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Tribal Education: A Case Study of Gangaram Ashram High School in Warangal District

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Abstract

Tribal societies have been neglected and were not treated as the mainstream population in pre-independence India. The government in Independent India has taken various measures to bring the tribal people into the mainstream. Government has used education as the main tool to bring awareness among the tribal population and thereby help in securing jobs in the modern societies and assimilate them into the mainstream. The present article tried to analyze the role of government in improving the literacy levels of the tribal girls in Gangaram Village, Khammam District, Telangana State. The efforts of the government have yield positive results, which increased the enrolment rate in the Tribal Welfare Girls Ashram School, Gangaram Village.

Introduction: The Tribal groups are considered as the oldest ethnical sector of the India population and are known as aboriginals or adivasis. The term adivasi is also used for a tribal which mean (Adi or first or original and Vasi, Inhabitant) the original inhabitant of the country.

The understanding and defining of a tribal as it has emerged from the attempts of scholars who studied different facts and facets of tribal life is that, Tribe is a social group usually with a definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. To understand or to have a clear picture of a tribe or to draw a scientific definition, one has to emphasis on historical perspective. A tribe is a stable endogenous community with a community and psychological make-up going back into an interaction with other sections of the society and their exposure to the mainstream of life and they are at different stages of development.

The origin and original settlement pattern genetic stories, mythologies, folk tales, historical evidences, partly reveal their hoary past.

The Tribal India lives in the forest hills and naturally isolated regions known as a rule by different names meaning either the people of forest and hill or the original in habitants and so on. The popular names are: Vanayajothi (casts of forest), Adimjathi (original

communities), Adivasi (first settlers), Janjati (folk people), Adimjathi (primitive people), Anusuchit Janjati (scheduled tribe) and so on. Among all these terms Adivasi is extensively used to refer the Tribals.

The term “tribe” as it has emerged from attempts of scholars on tribal life is a social group usually with definite area, dialect, culture homogeneity and unifying social organization. It can include several sub-groups such as elons or sibs. A tribe has an ancestor and patron deity. The families or groups composing the larger tribal units or linked through “blood ties” as is commonly used and through religious, social and socio-economic functions.

Some Important Features of the Tribes:

1. **Common Sense:** Each cast has a distinct name of its own through which it is distinguished from others.
2. **Common Territory:** Tribes generally occupy common geographical areas.
3. **Common Language:** Members of one of the speak the same language. Each tribe has its own dialect, if not the script.
4. **Common Culture:** Each tribe has prescribed patterns of behavior and festivals and duties to workshop.
5. **Endogamy:** Each tribe has the practice of marrying members within their own tribe.
6. **Political Organization:** All tribes have their own political organization. They have councils of elders which control member

Tribal Population in India: Tribes are the descendents if the primitives, oldest inhabitants of India, rightly called the “Adivasi” (the first inhabitants). Racially and linguistically they are different from the non-tribal population of the country. The tribal language, expect a very few do not belong to the indo-European or the Dravidian language families; about half of the tribal’s population of the country is concentrated in the state of chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orison. Besides, there is sizeable tribal population in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Kerala. The Tribals in India live in forests, hills and naturally isolated regions.

Growth of Tribal Population in India

| Sl. No. | Year | Total Population (in Millions) | ST population (in millions) | % of STs population to Total population |
|---------|------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 | 1951 | 356 | 19 | 5.3 |
| 2 | 1961 | 439 | 30 | 6.9 |
| 3 | 1971 | 548 | 39 | 6.9 |
| 4 | 1981 | 685 | 54 | 7.9 |
| 5 | 1991 | 846 | 68 | 8.08 |
| 6 | 2001 | 1002 | 84 | 8.2 |
| 7 | 2011 | 1210 | 104 | 8.6 |

Source: *Census reports for the respective years.*

In all, 698 scheduled tribes have been notified from time to time since 1950, tribe's "primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation and social and economic backwardness" are taken into consideration before notifying it as Scheduled Tribes (S.T). There are 75 primitive tribes among the 698 Scheduled Tribes (S.T): the primitive tribes are the most backward among the tribal communities which live in object poverty pre-agrarian economy and have very low literacy rates. On the whole, the population of these primitive groups is stagnant of disliking. The relatively disadvantaged tribal communities in habit widely varying ecological geo-climate conditions (hilly, forest, desert, etc) and are at various degrees of socio-cultural integration within general national life. According to Singh, the tribal groups occupy roughly 20 per cent of the country's geographical area which contains as much as 70 per cent of the natural resources such as water, forest, minerals and ores they have burgeoned into zones of mining and industrial opulence' (singh,2003:1).

