

A STUDY OF ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO TRIBAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

For socio-economical development of any country educational development is a basic requirement. To fulfill this need of society, spread of education among the weaker part of our country is very important. In a developing country contribution of education is noteworthy. Educated people enlighten, empower and also help individuals to achieve economic independence and social well-being.

Education is considered a basic need for human development as it can enhance the capability of an individual.

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are regarded as educationally 'backward' states because of a lack of meaningful access to education.

Since independence India has been facing biggest challenges in quality of education. Right to Education Act 2009 has sought to equal learning level and outcomes to those who are from disadvantaged communities specially for children from tribal community.

India is a home to large number of native group of people. They are still untouchable by the life style of the modern world. In general as compared to non-tribal people the tribal are backward. Tribal populations continue to have one of the lowest enrolments and retention rates as well as learning outcomes in the country, despite more than half a century of interventions to improve their educational status. The government of India has launched a number of schemes for the promotion of education and welfare among the tribes. In spite of these efforts the rate of literacy has not been improved. In case of the primitive tribes it is very poor.

The main objective of the research paper is

1. To acquire an understanding of tribal education.
2. To analyze the status of school education among tribal populations

3. Review policies and programs related to the education of tribal children in Chhattisgarh
4. To understand the status of factors that contribute, or act as barriers, to higher educational attainment of tribal children in district.

The diverse and complex structures of communities pose some serious challenges to India's education system. Even today, many areas are without the provision of schooling, forcing children of these areas to remain outside school, unenrolled and illiterate. Even if they enroll, they fail to complete the basic elementary education cycle.

Keywords— Tribal Education; Education Policy; Constitutional Rights; etc.

INTRODUCTION

Globalizations of education has been a constitutional commitment in India to provide education until the age of 14. To meet the objectives of the state, successive governments at the union and state level have implemented many policies. Education is considered a basic need for human development as it can enhance the capability of an individual.

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are regarded as educationally 'backward' states because of a lack of meaningful access to education. Education has become a fundamental right for children aged 6-14, mandated by the 86th constitutional amendment, the Right to Education Act 2009 and Article 21A, which has become operational from 1st April 2010. Various government programs have led to progress. Levels of literacy still remains a serious issue for Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Castes.

MahiTudu, says that the spread of education among the weaker section of our society is vital. The Policy to promote educational interests of the weaker sections of the people especially the scheduled casts and scheduled Tribes, has been enshrined in our constitution as Directive Principle of State Policy.

Vinoba Gautama's paper (2003) on Janasala experience, a collaborative programme between the government of India and United Nations agencies to achieve universal elementary education, especially for girls and children from the deprived communities, working children, and children with specific needs. It tries to cover nearly three million children; Out of it, 33% would be tribal children. Under Janasala, many favourable interventions were undertaken to improve quality education of tribal children. The study proposes that as the tribal children possess cognitive abilities, a suitable curriculum and teaching methods need to be devised. Finally, the paper

concludes that non-tribal education has very limited value in tribal cultural milieu because it does not match with the lifestyle of individuals and the needs of the tribal community. There is a need to linking school education with life and the needs of the tribal communities

S. Venkataiah's "Modern tribal education" depicts that the Tribals are the aboriginal people constitute around 7 percent of the population of the country. They are backward in all respects – hence the need of special modern education for them. Since tribals still professing their ancient religion and unique life pattern, special efforts are needed to educate them. The present book is devoted to the modern education of tribals. Undoubtedly, this will prove a veritable mine of information to academics, researchers, policy planners and administrators.

In tribal communities, the system of education is not in a well-developed state. Though they are migrating to urban communities to pursue education. In tribal education, there is a need to bring about improvements in teaching-learning methods, infrastructure, facilities, amenities and the overall environmental conditions of the educational institutions.

