

Education of Tribes: Issues and Challenges in India

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ABSTRACT

Tribes have unique cultural patterns and various strategies of surviving. The majority of tribal communities are found in some states, like the Mundas in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Biagha, Bhil, and Kol in Madhya Pradesh. They have numerous concerns and problems, including poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, shelter, and nutrition problems, and they lead a wretched life with little resources. Tribal communities confront numerous educational issues, thus the government is doing everything in its power to address all of these issues by enacting particular regulations. This essay's main goal is to address the significant obstacles and difficulties that tribal groups in India experience, with a focus on their educational troubles. Additionally, the researcher addresses the key obstacles to resolving the educational issue and focuses on the legislation passed by the government to advance the interests of the tribes.

Key Words: Tribes, Laws, Education, Challenges,

INTRODUCTION

The word "tribe" comes from the Latin word "tribes," which is used to describe the "poor or the masses." The term "tribe" first appeared in English in the sixteenth century to describe a group of people who claimed to be descended from a single progenitor. The term "tribe" is typically used to refer to a socially cohesive group that is connected to a region and whose members view them as politically independent. A tribe frequently has its own unique dialect and distinctive cultural characteristics.

Tribe concept and definition: Tribes are regarded as human groups; however there is no precise definition or standard for this. However, it was defined by scholars in a variety of ways over time. They occasionally referred to "Tribe" as "Adivasees," "depressed classes," or "aboriginals."

As per the definition by Oxford Dictionary, "A tribe is a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having a common ancestor."

Education is a tool for development that moves a society from being underdeveloped to developing. The level of education of each individual determines the culture and socioeconomic development of the country. One of the main forces driving change in the direction of progress is education. Education contributes to the inner power of tribal societies, which enables them to face new obstacles in life as well as the economic prosperity of tribes. It is an action, a sequence of actions, or a process that has the potential to either improve the quality of life now or in the future. It is the single most crucial way for people and society to increase their own endowments, capacities, overcome obstacles, and possibilities for long-term well-being enhancement. Education is a crucial factor in any inclusive economic progress. Therefore, improving the economic and social status of the Scheduled Tribes through education is crucial. Education contributes to the inner power of tribal societies, which enables them to face new obstacles in life as well as the economic prosperity of tribes. In India, the backward groups' levels of literacy and education are significant predictors of their social and economic progress. For the tribal people, education, particularly in its primary form, is of utmost importance since it is essential to the overall development of tribal societies and is especially useful in fostering confidence as among tribes so they can interact with outsiders on an equal footing.

Despite the government's serious and concerted attempts to advance the scheduled tribes' general well-being, they nevertheless lag far behind in practically all of the key development indicators. Since they are generally unaware of the programmes and policies created for their upliftment, they are unable to engage in the development process. This is mostly because indigenous people have a relatively low educational level and a high rate of illiteracy. Therefore, the scheduled

tribes' level of education and the role of administration in this area are of utmost importance. It is commonly known that tribes' educational backgrounds are significantly less encouraging than those of the general community. The scheduled tribes' economic and social problems can therefore be improved through education.

Background of tribal education

The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution primarily outlines the provisions pertaining to the management and control of scheduled areas and scheduled tribes, including Executive Power of a State in Scheduled Areas, Governor's Role in the Management of Scheduled Areas, Tribes Advisory Council's Constitution and Purpose, Law Applicable to Scheduled Areas, and Schedule Amendment. Under Articles 244(2) and 275(1) of the Constitution, the Sixth Schedule primarily outlines "Provisions as to the Administration of Tribal Areas in the States of Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram," including the establishment of autonomous districts and autonomous regions, the power of district councils and regional councils to enact laws, the administration of justice in autonomous districts, and more.

Educational status of SC children

According to the current planning model, scheduled tribes are a distinctive target group because they are the legally weaker segment of society. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of ST children at the elementary levels of education has increased significantly as a result of the government's determined efforts at the central and state levels, even more than that of their non-tribal counterparts. For example, the (GER) of ST children at the primary stage is 137 as opposed to 116 of their non-tribal counterparts. The corresponding values are 88.9 vs. 85.5 for Upper Primary and 119.7 against 104.3 for Elementary (Statistics for School Education

2010-2011). As a result, these kids' involvement now roughly reflects their proportion of the primary school population. Although they are on the decline, there are still a lot of dropouts at this level: the dropout rate for ST children in primary school is 35.6%, compared to 27% for non-tribal students.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify the major issues of tribal education
2. To find out the remedial measure of these issues

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The research methodology provides a thorough explanation of how the study will be carried out effectively. The current study is both analytical and descriptive. The investigator has utilised qualitative research to meet the goals of the current study. It is based primarily on secondary data, which is gathered from a variety of sources including journals, articles, books, and periodicals.

