

Problems of Scheduled Tribes in Bellary District: A Survey



Social Science

KEYWORDS :

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ABSTRACT

The tribes were faced many problems due to forest policies of the Government and they suffered during the British period. Due to the welfare policies of the Government now, it is essential to know whether these tribes have improved and to know about the problems faced by these tribes. Hence, a sample survey was made covering 450 ST population in Bellary district of Karnataka. It is suggested for education of the tribes for their overall development

Introduction:

In India, most "tribal" peoples are classed under the administrative category of scheduled tribes: a category neither comprehensive, nor always sociologically valid. Scheduled Tribes in India are generally considered to be 'Adivasis,' meaning indigenous people or original inhabitants of the country. The tribes have been confined to low status and are often physically and socially isolated instead of being absorbed in the mainstream Hindu population. As a result of being distanced by the Hindu population, many tribes have retained their social, religious, and cultural practices, as well as their distinctive languages. The mainstream Hindu population considers the general tribal population as primitive, technologically backward, and illiterate. Since the 16th century, the tribes have been perceived as sub-humans who live under primitive conditions (Xaxa, 2005).

The tribals are socially, economically and politically backward section in India. According to census 2001 tribals accounts for 8.2 per cent of Indian population. Scheduled Tribe groups have traditionally lived in remote and far-flung areas closer to forests and natural resources. Most of the tribals live in inaccessible areas. The areas in which tribal lives are economically backward and living conditions are also poor. Most of the tribals reside in rural areas which are under developed (Andrabi, 2013).

The problems faced by scheduled tribes during the colonial period in the form of the loss of control over land and other resources due to alienation of land to non-tribes and the state-sponsored displacement projects has continued unabated in the post-independence period. In the post-Independence period, while the Constitution protected the rights of the Scheduled Tribes and accorded them reservation in the legislature, educational institutions and government jobs, other 'development' activities, such as the construction of large dams or the sale of timber, led to the further marginalization of some tribes.

Though reservation is provided by the government for the education of the scheduled tribes, still they are under developed as majority of them are living in hilly areas, forests and most backward rural areas. Most of tribes are also negligent to accept civilization and modernization. As such, in the modern world, the tribals are facing many of the problems and challenges. The present study is made to analyze the problems and challenges faced by scheduled tribes in changing society with special reference to Bellary district.

Objectives of the Study:

The present study is made:

- To assess the social background of the scheduled tribes in Bellary district;
- To look into the economic conditions of scheduled tribes; and
- To know whether the scheduled tribes are accessing necessary facilities such as education, health care, etc. from the Government.

Methodology and Limitations:

The study was began with searching and studying secondary literature and interviews were made with total 450 scheduled tribe people living in Bellary district. As the illiteracy is prevailed more among the scheduled tribes, it was decided to study the problems of both illiterate and educated respondents. Hence, equal numbers of illiterate and educated respondents were interviewed. The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

Analysis and Discussion:

The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

1. Age-wise Distribution of the Respondents:

The age plays significant role in assessing the knowledge of the people. With the increase in age, people get awareness and knowledge on different aspects of society. Hence, information on the age of the respondents was collected and presented in the following table.

Table No. 1. Age-wise Distribution of the Respondents

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
18 to 25 Years	24	10.6	33	14.6	57	12.6
26 to 35 Years	59	26.2	48	21.3	107	23.8
36 to 45 Years	51	22.6	57	25.3	108	24.0
46 to 55 Years	56	24.9	59	26.2	115	25.5
More than 55 Years	35	15.5	28	12.4	63	14.0
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Among all the respondents, 115 (25.5%) are in the age group of 46 to 55 years followed by, 108 (24.0%) are in the age group of 36 to 45 years, 107 (23.8%) are in the age group of 26 to 35 years, 63 (14.0%) are of more than 55 years and only 57 (12.6%) are between 18 to 25 years of age respectively. It is observed that a great majority of the respondents are of middle aged.

2. Education:

As discussed already, half of the respondents are literates and even few of the respondents are highly educated. The educational qualifications of the respondents surveyed are tabulated as under.

