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Education Among Schedule Tribe Population In India, An Exploratory Study

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Abstract:

Education is a basic human right that increases the economic, social and political cultural opportunities available to all and empowered the human society. It creates capacity to respond and opportunities, to challenge their traditional roles and culture to change their living standard. . Literacy is an important and primary indicator of Human progress. According to 2011 population census report tribes constitute about 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country. Illiteracy among tribals is major barrier to their development. Their living conditions are poor; they have to struggle hard for their existence. Most of the children belonging from these categories with poor family do not go to school. It is inconsistent to accept that while the state is developing by the rest of the country and in the media as the most advanced state in using information technology, it is however true that the literacy rate in the state is satisfactory in eastern India . The governments have formulated several of schemes for the socio-economic development and adopted tribal sub-plan. Education adopted as a strategy for promoting the overall development of the tribes and for mainstreaming them. The Paper explains that Education is one of the key aspects for the human development among tribal people.

Keywords: Education, Social inclusion, Exploratory Study, Scheduled Tribes & Human development.

Introduction:

Education forms an important component in the overall human development of individuals fostering greater awareness and self-discovery; education is a basic human right that increases the economic, social and political, cultural opportunities available to all and it is a keystone of empowerment of human society because it creates capacity to act on possibilities, to challenge their traditional roles and to change their lives. Literacy is an important and prime indicator of Human Development. Literacy as an indicator of socio-economic status is highly essential for the economic development as well as social development of a region. Education has been recognized as an important component of human resource among tribes and remains as an ultimate basis of wealth of nations. According to 2011 census tribes constitute about 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country. There are 705 numbers of Scheduled tribes living in different parts of India. Recognizing the Shyness of the tribes, the governments have introduced a number of schemes for the socio-economic development and adopted tribal sub-plan. Education was conceived as a means for encourage the overall development of the tribes and also adopted as a strategy for mainstreaming them.

The education of tribal communities is a matter of severe concern the statistic provided by the Periodical Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report (July 2021-June 2022), published by the Ministry of statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the estimated literacy rate for Scheduled Tribes in India is 72.1 . According to census 2011 the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Terengana and Andhra Pradesh show low levels of literacy among the scheduled Tribes. In contrast the states of Nagaland, Goa, Sikkim, Daman & Diu shows outstanding performances in the literacy development.

Objectives

The following were the specific objectives formulated for detailed examination in the Study:

1. To study the Socio-economic and Demographic profile of the tribal's in India.
2. To study the influence of developmental programs on education among the tribal's in the study area.

Methodology: For analyzing the objective, the present paper has fully relied on secondary data which were collected from census reports, records and journal.

Education Status of ST Children with Present special reference to Northeastern Region:

Education is a continuous process it's develop human from birth to death and is not only an instrument of enhancing efficiency but also an effective tool of augmenting and widening democratic participation and upgrading the overall quality of individual and society. It is important to note that Assam is one of the educationally backward States in India. In the other hand it is note that the tribal people living conditions are poor; they have to struggle hard for their existence. A critical look at the nature of the problem brings in the fact that the state has a large block of scheduled tribes, and other backward classes that make the difference in education. Most of the children belonging to these families do not get school education. They keep their children engaged in the household works since very childhood. Even if they enter the school, they drop out and join as a child labour. Ultimately they lap into illiteracy. According to DSNLU Journal of Social Sciences, Volume 1: Issue 1 : 2023 of reason among tribes human development rank in Assam. It ranks as remarkable rate in child labour in the country. As a result, the tribals have to face the problems of illiteracy. However, the scheduled tribes are analogous group. Assam is one which accommodates nearly 29 tribal groups. As per 2011 Census the scheduled tribe population in Assam is 3.89 lakhs that constitutes 12.44% of state total tribal population. The tribal literacy rate in India, as per the 2011 Census, was 59%. This is lower than the overall national literacy rate of 73% India. While the tribal literacy rate has increased from 47.1% in 2001 to 59% in 2011, it still gap behind the general population. The government has implemented various schemes and programs to improve the literacy among tribals, like the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSS), to address this gap and improve educational opportunities for tribal communities.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES / PROGRAMME TO INCREASE THE LITERACY RATES AND EDUCATION LEVEL OF STS

