
**‘EFFECTIVENESS OF
GOVERNMENT
EXPENDITURE ON
EDUCATION- ISSUES
AND CHALLENGES’- A
CASE STUDY**

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Abstract

Education forms an important component in the overall development of individuals, enabling them to greater awareness, better comprehension of their social, political and cultural environment and also facilitating in the improvement of their socio-economic conditions. These hold true in the case of the Scheduled Tribes in India. But now the things are changing fast. The whole world as also India has set in the motion the forces of globalization, liberalization and privatization. Market is fast replacing the ‘WelfareState’. Competition has become the order of the day. The Reservation Policy of the State that did help the scheduled tribe to secure socio-economic mobility and upliftment is fast eroding. Under such circumstances, what will be the future of scheduled tribe in general and those in rural areas without access to land, capital, other types of skills etc. in particular? The task is indeed formidable. I therefore would take liberty to suggest a few things as a matter of agenda relating to the scheduled tribe education. This is because I am fully convinced that in the midst of all sorts of inequalities and changing scenario, it is only the higher education that would act as the surest and soundest key to the scheduled tribe.

The present study is conducted in the Thalavadi District of Tamil Nadu in India. Tamil Nadu is one of the major states in southern India; According to the census of 2001, the scheduled Tribe population in Tamil Nadu is 651,321, constituting 1.0 percent of the total population. Even in 21st century, Tribals are still facing the problems of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, poor literacy, poor health facility and deprivation from basic amenities. A number of developmental activities intended for protecting the tribal’s from exploitation and meant for helping them to further their socio-economic development have not yielded fruitful results as expected. This may be due to many reasons. The Anthropologists have studied the socio-cultural system and taboos of the tribal’s and have produced volumes of literature. There are a few studies made particularly in Tamil Nadu by the government agencies. This paper examines the essence of education of scheduled tribe population –a case study. it consists of three sections (a) the educational expenditure of India in relation to other countries of the world (b) Schemes and Programmes for Education of Scheduled Tribes (c) explains educational conditions of the tribal area as a case study.

Key Words: Education and economic development-Tribal population

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'EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION- ISSUES AND CHALLENGES'- A CASE STUDY

Education forms an important component in the overall development of individuals, enabling them to greater awareness, better comprehension of their social, political and cultural environment and also facilitating in the improvement of their socio-economic conditions. These hold true in the case of the Scheduled Tribes in India. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar correctly understood the importance of education as the most powerful instrument to free the poorest people from the century-old miseries, sufferings, insult and stigma inflicted on them by the caste system. This paper examines the importance of education of scheduled tribe population and the reasons for their backwardness in the society. It consists of three sections (a) explains the impact of education and development (b) education level of rural and urban India and in section (c) explains educational conditions of the tribal area a case study .

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Efforts taken by the government in improving their educational level.
2. To find out their attitude towards education and development.
3. Adequate infrastructural facilities with education would enhance backwardness of the tribal people.

Methodology

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from the selected households of tribal area of Thalavadi and Gundapura hamlets of Thalavadi village which comes under Thalavadi panchayat union/block of the Sathyamangalam Taluk in Erode district. The area of the block is 75,330 hectares (480 Square kilometers) in which forest area is 50239 hectares. 120 houses have been selected for the study purpose based on simple random sampling method.. The tribals investigated formed the sholagas and kurumbar category. Most of the tribals in these hamlets are cultivators, agriculture labourers or dependent on forests for their livelihood. Primary data was collected directly from the respondents through interview method by using specific information questions related to socio-economic data such as housing conditions, family size, age, gender, literacy and marital status of members, health and sanitations. The secondary data was collected from published and unpublished documents of Government Departments and private agencies. Also research reports, research papers, journals, books and from Internet were referred.

Review of literature

There exists a substantial amount of literature on the condition of tribal education in India. A brief review is worthwhile in order to highlight what has already been done in the field. In a study on tribes of Andhra Pradesh, K. Sujatha (1994) contends that the perspective adopted for educational development of tribal communities fails to adequately address the specific disadvantages characterizing the tribal population. She found that one of the major constraints of tribal education at the planning level is the adoption of a dual system of administration. Rani.M (2000) observed in her study that due to the language barriers, tribal children are unable to establish a proper communication link with teachers and thus leads to the termination of their education in some point or the other. Vaidyanathan and Nair, (2001) suggested that teacher motivation contributes more to teaching – learning process than teacher competence.

'EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION- ISSUES AND CHALLENGES'- A CASE STUDY

There are significance differences in education expenditure across the BRICS member countries, For BRICS member countries, the right to education has been constitutionally endorsed to give effect to strategies that aim to ensure that every citizen in the country has equal rights to education. The following table reflects Government expenditure on education.

Table 1: Government Expenditure on Education

Country	Government expenditure on education as % of GDP			Government expenditure on education as % of total government expenditure		
	1999	2005	2012	1999	2005	2012
Brazil	3.9%	4.5%	*5.81%	9.6%	12.0%	**14.6%
China	1.9%	...	*3.71%	12.6%	...	*16.3%
India	4.3%	3.1%	3.8%	16.3%	10.7%	13.0%
Russia	*2.91%	3.8%	*4.11%	*9.0%	11.5%	**11.9%
South Africa	6.0%	5.3%	6.6%	...	19.9%	20.6%

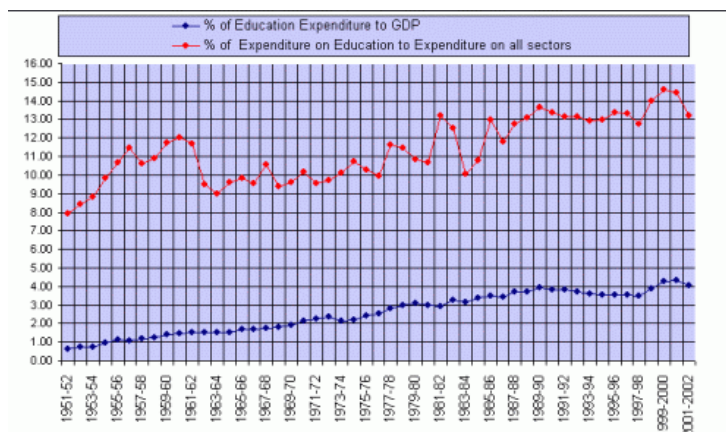
Sources: UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Notes: An ellipsis denoted as "..." indicates that data is not available.

* Data is extracted from the report titled "BRICS Building Education for the Future" by UNESCO.

** Data for Brazil is for 2012 and for Russia is for 2008.

Amongst the BRICS countries, South Africa continues to allocate the highest percentage of its GDP (at 6.6% in 2012) and share of total government expenditure (20.6% in 2012), to education. This is acceptable by international standards. Brazil follows closely, with 5.8% of the country's GDP devoted to education and 14.6% of total government expenditure being spent on education. The share of GDP devoted to education financing is lower for both China and India, even though their GDP has been growing significantly over the years, which can mean that a significant share is being devoted to other competing priorities as opposed to education. Russia devotes the lowest share of total government expenditure towards education when compared to other BRICS member countries. While efforts have been made to improve literacy, its literacy rate in 2011 was 74% well below China's at 95% (in 2010). In fact India's literacy level today is even less than what China's was in 1990. Therefore there is a need to improve the overall literacy rate as improved literacy rate has an impact on increasing a country's economic growth rate and decreasing population growth rate.

Figure 1: Public Expenditure on Education, in Comparison to the total Expenditure of the Government

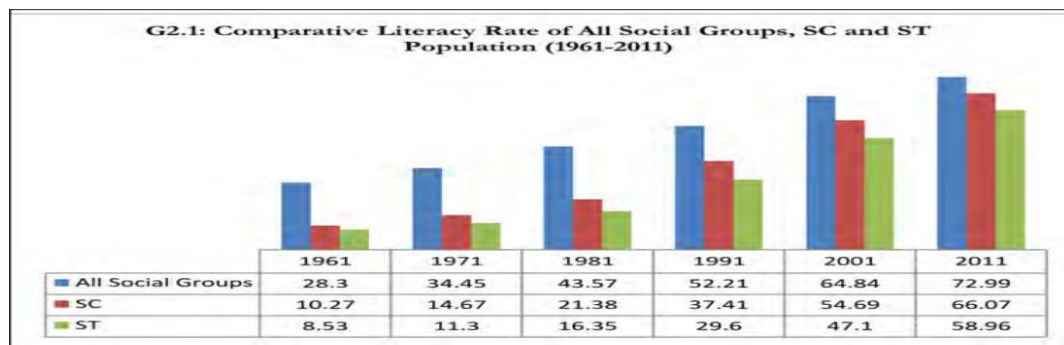
'EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION- ISSUES AND CHALLENGES'- A CASE STUDY

The above figure explains that Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP (blue) and as a percentage of expenditure on all sectors together.

It is important to note that the government's education expenditure as a percentage of GDP (blue line in Figure 1) has never ever risen above 4.3% of GDP, despite the target of 6% having been set as far back as 1968 by the Kothari Commission.

