ROLE OF MEDIA IN TRIBAL AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT  
- A STUDY OF KHAMMAM DISTRICT AGENCY TRIBES

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ABSTRACT

India is one of the largest agriculture based economies remained closed until the early 1990s. The agriculture sector has been undergoing economic reforms since the early 1990s in the move of liberalize the economy to benefit from globalization. By 1991, there was growing awareness that the inward looking import substitution and overhauled exchange rate policy coupled with various domestic policies pursued during the past few decades’. Approximately 25,000 tribal families are shifting practicing cultivation. Agriculture has been the traditional occupation for a vast majority of tribals. Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime minister of India, laid down the approach of development scheduled tribes during the times of generous of the community. In the year 1969, 24 tribal development blocks were created and various economic support schemes were implemented by Government and sanctioned Girijan development agency with focus on implementation of agriculture and allied activities with funds received from Ministry of agriculture Government of India. The Government and Non government has implemented various policies for agricultural growth through Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA). The Media plays significant role in transforming the various development activities and dissemination of information by the Government for the tribal development. Media can at as a social agent for social change and somehow they act as mediators to the tribes and providers of social and economic supporters. The present study deals with the tribal development, agriculture role of media various policies implemented by the Government of India, Andhra Pradesh and Khammam district of tribal welfare Development Agencies in order to improve the quality and quantity of agriculture productivity and to make the tribal people aware from these activities and how the role of media in disseminating the information to tribal people. This is descriptive study of tribal areas of Khammam district in Andhra Pradesh state.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the cultivation of land related activity includes Agriculture production, animals, and other products used to sustain life. Agriculture is playing pivotal role in the rise of sedentary human civilization. This Agriculture is carried out in various methods in different places. This differ from place to place in some places farmers using new technological agriculture equipments and in some places farmers are still using traditional methods.
Agriculture is the backbone of the national economy. It had been pretended that agriculture is the foremost priority in the development agenda, but investment in agriculture and rural development is still lagging behind. One of those is tribal area, where the people are illiterates and they are living away from the main streams society. They are not connected with other areas people. For the development of tribes Government established Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) has the overall responsibility of bringing about the development of the tribals area. ITDA helps tribals in distribution of High Yield Variety seeds, providing modern agriculture equipments on subsidy and it also giving education in Horticulture, animal husbandry, minor irrigation, sericulture and Fisheries. Any schemes provided by ITDA reach the people by better communication through the media.

There are different types of media like print media, electronic media, image media, folk media, and wordings. Any way Print media cannot reach the tribals because they live in inaccessible areas and they are illiterates, but electronic media reaching. With a good and ground knowledge about the agriculture and farming communities, a journalist can act like a catalyst in the field of agricultural development. I would say their essential role is as a catalyst, to facilitate a link between farmers and scientific information. This information is available but it does not circulate. Why? Because the media does not know that this information exists and the farmers don't have the communication tools to access it. Present paper deals with the Role of Media in Tribal Agriculture Development.

Majunder (1987) noticed that the Garos (a hilly tribal group) have now become a part of the modernized world society. In technological development they took a great leap from shifting cultivation, but it was pre modernization achievement and till now they have been refusing to accept any more advanced technology in agriculture through attempts have been made through various governmental agencies to modernize their agriculture. But, in other aspects they are deep inside modern technological development, their dresses now come from highly developed textile mills. Their ground and pottery containers have almost totally been replaced by iron and aluminum ware utensils produced by highly developed technology. Same thing is observed in Khammam District tribes. We can see change in their dress style food habits as mentioned above. But tribes of some agencies in Khammam District adopting to modern technology in Agriculture and they started producing commercial crops. Best example is Pusukunta Village (Dammapeta mandal) All this is possible with the proper communication.

Sangle and Kulkami have attempted to study the extent of technological gap in tribal farming and to determine the extent which the factors like situational, personal, and socio-psychological and communication can help in the prediction of technological gap on tribal farms.

Mass media do not involve the individual directly. They bring changes largely in the psychological domain. They capture the audience by changing their opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge and value systems. Psychological changes are considered to be more effective as compared to the change which is introduced directly into the social structure by means of law and government policies to which individuals are forced to adjust.

Purushothaman C, Kavaskar M, Reddy YA and Kanagasabapathi K says that Radio, Television has been acclaimed to be the most effective media for diffusing the scientific knowledge to the
masses. In a country like India, where literacy level is low, the choice of communication media is of vital importance. In this regard the television and radio are significant, as they transfer modern agricultural technology to literate and illiterate farmers alike even in interior areas, within short time. In India farm and home broadcast with agricultural thrust were introduced in 1966, to enlighten farmers on the use of various technologies to boost agricultural development. At present, there are about 50 such radio units all over the country. With the main stream of Indian population engaged actively in agriculture, television could serve as a suitable medium. For the tribal farmers can easily understand the operations, technology and instruction through television.

