



DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AMONG TRIBAL WOMEN IN THE AGE OF OPEN EDUCATION AND E-LEARNING: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF KEONJHAR DISTRICT OF ODISHA

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Abstract:

The present education age is termed as open education and E-learning in the globalization of education. So here the present study focuses on the actual condition of tribal women education in the district and different on-going modern measures taken by government to improve it as well as its effectiveness for decadal literacy change on girls' education in tribal areas of Keonjhar district. To achieve these objectives three research questions were established and Focus of the questions was to examine the significance of tribal women education for concern govt. Existing and expected role of tribal department in particular as well as contribution from government in general for tribal women's' education was also aimed to explore in research questions. The findings by the researcher disclosed that in some cases the family's positive perception towards their girls' education these are mostly high classes family, also found negative perception of most of the families due to lack of proper education and financial problem. However, at the same time severe scarcity of human resource and physical infrastructure for girls' education were highlighted in the areas that are the fault of govt. The paper recommended several empirical steps to overcome these problems including provision of new school locations and ensuring the availability of school buildings, supporting infrastructure. Financial aid for poor students also proposed in the study.

Keywords: tribe, primitive tribal group, illumination, vulnerable tribal, vaccination/inoculation, life skill education, SSA

1. Introduction

The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. Although Scheduled Tribes are a minority, they constitute about 8.6 % of the total population in India (Census of India, 2011), or 104,281,034 million people in absolute number. The Scheduled Tribes are not discriminated against in the same way by the mainstream Hindu population as the Scheduled Caste population in India. While the latter group belongs to the lowest hierarchy of social order and is often considered impure or unclean, the Scheduled Tribes have, for the most part, been socially distanced and living outside the mainstream Hindu society. The areas inhabited by the tribal population constitute a significant part of the underdeveloped areas of the country. About 93% of the tribal people live in rural areas (Census of India, 1981) and are engaged in agricultural pursuits. There are more than 400 tribal groups among the scheduled tribe population, each with their distinct cultures, social practices, religions, dialects, and occupations.

Thus, the different tribal groups are highly heterogeneous, and their differences are a function of the environment in which they live, the degree of exposure to the mainstream Hindu population, government involvement in their daily lives, their economic status, and history. The tribes are scattered in all States and Union Territories in India except for the states of Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, and Chandigarh. The tribes are heavily concentrated in the north-eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, and Nagaland although they constitute a small percentage of the total tribal population in India.

2. Education of Tribal Women: National Overview

India is the second populous country in the world with 104281034 number of tribal population. Most of the tribal people are poor, illiterate and inhibited in inaccessible forests and hilly areas. They lag behind in all spheres of life in comparison with other sections of the population. The government of India has launched a number of schemes for the promotion of education and welfare among the tribes in general and different new initiatives for the women section in particular. In spite of these efforts, the rate of literacy has not improved. In case of the primitive tribes, it is very poor and among women, it is very low. Literacy is the key for socio-economic development of any section or region, and this is the reason that the tribal community all over India have subjected to various forms of deprivation such as alienation from land and other resources. Especially the tribal women though they are away from the main stream of

national life, but they are not kept away from the impact of socio – economic changes effecting the society in general.

2.1 Education of Tribal Women: Overview of Odisha

According to the fourth, all India Educational survey only 83% of tribal population covered by primary schools within the habits or within 1 km of the same. Thus 17% of tribal population depended on elementary schools, which were more than 1 km away from their habits, out of these 13.96% did not have a school within 1.5 km and 8.37% did not have a school within 2kms. This contrasts with the general situation in which 92.82% of the population covered by schools within the habitat or within 1km therefore, more than 25,000 tribal habitats had no schooling facility. The coverage at the secondary level becomes still more unfavorable. While 82.18% of the population had a secondary school within 8kms only 51.89% of the scheduled tribe could claims this facility. At the higher secondary level, 41.08% of the general covered by a school within 8km whether only 18.08% of the STs had that facility in the state.