The tribes continue to remain economically and educationally backward and are languishing at the bottom of economic ladder. For generations together they are residing in inaccessible forest and hilly areas. They prefer to live in total isolation of the public and arte fully scheduled from the mainstream. Population, their geographical isolation and improvised economy have made them objects of economic exploitation. Expect the traders and immigrants to tribal areas: the general population in the country has very little knowledge about the tribes and tribal communities. Due to lack of education, tribes lag behind in acquiring new skills required in the use of appropriate technology and other opportunities and remain backward perpetually.

The tribal population of Andhra Pradesh according to 2011 census is 50.91 lakhs constituting 7.00 per cent of the total population of the state. Andhra Pradesh is covered under the provisions of Schedule-V of Constitution of India. In the state the Scheduled areas are extend over 31,435.34 Sq.kms. which is about 11 per cent of the total area of the state with 5,968 villages distributed in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad and Mahboobnagar districts. There are 35 Scheduled Tribes of which 21 Tribal groups are categorised as Primitive Tribal Group Communities. Of the 50.91 lakhs tribal population, 30.75 lakhs are found in the above mentioned 9 districts. The remaining tribal population of 20.16 lakhs is distributed in other districts.

The tribals are the children of nature and their lifestyle is conditioned by the eco system. India with a variety of eco system, presents a varied population throughout its length and breadth. The present study is carried out among the Ashram Schools tribes of Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh to examine the Tribal Education and case study of Gangaram AHS. According to 2011 census the Warangal district population is 35.22 lakhs, the district occupies 13th place in the state of Andhra Pradesh in its population and 12th place with regards to Scheduled Tribe population which is 3.86 lakhs i.e., 17.8 percent.

Literacy Levels among Tribes in India and A.P.

| Sl. No. | Census Period | All India Literacy % | | Andhra Pradesh % | |
|---------|---------------|----------------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| | | General | Tribal | General | Tribal |
| 1. | 1951 | 16.67 | 5.96 | 15.81 | 3.46 |
| 2. | 1961 | 28.29 | 8.54 | 21.19 | 4.41 |
| 3. | 1971 | 34.45 | 11.29 | 24.57 | 5.34 |
| 4. | 1981 | 43.57 | 16.35 | 29.94 | 7.80 |
| 5. | 1991 | 52.21 | 29.60 | 44.09 | 17.16 |
| 6. | 2001 | 64.84 | 47.10 | 61.11 | 37.04 |
| 7. | 2011 | 74.04 | - | 69.66 | 42.80 |

Source: *Hand book on Andhra Pradesh Tribes –TCR&TL, Hyd, 2004 and internet.*

Education and Tribal Development: Tribal education during British period .Going back to THE British period we observe that the colonizers never wanted India become self reliant. The educational structures during the British period were meant to play a crucial role in maintaining the colonist rule and not to favour indigenous education. The Government did not take any interest in making provision for educating the masses. As A.R Desai (1967: 102-103) observes. “The Government did not consider the supply of education entirely its own responsibilities, nor did not consider it as an essential necessity to every Indian to be provided free of cost and compulsory”.

Tribals Interest in Education: It is true that the Scheduled Tribes do not have an educational tradition in their homes. Most of them are illiterate; those that are literate have very low level of education. A large proportion of tribal parents do not send their children to school. To utilize the free education opportunities offered to them. It may be argued, therefore that they are not interested in education.

