A Study on the Challenges Faced By the Tribal Youth with Specific Reference to Nandimanagalam in Poondi Block

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Abstract: *Youth play a pivotal role in moulding the destiny of our nation. Youthfulness is the prime stage in a person's life where one decides his or her future plan. The major part of lives decision lies in the age group of 18-35 years. Keeping this in mind the researcher had visited four villages in Tirupachurpanchayt and had selected two villages in Poondi block, the main focus being tribal youth who are the most marginalized section of society. The tribal youth are the most backward as they are pushed to the periphery of development. Having being denied the basic right to education as enshrined in the article 21A of the constitution they are deprived of education and livelihood opportunities as well. The researcher had selected two hamlets which are predominantly occupied by the tribal population. Village -A Vasanthannagar which has 45 families, who are called the Irulars and the other being Nandimangalam of poondi block. Having realized the importance of tribal development and the need for empowering the tribal youth, the researcher adopted focused group discussions to highlight the challenges and problems faced by tribal youth. The study clearly reveals that majority of the tribal youth are less educated. They lack employability skills and are earning meager income which further pushes them to poverty. Their main source of income is from construction work which is of seasonal nature, they are dependent on MGNREGA work, which provides job card for a member in one family which gives them around 100 days of manual work, which does not provide sustainable development. Given this scenario one sees that there are many poverty alleviation strategies which is focused on the employment of the tribal youth. The question is how are these programmes effective in empowering the marginalized group and how are these schemes helping the needy, to the extent that are they beneficial, why are the poor further being pushed away from the centrifugal forces of development which is the crux of the paper. The conclusion would give the vivid findings of the focused discussion group and suggest suitable strategies towards empowering the voiceless based on empowerment model theory.*

I. Introduction

The transitional stage between childhood and adolescence, is one that may be defined both biologically as a stage during which certain physiological changes occur and socially and culturally, as a stage during which youth is faced with certain problems of adjustment both to self and to society at large. Youth thus begins with the onset of puberty and, after a number of years in which further experience and training are received, finally fits the individual for full citizenship in his own particular society and culture.

II. Primary objective of the Government Policy

The government aimed to safeguard tribal people and tribal areas and preserve tribal culture and social customs from erosion, safeguard traditional occupations, protect them from exploitation by the more sophisticated groups, and promote their economic and social development. Protection is provided to the tribal communities through various laws, regulations and government orders based on the provisions of the constitution. The problem of development of tribal areas in the country is primarily linked with the backwardness of these areas, poverty of tribal people and the concept of integration of tribes with the rest of the population. For promoting the welfare of scheduled tribes and raising the level of administration of the tribal areas to the state level, Article 275 of the Constitution provides for grants-in-aid from consolidated fund of India to states for implementation of development programme.

The problem of indebtedness should be solved without delay, partly by legislation and partly by a great intensification of the co-operative movement and the availability of easy credit from official sources. The problem of industrialization of the tribal areas must be regarded much more seriously. The tribal people are dispossessed of their lands and settled elsewhere, intelligent and generous measures should be taken to compensate them. The long isolation of the tribes should come to an end that they should be welcomed everywhere with warm affection and on equal terms, and that they should be given every opportunity of public service. Elwin illustrates five other points, to preserve the tribal culture and at the same time ameliorate their hardships.

1. We must help the tribes to come to terms with their own past. So that their present and future will not be a denial of it, but a natural evolution from it.
2. It is essential to avoid creating a sense of inferiority in the tribal people. Wemust not make them anxious and afraid; we must not make them feel ashamed, of their own "natural ways".
3. We must fight the danger of pauperization, the creation of a special class called "Tribal", who will want to be labeled "backward" in order to get material benefits from the government.
4. We should lay much greater stress on the possibility of the tribal people helping us.
5. We must try to ensure that the people do not lose their freedom and their zest for living.

III. Land Alienation among the Tribes

The introduction of the land revenue and money economy deprived the tribal right to ownership of the forest land. Through legal manipulation and other fraudulent means large scale transfer of tribal land has taken place to non-tribal people. This is a problem common to all tribal areas. The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution for the protection of the tribal lands in the Scheduled Areas could not prevent alienation of tribal lands and large scale transfers. The loopholes in the laws, the convenience of the bureaucracy and the political authorities have subverted the existing legal safeguards. Through mortgages, lease agreements, benami transfers, false title deeds in coalition with revenue officials, by marriage to tribal women and holding land in the name of their bonded tribal agricultural labourers, the non-tribes have taken the tribal lands. In the absence of education and literacy they were not in a position to read and understand the provisions, mentioned in the constitution and other reforms introduced and implemented by the authorities. Inadequate knowledge prevented the tribals to go forward with any legal action against the snatchers of their land property. Later when they realized the loss, it was too late, because the non-tribes who have taken the land illegally made it legal with sufficient documents, with the help of officials(35).

