

Role of Government for the Enhancement of Education Status Among Tribes in the Integrated Tribal Development Agency Area of Paderu, Andhra Pradesh

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India has 461 tribal groups with a population of 677.68 (8.08%) lakhs, account for about one-fourth of the world tribal population (1991 census). The state Andhra Pradesh consists of 33 tribal groups with a population of 4.2 (6.31%) million. A large chunk of tribal population in the state is mainly concentrated in the nine scheduled districts like Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, East Godavari, Warangal, Khammam, Adilabad and Kurnool. The district Visakhapatnam has a tribal population of 3,54,127, which forms 13.4 per cent, out of the total population. The major tribal groups found in the district are Bagata, Kotiya, Kondadora, Nookadora, Konda Kammara, Konda Kapu, Gadaba, Mali, Porja, Mannedora, Khond and Valmiki. Among these tribes, Khond, Porja and Gadaba are considered to be the most primitive tribes. Majority of the tribal population in the district stand below the poverty line and facing the problems like indebtedness, illiteracy, malnutrition and exploitation. The interior tribals still live relatively in isolation.

Since India's independence our government is spending some amount for improving the literacy rate among the tribals, apart from other population. Almost all the communities living in the rural, urban and tribal areas availed the government sponsored formal education to educate their children, but the tribals has proved to be slow in availing such facility due to certain cultural barriers, constraints and limitations. In order to improve the literacy rate among the tribals certain special provisions extended to them, but still the development in the education sphere taking place in a slow pace manner in the tribal areas of certain states including Andhra Pradesh. According to 1991 census, the literacy rate among the tribes of Andhra Pradesh is only 17.16 per cent, and extremely low when compared to national and state levels (52.11% and 44.09%). There is a lot of variation in the percentage of literacy between the tribal mandals within the

district. For instance Paderu 26.5 per cent, Munchingput 17.87 per cent, Chintapalli 15.44 per cent and G. Madugula 12.36 per cent.

Education as the means for knowledge and cultural transmission and very essential to mankind for sustainable development. The Anthropologists stressed the importance and value to study simple societies and their educational systems, which should be useful in understanding of education and educational process in complex societies. The last six decades the Anthropologists like Margret Mead (1953), Melville Herikovites (1943) and George Spindler (1955) have contributed to the engagements between anthropology and education, and out of their works emerged a special branch of Anthropology of education. Some of the concepts like, culture, socialization or enculturation, innovation, diffusion which are of special relevance to education, particularly the education of ethnic minority learners and aboriginal groups.

The present paper is aimed to discuss the education system in the tribal communities of Visakha agency area, their socio-economic and cultural background, tribal welfare educational institutions in an Integrated Tribal Development agency area of (ITDA) Paderu, expenditure incurred towards the maintenance of these institutions, supply of books and dress material to the students and steps taken for the improvement of students enrollment, tribal parents and students' attitudes towards formal education, role of the teacher to strengthen the education system in the area, incidence of drop outs, reasons for drop outs and tribal peoples perception about the value of education. The study was carried out in the ITDA area of Paderu, which falls under Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. A sample of 96 school villages were covered for the study. About 199 parent respondents were selected in order to know their attitude, value and opinion towards the education and functioning of the schools in the selected

tribal villages of ITDA, Paderu. The conventional Anthropological methods like observation, schedule, interview and case study were used to collect the empirical data. Secondary source of data were collected from ITDA, Paderu. The study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. This paper is prepared mostly on the basis of the qualitative data with intensive fieldwork observations in the Visakha agency area, which falls under the sub-plan area of Paderu ITDA.

During the Fifth five-year plan period for tribal development the government has evolved a new strategy of tribal sub-plan. The main objective of the sub-plan strategy is to integrate all the tribal development programmes including education in order to initiate these through a single administrative structure of ITDA. The integrated tribal development, sub-plan strategies are considered to be a landmark in the history of tribal development. The formal education institutions in the Visakha agency area are functioning under the control of the ITDA, Paderu.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE TRIBES