This, however, does not seem to be true. The summary of studies on the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe school and college students recently made in several states in India reveal that in almost all states educational aspirations of high schools as well as college students are high (CRDS1975; Shah 1975).In most cases the parents and in some cases the siblings encourage their ward to take education (CRDS 1975; Shah 1975). Thus it cannot be said that they are not interested in education. It is true, however, that their interest in education may be tampered by actual economic possibilities. In many cases, the tribal children are needed to help their parents in seeking out a living for their family. It may be possible for the families to spare them for education.

Government Tribal Welfare Ashram High School (Girls) Gangaram: Gangaram village is one of the important villages adjoining tribals, particularly to the Koya tribals. It is available information and the records kept at ITDA, that Tribal Welfare Ashram High School (TWAHS) for boys was commenced during the 1977. Tribals initially were hesitant send their girl children to this school, confining to their traditional practices that the girl child is only meant give services in the house and needs no education at all. Later with

initiation of some progressive teachers and fellow tribal brethren, the tribals tried to send their girl-children to the Ashram Schools. When the strength of the girl-children improved, and to cater to the educational needs to these, the TWAHS for boys was converted to girls Ashram school in the year 2002. And since then it is running with good number and with relatively good results. It can be said that tribals could realize a little the value of education and on the move forwards civil world. The initiation of the government and the will of committed officials then in well appreciated by the tribals were today.

Population and Literates/Literacy Rate of Gangaram Village-2011

| Sex | General Population | Literacy | Literacy Rate | S.T. Population | S.T. Literacy | Literacy Rate |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| M | 623 (53.67) | 366(31.5) (65.00) | 58.74% | 576(49.61) (54.44) | 344(53.61) (65.10) | 57.91% |
| F | 538 (42.33) | 197(16.97) (35.00) | 36.61% | 482(41.51) (45.56) | 179(33.27) (34.90) | 37.13% |
| T | 1161 (100.00) | 563 (100.00) | 48.49% | 1058(91.10) (100.00) | 513(44.18) (100.00) | 48.48% |

The above table provides the distribution male-female population and of tribals (here tribals mean only koyas) with their literacy figures and literacy rates Gangaram village. As seen from the table that majority of the koyas are literates and their literacy rate is 91.10 percent of Gangaram village. When we compare with general population, the ST literate seem to be much higher. If we take their micro phenomenon and judge the literacy rate, it would be multi leading, where district, state and national level literacy rates of tribals are put at lesser than 25 percent. Since the village population is dominated by koyas with 91.10 percent and hence their literates appear in majority, since the almost four primary schools are operating in all the residential aggregation covering entire village and its hamlets. Causing to this facility koyas tribe is able to take the advantage of receiving education at primary level, and we hope their standard of education is focused to improve in the years to come, and most of them can also go for higher education at mandal and district level.

It was established in 1977 and situated at Gangaram village. It is nearly 20 kms from Kothaguda mandal headquarters and on the main road of the Khammam dist. It is having classes from 3rd to 10th.

The school has its own building and is in good condition. There are 16 rooms among them 12 rooms are good condition and 4 rooms need repairs. The school has a playground. The school has 18 positions of staff. However at present only 16 and 5 Contract Residential Teachers are working.

The school has good arrangement for sports. The Government has not given any financial assistance for sports and games. The Headmaster arranges for the either from other funds or sometimes by collecting donations from the students.

The school hostel is in good condition. Though the rooms are less in number but the rooms are spacious. The hostel is situated in the school campus. The hostel must be provided with kitchen-hall and dining hall. For bathing and washing of clothes the students take water from bore well. The supply of drinking water is not sufficient for the students safe drinking water facility be provided.

The school building is having good electrical fittings and provision is electrified. The school has adequate furniture in the school as well as in the hostel. Bed sheets and mosquito nets are needed to the students. There is no first-aid box in the hostel. The distance of Primary Health Centre (PHC) from school is about ½ (half) km. However, it is observed that the medical facilities are not good in the P.H.C.

The quality of food is not so good. The day meal consists of rice, pulse and vegetables while during the night rice and vegetables are provided to the students and for breakfast rice based food served to them.

