



A critical analysis of government policies and educational development in rural India: An anthropological inquiries among the Pengo Kondh Tribes of Odisha

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Abstract

This study investigates government educational policies and rural educational development and the problems and issues related to the children among the scheduled tribes of Odisha. Large number of policies and programme has been undertaken by the State and Central government for tribal development since India's Independence. A number of commissions and committees were appointed to look into the problems of tribal developments in the country. During the five year plan numerous work has been carried out under special schemes for upliftment of the weaker section by the government. But, from anthropological prospective there are many weaknesses in policies and programmes of tribal development. The study discuss constitutional provisions for tribal people and how to protect them. The study recommended an urgent need of special educational policy to be formulated for the development of the tribal education.

Keywords: education, policies, development, tribes, Odisha, India

Introduction

The Union and State Government have together introduced a number of policies, programmes for different measures to provide education and eradicate educational barriers for the tribals. The educational programmes are mainly implemented by two Ministries, namely 1. Ministry of Human Resources Development through Department of Education, and 2. Ministry of Tribal Affairs. During the Post-Independence India several assurances have been mandated in Article 45 and 46 of the Directive principles of State Policy, and in order to fulfill the commitments, different departments have taken up various schemes and programmes depending upon the policy measures of the state. The Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 45) deals with the provision of free and compulsory education for children of the state. The state shall endeavor, within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution, to free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. But the actually major schemes and programs were initiated only after the National Policy of Education (NPE) was formulated in 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) was prepared in 1992. However, the major programmes implemented in tribal or rural area through the Department of Education includes; District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Sikshya Aviyan (SSA), Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) Upgradation of Primary Schools SSA, the Residential school for (both girls and boys) open in tribal area, teaching in tribal language, providing bicycles for ST Girls, start of Mid-Day-Meals programme, supply of free text book, Scholarships for tribal children etc, and different types of Micro Projects are at present working for tribal development. India has also signed a number of international conventions that aim to ensure the right to education. In spite of all these facilities, till now the Rayagada district's tribal literacy rate is very low at 36.4

percent, including all tribes in the district namely *Sabar, Soura, Kondh (Kondh, Dongria Kondh, Pengo Kondh), Jhodia Paroja* and *Paroja*, which is very low as compared to national literacy rate of 76.4 percent in India (Census, 2011) [4]. The gap between Rayagada district tribal literacy in comparison to the national literacy rate is too wide (40 percent). So there is a need to understand the perceptions and attitudes of the concerned government policies and plans for tribal people and their development. The tribal people are socially and economically disadvantaged group, therefore, in the present study I have tried to explore different policies and programme undertaken by the government of India. The major recommendations of important policy documents relating to education of the tribes have been briefly discussed.

Who are scheduled tribes and selection criteria

The constitution of India, in Article 366, has defined the scheduled tribes as such of those tribes or tribal communities which have been so declared by the constitutional order under Article 342 for the purpose of the constitution. There are 705 tribal including 75s Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), who have been identified as scheduled tribes. They have been previously described as 'aborigine', 'primitives', 'adivasis', 'vana jatis'. As per 2011 census their population is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6 percent of the total population. 89.97 percent of them live in rural areas and 10.03 percent lives in urban areas (GOI, 2013). In India tribal community were suffering from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness, because of practices of untouchability, exploitation, land-alination, practices of primitive mode of agriculture, lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation etc. Therefore, in the Article 46 of the Constitution of India it states: 'The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections

of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation' (GOI, 2007). On the one hand there is recognition of the fact that certain sections of the population are socially, educationally and economically not in par with the rest of the community. Alongside there is an equally important stipulation that the wide disparities in the socio-economic level of various sections of the community should be narrowed down and finally eliminated. It has been fully realized that special arrangements would have to be made for them in order to bring them to a position of equality with other citizens. In essence, therefore, this is a policy of social justice'. During the same time some Anthropologists made their own contribution to different aspects of tribal life for bringing them into the mainstream. Verrier Elwin on the basis of his prolonged experience of working in tribal areas and his understanding of the tribal life and culture, developed a firm conviction that tribes could only be developed, along the lines of their own genius. After that the first Prime Minister of India took a stand with Elwin's wisdom, sincerity and outlined that the government should follow more on revivalists and no changers approach for the development of tribes. Elwin enlightens on his book (*A Philosophy for NEFA*) 'We cannot allow matters to drift in the tribal areas or just not take interest in them. In the world of today that is not possible or desirable. At the same time we should avoid over-administering these areas and, in particular, sending too many out-siders into tribal territory' (Elwin, 1959). He then supplemented this statement with his 'five famous principles which constitute the basic tenets of this policy: (i) People should develop along the line of their own genius, we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their traditional art and culture. (ii) Tribal rights in land and forest should be respected (iii) We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territories. (iv) We should not over-administer these area or over-whelm them with the multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through and not in rivalry too, their own social and cultural institutions. (v) We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by quality of human character that has evolved' (Sen, 1992) ^[26]. All the above policy has been operationalized by the government of India through many constitutional provisions related to education, economic welfare programme.

