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Role Of Education In Tribal Village: A Study Of Chaudhari Tribes

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Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to analyze the role of education in the development of the Chaudhari tribal community of South Gujarat region. Among the tribal community members with dominant trends in related to education, this paper aims to explore how Chaudhari tribe's of South Gujarat region perceive the issue of education. Chaudhari community in Gujarat region has been selected to understand their social orientation and educational aspirations regarding their development (*Shikshan/Bhantar*). This is an area where Girls Literacy Residential School (GLRS), Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), Adarsh Residential Schools, Ashramshalas (Grant in Aid) educational enterprises are active along with various government schemes for the education and welfare of tribal Communities. In this context, this paper analyzes the factors that are responsible for generating the logic of education in this tribal community. However, this logic of education and its meaning can only be seen rooted in the social dynamics of the community life of the Chaudhari caste of South Gujarat region.

Key Words: Tribal, Chaudhari Tribe, Education, Development & Community

Overview of Literature

The question of education among tribal communities has been a subject of a number of studies. The literature on the education among tribal communities largely draws their framework from the role imparted to education in bringing social change. In post-independent India, this has been the declared objective of the government too. The education Commission of 1964-5 underlined, "a major objective of education is to help bring social change" (cited in Malhotra, 1998:1). However, over the decades

government measures of imparting education to uplift the weaker sections in this case, tribal societies have also created new types of social fragmentations among tribal communities. Emergence of the middle class is one such outcome which has been recognized largely as the result of modern education system making their entry possible in government and non government sectors (Xaxa, 2005). However, such social implications of education among tribal communities have not been investigated sociologically.

Following the dominant trend in the social science research, scholars working on education among tribal communities of South Gujarat region have largely looked at education as an important agent in bringing social change but remained focused on assessing the degree of its penetration in among tribal's.

Towards this aim, government measures are scrutinized i.e. The Tribal Area Sub Plan (1974-79) that aimed to cover 75 percent of the children in the age group of 6-11 years for providing primary education by 1980-81 (Shah, G, 1985:2). The study showed that the literacy in the state increased as a whole during the three decades from 22 percent in 1951 to 44 percent in 1981. Similarly, the rate of literacy among the scheduled tribe also increased during these three decades. The survey focused on statistics of literacy, educational levels, male and female distribution and found that 'like other benefits', education was not been evenly distributed among all social and economic strata of the tribal society' (Shah, G, 1985:16-17). Extending this framework in the three states (Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan) Punalekar recognized the fact that the scheduled tribe was never a homogenous group at regional level. There are differences among the tribal in the terms of landownership, wealth and other assets dictated literacy level. Hence, higher literacy in the upper strata of developed villages, compared to that of those living in the backward villages (Punalekar, 1985).

Looking at the infrastructural facilities of primary education in Dang District of South Gujarat, Rami (2001) has argued that 'the process of education and development does not seem to have benefited the disadvantaged tribal groups'. For him, 'the effort to enhance tribal education did not achieve its objectives because in many cases the educational needs and problems of tribal communities were not properly identified' (Rami, G. 2001).

Registering the fact that government is not the sole provider of education and various other institutions (with or without the support from the Government) are also active in the field of tribal education, Panda (2012) has studied the functioning of *Ashram* schools in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in order to understand some of the disadvantages they face and which need to be addressed in order to bring about holistic and inclusive development among the scheduled tribe communities.

This overview though not exhaustive, clearly delineates the trend that has overlooked questions related to community's own perception about education, role of education in creating a middle class, specificities of different service providers in the sphere of tribal education and the linkages between tribal education and the larger structures of contemporary period like commodity culture, dynamics of consumption etc. The proposed study intends to address such concerns.

Statement of the Problem/Objectives

Studies on education have mostly focused on institutional facility provide by government schemes and delivery aspects pertaining to it. In this framework education is perceived as responsibility of welfare state and an important factor in the growth of a community. Studies on tribal education have largely focused on status, impact and policy implementations of education among tribal communities. Attempts to venture outside the predominant definitions of education often result into emergence of binaries like modern education as opposed to traditional skill, scientific education as contrast to theologically structured education. In these research paper, education has always been treated as a means to empower, and a vehicle of the development of communities. With the Independence, government of India saw it a vehicle to create a homogeneous citizenry and hence wanted to bring tribal and other communities at the margins for the growth of the nation.