2.2 Education of Tribal Women: Overview of Keonjhar

In case of Keonjhar district it is found that at primary school level, the enrolment of scheduled tribe are 55.9 per cent to total enrolment and the enrolment of scheduled tribe girls are 48.3 per cent out of total scheduled tribe enrolment in 2009-10. At upper primary school level, the enrolment of scheduled tribe are 42.3 per cent to total enrolment and the enrolment of scheduled tribe girls are 47.2 per cent out of total scheduled tribe enrolment in 2009-10. But the aims of education by govt. Odisha to achieve by 2011:

- i) to ensure free and compulsory Primary Education;
- ii) to develop quality Education;
- iii) to stop drop-out;
- iv) to ensure 100 Percent enrollment and retention;
- v) to make SSA programme and RTE Act.2009 a Grand Successes.

In this juncture here, we need to have some strategic approach for improving the situation of enrolment of tribal children in rural and remote places.

2.3 Education of Tribal Women: Issues & Challenges

If we analyze the real issues of tribal women for taking education then we must find that there is higher concentration of poverty among the tribal population in both the rural as well as urban areas of Orissa. Their weak resource base, their low position in socio-economic and political hierarchy, illiteracy, their relative lack of access to facilities

provided by developmental measures; and their inadequate participation in institutions are mainly responsible for their backwardness as well as access to education. It is indeed a matter of deep concern that why the fruits of development fail to reach the weaker sections of our society despite our planned efforts?

3. Review of Literature

Given the scope of the problem and the multitude of root causes, a comprehensive approach is often necessary to meet the educational and personal needs of students. Addressing the many problems of tribal women education like, ineffectiveness of policy & programmes, dropout problem etc. requires a critical review of current classroom instructional practices, personal interactions with students, and educational policies and programs. In many cases, school and district staff will need to make modifications in these areas. In addition, greater support will be required from the community, the state, and policymakers - the problem is simply too pervasive and the causes too widespread for the education community to address the problem by itself. Dynarski, in Orfield, (2004)

For decades, researchers have studied and evaluated programs and practices designed to reduce dropout rates and to help students who are struggling in school. Although many promising activities exist, there are no “best” programs and practices that apply in every situation. One researcher noted that “we do not yet have a menu of program options for helping students at risk of dropping out. The evaluation findings are useful as guides... but they fall short of providing a scientific basis for implementing programs in new schools or districts based on the models”. Woods, (1995, p. 13)

Dropout prevention and dropout recovery programs have been developed and implemented with varying degrees of success in the past 40 years. Research suggests that reducing dropouts and increasing graduation rates require comprehensive, concerted efforts that include systemic planning and the willingness to change existing schools and create new programs and approaches to education. No single program or practice has been discovered to significantly reduce dropout rates. *“There is no magical, quick fix solution to the dropout problem. The problem is complex and requires a complex array of solutions. Dropouts have dissimilar characteristics and therefore need different kinds of programs which respond to their individual circumstances and needs”*. Jackson & Davis, (2000), significant impact on the experiences of students that inevitably influence dropping out. Three resources are particularly pertinent in helping schools increase their holding power. *Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in the 21st Century*

applies to middle schools. Resources for high schools include *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution* (Maeroff, 1996) and *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform* (NASSP, 2004). Darling-Hammond, Ancess, & Ort, (2002)

