

Educational Deprivation among Denotified Tribes: a Study of Andhra Pradesh

MALLI GANDHI*

Abstract

Denotified Tribes (DNTs) form a large segment of population in Indian society. They are largely characterised by extreme poverty and socio-economic backwardness. Due to several factors the DNTs remained backward educationally, socially, politically and economically. During the years of British rule, they were treated as habitual offenders and even today they are among the worst victims of cruelty and injustice particularly mob lynching, arson, public and police atrocities, mainly on account of the stigma of criminality attached to them. A majority of the DNTs are illiterate even after 65 years of Independence and are still deprived of quality education, violating both fundamental right to education enshrined in our Constitution and the basic socio-cultural human right. The DNT families are perceived to occupy the bottom rung of the socio-economic ladder, plagued by poor education and economic status.

The purpose of the paper is to analyse the current educational scenario of the DNT children in the settlement schools of Andhra Pradesh, their social context of education, state provisions for the education, school participation of DNT children, educational inequality, constraints to educational opportunities, and suggestions to improve the education of DNT children in Andhra Pradesh and the newly formed Telangana state.

Introduction

Andhra Pradesh is one of the states with a large proportion of DNTs (59 communities with 6 per cent of the total population). Of late, there is an

increasing visibility of the DNTs in social life, the most prominent being their growing political and cultural assertion, and identity formation as habitual offenders. A large section of

*Professor, Regional Institute of Education, NCERT, Manasagangotri, Mysore-6, Karnataka.

DNTs are experiencing social discrimination and stigma, particularly those located in the tradition bound and socio-economically backward regions. They are classified under different communities. Some of them are included in the list of Scheduled Tribes and others are in the list of Scheduled Castes, and some in the list of Backward Classes. There is lack of adequate information on their educational attainment, status, achievement levels, as these have not been covered reasonably during census enumeration and other surveys in the country. Only some rough population estimates for the purpose of sample surveys and estimating growth rates of population have been done so far with regard to this neglected and isolated population. Constitutional protection has to be guaranteed to them on similar lines as given to SC/STs by creating a separate Third Schedule for Denotified Tribes. They may be called Scheduled Denotified and Nomadic Tribes. They may be included in the Ninth Schedule as an independent list.

The DNTs are living in separate localities and outskirts of the villages. These places are called settlements or *tandas*. But, so far there is no settlement/*tanda* education, development schemes provided either by the State or the Central Government. Infrastructural facilities

like roads, electricity, safe drinking water, health, sanitation, education, and hostel provisions are not available in their dwelling places. Like SC/STs the government should provide provisions and budgetary allocation in the 12th Five Year Plan to the DNTs for the construction of roads, providing electricity, drinking water facility, and particularly for their education. They are living in squalour. Many of these communities have no permanent houses and schools. They are generally found only in the outskirts of the villages. Separate education schemes are very much required for these communities.

Current Educational Scenario of the Denotified Tribes

According to the 2001 census report, there are 59 communities of Denotified Tribes in Andhra Pradesh and as per the Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute, Hyderabad, Government of Andhra Pradesh (TCR & TI) survey there are 52 communities. Telangana, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema accounted for the largest number of DNTs among the districts. Of the total tribal population, 39 per cent of them belong to Sugali community and are dominant in Warangal, Nalgonda, Khammam, Mahaboob Nagar and Nizamabad districts. Around 9 per cent population, comprising both the Yanadi and

Yerukula communities, are predominant in Nellore, Chittoor, Prakasam, Guntur, Anantapur, Krishna, and Kurnool. The Waddar largely inhabit Kurnool and Anantapur districts.¹

