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Problems of Education among Scheduled Tribe P.G. Students in Karnataka

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Abstract:

Education is the media through which one can have better understanding in life. Almost all societies, stress on education in order to mould the future generations. Education is the means for many achievements in human civilization but for the development of science and technology the life pattern of man would have been more painful involving lot of human labour. A better life has become possible only through development and the spread of education. All most all the contemporary societies in the world have given preference to the education of their people. At the individual level education brings self- satisfaction. With the formation of a new democratic society, based in new values, education has a very important role to play. In modern India the social responsibility of the educational system assumes great significance. Education can no longer be only a matter of communication of skill, knowledge and technique but it is also a major vehicle of social transformation. Education is a very complex process, which helps in the development of the body, mind and spirit of an individual. It is not merely a technique, method or an approach, but is a basic weapon for stimulating individuals to think and perform better in ordering their lives in a fruitful manner. Education implies the transmission of culture from one generation to another by creating the power to awaken men to their social responsibilities. It provides a strong link between the past and the present with a view to fashioning a future that meets the socio-economic needs of mankind.

Key words: Scheduled Tribes, Education Problems, Karnataka

1. Introduction

Education has a marked influence on the future of an individual, hence education is often called the key to bright future. An individual who has acquired higher education will also have higher occupational aspirations. In Indian history, we find that the upper castes have benefited with the help of education, but lower castes and tribes lagged behind socially, economically, culturally because they were denied the benefits of education until recently.

At the higher level of education there is specialization of education, which enables one to enter a profession of his liking. Hence his desire is fulfilled in both education and occupation. In the past the responsibility of a government was mostly the maintenance of law and order and defending the country from external aggression. Today however a government is responsible for discharging many welfare activities for the people, particularly for those who have remained backward and poor on account of denial of equal opportunities in the past, such as the scheduled castes and tribes in India.

The home environment does not provide any intellectual stimulus to tribal children. Most of the parents are illiterate or have extremely low level of education. Parent's illiteracy or low level of education is positively associated with children's level of education. Due to the poor economic condition parents remain absent from home most of the time and child stays with other children. The peer groups in which they live also do not help for their educability because they are also illiterates and disinterested in education.

2. Review of Literature

The educational gap between the scheduled tribes and the rest of society is still very wide and the rate of improvement is very slow. Due to lack of proper guidance the scheduled tribe students are attending schools at a later age. Pimpley (1980) has revealed that college students among scheduled tribes were mostly over aged, in most cases their parents were illiterate with meager financial resources. Further they also had to spend a lot of time in performing domestic duties which interfered with their studies.

Chitnis (1979) and Premi (1984) hold that instead of providing equal opportunity to all, the present system of education is creating new inequalities. The available data show that only a small proportion of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students have been able to reap major benefits of higher education and modern education. It is because education among them is still a problem.

In this context Naik, D.J. (1969) opined that “Expansion of education among scheduled tribes has made them conscious of their rights and has made them secure better status in the society. Education has played an important role in the all-round development of the scheduled tribe people”.

Similarly Naik, T.B. (1969:166) said that “no doubt, because of such investment of money and machinery education has brought about changes in the modes of living, dress, economy and some less important customs of the tribals, but there is hardly any change in the social values and ethical codes”.

According to Mann, R.S. (1968:7) “Schemes for welfare, education, communication medical relief were no doubt, essential but one must always remember, however, that we do not mean to interfere with their way of life, but want to help them to live it. But tribal people should be helped to grow according to their genius and tradition”.

Chakrawarty and Singrole (1988) is of the opinion that “The socio-economic development of scheduled tribes is closely linked with their educational advancement, more so in today’s changing world in which education plays an increasing role in every day life apart from equipping a person with necessary skills for more effective participation in different spheres of economic activity”.

In the same way Balakrishna (1986) highlighted the effects of socio-cultural deprivation on tribal adolescents. He found that the Christian tribal students possess more intelligence, better reasoning ability and higher achievement motivation than non-Christian tribal students moreover, the Christian tribal groups were found to have higher aspirations and goals than non-Christina tribal group.

Chand (1985) compared various Naga tribal students in relation to their self perception, socio-economic status and allied aspects. It was found that the boys belonging to Angami and Sema tribes were significantly different from the girls of same tribe in self perception. The girls belonging to the three different tribes were found similar on self perception. The vocational choice of girls belonging to those three tribes was not found to differ significantly from one another. Likewise the educational aspirations of the boys were also found to be similar.

Choudhury (1985) focused on the education and social change among the scheduled tribes of North Bengal. Some of his findings are as follows. The indigenous scheduled tribes were generally more advanced compared to migrant scheduled tribes, both plantation workers and village settlers in the fields of literacy and gainful occupation. Migrant scheduled tribes of the village were alarmingly backward in education in relation to migrant scheduled tribes in the tea estate and indigenous scheduled tribe in the village.

