



SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF LAMBADA WOMEN IN ITDA AREAS OF WARANGAL DISTRICT – A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Article 46 of the Constitution of India has promised special care for educational and economic interests of STs and protection from social injustice and exploitation. But despite this constitutional promise 29th report of Commission of SC & ST have recorded that STs have become completely helpless on account of criminalization of their social and economic system, denial of rights over resources and non recognition of their Special governing systems. The Scheduled tribes constitute a small proportion of the total population of the country and they are marginalized from the society in many respects. Provisions made in the Constitution have brought about changes in their position but still they are confronted with a number of challenges. Lambada women in India are hardworking than tribal men and they contribute significantly towards their family income but their income generating sources are limited. The earliest period of independence has ushered in a new era in the field of women's education in general and lambada women in particular in the country. United Nations has defined the status of women as the "conjunction of position a women occupies as a worker, student, wife, mother of the power and prestige attached to these positions, and of the right and duties she is expected to exercise" (UN, 1975). Various NGO's can come forward to provide necessary trainings which will help them in becoming empowered and generate livelihood. Bridge trust an NGO has been working with lambada women in areas near Mumbai for generating empowerment for them.

Key Words: Constitution, Empower, Scheduled Tribes, Status

Introduction:

The Scheduled tribes constitute a small proportion of the total population of the country and they are marginalized from the society in many respects. Provisions made in the Constitution have brought about changes in their position but still they are confronted with a number of challenges. Lambada women in India are hardworking than tribal men and they contribute significantly towards their family income but their income generating sources are limited. Low income necessitates more hands in labour as a result they are reluctant to send their children to formal schools. Moreover due to general low level of education their awareness level is also low and so they tend to ignore the basic conditions of health. Status of lambada women in terms of education, employment and health is low not just compared to tribal men but also in comparison to women belonging to the general population. The purpose of this theoretical paper is to find out the challenges faced by tribal women, and to discuss the strategies that they can consider for handling these challenges successfully. The findings can be beneficial for implementing projects that can help in improving their situation of backwardness.

The earliest period of independence has ushered in a new era in the field of women's education in general and lambada women in particular in the country. In spite of the opportunities, extra initiatives and care by the government for tribal education, the achievement of lambada women education is not as per expectations due to several factors. Hence, problems associated with education of lambada women needs immediate attention and early resolution. Women play equal to men in productive activities. A large number of lambada women have missed education at different stages and in order to empower them there is a great need of providing opportunities so as to enable them to assume leadership qualities for economic self-reliance and even social transformation.

An education system should provide a new culture of work ethos and an array of young talented, skilled and well equipped target group who will be able to shoulder the developmental responsibilities. It should make an individual better suited to the needs of the ever changing dynamic world. The status of any social group is determined by its levels of literacy, education, standard of living and health nutrition. The lambada women constitute like any other social group, about half of the total population. Lambada women work harder

and family economy and management depend on them. It has been reported that illiteracy, in tribal as well as non-tribal population, is positively correlated health. As women in all social groups, they are more illiterate than men. In general, their lower literacy rate, lower enrolment rate and their presence in the school. United Nations has defined the status of women as the “conjunction of position a women occupies as a worker, student, wife, mother of the power and prestige attached to these positions, and of the right and duties she is expected to exercise” (UN, 1975). Education gives them decision making, economic status and empowerment always go hand in hand. To-day’s lambada women society wishes that their future would be good. They do not want their children to suffer as they have suffered. They demand good educational and job facilities for their children. Slowly educational status of women and their children, accessibility to all kinds of infrastructural activities improved decision making capacity in all important aspects is appreciable in states like Gujarat.

Strategies for promoting a change in the status of lambada women in India

As it has been pointed out, low levels of economic activity and living conditions below the poverty level is a major problem faced by the tribal women. A practical way of dealing with this problem can be to provide skills and training to women which will help them in building up of self help groups. Awareness can be created through effort to empower these women. Various NGO’s can come forward to provide necessary trainings which will help them in becoming empowered and generate livelihood. Bridge trust an NGO has been working with lambada women in areas near Mumbai for generating empowerment for them. The health of the lambada women is another aspect which needs attention because the lambada women work very hard and the income of the family depends on efforts of the tribal women. Among the tribal women, infant mortality rate is found to be higher as compared to national average, which is mainly due to their lack of awareness and facilities of child care. Lambada women suffer from nutritional deficiency. They have lower life-expectancy than the national average because they do not take the required amount of food and rest. From various reports it has been found out that, illiteracy is a cause of lack of awareness about health.

