INCLUSION THROUGH DIGITAL USAGE - AN ANALYSIS OF KATTUNAYAKKAN TRIBE IN THE NILGIRIES, TAMILNADU

Dr. Arivanandan.M

Assistant Professor,Department of Social Science

Tamil University,Thanjavur

Email: arivanandan.iitm@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

India is one of the largest tribal populated countries in the world after Africa. Tribes are categories into two major groups such as Primitive (Vulnerable) Tribal Groups (PTGs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). There are around 705 Tribal groups are living in India. Tribal population is mostly concentrated in the central belt of India and parts of the North-East. According to 2011 census of India the tribal population is constituted 8.6% in the total population of the country. They are differed among themselves in respect of language and linguistic traits and ecological settings. They are spread over the length and breadth of the country in the state like Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. Tribal society is characteristically distinct because of their culture, lifestyle, occupation and alienated from the mainstream. The tribes in India have been deprived of opportunities because of many factors. Among these education, economic and health status are significant factors for their development. All these are interconnected in the developmental aspect. Education is widely accepted essential tool for the attainment of the developmental goals and political consciousness, awareness of rights and duties among the people. The economy of the tribes is generally based on forests and sea. Tribal economy is act as small size and operation. But due to the shifting occupations from tradition to modern and global changes, they are unable to compete with the current situation and it leads to the tribal communities as 41% are living in below poverty line. The tribal community lags behind the national average on several health indicators, with women and children being the most vulnerable. Therefore in this condition application of ICTs particularly the usage of cell phone by tribal youth is integrated all the above developmental indicators and empower their life condition. In this platform, this research study focuses on accessibility of ICTs by the Kattunayakkan tribes which is one of the important tribal communities in Tamil nadu having a modest empowerment and how it has led to social inclusiveness of the community. This empirical research work was conducted in the Panthalur taluk of the Nilgiries district of Tamilnadu.

KEYWORDS: *Tribes, inclusion, empowerment, Digital, ICTs, Kattunayakkan*

INTRODUCTION

India is one of the largest tribal populated countries in the world after Africa. Tribes have termed variously as 'Aboriginals,' 'Adivasis,' 'Adivasi'. 'Adi' means oldest and 'vasi' means inhabitant is commonly used to designate them and also called as 'Forest tribes,' 'Hill Tribes,' and 'Primitive Tribes'. According to census 1931, the tribal population have termed as 'Primitive Tribes' in India. The 1941 census has mentioned first time the adjective 'tribes'. Today under the Constitution of India, the tribal population is scheduled and termed 'Scheduled Tribes'. The term Scheduled Tribes is recent origin which came into after the republication Constitution of India on January 26, 1950. According to the Anthropological Survey 2011, totally there are 4,635 communities found in India. Out of this 732 are under the 'tribal' or indigenous community. They are constituted 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (2011 Census). The following table indicates that the Scheduled Tribes Population in India.
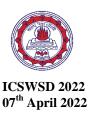
Sex	STs population (in crores)		Growth rate(inpercent)	Percentage of STs to total population
	2001	2011		
Person	08.43	10.43	23.70	8.6
Male	04.26	05.24	22.90	8.4
Female	04.17	05.19	24.40	8.8

Source: Primary Census Abstract, Census of India, 2013.

REGIONAL WISE POPULATION OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

Tribes are distributed all over the country except Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Puducherry, and Chandigarh. Nagaland, Chota Nagapur, Nilgiris Hills are example for densely populated points. Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat states are largest populated states in India. These states are having more than half the Scheduled Tribe population. Also the north-east India and central India constituted largest indigenous people. There was identical six fold classification on the basis of regional distribution of the tribal population. They are:

(i) **North-Eastern Region:** tribes like the Abor, Garo, Khasi, Mizo, Naga, and Mismi are living in the states such as Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya. They are mostly belong to the Mongolian racial stock

(ii) **Himalayan Region:** Lepcha and Rabha tribes mostly belong to a Mongolian racial group are living in the Sub-Himalayan regions like North Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh.

(iii) **Central India Region:** The older hills and Chota Nagpur Plateau, along the dividing lines between Peninsular India and the Indo-Gangetic basin live many tribal communities such as Bhumji, Gond, Ho, Oraon, Munda, Santhal lives in the states like Bihar, Orissa, Madhaya Pradesh and West Bengal and mostly they are belonging to Proto-Australaid racial stock.

(iv)**Western India Region:** the Bhil tribes racially belonging to the Proto- Ausraloid group lives in the states like Rajasthan, Maharastra, Gujarat, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

(v) **Southern India Region:** Chenchu, Kadar, Toda, Crumba, Irula, Paniya and Kattunayakkan tribes are living in the states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

(vi)**Island Regional:** Covering Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands live a number of small tribes like Andamanese and Onge.