The tribal's generally did not have a documented system of land rights. Tribal deprivation is a reality and in the process, their traditions of community ownership of resources, their dependence on forests and their practice of shifting cultivation have all suffered. The tribal population is sought to be sucked into the mainstream formal economy, in which they are at a clear disadvantage.

3.1 Different types of land alienation.
1. Manipulation of land records: the tribals were never legally recognized as owners of the land which they cultivated.
2. Benami transfers.
3. Encroachment
4. Concubinage or marital alliance.

The tribals have been relegated from their earlier „self-reliant‟ status to a dependent one. Exploitation by the non-tribes, the State legislations were proved detrimental to their interests. In the modern period, in all States and Union Territories the transfer of tribal land to non-tribes is banned. Even after the passing and imposing of Acts, for the protection of tribals, right over land, the tribal struggle for land still continues in many parts of the country. These questions and concerns of the tribals demand a separate legal framework supported by alternative premises in jurisprudence. The tribes are the second largest landless people in India. The Scheduled Caste is the first in that category. The large land holding (more than 4 hectares) is owned mostly by non-tribes. The tribal communities also witnessed an unequal land-owning structure that varies from State–to-State over the years. At the all India level, big land holders among tribes have declined from 4.80 percent in 1994 to 3 percent in 2000, leading to a fall in the number of landless households from 13.30 percent in 1994 to 7.20 per cent in 2000.

About 85.4 lakhs of tribals were displaced in India during 1950-1990, of them only 21.2 lakhs (25 percent) were rehabilitated during the same period. Three-fourth of the displaced tribals are not yet rehabilitated. The establishment of roads and communication facilities encouraged two trends in tribal areas.
1. The proportion of non-tribes has increased in tribal areas and
2. The proportion of the marginal workers and agricultural labourers to the total workforce of the tribals increase.

IV. Tribal Right to Land

The issue of tribal right to land, territories and resources are strongly debated in the modern period. The protection of tribals right over these aspects is essentially required because they always have been subjected to widespread disposition and unjust exploitation by States and others. Tribal rights to land, territories and resources are inextricably linked to the human right to self determination and development. The tribals will be

pushed to the edge of economic, cultural and political extinction, if they do not get adequate land and resources. The essential aspects of their survival and well being are linked with land and other resources. It is well established that denial or infringements of their collective land and resources results in a potentially wide range of human rights

V. Restoration of Alienated Land

From the inception of the First Five Year Plan, tribal progress was included in the plan objectives. The alienation of tribal land was not a serious crisis during that time. Tribals could not make the expected progress in the early plan periods. The fundamental facilities like clothes, food and housing were absent. The scheme of providing nutrients and mid-day meal attracted some parents and they sent their children to the schools. Restoration of land to tribes has been an issue of high priority to retain them in education, mainly as a first step in their progress. It will be useful to think some important measures to prevent land alienation and to restore land to the tribals. Firstly, there should be transparency and access to land records at the village level to the tribals. Regular updating of land records and display of revenue details at the village level should be part of transparency. Tribals should be allowed to participate in the process of survey of land. Secondly, oral evidence should be admissible where records are absent. If the non-tribes do not hand over the possessions of land to the tribes after the Court order, the case should be registered under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. Revenue officials should be made responsible for ensuring physical possession of land to tribals immediately. There should be a system of monthly monitoring of the restoration of land by Collectors and Commissioners and action should be taken against erring officers. State Commissions for Scheduled Tribes should also monitor the cases. Thirdly, all forest villagers should be given 'Pattayam' for the land, which they are cultivating since the ages. Tribals residing in forest areas should be allowed to cultivate the land.

Fourthly, tribals in newly allotted lands should be provided with the compensation for livelihood for at least two years. Fifthly, name of female family members should be included along with the male members in land records.

Most of the tribes are illiterate and they haven't any practice to keep the land records. So the non-tribes have taken advantage of forging evidence and documents in their favour. The complicated court language was alien to the tribes and they had absolutely no idea about the court proceedings. The land Revenue laws of the state, imposed restrictions on the transfer ofbtribal land to non-tribes. Land Reform Legislation (particularly TenancybLegislation and Ceiling Law) provided for the distribution of land to the landlessbgiving preference to the Scheduled Tribes, most of them belong to the landlessbclass, to arrest indebtedness remedial measures were taken to scale down their past debts.

