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# ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF TRIBAL EDUCATION IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

Ashim Kumar Baidya<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Prasanta Kumar Barik<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh

<sup>1</sup>Email: [baidyaashim@gmail.com](mailto:baidyaashim@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Email: [prasantabarik77@gmail.com](mailto:prasantabarik77@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

Education is the most essential element for the enhancement of any country. For this, education structure needs to ensure the advantage of education to all people of the nation, removing the disparities irrespective of category, religion, caste, sex and geographical location. If we overlook all over the world, the status of schedule Caste and schedule tribes are backward in compared with the other people. The term tribal came from 'tribe' which refers to a class of human social group. According to some studies on tribal education the tribal community especially who live in North Eastern region of India are neglected by others. In every aspect of development, the government policy maker of our country make plan for them, but sorrowfully these communities are unable to make them in the same level with the mainstream of the society. This study tried to find out the drawbacks of this tribe particularly in the aspect of education. The study also clarify the cause behind the backwardness of educational status related to socio-economic condition, academic cause and personal cause of students from primary to higher education stage. From time to time government implemented various plans and schemes for tribal education. This study also tries to give some suggestion for development of tribal education. And finally the findings of the present study would be helpful to tribal education for giving suitable guideline about all-purposes of education. The study deals particularly with the tribes of North East India in regard to education of all three stages and carries out the present status of it.

**Keywords:** *Issues and Challenges, Education, North-East India, Schedule Tribe.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is the most essential element for the improvement of any country. It makes an individual able to manage the problems of the nation and the society. Education is renowned as a tool for designing changes in a systematic manner and it is fundamentally concerned with every person as well as community development. It inculcates skills and competencies financially. The Indian constitution preserves justice, socio-economic and political equality of position and prospect to all citizens. For this, education structure

needs to ensure the advantage of education to all people of the nation, removing the entire disparities irrespective of category, religion, caste, sex and geographical location. The right to education of every individual is one of the primary requirements of the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights -1948' and 'International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights -1966', Article 13 and 14. However, education is mostly neglected in the societies to meet the needs and demands of their members. Now a day, education is making more significant as planners and policy makers recognized it as input in shaping the rate of development. If we overlook all over the world the status of schedule caste and schedule tribes are backward compared with the other people. In every aspect of development the policy maker of every country make plan for them from time to time, but they are unable in making them equal with the mainstream of the society.

## **TRIBAL PEOPLE AND TRIBAL OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION OF INDIA**

The term tribal came from 'tribe' which refers to a class of human social group. They are also known as indigenous people since they have a self identification with common and unique characteristics and social norms which distinguish them from other people of the society. The lifestyle of these ethnic groups may vary on the basis of their geographical location. They share characteristics of unity with each other, their earlier period and the territory they exist on. In our nation Tribal people are often denoted as native people, ethnic group, first nations, aboriginal people, adivasi, janajati, hill tribes, or hunter-gatherers etc. All over the world there are more than 476 million aboriginal people existing in 90 countries crosswise the world, accounting for 6.2 % of the universal population. An estimate of approximately 5000 indigenous ethnic group found throughout the world. Our nation comprises the second largest tribal inhabitants in the world. As per the census 2011 data, the tribal demography constitutes about 8.9 percent of the total population of the country. There are 705 indigenous group found in India with an estimated demography of 104 million.

NE India includes 8 states which are Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Sikkim. In accordance to census 2011, out of 457.74 lakh total inhabitants 126.79 lakh (27.7%) were tribal of NE India. There are 145 various ethnic groups with assorted social and cultural lives in N E India, where 78 groups are found in very large amount from survey data. One of the typical features of schedule tribes is that the conventional of them live in extend habitations located in remote, interior, and distant hilly and forest areas of North East India. The culture, nature, traditions, language, norms, believes and values are different in every ethnic group. Majority of the indigenous groups express themselves by variety of languages (Verbal Communication) which are different from the language spoken in the area of the state where they are to be found. There are more than 100 such languages and dialects found in North East region of India. As per geographical location, the tribes of N E region of India divided in two categories as hill tribes and plain tribes. The main tribal group of North East India which have more than 5000 population are- Bodo, Koch-Rajbanshi, Angami, Ao, Chakma, Dimasa, Reang, Konyak, Adi, Misimi, Aka, Garo, Mishing, Galong, Nishi, Wancho, Khasi, Tangkhul, Karbi, Tripuri, Lusai, Mizo, Kuki, Apatani, Jaintia, Singpho, Angami, Deori, Kachari, Bhutia, Barmans, Hmar, Rabha, Lepcha, Lakher, etc.