Evaluations of representative Coalition schools found that many schools have made progress in eliminating tracking; opening honours classes, providing individualized instruction and changing practice that reinforce inequities. More students have access to challenging college preparatory courses, graduate and go on to college. In a study of a set of Coalition Campus Schools Project in New York, small schools that were created to replace two large comprehensive high school noted outcomes of better attendance, lower incident rates, better performance on reading and writing assessments, higher graduation rates, and higher college-going rates. Mitra and Singh, (2008) The high status of women among the tribal groups in the north-eastern states has important effects on the literacy rates, enrolment ratios and dropout rates of girls in that region. High poverty rates pose to be significant obstacles in attaining literacy and education among tribal women in India. However, large differences in literacy rates in the various states in India show that social and cultural norms, proximity to the mainstream Hindu culture, and the role of women are also important determinants in achieving literacy among tribal women. Tribal parents had soft corner for their daughters' education. They were aware of the significance of daughters' education. But the scarcity of resources has compelled them not to engage their daughters in education. If there were some weak voices against girls' general education, these were based on ignorance of parents. The important thing in all scenarios is that people in tribal area of Dera Ghazi Khan want to educate their daughters. The major problem for majority of them is the absence of schools and school related human and physical infrastructure. The problems of transportation, drinking water, electricity, school buildings and boundary walls are severe in tribal cum rural areas than settled areas. Special efforts are recommended to refine girls' schools infrastructure on priority basis. Quality infrastructure ensures quality education and quality education ensures masses participation in education programs. Buzdar and Ali, (2011).

Large number of ST children are still outside the access of primary education and a high percentage of them drop-out without reaching Class X. The educational institutions for ST children are highly inadequate in terms of quantity and quality. This is particularly true of residential school facilities which have proved to be the most effective system for retaining ST children in school. The quality of these residential schools is shockingly below the minimum standard of human dignity for any child. Teacher qualifications and capacities are abysmally low. Sinha, (2005) Non-tribal teachers do not come to schools and teach, and they are rude whenever they come to

their school. The school languages, that is, Oriya, English, Hindi / Sanskrit, are difficult to learn for the tribal's, who speak different tribal languages at home. There is no proper environment to study at home. Tribal girls cannot go to the hostels as they are needed at home and field to extend support to their parents. If the school timings are changed to evening and the school holidays and dates for the examinations are changed to suit the local situations (during times there is no sowing, harvesting, etc.), may be, some more girls would join schools. Moreover, massive awareness of the programmes should be implemented for parents and community members.

4. Rationale of the study

The Orissa State government and the India Central government have introduced a number of important policies and different measures to provide education and to eradicate educational barriers to women in Odisha's Keonjhar district in particular and India, Odisha in general. For example: the National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 *"to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women"*. through Sarva Sikshya Aviyam, Up gradation of Primary Schools under SSA, New Residential Girl's High Schools / Educational Complexes, Teaching in Tribal Language, Bicycles of ST Girls, and Scholarships to tribal women and different Micro Projects, etc. India has also signed a number of international conventions that aim to ensure the rights of women as well as for right to education. After all these facilities still now the women education of Keonjhar district is very low that 40.30 percent, So there is a need to get understanding of perceptions and attitudes of the concern government and families for both enrolled and out of school girls regarding the tribal women education which was the major thirst of the study.

5. Objectives

The present study addressed with the following objectives:

1. To investigate the actual condition of tribal women education in Keonjhar district.
2. To list different govt. implemented developmental modern education programmes for upliftment of tribal women education in Keonjhar district in the open education and E-learning age.
3. To examine the effectiveness of the government implemented different developmental programmes for development of tribal women education.

6. Issues on Hand

Following are the issues or research questions upon which the analysis will be based on:

1. Whether the condition of tribal women in the district up to the satisfactory level?
2. How many programmes are undertaken by Central govt. and State Govt. to change the scenario of tribal education?
3. Whether implemented programmes are fruitful for the tribal women education?

7. Methodology

Descriptive survey method used in the study as the investigators tried to get information about more than one variable and assigned numerical value to those variables also with better understanding of perceptions of stakeholders (Hittleman and Simon, 1997). Through this method information about conditions, situations and events that occur in the present can be obtained (UNESCO, 2005). Therefore, in the present study the investigator used this method to explore all possibilities to measure the literacy and other developmental programmes implemented by Govt. To overcome the present obstacles faced by tribal women in general to change the present literacy percentage in particular.