BACKGROUND

The diverse and complex structures of communities pose some serious challenges to India's education system. Even today, many areas are without the provision of schooling, forcing children of these areas to remain outside school, unenrolled and illiterate. Even if they enroll, they fail to complete the basic elementary education cycle. Schooling provision, accessibility, enrolment, and retention for tribal areas. Scheduled Tribes (STs), are one of the officially recognised 'educationally backward' population groups. Article 366 (25) of the Constitution of India refers to STs as those communities who are 'scheduled' in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution. The term ST represents more an official/administrative, rather than a sociological or historical, category and is used to refer to a group of indigenous people who have for long remained distinct and isolated from the larger Hindu society (Jha and Jhingran 2005).

The dropout rates for tribal children between classes I-V have been particularly high in India (65 per cent, with the dropout rate for tribal girls being as high as 82 per cent). The sharpest drop in enrolment is seen to be between classes I and II.

LIFE OF TRIBES

The life of tribal communities is full of challenges. They face a lot of problems to survive. At some place the tribals have been made to serve as bounded labors. Even now a day's doms and colta's tribe communities serve the upper caste families in Uttar Pradesh.

In Rajasthan the sagri system, in Andhra the vetti system, in Orissa the gothi system, in Karnataka the jetha system and in Chhattisgarh the naukrinaama system are the example of the boundedness.

They have borrowed money from the money Landers, but have not been able to pay back so they bound to work till they bound to work till they return the loan.

The health condition of the tribes is also not good. Most of tribal people in India is illiterate.

They believe in faith, cure, and age old methods and also depend on local herbal medicines.

Gare (1983) writes that the status of the tribal, or any other social group, can't be improved with illiteracy, ill health and poverty. The extremely low levels of literacy, education and health. Nutrition status of the tribal put a constraint on improving their economic status. In tribal community usually children are engaged in house hold work with family at home or outside.

As parents are illiterate so the parental motivation is very less specially for academic goals.

MAJOR ISSUE AND PROBLEMS

As tribes are known as the most deprived communities in India. They live in isolation therefore they have to face many problems and issue in their life. Some problems discussed under the following heads:

Socio- Economic Problem and Exploitation

Tribal are always exploited by non tribal merchants, big farmers and money landers. The situation is due to economic factors and large-scale exploitation. Generally, conditions of tribal communities in India are very distressful. Their source of income is improper. Even they are unable to fulfill their basic needs like food, proper clothes and enough shelter. Due to lack of balanced diet, tribal suffer from various deficiency disease. Because of their poor condition they can't afford a good school for their children. Parents of tribes child is not enough educated. They don't know the value of education so they unable to create interest of their child toward education.

Economic burden and unemployment

In tribal areas source of income is farming, poultry, handloom and weaving so parents involve their children in their work to reduce economic burden and don't send them to school.

Banking facilities are also not adequate in tribal areas so they have to depend on money lenders to get money for small industries because they are not aware of banking facilities provided by government. They remain indebted to these money lenders because their land is not productive hence the crop yield is less.

As children are engaged in earning so have lost their interest on education, hence tribal are not aware of technology to improve crop.

To manage their livelihood and economic condition they complied to send children to work as child labour.

Most of the tribal children are engaged in cattle grazing, labour on work sites, collecting firewood and other minor forest products, stone quarrying, mining and home-based work such as processing forest products

Illiteracy

Illiteracy rate among tribal is very low while in 1961 it was 18.53%. In 1991 it increased to 29.60. If we compare it to general literacy rate (52.21%). It's very low. Mizoram is 82.71% in Nagaland, Sikkim and Kerala. It is between 57% and 61%. Lack of literacy among tribal people has been identified as a major development problem.

Unemployment Problem

The tribes are basically live in hill and forest area. There are no industries and no job opportunities so they are not able to get employment.

They use other source of income such as husbandry, poultry, farming, handloom, weaving and the handicraft work for their livelihood.

Housing problem

For protection from seasonal effect and other dangers, house is the basic need for every human being. The tribes do not have any kachcha or pakka house for their family. They live in a hut type house, made up of leaves and branches which can't protect them from seasonal temperature.

They live with their cattle/ farm animals so it's difficult to them to maintain cleanliness and healthy environment.

