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Problems of tribal education (A Study in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh)

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Abstract

Education is need for the development of a society through individual development. There is need for equality for and balance progress of all the sections of human communities and for this perspective it is imperative to bring the weaker, deprived and discriminated sections such as 'scheduled tribes' in India. To the forefront of education revolution and mainstream of knowledge, and knowledge of self-identity and human environment will infuse a sense of confidence, courage and ability among the weaker sections of the society to know and overcome the problems associated with exploitation and deprivation, and to avail the socio-economic and political opportunities expanded to them.

In India 85 million people are recognized as Scheduled Tribes. The majority of scheduled tribe communities are living by attachment of hill and forest zones they are away to civilized society. Scheduled tribal people are not utilizing the educational opportunities because various factors are influencing to maintain the gap from education and drop outs rate is high from tribal communities.

In India tribal communities have their own specific characteristics. They live in compact areas, which are generally hilly and have undulating terrain. Demographically speaking, there are some 250 scheduled tribes with several sub-communities speaking 100 above languages. Most of these tribes constitute separate socio-cultural groups having distinct, traditions, marriage, kinship and property inheritance system and they live largely in agriculture and pre agriculture level of technology. Although the central and state governments are making efforts to develop literacy rate in and to stop drop outs from educational institutions. But, still schedule tribes have vast gap in society, in literacy and drop outs when compare other community people. Finally they need education to demolish the socio-economic inequalities in India.

The present paper is based on the primary data collected from the Bollapally mandal of Guntur district, where a majority of the tribes (Lambadies) are located. The literacy levels among them are very low as well as the dropout rate is more. This present paper aims at to explore the reasons for the above as well to suggest the appropriate measures to tackle the issue. A structured schedule was used for the study, a part from the case study and closed groups interactions methods were used.

Keywords: Education, tribal students, migration, problems, teaching methods

Introduction

The tribals in present day India are usually called adivasis considering that they represent the earliest inhabitants of the country. Available early literature indicates that these groups were known by different names like Dasa, Dasyu and Vratya. In this contest, they defined the term tribe as "a group of people in a primitive and barbarous stage of development".

The early Sanskrit literature mostly emerging from the elite sections of the society do make references to such primitive groups by using different terms. For example, the Mahabharata refers to the primitive forest dwellers as Nishadas. They are described as having short limbs and a complexion resembling charred wood, blood red eyes and dark hair. They are described as excellent hunters, engaging themselves in killing animals and fishing. Here is a clear indication of definite existence of tribal groups, which the mainstream society considered as outside its own group.

Several inscriptions and ancient literature pertaining to Andhra region use the terms like Kirata, Atavika, Sabara, Chanchu, Yerukala, Pulinda, Boya, Manyamjanulu, Lambadi etc. it is interesting to note that they rarely distinguish between different groups and use the above names as almost synonyms. They are referred as having their own settlements in isolated areas.

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Tribal Education in Constitution

In the post-independent India, initiatives were undertaken to promote development of tribal communities. The Government of India formulated a policy that aimed to promote well-being and up-gradation of the socio-economic status of tribal communities. The enhancement of the system of tribal education has been one of the major responsibilities of the Government. The framers of the Constitution have provided certain rights and benefits to the tribes. The measures and policies formulated have aimed at alleviating the state of backwardness and seclusion and enabling them to become the part of the mainstream society. Article 45 of the Constitution is more specific regarding obligation of the state. The state is directed to make provision of free and compulsory education to the children, belonging to the age group of six to fourteen years (Akula, 2013). The Right to Education Act, which was implemented in 2009 stated that all children, belonging to the age group of six to fourteen years have the right to free and compulsory education.

Article 46 of the Constitution directs to promote special education and economic interests of the economically weaker sections of the society, particularly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Apart from the Constitutional provisions, the major basis of the educational policy of India are various committees and commissions that are appointed. Within the course of time, improvements and changes take place within the system of education. In order to cope up with these changes, there is a need to bring about reformations in the system of education. In accordance to the new educational policy, there are establishment of ashram schools for the students, belonging to tribal communities. Apart from ashram schools, there are also establishment of anganwadi centres, non-formal and adult education centers (Akula, 2013). The major objective of these educational institutions is to make provision of educational skills to the tribal population, so they are able to promote better livelihoods opportunities.