The economy of the tribes in the agency area is agro-forest based one. Large majority of the tribal population stands below poverty line and facing the food problem for about three to four months in a calendar year. They are exploited by the non-tribal moneylenders and traders in numerous ways because of their ignorance, innocence and illiteracy. The material culture, food habits, dress and ornaments are almost similar in all the tribal groups of the area. The tribes like Bagata and Valmiki speak the regional language Telugu, fluently, whereas the other tribes understand the Telugu language but can not speak fluently. Majority of the tribal population in the area speak the corrupted form of Oriya (*Adivasi Oriya*). Some of the tribes have their own dialects, for instance Konda Doras speak "Kubi" or *Konda Bhasa*. Social hierarchy is also prevails among the tribals of the area. Bagata claims superiority over other tribes and stands at top, whereas the Valmiki stands at the bottom in the tribal hierarchy of the area. The Bagatas are economically, numerically and politically dominant group in the area. The incidence of malnutrition is very high among the primitive tribes like Khond, Porja and Gadaba because of ecological factors.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE TRIBES IN THE AREA

The provision of free and compulsory primary education for all children upto the age of 14 is a constitutional commitment under Article 45. In Andhra Pradesh, compulsory primary education Act was introduced in the year 1961, for the children in the age group 6-7 years and the same was extended by 1965-66 to all the children in the age group 6-11 years. With the adoption of sub-plan as a strategy for development in the tribal areas of nine scheduled districts in Andhra Pradesh, the government has initiated education development among the tribals along with other economic and health programmes. The new deal for the tribal not only impressed the tribal beneficiaries but also laid foundation for optimistic faith in potentiality of education as an instrument, which can help the tribal to reach new heights. The new strategy has been adopted to bridge the gap between the tribals and non-tribals to reduce the gap and regional imbalances.

The ITDA is striving hard for implementation of educational development schemes covering a wide range of activities for bringing about qualitative improvement of the education in tribal areas of Visakhapatnam district. There was an impressive increase in educational institutions since the inception of Tribal Developmental Blocks in the area. The real education growth started and gained momentum during the fourth five-year plan period. Consequent on recognition of vital role-played by education in all-round development process. Higher allocations were made and new programmes were added to educational sectors. Eventhough, huge investment was made in this sector the results were not commensurate with the development efforts put in as the rate of literacy remained low. In order to enhance the educational status among the tribals, the government has provided certain educational facilities and concessions like scholarships for day scholars, note books, text books, stationary, clothing, lodging and boarding facilities (hostels), and mid-day meals, free ration to the student family.

In 1995-96, in Visakhapatnam district there were 2540 primary schools, 211 upper primary and 269 high schools and nine junior colleges. In the agency area there are 769 primary schools, 25 upper primary and 28 high schools, 2 junior colleges and one degree college, functioning

under different managements. The table 1 shows the tribal welfare educational institutions in ITDA, Paderu.

Table 1: Tribal welfare educational institutions in ITDA, Paderu

S.No.	Types of schools	Number
1.	High schools	51
2.	Upper primary schools	8
3.	Primary schools	44
4.	S.T. Hostels	15
5.	Number of borders	36290

The table 2 shows the expenditure incurred towards for maintenance of educational institutions.

Table 2: Expenditure incurred for maintenance of educational institutions

S. No. of the scheme	Name	Expenditure during 2000-2001(in lakhs)	No. of boarders covered
1.	Tribal welfare hostels	212.44	3266
2.	Ashram schools (TWD)	641.56	33024
3.	Post matric scholarships	347.39	6249
4.	Best available schools	62.02	814
5.	Work books	13.68	36290
6.	Note books	18.00	36290
7.	Inter-caste/Tribal marriages	0.70	7
Total amount spent		1298.79 lakhs of rupees	

The table 3 shows the distribution of books and dress to the students during the periods 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.

Table 3: Distribution of items to the students.

S.No. Items	Period		
	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
1. No. of books	342386	402634	426482
2. Dresses (cloth in meters)	13045	130630	173604

Enrolment

The data shows that the government has made good efforts to strengthen the education system in the tribal areas, but still the enrolment is not satisfactory performance. The recent survey conducted by the ITDA, Paderu, in the eleven tribal mandals reveal that out of total children of 76580 (boys 38,084 and girls 32,420) 5 years and above, only 30,052 (39.24%) (16,955 boys + 9,823 girls) are going to school and 46,528

(21,129 boys + 22,597 girls) are not going to school at all. It is clear that only 39.24% of the school age children are attending to the schools and with regard to girls less than one-third i.e. 30.30% only are attending to school. Eventhough, good number of mini primary schools were established in most of the tribal villages/hamlets and other type of educational institutions and package of incentives, enrolment of tribal children is discouraging, when efforts for universalization of primary education are being intensified. There are several socio-economic and cultural constraints, which are responsible for low enrolment rate. Subsistence level of economy, accessibility of good educational institutions, communication barriers, lack of committed teachers, unsuitable and monotonous school curriculum, stereo-typed school calendar and lack of proper facilities are some of the factors largely responsible for the poor enrolment and heavy dropout rate.

