From Policy to Practice: Unraveling the Realities of Tribal Education in Ranchi District Post National Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

This paper examines the perspectives of principals, teachers and students on the educational status of Ranchi district government and government aided schools in light of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). The convenient sampling method is employed to explore the educational status of the five government and government aided schools. The semi structured interview with open questions were conducted on the principals, teachers and students to know the attitude towards the implementation of NEP 2020 that help to find themes by using thematic analysis. The classroom observation, visiting school premises like library, computer lab, science lab, playground, toilets, etc. help to validate the data. The findings show the multiple issues and related challenges to implement the NEP 2020 in the present scenario. Thus, this paper examines the standpoint of inclusive and equitable education of Tribal students with reference to NEP 2020.

Keywords- Inclusive & Equitable Education, NEP 2020, Tribal Students.

Introduction

Education is vital for any progressive society, and it is prime responsibility of every nation that its each student should be a part of the educational process irrespective of their caste, creed, gender, socio economic status, location, culture, and disabilities. According to UN Sustainable Development Goal 4; it is imperative to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is aligned to the National Education Policy 2020 which benefits all the Indian's children and provide opportunity to learn and excel in the education process irrespective of circumstances of birth or background (NEP 2020, Part I, Section 6.1). Inclusive education has revolutionary approaches which is vital for all sections of the learners as it fulfils their academic needs, social integration, and emotional integration (Dr. Alka Mudgal, 2021). Moreover, the importance of language helps to promote Indian culture and heritage to see the world differently (NEP 2020, Part III, Section 22.2 &22.3).

According to Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE +) 2021-22, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) has drastically improved at all levels including social groups and gender and GER at higher secondary made significant improvement from 53.8% to 57.6% in 2021-22. But the scenario of Schedule Tribes (ST) students is not much impressive as the enrolment drop-off from 10.6% to 6.8% in UDISE 2016-17 data and tribal students find irrelevancy of their school education to their lives, both culturally and academically (NEP 2020, Part I, Section 6.2.1 & 6.2.3). The ST are 8.6% of total population in India and if we see in the state Jharkhand, it itself constitute 8.3% of total ST population according to 2011 census (Statistics, Ministry of Tribal affairs, GOI). There are 32 tribes in Jharkhand which are classified based on cultural types and their population in this state is 26.3% of total population of Jharkhand as per 2011 census. The literacy rate of Jharkhand is 66.41% with female literacy 55.42% (Statistics, Ministry of Tribal affairs, GOI). According to the Statistics of School

Education 2010-11, MoHRD, the comparison of number of Scheduled Tribe girls per 100 ST boys in Jharkhand is 97 and the Gender Parity Index which is used to measure the relative access to education of male and female is found highest in Class 1-V but eventually decline in secondary and senior secondary level in the school of Jharkhand. Moreover, the importance of tribal and regional languages needs to foster in this state to preserve the cultural identities of these people so that we can upheld the spirit of 'Incredible India' which is not only important for nation but for the individual to enhance cognitive, creative abilities and individual wellbeing (NEP 2020, Part III, Section 22.2).

Review of Literature

The educational growth rate of tribal communities is never up to the mark and there is always loophole in the implementation of any policies or programme. Various researchers have pointed these issues in their study. Majumder, (2018) in his study focusses on educational development of Bhumij tribal community (Jharkhand). Despite the multiples programme initiated by the government, tribal students did not receive appreciable benefits as these policies were not well contextualized and localized. Moreover, they lack political unwillingness, corruption and lesser attention. The study of Brahmanandam & Bosu Babu, (2016) ; Shaikh, (2020) emphasized that regardless of several programmes and policy the dropout rate of the tribal students is a major issue as there is lack of culturally linked education. Mohalik et al., (2021) in their research quantitively examined the multiple factors of low attendance of tribal students of Jharkhand. Thus, there is a need to seriously examine the issues and challenges of tribal students as well as foster cooperative federalism for the educational upliftment of this group. The comprehensive National Education Policy 2020 probably would cater this issue which was introduced by our recent government to accelerate the growth of our education system by maintaining our tradition, cultures, values and ethos so that our society become more equitable, sustainable and vibrant (Aithal & Aithal, 2020).

Rationale of the Study

Education is the basic human right which subsidize inequality and ensure sustainability. It becomes fundamental rights of every citizen of India under Article 21A. Moreover, NEP 2020 emphasizes on inclusive and equitable education which helps to fill bridges of various social groups and provide a framework for upliftment of tribal communities. It recommends to design intervention program for tribal students so that they would get maximum benefits and integrate with mainstream education (NEP 2020, Part I, Section 6.2.3). Education is the medium to provide opportunity to preserve and transmit our cultural heritage to the next generation and make it alive so that knowledge around these languages progressively add to our knowledge. The tribal languages never receive due attention and recognition till now. According to UNESCO 197 languages come under 'endangered' and almost 220 languages are lost in last 50 years (NEP 2020, Part III, and Section 22.5). Thus, tribal student should be given opportunity to participate in various educational activities to utilize their indigenous languages and cultures through various means like debates, games, singing poems, songs, and other artistic works (Carpio, 2021). However, any progress can be possible only if the students attend the school on regular basis so that teachers can build their skills and provide quality education to them (Mohalik et al., 2021). The educational status of various government and government-aided schools in view of the principal, teachers, and students according to NEP 2020 is considered in this manuscript by carrying out a simple small research study.

