AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF PRIMARY EDUCATION OF TRIBAL’S OF KERALA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PERIPATETIC SCHOOLS SINGLE SCHOOLS AND BALAVIJNHANA KENDRAS

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Abstract: This study aims at mapping the single teacher school provisions for primary education in tribal areas of the state Kerala, India. The government of Kerala started Single teacher schools under the Scheduled Tribe development Department. Mainly three types of schools were functioning here viz; Peripatetic schools for primitive tribes, Single schools and Balavijnhana kendras. Mother tongue inhibition is the major problem faced by the tribal children. To reduce the language problem and drop out rate the medium of these school is their own tribal language. For this the teachers are selected from the tribal community with minimum level of education and they are well versed in their own tribal language. Study through their own language helped to increase the enrolment rate and to reduce drop out rate among them. The tribal education in Kerala is also facing many other challenging problems. The other purpose of the paper is to describe the problems of tribal education in Kerala, the new schools opened in tribal areas to reduce the problems, infrastructure provided to the schools, status and educational capacity of the tribal teachers, the status of innovative curriculum and methodology and teaching learning material, details of enrolment and dropout, evaluation system and community participation.

These Single teachers schools started with many innovative and experimental ideas in isolated tribal region. The tribal research institute of Kerala developed a new methodology and curriculum for the students of these schools, in which each student should treated as a person and the teacher as a resource to encourage and boost the child to develop his talents, interest and attitude.

Key words: Scheduled tribes, Single teacher School, Peripatetic schools, balavijnhana kendras, Elementary education, Primitive tribal group or Particularly Vulnerable group

I. Introduction

“Education as a means of advancement of capacity, well-being and opportunity is uncontested, and more so among communities on the periphery. Marked improvements in access and to some extent in quality of primary education in tribal areas have occurred, and stem from government and non-government initiatives. However, the number of out-of-school children continues to be several millions, mainly due to a lack of interest and parental motivation, inability to understand the medium of instruction (i.e. state language), teacher absenteeism and attitude, opportunity cost of time spent in school (particularly for girls), large seasonal migration etc. Low literacy rates in tribal communities continue to indicate a...
need for overarching support that tackles issues from health to attitudes of non-tribal populations. Recognizing that the education system is currently designed for the dominant group, there needs to be investment in creating support mechanisms that supplement the assimilation of tribal children into the formal education system.” (Bagai and Nundy, 2009, 1)

The Government of Kerala introduced single schools to tackle the problems with the tribal education in primary sector. This paper examines 1) The major problems behind the below average situation of primary education in tribal areas 2) the importance of single schools in tribal areas 3) the alternative approaches introduced in these school to increase the number of enrolment and for the retention of the students.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Tribe

“The tribal people being the original inhabitants of India constitute a significant part of the vast nation. They have been dwelling in the forests surrounded by hills for a long period. Their social structure, their culture and their language are quite different from the general people of India.” (Thakur and Thakur, 1994:3)

“A tribe is a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous, with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes, without any social obloquy attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure, followed tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, illiberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration.” (DN Majumdar quoted in Hasnain, 1998:4)

2. Scheduled Tribe

“Under the Constitution of India certain tribes have been specified as the Scheduled Tribes. It is to be noted that only those tribes which have been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes are given special treatment or facilities envisaged under the Constitution. The Constitution neither defines nor lays down any criteria for specifying the Scheduled Tribes.” (Hasnain, 1998:16)

“Article 366 (25 of the Constitution of India refers Scheduled Tribes as these communities, who are Scheduled in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution. This Article says that only those communities who have been declared as such by the President through an initial public notification or through a subsequent amending Act of Parliament will be considered to be Scheduled Tribes.” (Ministry Of Tribal Affairs, 2011, 27)

As per the Lokur Committee report the basic traits of Scheduled Tribe Communities are
1. Indication of primitive traits
2. Distinctive culture
3. Shyness to contact with other
4. Geographical isolation
5. Backwardness

As per 2001 census the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in India is 8.43 crore and it contains 8.2% of the total population. The growth rate is 24.46%.”More than half of the total ST population is concentrated in the state of Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat”, (Ibid, 27)

This people have been known as Aadivasis, Gothra, Vanajathi, Girijan, Aborigines, aboriginal primitives etc. The Govt of India have been made special provisions in Constitution like article 46, 275, 330, 332, 335, 338, 348 to help and safeguard the tribal people and to protect them from social injustice and exploitation.

