

# Tribal Ashram Schools Upleading the Tribal Students in Maharashtra

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Submitted: 15-06-2021

Revised: 27-06-2021

Accepted: 30-06-2021

**ABSTRACT:** The tribal people are lagging far behind to their most fortunate fellow countrymen due to lack of education. Literacy and educational attainment are indicators of social and economic development among the backward groups in India. Many schemes have been implemented in Maharashtra for tribal peoples' educational empowerment. Maharashtra is the only state that allocates budget for tribal development in proportion of its tribal population, which left no scope for shortcomings, even though the state runs 555 Government Tribal Ashram Schools and 554 aided by the state. But however malpractices in tribal ashram schools and ground reality of them became the burning issues for Maharashtra. The objective of the paper is to analyse the status of tribal education in reference with literacy rate, enrolment and dropout rate, the gender disparity in context of education in India.

**Key Words:** Drop out, Education, Enrolment, Literacy, Tribes, gender disparity

## I. INTRODUCTION

As we all know Education is the only key of transformation towards development and advancement in each and every aspect of life. Tribal communities are lagged behind educationally; they are not yet become the part of mainstream. Economic development of tribes also is depending upon their educational status which is very low. Education develops the inner strength of tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. Like all other sectors of socio-economic life, educationally the tribal people are not at the same level of development in comparison to the others communities in India but on the whole, formal education has made a very little impact on tribal groups, In the light of past efforts it is nothing to surprise that because prior to independence, the government of India had no direct programme for the educational upliftment of tribal communities.

With the adoption of constitutional Provisional and recommended suggestions by various committees time to time, the scenario has been changed. Tribal empowerment becomes the special responsibility of the central as well as of the state Government. Indian leaders realised that education 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 and they tried their level best to bring tribal children into mainstream. The tribal people are lagging far behind to their most fortunate fellow countrymen due to lack of education. Literacy and educational attainment are indicators of social and economic development among the backward groups in India. Currently, the powerful tribes are not only behind to the general population but also the Scheduled Caste population in literacy and education. Literacy rate of girls in Schedule tribes is the lowest of all.

Various schemes have been made by the Government for Tribal Students in Maharashtra, for their educational empowerment.

## **EDUCATIONAL SCHEMES FOR TRIBALS:-**

Various Educational Schemes for Tribal students have been started by the Ministry Of Tribal Affairs for the educational development of the tribals in India.

- ii) The Post-Matric Scholarship
- iii) The Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme
- iv) Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)
- v) National Overseas Scholarship Scheme
- vi) Programmes on Educational Development
- vii) Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalay
- viii) The Sainik Schools

**Establishment of Ashram schools** - The Scheme for the establishment of Ashram schools in tribal sub-plan areas is a centrally sponsored scheme for construction of all girls' Ashram Schools and boys' Ashram Schools in certain extremely affected areas in both social and economical aspects. The

concerned States are responsible for the operation and maintenance of these schools. This delegation of maintenance of Ashram Schools to State Governments has resulted in the poor condition of these schools.

#### **Tribal Ashram Schools In Maharashtra -**

Keeping in view the peculiar problems and recommendation pointed out by Kothari Commission on tribal marginality, especially on educational backwardness, the Maharashtra government in 1953-54 took initiative to start Tribal Ashram Schools. The primary objectives of these schools are to provide hostel facilities, quality meal and learning to tribal students with an aim of empowering tribal communities through education, which is the key of employments and upgrading the standard of living. The Tribal plan is designed by the Government to assist tribal department to develop physical infrastructure of schools and expansion of hostels. Along with it Government is providing scholarships named pre-metric and post-metric scholarships to motivate tribal students for further education.

Tribal development department, Government of Maharashtra, is financially supporting 528 government and 556 aided residential Ashram Schools in hilly and remote regions of the state. These non-government organisations running AS are receiving 100% grants from government on the pay and allowances of the teaching and non-teaching staff and maintenance. The Government is offering financial aid upto 1200 rupees per student, studying in these schools. Expenditure on books, writing material, furniture and contingencies is also credited by the government. For school uniform, utensils, bed-sheets and other necessities etc. Government is providing financial aid to the tribal students learning in Tribal Ashram Schools. Voluntary organizations are also getting grants at the rate of three Lacks for the construction of Primary school buildings and 5 lacks for the post-metric Ashram Schools. Backward Tribal projects like Dharni, Amravati, Akola, Pandharkawada are the worst affected out of them.