Secondary data collection

The sources of secondary data are the published and unpublished reports. Data from secondary sources were gathered from books, articles, journals, published reports, Census reports, and Government documents. Quantitative information with regard to land-holding, demographic aspects, cropping pattern and irrigation system were also collected from Panchayat profile and District Statistical Hand Book. The secondary sources like books, journals, articles, etc., also provided a picture of the actual educational scenario of Keonjhar district in particular Odisha/India situation in general.

Discussion

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 wellbeing. It is not only applicable for man but for tribal women also, in the context of tribal women education. After many interventions by both the govt. and other agencies present educational scenario is:

Census Year	ODISHA		
	Total	Male	Female
1961	7.4	13.0	1.8
1971	9.5	16.4	2.6
1981	14.0	23.3	4.8
1991	22.31	34.44	10.21
2001	37.4	51.5	23.4
2011 (Rural)	52.2	62.3	42.5

Source: Census of India 2011.

Census Year	INDIA		
	Total	Male	Female
1961	8.16	13.37	2.90
1971	10.68	16.92	4.36
1981	14.92	22.94	6.81
1991	27.38	38.45	16.02
2001	45.02	57.39	32.44
2011 (Rural)	61.6	70.7	52.1

Source: Census of India 2011.

Table 1 & 2: Literacy Rate of ST Population in Odisha and India by Sex wise Representation 1961-2011

