



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

SOCIAL MOBILITY AND EDUCATION: A STUDY OF THE ARAYA FISHING COMMUNITY IN KERALA

Dr. Rajasree E.R

Asst. Professor in sociology

ITSR, Wayanad, University of Calicut, Kerala

Abstract

Education is a very strong means of encouraging social mobility in the Indian society. In this study mobility identifies through development. The study focused on the educational mobility of the Araya fishing community. It deals with the intergenerational mobility and educational status in the araya fishing community. Descriptive research design is used for the study. The study conducted at Thrissur district in Kerala. Quantitative and qualitative method is used for the present study. Primary and secondary data are sources of data collection. Tool of data collection is interview-schedule. Snow ball sampling is used for the present study.

Key words: Araya, Education, Intergenerational mobility

INTRODUCTION

Social mobility is the movement of an individual or groups from one social position to another. Social mobility does not happen suddenly because it is a dynamic process which happens gradually within the community. Education is seen as a strong driver or mechanism of social mobility. A society is constituted by the people who are dynamic in nature. From the primitive uncivilized form, it has evolved in to modern civilized and cultured society. This proves beyond doubt the dynamic nature of the society in which education has played a dominant role. Thus, education is a liberating force and in the present age it is also a democratizing force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances, thereby, bringing about mobility among the people in the social structure of the society (Nazimuddin 2014). Inter-generational mobility happens when the social position changes from one generation to another. This study analyzed the Inter-generational mobility with special reference to the educational mobility within three generations of the Araya community.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Society is the path of social mobility. Social mobility is the movement from one status to another. Education helps to a high social position in the society. Education can assist the movement of persons into the top positions in society. Araya is a traditional fishing community in Kerala. Arayas are socially, economically and educationally backward community in Kerala. So, they are included an 'other eligibility caste' in Kerala at the same time 'other backward caste' in India. In this situation to know the educational status of araya in present era is very relevant. This study focusses on the intergenerational educational mobility within three generations in the araya community and also discuss the educational background of arayas in earlier period.

OBJECTIVES

- To find out the inter-generational mobility in education among araya community
- To understand the educational status in earlier period of the araya fishing community

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design is used for the study. The study conducted at Thrissur district in Kerala because of more araya people located in this area. Quantitative and qualitative method is used for the present study. Sources of data collection is primary and secondary data. Tool of data collection is interview-schedule. Collected some interviews for now the earlier background and status of araya. Snow-ball sampling method is used. Out of total population 50 percent of sample is used for the data collection.

DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Discussion and results are deals with the educational background of arayas, cross tabulation of two variables like sex and education. Additional to age and educational level were cross checked to identify the educational mobility and relevance of the education among different age groups. Added to educational mobility within three generations and case studies from household respondents. Each title is deals with discussion and results.

Educational background of arayas

According to respondent (51 years old) In former days education merely existed among the higher caste Hindus. Only after the arrival of Christian missionaries that education has reached to the lower communities. It brought a spark into the life of Araya community but it does not work fruitfully. Some of the reformers like Pandit Karuppan, R B Rao from the community have worked for the development of Araya. But still not much development has been occurred. At the same time, during some of the officials deputed by the Madras government came to establish several fisheries schools for the development of the fishing community. Working syllabus of these fisheries schools were completely related to the mechanisms of fishing, fish net knitting, process etc. But there were not enough staffs in these schools so they recruited and tried to take some of the educated (2nd and 3rd class) fishermen to Madras for giving training in the aforesaid skills. But most of them were reluctant to go there. With the absence of proper management and maintenance these schools became deteriorated. The Araya did not receive any benefit from the schools due to their ignorance about the opportunities unattractive to them and also education. Hence the program was not become a part of their life. The early Araya were not concerned about the highly settled life. Meanwhile, the community organizations powerful interference has undertaken among the Araya specially to provide educational awareness and also literacy. In 1996 the government has proclaimed a rule to ensure a compulsory education among all people of Kerala. Due to the new policy, components like craft which included fish net knitting were taken away from the curriculum. The compulsory education generated some fluctuations among the Araya particularly, the parents were compelled to send their children to the schools. The government has brought some policies which are favourable to them as part of their educational activities such as free food, stipend and so on. As a result, it increased the number of Araya children going to schools. Hence, Sorokin (1959) argued the changes in the social position of individuals or groups on account of changes in the occupational, economic and educational status.