VI. Tribal Development: An Appraisal

Development is not the result of a single casual process, but the result of abnumber of factors. The rate of growth of development varies from community tobcommunity, place to place, race to race, person to person etc. In the case of tribes,bthe amount of development is highly varied from one tribal community to another.bAmong the primitive tribes, the process of development is very slow, because theybhave only a limited scope to get accessibility with the external world. They like tobretain and preserve their traditional way of life and neglect the thrust for brenovation from outside. They did not like to entertain the strangers either frombGovernment sector or from voluntary organizations. They continue theirbtraditional lifestyle inside dark caves, under rock-hollows, temporary sheds etc. They did not encourage external intrusion to their simple and peaceful life. Naturally the development profile of the primitive tribes would be frustrating. The development profile of the tribes in different parts of India, provide a varied picture. The North-East India reveals a good example of pro-developmental attitude. The tribal literacy is the highest in North-East India. The securing of Government jobs is also very high in that region. The utilization of educational opportunities and the thrist for government jobs is comparatively at a high rate in North-East India. In Central India, the picture is entirely different. There the rate of tribal development is not uniform. The landlords, corrupt officials and exploiting lobbies are active in that region. The government plans and projects for tribal development did not reach the exact destinations.

VII. Tribal response to Development

In the last six decades, tribal development may be categorized into three sections; i.e., positive, negative and suggestive responses. The positive response indicates the achievements so far made and the expectations of further development in future. They utilized the concessions in education and jobs and secured many jobs and acquired high qualifications. In the field of politics, they reached higher posts by contesting in the reservation seats. Besides, some exceptional cases of tribal occupation of higher posts in state and union governments. KariyaMunda, The Deputy Speaker of present Lok Sabha belongs to tribal community. There are

many tribal leaders, eligible to reach the constitutional positions of India. These aspects show that tribals have a positive response to the development programmes. The tribal development has negative responses also. To them, a limited per cent of tribals could reach higher posts in democracy and bureaucracy. It does not mean that the whole community reached the peak of development. A large group of tribals are still living amidst poverty, misery and illiteracy. The tribals occupy the second largest group of people as landless. They are the most illiterate people in India. They are the highly exploited section of people in our country. In this way the claim of tribal development in India has been a false statement to a group of analyzers. They criticizes the present form of tribal development as moribund, benefiting only the bureaucrats. To create sustainable self-reliant livelihood for tribals, development programmes with environmental conservation is required. They warn against privatization, globalization and bureaucratization because of the possibility of multifarious inequalities. As a solution to these problems, tribals need equal distribution of land, preservation of the environment, market-based services in line with local needs, gender equality and greater public provision of education and health care needs. There are various agencies working for the development of tribes in India, like Government departments, missionaries, institutions, civil society, organizations like NGOs and the activists of the human rights movements.

1. Schemes from the Centre and State
The tribal development programmes are categorized into two headings: centrally sponsored and State plan schemes. For centrally sponsored schemes, States get 100 percent central assistance. For State plan schemes, central assistance is available as block grants and loans.

2. Methodology
Qualitative analysis was done for the research with the respondents.

3. Submission of need assessment reports
The submission of needs assessment reports in Nandimangalam and T.B.Puram. The reports were carefully documented under the guidance of the faculty members by the students. These reports were submitted to the organization IRCDS on valedictory for planning and intervention. The document was prepared through the application of PRA [Participatory Rural Appraisal] and Transit walk in those villages.

Area under study: Nandimangalam
Major findings of the community visit to Nandimangalam colony located in Block of Thiruvallur District.
Time:-10:00am -4:00pm
Date: - 20/08/2016

Tools Adopted:-
• Observation
• PRA technique
• Focus group discussion

History of Background of the Community:-
Nandimangalam colony adjacent to Nandimangalam village has a population of 225 people. Its current population is 225 out of which125 are voting population. The community has rich cultural background. Drinking water supply is sufficient. The community lacks common and private latrine facilities. Frequent power cuts and it lasts for long hours. Schools are located nearby and far off. Occupational pattern is of seasonal nature. Yield is in abundance during rainy season. People here belong to different religious background but majority of them are Hindu's. Literacy rates have increased and women are educated and have started going for jobs, but still early marriages are seen.

The Findings of the Community Have Been Compiled Below:-
• Lack of sanitation facilities, people defecate in the open. There is no provision for public and private toilets.
• Intensive health care units are not there. People have to travel many kilometers away for primary health care and sub centers.
• Lack of local transports, hence difficulty in performing day to day activities.
• Lack of awareness on health and education amenities.
• Prevalence of early marriage.
• Lack of job opportunities for generation of income.
• Lack of skill development training and alternate livelihood programs.
• Lack of hand pumps.
• Lack of street lights and frequent power cuts.

