
PROBLEMS OF TRIBES IN SECONDARY EDUCATION: A STUDY IN SELECTED BLOCKS IN SUNDERGARH DISTRICT OF ODISHA

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Abstract: Education is the most effective changing agent and it has been regarded the most powerful instrument and key aspect in the process of all round development in every walks of life of people and more so in the case of tribal folk. Tribes in secondary education are to be considered seriously as this stage prepares their life in such manner which would define their future career life enabling country's GDP growth and economic development. Therefore this study would like to focus on the very problems of tribes in accessing and attaining secondary education. The present paper is the study conducted on problems of tribes in secondary education. This paper is based on primary field work. Focused Group Discussion method was executed to gather the data and information required for this purpose of the study. This study is purely qualitative in nature. Through this we come to know different factors that are helping and hindering the tribes in the process of secondary education in Sundergarh and also we find different social work activities that would assist the tribes to minimize their difficulties and challenges.

Keywords: Scheduled Tribe, Educational Development, Secondary Education, Problems of Tribes, Government Schemes.

Introduction: Education is the most effective changing agent and it has been regarded the most powerful instrument and key aspect in the process of all round development in every walks of life of people and more so in the case of tribal folk. Government benefits do not discriminate any Scheduled Tribe groups and indiscriminately provided different schemes and provisions for the tribes to make them improve in education status. There are constitutional safeguards especially for tribe so that they come up in education. In post independent there are education commissions set up and different recommendations made for the development of tribal education. Despite all these, the level of education tribal people have been reaching is much lower than the other mainstream society. In this context, tribes in secondary education are to be considered seriously as this stage prepares their life in such manner which would define their future career life enabling country's GDP growth and economic development. Poor educational progress among the tribal people is a major handicap in their development process. Lack of educational progress makes tribal people more vulnerable to different forms exploitation and social injustice than others in modern society.

The present study is focusing on the problems of tribes in secondary education. This paper work is based on the primary field study. There are three major objectives focused up on. Firstly, to study constraint factors that are influencing tribes in the process of secondary education, secondly, to study helping factors that are influencing them in the process of secondary education and thirdly to study social work intervention in addressing tribes to minimize their problems in secondary education. For this purpose, the researcher has conducted field work in the district of Sundergarh, Odisha in three blocks namely Rajgangpur, Kuarmunda and Gurundia. Focused Group Discussion method was executed to gather the data and information required for this purpose of the study.

Review of Literature: Suresh & Cheeran,(2015) have mentioned in their article, "Education Exclusion of Scheduled Tribes in India" that, there are more than 533 tribal communities scattered all over the states in India and majority of them live in difficult terrains, interiors of forests or remote areas which are difficult to access by mainstream population. The authors stated that because of the geographical isolation, they were often excluded from developmental activities. Their study tried to identify the

educational exclusion of tribes by comparing the literacy and educational attainments of the tribes with that of the other social groups. The paper was based on descriptive study method and used Census data published by Government of India for the analysis and interpretation. Behera, Minaketan (2014), conducted a study entitled, "Status and Problems of Educational Scenario of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Odisha: Government Initiatives". In this paper the author has talked about Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of India specially Odisha who have special significance due to their being one of the marginalized communities. The author states that even after sixty years of independence and in spite of initiation of dozens of welfare schemes in the post-independence era, the living condition of PTGs in Odisha has not improved to an appreciable level. Barma (2012), in his research article "Educational empowerment of the tribal women of Odisha: A study of the PTGs of the Nuapada District of the KBK" has studied how education plays an important role in the empowerment of the tribal women of belonging to primitive tribal Groups (PTGs) in Nuapada district of Odisha. Gramaik, I. & Barik, N., (2012) have done a study on the role of Ashram school in Tribal education. They have emphasized on the following objectives in the study: (1) to investigate the socio-economic background of the students, (2) to evaluate the facilities of Ashram School, (3) to evaluate the performance of the students, (4) to evaluate the educational aspirations of the students in the Ashram school. Teodor (2012), in his study "the influence of socio-economic status on the school performance", has described the concept of socio-economic status as to highlight the position of individuals, families that influences the school performance of their children. Rajam & Malarvizhi, (2011) in their paper on "A Study on Educational Status of Tribal Children in the Nilgris District" have said that Literacy and human development are keys to any quantitative social change and these two factors influence demographic behaviour of the tribes. They continue to affirm the reservation policy which has opened the gates of education to Scheduled Tribes low privileged group's men as well as women.

