EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN OF TRIBAL COMMUNITY- A STUDY OF ADILABAD DISTRICT

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Abstract: The present study aims at mapping the existing academic achievement of three tribal school children (Gond, Kolam and Pradhan) of Adilabad district. After 65 years of independence, still most of the tribal children are first generation to education. Education is essential for the human society to enable it to take up their due place in the social, economic and cultural life of modern India. But, even today education is far away from tribal life. The present study shows that academic achievement is very low, more tribal school children are irregular to school and the tribal schools have not been minimum infrastructural facilities.

Prior to schools and formal systems of education, tribal societies had their own informal system of imparting education to their children. In that system, learning from the habit, family and kin group was dominant. This type of transmission of cultural learning from one generation to another has three components.

- post figurative culture – in which children are essentially educated by their parents;
- con-figurative culture – in which children and parents learn from their Peer group; and
- Figurative culture – in which adults also learn from their children.

The history of Indian tribal education has traversed through different stages. Beginning of formal education among tribes took place in the pre-independence. The traces of education among tribes can be seen in the efforts of the Christian missionaries. As early as in the 18th century the missionaries came to India and began to spread their religious message. For that, they established education and health centers in the tribal areas.

During the colonial period the tribal areas were the last to come under British power primarily due to the difficult and accessible terrains where they lived. Tribal development was not a priority area of the British Government. The tribal development policy of the British Government was isolationist and inclined to follow the policy of laissez-faire. “This policy helped landlords, many vendors and traders to exploit the tribes by way of depriving them of their lands and forest rights, pushing them deep into the interior. No, attempt was made either to educate the tribes or to strengthen their economic base” (Ghurye, 1943).

The isolationist policy of the colonial government encouraged Christian Missionaries activity in the tribal areas, Christian Missionaries, through their sustained work, introduced various social and educational reform measures in the tribal areas. Consequently, some of the tribal areas acquired schools and hospital. The missionaries in this sense can be considered as pioneers, who initiated the process of an organized socio-economic transformation in the hitherto stagnant tribal life. However, missionary activities were confined to a few packets and they did not therefore have a significant effect on the overall development of the tribes in general.

During the Nationalist movement, some social workers have established a few “Ashram Residential Schools for tribal children along with craft oriented vocational-training (Hakkar Bapa in 1939 and Gandavari Purlakar established Ashram Schools as mentioned in G.D. Sharma and K. Sujatha, 1983). The model of these schools was replicated in large number in other parts of India after independence. Considering the magnitude of the tribal population and its diversity, the efforts of Christian Missionaries and Social workers were very meager and the tribes remained very backward socio-economically, particularly in their education.

I. Constitution and Tribal Education

In post independence India fresh initiatives were taken for tribal development by replacing the earlier policy of indifference. The Government of India advocated a policy, which could combine the welfare and socio-economic elevation of the tribes. With the adoption of the constitution, the promotion of education of tribes has become a special responsibility of the Governments. The framers of our Constitution have given certain special facilities and securities to the tribes. These facilities and securities provide some protective discrimination to the tribes against the non-tribes. The creation of scheduled areas for tribe’s performance in admissions to educational institutions and public services and the provision of incentives for education are some of mechanisms visualized to fulfill the constitutional directions.
Article 45 of the Constitution is more specific regarding obligation of the state. It directs the state to strive to provide with a period of 10 years from the commencement of the constitution free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 years.

Article 46 of the Constitution directs to promote with special care the education and economic interest of the weaker sections of the society and in particular scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. Beside the Constitutional provisions, the main bases of educational policy in India are several commissions and committees appointed from time to time to suggest reforms in the educational system so as to meet adequately the emerging educational needs and demands of the country.

The new educational policy document puts a premium on starting residential schools for tribal children including Ashram Schools. Looking into the need structure of the tribes special efforts would be made to bring them to accept technical, professional and Para-professional courses as a new deal for their future.

The document also emphasizes the introduction of Anganwadi centers, non-formal and adult education centers on priority basis in areas predominantly inhabited by the scheduled tribes. It planned that curriculum at all stages of education will be designed to create an awareness of the rich cultural identity of the tribal people as also of their enormous creative talents.

Though, number of initiatives has been taken for the development of education among tribal communities no considerable progress has taken place due to an intergenerational vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy and deprivation. This is evident in extremely poor adult literacy rates which are reproduced as low education levels among children from tribal communities.

