



DIFFERENTIAL IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON SCHOOL EDUCATION – A STUDY OF TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL SCHOOLS IN VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT

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Abstract

Government of Andhra Pradesh has introduced various policies and programmes to provide quality education such as the Amma Vodi, Mana Badi, Nadu-Nedu, the introduction of English as the medium of instruction in all Government schools, and the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka schemes to enhance infrastructure facilities in these schools for the academic year 2019–20. Accordingly, the government has spent over Rs. 53,000 crores on school education in the state for the academic years 2019–20 to 2022-23. The study was conducted in Payakaraopeta and Araku Valley mandals, the former one represents a non-tribal mandal and the latter one tribal mandal in the undivided Visakhapatnam district. A total of 300 students and their respective households from both the mandals (150 from each mandal) were selected. The main objective of the paper is to find out the differential impact and identified the factors responsible for the success versus failure of providing quality education in two sample areas. Majority of the respondent households were in the age group of 31-45 years. A sizable portion of pupils drop out of school at the secondary level in both the sample mandals but this dropout rate was higher in Araku Valley. About 96 per cent of parents reported that Amma Vodi were very helpful in preventing dropouts, and the amount received under this scheme was being used for the betterment of their children and 97 per cent of them aware of the implementation of the Nadu-Nedu programme. Cent per cent of parents were happy with Jagananna Vidya Kanuka, and all of them expressed that their children are receiving books and uniforms on time. Perception of parents about the implementation of English language in schools reveals that more than 90 percent of parents gave a positive response in all five aspects: awareness and agreeing to adopt English as a medium, having the highest respect in society, improving personality development and knowledge, and the language also helping them to survive in a competitive world. The introduction of the English language as a medium of instruction in primary schools is well thought out, but its implementation is something that needs to be addressed more carefully and pragmatically. The existing teaching staff, who have been accustomed to teaching in their mother tongue, are given the task of teaching in English, a language they have no command of. This is actually causing more problems. The government should focus more on providing the required infrastructure in the schools and monitoring their usage of it.

Keywords : Amma Vodi, Nadu Nedu, Parent's Perception, Quality Education, Tribal, Schools,

Introduction

India is the second-largest populous country and has the largest young population in the world; it is in the demographic dividend stage. Education, in both the public and private sectors, is expanding quickly. More than 227 million children are enrolled in the nation's more than 1.4 million schools. However, the educational system still has a great deal of room for growth. The Government of India protected all vulnerable sections through constitutional provisions like free and compulsory education and the right to education as a fundamental right, and along with state governments, they came up with many programmes like the District Primary Education Program, midday meals, Sarva shiksha Abhiyan, Beti bachao beti padhao, Kasturba Gandhi Girl Child Education, and infrastructure development programmes for Muslim minority institutions and tribal areas under the tribal subplan. In addition to the existing programmes and policies, the government of Andhra Pradesh has been striving to introduce many new programmes and policies towards the promotion of quality education in government-run schools in the state. The basic aim of this motive is that government-run schools should be able to provide quality education on a par with private schools. Accordingly, the government of Andhra Pradesh has introduced several programmes, such as the Amma Vodi scheme, Mana Badi, Nadu-Nedu, the introduction of English as the medium of instruction in all government schools, and the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka schemes to enhance infrastructure facilities in government schools etc., for the academic year 2019–20. According to 2011 census data, the Andhra Pradesh literacy rate is 67.35 per cent compared with the national average of 74.04 percent. In the light of the above scenario, the Andhra Pradesh government aimed to increase the literacy rate to 100 percent and the gross enrollment ratio (GER) in higher education to 70 percent. In the last three years, the government has prioritised education and spent more than Rs 53,000 crore on it in the state. Teachers have a key role in providing pupils with a quality education that moulds their lives, in addition to the government's attempts to make education free (The Hindu, 2022).

The schools and children in rural areas in general and interior Tribal areas in particular have different standards. The student's standards are

also dependent on their parent's occupation, social status, level of education, income, standard of living, status of employment (both tribal and non-tribal areas), and other specific socio-economic characteristics. There is a wider gap between the teacher-to-pupil ratio at the various stages of school education. There is also discrimination in providing basic facilities in Tribal and Non-Tribal areas. The studies have identified different problems faced by schools as well as children due to a lack of infrastructure facilities, a lack of awareness, the non-availability of basic amenities, health issues, a lack of hygienic facilities, the fact that local leaders do not pay much attention to the development of schools, and a lack of proper teaching staff. Some of the studies were conducted in various part of the country the studies like Geeta Gandhi Kingdon (2007), Zakir Husain (2010), Colin Bangay (2016), Subroto Dey (2019), Subba Reddy, P.V. (2020), Naveen Choudhary (2021), and Subba Rao, G.V.R. (2022).