3. Single teacher Schools: Those schools run by a single teacher is known as single teacher schools

4. Particularly vulnerable Tribes or primitive Tribes(PTG): Those scheduled Tribes who are characterized by (a) a pre-agriculture level of technology, (b) a stagnant or declining population (c ) extremely low literacy and (d) a subsistence level of economy.

III. Research Problem

The tribal people of India got a diverse socio-cultural life and economic development and live in scattered isolated areas, inaccessible settlements in interior forest and remote hilly areas of the country. These areas lack proper communication systems and transportation facilities like road and transport. They also deprived of the basic amenities like medical facilities, electricity and educational facilities.

In the education sector the literacy rate among tribes is very low and the majority children continue to be outside the school system. The Government introduced special educational support to the tribes. Special norms and flexible approaches introduced. But the number of the out of school children is large.

In Kerala, one of the major states of India the condition of tribal education is the same. Here also the number of enrollment among tribes is very low and the dropout rate is very high. There are no of reasons behind this, like lack of parental support and interest, inability to understand the medium of instruction due to mother to inhibition, lack of schools nearby, teacher absenteeism attitude towards girls etc.

So for the universalization of primary education the Government of India introduced new innovative approaches and strategies. The Government opened single teacher schools in remote tribal areas.
This paper documents the complete strategy behind these schools. The importance and need of these alternative schools and alternative strategies in meeting the educational needs of tribal children. It also analyses the viability and desirability of the school approach and the benefits of the schools to the younger generation. It also studies the major problems and challenges faced by the system. It also throws light to the new methodological and pedagogical approach. This paper also analyses the pedagogic reform, community participation and the attempts to improve the quality of teachers by adapting new techniques of training, and new methods like using local teachers, adapting curriculum and providing locally relevant teaching learning materials.

IV.Methods

1.Participants

Since this study is to analyse the importance of alternative approaches used by the Single schools of kerala the survey was given to the teachers of these schools. All the tachers from all kinds of single schools like Ekadhyapaka Vidyalayas, Peripetetic teacher schools and balavijnhaana kendras are selected. The number of respondents was as shown in Pie diagrame 1

![Teachers Pie Chart]

2.Profile area of the study

Kerala

Kerala is one of the 28 States of the Indian Union, which is the largest Democratic Republic in the world. This is the southernmost state which is on the shores of the Arabian Sea. It has an area of 38,863 sq. kms (1.18% of Indian land mass) with 30 million people, and it is divided into 14 districts. The language of Kerala is Malayalam, which had originated from Sanskrit and Tamil. Malayalam, another name of the state, which is also the name of the language, is probably derived from mala (hill) and alam (dale) corresponding to the undulating physical feature of Kerala, the land of hills and valleys. "Malabar" is a partially
The northern area of Kerala is still known as Malabar. The 14 Districts of Kerala are grouped into three regions on the basis of certain cultural, historical and geographical similarities. Malabar Region (North Kerala), Kochi Region (Central Kerala) and Travancore (South Kerala) are the regions.

Keralas map

V Results

1. Tribes in Kerala

“The tribal zone in India is generally divided into three zones according to their distribution namely the north-eastern zone, the central zone and the southern zone. The north-eastern zone consists of the Himalayan region and the hill and the mountain ranges of North-Eastern India. The southern zone consists of that part of the Peninsular India which falls south of the River Krishna. The central zone occupies the central belt of the older hills and the plateaus along the dividing line between Peninsular India and the Indo Gangetic Plains” (Thakur and Thakur, 1994:99). The State of Kerala belongs to the central tribal belt of India.