Area of the Study

The research paper is done by focus on Chaudhari tribal communities from Surat districts of Gujarat. According to Census of India, 2011 Gujarat has 14.97% of population belonging to scheduled tribes with an approximate number of 75 lakh spread across 43 talukas in 12 Scheduled Tribe dominant districts. The literacy rate in Gujarat has increased from 61.6% to 70% during 1991 to 2001. The literacy rate of tribal population has increased 36.5% to 47.4% and males and female literacy rate has increased 48.3% to 59.2% and 24.2% to 36.0% during the same period. Brief profiles of Chaudhari community intended to be studied under the research paper and data from the village proposed are given below: Name of “Titoi” Vilaage of South Gujarat.

The village “Titoi” is located in tahshil Mandvi of Surat district in Gujarat state. The village Titoi is mainly inhabited by the tribal, where dominated population is of Chaudhari’s and Gamit's but Vasava's and Chauhan's also live there. Most of the villagers follows the Hindu religion but there are some christens followers also in the village, they are converted under the influence of christen missionaries. A Muslim family has been also living in the village for many years.

The Chaudhari Tribe

A well documented scheduled tribe largely inhabiting in the region from Vapi Navsari to Bharuch-Ankleshwar. Initially a farming community, Chaudhuri’s has increasingly sought employment in government sectors since the Independence of India. The younger generation now has further diversified to find employment in government as well as private sectors.

The Chaudhari have three endogamous divisions, namely *Pavagdhiya*, *Naldhari* and *Valavda*. According to the 1961 census, they are further regimented into nine exogamous divisions called *kuls* (clans) such as Bamania, Dharat, Kanabi, and Rajputs, Ravalia, Valivi, Vashi, Hajarnia and Desai. Ghanshyam Shah (1977) has mentioned five sections “Nana, Mota, Valvi, Tekaria and Bonda”. Nana Chaudhari are treated higher than the other section, the Mota. The Valvi, Tekaria, and Bonda are territorial groups. Nana and

Mota Chaudhari are the numerically largest section rest are spread over Songadh, Mandvi, Mangrol, and Mahuva talukas.

The Chaudhari are again classified into two groups i.e. *Varjelas* and *Sarjelas*, depending on the extent to which they have been influenced by reformist ideas. The *Varjelas* are followers of different *gurus* leading a life in accordance with the reformist ideas but *Sarjelas* continue their traditional ways of life.

Education of this tribal community began when the then Vadodara state set up a residential school in Songadh for the Tribals in 1885 and Godsama 1902. The school provided not only free tuition but also boarding, loading and clothing facilities to the students (Ghatak, 2003:296).

Research Questions or Hypothesis

Vastly expanding the ambit of the earlier studies on the education among Chaudhari tribal community of South Gujarat region, this study intends to follow a relatively un-trodden path and will primarily focus on

- Role of education in replicating/creating social hierarchies among Chaudhari communities
- Social dynamics of different institutions (i.e. government, Girls Literacy Residential School (GLRS), Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), Aadarsh Nivashi shalas, Ashramshalas (Grant in Aid) educational ventures) active in delivering education among tribal's of this region.

Research Methodology

- Since the questions proposed are exploratory in nature and can be adequately answered only in non-quantitative terms, it is proposed to adopt a combination of survey and detailed ethnographic method for documentation and analysis.
- Survey method helped us acquire background information as well as for quantification of key indicators of perceptions and links with factors like consumption, aspiration, stratification etc.
- Along with this, participant observation, in-depth case studies and informal way of gathering information will help understand nuanced social and cultural behavior that shape social meanings of education among community members of tribal communities.
- Data from secondary sources such as Census, Gram Panchayat, Educational and health facilities and private service provider also be collected. There are primary data collected for research papers were households (200) from selected one village.

Educational involvement for tribal by Government

Formulation the Varies schemes implementation for the welfare and development of dispersed tribal's by the Government

Girls Literacy Residential School (GLRS)

Girls Literacy Residential School (GLRS) is the residential schools exclusive for tribal girls and is running across (11) eleven districts of Gujarat, under the scheme for strengthening education among ST girls of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India. Initially in Year 2008-09, Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA),

GoI has sanctioned 36 Girls residential schools for Gujarat state. Currently, there are altogether 43 Girls Literacy Residential Schools run by the Society and are functional from Std. VIth to Xth. These schools aim to bridge the gap in literacy level between the female population and tribal women, through facilitating 100% enrolment of tribal girls and reduce the drop-out ratio in low literacy blocks of Gujarat state.