Sex of the household members and Education

Sex of the respondent is higher in females than males whereas the greater number of sex of the household is females compared to males. From the analysis of sex of the household more than half (50.92%) of the members are females. While, nearly half (49.07%) of the members are males. As, in the marine sector the sex ratio indicated 969 males for 1000 females (MFC, 2013). It revealed that women are more than men from the field work and they are unemployed so the males are compelled to work more to satisfy the major portion of the female households.

The cross tabulation of two variables like sex and education shows that 1.53 percent of males (out of 49.07 percent) and 0.61 percent of females (out of 50.92 percent) are illiterate. The sex of the household in present study discloses in Araya community involved more females compared to male and these females are more literate compared to male. Similarly, the study on sea, man, and life by Vasumathi (2008) claimed that fishermen literacy rate at Thrissur indicated by female (62 per cent) are more than that of male's (60 per cent) literacy rate. While, total literacy rate of male (59.77) is more than female's literacy rate (54.85) in Kerala. Therefore, it revealed that the Arayas have reached the path of modernity and education is the prominent modernization factor in the society which intermingles with the Araya life. They receive education to improve their status in the society and also to avoid isolation from other communities.

The increasing education not only brings some changes in the philosophy of life of men and women but also provides new path of employment to the latter. After becoming economically independent some women demand more freedom in family affairs. They refuse to accept anybody's dominance over them. Education brings changes in relations in the family.

It definitely changed their individual values and rational thinking which generates stress between the uneducated elder and educated younger generation. Moreover it brought changes in the family system and diversifying their traditional occupation.

Age and education of the respondents

The age and educational level were cross checked to identify the educational mobility and relevance of the education among different age groups such as young (below 30), middle (31 to 60) and old (above 61) in the Araya community. Such an analysis showed the slower educational improvement within these age groups.

Table 1:1
Age and education

Education of the Respondent	Age group of the respondent			Total
	Old	Middle	Young	
Literate	2.35	0	0	1%
Primary level	51.76	2.91	0	25%
Secondary level	40.58	52.42	0	34%
High school	2.35	33.98	39.32	21%
SSLC	1.17	3.88	16.85	6%
Pre-degree/Higher secondary level	0.58	2.91	16.85	5%
Degree	0.58	1.94	12.35	4%
Post graduate	0.58	1.94	14.60	4%
Total	46.96	28.45	24.56	362 (100)

By the comparison of different age groups about their educational level identifies that, the old age group had only 2.91 percent were SSLC and above. Whereas, the ratio has been increased in the middle age group i.e., 10.67 percent. But the young age group is where the greatest number (60.65 per cent) of people acquired SSLC and above education. Compared to the old age group the education level of the younger has progressed. The higher the age group then the lesser is the educational level and when the age is declining then there is an upward education. So, the young age group is the highest group of people who has higher education compared to other groups.

More than half (51.76 percent) of the respondents belonging to the old age group have acquired primary level education. It is interesting to know that a good number of people were primary educated obtained the traditional occupation. The reason may be their reluctance to leave their traditional jobs even if they get opportunities for other jobs.

