

Spread of Education and Modern Technology Changed Santal Livelihood – A Case Study at Paschim Medinipur District (West Bengal)

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Abstract: *The Santal society is one of the most primitive castes among the oldest tribal of India. And it is also the largest tribal in India. In case of social structure its shows that the most of the Santal live in Paschim Medinipur, the district of West Bengal. The person of the Santal society mainly depends on subsistence farming. They leads a very simple and distinct live. They belief in superstition and these are the main cause of their backwardness, But now the spread of education has improved their lifestyle, their thinking so there have a lot of change in their thinking of social, economical and political. The government policies like “SARBO SHIKSHA AVIJAN” and “MID-DAY-MEAL PROJECT” has influence the spread of education. The technological improvement is also one of the most important causes of the improvement of the Santal. There are a lot of change in the method of agriculture, transport system and communication. Especially among the new generation of the telecommunication system (telephone, mobile, and internet) has been widely spread. The spread of educations on the other hand the improvement of technology are the main causes of the overall improvement of the tribal. It helps them to overcome from the conservative. The society has been modified. As a result the Santal have overcome their inertia and announce themselves as the important part of this beautiful world.*

Keywords: Education, Modern Technology and Govt. Policy.

1. Introduction

The Santals are one of the Munda peoples who live mainly in the state of Jharkhand, Bihar, west Bengal, Odisha and Assam. There is also significant Santal minority in neighbouring Bangladesh and small population in Nepal. Specifically study area at Paschim Medinipur district in West Bengal.

The Santal tribes of India have a typical tribal life style. Basic needs are fulfilled by forest trees and plants. The tribes are also engaged in fishing and cultivation. These tribes are India also poses a magnificent skill of making musical equipment, mats and baskets out is worth wathing. The study concentrates on the influences of modern values and institution in the day by day of the Santal spread of education, modern technology and migrants, sociologist have noted changes in the social, economic and cultural life of tribals due to such migration. More particularly the have been exposed to the processes related to modernisation and globalization. The impact of such changes can be seen in their changing cultural values, occupational structure and role perception. More particularly, the diminishing significant of patriarchies in the social life of the Santal is evident. In the traditional tribal society, specific role was assigned to man and women for maintenance of their age old tradition, custom etc. Dependency on forest based economy also influenced their cultural norms, traditions and values. Bat as a result of triblas have come close to new forms of life, institutions and values that have encouraged social transformation in their society. The basic objective of this chapter is to understand the impact of spread of education and modern technology on the Santal.

The tribal have migrated from their hinterlands to various agriculturally rich areas and urban city centre mainly in search of jobs. The tribal has brought various changes in their day to day activities, age, old customs and traditions. They have been influenced by the people and new cultural

traits at the place of destination. In this sense, education and migration has exposed them to various aspect of modernity.

Keeping these arguments in mind, this paper has been dealt with linkages between spread of education, migration and modernity as well as the facets of modernisation and it is impact on the tribal society.

2. Objective of the Study

The study was designed to fulfil the following objectives:-

- 1) To find out the social, economic and political changed in the Santals life.
- 2) To find out the changed occupational structure.
- 3) To compare sociality between the traditional and new social structure.
- 4) To find out the special, economic and social class wise spread of the new technology in Paschim Medinipur district.
- 5) To find out the spread of education changed whole system of the Santallife.
- 6) To identify the factors affecting adoption of new agricultural technology in Paschim Medinipur district.

3. Significance of the Study

Generally one of the major problems of the Santal regions is low standard life style. Most of the Santals are dependent on agriculture and hunting for their livelihood. Primitive occupational structure, superstitious belief and as the society is very conservative, it results their life style is very backward. But new technology and spread of education can improve life style of the Santals in Paschim Medinipur.