Table No. 5.2.3. Education

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Illiterate	225	100	--	--	225	50.0
Primary/ Secondary	--	--	92	40.9	92	20.4
Under Graduate	--	--	36	16.0	36	8.0
Graduate	--	--	89	39.5	89	19.8
PG/ Research	--	--	08	3.5	08	1.8
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Of all the respondents, 225 (50.0%) are illiterates, 92 (20.4%) have completed primary or secondary education, 36 (8.0%) have completed under-graduation, 89 (19.8%) have completed graduation and 08 (1.8%) of all the respondents have completed post-graduation or research degrees. It is highlighted that the educational status of scheduled tribes is lower and even only a few of the respondents have completed post-graduation or research degrees.

3. Women are Getting Equal Status and Respect in Family and Society:

It was asked to the respondents that whether the women are getting equal status and respect in the family and society and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 3. Women are Getting Equal Status and Respect in Family and Society

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	53	23.5	94	41.7	147	32.6
No	127	56.4	98	43.5	225	50.0
Can't Say	45	20.0	33	14.6	78	17.3
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Among all the respondents, 147 (32.6%) have agreed that women are getting equal status in their families and society, whereas 225 (50.0%) have not agreed to the same and the remaining 78 (17.3%) have not expressed their opinions on the same. It is surprising to note that though the respondents are educated that half of the respondents have not agreed that women have no equality in family and society.

4. Annual Income of the Respondent:

As discussed above, the respondents are working in different sectors and generating income on their own. The annual income of the respondents reveals the economic status and standard of living of the tribals. The information collected on the annual income of the respondents is tabulated as under.

Table No. 4. Annual Income of the Respondent

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Nil	31	13.8	40	17.8	71	15.8
Less than Rs. 50000	95	42.2	52	23.1	147	32.7
Rs.50001 to Rs. 1 lakh	88	39.1	104	46.2	192	42.6
Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakhs	11	4.9	15	6.6	26	5.8
More than Rs. 2 lakhs	--	--	14	6.2	14	3.1
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Annual income of all the respondents disclosed that, 71 (15.8%) have no any income, 147 (32.7%) have annual income of less than Rs. 50000, 192 (42.6%) have annual income between Rs. 50001 to Rs. 1 lakh, 26 (5.8%) have annual income between Rs.

1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakhs and 14 (3.1%) of all the respondents have annual income of more than Rs. 2 lakhs. It is concluded that almost respondents have lower annual income.

5. Development of Tribe in Present Society:

Due to displacement, many of the tribes affected worse and migrated to towns and villages. In towns and villages, tribes found many of the problems such as shelter, employment, etc. Hence, without suitable necessities, these tribes have suffered and become backward. Of course, the social welfare schemes have made these tribes towards development, but still there is need for major development of these tribes. It was asked to the respondents that whether their individual tribe is developed and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 5. Development of Tribe in Present Society

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Highly Backward	128	56.9	133	59.1	261	58.0
Backward	51	22.7	63	28.0	114	25.3
Developed to a Greater extent	32	14.2	24	10.7	56	12.4
Fully Developed	14	6.2	05	2.2	19	4.2
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Among all the respondents, majority, that is 261 (58.0%) have agreed that their tribe is highly backward followed by, 114 (25.3%) have stated that their tribe is backward, 56 (12.4%) have opined that their tribe is developed to a greater extent and only 19 (4.2%) have felt that their tribe is fully developed. It shows that to a greater extent, the tribes are still highly backward or backward though living in civilized areas.

6. Educational Development of the Tribe:

Many of the tribes are still backward in terms of civilization, modernization, education, etc. As such, it was asked to all the respondents that whether their tribe is developed in education and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 6. Educational Development of the Tribe

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Highly Backward	114	50.7	106	47.1	220	48.9
Backward	73	32.4	90	40.0	163	36.2
Developed to a Greater extent	28	12.4	24	10.7	52	11.5
Fully Developed	10	4.4	05	2.2	15	3.3
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Of all the respondents, on the educational development of their tribes, 229 (48.9%) have expressed that their tribes are highly backward in education followed by, 163 (36.2%) have stated that their tribes are backward in education, only 52 (11.5%) have mentioned that their tribes are developed in education to a greater extent and 15 (3.3%) have remarked that their tribes are fully developed in education. It shows that the tribes are fully backward in education.

7. Impact of Reservation on Employment of Tribes:

Government is provided reservation to the scheduled tribes in employment. As such, many of the tribals are working in different government departments and organizations. It was asked to the respondents to provide the impact of reservation on employment of tribes and the collected responses are tabulated as under.