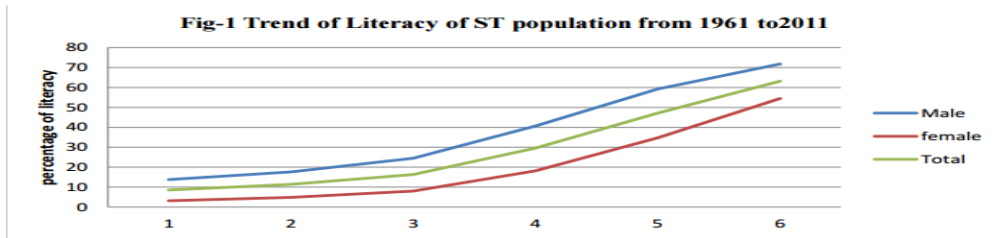
Figure 2: Comparative literacy level of education of the scheduled tribes in india

It is necessary to find out the educational level of scheduled tribe population along with the total population in order to understand the progress of the educational system in India. The following figure illustrates that a comparison between the literacy rates of the Total population and the STs, from Census 1961 to Census 2011:



The above figure reveals that the Literacy Rate of scheduled tribe population had increased from 8.53 percent in 1961 to 58.96 percent in 2011 while the corresponding increase of the total population was from 28.30 percent in 1961 to 72.99 percent in 2011. Literacy Rate has however been lower in the case of STs as compared to SCs and Total Population. Therefore the government of India has introduced various schemes to improve the educational status of the country including scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population. Currently, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is implemented as India's main programme for universalizing elementary education. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning levels of children. The new law provides a justifiable legal framework that entitles all children between the ages of 6-14 years free and compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education. It provides for children's right to an education of equitable quality, based on principles of equity and nondiscrimination. As a result, both literacy rates and gross enrollment ratios of boys and girls across the general population have increased substantially during the past 50 years.

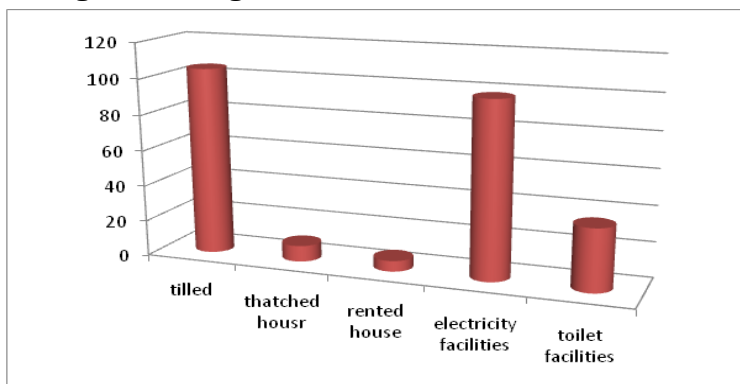
Literacy Rate of Male and Female of Scheduled tribes in India The trend of literacy rate of tribes in India from 1961 to 2011 is shown in the following figure. The percentage of literacy rate of scheduled tribes was only 8.54 per cent in 1961 which has increased to 63.1 per cent in 2011. The literacy rate among ST boys is 71.7 per cent and among girls is 53.1 per cent. Therefore we can state that there is a significant improvement in ST literacy rate from 1961 to 2011.

'EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION- ISSUES AND CHALLENGES'- A CASE STUDY

Source: National Commission for SCs & STs, Fifth Report & Census, 2011.

The above figure explains that there is an improvement in the educational conditions of tribal population. But a female literacy rate of tribes is only 53.1 per cent as compared to male literacy of 71.7 per cent. With the help of the above theoretical support, the author has analysed the real educational situation of the tribal area. The research conducted in 2014-2015 in bringing out the difficulties of these tribals and it provides an emphasis on their upliftment as citizens of India. The tribal population of Tamil Nadu has a special significance because of their extreme level of social and economic backwardness and also as they reside in remote isolated areas away from any other kind of human interaction. They are the first to receive the wrath of nature, in ways like drought, heat stroke, infectious diseases, heavy rainfall etc. Special attention and care is required for them to lead normal lives like others. Scheduled Tribes population in Tamil Nadu was 651,321; they constitute 1.04 percent of the total population. Ever since the Fifth Five Year Plan, Government of India has introduced a number of special development programmes and interventions which are being extended for this vulnerable section of the community. Therefore it is essential to understand the socio-economic indicators which determine the health and education of the tribal people. Despite several achievements and efforts, the 50 years of development plan has not changed the lives of almost one third of India's population. The study area covers two hamlets (Thalavadi village and gumdapura of Thalavadi block of the sathyamangalam taluk, in Periyar district. 120 households are randomly selected from the two hamlets. Thalavadi panchayat is situated in the northwest corner of erode district. There are 20 revenue villages and 99 hamlets in the Thalavadi panchayat union. There are four high schools, four Harijan welfare hostels, forty seven primary schools and fifty nine mid-day meals schools in this block. This is very small and calm city. Cultivation is the main profession. They follow mixed language & culture of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka (More in numbers).