4. Method and Study Area

This study has been conducted in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal. Midnapursadar, Jhargram, Kharagpur sub-division mainly the Santal lived. Most

populated blokes are –Binpur 1&2, Jamboni, Gopiballavpur -1&2, Nayagram, Sankrile, Kasiary, Datan-1&2, Mohanpur, Narayanghar, Kharagpur-1&2, Sabang, Pingla, Midnapur, Keshpur, Dabra, Salboni, Goaltor-1,2&3 Chandrakona-1&2.

1) Impact of Spread of Education and Modern Technology

The Santal society has changed for spread of education. Mainly govt. Policy (Sarba Shikhsa Avijan, Mid-day-meal Project) are influence them. Now a days as-well-as technology has developed so it effect on the Santal society

2) Impact on Santal Society

And culture since time immemorial the Santals are practicing various traditional norms, values, cultural practices in their effort to adjust with the nature and environment available at the particular area. Anthropologists have time and again demonstrated the symbiotic relationship between the Santal economy, culture and society with their ecology at the given time and space.

Notwithstanding diversity of cultural practices, therefore the Santals of India represent certain uniformities. But, tribal society and culture witnessed several changes particularly since independence in India. And one of major factors influencing them and bringing them close to other groups and societies of the countries is spread of education and modern technology. For education is argued to have exposed the tribal to non-tribal and often urban way of life. The impact can be seen in the field of culture, language, traditions, occupation, customs and so on.

Given such knowledge base, it would be of much interest to understand the impact of seasonal migration on the Santals. In order to do so, we have attempted to address the issue at two levels: one at the level of social and cultural identity of the Santals and another at the level of their day to day practices related to agriculture, education, health, economy and governance.

3) Impact on Society & Culture

Sl. No	Area of Changes	Number Of Responding		
		Male	Female	Total
1.	Towards acculturation	29(30.52%)	14(26.92%)	43(29.25%)
2.	Deterioration of traditional culture	21(22.11%)	12(23.08%)	33(22.45%)
3.	Evolve new culture	15(15.79%)	11(21.15%)	26(17.69%)
4.	Ignore the traditional leaders	12(12.63%)	07(13.46%)	19(12.93%)
5.	Educate themselves about changing norms and values	10(10.53%)	05(09.62%)	15(10.20%)
6.	To make understand the traditional leaders	08(8.42%)	03(05.77%)	11(07.48%)
TOTAL		95(100.00%)	52(100.00%)	147(100.0%)

4) Impact on Occupational Structure

Agriculture

New technology and advancement of research has changed agriculture pattern of the Santal. The tribal people are depending on rainfall for agriculture. The Santals have been deeply influenced by modern agriculture practices in terms

of uses fertilizers, pesticide, modern equipment and others necessary instruments in the field of agriculture practices. At the place of destination, these migrants learn about various modern methods of agriculture.

Impact On Agriculture

Sl No	Extent of Impact	Number Of Respondents		
		Male	Female	Total
1.	To understand the modern agriculture system fully	37(38.95%)	13(25.00%)	50(34.01%)
2.	To understand the modern agriculture system to a large extent	17(17.89%)	18(34.62%)	35(23.81%)
3.	To understand the modern agriculture system to some extent	15(15.89%)	10(19.23%)	25(17.01%)
4.	Do not have any impact	14(14.74%)	07(13.46%)	21(14.29%)
5.	Do not know	12(12.63%)	04(07.69%)	16(10.88%)
TOTAL		95 (100.00%)	52 (100.00%)	147 (100.00%)

Others

The Santals use the traditional form of economy and its sole objective to sustain their livelihood through subsistence agriculture. But now-a-days occupational structure has changed. There are many type of work. As for example - any type of service (govt. and private), small and big shop etc.

5) Impact On Economy

The Santals use the traditional form of economy and its sole objective to sustain their livelihood through agriculture.