The effectiveness of the mass communication depends on the type and kind of audience, image of development bureaucracy, and the interpretation of media practitioners which affect the interpretation of communication and its persuasive efficacy. Wilbur Schramm was one of the first to recognize that communication could play an important role in the national development of the Third World Countries. He believed that mass media could better the lives of people by supplementing the information resources and exposing people for learning opportunities. Same is applicable to tribes that mass media will play important role in tribal development in agency areas.

**PROFILE OF THE KHAMMAM DISTRICT**

Khammam district lies between $16^\circ 45' 0"$ and $18^\circ 36' 0"$ north latitudes and between $79^\circ 47' 0"$ and $80^\circ 47' 0"$ east latitudes. It covers an area of 16,029 Sq.Kms. The district is bounded by Chattisgarh and Orissa on the north, Krishna district on the south, west Godavari and East Godavari districts on the east and Nalgonda and Warangal districts on the west. As such, the district is adjoined with neighboring states and Telangana region as it was in Warangal district previously apart from the impact of the river Godavari which flows through large part of the district is immense.

There are twenty five tribal groups living in the district. Their population according to 2001 census is 6.83 lakhs of which 3.44 lakhs are men and remaining 3.39 lakhs women. The district occupies 1st position in its tribal population among tribal inhabited districts of Andhra Pradesh in the state.

The tribe wise population of the district is given below in the table.

**THE TRIBAL POPULATION OF KHAMMAM DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Sub Tribe</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Koya</td>
<td>359582</td>
<td>52.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lambada(banjara,Sugali)</td>
<td>271373</td>
<td>39.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gond-naikpod</td>
<td>16203</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tribe</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yerukala</td>
<td>13328</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nayak</td>
<td>11869</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Konda reddy</td>
<td>7252</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yanadi</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Valmiki</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kammara, Chenchu, Kondakapu</td>
<td>1643</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>682617</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Basic statistics on scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh

Out of 25 tribes in the district, the koyas are numerically predominant tribal group with 52.68 percent followed by Lambadas 39.76 percent, Gonds/Naikapodu 2.37 percent, Yerukala 1.96 percent, Nayak 1.74 percent, Konda reddi 1.06 and remaining nineteen tribal sub groups constitute 0.43 percent.

The sub tribe Konda reddi was identified as primitive tribal Group are found living in 66 villages of Bhadrachalam and Palvoncha revenue divisions.

The District is divided into three Physiologic regions namely:

- Thick forest region of Bhadrachalam, Burgampahad and Manugur.
- Plain region of Khammam, Madhira, Thirumalayapalam, Sathupalli and Aswaraopet areas
- Mineral deposit region of Kothagudem and Yellandu area

Agriculture is predominant with 75 percent population engaged in it. Paddy, Cotton, Maize, Chillies corps are raised in the district. It has 47.5 percent forest area

**AREA OF STUDY**

The district has 46 revenue mandals among them 31 mandals 904 villages (29 mandals fully and 2 mandals partially) covered under Tribal sub plan (TSP) area and 3 mandals 14 villages are covered under Modified area Development agency (MADA).
MANDALS COVERED UNDER TRIBAL SUB-PLAN(TSP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Divisions</th>
<th>Mandals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhadrachalam</td>
<td>Bhadrachalam, Dummugudem, Charla, vankatapuram, Kunavaram, Wajedu, Chinthoor, V.R puram.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palvoncha</td>
<td>Ashwaraopeta, Dammmapeta, Mulakalpalli, Kukkunooru, Velerupadu, Paloncha, Ashwapuram, Manuguru, Pinabaka, Burgampadu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kothagudem</td>
<td>Kothagudem, Bayyaram, Yellandu, Tekulapalli, Garla, Chandrugonda, Julurupadu, Enkurku, Gundala, Kamepalli, singareni.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sathupalli, penuballi Mandals from Khammam are partially covered under Tribal sub plan. Tribal’s have adopted Diverse agriculture practices with their time tested indigenous Knowledge’s and technologies and have integrated several related world view practices. In the Khammam area there are mainly three types of agriculture they are

1. Shifting cultivation (Podu)
2. Terrace cultivation
3. Plain land agriculture (pallam/ metta)

The Government has established ITDA in the district in the year 1975 to implement the developmental Schemes pertaining to tribals with head quarters at Khammam. Later, it was shifted to Palvoncha on 17th December 1979 and again shifted to Bhadrachalam on 9th February, 1993 in order to become nearer to the tribal habitations for speedy implementation of programs. Earlier Tribals are basically dependent used to do shifting cultivation. With the intervention of the ITDA, settled agriculture has become of the order of the day, with more and more tribals coming down for settled agriculture using new varieties of seeds and agriculture implements. ITDA activities include distribution of new variety of seeds, agriculture implements, transfer of modern Agricultural technology, packages, and enlightening the people on new crops and cropping patterns. The agriculture wing of the ITDA plans, implements, and monitors the development of agriculture in the land owned by the tribals of the forest area.