In terms of these enabling provisions, various safeguards have been provided for social, economic and educational development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution of India.

Constitutional safeguards for scheduled tribes

The Indian Constitution refers to tribal people as the Scheduled Tribes. The Constitution, adopted and enacted in 1950, is based on the principles of equality and guarantees equality before the law and equal protection to all its citizens. It not only guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms, but also prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race,

caste, sex, and place of birth. Recognizing the special needs of various weaker sections including STs, the Constitution also enjoins upon the State to make special provisions of affirmative discrimination for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes. These constitutional provisions have replaced the British policy of isolation and non-interference by a policy of inclusion and integration through development. The Framers of the Constitution of India incorporated several provisions which are meant for the welfare and development of the tribes. Some of the important constitutional provisions for STs are as follows:

Article 15 (4): The State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 16 (1): Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

Article 16 (4): The State to make provisions for reservation in appointment, posts in favour of any backward class citizens, which in the opinion of the State is not adequately represented in the services under the State.

Article 16 (4A): The State to make provisions in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts in the services in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 46: The State, to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and protects them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. In accordance with this policy special scheme were prepared to set up special Multi- Purpose tribal development block (SMPT) which were later converted into Tribal Development Block (TDB) in the undeveloped areas of tribal concentration. Through the special schemes, many developmental programmes covering like, agriculture, irrigation, soil conservation, road communication, health, education, village industries, cooperation, housing and rehabilitation were implemented in the tribal area.

Article 164 (1): In the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a Minister in charge of tribal welfare who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes or any other work for tribal development. (Now applicable to Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa).

Article 243 D: Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in every Panchayat (73 Amendment to the Constitution, 1992 and PESA Act-1996).

Article 243 (T): Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in every Municipality.

Article 244 (1): Provisions as to the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in any state other than the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram (Fifth Schedule).

Article 244 (2): Provisions as to the administration of Tribal Areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram (Sixth Schedule).

Article 275 (1): Provision for payment of grants-in-aid to enable the States to meet the cost of such schemes of development as may be undertaken by the States with the approval of the Government of India for the purpose of

promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. In this State or raising the level of administration of the Scheduled areas, therein to that of the administration of the rest of the areas of that State.

Article 330: It deals with the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and specifies that seats shall be reserved in this house.

Article 332: It concerns to reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.

Article 335: The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or State to be taken into consideration consistent with the maintenance of efficiency of administration.

Article 338 A: A National Commission for Scheduled Tribes to investigate, monitor and evaluate all matters relating to the Constitutional safeguards provided for the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 339: Control of the Union over the administration of Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 339 (1): Appointment of a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the States.

Article 340: Appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of socially, educationally backward classes and the difficulties under the labour and to make recommendations to remove such difficulties and to improve their conditions.

Article 342: To specify the tribes or tribal communities to be Scheduled Tribes. In addition to the above constitutional provisions, there are numbers of laws, both Central and State, which provide protection and safeguards for the interest of the Scheduled Tribes. Some of the important Central Acts are as follows:

1. Protection of Civil Right Act, 1955
2. Forest Conservation Act, 1980
3. Bonded Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
4. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
5. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989
6. The provisions of the PESA (Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996
7. The Schedule Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of forest Rights) Act, 2006.

Methodology

The present study is based on both primary and secondary information regarding tribal education in the study area. The primary information was collected from schools, hostels, household and the modes of teaching, existing problems in education, and the family problems of the students, parents, and teachers. The secondary information was collected which involves sources from textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, data of 2011 census and internet sources was used to gather relevant data for the review of literature concerning the topic. The data used in this study was collected through intensive fieldwork carried out during my one year Ph.D. fieldwork. This study mainly focuses on the *Pengo* tribes and an attempt was made to describe the existing problems, which have greater impact on the educational

development in tribal areas. It also tries to explore the factors that affect schooling of tribal children. To know the various causes of slow growth of literacy among *Pengo Kondh* tribes, it is necessary to understand the impact of educational problem, which plays a greater role in maintaining educational backwardness among tribes.

