

Socio-Educational and Political Scenario of Ladakhi Tribals

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, an attempt has been made to study the socio-educational and political scenario of Ladakhi Tribals. For the present study, some suitable primary and secondary data were collected. The study revealed that Ladakh is a hilly region which is situated among the narrow valleys of Himalaya. Union territory of Ladakh consists of two districts which are Kargil and Leh. It is found that most of the outsiders are getting confused with the name of Ladakh and Kargil. Actually Ladakh is the name of whole region under which Kargil and Leh district fall. The historical and geographical conditions of Ladakh approve it as a region which consists of both Leh and Kargil in current times, and before the partition of 1947 Ladakh covers Kargil, Leh, Gilgit, Baltistan, etc. popularly known as the erstwhile Greater Ladakh. It is further found that the people of both these two districts are mostly caring to their socio-religion custom and practices. The study revealed that in past the educational status of Kargil was worse than Leh, but now the educational status of Kargil is better than Leh. With the passage of time people of Ladakh has become civilised and moved ahead. It is also found that Kargil has diverse and unique ethnic groups.

Key Words: *Socio-educational scenario; political scenario; Tribal peoples; ethnic groups.*

Introduction

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the term tribal stands for “a member of an aboriginal people of India” and this term was first used in 1953. In India, Tribes are generally considered as one of the weaker sections of the Indian society. The Govt. of India has recognised tribal people constitutionally under the entitlement of scheduled tribe and provided some sort of reservation for them. Ladakhi tribals are completely different from the other people living in other parts of India in terms of geography, culture, traditions, and customs and so on. Ladakhi tribal’s culture, race, language, religious beliefs and social practices are completely different and unique. Ladakh region was constitutionally and legally recognised as tribal region by government of India, because this region is far away from both centre and state cores of India. Another factor which led to the recognition of Ladakh as tribal region is due to its hilly location, unique and diverse ethnicity and culture etc. It is further found that the routine life of Ladakhi people is simple, mostly religious, and hardworking for their livelihood. The main occupations of Ladakhi tribal are agriculture, trade, and labourers in building and constructing roads etc. Lots of Ladakhi people are depending on agriculture.

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Approximately 20% people are enjoying the professions like teachers, doctors, engineers etc. and rest of the major population spend their lives through hardworking in construction and business sector. There are no big businesses in Ladakh, business to Ladakhis means small shops, not big industries. Because of these reasons, Ladakh is still 'under development'. People wish to make best use of their natural and human resources in order to achieve their social ends. The process which facilitates their effort in this direction is called 'development'; the factors which hinder them in this effort are called 'under development' (Gaubal, 2014).

Socio- Educational Scenario

It is found that the daily lives of Ladakh are in the villages and peripheral areas are still society oriented. It means that village people are mostly caring to their socio-religious customs and practices in marriages and other social functions. The people of Kargil are mostly religious and strong believer of united Islam. The study revealed that in Kargil majority of people are Muslims. Buddhists and Sikhs are falling under the category of minorities. Despite of being diverse religious groups, Kargil district is safe and secure from any type of open communal conflict till date. Kargil is a great example in the field of communal harmony throughout India. The research found that in Leh, Buddhist community is fall under majority and Muslims are under minority. In Leh, Buddhist and Muslim people are very cooperative and responsive to each other in every socio-religious practices. Buddhist people are non-violent in religious beliefs and peaceful in nature. But in both districts of Ladakh, people are still asserting on their social baggage in their socio-cultural practices till date. It is found, there are four major types of races in Kargil Ladakh which are diverse in language, culture and social practices, these races are Purikpa, Balti, Dardi and Sheena. Puriks are also called as Purikpa and these people are mangoloid in linguistic and facial outlook, most of the Purik people are Buddhist conversion to Muslims, the another ethnic race in Ladakh is Balti, these people are very much related to Gilgit and Baltistan of Pakistan in terms of language and culture etc. The third ethnic group in Ladakh is Sheena, and these people have their own mother tongue, Sheena people are also found in Gurez and Tangdar areas of Kashmir. As another race is found in Darchiks and Gharkon areas of Kargil those are Aryans, and that valley is called as Aryan valley in Kargil.