Problem Statement: The parental education, occupation, home environment are not favorable, therefore Tribal student face difficulties in their education; they lack social support system like remedial coaching, counseling, educational campaign, sponsorship programme, timely scholarship help to minimize problems of tribes in secondary education.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study constraining factors those are influencing tribes in the process of secondary education.
- To study helping factors those are influencing tribes in the process of secondary education
- To study social work intervention in addressing tribes to minimize their problems in secondary education.

Methodology: The present study has followed exploratory research design. However, the study is qualitative in nature. The Universe of the study is 3 blocks under 3 subdivisions in Sundergarh district of Odisha namely – Gurundia block under Banai sub-division, Kuarmunda block under Panposh sub-division and Rajgangpur block under Sundergarh sub-division. Purposive sampling procedure was followed to select the blocks and convenient sampling procedure for the selection of the villages. The selection of these blocks is on the basis of high percentage of tribal population than other blocks in the district. Gurundia block has 79.41 % tribal population, Kuarmunda block has 80.3% and Rajgangpur block has 83.16% out of the total district tribal population. Three (3) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted to gather data and information at three villages namely Bhaludungri, Teliposh and Silikuder under the said blocks. Simple narration method is applied to analyze the information gathered in this study.

FGD No. 1

Name of the Village: Silikudar, Rajgangpur

Place: Village Community Centre

Name of the Participants in FGD: Promila Soreng, Anita kerketta, Rajni Kerketta, Rajkishori Soreng, Suchita Kerketta, Fransisca Kerketta, Theophil Soreng, Sushma Toppo, Maxima Ekka, Ashrita Soreng, Valentina Ekka, Tintus Kindo, Thomas Kerketta, Anita Soreng

Narratives: The FGD was conducted in the village community centre, Silikudar at 9.30 am. In this group discussion tribal parents of children going to secondary school were present. The parents started discussion on the problems faced while studying secondary education. Firstly, Alcoholic environment is hampering educational progress of tribes in secondary education. There is local alcohol named 'Handia', rice beer available all along the road. And children go to school through the same way. So mostly the boys in secondary school who are in teen age phase of life, they are the main victims of this alcoholic environment. They consume it for fun in the beginning but slowly it turns into their habit. They get drunk and do not go to schools. At home the parents are alcoholic. They come home drunk and create lots of noise and fight. Due to this Tribal students are disturbed at home in their study. Participants suggest to stop the sale of alcohol along the road where children going to school. Secondly, they discussed that Work load from home which is posing hindrance to tribal students in their good performance in secondary education. All the tribal families are dependent on agricultural produce. Without the cultivation of paddy, vegetables, wheat, etc. they cannot survive. So they are forced to give load of household activities on girl student and agricultural field activities on boy student in the tribal family. The children had to bear a lot of struggle while studying in secondary education. Thirdly, the members discussed that illiterate parent unable to direct their wards studying in high school. Parents without the knowledge of education they cannot assist and guide their children at home. So lack of regular and proper guide is leading the tribal students to face difficulties in their academic performances in high school education. The members suggested for opening of residential school for tribal student and active involvement of parents in the process of education of their children in daily follow up of their progress and remain present during their daily study hour at home etc. would facilitate in the tribal students in their progress of secondary education.

FGD No. 2

Name of the Village: Bhaludungri, Block- Gurundia Sub-Division- Banai

Place: Open Gathering Place

Name of the Participants in FGD: Samburu Pradhan, James Kisan, Bade Kisan, Juriam Oram, Ratho Kisan, Bansidhar Kisan, Mana Kisan, Christina Toppo, Sunder Kisan, Padmini Munda, Debaka Khadia, Wadhan Oram, Ludi Kerkatta and Hindu Surin

