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SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG PALLANS IN TAMIL NADU



B. Jawaharlal Nehru And M. Thavamani

Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, TN
Research Supervisor, Head & Professor, Department of Sociology, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, TN

Abstract: Indian society is heterogeneous, wherein people belonging to various castes and communities reside. Pallan caste is among the 76 scheduled castes of Tamil Nadu. The struggle of the Pallans for justice had happened even during the time of British and after independence. The Pallans are suffering with many disabilities. This paper is aimed to bring out the social change among Pallans in three generations.

Keywords: Pallans, Scheduled Caste, First Generation, Second Generation, Third Generation, Social Change.

INTRODUCTION:

Tamil Nadu is known for acceptance of guests from outside Tamil Nadu and bringing social change from within Tamil Nadu. Many studies already been completed by Andre Beteille, Bernard S. Cohn, Hardgrave and Parvathamma. The present study is aimed to bring out the social change among Pallans in the three generations. The variables are fixed as education, employment, income, household articles, marriage and family, social equality, untouchability etc.

Bernard S. Cohn studied about changing status of chamar of Madhopur in Rajput village in Janapur District of Uttar Pradesh and explained how they occupied a subordinate place in economic and political affairs of village. Cohn described several fundamental issues. But social change is associated with the process of urbanization and no specific issue is discussed from the part of the respondents.

F.G. Bailey studied about Bisipara village in Western Orissa and presented the social hierarchy. The process of change was initiated through the administration and trade. The order of relationship with their caste groups in the village within the frame work of administration.

Andre Beteille studied Sripuram village in Tanjore District and found the economic position of three groups and power has shifted from the Brahmins to non – Brahmins through the creation of institutions such as Panchayats.

The present study is planned to bring out the nature of social change for three generations on the basis of shift in education, occupation, welfare schemes and possession of household articles. Methodology

The data collected from 300 respondents in central part of Tamil Nadu. The respondents are called as FIRST generation (contemporary), the respondents fathers are called as SECOND generation. The respondents' grand father is called as THIRD generation.

Table 1 Education Status of THREE Generations

S.No	Educational Status	First Generation (Respondents)		Second Generation (Respondent's Father)		Third Generation (Respondent's Grand Father)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Illiterates	8	2.67	61	2.33	202	67.33
2.	Primary	13	4.33	57	19.00	66	22.00
3.	Middle	17	5.67	39	13.00	18	06.00
4.	High School	21	7.00	52	17.33	14	04.67
5.	Higher Secondary / PUC	31	10.33	33	11.00	---	---
6.	Graduate	62	20.67	19	06.34	---	---
7.	Post – Graduate	68	22.67	17	05.67	---	---
8.	Professionals	80	26.66	22	07.33	---	---
	Total	300	100	300	100	300	100

Source: Primary Data

Education was a luxury for centuries. It was only the higher castes who availed education. People from middle and lower castes were did not avail higher education. Only after the British, who liberalized the education system gave an opportunity to non – Brahmin castes to get educated. After independence special provision was also made to the scheduled castes by way of free facilities in schools and colleges and also Government Hostels. Mohinder Singh (1947) reveals, education accompanied by improvement in economic position through job reservation has resulted in the creation of a middle class among the scheduled castes with their attitudes, practices and social standards being more or less close to those of higher castes. The educated scheduled caste individuals act as a reference group for the individuals and groups among the scheduled castes.