Table No. 7. Impact of Reservation on Employment of Tribes

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Fully Effective & Useful	35	15.5	53	23.5	88	19.5
Benefitted to Only Few Tribes	73	32.4	124	55.1	197	43.8
Not Useful as Majority of Tribes are Not Educated	117	52.0	48	21.3	165	36.7
Any Other	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Among all the respondents, 88 (19.5%) have stated that the reservation for getting employment of the tribes is fully effective and useful, 197 (43.8%) have expressed that the reservation is benefitted only few tribes for gaining employment and 165 (36.7%) have remarked that reservation in employment is not useful as majority of the tribes are not educated. Hence, it can be concluded that education should be main priority for the scheduled tribes and later reservation in employment should be extended.

8. Access to Health Facilities:

Still many of the tribes are living in hilly areas and forests, which are not accessible to civilized amenities. Further, conveyance facilities are also not available in these areas. It is noted that health facilities are the prime facilities needed for all human beings. Due to lack of conveyance facilities and remote areas, still considerable tribal population is deprived from health facilities. Hence, information was collected from the respondents on the access to health care facilities and presented in the following table.

Table No. 8. Access to Health Facilities

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Lack of Health Centres	23	10.2	18	8.0	41	9.1
Non-Accessibility of Doctors	29	12.9	21	9.3	50	11.1
Insufficient Health Infrastructure in Nearby Hospitals	53	23.5	44	19.5	97	21.5
Good Expertise from Tribal Elders on Health	64	28.4	25	11.1	89	19.8
Modernized Hospitals are Accessible	56	24.9	117	52.0	173	38.4
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Among all the respondents, 41 (9.1%) have stated that there are lack of health centres in their areas, 50 (11.1%) have expressed that there is non-accessibility of doctors in their areas, 97 (21.5%) have stated that there is insufficient health infrastructure in nearby hospitals, 89 (19.8%) have agreed that there is good expertise of tribal elders on health issues and only 173 (38.4%) have stated that there is accessibility of modernized hospitals in their areas. It is emphasized that majority of the respondents are deprived from modernized health infrastructure in their areas and as such even few of the respondents are following the prescriptions of the tribal elders, which are generally based on herbal medicines or mystic medicines.

9. Suggestions for Social Development of Scheduled Tribes:

Majority of the tribes were settled in forests and hilly areas and as such, they may not have civilized culture that is prevailed in towns and cities. But now, the tribes have also learnt the social culture that is prevailed in towns and cities and different forward sections of the society and even they are following the same. Hence, many of the tribes have slowly getting social change and development by migrating to towns and cities. In this regard, the suggestions for social development of the scheduled tribes as given by the respondents are as under.

Table No. 9. Suggestions for Social Development of Scheduled Tribes

Particulars	Illiterates		Literates/ Educated		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
More Reservation in Govt. & Private Sector	106	47.1	132	58.7	238	52.9
Inter-Caste/ Love Marriage	--	--	14	6.2	14	3.1
Allow Tribes to Settle in Forests if they wish	88	39.1	15	6.7	103	22.9
Education & Employment	133	59.1	172	76.4	305	67.8
Any Other	03	1.3	06	2.6	09	2.0
Total	225	100	225	100	450	100

Among all the respondents for the overall social development of tribes, 238 (52.9%) have suggested for more reservation in government and private sectors, 14 (3.1%) have suggested for inter-caste and love marriages, 103 (22.9%) have suggested to allow tribes to settle in forests if they wish, 305 (67.8%) have suggested for education and employment of tribals and 09 (2.0%) have given other types of suggestions for the social development of tribes. Education and employment are essentially needed for social development of the tribes and for which there is need for more reservation for the tribes and it is also suggested by few of the respondents that the government should permit the tribes to live in forests.

Conclusion:

To conclude, tribals are backward in Bellary district. The reasons for the same are illiteracy, low education and poverty. Though reservation is given in education and employment to tribes, still due to their negligence towards development, the tribals are backward and not getting adequate facilities of the reservations. Due to reservations, only a few stronger tribes are getting facilities and getting developed and small tribes are neglected. It is essential to increase awareness of tribes towards education, provide self-employment training, financial assistance for employment, and such other schemes for the tribes. Further, it is highly recommended to encourage tribals to start art based handicrafts and decorative items, in which the tribes are experts. For this purpose, it is essential to give financial assistance to tribals to start such business.

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