



Tribal Women Education in Telangana – A Study

P. Nagendramma

Research Scholar (Ph.D)

Department of Public Administration & HRM

Kakatiya University, Warangal – 506009

ABSTRACT

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities. The Indian culture with regard to economic independency, participation in country's economy and career development of women is undergoing rapid changes due to the increased pace of Women Empowerment in every field specially in the corporate world. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations. The women in India, who were revered in ancient India but were the most neglected lots decades ago, have now been receiving increased attention. In India appreciable progress has been made in this direction- still much more remain to be done. Tribal society is far behind in education and in raising their social and economic status and thus integrating them in the so-called men dominated world of today.

Keywords: Status of women's; empowerment, education; literacy, tribal

Introduction:

The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women's status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. In many parts of the country, sex ratio has 940 females per 1000 males. India is ranked 135 out of 187 countries on Gender Inequality Index as per the 2014 Global Human Development Report. Women from disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minorities in particular face discrimination, exploitation and limited employment opportunities. Our work recognizes that women are by no means a homogenous category.

India is the second populous country in the world with 6.77 crores of tribal population. Most of the tribal people are poor, illiterate and inhibited in inaccessible forests and hilly areas. They lag behind in all spheres of life in comparison with other sections of the population. The government of India has launched a number of schemes for the promotion of education and welfare among the tribes. In spite of these efforts the rate of literacy has not been improved. In case of the primitive tribes it is very poor and among women it is very low. Literacy is the key for socioeconomic development of any section or region. Keeping this in view, the present study was conducted to identify the problems in promotion tribal women especially in case of tribal women's and to suggest suitable strategies. This paper presents the literacy scenario among the tribal education, objectives, and methodology etc. of the study. The socioeconomic and cultural background of the tribes and cultural background of the tribes are presented in the paper and describes the socioeconomic profile of the heads of the families. The developmental programmes implemented for the tribal population of India and constitutes the summary and strategies for the promotion of literacy among tribal women respectively.

Tribal Population in Telangana:

Tribals account for 6% of the total population in Telangana. About half of these tribes live in plains and the rest in forest regions. The STs of Andhra Pradesh constitute 6.75 percent of India's tribal population. Although the state's STs comprise only 6.59 percent of the states population, they account for the largest tribal concentration in Southern India. The Scheduled Areas of Telangana, covered by the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) approach, are spread over 31,485 sq km in 5936 villages (11,855 habitation) in the districts of Warangal, Khammam, Adilabad. The 35 reported ST communities are mainly concentrated in nine districts declared as Scheduled Areas by special government order in 1950. Sixty percent of the STs live in forest areas in the Eastern Ghats, on the banks of the river Godavari, Two-thirds of the ST population in the State of Telangana live in these areas. This constitutes 11% of the total geographical area of the state. Among the 31 districts' Khammam has the highest ST population (26.47%), followed by Adilabad (16.74%), Warangal (14.10%) and Nalgonda (10.55%). This zone forms the traditional habitat of 31 tribal communities in Scheduled Areas (sprawling 30,030 sq km) and the rest outside. The other three tribal groups, i.e., Lambada, Yerukala and Yanadi mostly live outside the Scheduled Areas. Out of the 33 STs, Sugalis are numerically the largest ST with a population of 2,077,947 constituting 41.4 percent of the state's ST population. They are followed by Koya 568,019 (11.3 percent), Yanadis 462,167 (9.2 percent), Yerukulas 437,459 (8.7 percent) and Gonds 252,038 (5 percent). These five ST communities account for 76 percent of the total ST population in the state. Of the major total ST population 92.5 percent live in the rural areas. Among the major STs, Gonds have the highest (97.6%) rural population, followed by Koya (95.5 percent), Sugalis (93.7 percent) and Yerukalas (77.5 percent) District wise distribution of ST population shows that they are mainly concentrated in the districts of Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad and Nalgonda. These four districts constitute 48.9 percent of the total ST population of the State (Office of the Registrar General, India, 2011).

Schemes for Promotion of Education

There are several centrally sponsored schemes for this purpose:

Free Education: The SC children are exempted from payment of any tuition fee for Entire education right up to the university level.

Free textbooks etc. : At the elementary stage, they are entitled for free text books and learning materials.

Free Mid-day meals: Under the new schemes, all children in primary schools are covered under free midday meal programme, which covers the ST children?

Free Uniforms: There is a scheme of providing two sets of free uniforms to the children belonging to ST in elementary schools.

Stipends: The ST children are entitled to stipends at varying scales at different stages of education.

