



**REHABILITATION OF THE MARGINALIZED SECTIONS OF THE
SOCIETY THROUGH EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY OF SCHOOLS UNDER TSWREIS IN
TELANGANA AND DWACRA SCHEMES UNDER APWCDC IN AP**

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ABSTRACT

In the context of the marginalized communities, globally, many terms have been used such as Anti-Discrimination, Affirmative Action, Reverse Discrimination, Equal opportunities, Quota System and Equal Rights Policy. In the context of Dalit and marginalized communities who have suffered centuries of ignominy, deprivation, exploitation and oppression of every possible kind, rehabilitation measure taken by any agency cannot nullify and negate their bitter past.

This paper looks into the two states of Telugu speaking people, the Telangana and Andhra Pradesh States and argues that restoring their dignity is possible by educational rehabilitation and economic empowerment to a certain extent. First half of my paper examines the aspect of education as seen through the model of schools under TSWREIS in Telangana. The Government of India soon after it became a Republic created a system of reservations system based on their caste. This allowed many from the deprived classes to get admission into government schools, colleges and institutions and also reserved a percentage of jobs in public sector for these sections.

INTRODUCTION

The word rehabilitation originally is derived from Latin 'rehabilitationem' meaning re-"again" (see re-) + habitare "make fit," from Latin habilis "easily managed, fit" (see able). Though this word in general has come to mean restoration, and is applied to people who have

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suffered from physical sickness, mental and emotional trauma, and also criminals and addicts who need therapeutic help for treatment and recovery.

Unfortunately, a large section of the society still remains downtrodden and continues to reel from the effects of nepotism, half-hearted measures of the agency that disburses these benefits.

Education that is imparted in the government schools in the rural areas is affected by many factors: teachers who are qualified but either inefficient or lack the motivation, students who lack the environment to foster, as well as reinforce the learning they receive in those limited hours at school, and parents who are uneducated and therefore cannot efficiently supervise their wards. Further, administrative issues such as lack of infrastructure and the right ambience are missing in the lives of these disadvantaged sections. Additionally the financial, moral and other support that their peers in private schools and metro cities or affluent families are cushioned with creates a colossal vacuum for the target group- namely the deprived sections whose rehabilitation is the focus of the volume.

Educational Rehabilitation under TSWREIS Society in Telangana State:

In such a scenario, I want to highlight the model of residential schools that are set up for children hailing from these sections by the government of Telangana. These schools and institutions are under the umbrella of Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TSWREIS) under the Societies Act as an autonomous body.

Taking into consideration the socio-economic and educational backwardness of the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities the government of Telangana was convinced that providing better access to quality education was one of the most effective ways of rehabilitation. And these separate schools for them ensured that there would be no economical burden. The government established Social Welfare Residential Schools in areas predominantly populated by the SC communities.

The society runs 268 institutions with about 1,50,000 students and has been providing quality education in English medium up to graduation. Though these schools were started three decades ago, in Telangana, after the bifurcation of the two Telugu speaking states, these institutions are the most sought after and almost on par with the reputed public schools in terms of the measures. The society allows no bar in terms of experimenting and bringing in methods that would synchronize the emerging trends in the education space.



Their vision states it all: “to build an outstanding government educational institution which provides high quality holistic and value based education to marginalized children on par with the other advantaged children in the country”.

Their mission of promoting “a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities beyond the confines of classrooms to create a vibrant teaching and learning environment and help marginalized students realize their full potential in every sphere of life in the 21st century” is realized with the forays they made by establishing specialized schools such as:

Exclusive Schools

1. School of Fine Arts & Film Making, Malkajgiri, Hyderabad – (1)
2. Social Welfare Sainik School, Rukmapur - (1)
3. Social Welfare Armed Forces Preparatory Degree College for Women, Bhongir - (1)
4. Centres of Excellence Colleges (COEs) - (27)
5. Sports Academies - (22)
6. Freedom Schools - (20)
7. Vocational Colleges - (34)

With a comprehensive plan of action efficient system to implement these right from the process of admission and support system that ensures the well-being of the students at a token amount of fee, these schools are amongst the most sought after in the State.