The Horticulture Wing looks after the development of Horticulture and Encourages the Tribals to bring their wasteland, degraded land etc. under horticulture crops like Cashew, Mango, etc. The tribals are encouraged to take-up improved varieties and are taught grafting and modern methods of horticulture to improve the productivity and to bring more and more land under useful cultivation.
The Minor Irrigation Wing of the ITDA is responsible for taking up construction of minor irrigation tanks, Bore wells, check dams, community irrigation wells. Electric Motors, Oil Engines are supplied to the tribal beneficiaries for irrigating their land using water from small rivulets and wells. They also develop lift irrigation schemes by taking water from the perennial, water sources. Godavari river which flows through the district and also from the various irrigation bore wells which are dug throughout the district, taking in to consideration the ground water availability. The ITDA bears the cost for extending electric lines for energisation of the motors meant for lift irrigation schemes as well as for the wells.

The Animal husbandry section of the ITDA ensures the supply of strong Plough Bullocks for ploughing the lands, Milch Animals like Cows and Buffaloes for milk production for domestic consumption as well as sale, distribution of new and improved varieties of poultry, sheep units etc.

The Sericulture wing helps tribals to take up rising of mulberry crops and rearing of cocoons. Since lot of forest land with T.Arjuna trees is available, this wing encourages tasar cultivation in a big way.

The Girijan Co-operative Corporation (GCC), for which the Project Officer is one of the Executive Directors, is responsible for the supply of daily requirements to the tribals in the interior areas at nominal rates, for the purchase of various non-timber minor forest products which are collected by the tribals, for distribution of loans - short term and Long term credit loans - to the tribal farmers for rising of the crops and for supply of motors etc., The GCC has a monopoly of the purchase of the minor produce from the forest. The shandy inspectors of the GCC are present in local markets to ensure that the poor tribals are not cheated by the non tribals. They ensure the correct price and Weighment of the produce collected.

The GCC also distributes daily requirements like rice, dal and other essential commodities at the interior village points and they are running fair price shops to help in the public distribution system of the Government.

The TRICOR wing of the ITDA gives margin money to the tribals at very low rate of the interest and help the beneficiaries to purchase modern agriculture implements, tractors, electric motors and auto-rickshaws etc. and for starting small scale industries. Most (80%) of the tribal groups live in inaccessible mountain valleys, hilltops and in plain forest areas with diverse life style and eco natured practices based on their beliefs in nature, world-views and indigenous knowledge. The tribal economy is mostly agro forest based which is a subsistence type of economy. While agriculture and animal husbandry are the major economic bases for land owning families, and animal husbandry and the collection of minor forest products are the major income source for marginalized and landless families of the tribals.

People of this area illiterates they don’t have relations with other area people. Earlier there was no development, but the intervention of ITDA and government and schemes and with a proper media communication slowly we can observe a playing an important role for development of tribals.
In every constituency there are no such large irrigation projects, even though there is a development in agriculture.

**KHAMMAM DISTRICT OPERATIONAL HOLDINGS AND AREA OPERATED BY SCHEDULE TRIBES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>Area ( Hect )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marginal (up to 1.0 Hect)</td>
<td>69191</td>
<td>34261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (1.0-2.0 Hect)</td>
<td>32633</td>
<td>46095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi medium (2.0-4.0 Hect)</td>
<td>21850</td>
<td>57743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (4.0-10.0 Hect)</td>
<td>7483</td>
<td>40326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large(Upto 10.0 Hect and above)</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>5948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>131595</td>
<td>184373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Basic statistics on scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh-2001

Above information is according to 2001 census. After forest Right act came into picture in 2006 tribals got rights on forest and Government issued pattas for 5 acres. Today most of the tribes owning minimum 5 acres land. For Example Pusuguppa (charla mandal), Karkagudem (Pinapaka), Sayanapalli (Gundala), Komaramar (yellandu) purely TSP areas tribal people owning lands but no proper pattas unable to agriculture they faced harassments from forest officers. But after Forest Right act came into picture they got rights on land now they are happily cultivating their lands. There by cultivating land increased by many folds by now.