Review of literature

Chaudhari (2010) studied "Participation of Tribal of Dangs in Elementary School Activities". Reveals the facts though VEC, MTA, PTA, and VCWC committees were constituted as per the SSA norms, the number of the committee members was not sufficient, the members were not trained, the committees did not fulfill their functions properly, the committees did not provide specific scope for tribal population. Tribal's participation in the committee meeting was not up to the mark and they were not active participants in the meetings. In all the sampled schools computer facilities, midday meal, science kit were available. Parents who did not migrate to earn for their livelihood, required their children to work with them. Parents were interested in getting funds and facilities; they did not use them for the facilitation of their children's education.

Mukherjee, (2009) ^[3] In acquisition of education, the individuals are required to meet number of expenses. These are related to obtaining textbooks, stationary items, uniforms, bags, transportation costs and learning materials. The tribal individuals are usually residing in the conditions of poverty and backwardness. Agriculture, hunting and fishing are their primary occupations. Income generated is used to sustain their living conditions. Therefore, due to financial problems, the parents encourage their children to get engaged in income-generating activities. In this manner,

as a result of financial problems, the tribal students experience challenges within the course of acquisition of education.

Rani, (2007) ^[4]. The study emphasizes primary causes are lack of capable understanding of academic concepts, learning disabilities, unavailability of learning materials, lack of infrastructure and other facilities, lack of support from parents, particularly in academic learning. In other words, they are short of the sources that are essential in achieving academic goals. When they are unable to understand academic concepts, it is apparent that they are unable to generate good outcomes in assignments or tests. As a result of setbacks, they experience low levels of motivation. Low levels of motivation are regarded as the major impediments within the course of achievement of academic goals. As a consequence, the students either experience low academic performance or drop out from schools, before their educational skills are honed.

Kartikeshwar (2006) critically examine the role of various educational procedures to improve the quality of life of the tribes of Keonjhar district. The author found majority of the tribal people were found illiterate. More females were illiterate than males, all tribal communities had received benefits from educational programmes, income generating activities, non-formal training, awareness programmes, social forestry, housing scheme, health programmes of NGOs of sample areas of Keonjhar district.

Nagda (2001) relieved that a large proportion of the poorer tribal children, on account of the rising cost of the schooling and economic burden, cannot afford to go to school.

Garg (2000) the study Observes caste, gender and family income were found to be affecting self-concept significantly, caste, gender and family income were found to be affecting the educational aspiration of the students significantly, caste and gender were found to be affecting the educational achievement significantly.

Subramanyam (1986) pointed the problems of dropouts among scheduled tribal students were unable to make adjustment with the present educational set-up, inferiority complex among scheduled tribal students, mobility of the parents depending on their occupation from one place to another, tribal customs tradition and negative attitude of parents towards girls education.

Kundu (1984) found that the problems of dropouts among tribal students was because of inadequate attention to the development of tribal language and culture, more stressed on confessional provisions, education programmes not in tune with tribal aspirations, education in non-tribal language, text books based on the non-tribal cultures and negative attitude of non-tribal teachers towards tribal students.

Some researchers (Hanumantha 1986, Kundu 1984, Azad 1976, Masavi 1976, Chaudhary 1974 ect.) done research to find out the causes of dropouts among tribal students. These investigators identified large scale dropouts of tribal students and their poor performance in schools and colleges due to poverty and economic backwardness, involvement, absents of special educational activities, illiterate parents and non-stimulating social environment, absence of special education programmes for tribal, looking after young sibling, ineffective and untrained teachers and defective medium if instruction.