Drop-out Rate

The dropout rate among children belonging to scheduled tribes is highest when compared to general population. The data shows that the dropout rate among the scheduled tribes in primary stage i.e. 1 to VIIth class is about 84.72%. The dropout rate among S.T. girls is about 89.20%. It clearly shows that the tribal parents are not in favour of girls education. The reasons for dropout are, poverty, inaccessibility for good educational institutions, absence of nursery schools, lack of awareness about advantage and utility of education, language problem (medium of instruction), lack of sufficient infrastructure facilities and teaching aids, lack of good number of qualified and committed teachers, unsuitable school holidays, defective course content for the tribal areas and local cultural traditions.

Majority of the tribal parents are not showing much interest to send their children to the school due to economic reasons and they considered their children as economic asset to them. Because of their illiteracy they do not know the value of education. Large majority of the school age children among the tribals are not psychologically comfortable to enroll in the school and their mental attitudes always bending towards the traditional cultural activities. Even the children contribute their family incomes. The informal education to the illiterate parents is much needed to solve this kind of problem in the tribal areas. Their participation in school education system is much

essential for the success of the educational programmes in tribal areas. No doubt the teacher plays a crucial role to increase the students enrolment and reduce the dropout rate in tribal areas. Qualified teachers with good communication skills in local dialects at the initial stage for introducing the tribal children into the school system are much needed to strengthen the education in tribal areas.

The government has initiated the participatory management of elementary education in tribal areas through the establishment of G.V.V.K. (Grameena Vidya Vikasha Kendra) Schools and Maabadi in June 1993. In each school village, Vidya Committee was constituted with a view to make the tribal community to participate in the education system. The tribal teachers were appointed in the G.V.V.K. Schools. Some of the Xth class passed and trained tribal teachers were benefited under this scheme. A good number of teachers were found among the Valmiki tribe. In this regard the I.T.D.A. plays a crucial role in volunteer instruction.

The Role of I.T.D.A. in Volunteer Instruction

1. The I.T.D.A. provides training to volunteer and village education committee members.
2. The I.T.D.A. deposits in the village committee account of Rs.150/- per month as an assistance and incentive for running the schools which can be used for books, improving accommodation, paying of the honorarium to the instructor.
3. The I.T.D.A. also provides reading material like slates, books on par with other pupils who study in tribal schools.
4. The I.T.D.A. conducts monthly/bimonthly review cum training programme for volunteers and members of village education committee. Special features of this programmes are :
 - i. Feeder to the regular Ashram schools : These schools have been constituted to take up 1st and 2nd classes in these schools. After they complete 2nd class, those children are admitted to 3rd class in any Ashram, residential or primary school.
 - ii. Initial training in local dialects: As the volunteer generally comes from the same community. Initially classes are held in local dialect of the group and gradually they switch over to the Telugu alphabets.
 - iii. Plays way methods: Play way methods are encouraged for active participation

and interesting learning experiences.

The study reveals that even this strategy is not yielded good results in the area due to lack of commitment from the vidya volunteer and inadequate infrastructural facilities.

Tribal Peoples Opinion, Attitudes Towards the School System and Value of Education

To know the tribal peoples opinion, attitudes towards the school system and value of education, about 199 parent respondents were selected in 96 sample villages in the I.T.D.A. area of Paderu. Out of the total respondents 187 (93.97%) are males and 12 (6.13%) are females. In regard to the tribal status of the selected respondents, 31.16% of them belong to Konda Dora tribe, 23.62% of them belong to Bagata, 12.06% of them are Valmiki, 7.03% are Khonds, 6.03% are Kotiya, and another 6.03% are Porjas, 5.53% are Nooka Doras, 2.51% are Konda Kammara, 2.01% are Konda Kammari, 1.51% are Sadde Gowdas, 1.00% are Konda Kapu and a single respondent belong to Gadaba tribe. Majority of the selected parents belongs to the Konda Dora, Bagata and Valmiki tribes. Even among the school going children, most of them belong to these three tribal groups. In regard to the literacy rate among the selected parents 38.69% are literates and 61.3% are illiterates. Among the literates, 65 respondents have primary education and 12 respondents have secondary education.