Problems of Tribal Education

Let's say we examine the true concerns of the tribal people towards receiving education. In such situation, we must discover that the tribal people are more likely to live in poverty in both rural and urban locations. The main causes of their underdevelopment and lack of access to education is their scanty resource base, low standing in the socio-economic and political hierarchy, illiteracy, relative lack of access to facilities made available by developmental measures, and insufficient participation in institutions. Indeed, it is deeply troubling why, despite our deliberate efforts, the benefits of development do not reach the poorer segments of our society.

However, the tribal people currently confront the following obstacles in their quest for education.

1. Medium of Language: Language is one of the major issues with tribal education. The limitations are what keep tribal youngsters from getting an education. There is practically any written literature and the majority of tribal languages and dialects are still in their most primitive stages. The majority of states use the regional language to teach both tribal and non-tribal youngsters, which devalues tribal sentiments and makes education boring.
2. Social factors: These dispersed communities are home to the indigenous people. This requires extensive travel to attend school. More funding being allocated and new schools not being opened do little to educate the tribal people. Tribal society members have been able to fulfil their social obligations without a formal education. As a result, people must be willing to embrace instruction, and it must be delivered in a way that breaks down prejudice and superstition. The tribal people still hold the general belief that education turns their ladies into modern people or leads them astray, while it turns their sons rebellious and arrogant and drives them away from the rest of their society. Some tribal communities passionately opposed the development

of education among their ranks because some of its educated youths felt cut off from their family and villages after receiving an education and a job. Additionally, some of their beliefs and superstitions are involved. Some tribal communities think that sending their kids to schools administered by strangers will anger their gods.

3. Nature of habitant: These dispersed communities are home to the indigenous people. To get to school, one must travel a significant distance. The outcome won't be encouraging unless the school is located extremely close to their communities and its location has the support of the locals. A significant factor in the expansion of education among the tribal people is school binding. The building is rarely appropriate to conduct an educational institution because of poor administration, bungling, and occasionally financial limits. Children from a tribal village are unable to attend a nearby village's school due to physical obstacles.

4. Lack of internet in formal education: In many states, non-tribal students in both urban and rural settings are taught using the same textbooks as tribal students. It goes without saying that such books' subjects rarely pique the interest of tribal kids from various ethnic backgrounds.

5. Attitude of the other students: One of the main elements for the growth of tribal learners' higher education is other students' attitudes, which is why environmental influences are so significant. His unfavourable attitude may be reflected in colleges and other institutions of higher learning, which are primarily found in large cities.

6. Attitude of the family: One of the key elements that affect a person's growth in general and their educational development in particular is their environment or surroundings. The majority of tribal parents are farmers and labourers; they are generally ignorant of current events and the environment. Their surroundings narrow them, resulting in a restricted mind-set. The tribal parents choose to place their children in lucrative employment since it complements the family income rather than investing in education because it does not produce any immediate economic benefits.

7. Problem of absenteeism: The issue is really serious in tribal communities. Despite having a huge number of students listed on the rolls, few actually attend class, and even fewer drop out of final exams. The fundamental issue is establishing economic circumstances that could encourage students to become sufficiently interested in their studies.

8. Lack of proper monitoring: Proper monitoring is hindered by poor organization between the Tribal Welfare Department and School Education Department.

9. Lack of suitable teachers: One of the main reasons why education is developing slowly in tribal communities is a shortage of qualified teachers. The majority of teachers hired to educate indigenous children exhibit little understanding of the tribal style of life and value system. They treat tribal people with contempt and treat them as "savage and uncivilised," which prevents teachers from building a good connection with their students. A teacher in a tribal region is required to have a comprehensive understanding of tribal life and culture, according to the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission report. He must be fluent in a tribal tongue. Only then is it possible to serve as a tribe's friend, philosopher, and leader. A distinct cadre for tribal areas should be established, with some incentives, to fulfil the educational demands of the tribal society. This would help to bridge the gap between teachers and other teachers.

10. Communication problem: One of the key elements influencing the growth of tribal education is communication. Due to their remoteness, the tribe has difficulty speaking both modern and regional languages. In general, society and instructors in particular find it exceedingly challenging to understand tribal language. As a result, it is difficult for students to talk to professors about their doubts. As a result of their continuing scepticism, tribal pupils automatically dropped to the back of the class.

11. Lack of awareness: The majority of tribal people are unaware of the government's welfare programmes and efforts to improve the education system for them.

Government policies and programmes for Tribal education

Our national initiatives for tribal welfare have long recognised the value of education as an agent of modernisation and a source of employment. The provision of education at the primary, pre-matriculation, and post-matriculation levels has received a larger amount of the funding from the central sectors. However, indigenous education has experienced equally shocking waste and dropout rates. Because of this, only those tribes that were willing to benefit from this programme have received the anticipated benefits.

