

EMPOWER THE DALIT CHILDREN THROUGH MEANINGFUL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Society is full of Educators carrying on the process of Education deliberately and consciously. Education is concerned with the development of the Child's personality which comprises Physical, Mental and Emotional Characteristics. A True education transcends all barriers of different subjects in the curriculum and lay down a stronger foundation for utilising the acquired knowledge and skills for further advancement and better citizenship. A study on children from 14-18 years was conducted in Tiruvanamalai district of Tamilnadu. Interview and Questionnaire method was followed to collect the required data. The study reveals that Poor

infrastructures, improper guidelines, non- availability of food, caste discrimination are the reasons for dropouts and underperformance. The Objective of the study is

- *to ensure to create learning environment and*
- *to trigger their skills for active participation in academics,*
- *to provide them basic facilities for the purpose of education.*

It is necessary to awaken the ability among those who feel the deprivation.

Introduction

Education is an abstract entity and its concept is dynamic. It deals with ever growing man and ever growing society. Education provides both experiences to the individual and his adjustment to the environment. Education and trained manpower is a major input for economic and social development. The American Educationist, James said: "The role of Education in the 21st century is to prepare students to know to care and to act in a way that will develop and foster knowledge and skill needed to participate in effective action.

Education is considered as an engine for the growth as well as for the progress of any society. It is not only responsible for imparting knowledge, skills but also responsible for building up human capital which breeds, drives and sets different technological innovations. Learning is a continuous process. It will bring behavioral changes in the form of acquiring more knowledge, improving the Proficiency of Skills and developing values.

Status of Dalits in India

The Indian Society is based on a unique socio cultural phenomenon. The caste system is essentially a religious system, sanctioned and sustained by Hinduism. Caste inequality and hierarchical thinking permeate every aspect of life in India. The Caste system has formed the social and economic framework of the life of the people in India. Dalit is the name which the people belonging to the castes at very bottom of India's caste hierarchy have given themselves. The official label for them has been Scheduled castes, because if their caste is listed on the government schedule, caste members become eligible for a number of affirmative action benefits and protections. The most affected people by this is growing inequality are those who by their birth bear the Stigma of

Untouchability. Casteism is a cruel social system which poses the major cause of most evils in India for it suppresses the untouchables, the Dalits and denies them the opportunity to grow as humans.

Objectives and Methodology

The main objectives of the paper is

- To analyse the educational situation among Scheduled caste of Tiruvannamalai and provide learning environment(12 panchayats).
- The study attempts to understand the nature of school dropouts and Underperformance.
- Encourage them to participate actively in academics.

The Paper is based on the secondary and primary data. Primary data is collected with the help of a NGO's – Visions Global Empowerment and ASMAE. Data from Teachers of Government and Private Schools had been collected. Semi Structured interview schedule had been taken for data collection from Parents.

Area of the Study

Thiruvannamalai is one of the northern districts of Tamil Nadu with Vellore, part of Chengalpattu and South Arcot districts as northern, Southern and Western Boundaries. It came into existence on 30th September 1989 after the bifurcation of North Arcot District. The total population of the district is 2,464,875. Tiruvannamalai stands 15th in population among the districts in Tamilnadu according to the census of 2011. The percentage share of SC is 21.4 percent and ST is 3.33 percent.

Major Causes of School Dropouts and Under Performance

Despite the large number of programs initiated by Government focusing on achieving universal elementary education by providing incentives like mid day meals, uniforms, text books, all the children are not sent to the schools. The following are identified as major problems in the study area:

Poverty

Poverty is the major cause of the dropout rate among these children. This situation had resulted in reduced willingness to support girls' education. The parents are of the opinion that due to their poor economic conditions they do not send their girls to school. The Children are considered as an economic asset in poor families. Boys were engaged in labour work, weaving, Shop vendor etc. Parents with low level of education are more likely to have non school going children. The majority of the parents found illiterate. The girls are forced to take up responsibilities of household tasks at early age which affects their education results in drop outs.