Objectives

The objectives of the paper are

- ✓ To examine the socio-economic characteristics of Tribal and Non-Tribal schools in Visakhapatnam district.
- ✓ To aware parents' perception on Nadu-Nedu and Amma Vodi programmes in the study area
- ✓ To know the parent's opinion about medium of instructions in the study area.

Methodology

The study has been selected two mandals in Visakhapatnam district, Payakaraopeta and Araku Valley; the former represents a non-tribal mandal and the latter one represents tribal mandal. The study's goal is to determine what factors contributed to the success or failure of offering high-quality education in two sample areas. The Payakaraopeta and Araku Valley mandals were picked for in-depth research. Four schools from Payakaraopeta five schools in Araku Valley mandal and from each school 30 percent of the children were covered. A sample of 150 students was selected from each of the sample mandals. All the students were classified into primary and upper primary, so that the sample covered from these classes was uniform. The total sample consists of 300 students and their parents from all the schools and from each of the two sample mandals in Visakhapatnam district. The reference

date is March 31, 2022, and all the information relates to the financial year 2021-2022.

Findings

The important aspects like age, gender, class-wise, parents' perception pertaining to Amma Vodi, Nadu Nedu, medium of instruction etc., were discussed.

Age of the Students

Information was extracted on the age of the students in both the sample mandals and these details are shown in Table 1. The number of students accounted for higher at the age 12 (20.67%) in Payakaraopeta and it was 22 per cent in Araku Valley. The proportion of students was much higher in both the sample mandals. It was observed that the percentage of students at the age of 13, 12, 9 and below the age of 8 years were more in Araku Valley. In the study area, as many as 64 (21.33%) of students were at the age of twelve, followed by 55 (18.33%) in the age of 13, at the age of 10 years 42 (14%) and 41 (13.67%) in the age 9 years.

Table 1 : Distribution of Students by Age

Age in Years	Payakaraopeta		Araku Valley		Grand Total	
	No.	%	No	%	No	%
Below 8	8	5.33	16	10.67	24	8.00
9	12	8.00	29	19.33	41	13.67
10	22	14.67	20	13.33	42	14.00
11	26	17.33	14	9.33	40	13.33
12	31	20.67	33	22.00	64	21.33
13	17	11.33	38	25.33	55	18.33
14	27	18.00	0	0.00	27	9.00
15	7	4.67	0	0.00	7	2.33
Total	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Gender - wise Students

Information was collected from the students on gender-wise in both sample mandals. Majority of them were girls in both sample mandals. Across the two samples, girl students were reported more at 83 (55.33%) in Payakaraopeta compared with Araku Valley's 78 (52%). As a result, Payakaraopeta has a lower percentage of boys (44.67%) than that of Araku Valley (48%). Of the total 300 students, girl students were

significantly higher 161 (53.67%) with boys 139 (46.33%) in the study area.

Table 2: Distribution of Students by Gender-wise

Boy/Girl	Payakaraopeta		Araku Valley		Grand Total	
	No.	%	No	%	No	%
Boy	67	44.67	72	48.00	139	46.33
Girl	83	55.33	78	52.00	161	53.67
Total	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00

Source: As ex ante

Class- wise Students

Table 3 gives the data on class-wise students in both the sample mandals in the study area. Half of the sample respondent students in Payakaraopeta mandal were enrolled in upper primary education followed by secondary education 28 per cent, and primary education reported at 22 per cent. While the corresponding figures were 79 (52.67%), 0 (0.0%), and 71 (47.33%) in Araku Valley. Overall, 154 (51.33%) of the students were enrolled in upper primary, primary 104 (34.67%) and secondary 42 (14%) education in the study area. This shows that in each of the sample mandals, a significant portion of students drop out of school at the secondary level. Yet, it's shocking to see that not a single student in the sample mandal of Araku Valley finished their education at the secondary level. One reason that there were no secondary level schools within reach in this mandal, and majority of them were girls, their parents were not interested in sending them because of too distant from their native villages.

Table 3: Distribution of Students by Class-wise

Class	Payakaraopeta		Araku Valley		Grand Total	
	No.	%	No	%	No	%
Primary	33	22.00	71	47.33	104	34.67
Upper Primary	75	50.00	79	52.67	154	51.33
Secondary	42	28.00	0	0.00	42	14.00
Total	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00

Source: As ex ante

Parents Perception on Amma Vodi Scheme

Data was collected from the sample parents' on Amma Vodi in the two sample mandals and the details are presented in Table 4. This aspect includes six items: awareness of the scheme, getting the money under the scheme, amount credited directly to the account, children's uniforms, etc.; the scheme helps in reducing school dropouts; and the amount is being used for the children's betterment. Cent per cent of the parents expressed their satisfaction about four of the six aspects, such as awareness of the Amma Vodi scheme, benefiting under this scheme, the amount credited directly to their accounts, and their children receiving uniforms, books, shoes, and bags at no cost in both samples. About 96 per cent of them considered this scheme was very helpful in preventing dropouts, and the amount received under this scheme was being used for the betterment of their children.