The problems faced by the DNTs are manifold, which are related to economic, social, cultural, school and administrative factors. Children are among the worst victims of social injustice. Extreme poverty, child labour, lack of Early Child Care and Education (ECCE) facilities, migration, seasonal occupations are some of the factors, which stand in the way of the educational attainment of these children. Illiteracy of the parents, early marriage, community loyalties, lack of awareness, and social stigma are some of the problems which hampers the educational development of the DNT children. Poor educational attainment of DNTs is associated with combined factors, like lack of access to schools, teacher absenteeism, poor quality teaching and unserviceable curriculum, unsuitable working hours in schools, and so forth. Lack of effective coordination, delays in supplies of textbooks, uniforms and other school incentives, weak monitoring and evaluation, lack of enrolment campaigns, lack of community control, lack of incentives for better performance of schools are some of the administrative factors affecting

the communities. Thus the current educational scenario of DNTs can be explained under the following areas—administrative structure, accessibility, quality, participation, economic condition, educational system, peoples' attitudes, level of awareness, aspirations of the teachers and administration, innovative approaches, policies and so on.²

Denotified Tribes and Social Context of Education

Using the example of the DNTs of Andhra Pradesh, the present study throws light on the socio-economic conditions of DNTs in the country, particularly to education. There is a serious problem of inclusive education that fails to meet the educational demands of these tribes, further subjecting them to vulnerability. In this backdrop, an attempt is being made here to examine the factors of educational deprivation. While education may be accessed with greater sedentarisation (implicit in the development strategies employed by the states) DNTs have a self-perception and way of life which makes them less inclined to low wage employment—often the consequence of sedentarisation for the majority of the DNTs. Here a few questions arise: firstly what is the present educational status of the Denotified Tribes? What kind of education should one envision for

the children of the DNTs? Perhaps one that recognises them and includes them, one that is not entirely detached from their means of livelihood, etc. Importantly, how should education be imparted to children of DNTs? Should one improve through more regular teacher-student interactions, or coupling it with innovations in ICTs, radio, TV, etc. or laying greater stress on orality and experiential knowledge as witnessed in alternative education experiments? The Government should think of an educational programme that bridges the gap between knowledge and livelihood, and a comprehensive educational support system that has the potential of maximising their livelihoods; because most often it is difficult for the DNTs children to attend regular schools on account of their engagement in parents' occupation, characterised by nomadic activities. These nomadic tribes move from village to village in search of employment, or they move seasonally to urban areas in search of jobs. In this view, special mobile schools, Ashram schools, residential schools need to be opened for the children of these communities. The DNT children must have easy access to educational facilities provided by the administration. They need to be given an easy access and equal opportunity to education. At the same time, recruitment of teachers

to the schools may be done by adhering to the national standard of excellence on par with other schools, coupled with adequate infrastructural facilities. The DNT children should be provided access to the general schools, so that they too can have social co-education. To encourage primary education among them, more residential hostel facilities should be provided.³

State Provisions for the Education of DNT Children

The State commitment to the education of denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic communities' children is contained in Article 15(4), 45 and 46 of the Indian Constitution. Article 45 declares State's endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. In effect, both central and state governments took up the responsibility of implementing these special educational provisions. Along the same lines, the Backward Classes Enquiry Committee (1955), under Kaka Kalelkar, had recommended certain measures for the upliftment of the DNTs through education. However, no serious attempts have been made by the State or Central governments to implement these measures. Excepting a few, most of the people from DNT community still remain socially backward. The educational

standards amongst the DNTs are much lower than those of the rest of the tribes/communities. The reasons are: many of the parents of the children belonging to DNTs, who are charged with criminal cases, find it difficult to admit their children in normal schools as the other communities find some pretext or the other to keep them out. As a consequence, most of the students particularly girls belonging to DNTs are unable to even pursue primary education. It was felt that the scheme of education should be such that their children should make use of their innate abilities. Therefore, in the first two Five Year Plans the focus was on basic education, residential schools, the basic facility of schools especially in remote and tribal areas and also providing scholarships and books. The scope of enabling interventions expanded considerably after the fourth Five Year Plan. During the first Five Year Plan to fourth Five Year Plan, efforts were made to set up schools, educational centres, Samskar Kendras, Balwadis and Ashram schools. Scholarships were disbursed to school going students. However, from the fifth Five Year Plan onwards no specific education scheme, including vocational training programmes, has been initiated for their development.⁴

