



Tribal Education and Impact of Ashram Schools – A Study

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Abstract : Education is one of the means of the development which transfer society from backward to develop one. The nation's culture, socio- economic progress is based on educational status of the citizen. Since India is pluralistic country which inhabited large variety of cultures, religions, languages and economic stages. India is a home to a large variety of indigenous people. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. With a population of more than 10.2crores, India has the single largest tribal population in the world. This constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Census of India, 2011). Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is in fact, an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. It is an activity, or a series of activities, or a process which may either improve the immediate living conditions or increase the potential for future living. It is the single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being.

Keywords: Tribal's, Education, Ashram schools.

Introduction: Education determines the level of progress of people living anywhere in the world. Education is a unique investment and scholastic achievement is a vital aspect in education. The educational resources available to children in India are not same in all communities due to many reasons. Especially the children from tribal communities usually are deprived of educational opportunities due to parental illiteracy, ignorance, affordability and accessibility.

Education plays a vital role in building up of the society. A modern society cannot fulfill its aim of economic growth, technical development and cultural advancement without fully harnessing the talents of its citizens

(Sharma, 1985). So it became the duty of every country to provide maximum educational opportunities to all of its children who are the future of the country. Educationists thus strive to fully develop the intellectual potential of the students and make efforts to see that their potentialities are fully realized and channelized for the benefit of the individuals and that of the society.

Professor Amartya Sen recently emphasized education as an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy. Some of the communities notably, Scheduled Tribe is economically marginalized and educationally stands at the bottom stage among the total population of the country. Educational empowerment is the most effective parameter to economic development and



to bring out people from poverty trap. The Government has recognized the importance of education and added many amendments to constitution like RTE (Right to Education) act enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 under article 21A which came in force on 1 April 2010. Article 15, 17, 46 safeguard the educational interests of the weaker sections of the society, that is, socially and educationally backward classes of citizens and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan a flagship programme was launched to achieve universal elementary education in a time bound manner. There are many provision in the act that prohibit corporal punishment, detention and expulsion which need to be fore fronted in SSA interventions to ensure that we move towards a system that provides a warm, welcoming and encouraging approach for children to learn (Saraswati 2016). An educationally deprived group, Scheduled Tribe is provided various provisions through Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Ministry of Human Resources Development. Education deprivation of Scheduled Tribe children through creating better provisions, relaxing norms for opening primary schools in tribal areas by, establishing residential schools like Ashram Schools, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalaya, Ekalavya Model Residential Schools and Vocational Training Centers are made available. Along with these, Pre Matric and Post Matric scholarships for top class education like Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship is being provided to Tribal children for higher education.

Literature review: There exists a substantial amount of literature on the condition of tribal education in India. A brief review is worthwhile in order to highlight what has already been done in the field. In a study on tribes of Andhra Pradesh, K. Sujatha (1994) contends that the perspective adopted for educational development of tribal communities fails to adequately address the specific disadvantages characterizing the tribal population. She found that one of the major constraints of tribal education at the planning level is the adoption of a dual system of administration. Rani, M (2000) observed in her study that due to the language barrier the tribal children are unable to establish communication link with the teacher and thus leading to the termination of their education in some point or the other. Vaidyanathan and Nair, (2001) suggested that teacher motivation contributes more to teaching – learning process than teacher competence. Sujatha.K (2002) revealed that though education was not Challenging Issues of Tribal Education in India www.iosrjournals.org 49 | Page a critical demand among Scheduled Tribes, government policy focused on education as the main avenue by which to integrate them into „mainstream“ society. Jha & Jhingran, D. (2002) have strongly advocated the use of the mother tongue or home language as medium of instruction in early stages of education. This assumes greater significance in the context of education of tribal children because their mother tongue is often quite distinct from the prominent languages in the state or regional languages and it is desirable to have a local teacher from the same tribal community. The Praitichi Committee Report (2002) identifies cost of schooling,