Hence their economy is often called under developed, if not primitive. This economy is also based on custom and tradition. There are specific custom stressing participatory function and specific role to be played by each member of the family and community. The Santals economy is predominantly forest based and they also take care to preserve the ecological balances with the nature sustain their livelihood. But exposure to modern economic practices teaches them to exploit the nature and consume its products. As a result, the traditional tribal leaders often face a dilemma while accommodating modern influences.

Extent Impact on Economy

Sl. No	Level of Impact	Number of Economy		
		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1.	To a great extent	61(64.21%)	32(61.54%)	93(63.27%)
2.	To a little extent	20(21.05%)	12(23.08%)	32(21.77%)
3.	No impact	04(04.21%)	03(05.77%)	07(04.76%)
4.	Do not know	10(10.53%)	05(09.61%)	15(10.20%)
Total		95 (100.00%)	52 (100.00%)	147 (100.00%)

6) Impact on Education

The education is the heart of any community. On the other hand the education is the backbone of any society. As education spread among the people it enables them to educate themselves and their community so that they can develop a utilize methods exploits the situation in the society for their own development. Education is the key to the future for the emerging nations.

Without education, modernity con not progress beyond imitation and duplication, without education the individual can rarely improve the quality of his/her life, without education, he cannot contribute his full potential to the task of nation building. When one considers the high rate of literacy in the developed countries, one is tempted to conclude that a prerequisite for social, economic and political development is the eradication of illiteracy and the universalization of education.

Quite reasonable therefore, illiteracy and lack of proper education has been one of the major issues of Santal development in India and elsewhere. Despite several governmental provisions for reservation of seat in educational institutions as well as economic incentives, tribals lag behind in school education, not to speak about higher education.

Extant Impact on Education

Sl. No	Level Of Impact	Number Of Respondent		
		Male	Female	Total
1.	To a great extant	56(58.95%)	20(40.39%)	77(52.38%)
2.	To a little extant	15(15.79%)	14(26.92%)	29(19.73%)
3.	No impact	11(11.58%)	10(19.23%)	21(14.28%)
4.	Do not know	13(13.68%)	07(13.46%)	20(13.61%)
TOTAL		95(100.00%)	52 (100.00%)	147 (100.00%)

7) Impact on Health

Health is one of the important things of human life. The millennium development goals had also emphasized “health for all”. This goal has become important in view of the poor health status of many Santal men and women at the place of origin. On the other hand, this people continue to rely on age old practice of herbal medicines which is sustainable given their closeness to nature and forests. But on a large scale, diseases caused by polluted water and lack of nutrients remain untreated. On the other hand, the involvement of ojhas including practices black magic and corcery for healing from various diseases make them vulnerable. It is here that migrants see a new role of modern medicines to cure their ailments and serious type of diseases. The access

to modern medicines available at district hospital at Medinipur has helped many of them to regain lose health conditions and increases their life span. This is certainly an improvement given the negative impact of such practices on the Santal life and society. These education spread and modern technology therefore feel the need to change to psychic of the tribal elites and aged persons towards the modern medicines and develop strategy to ignore the practice of black magic, sorcery for leading for healthy life.

8) Impact on Health

Sl. No	Degree of Impact	Number of Respondents		
		Male	Female	Total
1.	Yes	46(48.42%)	31(59.62%)	77(52.38%)
2.	No	38(40.00%)	14(26.92%)	52(35.38%)
3.	Do not know	11(11.58%)	07(13.46%)	18(12.24%)
Total		95(100.00%)	52(100.00%)	147(100.00%)

5. Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is clear that spread of education and modern technology has several direct and indirect impacts on the traditional culture, tradition and social norms of the Santals. The impact is evident in their day-to-day activities. The spread of education and technology has helped them to learn about new method of agriculture, cooking style and food habits, language, dress pattern, accustomed to ready-made clothes, aware to political mobilisation, learn habit of savings etc. Migration to cities and towns, understand the need of education for their children, get exposure to modern health practices and could doubt superstitious practices and witchcraft and sorcery performance by the priests and ojha

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