world Heritage, site. Earlier Bellary district was part of Rayala seema, a region in today's state of Andhra Pradesh. During the period of the British Raj Bellary district was severely affected by the "Great Famine of 1876-78, After Indian Independence. When the Indian states were recognized along linguistic lines, Bellary became part of Karnataka. This district is bounded by Raichur District on the north, Koppal District on the west, chitradurga District and Davanagere District on the South, and Anantapur District and Kurnool District of Andrapradesh on the east.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

No such study has done regard devadasi children in Bellary district. Previously the whole studies have been concentrated on socio-economic and religious life of Devadasis. Reformists and social activists tried to abolish devadasi system at the same time Failed to find out the social life and problems of Devadasi children. The present study intends to identify the problems Challenges conflicts of devadasi children in sociological point of view.

Devadasi children don't have their property rights, there is no consideration in social life, and suffering by education imbalance, frustration and leading painful life. There is no special concern for the devadasi children from the government, planners, and from the social activists. Though In Karnataka, actively working an organization *Vimochaka* in Athani , along with these there are many social organization, such as *Sakhi, visthar, Vimukhtha*.

It is clearly indicates that loopholes in the implementation of welfare measures. There is no long term, sustainable, integrated and inclusive approach for these special children. Though the present study would like to identify the major challenges Problems being faced by the devadasi children in their life and work towards the upliftment of devadasi children.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The Present study includes vital aspects including research design adopted for the study. Characteristics of the study universe, sampling technique, statistical techniques for the analysis of data will be used. Descriptive method of research will be in the study. The design adopted is mainly the Interview technique with supported by observation and document analysis

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study intends to look in to the status and position of the Devadasi children in socio –economic point of view in contemporary society keeping this in mind the present research work is taken up with the following objectives.

- 1.To asses the socio-economic status of devadasi children
2. To understand the problems and challenges of devadasi children in the study area
3. To analyze the educational background of devadasi children.

## **Study Universe and Sample**

The Universe For the present study of Children of Devadasi in Bellary district .Has been taken as my present research. In the present study there were 50respondents were selected from two taluks of bellary district such as hosapet and kudligi. For drawing a representative sample the researcher used random sampling method, and selected 25 respondents from each taluks

**Data analysis**

On the basis of primary and secondary data from various sources have been tabulated and codified

**Property rights from the father:**

The table 01 reveals that the property rights from the father. According Hindu succession and property right is mandatory. Every children enjoying properties rights of their fathers. Generally which is applicable to all children. But below table shows the opinion of the respondents about the properties rights.

**Table -01****Properties right from the father.**

<b>Gaining properties right from the father</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average</b>
Yes	02	04
No	45	90
I don't have any idea	03	06
Total	50	100

The above table shows the gaining property right from the father in which only 04% of the respondents were gained property from their father 86% of the respondents were unable to gain property from their father. Which mean 86% of the respondents are doesn't have property from their fathert. This indicates that the children of devadasi lives without property of their father rest of the life.

**Father identity**

The below table reveals that the information about the father , does the children of devadasis have any information about their father and elsewhere using their father identity and find out does they know their father.

**Table - 2****Knowing about the father.**

<b>Information about the father</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average</b>
Yes	3	06
No	47	94
Total	50	100

The above table reveals that the merely 6% of the devadasi children know about the father and 94% of the respondents reveals that they do not know their father . The reason may be many such as the mother has not revealed that, or kept information in secret or the children never ask the question about that, but the overwhelming information is huge number of the respondents they do not know the father.

**Table -03****Health awareness about the mother**

<b>Health awareness</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average</b>
Information about their mother health	29	58
Health awareness among themselves	06	12
Information about general diseases	09	18
Information about Malnutrition	06	12
Total	50	100

The above table shows the 58% of the respondents has the information about their mother health , 12% of the respondents know their health status 18% of the respondents provide the information as they have an idea about general diseases and only 12% respondents know the information of Malnutrition.



**Problems at marital relationships**

The below table shows the problem of marital relationships at the time of marriage. Because Being children's of devadasis they are living in shabby circumstances therefore the below table reveals the reality what is the opinion of devadasi children

**Table -04****Opinion about the marital relationships**

opinion	Frequencies	Average
Yes	46	92
No	04	08
Total	50	100

The above table shows devadasi children have problem at developing a marital relationships ,that is 92% of the respondents says that they have the problem only 08% of the respondents reveals that they are not face any problem or ignore at the time of marriage .

**Discrimination due to devadasi children**

Surely devadasipractice is one of the major social problem of India. This is may be describe as the sham of Indian society. The following table is provide the opinion about does they discriminated in their life due to born as children of debvadasi. The belpw table shows the opinion are as follows.

**Table – 05****Discrimination due to devadasi children**

Opinion	frequency	average
Yes	41	82
No	09	18
Total	50	100
reasons	frequency	Average
Due to the children of devadasi	36	72

Due to illicit relationship of mother	001	02
No father identity	03	06
others	01	06
Total	36	72

The above table shows 82% of the respondents discriminated due to devadasi children in which 72% of the respondents reveal that because of devadasi children they are discriminated by various ways, 02% the respondents says that due to illicit relationship ,another 6% of the respondents opined that due to no father identity which cause for the discrimination. Overall point of view one or the way these children were discriminated.

### **Finding of the study**

Devadasi children are are very special in the Indian society these are cursed community. Based on the data the findings of the study are as follows.

- Related property right more than 90% of the devadasi children donot have the right to enjoy the property of their fathers. Which mean the devadasi children are in the position do not owning a proper of their father.
- Exactly 94% of respondents reveals that, don't have any idea about their father. , Most of the devadasi children unaware are about their father.
- As concerning health issue 58% of the respondents aware about their mother health along with children reveals that their mother disease, Most of the devadasi children unaware are about their father.
- 92% of the respondents said they have certain problem at the time martial relationships.
- Most of the time devadasi children were discriminated by the neighbors, friends, relatives, 72% of the respondents reveal that they were discriminated by m,any ways.
- Most of the devadasi children are lack of constitutional safeguards government and NGO's has not been concentrating on these special children. There is no reservation policy or financial benefits from the government

**Sugetions and recommendations**

- There is need of separate governance to study their background are backwardness. Because these children are socially economically weaker section of the society.
- There is requirement of provide good and quality education with special provisions
- The personalities. Development programmes are to be launched.
- The separate reservation is needed for such children.
- it is very essential to remove the stigma and also some Measures have to be taken to remove the stigma of the Devadasi Children.
- It is also very essential to provide adequate facilities like loan or financial benefits to upgrade themselves

**Conclusion :-**

Devadasi is an issue of child prostration. Once a girl become devadasi rest of her life she must be unmarried. Though they have children the real sufferer of the practice is children of devadasi. The respondents desire to know about their mother health issues and the participants have a desire to know who their father. They have missed out on parental care and affection. During young age they were often looked after by their grandmothers as neither parent will be with them. Neither the boys nor the girls want any of their family members to become Devadasi and they feel that it is an oppressive practice. They are facing miserable condition. There is anger and disagree about the society which cause for their current situation.

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