PRIMITIVE TRIBAL GROUPS

Primitive Tribal Groups are Scheduled Tribes known for their declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural technology, primarily belonging to the hunting and gathering stage, and extreme backwardness. They were considered as a special category for support for the first time in 1979. There are 75 Primitive Tribal Groups spread over 15 states and union territories. The essential characteristics of these communities are primitive traits, geographical isolation, distinctive culture, and the shyness of contact with the community at large and economic backwardness. Tribal communities live in about 15% of the country areas, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development.

TRIBES IN TAMILNADU

Tamil Nadu, one of the major tribal populated states in the southern part of India. It has consisted of many important tribal groups. As per the census 2011 the total tribal population is 794697 (401068 males and 393629 females). It is 1.1 per cent of the total general population of the state. The literacy

rate of the tribes is 59 per cent. There are 83.08 per cent of the tribal survives in hilly/rural areas and 16.91 per cent of them live in urban (town) areas.

The tribal areas of Tamil Nadu can be broadly divided into two major geographical proportions such as the eastern coastal line and the mountainous regions of the north and west. The important hill ranges of Tamil Nadu are the Jawadhi hills and Yelagiri hills of the North Arcot district, the Kalrayan hills of South Arcot, the Pachamalai, Kollimalai and Yercadu ranges of Salem, the Anamalai of Coimbatore, the Sitteri hills of Dharmapuri, the Palani hills of Madurai and the Nilgiris hills.
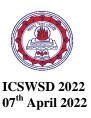
THE KATTUNAYAKKANS IN TAMILNADU

Kattunayakan is one of the important tribal communities in Tamilnadu. They believe in Hinduism and their language is mixture of all Dravidian languages. The main deity of the tribe is Lord Shiva and(jakkamma[Nayakkar])under the name of Bhairava. They also worship animals, birds, trees, rock hillocks, and snakes, along with the other Hindu deities. Kattunayakar are fond of music, songs, and dancing. The name Kattunayakan is derived from Kadu means forest and nayakan means King or leader. They believe that they are the chief community of the forest. They are also called Jenu Kuruba, Ten Kuruba, Ten Karumban, Venukoyyo, Sholanayakan and nayakkan

Kattunayakans live in very small single roomed mud hut thatched with leaves built in a row. Their house is called mana. The manas are covered by flattened bamboos and the roof with straw or grass. Till the recent years, many of them were lived in the open place in the day times and to sleep round a lighted fire at night. Many of their houses are built with the temporary purpose to make use of the natural resources available in the region, after which vacating the hut they move to another place where they also build another hut. Once they go into the forest, they return only after one or two weeks. In the past, bamboo inter-nodes and earthen pots were the chief house hold articles.

Now-a-days most of the Kattunayakan do hesitate to observe all the rituals and ceremonies in their strict sense as they are highly expensive. Kattunayakans' attitude towards education and modern changes is encouraging. Due to the introduction of tribal residential schools and special Ashrama Vidyalaya (Manjeri), their literacy and educational level are steadily increasing. Though they accept the modern facilities like cell phone, TV, radio, etc. however they are not willing to leave their natural habitat and forest.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Puja Mondal, (2015) study has mentioned that ICT is one of the economic development pillars to gain national competitive advantage. It can improves the quality of human life because it can be used as a learning and education media, the mass communication media in promoting and campaigning practical and important issues such as health and social. It provides wider knowledge and can help in gaining and accessing information. Now it has become the part of our daily life and we are living in the so-called digital world so ICT literacy and education in ICT has became more important in the new era of digital world.

Obijiofor Levi, Inayatullah Sohail, Stevenson Tony (2014) study revealed that there are serious barriers for the use of ICT such as education and socio-economic conditions, infrastructure support. Training and skill development, hierarchical social relations which are determined the access to the ICTs. They also observed that ICT has seen as the basic tool for survival, enhances efficiency, increase the ease, speed of social communication, time savvy, helps to solve the socio-economic problems and helps to monitor the crime in society, to make the society as a part of global trend, to promote the distance education, availability of the data, helps in productivity, innovations, entrepreneurship, job search by youth and essential for the knowledge era. However, there are some hampering factors like ignorance of the importance of the ICT, poor maintenance and repair culture, poor infrastructural support, lack of the support from the government, illiteracy, lack of basic skills, lack of science and technology Policy, high cost of ICTs, conservative attitudes, Lack of government policy and regulations, poverty and poor economic conditions, health and social welfare commitments, lack of basic education and computing skills.