Area of the study

The state of Orissa, the most picturesque states in the Eastern India, occupies a unique position in the tribal map of India. The state has 62 types of Scheduled Tribes, including 13 Particular Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), living in 26 districts. In Odisha, ST constitutes 22 percent of the total population of the state. The *Pengo Kondhs* are believed to be from the Proto Australoid ethnic group. According to their tribal myth, they had only one name *Kondh* until the nineteenth century. Post-nineteenth century, the *Kondh* tribe got segregated into five sub-tribes, namely *Dongariya Kondh*, *Kutia Kondh*, *Lanjiya Kondh*, *Sona Kondh* and *Pengo Kondh* (Naik, 2015). The *Pengo Kondh* tribe is one of them and identified as one of the particular tribes in Kashipur block of Rayagada district. The *Pengo Kandh* total literacy rate was very low at about 16 percent, and for males and females 19 percent and 13 percent respectively (Census, 2011). *Pengo* people are socially, educationally and economically underdeveloped due to lack of awareness and proper education. Until now, they believe in superstition and do not understand the value of education. Some *Pengo* people live in very remote hilly areas, where no communication facility is available and they mostly depend on forest to fulfill their basic needs. To sustain their economy, they also practice hunting and fishing. After 68 years of India's independence, they are still unaware about all the government schemes, particularly implemented for them (GOI, 2014). There is a negative impact of development due to lack of education among these tribal people.

History of compulsory education

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was the first person who introduced universalization of elementary education throughout the length and breadth of our country. He said 'to us it (the primary education) means the future salvation of the country. Universal education alone could help the farmer to resist exploitation by the money lender, to improve sanitation, to shake off superstition to increase his earning capacity, to take an intelligent interest in public affairs and remove the reproach that Indian public life was the monopoly of a tiny minority. In 1910, at the first meeting of the Imperial Council, Gokhale proposed that "a beginning should be made in the direction of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country' (Angol, 1995). The Bill was debated for two days in the Imperial Legislative Council, It was taken note by both the National Congress and the All India Muslim League but some people opposed the bill and it was rejected.

Kothari commission report (1964-66) know as national education policy 1968

The Kothari Commission Report (1964-66) also known as the National Educational Policy 1968. The commission convened

on October 2nd, 1964 and submitted its report on June 29th, 1966. 'The commission was appointed by the Government of India by a resolution dated 14th July, 1964 to advise government on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of all stages and in all aspects' (NEP, 1968). This report indicated the guidelines for the formulation of a National Policy on Education, after that July, 1968, the Government of India declared it as the first National Policy on Education. The commission consisted of 17 members with Professor D.S. Kothari appointed as the chairman who was at the time the chair of the Universities Grants Commission. J.P. Naik, who was the Head of Department of Educational Planning, Administration, and Finance at the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics in Pune, as its member secretary. J.F. McDougal, the Assistant Director of School and Higher education at UNESCO in Paris was appointed the Associate-Secretary, (REC, 1064-66). On the basis of the recommendations contained in the reports of this Commission, the Government took steps to introduce certain much needed changes in our system of education. The Kothari commission's main objective is to increase productivity, developing social and national unity, consolidating democracy, modernizing the country, developing social, moral and spiritual values, providing equal educational opportunities, developing languages and promoting scientific education and research. The commission emphasized the need to eradicate illiteracy and provide vocational adult education. To achieve this, the Indian education policy called for fulfilling free and compulsory education for all 6 to 14 years of children. Some important items of expenditure that the commission paid serious attention to was scholarships for students as a mechanism of the programs of scholarships for the backward classes, Formed a Residential school in each community development block, supply free textbooks at the primary stage, supply of Mid-Day-Meals at the primary stage and focus on learning of regional languages, outlining the "three language formula" to be implemented in secondary education, etc. A few other norms that were adopted by the commission, which have serious financial implications may be noted as follows: the commission had adopted higher pupil-teacher ratios in estimating the resource requirements, it desired that to ensure reasonably good quality of education, the pupil-teacher ratio in primary education be 30 and 35 in higher primary schools. All the above initiative were taken by Kothari commission, and the commission also suggested a detailed mechanism of grants-in-aid to local bodies. It recommended that 'the assistance of the local communities should be fully harnessed for improving the physical facilities in schools' (EPW, 2007). The first National Education Policy did not give any special attention to tribal people. The Kothari commission suggested the government to implement the policy but the government of India is unable to fully implement the policy in the way it was intended.