The tribes of Kerala mainly settled in four districts viz, Wayanad, Idukki, Palakkad and Kasargode. 35.82% of the tribal people are settled in Wayanad district. As per the Constitutional Amendment by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes orders (Amendment) Act, 2002 (Act 10 of 2003) Part – VIII – Kerala, 35 tribes considered as Scheduled Tribes.
total Scheduled Tribe population in Kerala is 3,64,181 and is suppose to be 1.14% of the total population.

2. Tribal Zones of Kerala

According to PRG Mathur,(1977) the tribal zones of Kerala are

1. The Kasargod tribal region
2. The Wayanad tribal region
3. The Attappadi tribal region
4. The Nilambur tribal region
5. The Parambikkulam tribal region
6. The Idukki tribal region
7. The Thiruvananthapuram tribal region

“The Scheduled Tribe communities of the state can broadly be classified into four categories viz, hunters and gathers, agricultural labourers, shifting cultivators and settled cultivators, based on their traditional economic activity. However today majority of the Scheduled Tribe population is landless agricultural labourers” (Sukumaran Nair, 2003:6).

3. The scheduled tribe communities

There are 35 tribal communities in the State. Among them Paniyans form the majority (67948 as per 1991 census which is 21.17 % of the total Scheduled Tribe Population in the State). Adiya, Paniya and Kattunaikans are the three tribal communities in Wayanad district who are still in a very underdeveloped stage compared to other tribal communities there. The Kurumas in Kasargode, Kurumbar of Attapady, The Kadar of Parambikkulam, Sholayar and Cholanaikans of Wayanad and Nilambur are the communities which are under the threat of extinction (Radhakrishnan, 2007).

4. Education Profile

At present the education sector as a whole in the state is characterised by the existence of a dual system: one segment comprising high quality institutions catering to the affluent 5 per cent of the population and the second consisting of low quality institutions meant for the masses. The state has never made any attempt at equitable distribution of quality higher education, the access to which is virtually barred to children of marginalized groups like SC/ST (Abdul Salim, 2008).

A review of literacy rates among ST population in comparison with that of the general population indicates a growing gap between literacy rates of these communities (Kerala Development Report, 2008). Our examination of recent trends in educational attainment of tribes: their recent trends in enrollment drop-out for the children are empty by absence of relevant statistical data. The main sources which have been utilized are the Census, Statistical Publications of Tribal Department and the NSSO etc. We have also drawn upon active studies.
It is found that the literacy rates of the tribes are far behind those of the other populations. (Narayana Swamy, 2010, 3) The literacy rate of the scheduled tribes population in the State is as follows:

Table 1
Literacy Rates – STs vs. All Castes (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>60.42</td>
<td>70.42</td>
<td>89.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>55.96</td>
<td>79.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>25.72</td>
<td>31.79</td>
<td>57.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5. Enrollment Rate of the ST Students

The percentage of Scheduled tribe students in total enrollment also went up only marginally from 1.15 per cent in 2001-02 to 1.23 per cent in 2003-04. But the absolute number of Scheduled Tribe students enrolled went up from 58859 in 2001-01 to 60339 in 2003-04. Also the vast majority of these students are in government schools and government-aided schools. In 2004, 42.08 percent of the SC/ST students were enrolled in government schools, 56.39 percent in government-aided schools and a 1.53 percent in private unaided schools (Anjana, Alex, 2005).

The proportions of Scheduled Tribe students in Lower Primary and Upper Primary schools during 2008-09 are relatively higher than their population percentage. In High School section the percentage of Scheduled Tribe students is a little less than their population percentage. (Narayana Swamy, 2010, 4)

Table 2
Enrollment of ST Students at School Levels
[As on 1.10.2008]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>Percentage to Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>1665993</td>
<td>33781</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>1452540</td>
<td>24449</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS</td>
<td>1427293</td>
<td>15882</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4545826</td>
<td>74112</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Directorate of Public Instruction (2009), Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
6. Dropout Rate

Among the Indian states Kerala has achieved the distinction of the state having the lowest dropout rate among school students. In the year 2006-07 dropout ratio among school students in Kerala was 0.81 per cent. The drop-out ratio in Lower Primary Section, Upper Primary Section and High School Section were 0.59 per cent, 0.52 per cent and 1.38 per cent respectively. Among the Districts, Wayanad has the highest drop out ratio in the Lower Primary section (1.89 %), Upper Primary Section (1.92 %) and High School Section (2.56 %). Drop-out ratio among Scheduled Tribe students is 4.18 per cent.1(Narayana Swamy,2010,4)

VI. Discussions

1. The major Problems of Primary Education in tribal Areas

The major problem faced by the schools were nothing other than high number for tribal out of school children.

