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A Study on Education Quality of Scheduled Tribes in Pachamalai Hills

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ABSTRACT

The literacy level of Scheduled Tribes is very low compared to the general literacy rate. Recognizing that education provides opportunities for a permanent change in the socio-economic status of these people, Government has identified top priority to education in the recent years. The present paper made an attempt to analyze the problems in the field of Tribal children education and suggest measures for the development of education among the Tribals in Pachamalai hills, Gangavalli Taluka of Salem district of Tamilnadu state in India. The study reveals that People of the remote area are superstitious and addicted to blind beliefs. Hence, appropriate policies to be framed and implemented by the government to enhance their education level.

Keywords: *Scheduled Tribes, Tribal Education, Quality, Pachamalai hills.*

INTRODUCTION

The Scheduled Tribes (ST) are among the most socially and educationally disadvantaged groups in India. Scheduled Tribes have different histories of social and economic deprivation, and the underlying causes of their educational marginalization are also strikingly distinct. However, a Comparison of educational outcomes among scheduled tribes yields a common picture that the government has sought to address through a common set of policy prescriptions. In this paper, we examine both shared issues concerning school access and quality for scheduled tribe groups and also highlight their unique problems, which may require divergent policy responses.

India stands in terms of tribal population after Africa in the world. According to the 2001 Indian Census, the population of the tribal communities in the country stands at 84.3 million and accounts for 8.27 of the total population. There are about 689 scheduled tribes speaking about 105 languages and 225 speaking subsidiary languages. They have traditionally lived in about 15% of the nation's geographical areas, mainly forests, hills, undulating inaccessible terrain in plateau areas, rich in natural resources.

The promotion of tribal education needs a fresh thinking and renewed efforts in new direction. The new policy and administrative initiatives should focus on the improvement of quantity as well as quality aspects for tribal education. The tribal people in India have their own culture, and are conditioned by the eco-system.

Normal development process has by passed the tribal communities. Hence the government has been implementing special schemes for their upliftment.

TRIBAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

Traditionally referred to as adivasis, tribes, or tribals, scheduled tribes (STs) constitute about 9% of India's population. Despite diversity in their community history, languages, production practices, and relationships with the non-tribal world, approximately 87 million Indians fall under the adivasi population, of which nomadic and denotified communities (DNTs), are at a projected 60 million. Nine States – Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, and West Bengal together account for more than four-fifths of the total tribal population in India.

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was established in 1988 for eradicating illiteracy. Like all 'Missions' it has worked with a focus on the purpose to be achieved which is to attain 'functional literacy of 75% of the people by 2005. 10 million volunteers were mobilized and 91.53 million people made literate by December 2001. The age group NLM first targeted was 15 to 35 which was enlarged to cover the 9 to 14 year olds in areas not covered by NFE. The groups to be addressed specially are women and members of SC and ST and other backward communities. The idea will be not only to impart knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also development of values such as national integration, environmental conservation, empowerment of women and the small family norm.

Education as a means of advancement of capacity well-being and opportunity is uncontested, and more so among communities on the periphery. Marked improvements in access and to some extent in quality of primary education in tribal areas have occurred, and stem from government and non-government initiatives. However, the number of out-of-school children continues to be several millions, mainly due to a lack of interest and parental motivation, inability to understand the medium of instruction (i.e. state language), teacher absenteeism and attitude, opportunity cost of time spent in school (particularly for girls), large seasonal migration etc. Low literacy rates in tribal communities continue to indicate a need for overarching support that tackles issues from health.

STs are one of the most deprived and marginalized groups with respect to education, a host of programmes & measures were initiated ever since the independence. Elementary education is a priority area in the tribal Sub-plans from the 5th five year plan. Tribal education is important for total development of tribal communities. Out of the ST child population of 16 million in the age group of 6-14 years, more than 14 million (11 million at primary stage & 3 million upper primary stage) ST children are attending schools during 2000-01.(selected educational statistics 2001-02). It means about 2 million ST children were not attending school during 2001-2002.

Despite the education initiatives, there is disparity among the states in terms of tribal literacy rates ranging from 82% in Mizoram to 17% in Andhra Pradesh. The ST literacy rate continues to be below the national average of 29.6% (Govinda, 2002), with literacy rates among tribal communities (in particular women) tending to be the

lowest. There exist areas in the tribal-dominated districts across India that remains largely un served by primary education facilities. Tribal children tend to inhabit forests and hard-to-reach areas where dwellings are spread and access to good quality education is more limited. Low enrolment coupled with soaring drop-out rates in primary schools exacerbates the problem, which has its origin in a gamut of inter-related cultural and socio-economic variables. Adivasis are associated with a certain stigma and behavior, which can be partially tackled through a change in mindset among non-tribals.

There is a need to provide special care and opportunities to the traditional disadvantaged population in a democratic society. It is with this in view that the constitution provides an ideal of 'Quality of opportunities'.