Objective of the Study:

- To know the perspective of the principal on the educational status of Ranchi district government and government-aided schools.
- To know the perspective of the teachers on the educational status of Ranchi district government and government-aided schools
- To study the perspective of students regarding the current scenario of schools in the Ranchi district.
- To study the school infrastructure of Ranchi district's government and government-aided schools.

Methodology

Sample & Sampling: In this study, sample consists of five Government and Government aided schools of Ranchi. The convenient sampling is employed to explore educational status of these five schools of Ranchi. These are mentioned in below table.1.

Table 1: Name of the school

S.No.	Name of the School
1.	Government School I (Co.Ed), Ranchi
2.	Government School II (Co.Ed), Ranchi
3.	Government Aided School I (Co.Ed), Ranchi
4.	Government School II (Co.Ed), Ranchi
5.	Residential School, Ranchi

Tools for the Study

The semi-structured interview schedule for students, teachers and principals. The open-ended questions were asked by principals regarding the strength of students, ratio of students and teachers, strength of ST students, active participation of students in school activities like sports and other co-curricular activities, number of absent students on regular basis and importance of indigenous language. The students were asked about their indigenous languages, reason of absent, interest of subject and co-curricular activity. The teachers were asked regarding the issue related to teaching like basic teaching apparatus, discipline of the students, background of students, administrative cooperation, and others.

Procedure

The fieldwork is done on the research site by taking interviews of principals, teachers and students; classroom observations; visiting school premises like library, computer lab, science lab, playground, toilets, etc. They were also asked regarding attitude towards National Education Policy 2020 and the challenges and issues related to implement this policy in their school system. The information is collected while taking the interview with the principals, teachers, students and school's record book. The classroom and school premises are observed by the investigator.

Data Presentation & Analysis

The objective of this study is to find the educational status of the schools with respect to tribal students by taking the interviews of principal, teachers and students as well as classroom and other premises observation. The findings are shown in table.2 with other indicators.

Table 2: Status of the Schools

Types of School (Class , I-X)	Govt. School (I, Co.Ed)	Govt. School(II, Co.Ed)	Govt. Aided School (I)	Govt. Aided School(II)	Residential School (Boys)
Student- Teacher Ratio	70:1	65:1	21:1	23:1	22:1
Girl's Students(‰)	49.47	55.21	53.55	51.21	N/A
Schedule Tribe Students(%)	51	57	54	52	Only SC
Special Needs Students	0	2 (1 Physical, 1 slow learner)	1 (slow learner)	0	0
Indigenous Language (teaching)	N/A	N/A	1 (Kurukh, till class VII)	1 (Kurukh, till class VII)	N/A

As depicted in table 2, the large student teacher ratio in government schools which create several issues like indiscipline, distraction and loss of interest which put negative outcome on learning. While in Government aided school the rate of enrolment is less as the parents are not willing to pay the fees due to poverty. The girl's enrolment ratio is all these schools are appreciable and almost all school have good number of tribal students. The inclusivity idea is lacking in most of the schools and only few have one or two students with special needs. They do not have special mechanism and infrastructure for the CWSN students. Moreover, there is no focus on the upliftment of indigenous language and only in government aided schools the Kurukh language is being taught till class VII. The rest schools have no such classes on tribal or indigenous languages. The enrolment ratio of the girls' students and tribal students are more than 50%. However, the children with special needs are negligible or less than 1%. The percentage of indigenous language is also same i.e. less than 1% is depicted in fig.1.
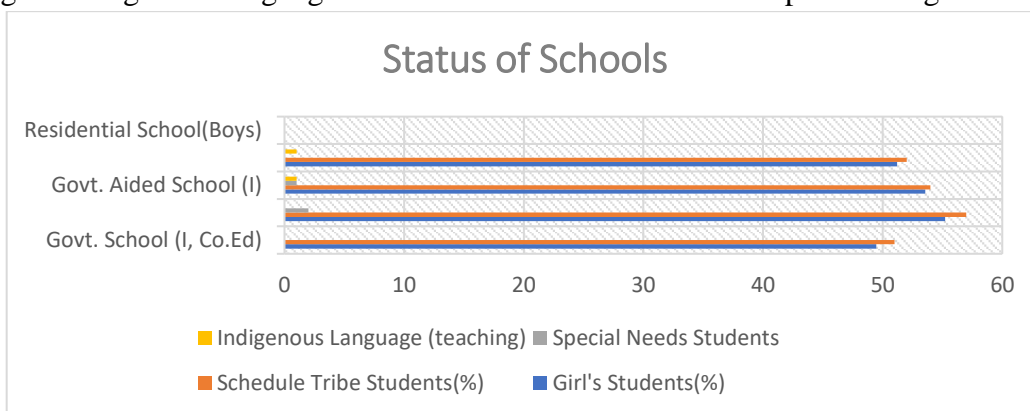

Figure 1: Educational status of the schools

After doing the classroom and school premises observations, the investigator found the following information of the schools regarding infrastructure. The objective IV of the study is shown in table 3.