Adarsh Nivasi Shalas

To facilitate students and encourage them in pursuing education after primary level

- Objective: To provide free education, boarding and lodging facilities to tribal students.
- Inception: 1986
- Partner: None
- Geographical Footprints - 74 schools in 17 districts
- Intended Beneficiaries: Students studying in standard 9-12
- Eligibility Criteria: Students who have scored 50% or above in primary level for admission in 9th standard, and 50% or more in New S.S.C. science subject for admission to 11th standard, shall get admission on basis of merit.
- Benefits under The Scheme: Lodging, boarding, education, 4 pairs of clothes, utilities for daily use is provided free of cost.
- Key Achievements: 74 Adarsh Nivasi Shalas have been established

Ashramshalas (Grant in Aid)

The Schedule Tribe population cannot afford to spend on their children's education due to their weak economic condition. Instead of sending them to schools, they compel their children to start working in their traditional occupation or any other job for monetarily support to the family. Thus, government launched a scheme to give 100% grant to NGOs for starting residential schools, known as Ashramshalas (std 1 to 8, Uttar Buniyadi Ashramshalas (std 9 to 10) and Uchchttar Uttar Buniyadi Ashramshalas (std 11 to 12). These schools provide education, boarding and lodging to tribal students and are fully funded by the state government, though they are run by NGOs.

Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS)

- "A Child without education, is like a bird without wings"
- GSTES, Gandhinagar has setup 34 EMRS to provide quality education for the holistic development of the tribal children. GoG has also taken initiative to run few EMRS on a PPP model with well known Trusts involved in education of indigenous people. The medium of instruction of these schools is either Gujarati or English and are generally affiliated to Gujarat Education Board. To provide more competitive environment at the national level.

- The main components of the school system are:

Facilities

Tribal children are provided free education from class 6th to 12th. All the students are getting free lodging, boarding, uniform, stationary, grocery, medical facility etc as in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Infrastructure

Looking at the latest developments in education system, schools have been equipped with modern technology like Biometric Attendance System, Computer Lab with 24X7 internet facility, Library, Science labs, Playground, Hostel, Mess etc.

Academic

Schools are following GCERT as well as NCERT curriculum, where medium of instruction is either Gujarati or English. Integration of technology in teaching and learning process makes learning enjoyable. To inculcate scientific fervor among these children, DIY (Do It Yourself) individual kits are being used to make them learn the scientific concepts by doing. EMRS of Muni Seva Ashram is providing such kits supplied by Think Lab (IIT) Mumbai to all the students so that they can imbibe the concepts which was taught in theory classes.

Hostel System

To inculcate a spirit of oneness, spirit of competition, fair play and co-operation, sense of belonging to the school and leadership qualities among the students, school follows House System. All the students are divided into several Houses. These Houses compete in different sporting, cultural and academic events and at the end of the academic session best house is awarded with the 'Best House Trophy'

Clubs

To nurture the hidden talent of the tribal children various clubs are formed like Science / IT club, Horticulture / Nursery, Dance / Drama, Photography, Mehndi / Rangoli, Nature, Social work etc.

Educational Tours

To provide more exposure to these children educational tours and picnics are organized on regular basis.

Sports and Games

To develop physical & mental fitness of the tribal children, regular sports & games and Yoga classes are conducted at these schools. Students from EMRS are competing at local / district / state level and are doing very well at state and national level and also taking part in major sports events like Khel Mahakumbh.

Major Area of Observation of Chaudhari Tribe Community from the Habitat village

House in Village

Most of the houses in the village are completely *kachcha*, which means they have used soil of that land, dung of animal and water to the construction of walls and floors. The roofing of the house is a frame, which made out of bamboo material. Some houses are half *pakka* (many of them are built under the housing schemes like Indra Awash Yovanna and Sardar Awash Yovanna) and very few houses are fully *pakka* (made of brick, cement, and concrete with proper cemented roof).

Majority of house have only one big room with an attached veranda on front side with a room for cattle. Inside the houses, the main thing which attracts is the huge grain containers for storage of grain and other things. The container is made by bamboo, such bamboo structure are plastered with mixture of soil and cow dung. One or two small steel trunks can also be seen in all houses.