The researcher interpreting the educational system of Ladakhi tribal as according to primary collected data. The education system in Ladakh is very weak due to lots of reasons. In the field of higher education, people of both districts are very curious and eager to gain more and more knowledge and status. But, still, the educational aspirations

of Ladakhi students are remained incomplete. Earlier, in both kargil and Leh, there was only one full fledged college for each district in order to grant quality education to the students. But as of granting UT to Ladakh there are six degree colleges in whole Ladakh. It is also found that due to the establishment of Ladakh University the hardships of respective regional students decreased subsequently. But, still in Kargil College, there are lots of deficiencies like lack of proper infrastructure, functional girl's hostel, lack of experienced and rational teaching faculty which are becoming barriers in the educational walk of students. There are more than 8 universities in Jammu and Kashmir, but in Ladakh, currently only one University has been working for the last 2 years which is unable to introduce all the graduate and post graduate level courses. Due to lack of qualitative educational institutions, Ladakhi students are compelled to move towards Jammu, Kashmir and other parts of India in order to gain quality education despite of facing financial challenges. As a result, majority of Ladakhi students are not able to go outside for pursuing higher education because of their poor financial background and these also resulted to increase the rate of dropouts in Ladakhi higher educational scenario, and again they forced to do labour for their three times bread. So, higher education for a Ladakhi village inhibited poor student is not possible to pursue. But despite of so many difficulties facing by the poor students in Ladakh, they are just rapidly jumping in the ocean of competition and knowledge. It is also because of the system of distance education as introduced by IGNOU, MANUU and KU are proved very much helpful for students in achieving their educational aspirations.

Political Scenario

The researcher found that politically this tribal region is a deprived one as since independence no Ladakhi Member of Parliament has got the status of ministry in the Indian cabinet. Not only this, but within Ladakh there was a political superiority for the people belonging to Leh in terms of Lok Sabha elections as despite being in majority the Kargil district lost the seat of MP to Leh due to the ignorance of common people for about four decades. It is also found that Kargil never got a share in state cabinet ministry till 2002 and it was the first state PDP-Congress coalition Government headed by the then Chief Minister; Late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed who appointed Mr. Haji Nissar Ali as the first Cabinet Minister from Kargil District. This political change proved a mile stone for educational and other developments in Kargil as that new government established twelve more Higher Secondary Schools in Kargil and the number of such schools reached from two to fourteen. In 1995, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Leh was established to develop the mountainous district in a meaningful way, but the same council

on the same pattern for the welfare of the people of Kargil was established after seven years in 2003. As of 1990s to till date religious organizations of Kargil are playing a vital role in elections, due to which Kargil bagged four times the seat of Member of Parliament Ladakh and got three times the status of cabinet ministers in the state cabinet during the last twenty-five years. Before 1990s, Kargil got nothing on political grounds. Some religious scholars of Kargil like Sheikh Mohammad Hussain Zakiri, Sheikh Ahmad Mohammadi and Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai not only changed the political scenario, but the socio-educational scenario as well. They have opened many grand modern education institutes to uplift the educational standard, took effective steps to give social status to common people and made people politically aware and Kargil begins to win the key seats. But still there is a feeling in the heart of common people of Kargil as they think that both centre and state government prefer Leh district whether they voted for them or not. The common people are expecting that political reforms could be seen in future due to the advancement in educational sector.

Conclusion

UT Ladakh is a hilly and scheduled tribe region comprising of two districts namely Leh and Kargil which is situated among the narrow valleys of mighty Himalaya. Leh is the largest district of Jammu and Kashmir in area and Kargil is the second one. Kargil is also popularly known as the 'Gateway of Himalayas'. The investigator found that most of the outsiders are getting confused with the name of Ladakh and Kargil. Actually, Ladakh is the name of the whole region under which Kargil and Leh district fall. Like many other societies, the Ladakhi Tribal people are dominated by socio-political elites since Independence. Elites grow and develop in every society and compete for power that creates data for a study of political culture (Johari, 2011). The historical and geographical conditions of Ladakh approves it as a region which consists of both Leh and Kargil, and before the partition of 1947 Ladakh covers Kargil, Leh, Gilgit and Baltistan, etc. popularly known as the erstwhile Greater Ladakh.

It is further found that the people of both these two districts are mostly caring to their socio-religion custom and practices. In past the educational status of Kargil was worse than Leh, but now the educational status of Kargil is better than Leh. On the other hand, Leh is still dominant politically. It is also found that Kargil has diverse and unique ethnic groups. It is found that the people of Ladakh are making various changes for effective policies and taking initiatives in order to enhance their daily socio-educational conditions. The people of Ladakh have been struggling constantly to bring the issues on the central level government platform.

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