

Impact of Government Policies on the Education of Tribal Girls in Jharkhand

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of government policies on the education of tribal girls in Jharkhand, highlighting initiatives to improve access, infrastructure, quality, and retention. Key efforts include remote area schools, scholarships, infrastructure upgrades, teacher training, curriculum reforms, and retention support. Community engagement through committees and awareness campaigns has bolstered these initiatives.

Keywords: *Tribal Girls, Government Policies, Scholarships, Jharkhand*

1. Introduction

The education of tribal girls in Jharkhand stands at the intersection of numerous socio-economic and cultural challenges, often characterized by limited access, poor infrastructure, and entrenched gender disparities. Recognizing the pivotal role education plays in empowering communities and fostering socio-economic development, the government has implemented various policies and initiatives aimed at addressing these disparities and improving educational outcomes for tribal girls. This essay delves into the multifaceted impact of government policies¹ on the education of tribal girls in Jharkhand, analyzing the efforts made to enhance access, quality, retention, and community involvement. Through examining the successes, challenges, and ongoing efforts, we gain insight into the effectiveness of government interventions in reshaping the educational landscape for tribal girls in Jharkhand.

2. Research Background

Sinha (2011) This article examined Jharkhand's policies targeting youth participation in governance and decision-making. It aimed to understand how these policies influenced sociopolitical power dynamics. Through a qualitative analysis, the study found that the state government's trust in youth involvement led to significant support for state policies among young people. The research concluded that these initiatives helped secure youth support for the state's semi-autonomous status, emphasizing the importance of engaging youth in governance for future development.

Rustagi, (2013) This paper examined educational disparities in Jharkhand, a state struggling alongside Bihar. It aimed to discuss the variations in educational outcomes across districts, social groups, and other inequities, such as gender and learner achievements. The methodology included a detailed analysis of progress in elementary education concerning enrolment, access, and infrastructure. The findings highlighted significant challenges, including high pupil-teacher ratios and poor retention rates, impeding

¹ National Education Policy 2020: All You Need to Know

the universalization of education. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act was discussed, emphasizing the need to address these challenges to make education a right for all children aged 5 to 14 years.

Aind, (2013) This study explored the role of tribal women in their communities and the obstacles to their economic empowerment. The research aimed to identify the factors hindering progress, such as education, health, and employment opportunities. Methodology included data analysis and field observations. Findings revealed that lack of education, poor health, high infant mortality rates, and limited employment opportunities were major obstacles. The study concluded that both government and non-governmental organizations should implement suitable plans and programs to enhance the economic empowerment of tribal women.

Higham, (2013) This article analyzed the impact of affirmative action and educational policies on Adivasis in Jharkhand. It aimed to assess the relative effects of these policies amidst political and economic transformations. Using a historically situated approach, the study found that despite absolute educational improvements, inequalities persisted and widened due to market-led gains benefiting more advantaged groups. The research concluded that contemporary affirmative action had limited success in improving the relative socio-economic positions of marginalized groups.

Satyam, (2013) This study explored the participation of tribal women in local governance in Jharkhand post-73rd Amendment Act. It aimed to investigate whether these women held real power or were merely symbolic figures. Using a comparative methodology, the research revealed that although women achieved significant victories in the 2010 panchayat elections, their actual influence varied. The study suggested that while some women enjoyed their roles, others remained as rubber stamps, highlighting the need for deeper reforms to ensure genuine empowerment.

Jojo, (2013) This article documented the functioning of Ashram Schools (ASs) aimed at educating Scheduled Tribe children. It utilized an explanatory research design, surveying 13 Ashram Schools (ASs) to assess infrastructure, staffing, and the quality of educational activities. The findings showed that many Ashram Schools (ASs) lacked adequate infrastructure and teaching capacity, hindering the progress of tribal children. The study concluded that improving these aspects was crucial for achieving the educational upliftment of ST children.

Singh (2014) This study assessed the awareness and impact of the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) among pregnant women in a Maharashtra district. A cross-sectional survey of 110 women revealed that over half were aware of JSY, primarily informed by ANMs, AWWs, and ASHAs. Findings showed significant associations between socioeconomic status, caste, occupation, and awareness levels. The study concluded that enhancing awareness and understanding of JSY among marginalized women could improve maternal and neonatal health outcomes.

Kumar (2015) The study aimed to identify the role of livestock in sustaining the livelihoods of Jharkhand's tribal communities. Researchers selected Ranchi and Dhanbad districts and used interviews, personal observations, and participatory rural appraisal tools to collect data from 120 tribal farmers. The findings indicated that livestock significantly contributed to annual income compared to other sources. The study highlighted the medium level of extension contacts and mass media exposure among respondents, and low social participation due to geographical isolation. It concluded that enhancing livestock-related activities could improve tribal livelihoods.