Policies and programmes for Tribal Education

Recognizing that the STs Count among the most deprived and marginalized sections of Indian society, a host of welfare and developmental measures have been initiated for their social and economic development. In this regard, particular reference has to be made to the tribal sub-plan approach which came into existence as the main strategy from the Fifth Five Year Plan. Along with core economic sectors, elementary education has been ac-corded priority in the tribal sub-Plan approach. Elementary education is considered important, not only because of constitutional obligation, but as a crucial input for total development of tribal communities, particularly to

Build confidence among the tribes to deal with outsiders on equal terms. Since primacy was accorded to elementary education, a broad policy frame for education was adopted in the tribal sub-Plans according equal importance to quantitative and qualitative aspects of education.

A second important development in the policy towards education of tribal's came with recommendations of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986 which specified, among other things, the following:

- Priority will be accorded to opening primary schools in tribal areas.
- There is need to develop curricula and devise instructional material in tribal language at the initial stages with arrangements for switchover to regional languages.
- Promising ST youths will be encouraged to take up teaching in tribal areas.
- Ashram schools/residential schools will be established on a large scale in tribal areas.
- Incentive schemes will be formulated for the STs, keeping in view their special needs and lifestyle.

The unique feature of the policy is its recognition of the heterogeneity and diversity of tribal areas. The policy also proposed the transformation of the structure of primary education with special emphasis on improving access in tribal areas. The policy has also underlined the importance of instruction through the mother tongue for effective teaching and encouraged incorporating locally relevant content and curriculum, besides emphasizing the localized production of textbooks in local dialects. Based on these considerations, the norms for establishing primary schools were relaxed to suit tribal areas in order to improve access to education. For instance, Andhra Pradesh has gone to the extent of establishing schools in habitations where there are even twenty school-age children; Madhya Pradesh has steadily decreased population size norms in order to open schools in habitations with 200 populations. However, in spite of such relaxation of norms many tribal localities are still without school, as they do not meet even the relaxed criteria.

Literacy and Educational Level

Literacy and level of education are two basic indicators of the level of development achieved by a group/society. Literacy results in more awareness besides contributing to the overall improvement of health, hygiene and other social conditions. According to 2001 Census, the percentage of literate persons (those who can read and write with understanding), aged 7 years and above, among ST population of Andhra Pradesh is 37 percent, which is lower than 60.5 percent reported for state population as a whole. The literacy data show that the ST population of the state has made significant improvement in literacy during the decade 2001-2011. The literacy rate, which was 17.1 percent in 2001, has increased by 19.9 percentage points in 2011. But in comparison to other states/UTs, the position of ST population of Telangana is not satisfactory. It is just above Uttar Pradesh (35.1 percent) and Bihar (28.2 percent), which are bottom two states in literacy rate for ST population among all states/UTs. At the district level, the highest literacy rate has been recorded in Hyderabad (55.4 percent) and the lowest in Mahabubnagar (25.8 percent). Among the major STs, Yerukulas have reported the highest literacy rate (45.4 percent), followed by Koyas (41.8 percent), Gonds (36.4 percent), Yanadis (35.3 percent) and Sugalis (34.3 percent). Female literacy rate of 26.1 percent among the ST population is a matter of concern as almost a fourth of ST females are illiterate in the state.

As against the general literacy rate of 61.01 percent, literacy among the tribals is 17.16 percent and among tribal women it is 8.68 percent. According to the 2011 census, Telangana's literacy rate is 66.46%. Male literacy and female literacy are 74.95% and 57.92%, respectively. Hyderabad district leads with 80.96% and Mahabubnagar district at the bottom with 56.06% Literacy and other basic development indicators among the PTGs like the Khonds, Chenchus, Gadabas, and others are even less than this average. The growth rate of ST population in the decade 1991-2001 at 19.6 percent has been higher if compared to the overall growth rate of 14.6 percent of the state population as a whole. Among the numerically major STs, a highest growth rate of 36 percent has been recorded in the case of Sugalis, followed by Koyas (24.4 percent), Gonds (18.9 percent), Yanadis (16.8 percent) and Yerukulas (12.8 percent).

Problems of Tribal Education

This review clearly underlines that in spite of constitutional guarantees and persistent efforts, tribal communities continue to lag behind the general population in education. The reasons for this can be categorized as external, internal, and socio-economic and psychological. The external constraints are related

to problems and difficulties at levels of policy, planning, implementation, and administration. Internal constraints refer to problems associated with the school system, content, curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, academic supervision, monitoring, and teacher-related problems. The third set of problems relates to social, economic, and cultural background of tribal's and psychological problems of first-generation learners.

External Constraints

The perspective adopted for educational development among tribal communities fails to adequately address the specific disadvantages characterizing tribal population.