National Policy on Education 1986

The national policy on education 1986 stipulated that the implementation of the various educational programs undertaken in accordance with its directions should be reviewed every five years. However, no such review was done

in the subsequent 17 years. It was therefore, felt that a review should be made. The Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took the initiative in this regard and immediately formed the revised document name of National Policy on Education 1986. The National Policy on Education was adopted by the Lok Sabha on 8th May 1986 and the Rajya Sabha on May 13, 1986. The government of India, for the first time in history, announced the Program of Action, (NPE, 1986). The main features of National Policy on Education 1986: universal access to education, common educational structure, Equal opportunity of education, Education for all, etc. The concept of a National System of Education implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. To achieve this, the government will initiate an appropriately funded program, (NPE, 1986). The National Policy on Education 1986 for the first time gave special emphasis on women's education, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. The policy lays extra emphasis on women's education and emphasizes the role of education, as an agent of change in the status of women. This will help to remove the gender disparities in society. NPE perceived education, as a means to create an egalitarian society in terms of gender discrimination. It also talked about the empowerment of women in this respect. The education for SC and ST were considered essential in this policy. The government have taken initiative for backward families to send their childrens to school. The earlier scheme was pre-matric scholarship, Ensuring the enrollment, retention and successful completion of SC/ST students and Recruitment of SC/ST teachers to tribal area. Provisions for opening new primary schools in tribal areas on a priority basis, with consideration of cultural issues and concerns, opening residential schools and other schemes for their upliftment proves that NPE 1986 was quite sensitive about human rights perspective. The policy talked about informal education, different types of vocational education which should start after class VIII. The policy believes that the cultures of different communities of India need to be given appropriate weightage in education. But unfortunately this is not happening till today in India, the tribal people are not compatible with the unified education structure, because of their language and culture variation.

National Policy on Education 1992

National Policy on Education 1986 was the first official document which attested Indian Government's commitment towards elementary education. This was further emphasized in the National Policy on Education, 1986. In the review of the policy in 1990, it was recommended to include Right to Education as a fundamental right in the constitution, on the basis of which National policy on Education 1992 was formulated. The Kothari Commission of 1964 and, subsequently, the National Education Policy, 1986 endorsed the concept of universalization of primary (elementary) education. Even after that almost half of the children, in the age group of 6-14, either do not go to school or drop out at an early age. Many have to stay out-side the educational system, due to some basic problems. Efforts, over the last 40 years, to remedy this situation, have not met with any significant success. Therefore, the V. P. Singh Government Recommended

on 1990 a Review Committee and Acharya Ramamurti was appointed as Chairman of the committee in May 1990. A Committee Review the NPE, 1986 and certain modifications were done, after which it was announced in the Parliament in the month of May, 1992. 'Under the NPE, 1992 the Program of Action has identified many defects, such as the inequality between schools, as some schools are provided with good teachers, excellent equipment, while in some others region absenteeism of teachers, unavailability of basic facilities such as drinking water, blackboard, seating space, large number of primary schools run by single teachers, etc' (POA, 1992) were observed. The Program of Action or the National Education System (1992) will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, the training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators, and the active involvement of educational institutions. The Program of Action 1992 focus on the SCs and STs' educational development. Priority will be accorded to opening primary schools in tribal areas and this underlines the need to develop the curricula and devise instructional materials that will be provided in tribal languages at the initial stages, with arrangements for switching over to the regional language. Residential schools, including Ashram Schools and Mid-Day-Mill Program will be established on a large scale. The Anganwadi, Non-formal and Adult Education Centers will be opened in tribal area. Incentive schemes will be formulated for the Scheduled Tribes, keeping in view their special needs and lifestyles. etc. (POA, 1992). The anthropological investigation in reality is different from NEP 1992, there is no Anganwadi center in maximum villages, and the pre-schools were never taken by Anganwadis till today. Non-formal and adult education has been opened in the tribal area without qualified or trained teachers.

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP-1996-97)

DPEP was a World Bank assisted project which was launched in Orissa in 1996-97 with a view to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). The aim of DPEP was a holistic approach to development of Primary Education in the state, through the district specific planning. Under this scheme various programs being undertaken such as formation of new primary school, opening of Education Guarantee Central construction, establishment of alternative schools, repair of school buildings, engagement of teachers (para teachers), teachers' training on activity and joyful teaching methods, supply of textbooks and teachings-learning materials etc. Some earlier study highlighted the gender equity strategies which included improvement of school infrastructure and provision of separate toilets for teachers and students, special attention to recruitment of female teachers for promoting girls' participation at school, classroom processes, child centered learning and pedagogic renewal are issues that have received a considerable amount of attention in DPEP, and also community participation has been an integral part of the DPEP (Ramachandra *et al.*, 2002) ^[24]. The Pengo area of Rayagada district comes under DPEP on the basis of low literacy rate and educational backwardness. The Pengo people are not getting benefit from this scheme because of lack of government attention. Till date maximum Pengo

people are not attracted to the education. The majority of the village there has no basic school infrastructure, and some Pengo village children sit on veranda for classes. According to Pengo people, due to teacher's irregularity at school children become least interested to attend schools.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA-2002)