Table 4 : Parents Perception About Amma Vodi Scheme

Opinion	Payakaraopeta		Araku Valley		Grand Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aware of Amma Vodi	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00
If yes, are you getting money under Amma Vodi Scheme	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00
Is the amount directly credited to your account ?	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00
Child is getting uniform, books, shoes and bag for free of cost	150	100.00	150	100.00	300	100.00

at school						
The scheme helpful in reducing child dropout	142	94.67	145	96.67	287	95.67
The amount used for betterment of the child	140	93.33	147	98.00	287	95.67

Source: As ex ante

Parent's Perception about Nadu-Nedu programme

Table 5 reveals the data on parents' perceptions on Nadu-Nedu programme in study area. This aspect contains of eight items. There were no wide variations in the implementation of Nadu-Nedu programme in the two sample mandals. Overall, about 97 per cent of parents were aware of the implementation of the Nadu-Nedu programme, and their perception relating to the school building was that it had a modern look (95%), furnished with modern furniture (90%), clean and modern toilet facilities (84%), clean and protected drinking water facility (75%), surrounded by greenery and a clean environment (75%), and had a compound wall (73%) and only 8 per cent of them expressed satisfaction relating to modern English and computer labs. There is a need to establish computer labs for children in public schools in rural areas.

Table 5 : Parent Opinion about Nadu-Nedu programme

Opinion	Payakaraopeta		Araku Valley		Grand Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aware about Nadu-Nedu	148	98.67	142	94.67	290	96.67
If yes, are you aware of the following changes?						
School building appears a modern look	145	96.67	140	93.33	285	95.00

Construct ed compound wall	113	75.33	105	70.00	218	72.67
Clean and modern toilet facilities	129	86.00	122	81.33	251	83.67
Provide clean and protected drinking water facility	109	72.67	117	78.00	226	75.33
Provided modern English and Computer labs	15	10.00	10	6.67	25	8.33
Provided modern furniture (Tables, Benches, Blackboard)	138	92.00	131	87.33	269	89.67
Greenery and clean environment	116	77.33	110	73.33	226	75.33

Source: As ex ante

Parent's Opinion about English Language

Table 6 presents the data on the perceptions of parents about the introduction of the English language in schools. About 97 per cent of parents in Araku Valley and cent per cent of parents in Payakaraopeta were aware of the introduction of the English language (as a medium of instruction) in schools, and they also agreed to adopt the same medium in the schools. As many as 140 (93.33%) and 145 (96.67%) parents had a positive opinion to the language and reported that it increased their children's respect in society in Araku Valley and Payakaraopeta respectively. More than 94 per cent in Payakaraopeta and 90 per cent in Araku Valley parents opined that it enhances children's personality development and knowledge. Similarly, 98.67 and 94 per cent respectively agreed that the language helps to survive in a hostile environment in the world. The analysis of the perception of parents about the implementation of English language in schools indicates that more than 90 percent of parents

gave a positive response in all five aspects: awareness and agree to adopt English medium, highest respect in society, improved personality development and knowledge, and the language also helps them to survive in the competitive world.

Table 6 : Parent Opinion about English Language on Quality School Education

Opinion	Payakaraopeta		Araku Valley		Grand Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aware about English language to be taught in school	150	100.00	146	97.33	296	98.67
Are you agree to introduce English medium in public schools?	150	100.00	146	97.33	296	98.67
English language will give more respect to your Child	145	96.67	140	93.33	285	95.00
It will improve Child's personality /knowledge	142	94.67	135	90.00	277	92.33
It will give more understanding about things	147	98.00	132	88.00	279	93.00
Language helps to survive in this competitive world	148	98.67	141	94.00	289	96.33

Source: As ex ante

Conclusion

To sum up, girl students were more in both the sample mandals; more than 50 per cent of the students were in upper primary; and 3/4th of them preference for government schools. Majority of the parents expressed positive opinion about the implementation of Amma Vodi and Nadu-Nedu. Perception of parents about the implementation of English language in schools reveals that more than 90 percent of parents gave a positive response in all five aspects. The study suggests that the medium of instruction is not a serious concern here, but the teacher's role is important to lay a strong foundation at the primary level in order to improve the standards of the students who are studying in government schools in rural areas, particularly interior tribal areas. The introduction of the English language as a medium of instruction in primary schools is well thought out, but its implementation is something that needs to be addressed more carefully and pragmatically. The existing teaching staff, who have been accustomed to teaching in their mother tongue, are given the task of teaching in English, a language they have no command of. This is actually causing more problems. The government should focus more on providing the required infrastructure in the schools and monitoring their usage of it.

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