The occupational background of the selected parents shows that, 92.97% of them are cultivators, 4.52% of them are labourers, 2.51% of them are government employees. In regard to the special status of the respondents 4 (2.01%) are holding the traditional village head position, 5 (2.51%) are holding the sarpanch position in the statutory panchayats, 11 (5.57%) are the ward members. About 93% of the respondents are owning either dry or podu categories of lands. Only 7% of the respondents own the wet land as well as dry lands.

The data pertaining to the motivation of parents to send their children to the school shows 61.3% of them are motivated by the elders and leaders of the concerned villages; and 38.69% of them are motivated by the I.T.D.A. officials and the concerned school teachers. About 61% of them expressed their willingness to send their sons to the school and 39% of them are not willing to send their sons to the school. A total of 32%

of the parents expressed their likeness to send their daughters to the school and 68% of them are not shown interest to send their daughters to the school. Thus among the sample parents, majority of them are favourable for male children education rather than female children education.

In regard to the level of their children education 3.52% of them have the desire to educate their sons only upto 7th class, 20.60% of them have the desire to educate their sons upto 10th class, 22.11% of the parents would like to educate their sons upto intermediate and 4.02% of the parents would like to educate their sons upto degree level. The rest of them have not responded to this. In respect to their daughters education levels, 4.02% of them would like to educate their daughters upto 5th class, 11.56% of them would like to educate their daughters upto 7th class and 16.42% of them would like to educate their daughters upto S.S.C. (10th class). Not a single respondent shown interest to educate his daughters upto the degree level.

About 60% of the parents have the aspirations that their children should be settled in government service and the rest of them aspire that their children should take up the agricultural profession which is the traditional occupation. In regard to the reasons for educating their children, 72.36% of them said for better earning, 5.53% of them said the reason for social status, 16.08% of them said the reason of leading happy life, 4.52% of them said to secure good job and 1.51% of them have not responded. It is clear that most of the parents have the idea that the education of their childrens certainly improve their life styles.

In regards to children's education expenditure a total of 43.22% parents are ready to spend money on their children education and the rest 56.78% of them are not willing to spend money on their children education. The basic reason for this kind of attitude is because of poverty. Most of the parents cannot afford the expenditure of their children education. Majority of them said that the government should have to meet the expenditure of their children education.

Parents Interaction with the Teacher

In regards to the parents interaction with the teacher, 69.85% of them know the name of the teacher, 90.45% of them meet the teacher, only 9.55% of them have not met the teacher even once.

Their purpose of meet to the teacher is mostly for their children education. Only 78% of them meet the teacher to know about the developmental programmes of the government or on health problems. The parents who do not meet the teacher are very marginal and they mentioned the reasons for not meeting the teacher because the teacher is always busy, teacher irregularity and also due to language problems to communicate.

Reasons for Teacher Irregularity to School

Majority of the parents mentioned about the teacher irregularity to the school during the working days. In regard to the reasons for teacher irregularity, 39.69% of the parents said the health problems of the teacher, 42.71% of them said that the teacher is busy with other works, 7.54% of them mentioned the absence of required facilities for the teacher, 6.53% of them said that the teacher is not interested in teaching, 3.02% of them said the lack of constant supervision on the teacher, 1.01% of them said that the teacher frequently visit his/her native place and only one respondent said that the teacher belong to other tribe and not interested to mix with the children of his community. However, 91.96% of the parents said that the teacher show interest in teaching whenever he attend the school, and 8.04% of them said that the teacher is not shown interest to teach even he attends the school. In regard to the teaching ability of the teacher, 87.94% of the parents mentioned that the teacher has the ability to teach, whereas 12.06% of them said that the teacher has no teaching abilities and skills. They quoted reasons for this kind of situation as such the teacher is not qualified, no teaching experience, local dialect problem, their childrens does not like the teacher.