The total population of Tamil Nadu is 721.06 lakhs; Scheduled Castes is 118.58 lakhs and Scheduled Tribes is 6.51 lakhs both comprising 25.43 % of the state's population as per 2011 Census (SC 24.26% & ST 1.17 %). As per the 1972 Census, the literacy level among them was 21.82%, in 1981 it was 29.67% and in 1991 census SC 46.74% & ST 27.89 %. This position, in 2011 census SC 63.19% & ST 41.53 % which is much lower compared to the overall literacy rate of 73.45% of the state.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

In April 2010, universal, free and compulsory education, was stated as the 8th Fundamental Right and according to it, throughout the country children under the age group of 6 to 14 would receive free and compulsory education. India is considered as the 135th country imparting free and compulsory education within the age group of six to fourteen years.

WOMEN EDUCATION

As regards the enrollment of girls and their retention, it is interwoven with the perception of society about women and their role. Their position in the community is nowhere near what it was in the early Vedic times which is considered a golden era. Slowly, their status started to slide down and perhaps this is the starting point of the yawning gap between women's and men's literacy, a legacy which we are trying to battle with even today. Several steps had taken during the British period and since Independence to promote women's education. Yet because enrolment of girls is poorer than that of boys in a situation of similar socio-economic background almost everywhere, it is pulling down the results of achievement of universal primary education. To bring more and more girls in to schools and see that they are there for an essential minimum period requires the backing of the community and a host of support services.

The parliament Committee on Empowerment of women in its 14th Report tabled in August 2003, which expressed concern that 35 million girls were still out of school, said that 'the need for superior academic achievement is greater for girls as compared to boys as the future of the girl child rests squarely on her educational achievement and economic independence. India will not only miss the Dakar goal of attaining gender parity-equal enrolment of boys and girls-by by2005, but in all likelihood will not get there a decade later by when the world is to achieve gender equality in

education. This dismal forecast is stated in the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report for EFA released in Delhi in November 2003.

SCHEDULED TRIBES IN PACHAMALAI HILLS

The tribal people of The Pachamalai hills are known as Malayali. Pachamalai is a green hill range, just 80 kms north of Tiruchiraplli via Thuraiyur. Pachai means Green and malai means mountain. Pachamalai which spread with a few range is a haven of the tribal of this region, with unique culture and way of life. It's altitude is 500 m to 1000 meters above msl. This mountain range in itself has different small regions like Thenparanadu, kombainadu, Athi Nadu and Vannadu. The Malayali population is approximately 7,000. The main occupations of these people are agriculture and collection of forest produces.