School Participation among DNTs Children

Studies carried out so far, including reports of the various Commissions and Committees of SC/STs, do not show any significant educational progress of the DNTs children. The progress is rather slow and uneven. There is paucity of reliable information and the only sources of data that are available are the old census reports viz. 1901, 1911, 1931, 1941, 1961 and a few reports of the Commissioner and Commission for SC/STs. Very low literacy is also accorded to the DNTs, particularly in Andhra and Telangana. Worse, there is 0% literacy among the DNTs girl children. Though the state and central governments have undertaken some measures for the education of DNTs, there is still a long way to go so far as the educational progress of the DNTs is concerned. The field study also reveals a very poor attendance and enrolment rate in DNTs settlement schools among the age group of 5-14 years. The Government schemes and programmes do not have any positive impact in the DNTs schools. There is high dropout rate among the DNTs children at the primary stage. The impact of poor attendance and high dropout rates of DNTs children is visible in low completion rates of their enrolment and retention at the elementary school level.

Besides, educational disparities are visible within each category of the DNTs. The enrolment ratios in the settlement schools are very poor. The school attendance rates of the DNTs children are very dismal. Therefore, a proper census data of the school participation of DNTs children in different states needs to be urgently carried out for determining the accurate literacy rate, educational progress, attainment and challenges, educational problems, school attendance of children in the age group of 5-14 years, the dropout rates, percentage of enrolment etc. These issues need to be brought to light to understand the stark reality of their education. Since they are often subjected to both physical and social exclusion the DNTs have recorded lower enrolment and achievement rates and higher dropout rates than the general population, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A study, that was conducted by the Regional Institute of Education, Mysore under the sponsorship of Educational Research Innovative Committee (ERIC, NCERT) in 2005 in five selected DNTs schools in four districts of Andhra Pradesh, reveals high rate of absenteeism among the enrolled DNTs children. Absenteeism is higher in grades 1 to 5. Very young children and those old enough to help with household work are less likely to attend school regularly. Seasonal migration in

search of job, non-residential teachers, sibling care, illiteracy of parents, labour work, contract work, child labour, psychological barriers, seasonal occupation are some of the specific problems of the tribal children in the DNTs settlements. Extreme poverty has adversely affected the education outcome of the DNTs community for generations.⁵

Educational Inequality among the DNTs

It is recognised that nomadic, semi-nomadic and DNTs in India are at the bottom of the educational and developmental pyramid. Their suffering is accentuated by the growing struggle for resources under the forces of globalisation and the many false promises of national and regional development made by government, and in the process they are sidelined and neglected. There is consensus among people that their situation is aggravated by the fact that governments do not try to understand their needs in education, infrastructure and political representation. They are far from receiving the benefits of development and social justice. Most of the DNTs work as labourers. They go to different places in search of jobs. Child labour practices are more common in these communities. So they continue to remain out of school. However, today, there is a growing demand and aspiration for

education among the DNTs tribes. The situation regarding school attendance, school completion and drop out rates in primary and middle school levels is unsatisfactory. There is also unevenness in educational participation levels due to the reason that many of the DNTs are not included in the list of Scheduled Tribes (Woddera, Dommara, Relli, Pamula, Boya and so on).⁶

Constraints to Educational Opportunities

Children of the DNTs differ in certain qualities from the students from urban areas. The special qualities of these children are: (i) s/he enjoys complete freedom/does not like restrictions, (ii) he does not take the opportunity himself but takes if provided, (iii) s/he is not a leader but a follower, (iv) s/he is a slow learner because of lack of opportunities, (v) s/he can also learn like others, (vi) s/he is disadvantaged because of lack of opportunities, (vii) s/he possess inferiority complex, (viii) s/he is not speaker of words but a doer of deeds; (ix) s/he heads only those which are useful to him/her, (x) independent but not under others' direction, (xi) very disciplined, (xii) more self-respecting, (xiii) very simple and comes to do anything if convinced, (xiv) opportunities are not given to them due to vested interests, (xv) education must be

need based, (xvi) education through productive activities, (xvii) needs vocation based education, (xviii) requires activities to draw out innate potentialities, (xix) lacks distributive justice, (xx) not lower IQs than others, (xxi) participates in physical activities, (xxii) likes to learn through imitation rather than instruction and (xxiii) very bold. The DNTs children are very clean, articulate, honest, united and good sportspersons. However, there is a psychological impact on the children's minds when parents are taken by the police and kept in remand or jails. There is also a psychological impact on these children, when the general public and school teachers abuse them (sometimes), as they come from the DNTs families/settlements. Often the DNTs children face a number of problems in their settlements such as frequent quarrels, abuse, and harassment both from the police and the public in general. The parents also use children for the preparation of illicit liquor. The children often accompany the parents to distant places for their nefarious activities. They are well versed in code language used by their parents. Generally children are involved in petty trade and poultry work.⁷