Social Life

Titoi villagers are distributed into different religions which mostly follows Hindu religion. Some Muslim and Christian followers are also there. There are also few people who don't follow any religion, they said that they are Adivasis. Within Hindus there are six to seven sects and the relationships between members of different sects and religion are cardinal and persons of one sect depend upon others for fulfillment of social obligations. We have also seen that every sect living in separate are in bulk which shows the social polarization in village, but in the village we have also seen that two or more than two sect are living together. Even in some area Hindu and Christian are living together because they belong to the same family (kutumb).

Marriage system is also not so rigid, here both love marriage and arrange marriage are allowed in Titoi village. Marriage inside the village and outside the village is allowed, inter-cast and inter-religion marriage is also allowed.

It has seen that in Titoi village many people, usually marry his/her daughter and keeps his/her daughter and son-in-law in their home as "*Ghar Jamai*". This is generally happened in the case when they don't have any son to take care them in their old age and social security. Some people who have two or more sons prefer to send one or two of them as a "*Ghar Jamai*", the logic behind this is that one who have less land and other assets but have two or more sons, for their financial betterment they send them as a "*Ghar Jamai*".

Education

Condition of education Titoi village is very interesting, where it has been seen that the women are more literate and educated than men. In the village, there is primary and middle school up to 8th class and also a Bal Mandir for kid. But there is absence of secondary and higher secondary school, for which they have to go Mandvi tahshil, which is 10 to 12 km away from their village. Due to which, we have seen a higher rate of dropout students. There is also lack of proper toilet for girls and boys in school due to which some time parent also restrict girl child to go to school.

In the village most of people who did not go to school after 7th, 8th, or 9th class. At the same time we have find student who is highly qualified but engage in cropping, we meet many girls who are more qualified (like B.A., M.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.) But not able to find job, which show lack of competence in education and lack of educated job in that area, at the same time every educated in Titoi has desire to work around their village not away, they always blaming government for un-employment.

There is also lack of moral education, civic education and financial education. also found that there is no vocation education and skill development center in Titoi village and absence of college and university within the radius of five kilometer. Now the 2nd generation is going outside the village for education and also learning with environment, which is positive sign for village like Titoi.

Economy

Agriculture is the main source of economy of Titoi villagers. Nearly all the households have agricultural field and cultivators. We have found that majority of the household have less than five vigha fields, where some of the villagers have more than ten vigha field.

Women play an important role in agricultural activity. But the technological, equipment is old one. The bullock is the largest capital item and the most important piece of equipment.

Most of them have non-irrigated land due to which they have to depend on weather. Many of them also have some amount of irrigated land but the source of irrigation is in function when it is raining.

Role of Government in Titoi village

Titoi village is well connected to tahshil, district, and other part of the state. The condition of roads is good. The connectivity is the one of the main Cause for the social and economic change of Titoi village. The facility of electricity in the village was also good. There was approx. 24 hours electricity facility in the village. Sometime power is cut which is only in critical condition. The electricity and T.V. (D.T.H) connect them with rest of the country or the world, now they are very much aware about other part of the country and many other things like politics. There is primary health center (Arogya Kendra) in that village where Asha worker assists people about their health. Also there is a primary school up to 8th class in that village. In the village, there is a center of Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana and a unit of Sumul, which plays an important role in their information and economic development. there is “Indra Awash Yojana” and “Sardar Awash Yojana” for tribes in the village.

Conclusion

Titoi is not a typical tribal village. There is well connectivity of roads and electricity. Every house has bike (few have cars also), most of people have T.V. and D.T.H. Facility, fridge, and other house hold things like Almirah, dressing table etc....

However, in maximum houses T.V. and D.T.H. has been impacting most to their thought, also helping to spread awareness, and connecting them to the rest of the world. But it has seen that some time people take it otherwise. It can be seen that the young generation is going out for education and other work. But they are not well guided towards their future, which restricts them to achieve their target. The lack of

awareness and competence is also a big obstacle in their journey. We can say that, now Titoi village is coming to the main stream of development.

The main reason for which the role of education can be said to be important for the development of this village, it can be clearly seen based on the primary information that the people of this village have developed a lot through education. Also, based on the primary information received from the people of this Chaudhari tribe, the first engineer in the village was from this community, who had the first job at a high position in the railway department. Behind which also the role of education is most important. It can be said that the people of the village are developing through education in this true sense. It can be said that education as an important factor for the development of the tribal community has been proven on the basis of primary data

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