Narratives: This FGD was conducted at the open gathering place where usually village gathers for any meetings at Bhaludungri village. It was held in morning hour at 7 am. The guardians of children studying in secondary school participated in this discussion. The members expressed during the discussion that they want their children to go to study till secondary education because in the present times so much competition is going on in every fields of life. They wanted their wards to get good jobs after studying secondary level of education. All of them were farmers by occupation. They also discussed that the government schools don not impart quality education. They narrated that convent high schools provide good quality education. All the members liked to send their wards to convent schools but it was located at far distant and quite expensive which they could not afford. Some of the members narrated that they sacrifice a lot for the better education of their sons and daughters. Next discussion was on various short comings faced by the family such as poverty, unemployment, lack of proper house, lack of electricity connection in the village. Another problem they have in the rural area was lack of good tutor/educated person who could give regular tuition to the students, so that they improve in their performance. All the participant members gave their opinion and suggestion that opening of rural education centre at the village level could be of great help to them. They suggested for opening of rural library where different books made available for their reference. The participant members discussed that NGO and social work intervention is required in the village level to provide them remedial coaching and counsel them.

FGD No. 3

Name of the Village: Teliposh, Block- Kuarmunda, Sub-Division- Panposh

Place: Under Shade of A Tree

Name of the Participants in FGD: Bijay Kumar Minz, Rajesh Ku Majhi, Fuldeo Toppo, Lilima Oram, Tasri Kisan, Patras Horo, Champa Minz, Blasius Minz, Guenda Oraon, Benjamin Minz, Fulkeria Toppo and Goretta Minz.

Narratives: The FGD started at morning 9.15 am in the village of Teliposh in Kuarmunda block. The FGD took place under the shade of a tree. Members present were belonging to four major tribal groups i.e. Oraon, munda, khadia and kissan in Sundergarh district of Odisha. The parents of children in secondary education took part in this FGD. The issue on secondary education was discussed. The members narrated that the secondary education is becoming very important for their children. As for now secondary education is must for every child in order to go for higher education in life. The members are well aware, as they narrated the situation in the government high schools. They said that teachers in the govt. school are never on time; one of them said, "Teachers come to school late and leave the school early". There is lack of tribal teachers in the high school in tribal region. Some of the common and practical difficulties faced by parents were discussed: Firstly they said Single parent faces difficulty to send their wards to secondary school. Single parent struggles a lot earn and feed children and fails to attend extra needs. For single parent survival becomes important. And education is just secondary matter. As a result the children with single parent cannot attend to schools. Or else they drop out from the school in order to help their parent. The members suggestion was the sponsorship programmes would made available for such children to pursue their education. Secondly, the members discussed, was the Modern technology misleading tribal students in secondary education (Mobil, TV, Internet) while narrating the members said that tribal student studying in high school are continuously engaging themselves in playing mobile phones and surfing internet and watching things that are not expected. Of course not all but few of them are being misled with the technology. Thirdly, they discussed that Disobedience to elders by tribal students is the reason for their slow progress in secondary education. The members in the FGD narrated that this present generation high school going children are disobedient to elders. They never listen to elder's advice to study. This disobedient nature is also hampering their academic performance in secondary education. Their suggestion was to educate the high school students with good mannerism. Fourthly, they discussed was form of harassment to tribes in secondary education. Tribal parents narrated that during the new class admission process they felt of having harassed from the school administration especially in Ashram schools. Tribal students were rejected without any proper explanation of reason from getting admission into the ashram school. Tribal students were neglected in the school by teachers and sometimes tribal students were victims of bully by other students, which led to dropping out of the school. The members suggested that guidance and counseling could be provided to students and teachers in the secondary level schools so that they may respect each and individual student be it tribal or non tribal. It was again narrated that teachers discipline has not been check at anywhere. The members suggested create a mechanism that would examine and evaluate everything as whole. For the better education of the tribes important role is played by the teacher. So they have to be well equipped and well integrated in their personality. This would require every teacher to be serious and responsible in their teaching activity. The members also narrated that tribal teachers were lacking in many of the secondary schools. Their unanimous suggestion was to appoint more tribal teachers in the tribal habitat regions.