## EDUCATIONAL STATUS AMONG THE TRIBES OF NORTH-EAST INDIA

In pre-independent period the Christian Missionary plays a vital role in spread and development of tribal people especially in the aspect of health and education all over the nation. But they were able to succeed mostly in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and greater Assam, which is now divided into seven state of North East India. After that in various time the status of education among north eastern tribe go through up and down. Now-a-day the literacy rate of North East India shows slightly lower than the rest of country. Since North East India comprises mostly tribal inhabitant. Therefore the literacy rate gradually affect on the educational status. But it is grief-stricken that the literacy rate of female is much lower at all. From the other side we see that Mizoram shows highest literacy rate of North Eastern state and second highest of the country. Overall literacy rate along with the tribal literacy rate of NE region shown in the table below.

**Table-01: Demographic data of North eastern state (Census data-2011)**

States	Overall		Tribal	
	Population	Literacy Rate	Population	Literacy Rate
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	13,82,611	65.38%	951,821	64.58%
<b>Assam</b>	3,11,69,272	72.19%	3,884,371	72.06%
<b>Manipur</b>	27,21,756	76.9%	1,167,422	72.58%
<b>Meghalaya</b>	29,64,007	74.43%	2,555,861	74.53%
<b>Mizoram</b>	10,91,014	91.58%	1,036,115	91.51%
<b>Nagaland</b>	19,80,602	79.55%	1,710,973	80.04%
<b>Sikkim</b>	610,577	82.20%	206,360	79.74%
<b>Tripura</b>	36,71,032	87.22%	1,166,813	79.05%

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR TRIBAL EDUCATION

After independent our constitution and government come in force and give special attention to the education and development of every citizen. According to 86<sup>th</sup> amendment of constitution, Article 21(A) incorporates the right of children to free and compulsory education between the age group of 6-14 years. It is in accordance with the requirements of the RTE Act 17. Under Article 15(4) and 46, central as well as state government has established primary, middle and high school for tribal inhabitant. A large number of charitable organizations have come ahead in tribal areas for the function of educational development in those areas. In the first five year plan (1951-56) the government has taken much initiative for tribal development. Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects (MTDPs) were created at the end of plan (1954), Tribal Development Blocks (TBD) s was adopted in third five year plan period (1961-1966) and Tribal Sub-plan Strategy (TSP) in 1972 was enforced by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. Some of the important intervention taken by government for fulfillment of the need of tribal education such as- Pre and Post Metric Scholarship Scheme for STs, Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission for economic empowerment, Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme for ST students, Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna (PNAAGY) for improvement of infrastructure,

Mission Indradhanush and Nikshay Mitra Initiative (TB treatment) for better health, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana for holistic welfare of tribal communities, Vocational Training Centre etc. The National Policy of Education-1986 gives a board policy structure for eradication of illiteracy which was in very large number in between the tribal population at that time and sets a target of expenditure on education at 6% of the GDP. The 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan (2012-17) propose umbrella scheme for establishing 'Ashram School'. As a result there is 892 'Ashram Schools' established which was purely residential across the country only for the development of schedule tribe students.

## **CHALLENGES OF TRIBAL EDUCATION IN NORTH EAST INDIA**

There are various problems and challenges face by the tribal population world wide as well as in North East India. In the education sector problems and challenges may be face by the people who are engage with the system, but the problems of tribal people are somewhat different from the rest of the general society. Some of these issues and challenges are as follows-

