THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BATHADA COMMUNITY IN KARNATAKA: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UDAPI DISTRICT

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Abstract

The term used in the constitution is 'weaker sections' of the community which are socially or educationally backward, particularly the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The scheduled castes occupy the bottom most rung of the Indian social hierarchy. These groups or castes have been discriminated against by the superior castes through ages, and they never had any kind of social acceptance from the majority of the people who belong to the upper castes. They are scattered throughout India. Bathadas a group of scheduled caste people are found in the Udupi district of Karnataka, suffer from various social, economic, political disabilities. Low level of education and ill health has been a major problem of the Bathadas. However, so far, no systematic empirical study has been conducted on Bathada community. Therefore, the present study is important to understand the correlation between attitude and health and educational development of Bathadas. It is important to know the role of health and education in the socio-economic development of the community. The study is also significant to understand the problems of health and education of the Bathada Community.

Keywords

Scheduled caste, Bathada community, problems, Socio-economic development, India

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Introduction

India is a Sub-Continent having social hierarchy and within the hierarchy different castes are existing. The Caste system is the main feature of this society. It is continued with different ethnical groups and distinctive patterns of levels of social and economic life. In such a castist-ridden society, the problem of untouchability has become unsolvable. -The untouchability has led a group of people to be sufferers in every walk of life for centuries. Thus the present day untouchable communities (castes) are worst affected with less social privileges and economic backwardness. The untouchables were called by different names such as 'panchamas' (Fifth group), 'Chandals', (Heathens or out caste) 'Anthyaja', (Low Class), and during the British period they came to be called as 'Depressed Classes' or exterior castes (Avarnas). During freedom movement they were called as 'Harijans' (Children of God). Babasaheb Ambedkar, the national leader, rejected the word Harijan. He demanded inter-alia change of nomenclature, and called them as Protestant Hindus or non-conformist Hindus. After the independence in 1947 the ,Constitution of India removed the term untouchable and in its Place 'SCHEDULED CASTE' came to be used as a term.

The Scheduled Castes have suffered a lot from several social, economic, political and other disabilities, since a very long time. They were denied right to own property, choose an occupation freely, seek admission to educational institutions, public posts and access to all public places. There has not been much improvement in their socio-economic conditions even today. Kamble, N D, in his book "Rise and Awakening of Depressed Classes in India", states that "the term Scheduled Caste is only a legal fiction and constitutional myth. Further the same author reveals the fact that "we can find list of castes or groups which come under the depressed class or backward classes. The researchers have focused either on .the. conceptual charity or on some aspects of the problems of poverty. and unemployment in rural areas and in urban areas, they are not completely by itself. While the problems of Scheduled Castes are multidimensional in character the totality of the situation of these people will have to be examined in the right perspectives.

In Karnataka the Scheduled Castes (SCs) form a sizeable part of the state's population. Not all SCs are former untouchables. Some of the castes and sub-castes, classified as 'Scheduled Castes' during the 1970s and 1980s, were nonuntouchables who did, however, have a history of deprivation. Scheduled Castes are known by different names in different parts of the state and comprise many sub-castes and communities. At present, there are about 101 sub-castes that have been recognised as Scheduled Castes in Karnataka. The majority of these castes are small in number. While the Scheduled Castes are the largest single group in Karnataka, they are also the weakest in terms of political, economic, social and cultural resources. Total of SC and ST is highest in Chitradurg district while the percentage is lowest in Uttara Kannada , Dakshin Kannada, Udupi, Dharwad and Uttara Kannada are the least socio-economically vulnerable districts of Karnataka.

Udupi district of Karnataka has a total population of 1,177,361 as per the Census 2011. Out of which 562,131 are males while 615,230 are females. In 2011 there were a total 253,078 families residing in Udupi district. The Average Sex Ratio of Udupi district is 1,094. Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 6.4% while Schedule Tribe (ST) were 4.5% of total population in Udupi district of Karnataka. Bathada community has a total population of around 2800 as per the census 2011.

Therefore the present study has been attempted to focus on the impact of SCP on Bathada community is also Scheduled Caste in Udapi district of Karnataka State and bring out the factors which encourage both the positive and negative aspects. The main objectives of the study is to make an overall assessment of the impact of Special Component plan on the living conditions of the Bathada community people. To study the Socio-

Economic problems of the Bathada community people in the area under study. To assess the impact of SCP in general and agricultural activities in particular on SC people in terms of a) Asset formation b) Income Generation and To analyse the factors responsible for the success or otherwise of the activities under these schemes.

Research Methodology

In the present study, the single interrupted time series design of the quasi-interrupted type is adopted. This design is actually interrupted time series and is bifurcated into two groups i.e., a group before SCP assistance and same group after SCP assistance. This design is suitable whenever the impact of policy is universal. Since SCP schemes have their impact on all the members of this community. A multi-stage sampling design has been adopted in this study. In the area under study, a total of 100 sample beneficiaries were selected. They are spread over in eight Gram panchayats in Kundapur taluk has been selected. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data from the sample household have been collected through personal interviews from the respondents with the help of the printed interview-schedule specially designed for the purpose. The secondary data are collected from the office records of Department of Social Welfare and other Seven agencies. The relevant statistical technique such as ratios, percentages and regression analysis have been applied to analyse the data systematically and to test the hypotheses of the study.