Suggestions for the Teacher Regularity to the School

Out of the total sample parent respondents 53.77% of them said that the teacher should be provided housing facility, 32.66% of them said that the teacher should have to reside within the school village, 6.06% of them said the need of teacher quarter and forced him to reside within the school premises. The rest of them said, the teacher should be provided certain basic facilities, and constant supervision by the higher officials (M.E.O, D.E.O) certainly improve the teacher regularity to the school.

Suggestions for the Improvement of Their Children Education and Enrolment

The selected parent respondents asked the following facilities for the improvement of their children education and enrolment. About 90% of the parents asked the mid-day meal scheme, and financial incentives for sending their children regularly to the school. The rest 10% of them asked better infrastructural facilities like school building, furniture, drinking water facility and scholarships. Most of the parents demanded to start the Ashram or residential type of schools in their concerned localities or village. Majority of the parents complained about the teacher irregularity to the school. A few of them asked pre-school education for their children aged in between 3-6 years. It is clear that the teacher regularity to the school, better infrastructural facilities in the school are much needed to improve the enrolment, student attendance and literacy rate among the tribal population in the area.

CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals that the literacy rate and levels are very low among the tribal population, when compared with the general population. The dropout rate among children belonging to scheduled tribes is highest when compared to general population. Only 39.24% of the school age tribal children enrolled in the schools. About 60.76% of the school age tribal children not enrolled in the schools, due to poverty and economic reasons. Eventhough, the government is allocating some amount for tribal education, and certain provisions and concessions given to the tribals in the sphere of education, education development among the tribals is not upto the mark. The education development among the tribal population taking place in a slow pace manner, due to lack of proper motivation, and large majority of the tribals not yet realized the value of education. The large majority of the tribal parents are not in favour of their daughter's education. Tribal girls education to be strengthen in the tribal areas.

The tribals should be motivated properly to participate fully in the education programmes in order to get fruitful results in the tribal areas. Adult literacy and non-formal education centers should be started in every tribal village/hamlet and total literacy campaign should be given top

priority. More concentration is needed to extend the school facility to the interior tribals and primitive tribal groups like Khond, Porja, and Gadaba tribes of Visakha Agency area, where this study was carried out. Ashram and residential type of schools are functioning better in the area when compared with the single teacher schools, G.V.V.K. Schools and other primary schools in the area. Proper supervision is necessary for the effective functioning of such schools in the tribal areas. Frequent evaluation studies should be conducted to assess the levels of education development at tribe, village, mandal and I.T.D.A. levels and lapses should be identified and rectified with amicable solutions.

The teacher should play a key role for imparting the education for tribal children. Teacher regularity to the school is much essential to reduce the drop out rate and to improve the student attendance's. The teacher should be provided certain essential facilities to reside in the school premises itself, and he/she should have take initiation to establish good rapport with the local tribals to improve the children enrolment into the school. Essential infrastructural facilities should be provided to each and every school in the tribal areas. The teacher should be provided with sufficient knowledge in the cultural traditions of the tribals. The tribal welfare department have to identify the dropouts belonging to scheduled tribes and motivate them to pursue education further. The department should have to be implemented back to school scheme effectively in the tribal areas on large scale. Educational guarantee scheme should be implemented in all the tribal settlements irrespective of their situation in tribal sub-plan area or in the plain area. This measure shall certainly contribute for promotion of higher literacy levels. Pre-school education is also much essential to the tribal children to create education interest among them. In this regard Anganwadi schools should be strengthen in the tribal areas to provide pre-school education and to enhance nutritional status among tribal children aged between 3-5 years.

KEY WORDS Education; socialization; enrolment; drop-out; anganwadi school; *Maa badi*, (our school).

ABSTRACT The study is focused on the issues of education system, in the Tribal Communities of Visakha agency area, socio-economic and cultural background of the tribals, tribal welfare educational institutions in an

Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) area of Paderu, expenditure incurred towards the maintenance of these institutions, supply of books and dress material to the students and steps taken for the improvement of students enrollment, tribal parents and students attitudes towards formal education, role of the teacher to strengthen the education system in the agency area, incidence of dropouts, reasons for dropouts and tribal people's perception about the value of education. The study provides a clear picture on the education situation in tribal areas and the role of government for the enhancement of education status among the tribes in a sub-plan area of Paderu, located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh State

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