The Right to Education is recognized as a Human Right by United Nations and is understood to establish an entitlement to free and compulsory education for all children. The Government of India has initiated efforts to achieve education for all, particularly to the groups which have lagged on the economic scale. A major step was taken in 2002 when by virtue of the 86th amendment to the Constitution, Article 21A was inserted making free and compulsory education to the children of 6-14 years age group as a fundamental right (SSA framework for implementation, 2002). The government of India tries to implement Right to education through the District Primary Education Project (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with the aim of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). Education shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. The National Programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which aims to achieve Universal Elementary Education (UEE), has a special focus on education of the tribal children. Due to poor access to school in tribal areas, the government of India set up Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), an alternative program objective to provide school within one kilometer of all habitations under the SSA program. Most of the interior area has relaxed these norms to enable setting up schools even in small tribal hamlets to achieve Universal education. Under the provision, SSA provides for Rs. 1.5 million per district per year for specific interventions for education of SC/ST children. It also provides free textbooks up to one hundred fifty rupees for girls and SC/ST children (SSA framework for implementation, 2002). The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan a leading program was launched for the achievement of universal elementary education within a deadline. It had a special focus on education for tribal children with different reference to the many provisions made by central as well state government. An Anthropological investigation observes that it is the right of every child to get free and compulsory education, still there are so many challenges in the Rayagada district of Odisha. In most of the Pengo village in Kshipur block, there is no basic school infrastructure, more than half school are being taught by a single teacher in Pengo area and teacher absenteeism at school is very high, therefore, the educational status of the Pengo people is very low compared to the other tribal community of the district in the state.

Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009

Universal schooling accompanied by quality, equity and accessibility can be a single big move towards attaining future prosperity of every nation. Education should be provided in such a manner that ensures children can benefit from it."The right of children to free and compulsory education Act, 2009" which is popularly known as Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 has been inserted by the 86th Amendment in December 2002 in the Constitution through which an Article 21 (A) was

inserted. The Right to free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) was drafted and passed in Parliament on August 27, 2009 which was notified on February 16, 2010 to come into effect from April 1, 2010. The Right to Education is recognized as a Human Right by United Nations and was understood to establish an entitlement to free and compulsory education for all children. The government of India tries to implement Right to education through the Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan with the aim of Universalization of Elementary Education. Education shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. The Constitution, Article 45 stated that ‘the State shall endeavor to provide within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, free and compulsory education to all 6 to 14 years children’ (RTE, 2009). The state government has given various incentives to the children and their parents for getting enrolled in schools as well as the local bodies engaged in this mega campaign. In spite of all these efforts there is not much improvement. A modest attempt has been made through the present write up to assess the impact of RTE Act, 2009 in the Universalization of Elementary Education. Besides, the salient features of the Act and constraints in its execution have been discussed with remedial steps for making the Act more viable and effective.

Salient features of the RTE Act, 2009

1. It makes elementary education free and compulsory for all children from 6-14 years age group in neighborhood schools.
2. No child shall be held back, expelled or required to pass a board examination until completion of elementary education.
3. It mandates education of children along their peer age group and provides for “special training” to facilitate age appropriate education in case of non-admitted or dropped out children.
4. A child who completes elementary education (up to form class VIII) shall be awarded a certificate.
5. Provides for 25% reservation for economically disadvantaged communities in admission to class I in all private schools.
6. It sets quality norms for all schools and if any private school fails to comply with the directions or does not fulfill the condition, or remains unrecognized will be fined Rs. 1 lakh. In case of continuing contravention Rs. 10,000 for per day penalty for a period of such contravention will be imposed.
7. Will apply to all of India except Jammu and Kashmir.
8. Mandates curriculum in all schools to be in consonance with constitutional values.
9. It protects children from labor, marriage, exploitation, discrimination, abuse, violence and neglect.
10. It mandates a system of evaluation that is free of the oppression of annual examinations and enhances the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies in implementation of the Act as well as in grievances redressed.
11. It mandates the participation of civil society in the management of schools; makes teachers accountable to parents and the community. There is provision for school

management committees (SMC) in all the government and aided schools to monitor its working and to prepare and recommend schools development plans and monitor the utilization grants in school for various development and welfare schemes.

12. It separates agency for implementation of the Act (Education Department) from an agency charged with monitoring the implementation of the Act (NCPCR).
13. Sets qualification and working norms for teaching in all schools.
14. Calls for a fixed student– teacher ratio.

Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) programme

The Mid-Day-Meal Programme was introduced during the eleventh plan by Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao government in 1995 to provide cooked Mid-Day-Meal to primary school children in all government schools and government assisted primary schools up to fifth Class all over the country for all working days. The main objective of this scheme was increasing the school enrollment and reducing the number of school dropouts, while also improving the nutritional status of the rural and backward child of the country (GOI, 2012-13). This scheme has a positive impact on various educational parameters and has helped a lot in achieving the goals of SSA in universalizing the elementary education in India. Therefore, the earlier study revealed that Mid-Day-Meals program can play a major role in improving school attendance, eliminating classroom hunger and retention of dropouts among primary school going children among the rural Orissa (Mishra, 2003) [15]. Some other study statement indicates that mid-day-meals can play an important facilitating role in the universalisation of elementary education by enhancing enrolment, attendance and retention. It also contributes to better educational achievements by improving the nutritional status of children, or at least eliminating classroom hunger (Khera, 2006) [13]. Therefore, the Global Education Monitoring Report articulates that, the country ensures “All schools should provide meals, access to water and sanitation, adequate gender-specific toilets and child friendly spaces” (GEMR, 2016) [7]. In Orissa MDM scheme is being implemented since 1995 in all the government schools, the government funded primary schools and the schools coming under EGS in Rayagada district of Odisha. The schools under the scheme were providing cooked rice and dalma (dal mixed with the seasonal vegetables) in all the tribal districts and underdeveloped areas like Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri and Kalahandi. The distribution of mid-day-meal is the responsibility of the headmasters and assistant teachers in the majority of cases. In Orissa the mid-day-meal is provided to the students only on working days. It was observed that the goal of universal elementary education remains a distant dream for the Pengos. It is because, most of Pengo village do not have school infrastructure and most of the schools are run by single teacher, who is not regular at his/her work. The MDM program in such school does not function due to irregular teachers. A Few Pengo people told me about selling of MDM stock by some teachers. Thus, there is no provision for distributing Mid-Day-Meals on holidays. By contrast, the Tamil Nadu Mid-Day-Meal is distributed both on working days and also on holidays (Si, et, al, 2008). The government should take the initiative for school infrastructure,

with the posting of teacher in Pengo areas. The government must also take the initiative for opening residential school in the Pengo area, and provide MDM scheme during working day as well as during holidays at the school.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme was launched by the Government of India in August, 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC areas. This programme took birth during the tenth five year plan period. This would be applicable only in those identified Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) where, as per 2001 census report, the rural female literacy rate is below the national average and the gender gap in literacy is more than the national average. With such ideas, the programme emphasized on setting up of residential schools with boarding facilities for the target group. Initially it ran as a separate scheme, after 1st April, 2007 it was merged with the SSA program. The main objective of KGBV is to ensure access to quality education to girls from disadvantaged groups by setting up residential schools at upper primary level. It aimed to give access to girls belonging to disadvantaged groups (SC/ST) a better opportunity, to ensure greater participation of girls in education, and to improve the quality of girls' education in the Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs). During the 2006-07 in Odisha 49 special schools have been constituted under the programme approved by the Government of India. A few tribal or disadvantaged children got benefit from this program in Rayagada district of Odisha, but majority of tribal children received no benefit from this programme. It is because there is very limited seat for boarding facility. Therefore, Pengo girls are facing difficulty in taking admission at the Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya. Upon asking about the accessibility to KGBV by the Pengo people I was told that KGBV is not available in the Pengo area of Kashipur block. Therefore, they are not getting benefit from this programme, and moreover majority of Pengo People don't know about the KGBV schools.

Residential school for girls and boys

The Ministry of HRD is mandated to promote education in the country and take measures to promote them. Especially education for deprived children through creating better provisions, relaxing norms for opening primary schools in tribal areas by establishing residential facilities. Ashram schooling provision with boarding and lodging free, besides taking care of other needs of the children, were started in 1974. The government of India during the fifth five year plan especial focused on tribal children's schooling. These schools are enriched with residential facilities and incentive programs which provided residential school, Ashram schools are imparting primary, middle and secondary education for SC/ST boys and girls. The Ashram schools which are run by State Governments have been an important tool to give formal education to SC/ST children at the elementary level. The provision of the scheme at the primary, middle and secondary level, all reading materials and dress were supplied to the children for free. Ashram schools have been viewed as an effective institution to meet the educational needs of tribal