Suggestions:
• Need for awareness on benefits of health and education to the community.
• Sensitization on early marriages.
• Need for provision of PHC's and sub centers within the community.
• Need for sanitation facilities and provision of latrine facilities.
• Need for provision of local transport and proper roads.
• Need to strengthen existing self-help groups (SHG's).
• Need for integration of people with villages.
• Sensitizing people on access to health and education facilities.
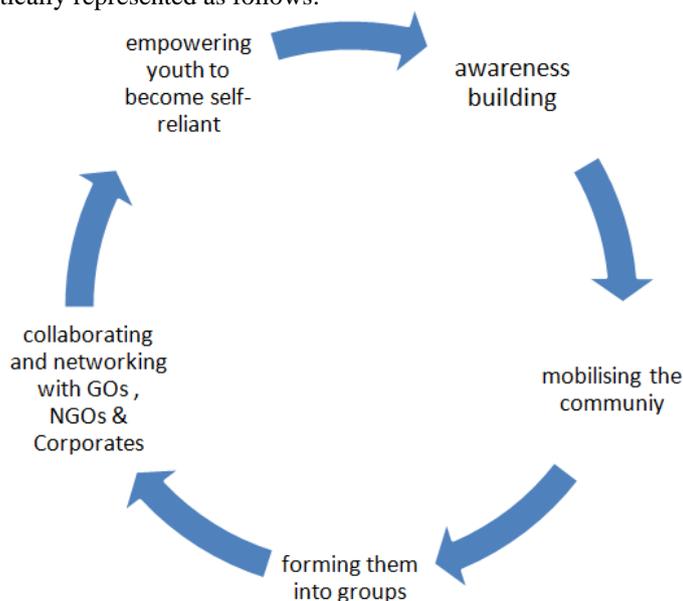
4. Conclusion

This community visit helped one to gain hands on experience the life of rural population, their day to day activities, the hardships they face and their rich cultural background.. People were highly enthusiastic in helping us for assessment

5. Suggestions and recommendations

Empowerment based model to bring about social transformation among tribal youth. Having worked in the field of development the researcher strongly believes that the empowerment based model is the best model for the development of youth and she has identifies the phases of development

1. Awareness of the youth on the importance of skill training and education and strategy to be adopted would be through skit, group work interventions.
2. Further sensitizing the youth by organizing them into groups and imparting knowledge and skills related to development
3. Mobilizing and networking with NGOS and government sectors to enhance their quality of life through various skill training programmmes which has already established by our college extension center.
4. Periodic evaluation and monitoring of the efforts undertaken by various e\sectors trough collaborative efforts.
5. Enabling them to participate actively in their own development through active followup measures by enabling them to form associations and trade unions and also to continue to motivate them towards their own development.

This could be diagrammatically represented as follows:

The need assessment of tribes in Vasantham Nagar.

Vasantham nagar is a hamlet with around 45 families which is located in Thirupaachur panchayat of Thiruvallur district. The focus group discussion undertaken by the researcher has been documented below.

Majority of the respondents has been educated upto primary level.

Most women are illiterates and hence are forced to do kooli work. Their major source of income in MGNREGA work with inadequate income to meet their daily needs

Almost all youths were engaged in kooli work or construction sites which were of seasonal nature. Moreover the youth opined that they were earlier working as bonded laborers and also seen their parents working as bonded laborers. Since they lack skills and education they are forced to do the same work. This is a major concern in today's scenario.

All the respondents were living in thatched houses with lack of basic amenities namely electricity drainage and transportation.

They do not have patta for their land so they are under the threat of eviction

Women elders and children were unable to move in streets late night due to lack of electricity and fear of snake bites.

Majority of the respondents opined that they lack electricity facilities which is very vital for holistic development.

It is unfortunate that the government hospital is located far away from their place of residence which further detoriates the health of the community. The major disease experience among the people are respiratory diseases and women face gynecological problems

Also the people are facing forceful eviction in future which is a basic problems o the Irular communities.

Focus group discussion : 10-15 members

VIII.   Conclusion

Education helps to bridge the chasm of disparities between people, socio-economic groups and regions and thereby reduces disintegration between people. It develops human resources which has a multiplier effect on utilization on all other resources. Thus it is an investment in development. Education planning can have social relevance only if it is deliberately supportive on holistic development. Education policy being an instrument shape the future is imperative to focus on overall spheres of development. As one sees tribal youth are less educated and they need to have an effective and quality education along with skill training to enhance their quality of life. Thus the author strongly concludes with the finding that quality education along with overall development can bring about social transformation of our tribal youth.

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