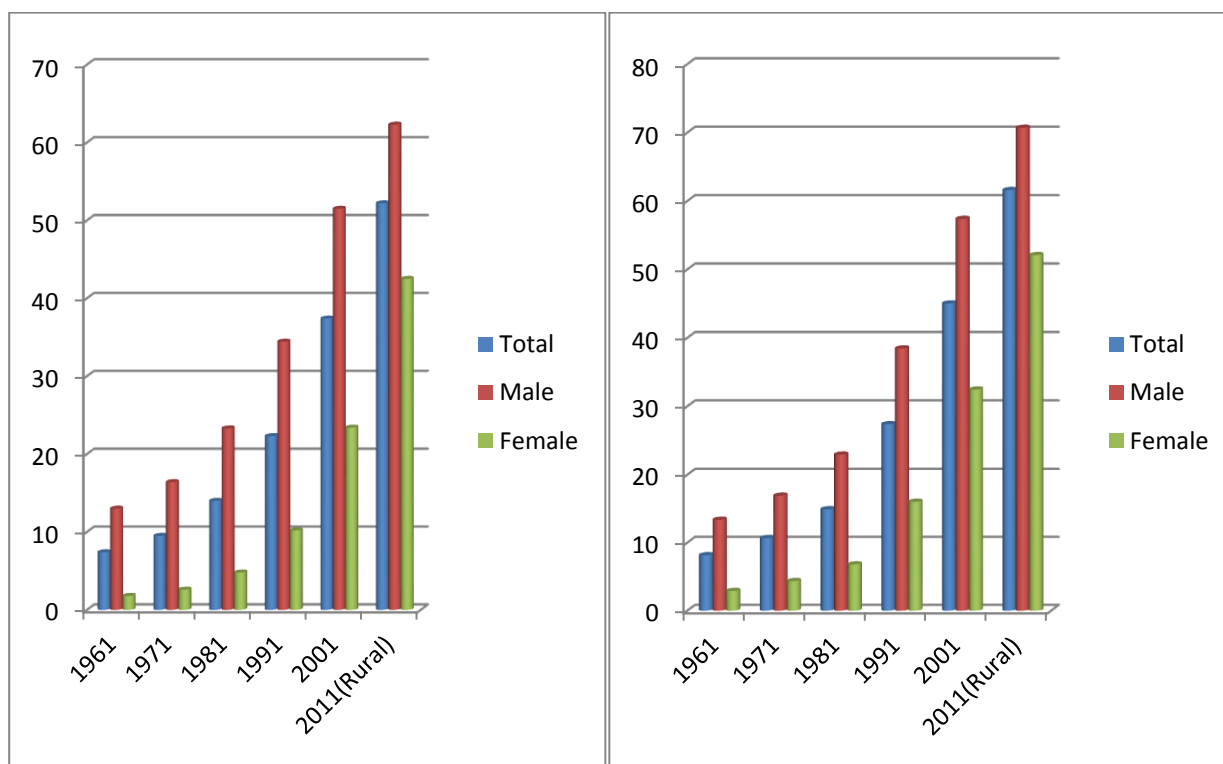


Figure 1.1: Representing Male Female literacy disparity of Odisha from 1961-2011

Figure 1.2: Representing Male Female literacy disparity of India from 1961-2011

The high costs of providing education and the need for children to work contribute to the high dropout rates in higher levels of education. This is particularly true for girls as poor families with limited resources would rather invest money in their son’s education rather than in their daughter’s education for reasons discussed earlier. While education at the lower level is free, there are other costs, including books and learning materials, which impose a significant financial burden on low-income tribal families (Ramachandran 2003). It is clearly visible on the following table and graph:

Drop Out Rates (DOR) Boys		
ST		All Categories
Classes I - V	37.2	28.7
Classes I - VIII	54.7	40.3
Classes I - X	70.6	50.4

Source: Statistics of School Education 2010-2011

Table 3: Dropout rates for Scheduled Tribes in India (2010-2011)

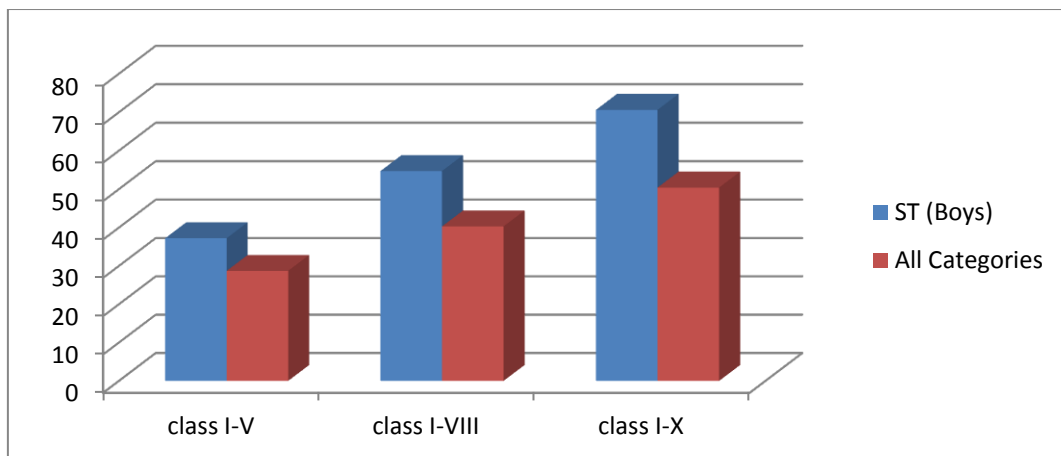


Figure 2: Graphical representation of drop-out scheduled tribe boys 2010-2011

Drop Out Rates (DOR) Girls		
ST		All Categories
Classes I - V	33.9	25.1
Classes I - VIII	55.4	41.0
Classes I - X	71.3	47.9

Source: Statistics of School Education 2010-2011

Table 4: Dropout rates for Scheduled Tribes in India (2010-2011)