Educational Problems

Education plays an important role for all round development of a person. Economic development of a nation always depends on education. If people are illiterate the concerned authorities can't implement strict economic policies and programmes. The rate of literacy among the scheduled tribes has been very low. Acc to census 2001 it's found far below the overall literacy of the country. For a tribal family to send its grownup child to school is essentially a matter of economics "many parents can't just afford to send their children to school (elwin, 1963, 1984). Lack of education is a stumbling below to the tribals in attaining a higher standard of life. The problems that's why the literacy rate and school enrolment of tribal child is below average.

Child Marriage/Narrow Mentality

The parents of a girl child have an old mentality regarding education of a girl child. They think there is no need to educate a girl. She should do household work that's enough for her so the parents don't take initiative to send the girl child in school. Child marriage is a big problem. After marriage a girl have a responsibility of household work. There in laws don't allow her to continue her studies so the girls dropped out.

Negative Attitude of Parents

Parents of tribal children are not well educated and are educationally backward as the literacy rate of the tribe is very low. As parents are illiterate ,hence they do not encourage their children to go to schooldaily and study well to be a literate citizen ,even they don't want to send their girl child in a coeducational institute. Parents dropped out their girl child from the fear of boys teasing.

Jayawalet. al. (2003) examined The role or parental support on academic achievement of tribal students and found that the parent of higher exerted significantly more support to their children. On the other hand, the parents of lower achiever were not strongly ambitious of children's upward mobility.

Academic and administrative problems

Even though the number of programmes for the upliftment of tribal education is many, the percentage of people receiving these benefits is very less. Administrative authorities are always showing very neutral attitude towards the education of the tribals

Basic Amenities in School

In tribal areas most of schools don't provide basic amenities such as toilets, drinking water, electricity and well managed classroom for proper teaching. Vijayalaxmi (2003) conducted the study on identifying the problem of tribal students in secondary school. The finding of the study reveals that the residential schools are very poor in infrastructural facilities, poor non meal programme.

Communication problem

The teacher in classroom communicates in official/ regional language which is not understood by the tribe's child. They only understand their mother tongue. They think that the teacher is speaking any foreign language.

Gautham, V. 2003 focused his study on education of tribal children and revealed that in India the appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal school. The teacher couldn't understand the language of the children and in reverse the students are also unable to get the teacher.

Untrained Teachers

Tribal schools are unable to attract students and create interest of tribal students in study due to shortage of trained teachers. Proper training is required to teach the students. According to Desai & Patel (1981) in relation to effectiveness of various interventions for improving tribal education studied that only 18 out of 22 residential schools have 100% teacher's strengths. Often teacher scold, insult and physically punish poorly performing child, so the child leaves the school from fear of teachers.

Lack of Transport Facilities

Large number of villages are still unconnected with other villages or cities nearby. Most of tribal areas are hilly so the child faces transport problems to reach school. They have to walk a longer distance which creates irregularity in school. They do not reach school on time, sometime weather condition stops the students to go to school because of improper road facilities. In a hilly area, without road it is very difficult to walk or ride on a vehicle.

Attitude of Other Students:

Attitude of other student is one of the important factors for the promotion of tribal student's higher education i.e., environment factor is one of the crucial factors for the development.

GOVERNMENT LAWS FOR UPLIFTMENT OF TRIBAL STUDENTS

As we discussed earlier Tribes are very backward in education and in other fields, hence it's a special responsibility of the state and central government as well as of educated citizens of the country to promote vital of education among scheduled tribes. With the formulation of National Policy of Education, India initiated a wide range of programmes for achieving the goal of education. are as follows -

For the spread of education schemes such programmes are implemented in the tribal areas, that dramatically increases the enrollment rate.