Schools

Each DNTs settlement has a school but no hostel. The DNTs schools are

not residential schools. Some of the DNTs schools are managed by the missionaries, for example Stuartpuram settlement is managed by the Salvation Army. This is meant to serve as an alternative to otherwise inferior mobile schools. However, the general feeling among the DNTs is that residential schools and hostels would imply isolation from their tradition, society and knowledge, because the DNTs children take up the profession of their parents from the age of 8-10 years, which ultimately leads to child labour. The hostels and the schools isolate the children from the other children in the schools and succeed in bringing the divide between DNTs children and other children from their society. Thus, the hostels and residential schools though viewed as a good thing by many, will result in a three-step alienation of these children. They will be distanced from the native children as well as their own kin groups and way of life. Parents hesitate to send their children, particularly girls, to these schools and hostels which further deprive them of the right to education. In the DNTs settlements, there are hardly any educated women. Most of the children in the settlements lack proper motivation to study. The current scenario is that the DNTs parents put their sons in hostels, and they prefer that they find secure government jobs. The girl children

are married off at an early age and drop out of schools. This is the situation prevailing in the DNTs villages.⁸

As far as school infrastructure is concerned, there are no proper school buildings in DNTs occupied areas. The existing schools are located in old buildings which have been constructed during the British period. Therefore, these schools do not attract the parents enough to send their wards to these schools. The condition is such that in one room, multiple classes are being held therefore, a few of them prefer to send children to neighbouring places/villages. Some of the DNTs schools operate with a single teacher, and teacher absenteeism in schools is rampant. The schools lack basic infrastructural facilities—no safe drinking water, no toilets, no electricity and no kitchen is available. Moreover, in some situations, teachers are transferred frequently. These schools do not have proper equipment such as furniture, blackboards and other teaching modules, learning kit/materials, etc. In addition, the teachers are not well-qualified and so teaching is also very poor. No proper housing facilities are provided to teachers who stay in the DNTs colonies. As a result of all these problems, non-tribal teachers do develop a negative notion of DNT children. Thus one may sum up that on account of the

frequent mobility of the family, anywhere for six months or a year, DNTs children rarely get an opportunity to attend formal education. There are virtually no educational institutions that have developed a system to cater to the educational needs of children on the move.⁹

School Quality

Provision of schools within easy access has been relatively poor for the DNTs children when compared to the general population. The settlement schools are located in remote and thickly forested areas. Due to the geographical distance, the children are unable to attend the schools. The denotified tribal families usually live in segregated habitations. Their residential patterns have an impact on the physical and social access to schools. Only elementary/primary schools are available in DNTs settlements. Taking this into account, there is a need to upgrade the schools up to secondary and higher secondary levels. The DNTs have to send their children more than 20 kms or in some cases they go to other village schools to pursue secondary and collegiate education. The schools located in the DNTs settlements in Andhra Pradesh rank at the bottom, in terms of quality, infrastructural facilities and human resources. The level of education among the DNTs

communities is dismally low. According to some of the DNTs communities, only 10 to 20 percent of their community members are only educated. Their dropout rate is very high due to the nature of occupation that is nomadic. Poor education is a big hurdle in exploiting new economic opportunities.¹⁰