Result and Discussion

The profile of the Case Study district, an assessment of various developmental programmes implemented in the district, with special reference to Bathada community(SC), and the profile of sample study eight Gram Panchayats are presented. Agriculture sector includes schemes such as supply of seeds, fertilisers implements like plough, water storage tanks, borewells, pumpsets and supply of bullocks and bullock-cart, etc. Horticulture Sector covers farm ponds land leveling, fruit gardens, free supply of coconut seedlings, etc. Animal husbandry sector includes the supply of cross-breed milch cows, buffaloes, sheep and goat units, piggery, etc. Sericulture sector provided assistance for mulberry cultivation.

The socio-economic profile of the Bathada community households reveals that the majority of them are engaged in agriculture activity as they are slowly shifting towards adoption of new method of farming. Some others pursue on agricultural ventures like self-employment services, government jobs, etc. The landless people are also pursuing to get their authorised records from the government for their piece of lands cultivated unauthorisedly, and also they are working as agriculture labourers for their livelihood.

The majority of the beneficiaries are marginal and small farmers when they are they constitute 66 per cent, And 29.25 (117) per cent are landless and the rest are others. The land reforms of the government have not reached the beneficiaries of the study area to the proportion of the Scheduled Caste population. The major share of production under extension programme contributed from irrigated crops. It works out to be 89.08 per cent but the cost of cultivation is more. The proportion of the area under irrigation has increased horn 168.75 to 236.85 acres. The income is significant from the crops cultivated in irrigated land. These are all the positive results of the developmental programmes under special component plan. The impact shows that the beneficiaries under animal husbandry sector have shown keen interest to have more asset like livestock and agriculture implements, which account for 49 and 33 per cent respectively during post-assistance period. But when compared with the pre-assistance period, the increase is to the extent of 25.2 per cent and 33.31 per cent respectively. This is substantial when compared with all other sectors.

Average value of asset per household has increased from Rs.11,786.88 to Rs.l4,194 for the beneficiaries under study. The considerable value of asset has resulted in agriculture sector and in animal husbandry sector. On an average, it has increased from Rs.17,969 to Rs.22/559 (Rs.4,590) and Rs.6,455 to 8,060 (Rs.1,605) respectively. But the average value of asset is not stagnant nor negative; rather the asset value, on an average has increased marginally from Rs.11.286.5 to 12,165 in horticulture and Rs.6,632 to 7,596 in sericulture sector. Significant value of asset is not formulated among the beneficiaries of the horticulture and sericulture sectors.

An item-wise break-up under each category of asset of each sector has also been undertaken with a view to understand which particqlar activity has helped increasing the asset value. Accordingly in the case of livestock of animal husbandry sector, there has been an increase both in the total numbers and value of sheep and goats which accounts for 69.3 per cent during post-assistance period . Whereas in the case of asset value of agriculture implements of agriculture sector, it is the pumpset which has got highest percentage value of 70.74 during post assistance period. In the case of consumer durables under each sector, it is observed that there has been an increase in the value of motor cycle, excepting car/ jeep in the case of agriculture sector and sericulture sector. The other . common item of the asset value under each sector, the value of cycle has increased during post-assistance period. Next item of the asset value during post-assistance is the TV Set.

The average family income has increased from Rs.11,148, in pre-assistance period for Rs.14,843 in the post-assistance period, and the major share of income is from main activity. Sector wise Sericulture and Horticulture have got higher average income when compared to agriculture and animal husbandry. This may be due to commercial nature of crops during the post-assistance period. This is in contrast to the inference drawn in respect of asset value. But is to be noted that the income generation aspect that is taken into consideration. They are the commercial crops as against those of agricultural crops. Normally, prices for the commercial crops are highly rewarding as a result they contribute for the increased income.

An intra-sector comparison of the schemes within the agriculture sector shows the large number of coverage of the beneficiaries and their high income as well under SFP schemes. When they compared to the SFP schemes, the other schemes beneficiaries are less in number but their average income is high. The regression analysis of different sectors and of different schemes of Special Component Plan will indicate that the elasticity co-efficient were of high magnitude in increasing income, whereas in the case of asset formation, the average incremental position is witnessed only in agriculture and animal husbandry sectors. Since the main analysis of activities of this study under SCP is focused on agriculture and other subsidiary occupations, there have been large number of beneficiaries both in agriculture and animal husbandry sectors with an average income of Rs.12,488 and Rs.10,483 respectively. The identification of beneficiaries for assistance under the programme is to some extent is correct precisely because the area is dominant in agricultural occupation. Even the results of the regression analysis also confirms that the elasticity coefficient were highly magnitude in increasing income generation, but there is marginal increase in asset formation.

Conclusion

Issues and Concerns The greatest single issue that comes into focus is the wide gap between the Scheduled Castes and the general population along almost all human development indicators. Economically, the SC population is highly concentrated in rural Karnataka. They are dependent on agriculture, but since they own only 11.65 per cent of operational holdings, 83.25 per cent of which is un-irrigated, they derive only 15.4 per cent of their income from cultivation. A high 52 per cent of marginal holdings are held by SCs. They crowd the primary sector (78.83 per cent) where remuneration is low and their share of the secondary and tertiary

sectors is insuffi cient, probably because of high levels of illiteracy and a poor vocational skill base. The monthly per capita expenditure of SCs is the second lowest in the state at Rs.419 for rural and the lowest for urban, at Rs.593. After having assessed socio-economic impact of the SCP schemes along with discussion for the success and failure of the programmes in different dimensions, the following conclusions can be drawn: The long term economically viable schemes have made positive impact on the living conditions of the beneficiaries than the short-term benefits under SCP.

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