Schemes for Elementary and Primary Education

1. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – SSA is implemented as India's main programme for universalizing elementary education. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gaps in education, enhancement and overall development of students.
2. Mid Day Meal – The Mid day Meals scheme is a school meal programme in India designed to better the nutritional value in school going students at Balwadi, Madarsas, Primary and Upper Primary stages. The scheme has been renamed as Poshan Scheme. The abhiyan supplies free lunches on working days for children in government primary and upper primary schools.
3. Strengthening of Quality Education – This goal ensures that all the girls and boys complete free primary and secondary school education by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training.
4. Right to Education – The Right of Education to Free and Compulsory Education Act is an act enacted in 2009, describes the free and compulsory education for children between age of 6-14 years in India under Article 21 A of Indian Constitution.
5. Balwadis – Government has setup balwadis in zilla parishad primary school. The purpose of Balwadis is to provide a child facilities for physical and mental growth at school and at home. Thousands of balwadies have been set up all over India by government and non-government agencies.
6. Muskan Library – Government has established Muskan Library for primary students, where students spend their time by reading story books, small poetry books and comics in a healthy environment. In this library students can enjoy the time spent here and also can learn so many things.

7. Free School Uniform -There is a scheme of providing two sets of free stitched uniform to the children belonging to ST/SC in elementary , primary and upper primary stages.
8. Free School Books – Free school books are provided to the students of elementary schools as they are not capable to effort books because of their poor economic condition .Government also providing notebook to the students.
9. Free School Education– Education is free in elementary level for all the students from class 1 to 8th to enhance the percentage of literacy in India.

Schemes For Secondary Education

Secondary education is the most significant stage in the educational hierarchy as it prepare the students for higher education and also for vocational training .At present following schemes targeted at secondary stage are being implemented

1. Rastriya Madhyamic Shiksha Abhiyan- This scheme was launched in 2009 with the objective to enhance access to secondary education and to improve it's quality.
2. Girls/boys Hostel Scheme- Transportation facility is not satisfactory in tribal area ,so students do not reach school on time ,hence to improve daily attendance and to create and develop interest in studies and other activities government has opened hostels for them in distant tribal areas.

The scheme for construction of ST Girls' Hostel was started during the Third Plan period. A separate scheme for construction of ST Boys was launched in 1989-90. Both schemes were merged into one scheme during 10th Five Year Plan. The objective of the scheme is to promote literacy among tribal students by providing hostel accommodation to such ST students who would otherwise have been unable to continue their education because of their poor economic condition, and the remote location of their villages.

3. Incentive for Girls at secondary level – A sum of rs 3000 would be deposited in the bank or in a post office for tribal girls studying in highschool, which will be transferred in their account after passing the high school exam in first attempt.
4. Inclusive education for CWSN (Child with Special Needs) at Secondary stage- In 2009 when RTE was launched education became free and compulsory to all the children including CWSN. As per amendment of 2012 it also mandates that ,a child with multiple or severe disabilities has the right to opt for home based education.

5. National Merit-cum-Means Scholarship– The objective of the scheme is to provide financial support to the poor and meritorious students.
6. State and National Scholarship for ST and SC students at pre Metric and Post Metric Stage CG Scholarship is provided by the social welfare department of Chhattisgarh ,has been granting opportunities to the students belonging to the SC/ST/OBC .
7. Opening and development of government and non-government secondary at every 3 kilometers distance to promote education .In 9th plan special provision has been set up hostel facilities including pre and post metric scholarship are initiated exclusively for tribal.
8. Adult education program- This program aims at extending educational options to those adults ,who have lost the opportunity and have crossed the age of formal education, but now feel a need for learning ,including basic education ,skill development and continuing education.
9. Schemes for the establishment of Ashram School in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas: This scheme is operational in tribal sub plan 1990-91. The presence of boarding and lodging facilities has been found to be the factor of higher rate of enrolment in schools). The objective of this scheme is to promote and extend educational facilities to Scheduled Tribe students including PGTs. Ashram Schools provide education with residential facilities in an environment conducive to learning. This is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on a cost sharing basis between the Centre and the States.
10. Quality improvement of English teaching on tribal areas- Government and NGO has launched several teaching programs to improve English in tribal area as English is a global language, and everyone should learn English.
11. Free Text Books - - Free school books are provided to the students of secondary schools as they are not capable to effort books because of their poor economic condition .
12. Free Cycle Scheme- Saraswati cycle campaign was launched to distribute cycle to the girls studying in class 9th every year to increase the percentage of school going students.
13. Free Education to All– in a new setup government is opening Atmanand schools ,in which school education is free to all.The SC children are exempted from payment of any tuition fee for entire education right up to the university level.