**DATA OF SCHEDULE TRIBE WORKERS ACTIVITY WISE STATUS IN KHAMMAM DISTRICT AS PER 1991 AND 2001 CENSUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cultivators</th>
<th>Agriculture Laborers</th>
<th>Manufacturing house holds</th>
<th>Total main workers</th>
<th>Total marginal workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>112341</td>
<td>148975</td>
<td>3071</td>
<td>282801</td>
<td>20562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>120521</td>
<td>142954</td>
<td>3967</td>
<td>298627</td>
<td>79551</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Basic statistics on scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh-2001

Above information is according to 2001 census. After getting awareness of 1/70 act by mass media. Most of the Agricultural labors became land owners.
Rudraksha palli village (Sattupalli mandal) is one example. Before the act came into picture these tribal people are working as agriculture labours under non tribals and learned modern methods of agriculture while working with them. After this acts came into picture they took their lands and able to cultivate all types of crops including commercial crops and became Land owners.

**ROLE OF MEDIA**

Any development programme implemented by Government to reach people by means of better communication. In this context electronic media is playing important role, especially Radios and Television. It is creating awareness to tribal farmers and changing social behaviors in adopting new technology in agriculture, and also which crops have to be grown in which season, which soil and what pesticide and fertilizers to be used.

As these people are innocent and illiterates some brokers are trying to sell them fake seeds, pesticides and fertilizers to tribal’s. Media can develop the awareness about these things. but these incidents media bringing them into light and awaking people. Apart from this media is helping introducing new variety of seeds. For example in 1990s Khammam District agency tribes cultivated cotton crops, here media played important role in bringing awareness of cotton crop cultivation and pesticides and also marketing. Now this commercial cotton crop is cultivated all over the Khammam district agency tribes copiously. After the lot of efforts they finally able to cultivate some food grains but they are not getting reasonable prices while selling them in markets. Some mediators are cheating them. For these ITDA provided shandy Inspectors but still some people not aware of these things.

Apart from this media is providing information about weather. In the time of natural disaster media is playing key role in bringing them to officials and trying them to get exgratia.

Agriculture is primitive, infant mortality rates are high and transportation and communication facilities are poor. The purpose of Jhabua development communication project is to experiment with the utilization of an interactive satellite-based broadcasting network to support development and education in remote, rural areas of India. Some 150 direct-reception systems (a satellite dish, Television sets, VCR’s and other equipment) have been installed in several villages of Jhabua, which receive television broadcasts for two hours every evening from DECU’s (Development and Educational communication unit) Ahmadabad studio, unlinked through satellite. In addition, 12 talkback terminals have been installed in each of the block headquarters, provide feedback, and report on progress.

The evening’s television broadcasts on topic such as health, education, rainfall watershed management, agriculture, natural forestry, local governance and marketing information are designed to be entertaining and educational. The programs are made with the active participation of the local people of Jhabua. In the afternoons, interactive training programs are conducted with a variety of village functionaries like teachers, anganwadi workers, hand pump mechanics and local panchayat members.
In the same way ITDA provided Television DTH connection and DVD Player sets for every hilltop area. Using this they are teaching the students and the evening times they are creating awareness in adults by showing agricultural programs, news and other entertainment programs. But there are some problems like programs telecasted in these channels are not designed for tribal people and language. In this context if ITDA starts a local Television channel for agency tribes like JDCP (Jhabua Development Communications Project) it will be even more helpful for tribes for their development in all angles.

Dammaveta mandal Ankampalem Grama panchayathi Pusukunta village is the hill top areas rehabilitation centre. All these people belongs to Kondareddi tribes and illiterates. It is located 12 Kms away from Grampanchayathi Headquarters, which is in thick forest area and till date there is no roads for transportation. 20 years ago ITDA moved Kondareddis tribes from Hill top areas to forest areas they provided them food grains. Along with this ITDA People brought awareness in how to cultivate food grains after that they learned so many methods of cultivation by visiting the plane areas, communication through folk media, image media at shandy markets, mouth to mouth communications and jataras. Now they are cultivating all commercial crops like Tobacco, Cotton, chilies. Today they are not less than any other plain area people in agriculture. In this village 25 families are living in that 10 members having Television with DTH connection, 7 members having radios and 8 members having both technologies.

SUGGESTIONS

ITDA should provide training for tribes in collecting and preserving forest goods.

- Training In making leaf plates and making house decorating Items with bamboo’s and jute where the raw material available from forests.
- Providing them direct markets with out mediators helps them a lot.
- If ITDA starts Community Radios and local Television channel and provides information about agriculture for the tribes in their own language.
- ITDA has to increase the subsidies and has to take initiative to train them in cultivation of commercial crops.
- ITDA should start residential school for tribal students at their villages.
- Government should develop the roads for better transportation for agriculture development.
- ITDA should develop the irrigation facilities for agriculture.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that agriculture is back on the development of tribal areas. But and the rhetoric from governments worldwide, investment in agriculture and rural development is still lagging.
Communication for agriculture is also not seen as a major priority at either national or international level and the role of the media as an effective player in agricultural and rural development is undervalued. For the development of tribal areas the Government should invest on communication, transport, health, education and infrastructure.

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