Out of school children means those children who were never enrolled in school and those drop out student.

The major factors behind this were two types
1) The internal factors or Intrinsic factors: This factor lies in the structure of education system itself.

2) The External factors: Those factors which were outside the education system

- Mother tongue migratory inhibition
- Incentives
- Gender
- Geographical bias, isolation, pattern, parents
- Content & pedagogy
- Teacher absenism and negative attitude of teachers

2. Establishment of Single Teacher Schools

The Government of Kerala has been implementing a number of programmes for the educational enrolment and maintenance of tribal students in primary education for the last few decades.

Thus the Government decided to establish single teacher schools in remote isolated areas for primary education. This school was established under Scheduled Tribe Development Department (STDD). They started 3 types of schools.

1. Normal single teacher schools for all tribes
2. Peripatetic schools for particularly vulnerable tribes (PTG)
3. Balvijnhana Kendras for pre primary tribal kids

STDD of Kerala is flexible towards the school. Lack of qualified trained teachers will lead to the relaxation of the policy of educational and training qualification of the teachers. STDD selected local tribal educated youth as teachers. They have only Ten years of education. Some of them were passed and some others were failed. Government started 40 no. of single schools. 29 schools are functioning smoothly. Each school got 20 students and one teacher. In some area Government started Balvijnhana Kendras which mainly focused on pre primary education. This school also got teachers from educated tribal local youth. In Kerala only 5 schools are functioning.

In 2005 the Government of India introduced Peripatetic schools among the PTG’s. The meaning of the word peripatetic is moving from one place to another or mobile. The beneficiaries of this kind of schooling are those tribal with the migrating characters. In this
teacher will go to the field and give teach the children. Initially the STDD opened 35 schools and now only 15 are running.

### Table-2

**Table showing total number of students in schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Total no.</th>
<th>Below 5</th>
<th>Std I</th>
<th>Std II</th>
<th>Std III</th>
<th>Std IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripatetic</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balavijnhana Kendra</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1252</strong></td>
<td><strong>161</strong></td>
<td><strong>415</strong></td>
<td><strong>313</strong></td>
<td><strong>213</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Strategies and Approaches to Solve the Problems

The schools mainly started to rectify the major internal factor which primarily impediments the education

#### 3.1. Approaches to solve Mother Tongue Inhibition.

Normally the tribal child is unfamiliar with the language of instruction in primary school. They knew only their tribal dialect. The language of instruction in Kerala or the state language is Malayalam and some schools use English as their medium of instruction. The instruction and communication in state language will lead to a kind of alienation among kids in class room activity.

In Single school the language of instruction and communication is local tribal dialect. This will create interest in classroom teaching and activities. This language makes the process of education and learning easier and natural. So that the child can acquire knowledge very easily. This will reduce the rate of drop outs. Later stage these schools used trilingual approach of education. In the initial stage they get their own tribal language then Malayalam the state language and English.

#### 3.2. Multigrade and Multilevel curriculum

In single schools we gave admission to Four different grades of children. The teacher is force to addresses class I, II, III & IV at the same time. So the Govt. with the help of KIRTADS(Kerala Institute for the Research, Training and Development Studies of scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) and SSA(Sarva Siksha Abhiyan) introduced a new teaching methodology. This Multigrade, multilevel methodology is known as 'Koottam approach' (Group or Congregation approach), which make use of different innovative teaching learning material.