Teachers

Keeping the DNTs children systematically out of schools through harassment means that there will not be any competition from the next generations of these communities for government jobs. The children of the DNTs are not welcome at the municipal schools of their 'settlement' areas. The DNTs children are harassed by children belonging to higher castes in public schools. At the same time, teachers also harass and abuse the DNTs children and do not care to address the problem, rather DNTs children are further victimised through harsh treatment from their teachers. It is also learnt that they are made to sit separately in the classrooms by the teachers, as a result of which a general consensus is drawn among the parents that it is better and safer to keep the children out of schools and train them in traditional skills to fend for themselves in future. Therefore, the children living in the 'settlement' areas are encouraged to engage in traditional occupations

with their parents, in an attempt to protect their children from such harassment at schools, which also means involving them in greater risk of vulnerability and social exclusion. Teachers, who are called to strike a balance between controlling the pupils and monitoring them to learn, here are perpetuating the process of exclusion by encouraging segregation among the students based on caste. It is also observed that teachers discourage DNTs children from mingling with children belonging to other communities. Furthermore, teachers demotivate and demoralise the DNTs children by dubbing them as slow learners, instead of attending to their educational needs.¹¹

Educational Schemes and Incentives

In the DNTs schools, scholarships and stipends are provided by the State government to support and encourage the children to continue and complete their education. The incentives earmarked for the DNTs schools are not properly distributed in the schools. The students do not receive their scholarships, uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, school grant, mid-day meals and other incentives in time. Even if the schools receive the incentives, the DNTs children are not able to get them from the school authorities. There is a great delay in dispatching scholarships. Sometimes, the government

scholarships never reach the DNTs children studying in remote areas.¹²

Language

It has been recognised that education is more effective when imparted in mother tongue at the primary level, by the community members or bilingual teachers. While this has been integrated in educational structure of the DNTs communities the quality of education and teacher motivation is so poor that most of the children do not even qualify for admission or are not encouraged to speak their home language at primary or secondary schools. Though the Government of Andhra Pradesh has prepared bilingual textbooks, posters, dictionaries, glossaries, kits, materials and bridge inventories in tribal languages they are hardly of any use for the teachers working in the schools in tribal settlements. There is an urgent need for the training of teachers who are working in the DNTs schools to encourage the children to speak their mother tongue. Also, teachers should learn children's language for effective communication in the classroom. The Constitutional provision of Article 350A also recognises the importance of the minority languages. Children must be educated in their home language (mother tongue) at least at the primary level. Loss of a language means the loss of a certain way of

knowing the world. Experiences of schooling of the DNTs children in Andhra Pradesh have revealed the displacement of Yerukulas, Yanadis, Sugalis, Boyas, Waddars, Dasaris and other DNTs tribes. Therefore, the government should take effective measures to introduce the mother tongue (Banjara, Yerukula, Yanadi, Boya, etc) in primary education in DNTs settlement (village) schools under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) under Article 29(1) and 350A of the Constitution of India and inclusion of Yerukula and Banjara tribal languages in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution. Similarly, other DNTs languages also need to be considered.¹³

Curriculum

DNTs children are imaginative participants in the process of defining their space, having the capacity to inhabit their own conceptual world whilst mediating and participating in that of adults. Which areas of the landscape/knowledge do the DNTs and their children attach meaning to, and how does their knowledge/skills relate to their own search for relaxation, play and excitement? Indeed the DNTs have rich folklore and art in their society. They take the central position in performing in their villages regularly. Storytelling, dances, puppetry, folk songs, music, community gathering—all these activities in

their society seem to contribute a lot to their children's fertile imagination and effective learning. After taking into consideration their culture specific curriculum this study hopes to ascertain the impact that restricted movements of many of the DNT communities could have a positive impact on their children's education, their physical and cultural well-being and natural aesthetics. This can certainly have a positive impact on their culture, creativity and transmission. This suggests a particular way of learning that is sensitive to the life conditions and situations in their colonies or villages. Integration of games, sports, music, cultural activities should be introduced in schools and in the school curriculum of DNT children. Virtually no value is attached to the sophisticated skills, knowledge systems and complex institutional structures of the DNTs which should be at the centre of every analysis of the continuous failure of education for DNTs. There is a virtual absence of focus in research on the nature of association between formal education and their traditional knowledge.¹⁴

The depth of knowledge the DNT people possess of their region, forest, flora and fauna and about their surrounding areas and thick forests is unmatched. The DNT communities have abundance of knowledge about the locally available resources,

herbs, medicinal plants, etc., however the local business communities extract medicinal herbs collected by these communities. Besides, children are talented and show acrobatic feats and exceptional skills in towns and markets, by performing their feats. Since they possess a variety of skills, the children derive their livelihood by organising cultural shows in public places. Many good sports persons, musicians, painters, dancers also can be found among the children of the DNT communities.¹⁵