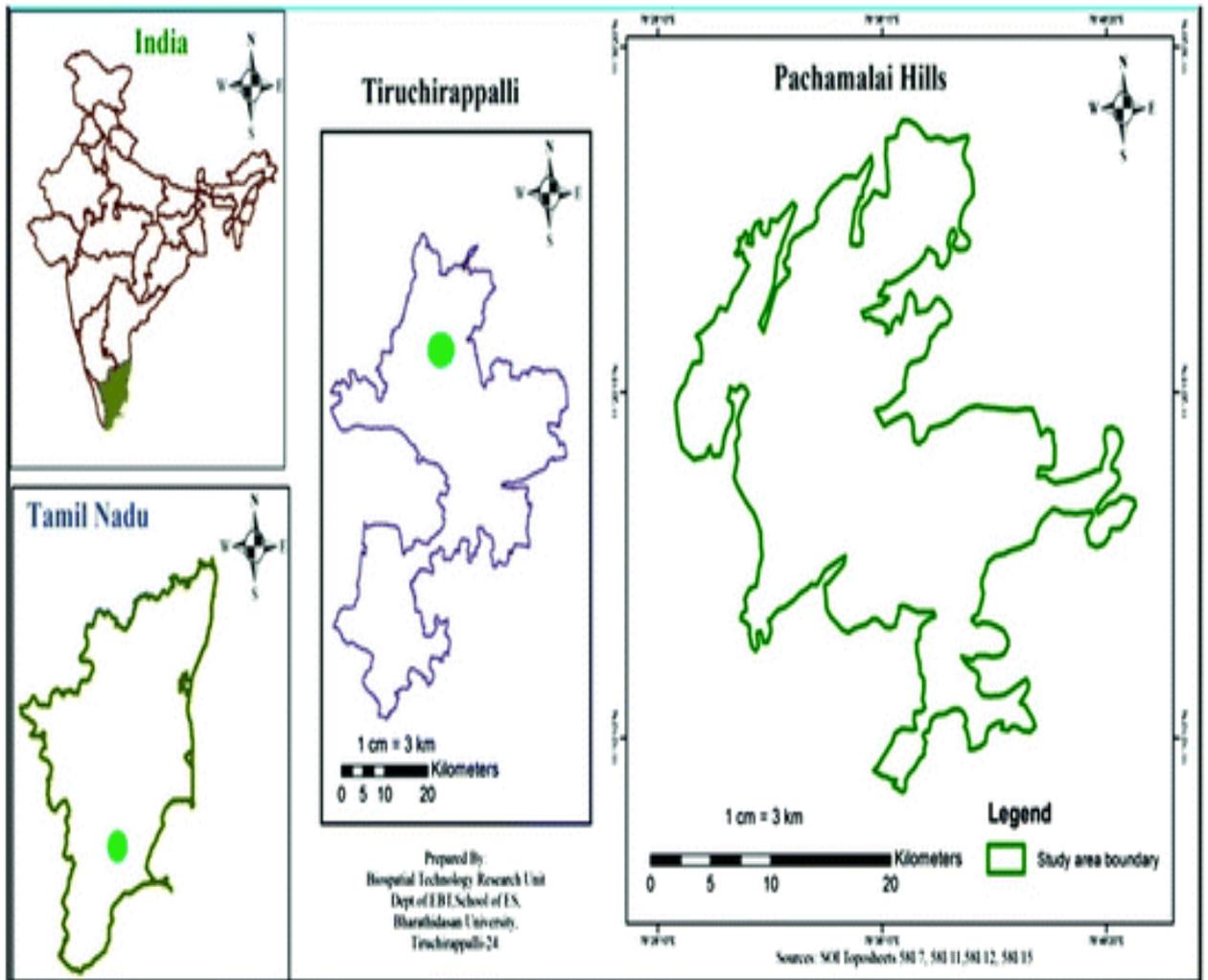
LIFE STYLE OF SCHEDULED TRIBES

They do not wear any distinct tribal wear but are clad in regular dhoti and saris. Malayali construct mud walled thatched houses with an elevation at the top for storing grains. They lead a very simple life with almost every one dependent on agriculture. They cultivate different kinds of grains, ragi, bhajra, maize and fruit bearing trees. A cattle breeding is also widely popular. All farmers own small pieces of land and most of the agricultural produce are utilized for consumption and a little is taken to the market for trading. Another main occupation of the tribal woman is collecting forest produces and selling them in the market. The government has established a co-education school especially for the tribal children. The initiative aims at improving the standard of living of the tribal people.

The Malayali tribe consist of cultivators, woodmen and shepherds, and are not as uncivilized as many other hill tribes.” Thus, these legends and comments reveal that they were originally a caste group who became Malaialis (hill men) after migration from Kanchipuram to the hills of different districts. Malayali speak Tamil among themselves and with other communities.

PROBLEMS OF TRIBAL EDUCATION

The basic problems of tribal education as non-availability of school, long distance, inadequate facilities, tough syllabus, inconvenient timings, unfamiliar language, lack of teachers, difficult language and sick parents. The application of Garret’s ranking technique indicated that long distance was the major problem in tribal education.



STUDY AREA MAP (Source: Google Map)

Table. No: 1 CENSUS OF INDIA

1	SCHEDULED TRIBES (INDIA)POPULATION
Persons: 1045.5 Lakh	
2	PERCENTAGE OF ST TO TOTAL POPULATION
Rural : 11.3%	
Urban : 2.8%	
Total : 8.6%	
3	LITERACY RATES
Person All : 73% / ST : 59% / Gap : 14%	
Male All : 81% / ST : 69% / Gap : 12%	
Female All : 65% / ST 49% / Gap : 15%	
4	SCHEDULED TRIBES (PACHAMALAI -GANGAVALLI TALUKA- VILLAGES) POPULATION
Person All: 4,712	
Male All : 2,410	
Female All : 2,302	
5	LITERACY RATES
Person All: 54.04%	
Male All : 60.64%	
Female All : 47.30%	

Source: National Commission for SCs & STs, Fifth Report& Census, 2011

Table. No: 2 The Total Number of School/College Going Boys and Girls in Sample Villages

Total Villages	Total Number of Boys and Girls	No. of school / college going boys and girls		
		Total	Boys	Girls
3	540	360	215	145

Table. No: 2 Student Dropout during the year 2017 And 2018.

Gender	In the year 2017			In the year 2018		
	Class 10th	Class 11th	Class 12th	Class 10th	Class 11th	Class 12th
Boys	21	34	36	18	30	31
Girls	15	13	12	12	10	6
Total	36	47	48	30	40	37

Source: Field data

The comparison between male and female drop out students in the year 2017 and 2018 shows that out of the drop out male student is 69.47 % and female student is 30.53 % in the year 2017. In the year 2018, the dropout male student is 73.83% and female student 26.17 %.

SUGGESTIONS

- Establishment of secondary and higher secondary schools within easy accessibility
- Providing more regular transport facilities
- Appointment of adequate number of teachers in the school
- Motivating all the parents to send the children to school and not to work and
- Creating awareness to the tribal families about the education facilities provided by the Government.
- For future generation, education is only option available, by and large. Hence, priority to be accorded to education.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the present study for education quality of the schooling and other educations in and around of the Pachamalai hills. The major focus for the Education quality improved population among the Pachamalai hills. The highest literate population is Periyapakalam, Mayampady and Nallamathi, the male literate population is high and low in Female population. The location is come under the potential resources and physiographic in nature occupied forest, soil, water and agriculture engaged to tribal's. The government implementing the so many Education awareness programme by NGO's. The NGO's also role to counseling to tribal communities for school going children, women's and youths.

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