Smith and Cheung (1968) assessing the trends in the effects of parental status as a determinant of educational outcome, feels that the effect of background on schooling differ for men and women. The number of years that an individual’s father has attended school is clearly a strong determinant of educational attainment for both men and women.

3. Objectives

- The study aims at understanding the problems of education among scheduled tribes.
- It is an attempt to understand the relation between higher education and changes among scheduled tribes.

4. Methodology

This study was conducted in four universities of Karnataka, which represent different regions of the state. The universities are Mysore university, Mysore, Gulbarga University, Gulbarga, Karnatak University, Dharwad and Kuvempu University, Shimogga. The study is based on survey method to select samples quota sampling method was used. To collect the required information interview schedules were used. For the present study 300 scheduled tribe PG students were selected as samples.

5. Limitations of the Study

The present study is confined only to post-graduate scheduled tribe students. The study covers the respondents from only four universities representing different regions of the Karnataka state.

6. Analysis

The medium of instruction is a most important factor in accelerating the knowledge among people. Because in modern society the English medium of instruction is the best way to acquire better and qualitative education. Therefore an attempt is made to understand the medium of instruction of the respondents.

Sl. No.	Area	Opinion regarding English language				Total
		Very tough	Slight tough	Easy	Very easy	
1.	Rural	12 (4.8)	134 (54.0)	80 (32.3)	22 (8.9)	248 (100.0)
2.	Urban	02 (3.8)	20 (38.5)	26 (50.0)	04 (7.7)	52 (100.0)
	Total	14 (4.7)	154 (51.3)	106 (35.3)	26 (8.7)	300 (100.0)

Table 1: Area and opinion regarding English language

The data indicates that for the respondents English language is somewhat hard. A majority of the respondents have felt that English language is slightly tough as compared to Kannada language. Among all the respondents a majority 51.3 per cent (154) respondents have felt that English is somewhat tough, 4.7 per cent (14) respondents have opined that English is very tough language. But 35.3 per cent (106) respondents have said that English is an easy language and other 8.7 per cent (26) respondents have felt that English is very easy language.

As far as area of the respondents is concerned, a majority of respondents have felt it is difficult language irrespective of their geographical background. Among all the rural background respondents 4.8 per cent (12) are of the opinion that English is very difficult language, 54.0 per cent (134) respondents have opined that it is somewhat tough language, 32.3 per cent (80) respondents of rural background are of the opinion that it is easy language and remaining 8.9 per cent (22) rural respondents feel that English is very easy language. But among all the urban background respondents 50.0 per cent (26) respondents feel that English is easy language and 38.5 per cent (20) respondents opine that it is slight difficult language. Remaining 7.7 per cent (04) respondents feel it as a very easy and 3.8 per cent (02) students opine it as a very tough language.

Thus a majority of rural background respondents have felt that English is difficult language whereas urbanites have opined that it is an easy language. It shows geographical disparity so far as quality of education is concerned. Therefore it is better to introduce English language in all schools either government or private.

Not all the respondents joined post graduate courses just after bachelor degree due to various reasons. Hence an attempt is made to understand the gap to join P.G. after bachelor degree.

Sl. No.	Age	Opinions			Total
		Soon after	After one year	After two years and more	
1.	21-22	109 (93.2)	07 (6.0)	01 (0.9)	117 (100.0)
2.	23-24	135 (82.8)	24(14.7)	04 (2.5)	163 (100.0)
3.	25 above	10(50.0)	07 (35.0)	03 (15.0)	20 (100.0)
	Total	254 (84.7)	38 (12.7)	08 (2.7)	300 (1000)

Table 2: Age and gap to join P.G. after degree of the respondents

The data reveals that a majority of respondents have joined post-graduate course just after their bachelor degree. Among all the respondents 84.7 per cent (254) have joined post-graduation course just after their degree, 12.7 per cent (38) respondents have joined after one year and 2.7 per cent (08) respondents have joined after two years or more.

As far as age of the respondents is concerned, a majority of respondents of age group 21-22 have joined post-graduate soon after their degree, 6.0 per cent (07) respondents have joined one year later after their degree and only 0.9 per cent (01) respondents have joined post-graduate course after two years. Similarly among the respondents of age group 23-24 years 82.8 per cent (135) have joined after their degree, 14.7 per cent (24) have joined one year later and 2.5 per cent (04) respondents have joined after two or more years later. In the same way among the students of age group 25 years and more 50.0 per cent (10) had joined just after their degree, 35.00 per cent (07) have joined one year later and 15.0 per cent (03) have joined two years or more after their degree.