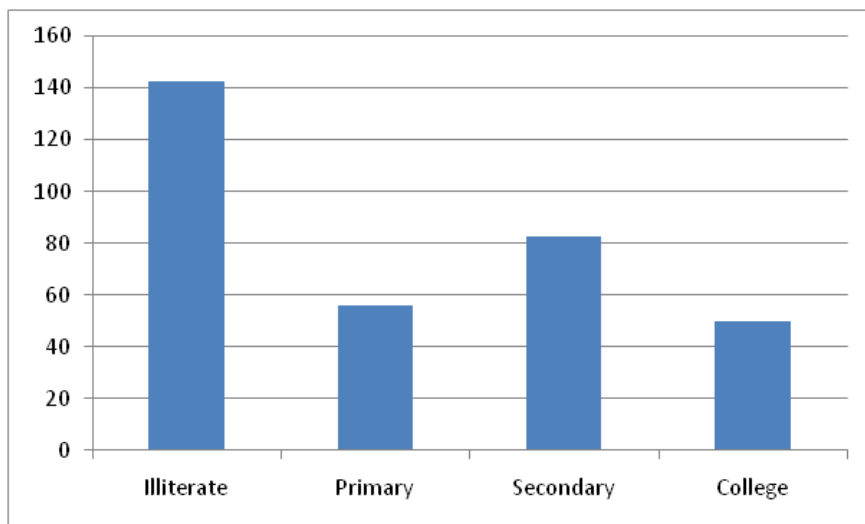
Fig 1: Housing Conditions of the Tribal Hamlets



Source: Field study

'EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION- ISSUES AND CHALLENGES'- A CASE STUDY

The above figure indicates the housing conditions of the tribal hamlets. Among the 120 houses 9 houses are thatched, 105 are tiled houses and the remaining houses are rented houses. Among the total houses about 98 percent of the houses have got electrical facilities, and only few houses have toilet facilities. These tiled houses were built by the IRDP Scheme in which some of them were totally damaged and few houses were repaired by MYRADA (Mysore resettlement and Development Agency) a non-governmental organization. Also Terraced roofs are partly damaged. Since these people live in thick forest, they should be given proper housing facilities which enable them to be away from acute problems which crop up from their surroundings.

Figure 3: Educational Particulars

Source: Field survey.

The above diagram explains the literacy level of selected tribal people of Thalavadi and Gundapura hamlets. Compared with the male population women are more illiterate. It has been observed that tribal community in the study area, have studied only up to secondary school, after that they have been advised to look after the domestic work rather sending them to higher studies. Only very few parents have allowed their children to go for higher studies like BA and B Ed and nurse training etc.

Most of the tribal hamlets do not have schooling facility. The state should strive to provide them school to every Panchayat. The syllabus incorporated in the curriculum is not relevant to the integrated development of tribes. It does not have well formulated distinct one required for the balanced growth of tribes. The curriculum offered to them is designed for mainstream society and it has been followed without any change. All the teaching members in this school are non-tribals, so they lack cultural, environmental and value orientations of tribes and tribal students. From the national curriculum it is evident that lack of education leads to ignorance at all levels causing them to still blindly believe in age-old customs and traditions. Majority of the tribal community in the study area, i.e., 82.22 percent of the people never read regional news

'EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION- ISSUES AND CHALLENGES'- A CASE STUDY

papers at all and there are no library facilities inside the tribal area where almost 1000 people are living. Zoonotic diseases transmitted via animals like cattle, sheep and wild animals cannot be diagnosed and treated in well time resulting in spread of the disease very easily.

Conclusion

It signifies that educational development is a stepping-stone to economic and social development, and the most effective instrument for empowering the tribal; but it is not very much successful in tribal areas due to lack of transport facilities and lack of infrastructural facilities. So, there is an urgent need for various government interventions, planners and policy makers to address this problem and allocate more funds in the central and state budgets for tribal education. Easy access and more opportunities should be provided to the tribal children in order to bring them to the mainstream of economic development and Progress as suggested by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

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