Under the able and the most efficient leadership of its current Secretary, IPS officer Praveen Kumar, who is also called as the modern Gandhi, the society is expanding its vision and Residential Educational Institutions Societies (TSWREIS & TTWREIS) have risen to the occasion during the challenging times of corona pandemic by converting an adversity into an opportunity.

COVID 19 and VLCs under TSWREIS:

The current pandemic and its concomitant effects of lockdown has not derailed the vision and mission of the Society totally. The Society has helped in forming Village Learning Centres which are ensuring education like the private schools are doing through the ICT and digital media. Taking into cognizance that in the rural areas and among these sections of the society, children and all homes may not be able to afford an android phone, the society has come up with these Village Learning Centres(VLCs).



Taking the support of village sarpanches, public representatives, volunteers, parents, teachers and community members, many homes, church compounds, religious places, school buildings, community halls, are being used as learning centres.

What the elite schools have failed to do in the lockdown, students in these Villages are doing—peer teaching. Exceptional students with academic excellence, and a zest for community service, aided by their effective communication and teaching skills have revolutionized these Village Learning centres. These students from class 6 to Degree level are monitored remotely by their teachers and impart education to their younger schoolmates and peers in this lockdown. Each VLC comprises 10-15 students from all classes from both government and private educational institutions and classes are conducted for 2-3 hours. There is a timetable in place, and in addition to the regular classes, quiz, spell bee, essay writing, poetry, art & craft competitions and English –Plus club activities are also organized. Teachers’ from their homes give guidance to these ‘student teachers’ in using the appropriate methods of teaching, giving assignments and project works for a diverse category of students and their diverse abilities.

It is worth mentioning that more 10,000 VLCs were formed in Telangana by the end of July, 2020 and nearly 50,000 students actively involved in VLC academic activities. **Telangana Social & Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Societies** (TSWREI and TTWREI) plan to increase the number of VLCs to 50000 by the end of August, 2020. These Village Learning Circles (VLCs) not only impart education but also spread awareness about Covid by following the protocols such as personal hygiene, sanitization, health and nutrition to be maintained in the Covid times.

The lack of resources like smart phones, internet connectivity and laptops has not deterred the Society in accomplishing its vision and mission of its primary goal- - education. The VLCs have kept the lamp of learning shining brighter in these dark and extraordinarily challenging times of the current pandemic that has sent the entire world into a dizzy, and have been bridging the learning gap and digital deprivation among the marginalized sections of the society.

If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation says an African proverb.

The second half of my paper concentrates on improving the other major section of the society that needs to be rehabilitated i. e. that is the ‘Second Sex’. My aim is to start off this section by continuing to highlight the efforts of the TSWREI in working towards this goal. While the ministry of women and child development has a number of schemes for the empowerment of

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women, I would like to end the first section by pointing out the importance given by the TSWREI to eradicate illiteracy of the girls from these sections and fostering their education. Out of the total 268 institutions, girls' institutions constitute 175 (65%). This shows the commitment of the Society and its vision which is more girl-centric with 175 institutions giving education to 1,02,720 girls. This also includes "14000 young women who escaped the clutches of early marriage to pursue higher education".

The empowerment and rehabilitation of women who have crossed the age of education remains a challenge. Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India has various schemes listed on its website.

As much as the TSWREIS in Telangana has reached an invincible position in global public residential education map and continues to attract many educators from different parts of the country and the world every year, the DWCRA program in Andhra Pradesh has been successful in bringing about the much needed change and awareness among the rural women

Genesis of DWCRA:

DWCRA program was started by the Government of India (GOI) in September 1982 under the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP)³. Initially it was started program in only 50 districts of India on a experimental basis with a primary focus on the development of women and children.

