

A STUDY ON CHALLENGES FACED BY GOVERNMENT AND NGOs IN IMPARTING BASIC EDUCATION AND REDUCING CHILD LABOUR IN NARIKURAWAR COMMUNITY

Thangamuthu.I

Reg. Number : 20111281031002

Ph.D. Research scholar

Department of Economics & Research Centre St.Xavier's college (Autonomous),
Palayamkottai - 627002, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli -
627012, Tamil Nadu, India.

Dr.Goldagrace Duraisingh

Research supervisor

Assistant Professor Department of Economics & Research Centre St.Xavier's college
(Autonomous), Palayamkottai - 627002, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University,
Tirunelveli - 627012, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

In this article, basic education for child labourers and the challenges faced by the government and NGO's in reducing child labourers and their life history, employment, their backwardness in education, social status, etc. Even after all these efforts, the problem that hinders their educational development should be recognized and gradually reduced.

Key words : Narikurawar, child labour, education, ornaments, SCAD, NCLP, Project Spark.

Introduction

Around 400 years ago Narikuravar believed to have migrated from the states of Rajasthan,Gujarat and Maharashtra to South India They were the nomadic group of people so they keep migrating from one place to another for their livelihood. Their mother tongue is Vagriboli. It is a spoken language.

Occupation

The Hunting was their original occupation of this people they were forced to take up other alternatives to survive as hunting was prohibited. But they never give up hunting. They follow Hindu religion , beliefs and customs. Their occupation is related to Hindu temples and festivals like making ornaments out of beads. They sell ornaments made out of beads which is their daily business. In order sell these ornaments they keep migrating to find a market for their beads. They are trading at the local level as street vendors. During festive seasons they move in groups to the nearby areas and even to states like Kerala sell beaded ornaments. Apart from beaded ornaments they also sell black and white holy threads, pendants with Hindu gods and goddesses pictures and fancy items. They sell these items mostly during festival seasons in Mandakkadu –“Devi” Temple, Tiruvandrum–“Attrankarai Amman” Temple, Sabarimala–“Ayyapan” Temple, Kulasekarapatnam – “Mutharamman” Temple,

Kanyakumari temple, Tiruchendur- “Murugan temple” etc. All these places are associated with Hindu temples and festivals. They sell their artifacts in the festival at Lady of Snow church, a Roman catholic church at Tuticorin. During “Karthikai” a Tamil month the Narikuravars go to Sabarimala Ayyappa Temple in the Kerela state for three months for their business. They also go there every month during the opening of the gate festival “Nadai Thirappu.” They go to Kulasekarapatnam Muththaramman temple festival during the Tamil month of “Aadi,” and stay there for three months. In “Vaikasi” for “Visagam” festival they go to Tiruchendur and stay there for 10-15 days. They also stay in Mandakkadu Bagavathy Amman temple for three to four weeks.

In the corridor of the bus stand at Tirunelveli junction nearly twenty five Narikuravar ladies are sitting and sell their artifacts to the passengers every day. They also sell their hunting products and honey. They sell bead malas, needle, kavittai, plastic cars, combs, “kilukiluppai”, purse, honey, “Punuku”, combs, mirror, ear rings, hair clips etc. They also sell items like nail polish, combs, bangles, mirrors, ribbons, hairpins, key chains, naphthalene balls, safety pins, sandal balls, “bindi”, dolls, black and yellow holy threads etc. Some of them sell oil extracts made out of the fats of peacock and rat – snake. They sell them as pain reliever medicines. They sell egg like stones in black and white colour as ritual items for Hindu gods. Now a day’s Tattooing has become their another important business activity.

Methodology

The study is focused on qualitative research. Face to face interview was conducted with NCLP Teacher, SCAD staff and Narikurawar people.

Community

The Narikurawar community lives in groups and their communal bond is thick and strong. They do not compromise in changing their inherent values as they never like to change their way of life, environment, searching food and migrant life. They are happy in leading simple life. They don’t bother about future. They keep roaming without bothering about the hot sun or cold rain for their survival. They want to preserve their identities and cultural practices so they distance themselves from other people. They want to stay away to protect their community so they spend their time happily, without mingling with others.

The Child marriages are still prevalent in this community. They conduct marriage function at night as the government officials warn to punish them. They value their own system so much that if officials identifies such marriage and warns them the community uniformly will come in support and say they it’s not marriage just a ritual. They are strict in following their religious rituals. They get their daughters married at an early age with in their community boys to prevent inter caste marriage. Within their community the boys and girls can choose their partners own.

Due to their nomadic nature children accompany adults, which deprives the with opportunity to attend school.