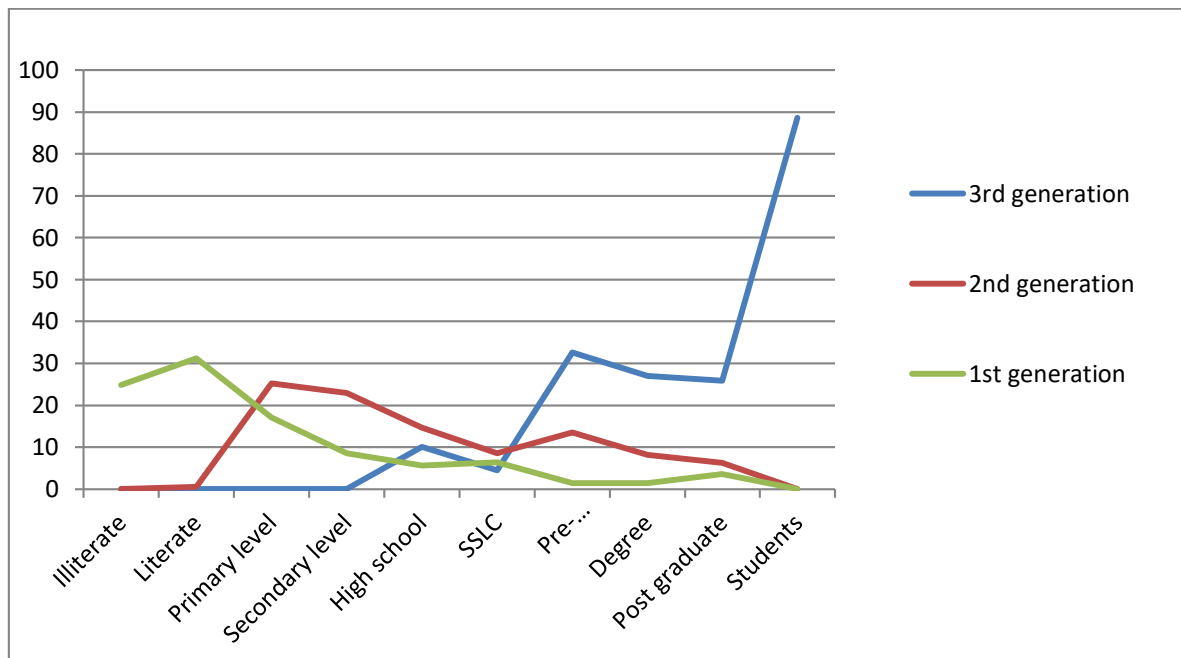
For instance; there was a system which provides training to the young individuals for different kinds of job by the Madras government. But the majority Arayans hesitated to enlist for this training in Madras because they were shy to intermingle with the strangers, and they were part of the traditional jobs: their fear and scare to go for training was due to the misbelief among the Arayas at that time that the scheme was to abduct their children for some criminal purposes. Therefore, they did not utilize these opportunities well and continued in their traditional life.

In conclusion, there has been dawdling improvement in the education among these age groups. At the beginning, lower number of people (old age group) went for higher education due to the lack of knowledge and education of their parents. While at the second stage (middle age group) there are many individuals who acquired upper education because their parents are aware that the value of education, norms and values, policies, reforms, economic condition and educational institutions is better than previous years. Modernization had an effect to this positive change among them. It was in the third category (young age group) that the highest number of individuals gained advanced level of education and the reasons for this can be attributed to the increased interaction, technological and educational advancement, innovation, transportation and so on. Among these, modernization had a great influence on the younger generation. The young people identify all trends and tried to achieve that trend. So, they sometimes do not care the words of grandparents, but they do not reject the words fully. Education takes on youngster's independent decisions relating to his personal affairs such as higher education, marriage, occupation etc. Youngsters are not much carried away by the traditional influence. He is ready for new experiences and ideas and is relatively opened minded and cognitively flexible. Here surely effected is mass communication, indusralization, new life style and modernization. Thus, it increases mobility in the Araya community like material standard of living, scientific and technical education, transition from ascribed to achieved status and increase in geographic and social mobility.

Educational mobility within three generations

In this section, educational mobility among three generations of the Arayas has been examined; third generation, second generation and first generation from the 362 households. It divides the age group that is, below 30, 31 - 60 and above 61. The third generation is the children of second generation and first generation is the parents of second generation. It aimed to analyze the educational comparison between the three generations and through it evaluates social mobility among Arayas. The educational levels between the first to second generation, and the second to third generation were compared.

Figure 1:1
Inter-generational difference in education



The above figure (1:1) focused on the level of education and generations within the Araya community to know the mobility of Arayas. In the third generation, majority (88.57 percent) of the members are students. While, there were no students in the second generation. The highest number (32.58 percent) of educational qualification possessed the pre-degree and technical holders in the third generation. While the primary holders the highest education that is, just above one fourth (25.28 percent) in the second generation. It is noticed that, in 3rd generation all of the members have above secondary level education. Whereas, in the second generation only few (0.56 percent) of the members are literate and also their education extended until masters' level.

