



Study On The Problems of ST Students In Tripura At Elementary Education

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Abstract

The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India, with a population of more than 10.2 crores. This constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Census of India, 2011). Tripura is one of state in India with population of 3673917. As per the Census India 2011, there are 31.76% Scheduled Tribe (ST) of total population in Tripura. There are so many problems of ST students in Tripura at Elementary Education. ST students dropout rate is high as compare to other tribes. Due to the weakness of socio-economy, they are daily facing so many problems. Education is the key element to improve their socio-economy. Aim of this study is to solve the various problems of ST students in Tripura at Elementary Education.

Keywords: ST, Elementary education, marginalized, socio-economy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tripura is a state in North-East India. The third-smallest state in the country. Tripura is a called one sister of seven sisters of North-East India. It covers 10,491 km² (4,051 sq mi) and is bordered by Bangladesh to the north, south, and west, and the Indian states of Assam and Mizoram to the east. In 2011 the state had 3,671,032 residents, constituting 0.3% of the country's population. In Tripura a mixed population can be seen Tribal and Non-Tribal people Tribal in India have to struggle hard for survival and development. They constitute a large number of populations so, their development is essential for integrated development of the country as a whole. They are deprived of normal opportunities which may result in intellectual weakness. Literacy and human development are keys to any quantitative social change. According to 2011 census, among all STs, 56.5 per cent of the population has been recorded as literate, which is higher than the national average for STs (47.1 per cent). Hence, the present discussion would focus on the ST Students in Tripura at Elementary level.

Scheduled Tribes: According to Majumdar (1961) the tribe is "a collection of families or common group bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos, regarding marriage, professions and have developed a well assured system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations."

Kamala Devi Chatopathayaya (1978) defines "a tribe ordinarily has an ancestor or a patron deity. The families or groups composing the larger units are linked through religions and socioeconomic functions."

The term 'tribe' has not been defined clearly anywhere in the Indian constitution. Only the term 'Scheduled Tribe' explained as "the tribe or the tribal communities or parts of or group within tribes or tribal communities". These groups are presumed to form the oldest ethnological sector of the people (Constitution of India, Article.342).

2.AIMS OF STUDY

- To find out the problems of ST students at Elementary Education
- To reduce the dropout rate of ST students at Elementary level.

3.PROBLEMS OF ST STUDENTS AT ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Tripura sketched its name in the top of the country's literacy list. But it has some darkest sides also. There we find several critical issues and challenges in elementary level. We can discuss about this problems in the following manner:-

- **Remote area**:- Most of their villages are in remote area. Their villages are scattered and settled among hilly places. It is not possible to establish school on that places if sufficient numbers of children are not found for study. This creates genuine obstacle to facilitates students for their study.
- **Lack of financial**:- Due to the lack of financial or money parents of students can not send their students to school. Income is more important than education to meet daily needs of them. So, they do not encourage their children for education.
- **Medium of study**:- Mother tongue should be the medium of instruction in elementary level for every students. Maximum ST students are speak their mother tongue Kokborok language. But in school medium of instruction is Bengali language.so, they can not understand class topics. It's a major issue for them.
- **Nutritional Problem**:- Apart from social, economic, political, cultural and other problems tribal children suffer from health and nutritional difficulties too due to different reasons. Some of them are-isolated living condition, unsafe drinking water, poor sanitary system, ignorance about maternal and child health services, malnutrition, illiteracy etc. These greatly affect their educational development and sometimes may lead to drop-out from the educational institutions. A recent study made by Deka and Das (2012) shows that the drop-out rate is nearly 14% among children of Scheduled Tribe families which is higher than other non-scheduled tribe children
- **Problem of Communication** :- It is the another big problem of ST students. Due to the lack of language efficiency they can not share and express their ideas with non-st students. Even they can not clear their doubt with teacher.
- **Lack of ST language teacher**:- There are another problem is lack of trained and lack of those teachers who can teach them in their own language.
- **Irrelevant curriculum**:- Curriculum of Elementary education is not based on local interest and environment. Curriculum should be based on ST students' interest, needs and local environment.
- **Other Problems**:- some the issues are single schools in ST areas, biasness of the faculty teachers, lack of trained qualified teacher, lack of study materials in their language, negative attitude of non STs students on STs students, etc. are the problems among them. It's the obstacle for educational development of them.