In most states of India the development of women and children is under the aegis of the Social Welfare Department. However among the states which have a separate with a separate Department are the two Telugu speaking states- Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The second half of this paper will focus on rehabilitation through various measures and schemes in the rural areas in Telangana and more particularly in Andhra Pradesh under **DWCRA**

In Telangana , the holistic development is taken care of by the department of Ministry of Women & Child Development, which has is implementing the largest program of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). This is unique in the world. It provides a number of programs that focus on children, ranging from their supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up and referral services to pre-school non-formal education. To give statistical information, there are 35,700 Anganwadi Centers functioning in the State of Telangana in 149 ICDS Projects.



DWCRA and Rehabilitation of Women in AP under APWCDC:

Apart from the welfare schemes for rural women, DWCRA is unique in involving the women in development activities. DWCRA has an administrative set-up at the following five levels - village, block, district, state and national. At the village level, self-help groups (SHGs) popularly known as DWCRA with 15-20 groups are formed. These groups, chose a leader, and have regular group meetings and maintain the group's accounts.

With an initial focus of small savings of rupees one a day which would be credited into an account in the post office or bank, the groups with funds from the Centre and States have moved on to a higher level of entrepreneurship.

Having established their credentials through various measures of saving, borrowing loans from their accounts and repayment of the loans, a group which successfully achieved its savings target became eligible for availing of credit from the bank for starting income generation activity.

Based on their skills, the group members collectively decided on the income generation activity that they would undertake such as sewing or making jute products, baskets or pickle making.

Rehabilitation through Economic Empowerment: DWCRA and AP:

It is observed that most welfare and poverty alleviation programs, initiated by the government, fail because of the lack of the involvement of the target group. Despite the awareness levels created by the media, because of the low level of media penetration in the rural areas, these programs are not met with as much success as in the slightly advanced areas where these SHGs are formed.

But the DWCRA groups of Andhra Pradesh have scripted a success story like the schools under TSWREIS & TTWREIS. This has been possible because instead of NGOs, the State Government of AP has taken an active interest in the development of women through AP Women's Cooperative Development Corporation Ltd. (APWCDC).

Genesis of APWCDC

Popularly known as Women Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh it was established in the year 1975 with the aim of empowerment of women on the eve of International Women's Year.



The Core activities of the Corporation are:

1. Structured capacity Building trainings to rural Women through Mahila Vikasa Kendrams.
2. Management and Construction of Working Women's Hostels
3. Coordination of NGOs programs
4. Marketing and
5. Micro Finance

APWCDC selects poor rural women in the districts of Andhra Pradesh through their Mahila Vikasa Kendrams (Women Training Centers) and provides skill development training in marketable trades, which is promoting economic activities among the rural women. This is taking care of the economic rehabilitation of the various strata of the disadvantaged sections: the women, the rural and the lower castes of the society.

The success of AP government lies in its efforts in liaisoning with many agencies and taking their support- financially and otherwise. Different schemes are envisaged, and, funds from NABARD, SIDBI, and Government of India through the Women & Child development are used to promote traditional and nontraditional economic activities among the poor and deprived women.

What is unique of AP government is that these Mahila Vikasa Kendrams are housed in 10 to 12 acres of land with well equipped training equipment, stay and boarding facilities, and administrative set up.

Under the Skill Up gradation these women are given Vocational Training Programs, Counseling on Entrepreneurship Development, Sensitization on many issues. Other activities of the Mahila Kendrams include: Residential Bridge Schools for Girl Child Labour Rehabilitation, Anganwadi Training Center (AWTCs)

The following course show the multifarious activities of the economic rehabilitation programs for women through Courses such as: Computer Applications, Desk Top Publishing, Pre Primary Teachers Training, Community Health Workers, Multipurpose Health Workers, Printing Technology, Screen Printing, Electronic assembling, electrical appliances repairs and maintenance Canteen Management, House Keeping, Bee Keeping etc.

These are in addition to the training in **Traditional and Non Traditional Trades** like: Fashion Technology, Block Printing Plastic Wire Handicrafts, Hosiery, Lace Making Hand



Embroidery and Zardosi, Leather and Rexene Products, Jute Products, Foot Wear, Nursery Raising and Grafting Technology, Beauty Culture, etc.