**Management Of The Ashram Schools:-** There are two types of Ashram schools in India,

- Government Tribal Ashram Schools
- Private but Government aided Tribal Ashram Schools

**Objectives Of Tribal Ashram Schools:-** Academic deprivation of the STs has been considered as a great issue for establishing Ashram Schools in

tribal areas. For educational development of STs Ashram schools are being proposed by the Government. To improve literacy rate of tribal people is the primary aim of these schools. They are started with the following objectives,

- 1) To enroll tribal students in schools who need government assistance.
- 2) To improve standard of living of tribal students by providing them appropriate facilities.
- 3) To improve calibre and inner strength of ST students as well as to develop their self confidence.
- 4) To encourage ST students for Vocational education and set up primary industries with minimum finance.
- 5) To protect the uniqueness of tribal cultural heritage.

Social and cultural atmosphere of the tribal families is not that much supportive to conceive education. Ashram schools proved a great help for tribal students to improve literacy level of them through formal education.

**Purpose and scope of the study:-** Adivasi children do not go to ZPs schools, because due to poverty they do not have sufficient cloths, money for fees and other school requirements, even their parents don't know their birth dated. If somewhat grown up children think about any kind work in forest or farms, then they can get two times meal only but they will not able to give time to attend schools. When their parents go to forests to cut wood or to collect moha flowers as they are their traditional work, to get some income, at that time these children have to live home compulsorily to look after their younger brothers and sisters. Another fact is that these children do not understand the regional language which is used in general schools because they speak in their own Adivasi dialects, hence if they joins the schools they leave it for this reason. Keeping these problems in view the Maharashtra Government started Tribal Ashram Schools. The primary objectives of these schools are to provide free lodging, boarding and schooling to tribal students leads to empowering tribal communities through education. Consequently, the authorities offer monetary help to tribal department for construction of new hostels and expansion of current hostel buildings. Along with this the authorities are offering Pre-metric and Post metric scholarships to tribal students which cover tuition fees, hostel charges and expenses on books, after having all these facilities it becomes necessary to know whether the Tribal children are educationally developed or not, are they getting all facilities

properly that will help them to improve their educational status.

Though Government made many schemes and policies for empowering tribal children educationally but still the tribal literacy rate is still low, it is a big concern, educationally they are lagged behind than the others, even the problem of malnutrition in infants is not yet solved, **all over in Government and private tribal schools students are getting good facilities which make their attitude favourable towards education.**

#### MEJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 1) Government schemes and policies are proved beneficial for tribal student's educational upliftment. That has increased literacy rate in tribal community.
- 2) Government tribal Ashram Schools provide better facilities to students than private Ashram Schools run by NGOs.
- 3) Government Tribal School buildings are well constructed than Private Tribal School buildings.
- 4) Most of the students living in hostels are not satisfied for the facilities they are getting, they demand for beds, fans, cupboards, better sanitation and good healthy food.
- 5) Student's security norms are not strictly followed in private and government schools hostels.
- 6) In many schools there are no sick rooms and no caretaker for students in emergency need.
- 7) Cognitive development of tribal students studying in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> is good in all subjects, except Marathi and English language.
- 8) Enrollment rate of tribal students is less than non-tribal children.
- 9) Students complete their secondary education without retention. But after secondary level dropout rate of tribal girls and boys increases incredibly.
- 10) Dropout rate of tribal girls is higher than tribal boys after secondary school education as shown in table no. 5.92
- 11) Gender disparity is sighted between parent's attitude for girls and boys, they give less importance to girl's education.
- 12) Following are the obstacles in the educational progress of tribal students learning in ashram schools upto Higher Secondary level.
  - ❖ Scarcity of modern teaching aids
  - ❖ Scarcity of lab equipment
  - ❖ Frequent migration of parents
  - ❖ Tribal students don't know the regional language