The children will be grouped into three groups viz, *Kurunnu koottam*, *Shalabhakkottam* and *Kilikkoottam* according to their age and level of learning.
Kurunnu koottam (Kids Congregation): Students in the age group of 3-7 (Pre primary level to class One)

Shalabhakkottam (Butterfly Congregation): Students in the age group of 6-8 (Class two and three)

Kilikkoottam (Bird Congregation): Students in the age group of 9-11 (Class four)

This grouping method increase face to face interaction and communication of the kids. This also help for the peer to peer learning observation capacity. They become more and more sociable. This method replaces the textbook oriented, teacher directed, syllabus centred monograde approaches. The concentration is on learning. The importance of this method is it increase the student activity level, self learning group dynamics, interaction, interrelation, co-operation, socialization, sociality and sociability with coalesing.

The four classes were considered as step learning ladder. This ladder covers the whole curriculum from class I to class IV, in the area of Mathematics, Environmental Studies and Languages. Activities were planned according to the learner’s level.

3.3 Content of Curriculum

Content of the State syllabus the terminologies, the topic and messages are really alien to the tribal kids. So there need a total deconstruction of the content. So that the contexts and the matter rebuilt on the basis of local and familiar theoretical space. Introduced ten important themes which got local specificity, cultural meaning, ecological validity.

KIRTADS developed dictionaries and developing primer in the tribal language. Apart from these KIRTADS gave biannual training to the teachers using developed text books, work books picture books on the basis of theme. Also developed local friendly teaching learning materials to help the students to learn easily.

The major activities are

1) Developed a language lab for the them
2) Created a reading corner (Vayana moola)
3) Created a laboratory corner (ShaasthraMoola)
4) Collected the tribal songs, stories, fables and created cultural encyclopedia.
5) Supplementary Teaching Learning Material Kit (TLM) developed on the basis of theme.
6) Developed picture work books, teachers hand books, chart and models.

3.4 Teacher Training and Pedagogy

KIRTADS gave continues training to the teachers to empower them in the alternate and innovative content and methodology. Empowerment training and capacity building training motivated the teachers. Some crash courses in language and mathematics were given.
Training on material use, thematic presentation of the subject, TLM creation, techniques to control Multigrade multilevel situations were also given.

In the training programme the teachers got attitudinal training also. They were sensitized to the importance of tribal education and the problems of tribal students in education.

3.5. Creation of effective TLM Kit

This training help the teachers to create interesting and innovative teaching learning materials on the basis of the themes. Majority of these materials were prepared on the basis of socio-cultural background of the community. Teachers have flexibility in the creation of materials by supplementing their own ideas with their own social customs, language and peculiarities. This gave proper understanding in the creation and use of TLM materials. They also get proper understanding about need and use of materials.

3.6. Development of Context Specific reading and writing materials

The teachers got thorough training in the preparation of context specific reading and writing materials. This materials help them to create interest in the study among tribal students.

3.7. Increase in Incentives

To increase the number of tribal students in these schools the Government started to give incentives. These schools provide milk, midday meal, egg and fruits for the students. Govt. also provided two pairs of uniform, free text books, bags, Umbrella and other study materials. This incentive helped to raise the number of enrollment and retention. It motivated the kids to study and to learn things.


The Directorate of KIRTADS conducted community awareness programmes in the field. Gave empowerment and motivational training to the parents. These programmes help them to create a positive attitude towards education, particularly the need and importance of education, girls education etc.

VII. Conclusion

Education is the only means to the individuals and society can improve endowment. It help them to built capacity and confidence. The education system in India is currently designed for the dominant groups so that for the education of tribes we need to develop a supplementary alternative support mechanism. This will help the tribal children to enter in to formal system of education. The major support mechanisms are
1. Use community dialect or language as the medium of instruction. Develop a trilingual approach.

2. Introduce a multigrade, multilevel student oriented curriculum.

3. Create dictionaries, primers, text books and encyclopedias in tribal language.

4. Develop a context specific thematic approach.

5. Create a context specific teaching learning material.

6. Introduce incentives to the tribal students and for teachers too.

7. Empower and consentize the parents.

8. Develop a positive attitude among teachers regarding tribal life and culture.

9. Improve community participation.

Acknowledgement

Kirtads, STDD, SSA, Govt. of Kerala, Abdurehman, Suresh and Dileep

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