Thus the data shows that most of the respondents irrespective of their age have joined post-graduate course just after their degree. But some have joined after one or more years after their degree due to various reasons.

Sl. No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Lack of proper guidance	05	1.6
2.	Financial problem	26	8.7
3.	Other	15	5.0
4.	Not applicable	254	8.7
	Total	300	100.0.

Table 3: Reasons for late admission for P.G. course

Among all the respondents a majority 84.7 per cent (254) have joined post-graduation just after their Bachelor degree. Among remaining students 8.7 per cent (26) respondents have opined that they have joined post-graduation later because of financial problem, which shows their poor condition, 1.6 per cent (05) respondents have joined later due to lack of proper guidance, which shows illiteracy and lack of awareness among the elder members of scheduled tribes. Remaining 5.0 per cent (15) respondents have joined due to other specific reasons like lack of encouragement, late results, non-availability of hostel facility and the like. Thus due to lack of proper guidance, financial problem and other problems, scheduled tribe students have not joined post-graduate courses just after their degree. It shows backwardness of scheduled tribe students who have not joined post-graduate courses just after their degree. It shows backwardness of scheduled tribes in rural areas.

Almost all educational institutions provide opportunities to take participation in extracurricular activities along with education to the students. Not all the students take active participation in such activities due to different reasons along with inferiority feeling. Hence it is an attempt to know about the respondent's participation in extracurricular activities in Universities.

Sl. No.	Sex	Opinions		Total
		Yes	No	
1.	Male	183 (92.4)	15 (7.6)	198 (100.0)
2.	Female	78 (76.5)	24 (23.5)	102 (100.0)
	Total	261 (87.0)	39 (13.0)	300 (100.0)

Table 4: Sex and opinion regarding participation in extra-curricular activities

Among all the 300 respondents 87.0 per cent (261) respondents have opined that they took active participation in other activities in university, 13.0 per cent (39) respondents have not taken any participation in such extra-curricular activities. Among male respondents 92.4 per cent (183) respondents have actively participated in other activities, but among female respondents 76.5 per cent (78) girl students participate in extra-curricular activities. Thus 7.6 per cent (15) male respondents and 23.5 per cent (24) female respondents have not taken any active participation in other activities of the university except the study.

Thus some students have not engaged in extra-curricular activities in universities. As compared to male, female respondents are more in number, who had not joined other sports and cultural activities. It may be either due to inferiority feeling or non-encouragement to them.

As it is clear that there is relationship between higher education and better social status in the society. Hence an attempt is made to explore the relationship between higher education and increase of social status in the society.

Sl. No.	Social class	Opinions		Total
		Yes	No	
1.	Upper class	36 (100.0)	-	36 (100.0)
2.	Middle class	137 (98.6)	02 (1.4)	139 (100.0)
3.	Low class	124 (99.2)	01 (0.8)	125 (100.0)
	Total	297 (99.0)	03 (1.0)	300 (100.0)

Table 5: Social class and opinion regarding higher education and increase of social status

Obviously, the data in the above table ascertained that higher education helps to increase social status for the weaker sections of the society. 99.0 per cent (297) respondents irrespective of their social class have supported the positive relationship between higher education and enhance of social status. All the upper class respondents have supported above opinion. Among all the middle class respondents 98.6 per cent (137) respondents and 99.2 per cent (124) respondents of lower social class have supported the view that higher education leads to higher the social status. But only 1.4 per cent (02) respondents of middle class and 0.8 per cent (01) respondents of lower social class have opined that there is no correlation between higher education and higher social status.

Thus from the study it is evident that as the level of education increases the social status of the downtrodden or oppressed sections of the society increases. Since scheduled tribes are either lower level of educated or illiterates, the above opinion is true with the scheduled tribes.

Generally scheduled tribe people living in villages and inaccessible areas. Hence it becomes difficult to accelerate educational facilities for them. Moreover the dropout rate even at primary level is high. This is due to their family background, social and cultural background etc. Therefore here an attempt is made to understand the reasons for lagging behind in higher education among scheduled tribes.

Sl. No.	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Family environment	146	48.7
2.	Inequality in educational institutions	12	4.0
3.	Inferiority feeling	14	4.7
4.	Parents want to work in early age	118	39.3
5.	Others	10	3.3
	Total	300	100.0

Table 6: Reasons for lagging behind in higher education

The study explores that family environment is mainly responsible for their dropout in early level of education. Similarly most of the parents force their children to go for work in an early age to meet their basic amenities. It is mainly because of their utter poverty. Among all the respondents 48.7 per cent (146) respondents have opined that family background is the main cause for lagging behind in higher education. 4.0 per cent (12) respondents have said that inequality in educational institutions leads to their drop out in higher level of education, 4.7 per cent (14) respondents have opined that due to feeling of inferiority scheduled tribe people will not go for higher education, 39.3 per cent (118) respondents have opined that many scheduled tribe students will not continue their higher education because of severe poverty. As a result of poverty many parents send their children to work in an early age. Remaining 3.3 per cent (10) respondents have given other reasons for their backwardness in higher education.