14. Book Bank: In order to reduce the drop-out rates of the ST students from the professional institutes /universities, funds are provided for the purchase of books under this scheme. The central assistance to States /UT Administration for setting up Books Banks is limited to the following ceiling or actual cost of the set, whichever is less.
15. Vocational Training Centers in Tribal Area: This scheme was introduced in 1992-93 and is continuing. The main objective of this Scheme is to develop the skills of the ST Youths for a variety of job as well as self employment and to improve their socio economic conditions by enhancing their income. Under this scheme 100% grants are provided to the States, UTs and other Associations implementing the scheme. Under this scheme, the Ministry provides financial assistance under three components: Grants to Tribal Research Institutes on 50:50 sharing basis; for conducting Research and Evaluation Studies, Seminars, Workshops etc. Awards of Research Fellowships to Tribal Students on 100% basis registered in Indian Universities and Supporting projects of All-India or Inter-State nature on 100% basis to NGOs/Universities etc. for conducting research on tribal matters, travel Grants and for the Publication of Books on tribals
16. Coaching For Scheduled Tribe Students: The scheduled tribe candidates coming from deprived families and disadvantaged environment find it difficult to compete with those coming from a socially and economically advantageous background. To promote a more level playing field, and give ST candidate a better chance to succeed in competitive examinations, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs supports a scheme for coaching for the disadvantaged ST candidates in quality coaching institutions to enable to successfully compete in examinations for jobs/admission to professional courses. The scheme supports free coaching to ST candidates for various competitive examinations viz. Civil Services /State Civil Services/ Other Exams conducted by UPSC like CDS, NDA, etc./ professional courses like Medical, Engineering, Business Administration/Banking/Staff Selection Commission /Railway Recruitment Boards/insurance companies etc. The financial norms of the scheme have been revised during 2007-2008. The scheme covers coaching fees, monthly stipend @Rs 1000/- per ST student per month and boarding/lodging charges for out station students @Rs 2000/- per student per month for the period of coaching.

17. Strengthening education among Scheduled Tribe girls in low literacy districts: It is a gender scheme of the Ministry of tribal affairs .The scheme aims to bridge the gap in literacy between the general female population and tribal women, through facilitating 100 %enrolment of tribal girls in the identified districts or blocks, more particularly in the naxal affected areas and in the areas inhabited by the Primitive Tribal Groups (PGTs), and reducing drop -out rates at the elementary level by creating required ambience for education. The scheme covers 54 identified districts in 12 States and 1 Union Territory where the ST population is 25% or more, and ST female literacy is below 35% or its fraction as per census 2001. In addition, any other tribal block in a district, other than aforesaid 54 identified districts, which has scheduled tribal population 25% or above, tribal female literacy rate below 35 % or its fraction, as per census, are also covered. The scheme is implemented by nongovernmental organizations and autonomous societies of the State Government/ Union Territory.

CONCLUSION

The present paper describes a wide range of issues and problems faced by the tribal to achieve education in India and also the schemes launched by the government to fulfill the aim. Tribal live a challenging life and face problems related to their residence, economic, transport, less basic amenities, job security, unemployment and educational problem.

To overcome all these problems education is the basic root. But to achieve education they have to face a lot of problems . Untrained teachers and problem of transport are the biggest barrier in education of tribes.

Due to language problem less Interaction between the teacher and the students, they are unable to understand each other's language then teaching learning process stops .Study material in local language should be used to teach tribal students.Literacy campaign should be done in different tribal areas to promote education of tribes.

To improve the educational and economic status of the tribal, opportunities for basic and adult education with training leading to better employment should be provided. Hostel facilities to tribal students should be improved. Tribal welfare department may design and launch new programmes to generate employment opportunities for tribal's.

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