- i. **Ashram Schools:** Funds are provided to States for setting up residential schools for STs for primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary levels of education.
- ii. **ST Hostels:** Central assistance is given to States/UTs/Universities for construction of new hostel buildings and/or extension of existing hostels.
- iii. **Scheme of Strengthening Education among ST Girls in Low Literacy Districts:** 100% Grant-in-Aid is given to NGO / Voluntary Organizations for running and maintenance of educational complexes for ST girls.
- iv. **Post Matric Scholarship and Pre-Matric Scholarship for ST students studying in classes IX & X.**
- v. **Funds are provided under Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSP),** Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution and Scheme for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) for various interventions relating to improvement of education including construction of hostels, schools, construction of boundary walls in schools, construction of playground, toilets and arrangement of drinking water, kitchen garden in schools etc.
- vi. **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA),** a Centrally Sponsored Scheme is also being implemented in conjunction with the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 for universalisation of elementary education for all children in the 6-14 age group.
- vii. **The National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT)** in the National Curriculum Framework, 2005 (NCF) makes it clear that language and culture are important to all children's learning including Scheduled Tribes. SSA aims to develop context specific interventions.
- viii. **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs)** are residential schools from class VI to XII for girls belonging to disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST, OBC, Minority and Below Poverty Line (BPL). The objective behind establishing KGBVs is to ensure access to quality education to girls from disadvantaged groups by setting up residential schools and to reduce gender gaps at all levels of school education.
- ix. **States are also advised for expansion of scope of education** for Tribal children to include sports, physical education, vocational education, Tribal Art, painting, crafts, health, hygiene and nutrition, traditional food (minor millet) in school meals, etc., to make the school education useful, relevant and interesting for the children and tribal communities.

Results and Discussion:

Education as a Key to Human Development among the Tribals Education imparts knowledge, and knowledge of self identity and human environment will infuse a sense of confidence, courage and ability among the tribal society to know and overcome their problems associated with exploitation and deprivation, and helps them to avail socio-economic and political opportunities extended to them. But, the rate of literacy in the developing countries is very low. Being a developing country, as well as highly populous India is lagging behind in terms of literacy. Recognizing its plight, the government of India has launched several programmes since its Independence for the promotion of literate society in the country both in formal and non-formal streams of education. Education is one of the key aspects for the human development among tribal people.

YEAR	ALL		Scheduled Tribes			
	Persons	Males	Females	persons	Males	Females
1971	34.5	45.9	21.9	11.4	17.7	4.9
1981	43.6	56.4	29.8	16.4	24.6	8.05
1991	52.3	64.2	39.3	29.7	40.6	18.2
2001	64.9	75.3	53.7	47.2	69.2	34.8
2011	73.0	80.9	64.6	59.0	68.5	49.5
2022-23	80.4	86.2	74.2	73.6	80.4	66.8

Source: Annual Report 2023-24, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

The above table-1 shows as per census figures, the literacy rate for STs in India improved from 47.2 % in 2001 to 59% in 2011. Among ST males, the literacy rate increased from 59.2% to 68.5% among ST females, the literacy rate for the total population has increased from 64.8% in 2001 to 73% in 2011. In addition to this, the Department of school Education and literacy, Ministry of reveals that the Gross Enrolment Ratio of ST students for the year 2021-22 in respect of primary (I-V), Upper primary (VI-VIII), secondary (IX-X) and Higher Secondary(XI-XII) is 106.5,98.00,78.1and 52.0 respectively.

It's important to note that several reasons were identified for low literacy rate, several factors causing for low enrolment and high dropout students among tribal area particularly in Assam. One of the important causes that many of the tribal groups especially living in remote villages, and they speak Adivasi Misong, karbi etc. Many of the tribal children are facing difficulties to understand lessons in Assamese particularly the student who are at 1st and 2nd class. Tribal children do household work, labour work and cattle rearing are quite common practice by children in this region, unfortunately most of the tribal parents felt that this is children's responsibility. By this kind of attitudes of parents, girl children are unable to get 'regular' education. Remoteness is one of the crucial elements along with distance levels which have negative impact on tribal children education, especially girl children. During rainy session many of the streaks flow across roads in the tribal region, therefore, children coming from nearer village do not attend the school in entire session. Many of the schools situated in remote area of Assam are lacking basic facilities like safe drinking water, toilets etc a few parents do not show interest in sending their girl children. In addition to this teachers do not deliver their duties properly and their irregularity in attending to the schools, lack of infrastructure facilities, lack of proper or no transportation to the school, lack of commitment of teachers. Moreover, the government policies which are meant for benefiting the tribal students need to change based on suitability to the local environment rather than state or national environment. Though, there are several programmes like mid-day meals, supply of books etc. these are not reaching properly to the targeted group like PTGs. Awareness and orientation camps on importance of education definitely help for high enrolment.

Conclusion:

The schedule tribe population in Assam has low levels of literacy. The level of education of tribes is very low in comparison to general castes and other communities. Therefore the most urgent priority is to ensure access to and improve the quality of education for tribal to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation in developmental processes. All that has been described and analyzed reveals that education of the tribal's in India mainly after independence is a story of long journey and repeated efforts the government to bring the marginalized people to the forefront.

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