children. These schools have been providing free boarding, lodging and other facilities to the tribal children. This scheme provides 100 percent funding for the establishment of Ashram Schools i.e. provides funds for the construction of school buildings, hostels, kitchen and staff quarters with free boarding, lodging for tribal children in TSP areas (SESJE, 2012-13). The main objective of Ashram school is, it can reduce the incidence of student absenteeism in school, improve the standard of education at the primary level and reduce the burden of their parents from incurring expenditure on their children's education. The government taking care of different facilities like a school building, playground, free kitchen, teaching material, furniture, dress, books and economic resources have been provided to motivate the tribal children and their parents towards education (Garnaki, 2012). An anthropological investigation on the tribal people depicts dissatisfaction about the educational progress of Ashram School in Rayagada district of Odisha. A huge amount of money has been spent under different five year plans for improving tribal education, but these plans or policies could not make much headway. Till now the government is unable to provide basic school infrastructure like; classroom, drinking water, accommodation, library, reading room, common room, toilet, modern educational aids, and adequate number of teachers. Data from the All India Education Surveys reveal that primary schools in rural areas have relatively poor infrastructure. There are a large number of schools that have kutchha buildings, insufficient number of classrooms and lack of library facilities and basic amenities such as drinking water arrangements and toilets within the premises. Blackboards, chalks and dusters are also in short supply and insufficient teachers, etc. (NCERT, 1986). According to Pengo people one of the reason behind less attendance in school is that they are not able to get residential Ashram school. In some cases schools are not available in the village, and Pengo children have to walk great distance to get to school. Therefore they are not interested to study. In some Pengo ashram school, children complain that they do not get timely supply of reading and writing materials as per the requirement. Many tribal parents complained about the bad quality of education in Ashram school, and said "the tribal children are residing at the ashram school only to have a good meal rather than education". (*Pila mane khalikhaibake school galaeni padakenahi*).

Arguments in this paper

In Anthropological prospective, The Right to Education Act, 2009 focuses only on children between the ages of 6-14 years to get privileges, but leaving out early childhood care, education and senior schooling. It seriously limits the right to education for children in the age group of 0 to 6 and 15-18 years, whereas 0-6 years are considered to be the formative years in the child's upbringing. Therefore, the Global Education Monitoring Report exposes, in 2014, 44 percent of children were enrolled in pre-primary education worldwide, but the India shows downward position from early childhood education. Among the 207 countries and territories in world pre-primary education were compulsory in 50 and free with compulsory for at least one year in 38 countries (GEMR, 2016) ^[7]. Without pre-classes to improve their school readiness, but they are ill prepared for them. There is no

security for providing education to the child up to the age of six years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, (Section 11) merely says- 'with a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education and to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years, the appropriate Government may make necessary arrangement for providing free pre-school education for such children' (GEMR, 2016) ^[7]. However, India is one of the original signatories of U.N. The charter which states clearly that free education should be made compulsory for children of 0-18 years. Thus the Act 'excludes 157 million children below six years of age and children between 15-18 years, and this number is more than the total population of some large number of countries in the world' (Dalal, 2013) ^[3]. The SMCs are supposed to ensure enrollment and continued attendance of all children from the neighborhood of the school. But these obligations remain only on paper as we continue to see Children either begging on the roads and are involved in child labor. In order to end the burgeoning problem of child labor, it is important to ensure that children below the age of six are also brought within the targets of the Act. It is a social reality that children are employed from a very early age in various circumstances within and outside their homes. Therefore, it is not sufficient that the right be guaranteed only from the age of six, and must widen its scope to ensure the mitigation of child abuse in formative years. The objective of RTE says, every child from the age of six to fourteen years shall have right to free and compulsory education in neighborhood schools, since the significance of education cannot be denied in a child's life. The government should take care of other needs of the children for elementary education. The norm followed by most States is to ensure availability of schools imparting primary education within a distance of 1 km. And schools imparting upper primary education within a distance of 3 km. from the residence of children (NUPEA, 2014). The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, popularly referred to as the Right to Education Act (RTE Act), came into effect on 1 April 2010. It also laid down a three year timeline for improvement in school infrastructure. However, while this deadline expired on March 31, 2013, yet considerable numbers of children in Indian schools still do not have access to basic infrastructure (The Hindu, 28 April 2013). The state of Odisha as well as some other tribal dominated state does not fulfill these criteria till date. Some tribal areas do not have primary or upper primary school within a distance of 5 km from the habitation. Information on the quality of education is limited largely to the physical facilities for schooling that are available to children. The surveys indicate that at 'only 49 percent of schools are equipped with a girls toilet due to the high dropout rate of adolescent, 60 percent school have drinking water, 15 percent school have computers without computer teacher, some schools have no boundary wall, etc. and language is another big problem; children speaks their tribal language and it is not compatible with the textbook and classroom language', (Singh, et al. 2016). Therefore, the early childhood education environment of high quality are also inclusive. Education should provide opportunities for every child and family to learn and participate, identify children who are falling behind,