The Social Change And Development (SCAD), the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) at Cheranmahadevi identified the problems of this community and began to work for them. The authorities of the government in Tirunelveli purchased lands from the private parties and allotted it as a colony for this community at Pettai. This colony was created in 2004, with the combined effort of SCAD as well as the government

SCAD's role in education and awareness creating in the Narikurawar community

The SCAD is running a school at Pettai exclusively for Narikuravar children which was started 30 years ago . Once schooling is completed till fifth they are shifted from Pettai to Cheranmahadevi . Some children continue their secondary education in the nearby schools at Pettai. Very few children are able to complete tenth standard in school. The 1300 children have completed the primary education through SCAD.. Two boy are studying in college. In Pettai colony only one girl reached tenth standard but she did not complete that course.

Children accompany the adults wherever they go due to which most of them are dropouts in the earlier classes itself. The Boys and girls of Narikuravar community are encouraged to stay in the hostel run by SCAD at Cheranmahadevi called “ Anbu Illam”. But parents are unhappy to allow their children to stay at hostel. Even though SCAD institution has guaranteed their safety and welfare but the parents unwillingly allow their children to stay in hostel. Due to their unwillingness it does not last long duration ending in dropout.

Apart from running a school for Narikuravar community SCAD has formed Self help group for womens, arranges health camp with co- ordination of health department, provide support during covid and flood and giving monthly old age pension to elderly people. The Narikurawar community had no vendor card to sell their product and had no two wheeler license. SCAD took efforts to get these cards from concern department. SCAD group is rendering all sort of assistance to get financial support from the government. This community people never think of savings. They spend all the money earned in few days. They spend their income for various purpose like eating snacks, consuming liquor. The SCAD formed women into Self help group and they started saving bank and got linkages. They used to live in tent like structure. SCAD supported has supported 86 families to build permanent houses. Many people constructed permanent houses on their own.

NCLP role in education and awareness creating in the Narikurawar community

NCLP through SCAD was running a special school for children aged between 9- 14 years. There were two special school at Pettai. One school was started in the year 2010 and running till 2020 & another school was started in the year 2016 and was running till 2022. In this school basic education was given and along with this vocational training was provided to these children like handicrafts, basket making etc. They also arranged for vocational training for parents in making soap, pheyngols etc. This special school used to provide mid day meal, monthly stipend to students, conduct checkup camp, free uniforms and learning material to

students. This school customized syllabus was taught and more emphasis was laid on making these students read, write and speak.

Apart from this NCLP through Project Spark- Inspire and Ignite under supervision of District Collector tried to motivate these children and make them to continue their higher education by making them meet higher officials and spend whole day with them. Sakthi world peace award nominee, a student from Narikuravar community from Kanchipuram district created a awareness programme for importance of education on 6.2.2018 due to which more than 25 children were admitted in regular school . On 9.3.2018 children from this special school attended the programme of Thiru. Naresh I.R.S Joint commissioner, customs and central excise. Through this programme they were motivated for central government posts.

Project spark and NCLP inspired students of this community due to which 6 students appeared for X std examination first time and five passed it. Out of this four children went for Polytechnic course and one who was interested in football was admitted to 11th. He was also selected for District Football team.

Challenges Faced By Government and NGO

Language Barrier

This is one of prominent issue faced by children from this community. Vagari Booli being their mother tongue they are well versed with that. They understand and speak Tamil but not fluently which clearly discriminates them from other children.

Hygiene & Appearance

Their dressing sense, overall physical appearance and hygiene is other reasons these students are unable to mingle with normal students.

Customs

They traditional practice like Early marriage and child marriage deprives/ distant these children from education. They are against inter caste marriage.

Migration

They being nomadic in nature keep migrating for their work. When parents migrate they take children with them for about months.

Insecurity

They are insecure about leaving their children in hostels.

Economic

The children when go with their parents start selling pins at early age around 5 yrs. They earn around 200-300 per day. The Narikurawar does not have the habit of saving. They earn and spend on food, clothes, liquor etc. Their unsound economic condition does deprives children of education.

Education

The importance of education is lacking in the community as a whole. The teacher in the SCAD and NCLP school visit children home to bring students to school. The parents encouragement or motivation is missing.

Conclusion

The Narikurawar community can be become a child labour free society only if they understand the importance of education. Even though government and NGO's are putting their efforts educate them and create awareness it is only their self realization which will help the community to go child labour free.

Reference

1. Dr.M.S. Thangam (2022), An Empirical Study on the Status of the Narikuravar, the Peripatetic Nomads in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, South India, Volume - 06, Issue - 07, Pages 43-48, DOIs:10.2017/IJRCS/202207004.
2. Dr.M.S. Thangam (2022), Cultural Survival of the Self-Determined, Mobile Narikuravar in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, South India, Volume - 08, Issue - 07, Pages 34-39, DOIs:10.2015/IJRMF/202207007.
3. S.K.SEENA SURESH (2022), A Review On Social, Economic, Political Conditions Of Narikuravars In Tenkasi District Of South Tamilnadu, Volume -20, Issue - 09, Pages 7327-7332, DOIs: 10.48047/nq.2022.20.9.nq44853.