With many innovative ideas and an excellent partnership programs, the APWCDC has already achieved many milestones and has a great vision for the rehabilitation of women through TARUNI programs under partnership.

The Corporation plans to take up the below projects in phased manner, with the support of women Partners, Financial institutions and Banks. Some of the projects are mentioned below: **Taruni Water Plants** to market and distribute mineral water through womens groups.

3000 Taruni Facility Centers with one computer and laser printer, photocopier; fax machine, internet and telephone with STD/ISD facility each, where the women would be encouraged to use the access and learn the ICT.

Taruni Foods where locally prepared foods are processed to have a better shelf life with low cost easily adaptable technology and marketed.

Taruni Outlets in various tourist spots of State of Andhra Pradesh market the items produced by women such as utility items, water bottles, snacks and bakery items etc.

Taruni Garments where hosiery units and the ready-made garments have wide National and International market. Women are trained and provided with necessary equipment and machinery and employed.

Under many such umbrellas like Taruni Farms, Taruni Cold Storage, Taruni Power Projects, Taruni Motels, Taruni Resorts, Taruni Finance, Taruni Petro stations a host of activities are undertaken.

From farming activities like dairy, horticulture, apiculture and normal tree plantations, building cold storages, to developing water plants, resorts and commercial complexes and bio-power to “Taruni Resorts” which will contain gardens, Children Parks, shopping complex and restaurants to target the rural population, the umpteen projects involve thousands of women whose employment is booster to their self-esteem, their families and the society at large.

These women are encouraged to build and trade in poultry products, milk and vegetables and general and utility items for the motorists by the women. Taruni petro stations encourage



women to venture into petro stations, by setting them up fully provided land is made available.

Conclusion:

I would like to conclude my paper with the success stories of TSWREIS and DWCRA.

The efforts of the TSWREIS has reaped its benefits which can be seen in the following data: “Students of Telangana social welfare residential degree colleges for women scripted history in IIT JAM 2020 National level entrance exam and for the first time secured admissions in post graduation courses in prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT’s) and National Institute of Technology (NITs). The following meritorious students made the TSWREIS proud and their selection into the top- notch institutions in the country would go a long way in lighting the lamp of education and prosperity and breaking tailspin of poverty”.

Nagalakshmi M.Sc. Analytical Chemistry NIT, Warangal.

Rani, in – M.Sc. (Chemistry), NIT Warangal.

Yamini Supriya – M.Sc. (Life Sciences), NIT Rourkela.

Ashwini of Budvel- M.Sc. (Physics), NIT, Warangal.

Srilatha of Budvel – Computer Science, NIT.

Sai Shivani – M.Sc. (Chemistry), IIT Manipur.

And the success of APWCDC in AP through DWCRA is worth emulating. 'Export orders for the pickles produced by DWCRA group.' 'Export order from South Africa worth Rs 0.8 million' - are the two headlines that reflect just the two of the success stories of the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) of Andhra Pradesh. In March 2001, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the UNO who was briefed about the programs and outcomes of schemes through DWCRA said: " What we see happen here I want to see happen in every country". This reflects the success of DWCRA.

Yes people across the world suffer many forms of injustices, oppression and inequalities that are triggered off by sometimes man made devastations, systems of prejudice, war, displacement, and natural calamities and even old age infirmities.

However, with all the development that human society has made by leaps and bounds, many governments have been taking care of their citizens through many associations, societies and schemes like the geriatric care, palliative care, welfare measures for the disabled etc.



In the context of the success stories of women through the two Telugu State governments through TSWREIS and DWCRA, the governments have proved that where there is a will, there will be a way in rehabilitating sections of the society, especially the minorities and the women.

Such measures will go a long way in ensuring development, maintaining peace, law and order by their various rehabilitation programs that will prevent dissent, protest, frustration and unemployment, by fostering educational and employment opportunities that foster economic growth, health and well-being of the these under privileged, disadvantaged and marginalized sections of the society.

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