Home, School and Community

Harmonious relationship between school, home and community plays a very important role in improving the educational levels among DNT communities. Home atmosphere forms an important variable influencing the child's educational achievement. The child needs encouragement and assistance from family members for coping up with the demands of schooling. Community support, on the other hand, goes a long way in helping the teachers to perform their duties. Community involvement is essential for enrolling the children of the community and taking interest in the functioning of the school. With community involvement, the teachers will be more alert and focussed in performing their duties. Parents' associations and Village

Education Committees (VECs) are the bodies that are expected to bridge the gap between school, parents and the village communities. Effective functioning of these linkages or further activating these linkages is urgently required. This becomes crucial, considering the unique problems faced by the denotified communities.¹⁶

Among the denotified communities, family life is frequently interrupted because of the culture of crime. Though very few families indulge in criminal activities, the stigma attached to the community is still haunting the denotified communities. Due to perceived lack of opportunities, parents do not have enthusiasm in enrolling their children in schools. Generally, the educated adults from denotified communities are discriminated against in employment. Because of economic compulsions, parents regularly depend upon children to assist them, sometimes even in illegal activities. Poverty and the attraction of making quick money drive them to crime. Male members in some families are on the move, both for legitimate and criminal activities. Police harassment of parents, deeply affects the psyche of children and hence adversely affects their studies. Children coming from disturbed families lack interest in studies, therefore the best possible solution to this problem is to move

or shift them to residential institutions. Denotified communities face several problems on social and economic fronts. Wherever the members go their past haunts them. Efforts have been made by missionaries and social reformers to address the plight of the communities. Little success has been achieved so far because social reforms alone cannot solve the problem, without providing them a sustainable economic rehabilitation. The community is divided even among themselves on economic grounds; those who are well off strive for better education for their children in private schools, others remain indifferent. By and large, villagers hardly take interest in school affairs, which has a massive impact on the children's future prosperity.¹⁷

The word settlements is a misnomer and therefore, there is a need to change the nomenclature, that is, to use the names of modern villages rather than terms like settlements. Thirty years back the villagers of denotified communities wished to have protection from the police and public. They are often harassed, humiliated and beaten by the police. Today in the DNT colonies English medium schools are preferred. It proves the fact that there is an ocean of difference in their living conditions between thirty years back, when reform work started, and the present day. In the

primary schools of denotified tribal settlements in Andhra Pradesh the students face many discriminating and psychological problems. The children of denotified communities cannot be compared with general populace. DNT students still face different types of discrimination in all places, because of the stigma of criminality, even though the DNT settlements are made free colonies. Still the public use the word 'settlement' for these colonies. The Tribal Welfare Department should rename these colonies after some patriots.¹⁸

Pertaining to the language of the DNTs, the children are familiar with the home code language used by the parents. If the medium of instruction in school is the same as mother tongue, it will be more advantageous for the students to converse in the same language with the teachers. Teaching in mother tongue, in a way, will reduce the communication gap between teachers and students to some extent. Besides, there is a need for the village community to take interest in children's education. The parents and village elders should attend the village committee meetings regularly and contribute to the development of schools, not only by giving time but also in cash. The village elders should persuade the Mandal Revenue Officers (MROs) and other educational functionaries of that area to attend some of these

meetings. With their involvement, there is a scope of reducing school dropout rate in the village, by keeping a check on all factors affecting the problem. Most of all, villagers should be made aware of the importance of education, including girl child education. Sometimes the children go to the fields with their parents, protect the siblings, rear pigs, goats, sheep, and milk animals. The parents and children should realise the fact that education will pave the way for their future. The school authorities should take interest in promoting the DNTs' social and cultural activities and festivities. There is also gender discrimination in the family, favouring the male members and discriminating against female children. Among the Yerukula community marriageable age for a girl is 17 years. But today child marriages are taking place in these areas, adversely affecting the educational attainment of the girl child. If the village elders understand and solve the problem, then there is a scope for curbing these social evils.¹⁹

