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GRT **DEVELOPMENT OF PALLAN CASTE
IN TAMIL NADU - HINDRANCE AND CONTRIBUTIVE
FACTORS**



B. Jawaharlal Nehru

Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, TN

Abstract: Pallan caste is sub – sect of scheduled castes in Tamil Nadu. Pallan caste people possess their own cultural heritage among the scheduled caste. This paper narrates about the hindrance contributive and factors for development of Pallan in Tamil Nadu.

Key words: Pallan, Scheduled Caste, Quota within Quota system, Constitutional Provisions, Mukkudal Pallu

INTRODUCTION :

Pallan caste is one among the 76 castes of scheduled castes in Tamil Nadu. Their main profession is ploughing the wetland in the Agricultural field from the ancient time. They have indigenous skills in the cultivation of paddy, sugar cane and plantains. Pallan women are traditionally famous for their skill in planting paddy seeding. In the Sangam literature, the 16th and 17th centuries Tamil literatures ballads of the PALLU ILAKIYAM, the PALLUPATTU and the MUKKUDAL PALLU of Tamils are spoken of as 'Katasiyar' (women of Pallan) planting the paddy seedling in wet lands.

Various discussions and debates are going on the development of the Pallan caste associated with the intact of local political parties. The present work is an attempt to assess on overall developmental perceptions by Pallans themselves over three generations. The total population of Pallan caste in Tamil Nadu is 2272265 as per 2001 census. Among them, 1128626 people are males and 1143639 peoples are females. In the rural areas 1727406 Pallan caste people are living. Among them 544859 Pallan caste people are living in urban areas. Many of them identified as important urban Elites in the fields of Medicine, Law, Science and Technology, Fine Arts including Movies. However, the exact nature of their development is yet to be studied.

This paper concentrate specifically on the factors associated with development of Pallan caste. Many factors are reported by the respondents both for and against for their development. They range from education, constitution, social legislations, culture, social and economic inequality, poverty, political participation and Government program mes.

METHODOLOGY

A sample size of 300 respondents is interviewed to spell out the nature of development not only to their

generation but also theirs fathers' and grand fathers' generations.

They were asked to mention about the nature of education, the household articles, marriage and family system, caste organization, inter-caste relationships in public functions. They were also asked to point out constitutional provisions, reservation policy, political participation, the role played by Government and Non Governmental organization in Tamil Nadu. The following set of factors was found to be either contributory or hindrance for the development of Pallan caste.

The respondents mentioned four Community Organizations which are working for development and safety of Pallan caste. They have also mentioned in the named six leaders. However, their opinion is divided into role of Pallan caste leaders. Whether positive or negative. But, they are very sure about the scheduled caste movement in minimising the atrocities and protection of human rights.

Table 1 Hindrance factors for Socio – Economic Development of Pallan Caste

S.No	Hindrance Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Un Employment	62	20.67
2.	Social Inequality	21	07.00
3.	Cultural Constraints	18	06.00
4.	Un Sociability	23	07.67
5.	Poverty	44	14.67
6.	Illiteracy	42	14.00
7.	Independences	16	05.33
8.	Lack of Caste Solidarity	24	08.00
9.	Lack of Political Participation	36	12.00
10.	Exploitation	14	04.66
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

There were ten hindrance factors projected by the respondents as follows. The first one happens to be

unemployment (21%) followed by poverty (15%) and illiteracy (14%). The fourth hindrance factor identified as the lack of political participation among Pallans themselves which are the internal factors. This is also supported by the fifth factor which is lack of caste solidarity (8%) followed by unsociability (8%) social inequality (7%), cultural constraints (6%) and finally exploitation (5%).

Tamil Nadu as observed by Andre Betaille, have three types of caste system, namely Brahmin, Non – Brahmin and Scheduled Caste. The social actions are also carried only on these directions whether it is friendship, employment, political participation, marriage alliance etc. Therefore in any private organization, if there is no Pallan caste higher officer, the possibility of absorption of Pallan caste worker is rare. Hence, unemployment was first hindrance factor. The second hindrance factor is poverty which has been historical for many countries. However, the recent trends may be different. In other words, the lack of development of Pallan caste depends upon the above mentioned factors and has to be taken care by the Government and private organization. Those who are already developed, settled in urban centre have the pre martial loyalty to the life of their brothers above the poverty and inequality level. They may contribute towards the political bureaucratic and administrative hindrances. Any political decision making should be focused on these hindrance factors and accordingly the planning and implementation are to be fulfilled.

Many factors contribute to the development of Pallan caste which are similar to Ezhavas of Kerala, Mahars of Maharashtra. These factors are ranging from higher education, higher income, constitutional provisions and political participation. The respondents remembered the thoughts and action of their caste leaders.

However, the immediate internal factors are identified in the following table

Table 2 Contributive factors for Socio – Economic Development of Pallan Caste.

S.No	Factors Improve the status of Pallan	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Higher Education	78	26.00
2.	Higher Income	82	27.33
3.	More Political Participation	76	25.33
4.	Constitutional Provisions	27	09.00
5.	Social Legislations	24	08.00
6.	Quota within Quota Reservation System	13	04.34
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

The factors have improved the status of Pallan caste they are adjusted to the higher income first (27%) and higher education next (26%) This is further supported by the political participation, constitutional provisions (9%), social legislations (8%) and finally quota within quota (4%) system.

Higher education must necessarily make a shift an upward mobility in the form of occupation which also leads to change in economic aspects. Higher income also caused the social mobility. More political participation created the high social status. The constitutional provisions provide the safeguard for Pallan caste. Social legislations promote the

status of the Pallan caste. The quota within quota system provides the more opportunity to get job in Government. So, the above mentioned factors promote the status Pallan caste.

CONCLUSIONS

The Pallan caste people made use of constitutional provisions, higher education and reservation policy positively. The second set of factors has to be removed through the intervention of Government and Non-Government organizations. The favourable factors can further be increased. So, that Pallan caste could enter into move egalitarian society and prove their capability in the corporate social settings.

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