For instance, the population and distance norms formed by the government have not been beneficial to tribal locations because of their sparse population and sporadic

Residential patterns. Further, in formulating policies and programmes for tribal education it is essential to understand the complex realities of tribal life and the expectation of tribal's from the system, and this has never been done either by the tribal welfare department or by the education department. Consequently, no worth while

Policy for tribal education has been formed. One of the major constraints of tribal education at planning level is the adoption of a dual system of administration. The tribal welfare department deals with tribal life and culture and administers development work at the local level, including education. But the tribal welfare department lacks expertise in educational planning and administration in general and academic supervision and monitoring in particular. On the other hand, the education department is the sole authority for planning of educational development at state level. It formulates implementation guidelines and instructions regarding curriculum, textbooks, teacher recruitment, transfer policies, and so on. In this the department tends to formulate uniform policies for the entire state. The school calendar is a case in point, where vacations and holidays cater to the needs of the formal school set up in a non-tribal context, with little consideration for local context and tribal's festivals. This lack of sensitivity to their problems and failure in understanding tribal social reality, coupled with faulty selection and appointment of teachers in tribal areas, have resulted in poor performance and teacher absenteeism in tribal schools.

Factors affecting Tribal Education

Attitude of Other Students: Attitude of other student is one of the important factors for the promotion of tribal student's higher education i.e., environment factor is one of the crucial factors for the development. The negative attitude we can reflected in university and other higher educational centre mainly located in big cities.

Social Factors: More allocation of funds and opening of schools do not go far in providing education to the tribal's. Formal education has not been necessary for the members of tribal societies to discharge their social obligations. Hence they should be prepared to accept education and it should be presented to them in such a way as to cut the barriers of superstition and prejudice. There is still a widespread feeling among the tribal's that education makes their boys defiant and insolent and alienates them from the rest of their society, while the girls turn modern or go astray. Since some of their educated boys felt alienated and cut off their bonds with their families and villages after getting education and good employment. Some of the tribal groups vehemently oppose the spread of education in their midst. Besides, some of their superstitions and myths also play their part. Some tribal groups believe that their gods shall be angry if they send their children to schools run by 'outsiders'.

Economic Factors: Some economic factors too are responsible for lack of interest shown by the tribal people in getting education. Since most of the tribal people are living in poverty, it is not easy for most of them to send their children to schools.

Lack of Interest in Formal Education: In many states tribal children are taught through the same books which from the curriculum of non-tribal children of the urban and rural areas of the rest of the state. Obviously, the content of such books rarely appeals to the tribal children who come from different cultural backgrounds. Under the traditional tribal set up a child enters adulthood with confidence. He knows his

environment thoroughly, knows how to construct his own house, cultivate his field, weave his cloth; in short he acquires all the skills to lead a reasonably comfortable life within the limitations of his culture. The simple skill of reading and writing acquired in an over formal school is no match for this. We cannot afford to push him back to his environment naked. Therefore, a curriculum should be framed in the welfare of tribal people. Certain tribal activities like agriculture, dancing, hunting, tribal games and archery must be allowed to find fullest expression in the extra-curricular activities of the school, thus providing some continuity of the traditional values and forms of organization. A scheme is to be worked out through which the school children will be able to link up the school and the teacher with their parents and the tribal activities. The school has to act as a centre of dispersal of simple technical know-how beyond the skills of reading and writing to become an effective agent of social change. This student-teacher-parent continuum should be able to generate a congenial atmosphere, so that the broad purpose of education, which is to enable an average citizen to comprehend the social, political, economic and other processes and forces around him, is fully served.

Suitable Teachers: Lack of suitable teachers is one of the major reasons for the slow growth of education in tribal areas. Most of the teachers employed for imparting education to the tribal children show little appreciation of tribal way of life and value system. They approach tribal people with a sense of superiority and treat them as 'savage and uncivilized' and hence fail to establish proper rapport with their students. The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission's report says that a teacher in the tribal areas must have a thorough knowledge of tribal life and culture. He must speak tribal language. Only so can he be in a position to act as a friend, philosopher and guide to the tribal people. Actually the gulf between teachers and taught can be best reduced by appointing teachers from the tribal community itself or a separate cadre of teachers for tribal areas, with some inducements, should be created to serve the educational needs of the tribal society.

Lack of Facilities: One of the major problems in tribal education is that of language. Most of the tribal languages and dialects are in the most rudimentary stage and there is hardly any written literature. Most of the states impart education to tribal and non-tribal children alike through the medium of the regional language, which makes the education uninteresting and also hurts tribal sentiments.

Nature of habitat: Most of the tribal villages are scattered. This entails long travels to attend schools. Unless the school situated very close to their villages and its site approved by the local people the result shall not be encouraging. School building also plays an important role in the growth of education among the tribal folk. Due to mismanagement, bungling and sometimes financial constraints, the building and sometimes-financial constraints, the building is seldom suitable to run an educational institution.