In comparison to the two, the 3rd generation's educational qualification is better than the second group. The maximum educational qualification is above degree in the current era therefore the 52.8 percent members acquired both degree and post graduate qualification level. It indicates an educational mobility among this age group. But on the contrary, during the second generation the highest education level is considered as SSLC and above, so it is evident that 36.56 percent members are above SSLC.

Only 31.20 percent of the members are literates in the 1st generation but in the 3rd and second-generation educational level is comparatively better. It is significant to note that only below one fourth (24.82 percent) of members were illiterates. Comparatively they are the backward group who got less education than the other two groups. The 1st generation is proud to keep as education level that is the high school and above that is, 18.41 percent of members are educated. In earlier days their life is related to their occupation therefore they were unattracted to education. In general, compared to the first and second generation the third generation is the group of people who educated well in the society. The reason is that, education has been developed due to the influence of modernization and external factors. The reason for lack of education in the second and first generation is the situational factors which are different from time to time. It is investigated that, moving from first to third generation there was a gradual educational improvement among Araya.

Case studies from household respondents

Few case studies are presented to acknowledge the education mobility among the Araya.

Case I: Thambi, aged 43 years residing in the semi urban area of Azhikode, hails from a middle-class family. He is a SSLC holder who was working as a manager in a private company and now he is retired. His wife also achieved SSLC education but was not working. But his parents were educated up to secondary level. They have three children: two sons and one daughter. Three of them are graduates. His elder son studied Bachelor of Engineering (B.E), the other one is studying in Bachelor of Science (B. Sc.) and the daughter is studying Bachelor of Commerce (B.com). It showed an educational mobility in this family, from secondary level to engineering graduate, within the three generations.

Case II: Informant aged 29 years, dwelling at the semi urban area of Thalikulam is a graduate from lower middle-class family and working as driver. His father was educated up to secondary level and mother was primary educated. His grandfather was illiterate. His sister is studying in the 12th standard. Respondent told that he lost his father when he was fifteen years old. But his mother supported him for completing his education and now he is educating his sister.

Case III: Respondent aged 61 years, living at the rural coastal area in Koolimuttom, has two daughters and one son. He is from a below upper-class family and educated up to high school level and his wife was educated up to secondary level. His father and mother were illiterates. His son is diploma holder and employed in Indian navy at Mumbai. One of his daughters is studying medicine at Bangalore and the other daughter has graduated BSc botany.

Case IV: Respondent aged 56 years, located at the rural area of Chavakkad. He and his wife got secondary level of education. His parents were literates. He has two children. One son studied B Com with Network Engineering and daughter studied up to TTC.

There is a trend of intergenerational mobility with regard to education in every households. These four cases are taken as representational to support the idea that the educational mobility between the generations is far more familiar. People from the 3rd generation showed a better level of education than their parents and grandparents. Hence, the intergeneration mobility can be seen among the Araya.

CONCLUSION

The present study is an attempt to analyze the educational mobility of araya community through the background of araya community and intergenerational educational among araya. It revealed that in earlier days, majority of arayas are not acquired formal education because of situational reasons but the younger generation is the path of educational mobility. Education is a prestige symbol and at the same time higher education is not only a status symbol but also an effective means to upward mobility in the Araya community.

REFERENCES

Bhaskar, M., & Dilip, K. G. (2003). Folk religion of Araya fisher folk of Poonthura (Kerala). *Man in Asia*.

Dhanuraj, D.(2000). *Traditional Fishermen Folk In Kerala & Their Livelihood Issues*. CCS Research internship papers May- June 2004. Centre for Civil Society. New Delhi: www.ccsindia.org. Retrieved from 1 11 2011.

Nazimuddin, P.A. (2014). *Social mobility and Role of education in promoting social mobility*. India: International journal of scientific engineering and research.

Sorokin,P. A. (1959). *Social and and cultural mobility*. USA: Free press of Glenceoillinois.

Vasumathi, Rekha (2008). *Kadal ,Manushyan, Jeevitham (Mal)*. Thiruvananthapuram: The state institute of languages,Kerala.