Recently one of the tribal education studies identified that the main problem in the tribal areas is language. There are certain tribes (Kohla, Kondh, Saora, Bondo etc.) in Orissa within which it is extremely difficult to interact with their children and women. As for male members of these tribal communities, they are somehow exposed to the market, therefore, making it a little bit easier to interact with them. In most of the cases language creates problems of communication among children and teachers which in turn causes drop-out of children, Anil Pradhan (2010). One of the main reasons is language for drop-outs in the tribal area, and other reasons are poor economical conditions of the family, parents make their children participate in their agricultural works, parents do not have proper understanding about importance of the education, shifting habitations and traditional way of life may be the causes for the drop-outs and low level of performance among tribal school children.

Education, in its broadest sense, refers to the ways in which people learn skills and gain knowledge and understanding about the world, and about themselves. Most countries spend a large amount of time and money to provide education for their citizens. But this is lacking in the tribal belt which creates new problems. In short their problems are as follow:

- Due to poverty, instead of send sending their children to school, they send them to farms for labour work to earn money.
- The children who take admission in primary schools drop out. This is a great concern as it worsens their situation.
- The youth of a tribal community, who take higher education, start rejecting their cultural aspects. Therefore the benefits of higher education are proving to be detrimental to that tribe.
- Due to lack of agriculture as an occupation, maximum people do not accept the utility of such education.
- With the increasing tendency of unemployment, the interest towards education has been decreased.
- The misuse of tribal scholarship and mid day food has discouraged the present system of education.

“There is strong reason to suppose that no one designed to speak one or another language. If my children were to have grown up in Hapan, they would have spoken Japanese, indistinguishably from natives. The ability to acquire language is basically a fixed, uniform species property” -Noam Chomsky in Powers and prospects.

An attempt is made to study the academic achievement of tribal primary school children, for the purpose of assessing the educational performance of tribal primary school children marks scored by the students in the previous year annual examination were taken. On the basis of the range of marks scored it is categorized into four (4) levels i.e., i) 40 to 50%, ii) 30 to 40%, iii) 30% and below and iv) absentees. Like all other sectors of health and socio-economic life, educationally the tribal people are at different levels of development but, on the whole, Even after 65 years of independent India, the growth of formal education among tribal population is very poor.

II. Methods and Material:

The study has adapted a Question paper, which is developed by SSA to assess the academic achievement of tribal school children. It included the four subjects Telugu, Maths, Environment I and II, for 100 marks, the exam conducted at the end of academic year, apart from this one more interview schedule has developed to observe their language and speaking skills.

III. Results and discussion:

**Table 01:** The below table indicating the six hundred (600) tribal school children’s academic achievement.
The study reveals that academic achievement of three tribal primary school children. Out of six hundred, only 5.1% of children achieved 40% to 50% of marks and these children are belonging to Pradhan community. 39% children acquired from 30% to 40% of marks, 39.6% children attained 30% and below and 16.1% of children are do not attend to school and examinations regularly.

Among these three tribal communities, the pradhan community children’s academic achievement is comparatively good. fifty eight percent of children gained nearly fifty percent of marks. Twenty percent of Gond and Kolam children are not attending to school and examinations and perhaps we can consider as dropouts.

**Table 02:** The following table shows that the three hundred and twenty two (322) tribal school children’s academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Academic Achievement of tribal children</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40% to 50%</td>
<td>30% to 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gond</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>35.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pradhan</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study finds out that the academic achievement of three tribal boys primary school children. Out of three hundred twenty two, only 5.8% of boys children achieved 40% to 50% of marks and these children are belonging to Pradhan community. 39% boys acquired from 30% to 40% of marks, 39% boys attained 30% and below and 15.7% of boys have not been attending to school and examinations regularly.

Among these three tribal communities, the pradhan boys' academic achievement is relatively better then their counter parts.

**Table 03:** The below table reveals that the two hundred and seventy seven girls’ (277) tribal school children’s academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe (GIRLS)</th>
<th>Academic Achievement of tribal children</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40% to 50%</td>
<td>30% to 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gond</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The present study reveals the academic achievement of tribal primary school children. The interesting note that, out of 600 children, only five percent of children achieved fifty percent of marks in examination of IV and V class standards, which is most important period to learn language skills and mathematics problems, to promote secondary education. Basic education is the prerequisite for building a just and equitable society. It is also an established fact that basic education improves the level of human well being especially with regard to life expectancy.