One of the crucial indicators of development is education. Education of the respondents alone does not bring out the changes over generation. Education over generations only can point out the nature of development on the one hand and the effect of Government programmes on the other. In addition it also enables the analysis of the impact of social organization within the one of the surprising finding is the contrast between first generation and third

Social Change Among Pallans In Tamil Nadu

generation in higher education with special reference to Post Graduates and professionals. While it was zero in the third generation, the counter statistics for first generation, is 80%. The corresponding figure for second generation is 30%. The travel from 0% to 30% and then to 80% has to be noted with great care. The scene of illiteracy has also been mentioned here. It has reduced from 67% from third generation to just 3% in the first generation. The credit goes to whom? to the Government? or to the social organization? Or both are a matter of discussion. It shows the establishment of social history, a history of struggle for survival in the third generation, struggle for progress in the second generation and establishment of success in the first generation. The figures shown in the table are not mere numbers, but the process of social change. Giving the opportunities, Pallan caste people are capable of climbing up in the educational ladder including professional courses. The analysis also shows the fact that all the 100% of third generation were below High school, in the second generation it was reduced to 70% whereas in the first generation it is further reduced to 20% which may come to an end in the forthcoming generation.

In addition the striking point of education lies with professional courses where around 20% difference highlighted between second to first generations which ascertain the process of education towards the professional stream which guarantees the livelihood.

One of the features of the caste system has been the close association between the caste and occupation (Dumont 1966). This close relationship between caste and occupations eventually, contributed to the stability of caste system, a closed and static society and blocked any possibility of social mobility (Khan 1980). The declining relationship between caste and occupation is also noticeable even in the rural areas and the studies conducted in rural areas after independence reveal the practice of occupation other than their own caste occupations. (Mayer 1960, Reddy 1968, Kantowsky 1970, Baum 1974). This view is also revealed by Beats (1965) and Andre Beteille. (1965).

Table 2 Occupational Status of THREE Generations

S.No	Occupational Status	First Generation (Respondents)		Second Generation (Respondent's Father)		Third Generation (Respondent's Grand Father)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Engineers	42	14	12	4	---	---
2.	Doctors	34	11.33	9	3	---	---
3.	Teachers	67	22.33	41	13.67	---	---
4.	Lectures	24	8	9	3	---	---
5.	Advocates	35	11.68	8	2.67	---	---
6.	Bank Employees	37	12.33	17	5.67	---	---
7.	Business	21	7	16	5.33	---	---
8.	Agriculturist	27	9	56	18.67	119	39.67
9	Daily wage Labour	13	4.33	51	17	181	60.33
	Total	300	100	300	100	300	100

Source: Primary Data

The inference is educational development must necessarily make a shift an upward mobility in the form of occupation, which also leads to change in economic aspects, while in the third generation only two categories are found

namely daily wage labour (60.33%) and agriculturist (39.67%), the second generation made on upward mobility. It reveals a shift to teaching profession (13.67%) followed by bank employees. This is the initial level of change from agricultural to teaching and clerical, using the privileges, provided by the Government reservation or protective discrimination. In addition another trend is visible such as a movement towards business, Engineering, Medicine, Law etc. coming to the generation of our respondents, ie, first generation a quantum jump is found towards Medicine and Engineering. The first two is prestigious occupations. To sum up, a total shift is found from rural based occupations to urban based occupations, by using the educational and employment privileges. There is no corresponding change in business. Approximately one third of them are in the teaching profession. The Government has provided for reservations and lot of occupational change has been noticed among the Pallan caste.

The first generation respondents had modern amenities namely possession of car, Motorbike, Television, Refrigerator, Telephone, Furniture, Mobile Phone, Computer, Camera, Washing Machine, Fan, Cooking Gas, Grinder, Pressure Cooker, Air-Conditioner, Air Cooler, Tape Recorder, Radio, Video Player, Geysers and Iron Box. The above mentioned household articles were not available to third generation.

CONCLUSION

The respondents are aware of their position today in comparison with fathers' generation and grand father generation. A shift was clearly identified in education and more remarkably in higher education. Given the opportunity they achieved various positions and status in medicine, teaching, research and other administrative privileges. They made use of modern household articles which is drastic change in comparison to the third generation. It has helped them to live in par with other castes. Similarly social change could also be arrived following the path of education employment and modernization by other castes as found in the Pallans of Tamil Nadu.

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