lack of motivation of teachers, lack of inspection, and the increasing dependence on private tutoring to be the main hurdles in the path of education for tribal children. Gautam.V (2004) in his article found that high "dropout" rates among tribal children. He analyzed that due to wrong medium of instruction, the appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal areas and communication gap between the teachers and tribal children are the causes of high dropout rates in tribal schools. Maharatna, A. (2005) the key challenge does not concern how tribes can be brought within the folds of mainstream society and culture, but how a more voluntary and mutual interaction between tribes and mainstream society can be developed. Lal, M. (2005) found that among all school dropouts, Adivasis and Dalits form the biggest group. Further, the largest group amongst them is girls. Education, thus for the weaker sections of the society needs to become the panacea and an inclusive growth strategy for their economic and social upliftment. Education has special significance for the SCs and STs who are facing a new situation in the development process. Nair.P (2007) has given importance on non-formal education in tribal areas particularly to reach out to the hardest-to reach group of children in remote areas. NFEs therefore target children who are drop-outs from the formal system of education. This non-formal method provides room for innovations and injects flexibility to a rigid system in terms of organization, teaching method, content, target group of learners and evaluation procedures. Sedwal, M. and Kamat.S (2008) focused on issues related to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes – groups which are

recognized for affirmative action within the Constitution of India. Abdulraheem.

A (2011) explained that education as an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy and the policies have to focus on inclusive rather than divisive growth strategies. Haseena (2014) focused on problems of tribal education and causes for drop-outs. Tribal literacy is lagged behind because of their economic backwardness, social customs, lack of awareness about education, cultural ethos and distance between home and schools etc. Thus the policy framers have to focus on long term strategy which should enhance the educational status of tribal children. Saraswati (2016) analyzed the educational status of tribal community with the help of literacy rate. The paper highlighted the challenging issues of tribal education in Odisha. The Central and State Governments are initiated various education supportive measures like establishment of Ashram Schools, Ekalavya Model Residential Schools and Pre Matric and Post Matric scholarships etc. if these facilities fully available to needy tribal students, then there will be increase in the educational status of tribal children.

General Objective: To assess the problems faced by tribal children in education.

1. To find-out current challenging issues for tribal education in India
2. To know the impact of Ashram Schools on tribal education
3. To offer suggestive policy measures



4. To study the problems faced by tribal children at home.

5. To study the personal problems faced by tribal children in ashram education.

Methodology

For the purpose of the present study the data has been collected through the secondary data. The secondary data has been collected books, journals, reports, newspapers, magazines etc.,

Tribal education in India

In order to minimize exclusion and marginalization of scheduled tribes in general and integration of them in mainstream formal education in particular, the various attempts have been made by the Government of India through various legislations, policies, schemes and programmes. More specifically, In order to provide better access to formal schooling system with residential/boarding facilities, the Ashram schools/ residential schools for ST students have been opened in remote and tribal areas under the Central Scheme of 'Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas' by Ministry of Tribal Affairs since 1990-91. Similarly, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has also introduced scheme of 'Eklavya' Model Residential Schools for Scheduled Tribes (STs) students' in 1998 to provide quality middle and high level education to Scheduled Tribes (STs) students in remote areas. Apart from the Governments initiatives, the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also run ashram schools/residential schools for the educational developments of tribal children in India. It has been