1. Post-metric scholarship for ST students: Scholarship for Scheduled Tribe Students Pursuing Post-Matriculation in Professional, Technical, and Non-Professional Courses: This programme was created to encourage ST students to pursue Post-Matriculation in Professional, Technical, and Non-Professional Courses in Various Recognized Institutions by Offering Financial Support. Students who come from families earning no more than 1,0800 rupees annually are eligible for this programme. The state government and the UTs administration pursued this plan in 1944–1945 with complete support from the federal government.
2. Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Program (RGNF): In order to encourage students from the ST community to pursue higher education, including M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees, RGNF was established in the academic year 2005–2006. On behalf of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the University Grants Commission (UGC) accepted responsibility for putting this programme into action.
3. Coaching for ST: Under this programme, ST students receive free coaching lessons to improve their knowledge and abilities for a variety of competitive exams so they can compete with students from the mainstream in all competitive exams.
4. Hostels for ST students, both girls and boys: During the third five-year plan era, a strategy for providing hostel housing for ST Ladies was initiated. For ST boys, a similar programme was launched in 1989–1990. Both of these schemes were combined in the tenth five-year plan. This programme intends to make hostel accommodations available to ST students in outlying areas who are unable to continue their study because of their financial situation or where they now live.
5. National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for ST: This programme offers financial assistance to deserving tribal students who want to pursue graduate or post-graduate degrees in engineering, technology, or science abroad (Master's, Doctorate, Post- Doctorate).
6. Vocational Training Centre in Tribal Areas: This programme aims to improve ST students' skill levels in accordance with their educational backgrounds and current market trends. They would be able to find acceptable employment or achieve self- sufficiency thanks to this vocational training.
7. Scheme of top class education for ST students: The Ministry of Tribal Affairs established a scholarship programme in 2007–2008 to encourage outstanding tribal community members to continue their education at the degree or post-degree level.
8. New Eklavya Model School construction: By as early as 2022, 400 residential schools modelled after the Eklavya model will be built throughout the country's tribal belts, the central government said on December 6, 2019. It is important to note in this context that a network of Eklavya Model schools is being established to give pupils from tribal communities' access to cutting-edge sporting facilities.
9. Ashram School in Tribal Sub-Plan Area: This programme was launched in 1990– 1991 with the goal of offering ST students' residential education. Tribal Research Institute: In the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Assam, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh, and Tripura, fourteen tribal research institutes (TRIs) have been established. Book Bank: Funds are allocated under this programme for the purchasing of books in order to lower the dropout rate for ST students at professional institutes and universities.

Suggestions

The best method for helping people and society increase their potential, get over obstacles, and have more possibilities for their well-being is education. The federal and state governments have implemented a number of educational policies and programmes, as well as unique educational facilities, in an effort to improve education. The tribal group does, however, have a difficulty with the development of education. As a result, funding must be allocated to developing support systems that complement the inclusion of tribal children in the mainstream educational system. There are various recommendations that assist in addressing the issues in education:

1. Campaign for literacy - An effective awareness-raising effort should be launched to raise public knowledge of the value of education. To literate the tribal, a comprehensive literacy campaign may be launched in the tribally dominant districts.
2. Study materials that are pertinent and available in the tribes' native tongues should be provided for all students.

3. The attitude of the tribal parents - Through appropriate counselling and assistance, the attitude of the tribal parents toward education should be improved.
4. Residential schools: More should be built in each state and district, and in tribal territories, they should be expanded to the PG level.
5. Female instructors and local teachers should be appointed more frequently in tribal communities, as well as more tribal teachers. Teachers in tribal communities should carefully evaluate the cultural, ecological and psychological traits of tribal children.
6. Proper Monitoring - Senior officials should regularly examine how well schools are run in terms of the curriculum, operating schedules, and attendance records.
7. Stipends and other scholarships - Due to the low rate of higher education among the tribes, tribal students seeking higher education, particularly in the fields of medicine, engineering, and other vocational fields, should be given special ST scholarships.
8. Social security is a major concern at residential schools, particularly for young girls.

CONCLUSION

People closely link a country's development to the ease of access to and possibilities for using educational resources. The driving force behind history is education, without which civilization would not be able to advance. The Indian Constitution's Article 46 emphasises the importance of giving ST and SC persons special consideration in the economic and educational and systems. The ST has received schooling at a very inconsistent rate throughout the past forty years. By offering appropriate education and awareness programmes, ignorance and illiteracy among the tribes should be reduced and eradicated. The government should make sufficient grants available to provide opportunities for basic and adult education with training that leads to better employment in order to improve the educational and economic condition of the tribal members. It is vital that different government administrations, planners and policymakers, and non-governmental organisations address the issues and increase funding for tribal education in the federal and state budgets. The children of the tribes should have easy access to resources and greater opportunities so that they can join the stream of economic growth. Making different policies and strategies for tribal development now is crucial. It's important to regularly monitor the execution and outcomes of implemented initiatives. The government will then be able to accurately assess their functionality and welfare.

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