Constraining Factors: The constraint factors that are found out in this study are:

Alcoholic environment is hampering educational progress of tribes in secondary education. Work load to tribal students from home especially tribal girls are engaged in household works and tribal boys are engaged in agricultural field. They are engaged in family income generating activity. Distant location of good quality Institution is another hindering factor for the better education of tribal children especially for tribal girls. Poverty and low finance is a problem situation for tribal family. Unemployment, lack of proper house, lack of electricity connection in the village poses constraint to their education. Another constraining factor is lack of confidence among parents to enquire school teachers and administrators about teacher's performance in the school. Inability of parents to direct their wards during their study hour is also major constraining in their better education. Tribal student migrate to other state to earn money and show lack of interest to study in secondary education is found in the study. Tribal students have faced discrimination and harassment in their schools. Single parent faces difficulty to send their wards to secondary school. Modern technology is posing a block for tribal students in secondary education. Disobedience to elders by tribal student is causes of downfall in educational progress in secondary education.

Helping Factors: Helping factors that have come out in the study are as given below: The participant members said that Convent schools provide quality education which is helping factor to them in progressing in secondary education. Government provisions especially ST hostels for boys and girls separately and residential schools are much of help to the tribal development in secondary education. Parental interest for education among the tribal community is a positive factor towards education of their Children in secondary education. The realization of importance of secondary education by Parents, Parental visit to children at secondary school and boarding to follow up and support them in their educational pursuits, Parental support and self sacrifice nature in order to educate their children, B attending guardian meeting in the schools, realization of parental roles and responsibilities to educate their children in secondary education etc. are the helping factors for the tribal children in the process of secondary education.

Social Work Intervention: The tribal parents in rural area expressed their opinion positively for social work activities are required in the secondary level of education. Through their opinion it is clear that remedial classes for the tribal students is very much required and it helps to clear their doubts and improves their knowledge. With regard to providing guidance and counseling they endorsed by saying it would help tribal parents and students in secondary school to face their daily problems related to personal life, social life and also their educational and career life in future. Their opinion on introducing school social work in secondary level too was positive. In their views with regard to appointment of social worker in secondary school they said that it would be good but needs formulation of norms and guidelines and special statues for the involvement of social worker in educational institution. Their opinion on the sponsorship programmes for tribal students in secondary education was also positive in nature. They said that through sponsorships poor and needy students and those facing financial crisis at home are assisted financially for their education. opinion on the conducting educational campaign or rally the social workers and teachers affirmed that it would sensitize and bring awareness among the tribes regarding the importance of education and other educational provisions and schemes of government for them.

Suggestions: Following are the various suggestions and measure for bringing educational progress among the tribes in secondary education.

- Improve and implement provisions to conduct regular remedial class for the tribal students in high school.
- Setting up rural educational centre at the tribal inhabitant area for regular guidance to tribal students in secondary education.
- To provide counseling and guidance to the tribes and also to their parents in secondary school level so that they can solve their day to day academic and social problems.
- To introduce guidelines and norms for organization of the rural tutors in to form of club or association which would be registered just like educational trust and then they would fix up the fess for tuition of different subjects.
- To create alcoholism free environment to promote educational among children.
- Opening of more government residential high schools more in interior tribal belt regions.
- More appointment of tribal teachers in secondary schools is the needed. So that tribal students feel conducive to pursue their study. Introducing monetary/ non-monetary incentives for teachers in tribal areas. As many teachers hesitate to teach in high schools located in tribal regions due to lack of proper facilities they may be given incentives in any kind.
- To create some mechanism to evaluate may be annually or bi-annually of teachers' performance aspect in school, school administration aspects, school infrastructure aspect, student performance aspect, parents involvement in school activities, so that it may be help for the school to better function and there may be excellent output.
- There is requirement of Social Worker in secondary education system to facilitate the secondary school for its smooth running and follow up of it. More so for the tribes for their better education. Providing counseling services and remedial classes to the students and provide sponsorship to children having financial crisis in their family.

Conclusion: However Tribes have started realizing the importance of secondary education and making effort to educate themselves by educating the children. The actual situation is that the tribes are new in the process of education in comparison to the other main stream society. To become an educated from an uneducated background is a long term process where need to be brought total behavioral change and attitudinal change. To attain complete education as that of main stream society would take rather a long time period. To remain stable, to retain static and to complete successfully in the process of educating themselves they need support and assistance institutionally, structurally and at the level of idea. It is a time taking process for all round development to the tribes. They face many challenges in the process of education. We as social scientists, it is our duty to be able to understand them and help them out in the process.

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