Another important factor is lack of attentive parent/s. Children have their demands, their own emotions. Unless they are satisfied they cannot be their normal self. In broken homes or when the father is absent, it is very difficult for children to adjust and go to school regularly. Father's absences, ill treatment by police, ill-treating the womenfolk when they

are in remands are factors which affect the mind of the child. The atmosphere prevailing in the school is quite different from that of the home. The influence of broken homes on children's academic achievement is inevitable. The state of education in all the settlements is almost the same. All the settlements should have a pre-primary school with training facilities so as to enable the children to join the State run schools. As members of the denotified tribes, they would like to have jobs which give them immediate remuneration and relief. Employment in labour intensive industrial establishments should be created for them so that they are absorbed in large numbers. This will give them immense satisfaction and confidence. This will make parents realise the importance of the education of their children. If the parents get financial benefit, then they will not force their children to go to labour contract work, child labour, rearing of domestic animals, etc. Also, if the teachers are able to educate the denotified groups, then automatically children will explain to them the importance of eradicating the practice of child marriage. The *panchayat* decides what type of punishment is given to those people. Such type of incidents leave a permanent stamp on the minds of the students. To improve the education of the children of the DNTs, the whole atmosphere should

be changed and restructured. For this betterment, the public, the community, the parents, the teachers and the government should all work like a team and improve their situation. There should be a committee at the state level to improve every aspect of their life in so called 'settlements'. Government officials, representatives of the DNT families, researchers, and social workers should form the committee. The psychological and sociological problems of the DNT communities should be understood by one and all. Electronic media should also help these villages in such a way so as to enable them to become free citizens and improve their living conditions; only then will the schools come up to the expectations. Otherwise, the development of these DNTs will remain as it is even after six decades of Independence.²⁰

Even after 65 years of Independence, the rural masses in India particularly the DNT communities (to some extent in major towns and cities also) remain poor with regard to primary and secondary education. These communities are caught in the cobweb of development and transformation. Their villages are transformed into slums, and they continue to remain under privileged.²¹ The quality of education in their schools and colleges is substandard. The educational

facilities provided to them are very poor. Their children are living in the midst of dirt, sickness and unemployment.²² "We have heard that education brings development, but our children do not learn anything in the schools. We are living in poverty. We cannot afford to buy books and pay fees. Education has no benefit for our children. Education given in the schools has no connection with our day to day life. What kind of education our children are provided in the schools we do not know. Education does not bring development in our life", said some the inmates of the ex-settlements in Andhra Pradesh.²³

The government of India appointed several committees and commissions to suggest measures for the development of DNTs, since 1950s. (Dr.K.B.Antrolikar, Kaka Kalelkar, Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Mandal Commission etc). These committees recommended special educational facilities for the education of these sections of people. The facilities extended to the children of SCs/STs and OBCs should be extended to them also. But the implementation of the various committees' and commissions' recommendations was very little. DNTs children remained under privileged. The recommendations of these committees and commissions were totally ignored by successive

governments. Therefore, at least the current government should implement the recommendations suggested by various commissions' reports to improve education in all the areas wherever the DNT communities are inhabited.²⁴ It should be seen that within the next ten years, the educational standards of the DNT children should be brought on par with others by implementing the measures recommended by the various committees and commissions. Primary schools, secondary schools,

ashram residential schools should be provided in their localities including vocational training centres and more scholarship facilities. The directive principles of state policy enshrined in our constitution, with in a period of ten years with free and compulsory education for the children of DNTs should be the priority of the new government. The Right to Education of the DNT children should not remain a dream for these children.²⁵