Similarly scheduled tribe people are lagging behind in technical education also. Therefore an attempt is also made to find out main reasons for their lower representation in technical educational institutions.

Sl. No.	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Poverty	225	75.0
2.	Feeling lower status in society	05	1.7
3.	Lack of proper guidance	50	16.7
4.	Problem of English language	14	4.7
5.	Others	06	2.0
	Total	300	100.0

Table 7: Reasons for lagging behind technical education

The data explores that poverty is main reason for their fewer representation in technical education. Among all the respondents 75.0 per cent (225) respondents have ascertained that severe poverty is main reason for their backwardness in technical education, 16.7 per cent (50) respondents have opined that lack of proper guidance in time is responsible for their lesser number in technical educational institution, 4.7 per cent (14) respondents have said that many scheduled tribe students do not prefer technical education due to problem of English language, 1.7 per cent (05) respondents are of the opinion that as a result of inferiority feeling many scheduled tribe students do not go for technical education. Remaining 2.0 per cent (06) respondents have given other reasons for their lagging behind in technical education.

Thus poverty and problem of English language are main reasons for their lagging behind in technical education.

So far as literacy rate among scheduled tribes is concerned the female literacy rate is lower than males. It may be due to early marriage of girls among scheduled tribes and higher dropouts in primary level of education and feeling of providing education to girls is an unproductive expenditure. Hence many scheduled tribes parents discard higher education for girls.

Sl. No.	Sex	Opinions						Total
		Cultural background	Financial problem	They have no interest in education	Family discouragements	Feeling of inferiority complex	Others	
1.	Male	30 (15.2)	17 (8.6)	11 (5.6)	132 (66.7)	06 (3.0)	02 (1.0)	198 (100.0)
2.	Female	10 (9.8)	13 (12.7)	06 (5.9)	70 (68.6)	03 (2.9)	-	102 (100.0)
	Total	40 (13.3)	30 (10.0)	17 (5.7)	202 (67.3)	02 (0.7)	02 (0.7)	300 (100.0)

Table 8: Sex and reasons for educational backwardness of ST women

Among all the respondents a majority 67.3 per cent (202) respondents have opined that family discouragement is main factor for the educational backwardness of scheduled tribe women. 13.3 per cent (40) respondents have said that for the female educational backwardness cultural diversity and background is responsible, 10.0 per cent (30) respondents have opined that the female drop out rate is high due to financial problem, 5.7 per cent (17) respondents have opined that girls are educationally backward due to their personal non-interest in getting education, 3.0 per cent (09) respondents have said that most of the girls have developed feeling of inferiority and hence they will not go for education. Remaining 0.7 per cent (02) respondents have opined that due to other specific reasons the girls will not get education.

So far as sex of the respondents is concerned most of the respondents have agreed that family discouragement is the main reason for the educational backwardness among scheduled tribe girls irrespective of sex of the respondents. Other than this reason most of the female respondents have opined that financial problem is the main reason for their educational backwardness, whereas most of the male respondents have said that cultural background is responsible for educational backwardness among girls of scheduled tribes. Among all the male respondents 66.7 per cent (132) respondents have said that due to family discouragement girls are educationally backward. 15.2 per cent (30) male respondents have said that cultural background is responsible for lower female education of scheduled tribes 8.6 per cent (17) male respondents have opined that financial problem is main reason for educational backwardness of women, 5.6 per cent (11) male respondents have said that girls themselves have no interest in getting education, 3.0 per cent (06) male respondents opined that girls have developed the feeling of inferiority and hence they do not go for education. Remaining only 1.0 per cent (02) male respondents are of the opinion that girls will not get education due to their personal and specific problems.

Among all the female respondents 68.6 per cent (70) respondents have given family discouragement, 12.7 per cent (13) respondents have given financial problem, 9.8 per cent (10) respondents have given cultural background and 2.9 per cent (03) respondents have given feeling of inferiority complex as the main reasons for the educational backwardness of scheduled tribe women. Remaining 5.7 per cent (06) female respondents have opined that due to non-interest in education girls are not getting education. Moreover there is no any specific and personal reason for their educational backwardness.

7. Conclusion

Thus higher education is necessary for upward mobility. It plays an important role as a powerful instrument of economic and social changes. It makes significant contribution in raising the quality of life of people. It is through higher education that the all-round progress of weaker sections of the society is possible. Thus the study shows that most of the respondents maintain their educational expenditure with the help of scholarship amount is not sufficient to meet all their expenditures.

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