



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION OF TRIBAL WOMEN IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

India is one of the countries having the largest concentration of tribal population in the world. According to 2011 census, the Scheduled Tribe Population in the country is 8.43 crores, constituting about 8.2 percent of the total population. Majority of the tribal population is concentrated in nine states of India, i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Odessa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Assam, Maharashtra and West Bengal.

Andhra Pradesh is the traditional home of (7% of total population) 59, 18,073 lakhs of tribal's (belonging to 33 different groups and 200 ethnic groups) found inhabiting the border areas of Andhra Pradesh. The Tribal women in India are undisputedly considered as the weakest sections of the population in view of common socio-economic and socio-demographic factors like poverty, illiteracy, lack of developmental facilities, and lack of adequate primary health facilities, guidance and direction.

This paper focuses on to assess and understand the Community Participation and its impact on Tribal Women. The study was carried out in the state of Andhra Pradesh one each from the two regions of Andhra Pradesh namely Costal Andhra and Rayalaseema were selected for the study. Adopting stratified random sampling technique 400 tribal women were selected from each region, totaling a sample of 800. Data pertaining to the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources.



KEYWORDS : Scheduled Tribe Population , socio-economic and socio-demographic factors.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

Role and Importance

The role of women in the developmental process has been widely investigated in different cultures of various countries. By now, it has become an established fact that a woman has been stepping out of their traditional status being confined to the environment of their homes. They perform dynamic roles in enabling their society to advance towards development and prosperity. Women's productive efforts and their capability to shape family life and thus society have convinced more and more men of the need to recognize women's equal right and status (Shahand et al., 1986)

"Women's Participation" in so-called informal sector activities such as petty trade, brokering, shop-keeping and other small-scale enterprises help to lubricate the developing commercial market economy, performing many functions which are not profitable enough to attract or support larger modern business, yet are necessary to serve the local consumption needs of the population at large, particularly lower income groups. It is significant that women are frequently the only members of the indigenous population who can compete with minority immigrant groups in such activities.

Thus women's employment or self-employment in market production makes an important direct contribution to economic growth, and particularly to the development of certain "modern sectors" and industries which could not survive without them and have proved especially important to the balance of payments. But women's non-market activities also play an important though largely unrecognized and unrewarded role.

Women's sustenance agricultural production, for example, subsidizes many rural workers families and thus lowers the real wage that employers have to pay them, increasing the surplus available for reinvestment and growth. It includes not only the cultivation of staple grains, but also poultry rearing, vegetable farming, collection of forest product and other supplementary activities. Women's craft production for the household use has the same effect. And many in areas, the time-consuming and backbreaking tasks of fetching and carrying water, and gathering firewood, are assigned to women, as is household marketing and the transport of goods often considerable distances of foot. Child rearing, including the teaching of household and farm production tasks, which largely devolves on women, daily housekeeping and cooking and general household management, complete in wide range of activities which comprise women reproductive duties.

Participation in Community Development activities

The community has recognised the status of the women and their contribution in not only managing their families, but also to the economic and social development of the entire community. Women have shown their capacity to play a major role in community development.

With such significant contribution to the society, most women were participating in Gram Sabhas. Many active leaders of the Self Help Groups have contested and been elected for various Panchayat Raj Institutions, Co-operative bodies and other village level organisations. The leadership of women has been recognised by the society. Gradually, women were now able to influence the Panchyati Raj Institutions to work for the benefit of the communities.

The data represent table No.1 from Kadapa district showed that about two thirds (69%) of the respondents never attended the Gramasevika meetings. A negligible (7%, 16%, 8%) proportion of the respondents attended Gramasevika meetings. With regards to meetings with health visitors, majority (66%) of the respondent never attended these meetings. Only a small proportion(11%, 14%, 9%) attended the meetings often, occasionally and rarely respectively. 73% of the respondents never attended meetings of other development agencies and extension officers or demonstrations, KisanMela etc. Only negligible percent (7%) attended these meetings.

Table- 1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Source of Change Agent

Change Agent	Often		Occasionally		Rarely		Never	
	Kadapa	Visakha-patnam	Kadapa	Visakha-patnam	Kadapa	Visakha-patnam	Kadapa	Visakha-patnam
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Meeting Gram sevika	7.00	6.00	16.00	12.00	8.00	5.00	59.00	77.00
Meeting health visitor	11.00	6.00	14.00	17.00	9.00	4.00	66.00	74.00

Meeting other development agent and extension agent or attending demonstration, KisanMela	5.00	2.00	14.00	4.00	8.00	14.00	73.00	80.00
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The data from Visakhapatnam district revealed that a higher percentage (77) of the respondents never attended the Gramasevika meetings while a negligible proportion of respondents (6%, 12%, 5%) attended these meetings very often, occasionally and rarely respectively. Majority (74%) of the respondents never attended the meetings with the health visitors. A negligible percent (61%) attended these meetings. About three fourths (80%) of the respondents never attended these meetings of other developmental agencies and extension officers, demonstrations, KisanMela etc.

The data from Kadapa district showed that about two thirds (69%) of the respondents never attended the Gramasevika meetings. The data from Visakhapatnam district revealed that a higher percentage (77) of the respondents never attended the Gramasevika meetings. A small proportion of (5% in Kadapa and 2% in Visakha) the respondents attended meetings of other developmental agencies and extension officers or demonstrations, Kisanmela etc. In general, the data showed that participation in community developmental activities was not as desired.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Social participation is an important dimension in the study of community development. The membership in any organization influences and increases one's awareness by interacting with others and also helps in social contact.

Table No. 2. Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their social participation

Social Participation	Kadapa	Visakhapatnam
Membership any one organization	40 (160)	56 (224)
Membership in more than one organization	18 (72)	9 (36)
Office holders	2 (8)	-
None of the membership	40 (160)	35 (140)

It was clear from the data from Kadapa district clearly shows that two fifths (40%) of the respondents were Membership any one organization. 18 percent of the respondents participated Membership in more than one organization and only 2 percent are Office holders. Another two fifths (40%) of them did not participate in any organization.

The data from Visakhapatnam district showed more than half of the respondents were members in one organization. Thirty five percent of them did not participate in any organization. Only nine percent of the respondents were participated Membership in more than one organization.

Majority of the respondents in three districts showed they have Membership any one organization as followed by Kadapa district clearly shows that two fifths (40%) and Visakhapatnam district showed more than half (56 %)of the respondents. But at the same time non participation of social agencies also at large percentage.

CONCLUSION:

The findings of the study showed that large numbers of Tribal women were still plagued with various concern and uncertainties. In this back ground the present study suggest implications to enhance social participation of ST Women through conduct Motivational programmes for Tribals to take greater advantage of community credit organisations and for greater political participation should be undertaken to access the linkage of social agents in tribal areas. Implementation of various welfare programmes with a human resource development approach would improve the quality of life of the Tribals. Examining occupational mobility among Tribal women as a result of modernisation, education and social change.

The study suggest that membership in any organization influences and increases one's awareness by interacting with others like development agent and extension agent etc., also helps in social contact but at the same time participation of the community meetings are enshrines to their sustainable development and Empowerment of the Tribal Women.

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