and address individual differences in needs and skills. A key aspect of inclusiveness is that children have the opportunity to learn in their native language. In areas with linguistic diversity, teacher who is fluent in children's native tongues can have enormous benefits for language and literacy development. On the other hand 'the most critical elements of a quality pre-primary education is the interaction between teachers and children, and whether children are enabled to be autonomous and stimulated' (GEMR, 2016). Another research paper highlight the problem of tribal education referring to the quality of school provision, suitable teachers, relevance of content and curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, and special supervision. A majority of schools in tribal areas is without basic infrastructure facilities. Normally school buildings in tribal areas have thatched roofs, dilapidated walls, and non-plastered floors, etc. Research evidence shows that a large number of tribal schools do not have teaching-learning materials, or even blackboards (Behera, 2014) ^[2]. In tribal areas the opening of a school is equated with the posting of a teacher and same is the case with ashram schools. Though the demand for changing the content and curriculum to suit the tribal context has been an old one, no serious effort has been made in this direction in any state, except for some sporadic pilot projects. The uniform structure and transaction of curriculum has put tribal children at a disadvantage. Apart from all this lack of awareness of the teachers about tribal culture and environment also force the tribal students to withdraw from schools. All these issues are emerging in their primary and high school levels. These constraint forces them to drop-out from school at very early levels and higher education, thus remains a dream for them (Haseena & Mahammed, 2014) ^[12]. The Right to Education Act unable to provide sufficient and trained teachers tills date, need for increasing the number of qualified with trained teachers was felt along with balancing the pupil-teacher ratio as proposed by the RTE act. Lack of study material, teacher shortage, teacher absenteeism, a culture of proxy teachers and sub-contracting, the appointment of untrained teachers, long distance postings, lack of motivation, poor accommodation facilities, non-academic duties and political pressures are prime reason for the poor learning and teaching (Rashid, 2016) ^[21, 22]. According to the Ambarish Rai, national convener, Right to Education forum "Ninety percent of teacher training institutes are run by the private sector (and) private training institutes are selling teachers' degrees." On the other hand; local politics, corruption in teachers appointment, training defects, caste discrimination in school to children are some major reasons responsible for the poor quality of education. The Ministry of Human Resources reported that, there was a shortage of more than 8.5 lakh trained primary and upper-primary teachers across the country until last August 2016. Uttar Pradesh had the largest deficit, 2.14 lakh teachers in the primary and upper primary level (Rashid, 2016) ^[21, 22]. This research article will try to highlight the quality of Elementary education in India. One of the major handicap in the policy of Right to Education Act was the prioritizing of children only from six years of age, thus ignoring the positive impacts of pre-school education on a child's learning capabilities. Corruption in the appointment of government school teachers too have compromised the quality

of the education. There are evidences in annual studies from the past decade that a significant percentage of children in higher elementary classes lack the basic language and arithmetic skills of standards I and II (Kumar, 2016). During the last seventy five years, the tribes, who have remained the least beneficiaries, are those living in isolated, hilly and forest areas in the country. These are numerically minor tribes and have not been able to attract the attention of the policy-makers and administrative machinery so far owing to their isolation and lack of preparedness on their part to face the challenge of backwardness. The problems of these less developed tribal communities of India need to be taken up on urgent and priority basis.

Conclusion

Large number of policies and programme has been undertaken by the State and Central government for tribal development since India's Independence. A number of commissions and committees were appointed to look into the problems of tribal developments in the country. During the five year plan numerous work has been carried out under special schemes for upliftment of the weaker section by the government. But, from anthropological prospective there are many weaknesses in policies and programmes of tribal development. Some of the highlighted issues here are, firstly, most of the programmes were dependent on the limited resource of the tribal welfare sector, and secondly, there are failure to understand the grass root problem of tribal areas. During the last seventy one years, the tribes, who have remained the least beneficiaries, are those living in isolated, hilly and forest areas of certain districts in the country. These are numerically minor tribes and have not been able to attract modernization and attention of the policy-makers and administrative machinery so far owing to their isolation and lack of preparedness on their part to face the challenge of backwardness. Therefore, the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR, 2016) ^[7] highlight that the government should provide financial support for the planning and implementation of education and other activities to be carried out with an integrated approach to policy and development at the national and local levels which are people oriented. In Odisha the Rayagada district of Kashipur block, specially Pengo area, nothing new or beneficial had happened, nor was the exercise abandoned yet. The problem is much more complex than mere formulation of programs.

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