A) **SOCIO-ECONOMIC:** - In accordance to Economic Survey of India the Schedule tribe people have a poor socio-economic position. They are dependent on the nature and ecological conditions for their persistent existence. They suffer in low conditions and backwardness along with poverty. They mainly depend on the innate resources such as, water bodies, forests, traditional agriculture, hunting and fishing etc. As a result of the low socio-economic situation of these communities, the pupils face different types of problems to get enrolled in schools. They also suffer problem in usual attending of school regularly. Tribal children are usually make active themselves in various household activity like assist in agricultural work, take care of their younger sister or brother, fishing , hunting, work at own house to enhancement family income etc. The society is also responsible for hindrance in education of tribal community students which known to be social cause like as- illiterate parents, lack of supervision and guidance at home, uncongenial home environment, marriage in the early age of life, bad company, juvenile delinquency, blind faith or believe in superstition, believe in dian or black soul, exploitation, mental pressure or distress, migration from one place to another, natural disaster, lack of communication and transportation, lack of awareness of their right, large family size or uncontrolled birth rate etc. Socio- economic condition of these tribal groups on a daily basis stands as partition for their development in every direction.

B) **ACADEMIC:** - New Education Policy 2020 provides more priority on tribal education but it is extreme away from proper accomplishment. Dropout, stagnation, distance of school from home, tough evaluation system, lack of co-ordination between teachers and parents, unattractive curriculum, syllabus not accordance to tribal area or environment, lack of tribal development and education policies, repeated failure of students, inflexible timetable of school hours, unattractive school environment and infrastructure, lack of teachers, problem for medium of instruction, untrained teachers, fear of teachers, unattractive instructional methods, inadequate teaching-learning strategies, lack of provision for co-curricular activities, lack of proper fund from government as well as from Tribal Affairs, shortage of learning materials, inadequate training facility for teachers, pitiable administrative functions, inadequate scholarship, holidays are not accordance to tribal economy etc. are some academic barrier identified as causes of education in primary, secondary and

higher level. Indian education design of is always good quality for the average society of the country but for the weaker division its need some modifications.

C) **PERSONAL:** - Personal factors are beliefs or behavior specific to a student, like personality and interest. School comprises of different students with different personality and behavior. They can face a variety of problems for which they cannot adjust themselves with the school environment as well as the whole education system. The success and development of any work is depends upon the personal factor of an individual. In the education system also personal causes plays a vital role for succeeding it in the all stages. Here indicate some personal issues and challenges for unsuccessful result of tribal education in NE Region as - negative attitude of parents and students on secondary education, illiterate or low literate parents, feeling of insecurity in educational institution, shy nature of the pupils, engage in crime activities, low intelligence, fear of study, lack of interest in study, fear from teacher and examination, irregular attendance, repeated failure, low health condition, give more importance in other works rather than study, bad company, alcohol or drug addiction, tensions for future professions etc.

### **SUGGESTION FOR UPGRADATION OF TRIBAL EDUCATION**

Tribal education system should have some changes and consideration to make them equal with the society. This changes in education policies can only make the tribal people interest in every stages of education. Some of these are as follows- literacy campaigns, attitude of the elderly individual, relevant study materials in local languages, appointment of local teachers and female teachers, stipends and various scholarships, residential schools and colleges, provide social security specially for the girls students, proper monitoring, equal opportunities, reduction in the household responsibilities, stop crime activities in schools, stop early marriages, create interest in study, provide free food opportunity, provide proper guidance and counselling etc.

### **EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Education is the groundwork for the development of every people of the country. It is also essential for the overall development of human capital. Each research study procedure has some educational implications, in the same way the present study has been educative in nature in the areas of the tribal of North East India, quality of education in NE Region, improve in terms of tribal education, enrichment of information and ability to conduct action research. The study has its educative value in solving the problems face by the tribal people of NE region at the all stages of education. The work is an eye opener for the educational planners, educational administrators, policy maker and community members in improving the system for ensuring the quality of education for this section of the country. The findings of the present study would be helpful to tribal education for giving suitable guideline in all stages of education.

### **CONCLUSION**

Education is the most important agent in the process of development and tribal education is utmost important not only for economic development but also for the inner strength of the community to meet new challenges in daily life. There is an imperative need for different government interventions, policy makers and planners to address this problem and assign more funds in the central and state educational budgets for

expansion of tribal education. The tribal youths should be more engage in every activity of society and school, so that they can show their hidden talents and capabilities. There should be appropriate development of the curriculum, medium of instruction, instructional methods and teaching-learning methods, so that the tribal children feel motivated towards achievement of education.

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