Vinay kumar, Abhishek Bansal (2013) study observed that ICT has been used in many areas of administration for the implementation of various e-governance programs for the tribal communities. It has been a effective tool for enhancing people's livelihood through increased access to information relevant to their economy, healthcare, transport, distance learning and to uplift the basic livelihood of tribal population in India. In tribal areas there is need for an effective interface between the traditional and emerging information systems while introducing ICT in Tribal Areas.

Ajahana (2012) study mentioned that the positive and the negative aspects of ICT. Positive sides are access to information, improved access to education, new tools and new opportunities, fast communication, information management; security whereas negative sides are job loss, reduced personal interaction. Reduced Physical Activity, higher cost of Infrastructure. There is one more side effect of the technology among the people, difference between people who use the technology and who don't (digital divide).

Nath Pradosh (2014) mentioned about Information communication Technology for economic and social transformation. There are many questions related to implications of the ICT like underdevelopment, poverty, and other structural anomalies that contribute to marginalisation of an economy or a segment of an economy. The study also stated that the remoteness is one of the major hindrances of ICT accessing.
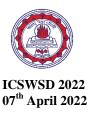
Mantu Das and Dipannita Guha(2019) have conducted a research study in Jhargram district of West Bengal, about the technological usages of tribal communities . The result of the study was that Santal, Lodha, Kora, Loharatribs have smallest number usage ICTs. The tribal people of Jhargram village could not enjoy the benefits much of the information technologies.

Herlin Jenoitha and B. Radha (2017) study discussed about the challenges faced by the tribal people in the village in Tamilnadu. The study has find out the reason for the ICT access and also to understand the real digital divide in the tribal village. The result shows that there was high level of digital divide among the tribal community and they did not use the ICTs much of their government programmes like online application and apply for certificates.

Pabitra Kumar Das et al. (2019) have conducted a study students belonging to the Scheduled Tribe community, on Career aspiration of students of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. This descriptive study was focused on their aspiration and its relation with social and environmental factors and the influence of ICT. Under this study career the concept is anticipated as a composite of educational aspiration as well as occupational aspiration. The study revealed that i) higher level of career aspiration of indigenous students; ii) economic and demographic status of their families' bearing social and economic disabilities; and iii) ICT playing a highly significant role in career aspiration of students. However, the findings in this study said that limitation of accessibility and opportunities (availability and access to ICT) for higher education, mistreatment and discriminatory outlook towards Dalit and tribal students, privatization of education, lack of guidance and awareness are factors playing causal roles behind this.

Kharmudai. A., et al. (2018) were conducted a study to observe the Khasi tribal farmer's attitude towards the ICT. There were sixty respondents randomly interviewed for the study. The result showed that all of the farmers owned mobile phones and television or radio. Also the study revealed that majority of the farmers (81.67%) have a moderate favourable attitude towards the ICT-Based extension services whereas, 18.33 % of the respondents have a more favourable attitude. This means that there is a scope for higher usage of ICTs in disseminating the agriculture related information and the tribal farmers need to be aware of the advantages of using the information and communication technologies.

The above studies were described that status of the ICTs in the tribal community and their influence in the social and economic enhancements. From the findings of these studies we can understand that the ICTs are not much benefited to the tribal community, due to lack of education, economic, and infrastructure facilities in the tribal areas. The studies had been conducted either in the larger community or small size of respondents with mixed population.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the economic improvement of the tribal community by the ICTs in the study area
- To examine the role of ICTs in educational enhancement and employment development of tribal youth in the study area
- To analyse the role of the ICTs in social inclusiveness of the kattunayakkan tribe
- To analyse the difficulties faced by the tribal youth in access of the ICTs

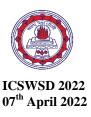## Process of the Data collection

The study has been adopted the descriptive research design. It has implemented the interview scheduled and observation, focus group discussion (FGD). These tools are very suitable for the field based data collection in particular the tribal studies. The self structured interview scheduled has prepared by the researcher. It has constructed based on self details, questions related to social, economic and ICTs accessibilities by the tribal community. The data was collected from the tribal youth based of the house hold method through the simple random technique. The data was collected from tribal youth in the age

group of 15 to 35 years. The total sample size of the research study was 65. The data was collected directly from tribal youth in the tribal settlement such as Naicherry, Muttimulla, and Manalkolli of the Pandalur taluk of the Nelgries District.