Need for the study

The Schedule tribes are living in rural and agency areas, their life style based on agriculture and they are migrant people. Especially in Bollapalli mandal 27.08 per cent of schedule tribes are living in total population of mandal. An attempt is made in the present study to examine the problems of tribal education of scheduled tribes in Bollapalli mandal and concentrate on education problems. The study attempts to emphasise the problems of education and reasons for dropouts. Though several people analysed the tribal problems, no one studied the problems of tribal education and dropouts in Bollapalli mandal. Hence, this study made an attempt to fill the gap in this area of research to certain extent.

Objectives of the study

1. To analyse the problems of tribal education
2. To find out causes for school dropouts
3. To offer suggestions, which may be helpful in reducing problems and dropouts among tribal students.

Study Area and Methodology

The study was conducted in Bollapalli Mandal, Guntur district and the tribal population is around 2.47 Lakhs. In that 15,731 tribes are living in Bollapalli Mandal, it is around 27.08 percent of the total population of the mandal. This mandal have 61 primary schools and the literacy rate of scheduled tribes is only 34.88 percent. The mandal is connected with Nallamala forest it have no town connectivity all people are living in agency and rural areas. For conduct of this study data was collected following through random sampling technique, 100 samples were collected from school students, 40 samples was collected from teachers and 40 samples was collected from parents. To get collect the data direct personal interviews and observation methods were used in this study.

Table 1: Personal Information

1. Gender	Total	Percentage
Male	62	62.00
Female	38	38.00
2. Parent Occupation		
Agriculture Labour With land	48	48.00
Agriculture Labour Without Land	30	30.00
Daily Wage Earner	22	22.00
Collection of Miner/ Forest Products	00	00.00
Government Employees	00	00.00
3. Motivation for Education		
Parents	68	68.00
Brothers	12	12.00
Sister	11	11.00
Teacher	09	09.00
4. Transportation for School		
Walk	89	89.00
Cycle	11	11.00
Scooter/Motor Cycle	00	00.00
Auto/ Bus	00	00.00

Among the total 100 respondents 62 respondents are male and 38 are female. Regarding parent occupation 48 percent of the respondents parents are agricultural labours who are having below two acres of land. Remaining 52 percent of

the respondents are daily wage earners on agriculture, or dependents on forest products. The respondent's education is mainly 68 percent are motivated by their parents. The transportation for school of the respondents all most all 89percent of the respondents are going to school by walk.

Table 2: Mid-day Meals Facility

1. Mid-day meal Providing to you. In the School	Total	Percentage
Yes	100	100.00
No	00	00.00
1. a. If yes, do you get every day in school		
Regular	92	92.00
Irregular	08	08.00
2. Quality of Food		
Good	22	22.00
Not Bad	47	47.00
Bad	31	31.00

The investigator asked questions to the respondents regarding the facility of mid-day meal. Cent percent of the respondents agreed that the schools are providing mid-day meals to them. Most of the students stated that they are taking the mid-day meals every day in their school. More than two third of the students expressed that the mid-day meal is not qualitative and not hygienic condition.

Table 3: Class Environment

1. Mode of Teaching	Total	Percentage
Black Board	67	67.00
Charts/Maps	33	33.00
Science Kit	00	00.00
Audio Visual Equipment	00	00.00
2. Sitting Arrangements		
Separate Class Room	43	43.00
Merging two or three classes	57	57.00
3. Classes are taking regularly		
Yes	74	74.00
No	26	26.00
4. Difficulty to understand the class room teaching		
Yes	37	37.00
No	63	63.00
4. A. If Yes Reason		
Language Problem	15	40.50
Lot of Disturbance in the class room	08	21.50
Do not explain properly	07	19.00
Cannot specify any reason	07	19.00

The study is focused on class room environment how the students are getting education facilities in tribal area. The teaching method is followed either black board or chart/maps and, sometimes both are using. More than half of the students stated that the classes are merging because of not availability of sufficient teachers as per the student and teacher ratio. Two third of the respondents expressed that classes are taking by the teachers is regular and the student are understanding that subject. 37 percent of the respondents expressed that they are not understanding the classes due to language problem, lot of disturbances, teachers are not explaining in detail and same are not specified the reasons.