4.SUGGESTIONS

For the development of ST students in Tripura at elementary level we can suggest and take initiative in the following ways:-

- **Medium of Instructions**:- In STs areas, medium of instruction should be in their mother tongue. We have seen many education commission has been recommend that medium of instruction should be in their mother tongue upto Elementary level.
- **Recruitment of Quality ST Teachers**:- In ST areas, Govt. can take steps to recruit qualified ST Teachers. It would help students to clarify their subject related doubt through their mother tongue. And they can easily understand about subject related topics.
- **Teachers Training**:- A large scale training programme for teachers should be organized for Elementary level's teachers.. These programmes may be of short-term and should be performed in district or block level on regular basis. Moreover, those training schedules should project more of tribal issues - both contemporary and traditional. Another separate training programme for teachers may be arranged with the thought of using fundamental concepts of learning tribal languages, their traditions and other cultural features etc.
- **Distribution of Teachers**:- In Tripura, there are several hundreds of schools where requisite number of teachers is not placed. Those schools are seriously lacking of sufficient teachers. Obviously, students hardly find the service of such teachers who, with proper placement can satisfy various academic demands and interests of students. Further, it is observed that ADC areas have a strong dearth of teachers in school level. On the other hand, some schools are over-burdened with teachers. This indicates to the uneven distribution of teachers. The problem can easily be minimized by formulating a definite and lucid transfer policy by the State government. If appropriate placement is done, then this problem of shortage can be solved.
- **STs Students Based Curriculum**:- School Curriculum should be based on their ideas, needs, interests, culture and habits. It would help them to interest and engage in Education.
- **Teacher Parents Relationship**:- There should be a periodical meeting between the teachers and parents of the students for discussion on matters relating to hurdles in the path of students studies and on various issues that motivate the student minds towards progress and inculcate good habits in shaping their future.
- **Co-curricular Activities**:- In Tripura, from primary stage of education to university level, art and craft, music, dance, drama and physical education activities are nearly absent. Especially in school situation, no strenuous try-out has been taken to provide incentives and opening scope to those activities whereas they have the capability to develop the latent potentialities of a child.
- **Provision of Supporting Facilities**:- A huge number of children from these communities are needed to include in schools. If adequate numbers of facilities are not opened for them, then all initiatives would be in vain and it can even mess the scene. Hence, several facilities must be provided for arousing their interest towards education. These are: a) Merit Scholarship. Attendance Scholarship etc. should be provided for their financial support; b) Free text books, dresses etc. should be arranged for tribal students; c) Library facilities should be made available for the tribal students. For their convenience, they should be given scope to access books, journals. Magazines and other learning materials comfortably, d) Hostel facilities with all amenities should be arranged to both tribal boy and girl students, etc.
- **Teacher As friend, Guide and Philosopher**: - Teachers must not think about them in similar manner or rather they don't show negligence in dealing with the sentiments of tribal students. Here, full responsibility lies on teachers only to normalize the scene. They should be more sympathetic, caring, unbiased, supportive and sincere towards tribal students. In a true sense, their role should be friend, philosopher and guide".
- **Cultural programmes**:- For preservation and transformation of their culture, customs, laws schools should organize cultural programmes. It would help to enrich their culture.
- **Role of Organizations**:- Different NGOs should come forward with their schemes and plans prepared in accordance with the interests and choices of tribal students. These NGOs should further, organize different kinds of vocational and skill training programmes so that students gain the knowledge of work and build capacity related to future job experiences. In this regard, introduction of job-oriented courses would be significant.

5.CONCLUSION

Education is the best way to upgrade the economic and social conditions of the Scheduled Tribes (ST). Linking school education with life in general and the needs of the tribal communities in particular is a most important step that requires serious attention. Tribal children have very low levels of participation and success in school education programmes. A clear policy for local language or STs language use in schools is necessary for inclusive growth. Development of primers in the tribal dialect involving content from the local context will go a long way in ensuring children's active participation in the learning process in schools. For development of them the State Government has already been worked out to overcome the situation by means of settling so many provisions. For instance, SSA and RMSA both are functioning in the State and they have some satisfactory achievements too in elementary as well as secondary stages of education.

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