If economic, educational and health aspects are given adequate attention, then these factors may contribute to an increase in the decision making abilities of the tribal women. If they are convinced about the significance of financial institutions and if the banks extend their co-operation to these women then their security about financial matters will be

enhanced. Moreover, if efforts are given to make women literate then that may help them to face the outside world in a confident manner, which in turn will enrich their lives.

Opportunities associated the education of the lambada women :

There is a saying that “if you educate a boy, you only educate an individual; if you educate a girl you are educating the whole family’. Education imparts 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 their problems associated with exploitation and deprivation, and avail socio-economic and political opportunities extended to them (Pradhan 2011). On November 28, 2001 the Government enacted the 93rd Amendment of the constitution making the Right to Education a Fundamental Right. There are number of studies exposed the educational development of lambada women by quantitative indicators in the form of enrolment, literacy rate and educational facilities. Though the governments have taken several steps in the development of tribal education projects and schemes much need to be exercised. The social welfare programmes have been ineffective due to deficiency in the administrative scheme, lack of sore trained management, lack of general preparedness for large investments, lack of accounting systems, procedural delays and insufficient of proper monitoring and evaluation.

The constitutional directive to allow for free and mandatory education for all children up to the age of fourteen years has not yet been fulfilled. Experts from the educational field acknowledge that this lack of success is mainly due to the slow progress of education among girls, SC and STs. It is observed that the literacy among the lambada women has falling behind all other section. The low educational condition of the lambada women is excogitated in their lower literacy rate, lower enrolment rate and higher dropouts in the school. When women want to deal with issues like wages, savings, accessing government schemes, skills up gradation, interacting with socio-political structures the literacy have to be propelled. The dropout rate for tribals at the secondary level is as high as 87 percent and for the girls it is almost ninety percent.

There are various factors responsible for the slow advance of the educational development of lambada women. The factors like poverty(Poorness), unbiased attitude of the parents, irrational and bias, problem of suitable teacher, language and communication, inadequate infrastructure facilities in education institution, high loss and stagnation. First and

foremost indicator is poor economic status is a great deterrent to successful education of the tribal children especially for female children. In tribal communities, the role of women is substantial and crucial and women are more important than in other social groups, because they work harder and the family economy and management depends on them (Awais, Alam and Asif 2009). The tribal community think that if the child is taken away from his normal economic work to attend school, the family deprives of the little income, which she brings. As a consequence, the parents have to feed the child out of their earning and resulted economic marginalisation of the household. In these circumstances, education, the basic necessity of life, is a matter of luxury for the tribal family. A huge section of tribal parents avoid sending their children to school to grab the costless educational opportunities offered to them. However tribal and non-tribal teachers feel hard to convert the tribal parents to send their youngsters to school. The tribal community feels that there is no need for the girls to go to school and waste their time. Psychological and social factors like illiteracy of the parents and their indifference to education, lack of encouragement by the community, motivation and "insecurity" of future for being educated. Other factors like low social interaction between students and teachers, and between teachers and parents, suspicion over the sincerity of the non-tribal teachers and in many cases shortage of tribal teachers also discourage parents to send their children to school.

Irrational and bias acts a damaging role in contributing education in the tribal areas. The tribals thinks after becoming educated and earning jobs, their children may alienate from them and cut off their links with their families and villages. Some tribal groups trust that their almighty shall be furious if they send their children to schools run by outsiders. The non tribal teachers in many cases treat themselves, civilized and tribals as uncivilized and savage (Pradhan 2011). The relationship between teachers and children is poor. In a tribal group, a positive thinking teacher, has a special power in the village setting for which tribals are afraid of him. Most of the teachers unwilling to stay near the school or in the village, where as teachers stay in nearby towns. Most of the tribal area schools do not have sufficient teachers and the schools are depending on stop-gap arrangement teachers.