found that in the state of Maharashtra and Gujarat, the Ashram schools/Residential schools are mostly run by the State Government as well as NGOs/voluntary organizations known as private aided/granted schools and they are operating at three levels: primary, middle and secondary. But, there is a very limited data available at the national level as regards to the number of Government as well as NGO run Ashram schools/residential schools exist in India, What is the condition of these schools? How do they contribute to educational development of tribal children? What is an overall outcome of Ashram school scheme in India? These and such other facts are not recorded either at the state level or at the National level. It is important to notice that the ashram schools/residential schools in India have been in news for varied wrong reasons such as mismanagement of government funds, lack of administration, poor quality of infrastructure, overcrowding of children, lack of toilet facilities, unhygienic living condition, poor quality of mid-day meal, lack of safety and security, sexual harassment of tribal girl students and death of tribal students due to various reasons. It has been reported that from the year 2001 to till date more than 800 tribal students have been died in Ashram schools/residential schools of Maharashtra due to snake bites, scorpion bites, fever and minor illness. This state of affair of Ashram schools/Residential schools has posed a new challenge to the government in implementation of Ashram schools scheme in the tribal areas. It is in this context that there is a need of fresh insight to look into the implementation, management and governance of Ashram schools scheme in India. After more than twenty-five years



of existence of these schemes, there is a limited data bank and literature on Ashram school in India. Thus, the purpose of this seminar is to bring in public domain the present condition of tribal Ashram Schools and provide academic platform to stakeholders such as academicians, scholars, bureaucrats, civil society and corporate sector representatives to discuss, deliberate and contribute an idea for the effective implementation of Ashram schools scheme and policy initiatives in India.

Impact of ashram schools on tribal education: Ashram Schools provide free boarding and lodging facilities to the students and also provide conducive educational environment. Tribal parents cannot afford present costlier education and they send their children to work which fulfill the objective of division of labour. Poverty is the major factor contributes to their educational backwardness. The tribal parents whose children study in Ashram Schools would be engage in agriculture or traditional activities, which will not support them to provide better education. Educational expenditure not only include boarding and fooding but also have cost on note books, reference books and stationeries, dresses for student, money for better treatment in private hospital and traveling from home to school and back to home by the students during holidays and vacation, private tuition fees for various causes like celebration of puja and picnic etc. (Saraswati 2016). Expenditure on these put economic pressures on poor tribal parents, such poor children could join Ashram Schools and absorb better education with lodging and fooding facilities at the free of cost under one roof.

There are many challenging issues emerging in the field of tribal education in India, those are mentioned as follows.

A. Poor Economic Background: In India tribal people are depends on agriculture or traditional economic activities for their livelihood. They generate less income from such works through which they can't afford good education for their children. In this situation they send their children to earnable work but not for school.

B. Isolation (Interior Inhabitation): The tribal population in India are located at isolated hilly and forest areas where modern facilities are not available. They have to move to far distance to International Journal of Scientific and which leads to absenteeism and dropout and also they will not join to school also.

C. Attitude of the Parents: Tribal people are illiterate and ignorant and do not know the value of education. They concentrate only on survival of their family. They thinks that their children also should have earn it would be better. This is the reason tribal parents send their children to work not for school.

D. Teacher Related Problems: Tribal locations do not have proper accommodation facilities so that teachers have to come from far distance city places. This inconvenience will lead to absent or skip of school. Due to this students will be delink from the school. Teachers may not understand tribal language and they teach in specified formal languages. Thus the appointment of untrained outside teachers also diminish the value of tribal education.



Conclusion

Education is the key for tribal development in India. But tribal children have low level participating in the field of education. Though the tribal development is taking place in India but the increasing rate is very slow. If the government will not take this problem seriously, the tribal education will become distress and despair. So it is the time to think seriously that the tribal education and inclusive growth. Thus there is an urgent need of thinkers, planners and policy makers to put efforts to address the problem and allocate more funds from central and state budget for tribal education. Easy access and more opportunities should be given to tribal children in order to bring them to the main stream of economic development. Education is the single most important means by which individuals and society can build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for their well-being. In the context of education of ST children, finding a balance between preserving tribal cultural identity and mainstreaming them seems crucial. It means building education programs that ensure a tribal child's success in mainstream schools. It is seen that the current education system is mostly designed for the dominant group. Hence, there needs to be investment in creating support mechanisms that supplement the integration of tribal children into the formal education system.

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