Strength Particulars of Govt. Tribal Welfare Girls Ashram High School Gangaram (2003-2015)

| Sl. No. | Academic | III | IV | V | VI | VII | VIII | IX | X | Total |
|---------|-----------|-----|----|----|-----|-----|------|-----|----|-------|
| 1 | 2003-2004 | - | - | - | 98 | 52 | 88 | 36 | 39 | 313 |
| 2 | 2004-2005 | - | - | - | 119 | 100 | 54 | 84 | 35 | 392 |
| 3 | 2005-2006 | - | - | - | 109 | 114 | 104 | 50 | 79 | 456 |
| 4 | 2006-2007 | - | - | - | 102 | 127 | 119 | 97 | 47 | 492 |
| 5 | 2007-2008 | - | - | - | 97 | 88 | 126 | 111 | 85 | 507 |
| 6 | 2008-2009 | - | - | - | 35 | 75 | 77 | 97 | 83 | 367 |
| 7 | 2009-2010 | - | - | - | 45 | 40 | 79 | 74 | 98 | 336 |
| 8 | 2010-2011 | - | - | - | 41 | 45 | 47 | 77 | 71 | 281 |
| 9 | 2011-2012 | - | 11 | 22 | 41 | 76 | 102 | 96 | 88 | 436 |
| 10 | 2012-2013 | - | 3 | 16 | 35 | 51 | 65 | 91 | 82 | 343 |
| 11 | 2013-2014 | 10 | 13 | 30 | 72 | 47 | 52 | 90 | 84 | 398 |
| 12 | 2014-2015 | 7 | 11 | 22 | 44 | 69 | 52 | 47 | 88 | 340 |

The above table shows year-wise and class-wise enrolment of student’s particulars in Tribal Welfare Girls Ashram High School, Gangaram. The table indicates that every year the school provides education to more than 300 students. In the academic year 2007-2008 the students strength has increased than the previous academic years. In the 2003-2004 academic year admissions are 313, from this academic year to 2007-2008 admission increased very well from the academic year 2008-2009 decreased. The academic year 2010-2011 also decrease. In the academic year 2011-12, there considerable increase but in the academic year 2012-13 there is a decrease, in 2013-14 there is slight increase in the present year i.e. 2014-15, there is slight decrease. Before 2011 there was a practice of bifurcation so that the classes 3rd to 5th were run under the supervision of Primary School Head Master.

But since 2012 the bifurcation was cancelled, these primary classes from 3rd to 5th were merged with Ashram High School.

In the same village there are 4 primary schools with maximum number of strength in each class and providing midday meals. This may be the main reason for not increasing the strength in 3rd to 5th classes in Ashram School. It can be safely admitted here that the pacca school building with the provision of power supply and good furniture could gain the strength. Hostel accommodation with good food facility, and with the provision of minimum medical care are attributed for good strength.

Teachers Educational and Training Status for the Academic Year 2014-2015

| Sl. No. | Educational Status | Number | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 | Post-Graduation with training degree | 3 | 18.75% |
| 2 | Graduation with training degree | 7 | 43.75% |
| 3 | Intermediate with D.Ed. Trained | 6 | 37.50% |
| Total | | 16 | 100% |

In the above table general and professional qualifications of the teachers have been shown. 18.75% percent of teachers happen to trained post graduates and again 43.75% percent are trained graduates remaining 37.50% percent are Inter mediate with D.Ed. trained. And all 5 contract Residential Teachers Trained with Post Graduation.

It is also noteworthy that even in Ashram school type of education which is being conducted in the remote areas post-graduates has also offered their services. But some of them after joining their posts started feeling dejected because of lack of communication, medical and housing facilities and due to the desolate surroundings.

Conclusion:

- ❖ The Tribal Girls enrolment has been increased with the inception of the school for girls in this area.
- ❖ Increasing the awareness of the tribals has made them to send their children to school, which in turn has increased the literacy rate.
- ❖ The teachers who are from the same community has helped to understand their background and language problems and helped them to improve their education.
- ❖ The government by increasing more funds and by bringing awareness can bring the tribal population into the mainstream.

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