Deficiency of communication becomes a problem between student and teachers. It is found that tribal students are often ridiculed, humiliated and reprimanded for speaking in their own language, and are punished for failing to talk in their standard language or continuously lapsing back in the mother tongue (Nambissan 1994). The basic infrastructure facilities in the

tribal school building are very poor which results the children stay away from the school. Some of the hostel constructions are very slow, poor with substandard quality of materials. In reality, most of the primary schools in the tribal areas are single teacher-managed whose presence in the school is more of exception than a rule (Hasnain 2004). A data revealed at the Primary level, the dropout rate among STs in 2003-04 was 48.9 percent and 70.1 percent at the Upper Primary level. School timing i.e. clash of class hour with the working hour particularly, during the harvesting period, formal education, poverty, lack of academic atmosphere, unwillingness of the teachers to convince the parents and parental apathy towards education and lack of proper medical aid, balanced diet and suitable self-employment opportunities are the major factors for which there is wastage and stagnation.

To assess the challenges and Change:

Tribals are still devoid of modern facilities like education, electricity, proper drinking water health care, ample transportation, etc. problems associated with education of lambada women needs immediate attention and early resolution. Lambada women need to face lots of challenges in the society. Skills training, increased growth, productivity and innovation, in particular for the informal sector are linked with poverty re-education (Fluitman: 2002). The first and foremost challenge to the tribal is that they are still not much exposed to the outside world and are confined to their community only. If we closely analyze functioning of educated tribal's, we notice two traits of transformation. One group of educated tribal argues that tribal's should reform themselves with the mainstream society. The other group of tribal's wants to maintain its tribal identity. Most of the primitive tribes still live in hills, dense forest with difficult terrain and many a times, it is difficult to reach them because of lack of road and transport facilities. It is a challenge to provide education to tribals and setting up school and institutions in small, scattered and remote tribal habitations. High school drop-out rate among tribals is another reason for their lagging behind in education (Vinoba Gautam, 2003).

The issues and challenges in tribal education can be categorized as external, internal, socio-economic and psychological. The external constraints are related to issues at levels of policy, planning, and implementation while internal constraints are with respect to education system, content, curriculum, pedagogy, and medium of instruction, etc. The third set of problems relates to social, economic, and cultural background of tribals and psychological aspects of first generation learners. It is important to address the problems of low literacy

among lambada women severely at national level and resolve the peril through confident and effectual means.

Constitutional Provisions:

Article 46 of the Constitution of India has promised special care for educational and economic interests of STs and protection from social injustice and exploitation. But despite this constitutional promise 29th report of Commission of SC & ST have recorded that STs have become completely helpless on account of criminalization of their social and economic system, denial of rights over resources and non recognition of their Special governing systems. With due reference to above Constitutional provisions and observations, we can study the position of tribal women in society and nation. Here we can use two words: (1) Status, and (2) Condition. The popular image of tribal women is better than their non Tribal counterpart since there is no child marriage. She selects here partner by choice, there is bride price instead of dowry all indicating high social status of the tribal girl⁹. The birth of tribal child is never seen as curse. She is helper of her mother and is never a burden to the family.

There are many facts which indicate poor conditions of tribal female. They do not have property rights except in matrilineal society. There is higher percentage of child labour in the tribal society. She generally does not gets nutritious food, and proper health care. Her labour in assisting her mother is always unrecognized and un accounts for.

In the present study an attempt is made to focus the attention of all concerned on some of vital aspects such as

1. Education
2. Health / Sanitation
3. Nutrition
4. Social status
5. Political Evolution
6. Economic condition

The tribal community is Lambadi. Thus the majority of people of the city will communicate in the special tribal language, Lambadi or Banjara (60%). This language is one among the officially recognised dialects by the government of India. This language has no script and is sustained on spoken words.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives of this paper are -

- To identify the problems of tribals, particularly Lambada women.
- To analyse the policies and programmes launched for the development of the tribals particularly Lambada women.
- To assess the socio-economy cultural and political conditions of Lambada women.
- To evaluate the impact of the tribal development agencies / institutions on the Lambada women in ITDA areas of Warangal district

Methodology

The descriptive part of the study will be substantiated by the secondary sources, where as the empirical part of the study will be undertaken through the administration of a structured questionnaires and interviews with Lambada women activists, community lady leaders, political lady representatives representing to the villages of the ITDA areas of Warangal district.

The secondary data related to the problem will be collected from periodicals journals other published literature. The study would be undertaken at the exclusively micro level based on the field investigation of the tribal villages of Warangal district.

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