Kachhap, (2016) This research investigated the problems faced by tribal communities in Jharkhand and the factors responsible. Using a descriptive methodology and interviews with 40 graduates from the Kolhan region, the study identified several issues: social, cultural, educational, political, health, migration, displacement, economic, and naxalite problems. The findings mapped out specific challenges, such as child marriage, lack of resources, and malnutrition. The study suggested implications for addressing these issues to improve the living conditions and empowerment of tribal communities.

Chandra (2018) This study evaluated the Udaan program, a state-run adolescent education initiative in Jharkhand, to understand factors contributing to its success. The research involved reviewing programmatic reports and conducting interviews with the Centre for Catalyzing Change staff. Findings indicated that an enabling policy environment, government support, a committed NGO partner, sustained funding, and ongoing evaluation were key to the program's longevity. The study concluded that Udaan serves as a model for other adolescent health programs in India and beyond.

Ara, N., & Shukla, D. K. (2021). The Government of India has introduced several schemes that focus on women and aims to provide them with their due social dignity and ensure ways of earning. As the past of Indian society is filled with stances of gender inequality, the Government has come forward to bring equality at every level, empower women and uplift child education. Women in today's world are creating their niche in almost all walks of life, empowerments being one of the most challenging arenas to explore and sustain in the ever changing social, cultural, economic environment of the nature of business across the globe. Empowerment plays a vital role in the economic growth and development for women as individuals and country as a whole.

3. Government Policies for Tribal Girls

Government policies have significantly improved access to education for tribal girls in Jharkhand by implementing various initiatives. These include the establishment of schools in remote tribal areas, ensuring that girls do not have to travel long distances to access education. Additionally, scholarship programs such as the Post Matric Scholarship² for Scheduled Tribe Students and the National Scholarship Portal have alleviated financial barriers, making education more accessible for marginalized communities. By prioritizing the establishment of educational institutions in underserved regions and providing financial support, government policies have played a crucial role in expanding the reach of education to tribal girls in Jharkhand.

3.1 Toward Infrastructure Development

Government initiatives have led to significant improvements in infrastructure for the education of tribal girls in Jharkhand. Under schemes like the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, separate toilets have been constructed for girls in schools, addressing a critical barrier to attendance and ensuring their dignity and comfort. Furthermore, the establishment of residential hostels, particularly under programs like the Ashram Schools scheme, has provided safe and supportive living environments³ for tribal girls, facilitating their access to education by removing logistical hurdles and creating conducive learning spaces. These infrastructure developments underscore the government's commitment to enhancing the educational experience and opportunities for tribal girls in Jharkhand.

² Welcome to Ministry of Tribal Affairs 2012.

³ Tiondi, T. (2001). *Women, environment and development*

3.2 Quality Enhancement

Government efforts have focused on enhancing the quality of education for tribal girls in Jharkhand through various strategies. Teacher training programs have been implemented to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand the socio-cultural⁴ context of tribal communities and employ inclusive teaching methods. Additionally, curriculum reforms have been initiated to incorporate local languages and culturally relevant content, making education more relatable and engaging for tribal students. By investing in the professional development of teachers and updating the curriculum to reflect the diversity of the student population, government policies have aimed to elevate the overall quality of education for tribal girls in Jharkhand.

3.3 Retention and Transition Support

Mid-Day Meal Scheme: The government's implementation of the Mid-Day Meal scheme has played a crucial role in supporting the retention of tribal girls in schools. By providing nutritious meals during the school day, this program addresses the nutritional needs of students, incentivizing regular attendance and reducing dropout rates among tribal girls.

Bridge Courses and Remedial Education: Government initiatives include the implementation of bridge courses and remedial education programs to support tribal girls who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out. These programs offer additional educational support to help students catch up on missed learning and smoothly transition back into formal education, thereby mitigating barriers to continuous schooling and improving overall retention rates.

4. Community Engagement and Awareness

School Management Committees (SMCs): Government policies have promoted community engagement through the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) in tribal areas. These committees comprise parents, local leaders, and community members who actively participate in decision-making processes related to school governance, ensuring that educational institutions address the specific needs and concerns of tribal girls and their communities.

Awareness Campaigns: The government has conducted awareness campaigns focused on highlighting the importance of girls' education within tribal communities in Jharkhand. These campaigns leverage local leaders, influencers, and community platforms to disseminate information about the benefits of education for girls and to challenge cultural norms and practices that may hinder their educational attainment. By fostering dialogue and promoting a collective understanding of the value of girls' education⁵, these initiatives encourage community support and involvement in advancing the educational opportunities of tribal girls in Jharkhand.

5. Conclusion

Government policies have significantly improved educational opportunities for tribal girls in Jharkhand through infrastructure enhancements, scholarships, teacher training, and retention programs. Community involvement via School Management Committees and awareness campaigns has been crucial. Continuous policy refinement and collaboration are essential for sustaining and enhancing educational outcomes.

⁴ de Vaan, Michiel (2008). *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the other Italic Languages*

⁵ Osler, Audrey; Vincent, Kerry (2003-12-16). *Girls and Exclusion*

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