- ❖ Trained teachers are transferred in other schools generally in government schools.
- ❖ Lady teachers and lady superintendents are not appointed in proportion with number of girls.
- ❖ Parents' pessimism towards education.
- ❖ Health Officers do not visit to Ashram schools as per planned schedule.
- ❖ No separate buildings for hostel and schools.
- ❖ No independent post of librarian in libraries.
- ❖ No special scholarship for higher education to average students.
- ❖ Long distance of schools from home.
- ❖ No internet facility in many remote schools.
- ❖ Feeling of insecurity especially of girls in hostel.
- ❖ Parent's poverty, illiteracy and superstitions.

#### Findings from hostel superintendents' interview

- 1) In maximum hostels of Amravati division found full strength for high schools as well as junior colleges too.
- 2) There are separate dormitories for girls and boys, and each hostel has two superintendents. The post of lady superintendent is sanctioned by Government in 2015.
- 3) Per head grant on every student is not sufficient to meet their monthly needs. But even all those odd circumstances Hostel Superintendents manage good kind meal and other facilities.
- 4) According to them it is the toughest task to handle that much number of children together, belonging to different age groups. Psychological and emotional needs of primary children, teenaged inmates' addiction, non-cooperation, parents' non-cooperation, are some of the problems hostel superintendents face.
- 5) Last three years 15 deaths have been noticed in Tribal hostels in Amravati division due to various reasons. Students' physical security in Tribal hostels is a burning issue now a days, there are increasing number of deaths every year, due to snake bite, ill health, poor facilitates in remote areas, hygiene unawareness etc.

- 6) Most of the hostels are found in poor infrastructure conditions. In Government hostels inmates get better facilities than private hostels.

**Findings from the interview of parents belonging to tribal groups:-** Tribal parents are depending mostly on agriculture based, forest based occupations and home based industry, etc.

1. A joint family pattern is generally followed by tribals. Few nuclear families are also found due to migration they did for occupation.
2. Tribal parents pass on their values, culture to next generation but literacy rate of tribal community is very low. They do not prefer their girls generally to go to schools. For maximum families it is their first generation attending schools now.
3. Establishment of Tribal Ashram schools is the most important scheme by Government, according to them, they are quite satisfied with the facilities their children getting, but then also they asks for certain amount by government for sending their grown up children in schools.
4. Low level of collaboration between school and community is observed through interview. Parents are unaware about their ward's achievement. Maximum parents do not know in which standard their children are studying.
5. Malnutrition is the most serious problem in Dharni, Melghat region. Due to poverty from decades they are facing health problems, tribal people generally use their own traditional solutions to get away by diseases. They don't believe in doctors. Pregnant women do not follow doctor's instructions.
6. Economically maximum parents are living below poverty level. They have their traditional way of working; no advance technology is reached to them. They follow their own customs and traditions. They are quit superstitious believe in black magic and supernatural elements.
7. Parents want to see their children educated but their financial position do not allow them to send them to schools. Tribal parents expect quality education and good facilities their children, they want them to make a part of development, demanding scholarships for higher education to get good government jobs. Towards girl's education they are changing their views positively.

## II. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:-

- As per the students demand management should provide individual beds, cupboards to every inmate. Separate toilet bathrooms for girls and boys, common dining hall with table chairs and fans in every rooms to them. In maximum government and private schools presently students are sleeping at the floor, that causes the mishaps like snake bite, scorpion bite etc.
- Extra funds for Private Ashram schools should be provided.
- Adivasi dialects must be compulsorily used for primary education, later on from upper primary regional language or Hindi can be used.
- Hostel department and school department should be separated, they should held in different buildings.
- Scholarship for higher education after graduation must allotted to all students who want to continue their education.
- Full time posts of sports teacher and Arts teacher as well as part time post of librarian should be sanctioned by Ministry.
- Headmaster's post and Principal's post must be filled through MPSC. Exam.
- There is need of Internet facility provided to all remote schools.
- Student's Health check-up camp must be conducted once in a month.
- Ashram schools must locate far from industrial area.

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