Distance

Most of the girls feel unsafe due to the distance of the school from their residence. Parents are afraid of the sexual harassments that were happening at present, so they are not ready to send their children to far off schools. Therefore a large number of children especially girls stopped their schooling.

Socio Economic Conditions

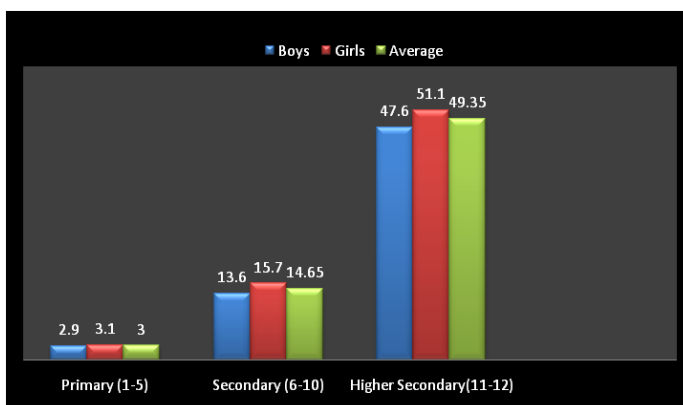
Children said that their fathers under the influence of alcohol disrupted their studies. Parents always quarrelled, and beat their mothers under alcoholic influence. Parental separation will often have an impact on the educational outcomes. Divorce and remarriage is a particular significant cause, give psychological disturbances to children. As the houses are crowded with one or two rooms the children hardly found space for their studies results in under performance.

Lack of Interest

The most common reason given for dropping out was less interest in studies. They find it difficult to cope up with indifference from Teachers and little or no support for learning at the home. Humiliation and insults grow are the main reasons for fear for going to school. They are being literally pushed or beaten.

Lack of Infrastructure Facilities at Schools

The Children who scored low marks and failed in higher secondary education said that they didn't have teachers for science and maths. Most of the schools have inadequate class rooms and the school buildings are in highly dilapidated conditions. The primary schools have no or poor sanitation facility. The secondary and higher secondary schools have inadequate toilet facilities.



Percentage of Dropout among Dalit Children in 2016-2017

Sl. No	Panchayat	Name of the Village	Boys	Girls
1.	Kalasapakkam	Kalasapakkam	18	15
2.	Aniyalai	Aniyalai	19	18
3.	Soranthai	Soranthai	19	13
4.	Karunthuvambadi	Karunthuvambad	15	19
5.	Kolakkaravadi	Kolakkaravadi	22	13
6.	Usambadi	Usambadi	21	14
7.	Vadaandapattu	Vadaandapattu	12	13
8.	Chinnakangaiyanur	Chinnakangaiyanur	17	16
9.	N.Ganagapattu	N.Ganagapattu	23	18
10.	Azhaganathal	Azhaganathal	19	12
11.	Kannapandal	Kannapandal	14	14
12.	Kolakkudi	Kolakkudi	18	17

Dalit Communities and Number of who shall be directly benefiting

Project Activities

E- Learning Facility to Promote Learning, Creativity and Innovation

ASMAE introduced the e-learning facility in those schools. An e-learning set had 30 tablet computers and a Zaya Platform Device. They used grade based educational materials to improve their performance in the four skills namely reading, writing, communication and analysis. Each student get at least one hour of this tab class in a day so that improper attendance is reduced. Slow learners have been improved their standard of learning ability. Those schools will function after 6.00 p.m to 8.30 p.m. The purpose is to provide enabling study environment for these children to do their home work and study lessons for one and half hours and the final hour shall be dedicated specially to train children in reading, writing and communication skills both in Tamil and English and in analytical skills.

Conclusion

Education is what remains with us after forgetting all that we have learnt. Teaching can be such an interesting career because there is so much variety. Teaching can be done in innovative manners which attract more number of students towards school. As Dr.Radhakrishnan said a teacher can make uninteresting subjects as interesting one through their teaching method, the teachers in the study area trained the students through innovative methods with help of the NGOs. The study concludes that governmental efforts combined with the efforts of the non-governmental organisations can produce best results. They can definitely bring hundred percent literacy rate among the people, without any caste discrimination.

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