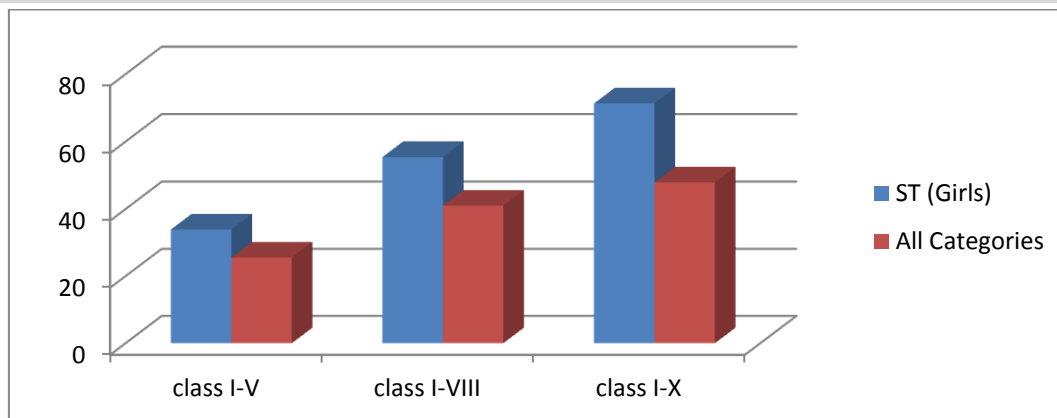


Figure 3: Graphical representation of drop-out scheduled tribe girls 2010-2011

8. Educational Status and Developmental Work of ST in Odisha

Special Programme for Girl Children Literacy

- To bridge the gap in literacy levels between the general female population and tribal women, through facilitating 100% enrolments of tribal girls Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (earlier known as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs),
- To reduce drop-outs at the elementary level by creating the required ambience for education.
- The scheme lays emphasis on providing hostel facilities to enable the ST girls to attend regular schools and wherever schools are not available within five km distance, both schooling and hostel facilities are provided.
- Improvement of the literacy rate of tribal girls is essential to enable them to participate effectively in and benefit from, socio-economic development.
- Promote awareness among parents towards the importance of girls' education;
- Ministry support any innovative intervention to promote scheduled tribe female literacy.

Issues

- Non-availability of basic facilities in the recognized schools such as building, classrooms, drinking water, electricity, urinals, lavatories, furniture for students and teachers, incentive schemes and beneficiaries, medical check-up and vaccination/inoculation of students.
- Non-availability of books and library, physical education, teachers, guidance counselors, non-teaching staff

- No encouragement for co-curricular activities like sports, dance, songs, drawing & painting, science exhibition, essay & poem competition
- No bench & chairs for sitting
- Illumination level is very low
- For every class there should be a class room and class teacher should be appointed.

Facilities required

- School Buildings and Playground Facilities
- Ancillary Facilities like drinking water facilities within school premises, toilet facilities (urinal and lavatory), electric connection, arrangement of annual medical check-up (vaccination/inoculation) of students, availability of blackboards, furniture for teachers and students and schools having almirahs/ trunks/ boxes for storing the records
- Primary schools with girls' enrolment have urinal and lavatory facilities, annual medical check-up of students
- The teaching-aid facilities for a classroom in the school consist of blackboards, furniture for teachers and students. The blackboards are the only easily visual teaching-aid in the country.
- Encouragement of sports & other activities to explore their talents

9. Conclusion

At last I would like to conclude here that many modern programmes are ongoing in the education sector in district basis but still one strong implementation and review for these programmes are needed for betterment of the programme in particular for the tribal people of this country in general, Because now even if UNO and every country admits that education is the only means to uplift the tribal people in the mainstream.

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Web Resources

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2. <http://www.unifem.undp.org/cedaw/indexes.htm>
3. www.nlm.nic.in
4. <http://www.dhaatri.org/dhaatri/publications/Study%20on%20Primary%20Education%20of%20Adivasi%20Children%203%20Jan%202012-final-small.pdf>
5. http://cmdr.ac.in/editor_v51/assets/mono-52.pdf
6. <http://s24pgseducation.org.in/research/survey%20201011/STUDY%20ON%20KGBV.pdf>

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