Different studies have shown that universal basic education is an important factor in economic growth. A study by Sanjoy Deka (2010) on “Health and Nutritional status of the Indian tribes of Tripura and effects on Education” and concluded that dropping-out of school remains a concern, particularly among scheduled Tribe households. Over the last five years, the overall dropout rate for primary school children (classes I to V) has fallen sharply, from 50 per cent in 2001-02, 11.6 per cent in 2005-06. At the same time, the drop-out rate is higher among children of scheduled tribe families (14%). Retention in school is more difficult at the upper primary level, and the statistics show that one-fifth of the children drop out of elementary school. Special attention has to be paid to ensure continuation of schooling, particularly among tribal children”.

The present study found to be that among the three tribal group children’s academic achievement is below average and very poor the reasons may be:
- Poor economical background of the family,
- Poor health status of the tribal school children,
- Still they are practicing the traditional culture,
- Educational planners should bring out the ground realities of their cultural practices and inculcate in the school syllabus and
- Lack of supervision of ITDA and Government authority on policy practices, they are not paying attention on the health and education of the tribal children
- The tribal parents do not have aware about education and they make them their children participate in agriculture and domestic works.
- Meager infrastructural facilities of classroom and school and unhygienic conditions of the school.
- Poor health and nutritional status of the tribal school children.
- Children who are ill, hungry, weakened by parasitic disease, malnourished, scared, or tired are not capable of learning well. Meagre attention to the health needs of children diminishes efforts to achieve education for all in the short term and minimizes the benefit of education in the long term. Though we bring the children to the school and provided congenial classrooms, efficient teachers and high quality learning resources are not enough, unless children who are not in classroom with healthy. “The best teachers in the world won’t be able to eliminate the attention and learning deficits of children who are starved, ill or intellectually challenged. Health, nutrition and hygiene are key determinants which make education wholesome” (WHO, 1997).
- The language is also one of the main problems among the tribal school children, the children use to talk their own dialect in community, whereas in the school the text language is in regional language. As a result, the low reading ability, low understanding ultimately the child felt into fear towards study. A study carry out by Anil Pradhan (2010) “they identified a problem in the tribal area is language. There are certain tribes (Kohla, Kondh, Saora, Bondo etc.) in Orissa within which it is extremely difficult to interact with their children and women. As for male members of these tribal communities, they are some how exposed to the market, therefore, making it a little bit easier to interact with them. In most of the cases language creates problems of communication among children and teachers which in turn causes drop-out of children.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pradhan</th>
<th>8.3%</th>
<th>28.9%</th>
<th>37.5%</th>
<th>42.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.6%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
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The above results shows that the two hundred seventy seven girls’ academic achievement. Only 4.3% of girls children achieved 40% to 50% of marks. 38.6% girls acquired from 30% to 40% of marks, 40.4% girls attained 30% and below and 16.2% of girls are irregular to school and examinations.

Among these three tribal communities, the pradhan girls’ academic achievement is good then other two tribal community girls.

IV. Discussion:

The present study reveals the academic achievement of tribal primary school children. The interesting note that, out of 600 children, only five percent of children achieved fifty percent of marks in examination of IV and V class standards, which is most important period to learn language skills and mathematics problems, to promote secondary education. Basic education is the prerequisite for building a just and equitable society. It is also an established fact that basic education improves the level of human well being especially with regard to life expectancy.

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<table>
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<th>45...</th>
<th>277...</th>
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Among these three tribal communities, the pradhan girls’ academic achievement is good then other two tribal community girls.
V. Conclusion:

This study carried out some conclusions about academic achievement of the tribal school children. The tribal school children have creative knowledge towards their own works, when, the education system can able transform that knowledge into education, certainly they can improve their academic achievements. There is a contradiction among the tribal students regarding to deliver their ideas and creative knowledge, whether, in their own dialect or in the regional language like Telugu. But it is very difficult to express in the school text language, by this consequences the ideas and knowledge remains in their mind. When they come out from that contradiction their academic achievement can perform like plain or urban children. The government or any other organizations should take initiation to provide text books in their own dialect and teaching should be in the same.

References:

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