Findings of the study

The following are some of the major findings of the study. The study has focused on the kattunayakkan youth and usage information technologies for their inclusiveness of the society. These findings are described about the current status of the usage of cell phone and internet for their educational and economic development. The age groups of the respondents are above 15 to below 35 years therefore they are either studying or working as coolies in the same location. In these settlements, even the educated youth are also working as coolies, they are not interested to go out of
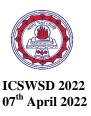
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their settlements. The youth in the study area is have good relationship with other community people, this will help to get employment for them, at same time apart from the employment purposes they do not have any relation with other communities.

The following are research related findings:

- There are 70.3 percentages of the respondents are having educational qualification as 6th - 10th standard. 17.8 percentages of the respondents are studied Higher secondary level. One percentage of the respondent has pursuing degree programme.

- There are huge majority 97 percentages of the respondents are accessing the cell phone for their communication purposes. The majority 58.4 percentages of the respondents are accessing Television. Interestingly many of the respondent's homes did not having electricity facilities, however they are charging the cell phone from their neighbors homes. Since they have a few contact numbers from other community people. Majority of them are having less than 5 contact numbers in their cell phones`

- The vast majority 96 percentages of the respondents are watching cinema, 42.3 percentages of respondents are watching serial drama programme however, 25.8 percentages of the respondents watching News programmes. At the same a few 3.1 percentages of them are watching world news in Television.

- The majority 59.4 percentages of the respondents are having internet facilities in their cell phone.

- The huge majority 75.2 percentages of the respondents said that the cell phone is helping for their communication

- The majority 60.3 percentages of the respondents are accessing Whatsapp for their communication and 39.6 percentages of the respondents are accessing Face book.

- There are 19.8 percentages of the respondents are having laptop in their home, however, 13.9 percentages of the respondents are only use the laptop in the study population.

- Majority 65.3 percentages of the respondents said that the cell phone is helping to improve their business and economic improvement

- The respondents are not aware about the ticket booking through internet. Since some are educated up to degree level. Even though they are not aware about ticket booking.

- The majority 80.2 percentages of the respondent's opinion is that the ICTs are not helping to improve education. There are many factors influencing in this findings like lack of awareness on ICTs and education, lack of infrastructure facilities, lack of adequate income to purchase the ICT gadgets, lack of motivation form the family and society

- 25.7 percentages of the respondents are encouraging women to use the cell phone.

- 49.5 percentages of the respondents are communicated with their friends through whatsapp.

- 58.4 percentages of the respondent's opinion cell phone create better relation with other community people.

  The following are some general observations on social and personal life style of the youth in the study area: Cell phone is a significant part of their life almost all the youths are having the cell phone whether it is useful or not for them.

- The kattunayakkan tribal youth are always watching movies and songs in cell phone
- They are spending some considerable amount of their wages for the cell phone
- Majority of the time they are watching unnecessary websites only, they are not interested to make income through the information technology. Their understanding on cell phone is for making enjoyment in their life.
- The young girls are interested to study within their jurisdiction not far away locations.
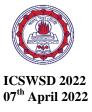
SUGGESTIONS

- Provide training to the tribal youth on accessibility internet, cell phone in proper manner.
- Create awareness on the actual benefits of the ICTs and internet to the students
- Find out the educated and talented tribal youth and provide them special skill development trainings through ICTs
- Provide adequate network facilities in the tribal areas, setting up the internet towers and cable lines
- Create awareness to the tribal youth to use ICTs for their economic development and well being
- Create awareness on health and hygienic life through digital media
- Government may be setting up the common service centres in the tribal areas.

CONCLUSION

It is a fact that the information and communication technologies are playing an immense role in the development arena. ICTs have penetrated every nook and corner of the world. However still there are people those who are not tasted the real benefits of ICTs. Therefore the digital divide is major developmental issues in the world particularly in the developing nations. According to this study among the various kinds of ICTs the cell phone and Television have been provided many advantages to the Kattunayakkan tribal in the Neelgries areas. There are huge majority 97 percentages of the respondents of the study are accessing the cell phone for their communication purposes and 58.4 percentages of are accessing Television. Interestingly many of the respondent's homes did not having electricity facilities, however they are charging the cell phone from their neighbors homes. Therefore cell phone is part of their life almost all the youths are having the cell phone whether it is

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useful or not for them. The cell phone is helping to improve their business and economic improvement. Therefore, as the conclusion there is a start up for the social and economic inclusion but miles to go to reach the real benefits of the ICTs by the tribal community. There is need for holistic approach from government, NGOs and tribal community for better and flourish development of the life of the tribal community through ICTs.

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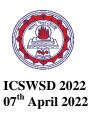
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