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- ¹GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH. 1964. *The Tribes of Andhra Pradesh: A Monograph*. Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute, Hyderabad, pp. 1-20.
- ²RANI MIDATALA. 2009. *Problems of Tribal Education in India: Issues and Prospects*. p. 7. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- ³TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP. *Road To Freedom*. Report on Denotified Tribes, Nomadic Groups, Semi-Nomadic Groups. p. 6. New Delhi.
- ⁴SINGH, BIRINDRA PAL. 2008. December 20-26. Ex-criminal Tribes of Punjab. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. XLIII (51), p. 62.
- ⁵SIMHADRI, Y.C. 1979. *The Ex-criminal Tribes of India*. pp. 83-84. National Publishing House, New Delhi.
- ⁶GANDHI, MALLI. 2008. *Denotified Tribes: Dimensions of Change*. p. 257. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- ⁷RANI MIDATALA. 2009. *Problems of Tribal Education in India: Issues and Prospects*. p. 67. Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
- ⁸GANDHI, MALLI AND V. LALITHA. 2009. *Tribes under Stigma: Problems of Identity*. pp. 78-79. Serials Publications, New Delhi.
- ⁹GANDHI, MALLI. 2012. January-December. Education a Means for Development: India's Experience with Right to Education of Denotified Communities (with special reference to Andhra Pradesh). *Itihas*. Journal of the Andhra Pradesh

- State Archives and Research Institute. vol. XXXVI. Government of Andhra Pradesh. pp. 102-116.
- ¹⁰SINGH, BIRINDRA PAL. 2010. *Criminal Tribes of Punjab: A Socio-Anthropological Inquiry*. p. 110. Routledge, New Delhi.
- ¹¹RADHAKRISHNA, MEENA. 2008. October 4-10-26. Urban Denotified Tribes: Competing Identities, Contested Citizenship. Special Article. *Economic and Political Weekly*. vol. XLII (40), p. 7.
- ¹²EDITORIAL. 2008. October 4-10-26. Branded for Life. *Economic and Political Weekly*. vol. XLII (40), p. 6.
- ¹³There are several DNT communities in India that are broken up and spread over long distances but have survived as communities because they are bound together through the tradition of their oral language. The wealth and variety of their languages is enormous. However, it is sad but true that their languages and their literary works are neglected. Their languages, songs and stories heard from itinerant street singers and which are not being used by the members of these communities now. G.N.DEVY. 2006. *A Nomad Called Thief, Reflections on Adivasi Silence*. Orient Longman, Hyderabad.
- ¹⁴M.J.DUBNICK. *Educating Nomads: Narratives and the Future of Civic Education*. Retrieved from website www.newark.rutgers.edu/dubnick/contact.html.
- ¹⁵THE HINDU. June 10. 2008. Residents of Ekalavyanagar Launch Indefinite Dharna: They Demand a Permanent Place to Live with Basic Amenities. Karnataka Edition.
- ¹⁶GANDHI, MALLI. 2005. A Study of Factors Affecting the Education of Denotified Tribe Children in Settlement Schools of Andhra Pradesh. Unpublished ERIC Report. p. 89. NCERT, New Delhi.
- ¹⁷LALITHA, V. 1995. *The Making of Criminal Tribes: Patterns and Transition*. New Era Publication, Madras. pp. 178-179.
- ¹⁸IBID. 180.
- ¹⁹GANDHI, MALLI. 2012. April-June. Police Administration and Denotified Communities: A Human Rights Perspective. *Social Science in Perspective*. 4(2), pp. 127-128.
- ²⁰ANANTHAKRISHNAN M.V. 2005. *Educating Nomadic Children: An Experiment with the Convergence of Technologies*. TENCON 2005. Melbourne, Australia. November.
- ²¹D'SOUZA, DILIP. 2001. *Branded by Law, Looking at India's Denotified Tribes*. Penguin Books. New Delhi. pp. 70-71.
- ²²SUJATHA, K. 1987. *Education of the Forgotten Children of the Forests—A Case Study of Yennadi Tribe*. Konark Publishers, New Delhi.

- ²³Interview with Yerukulas in Stuartpuram, Sitanagaram and Lingala Ex-settlements in Andhra Pradesh. November, 2005.
- ²⁴ANTROLIKAR, K.B. 1950. *Dr. K. B. Antrolkar Committee Report 1950 (Report of the Ex-criminal Tribes Rehabilitation)*. November 1951. Government Central Press, Bombay.
- ²⁵BOKIL, MILIND. 2002. January 12. Denotified and Nomadic Tribes – A Perspective. *Economic and Political Weekly*. pp. 148.