Table 4: Reasons for Dropouts

1. Teacher opinion	Total	Percentage
Illiterate of Parents	05	12.50
Poverty	07	17.50
Migration	23	57.50
Discouraging School Environment	02	5.00
Semi- settled Tribal Life	03	7.50
N=40		
2. Parent opinion		
Need at farms	16	40%
Children need house hold work	12	33%
Language difficulty	04	10%
No immediate gain	08	18%
Useless Education	00	0%
N=40		
3. Student opinion		
Have to Work for Wage	34	34.00
Have to Participative in Domestic Activity	30	30.00
Health Problems	20	20.00
Teachers Unfair Behavior	10	10.00
Discourage School Environment	06	6.00
N=100		

The reason for school dropouts, the investigator has collected the data from 40 teacher's respondents, 40 from parents and 100 from students, the teacher's point of view the main important case is parent's migration and next is poverty. The parent's point of view the researcher asked, their children are engaging their house hold work or also earning along with them. The students expressed that 34 percent are attending for wage work and 30 percent are attending to participating domestic work at their homes, the other cause are health problems, teachers treatment and discouraging the school environment.

Findings

The following findings are presented by the research based on the study

The ratio of male and female tribal students in primary level is 62 and 38 percent of tribes are depending on agricultural work Majority tribal parents are motivating their children for education, 89 percent of the students are attending school by walk only. All schools are providing midday meals in this mandal, 8 percent have irregularity and only 22 percent of students are told quality of food is good remaining 78 percent are expressed not bad and bad.

Still in this tribal area they are using old methods in teaching, 57 percent of classes are merging, two or three classes it indicates lack off teaching staff and class rooms and 37 percent of students are still not understanding the class room teaching and 40 percent students are feel in difficult to understand language. Teachers opined that mainly parent's migration is a reason for students drop outs, when they migrating from one place to another place for work on that time the children are also going to work along with them.

Parents are using them in their field and domestic work, 65 percent students stated that making drop outs with this reason. Student expressed the reason for dropouts mainly attending works for wage in fields and participating in domestic activity. Students are doing sanitation works like toilets cleaning, sweeping school and cleaning teacher's lunch plates. Teachers are not willing to work in this place due to transportation problem, it is far to city. Majority the schools have insufficient staff due to teachers are not

selecting in this mandal schools. Language is also a big problem to tribal students. They have their own language they will talk at home in that language.

No proper transport facility was available in most of the villages, secondary schooling facility was not available nearly in all the villages, almost all teachers were found staying outside the villages, early marriage was still prevalent in this mandal, people had a positive attitude towards education of children but only socio-economic backwardness was found to be a major problem etc.

The seasonal hostels what was established by the state government those are working conditions are not good, not providing hygienic qualitative food to students,

Suggestions

Governments have necessity to establish hostels, since primary level education because the majority of tribal students, parents are migrating for work if hostel facility is available at thunders the tribal literacy rate will be increase. To fulfill the language gap between students and teachers to solve this teachers have idea on tribal language and tribal community teachers need to appoint there.

Teachers shall stop using students for their personal works and sanitation work at schools. When they will stop on that time only the student and parents react positively for school education, teachers have need to develop the confidence in parents through explain the future of the child after completion of education. Teacher have need counselling how to motivate the tribal students

Tribal people have need awareness on government schemes, policies about tribal education and how to utilise it through publicity and campaigning. They need hospital facilities because so many students are irregular due to health problems in this place people have no hospital if any health problem will arise on that thy will go to Mandal head quarter or Vinukonda so they need at least primary health centers.

Conclusion

Education is the most effective agency of social change. Most of the tribal communities are educationally very backward. Success of a nation is determined by the quality of its citizens. Nation is not built by brick and mortar but by the quality of citizens. Education plays the primary role in economic and social development. It is crucial for building human capability and for opening opportunities. This paper established that facts that are majority students are struggling with parent's migration for agriculture works.

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