Number of teachers: Most of the primary schools run in the tribal areas are "Single teacher-managed whose presence in the school is more an exception than a rule". The enthusiasm of tribal people in the education of their children also depends considerably on the timing of school hours in different seasons. It should not clash with their important socio-economic activities.

To many observers of the situation, the problem of education in tribal areas is the problem of wastage. It is not that wastage and stagnation are peculiar to the tribal communities alone but the extent of wastage is much larger in their case. The problem of

Absenteeism is a serious one in tribal areas. One sees a large number of students on the rolls but the actual attendance is really low, and the number of students passing out at the final examination is even lower. The real problem is *to create such economic conditions as could be conducive to the students developing sufficient interest in their studies.* Education being the most effective instrument of empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups, all out efforts should be made to improve the educational status of these groups, especially that of the women and the Girl Child. In fact, the educational backwardness, prevalent amongst these people, necessitates an added thrust on their education, training and skill up gradation, as it will bring forth not only social empowerment but also economic empowerment.

Environment of family: Surrounding or environments is one of the importance factors influence for the development of a person generally and particularly in educational development. Most of the tribal parents are agricultures and labours; they have little knowledge relating to modern world and modern environment. Their environment narrows that created narrow mentality. And most of tribal fathers are addicts to alcoholic

and other beverage items that creating some problem in mentally and economically end result students will fail exams.

Communication: Communication one of the key factor affecting the development of tribal education. Due to isolation tribal facing problem for expressing modern and regional languages. For understanding tribal language very difficult generally in the case of society and particularly in teachers. So the students facing problem for discussing their doubt with teachers. So their doubt continuing and automatically tribal students became the last in the class.

Cooperation from Stake Holders: Cooperation is essentials for promoting education in the case of tribal students. Their funds are flowing a number of persons hand and at last that amount will get students hands. The delay of funds creating problem, so the respective authorities need to be responsible for providing funds at right time at right hand. And at last but not least the success of tribal education is completed only after getting the cooperation and help from their classmates.

Conclusion

Article 46 of the Indian constitution stress to promote the ST and SC people with special care in the educational and economic establishment. The spread of education among the ST during the last four decade has been quite uneven. Ignorant and illiteracy among tribals should be minimized and rooted out, by providing proper education and awareness programme. Government should make available adequate grants for education of tribal. To improve the educational and economic status of the tribal, opportunities for basic and adult education with training leading to better employment should be provided. Hostel facilities to tribal students should be surveyed and improved. Tribal welfare department may design and launch new programmes to generate employment opportunities for tribal's. The Director of Employment and Training may provide effective career guidance service to the tribal students so as to help them to make a self assessment of these abilities, aptitudes and plan for the career. Ensuring of high quality education to tribal students. Pre-primary education and residential education will be strengthened further. The existing tuition scheme will be modified to cater to the needs of all tribal students. Programmes for assisting dropouts and improving enrolment will be formulated. All Houseless families will be given houses in a phased manner. The rate of Scholarships [Lump sum grant / stipend etc., will be revised frequently. High priority for the completion of pre-metric hostels and improving of their infrastructure facilities and revision of mess charges etc. Massive awareness and literacy programmes with involvement of NGOs will be organized in the tribal areas. Programmes aimed at improving the brilliance of talented ST students will be formulated and implemented. Training programmes such as IT Training will be arranged for the tribal students and programmes for ensuring jobs for tribals in the IT sector will be formulated. For applying schemes at right time, right place and right manner the government and respective authorities' cooperation. And at last but most for developing education in tribal communities the balanced relationship between other students and teachers is essentials.

Suggestion

Education is the most effective instrument for ensuring equality of opportunity; keeping in view of this assumption the Government has been making several efforts to education by extending special educational facilities and reservation of seat in educational institutions. But the development of education is one of the important problems in the case of tribals. For solving that problem I like to express some suggestions.

1. Proper awareness campaign should be organized to create the awareness and the importance of education.
2. Educated tribal youth should be recruited as a teacher and posted in tribal areas.
3. The attitude of the tribal parents toward education should be improved through proper counseling and guidance.
4. Teacher buildup and maintain close relationship for the development of tribal students.
5. Vocational institutes should be implemented for the tribal students for creation of new avenues.
6. Administration of incentives need to be streamlined so that the students may avail all the facilities at proper time.

7. Higher level officials should check the functioning of schools frequently relating to the teaching methods, working hours, days of the school and attendance registers.
8. Establish separate residential school for each districts and extended up to PG level.
9. Residential facilities with all amenities should be provided to teachers and other staffs.
10. Merits scholarship, attendance scholarship, and more incentives in the form of grant allocated to uniform, books, learning materials, midday meals, supply of sports equipments.

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