Table 3: School Infrastructure

Types of School (Class , I-X)	Govt. School (I, Co.Ed)	Govt. School(II, Co.Ed)	Govt. Aided School (I)	Govt. Aided School(II)	Residential School(Boys)
Library	0	0	0	0	1 (Moderate)
Composite Science Lab	1	1	1	1	1
ICT Lab(No. of Computers)	10	15	5	5	10
WiFi	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Play Ground	Moderate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Small
Sports Equipment	0	Football (1), Volleybal (1)	Football (1), Volleybal (1)	Football (2)	Football (2), Volleybal (1), Cricket kit(2)
Music/ Art /Dance Room	0	0	0	0	0
Auditorium	1	1	1	1	1
Sanitation & Hygiene	Filthy	Average	Average	Average	Average

The classroom size is appropriate with proper sunlight and ventilation as per the norms. There is composite science laboratory for senior students but absence of special library room in most of the schools. The residential school has a library but the books are not sufficient for the students. The number of computers in all these schools are not appropriate as per the size of the students and there is no Wi-Fi or internet facilities in any of the school. The playground is moderate in size but the sports equipment is not adequate for students. Every school has one auditorium with average size. The drinking water facilities are there but the hygiene is major concern in government schools. All schools have separate toilets for boys and girls with signage board but lack of proper cleanliness.

The semi structured interview using open ended questions were conducted with principals, teachers and students. These interviews helped to identify various issues and themes, summarized in below tables 4, 5 and 6.

Table 4: Interviewed with Principals

Unit of Analysis	Narration/Statement	Tally

Discipline	Ninth classes ke students zayada problem create karte hai, unhe control karna thoda muskil ho jata hai kabhi kabhi (the IXth class students create chaos in classroom, sometimes it is difficult to handle them)	////
Absenteeism	kuch bache hafte 2/3 din absent hi jate hai especially tribal bache. Kheti ke season mei bache kayi din tak absent rahte, unke parents ko bhi itna fark nahi padta. Kayi ke ghar ka mahool bhi padhai wala nahi, unke parents kaam par chale jate hai aur unko baki bhai behan ko sambhalna padta hai(Some of the students generally absent 2/3 days in a week due to various reasons. Some student's parents are negligence about their education, and few have abusive environment at their home. Most of them are absent during harvesting seasons and they have to take care of their of their siblings)	ⅬⅡⅠ
No Administrative Employee	Hamare pass koi bhi administrative staff nahi hai aur saare kaam hum log hi karna padta hai(we do not have any administrative staff and all the clericals works to be done by us)	ⅬⅡⅠ
Lack of Financial Funds	Hamare pass fund ki bhi kafi kami rehti hai jiske karan bahut sare kaam nahi ho pate hai (We consistently have scarcity of funds which results many works uncompleted)	ⅬⅡⅠ

Table 5: Interviewed with Teachers

Unit of Analysis	Narration/Statement	Tally
Discipline	Kayi students class ko disturb karte hai, zayadatar yeh bache ninth class ke hai , unko punishment bhi de do lekin nahi smazhte (Some IXth std. students impede in the classroom activities and no improvement even after getting punishment).	////

eISSN 2583-6986

IDEALISTIC JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH IN PROGRESSIVE SPECTRUMS (IJARPS)
A MONTHLY, OPEN ACCESS, PEER REVIEWED (REFEREED) INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
Volume 03,   Issue 05, May 2024

Absenteeism	kayi bache kayi din tak school nahi aate, unke parents kaam pe chale jate hai aur unhe baki kaam karna padta hai, kayi apne kheti ke kaam mei lage rehte hai (Some students do help their parents in their work and remain absent from school. Some of them busy in agricultural works)	ℐℋℐ
Non-Educational Work	Hamare pass padhane se zayada dusre govt. official kaam karne padte jiske karan hum apni classes sahi se le nahi pate (We are generally busy in govt. paper works due to which we cannot give appropriate time to academic activities)	ℋℐ
Lack of Resources	Hamare pass resources ki kami hai jiske karan kafi dikat aati hai aur hame kam se kam resource mei zayada se zayada kaam karna padta hai (there is a lack of resources and we have to manage in the limited resources)	ℐℋℐ

Table 6: Interviewed with Students

Unit of Analysis	Narration/Statement	Tally
No promotion of Indigenous languages	Yaha pe sab log hindi mei baat karte hai, apne bhasa mei baat karne mei sharam aati hai. (It is embarrassing for us to speak in our native language because everyone here speaks Hindi.)	ℋℐ
Attending School	School aana achaa lagta hai , par ghar pe kai baar kaam hota hai tu chutti leni padti hai (We enjoy coming to school but sometimes we have to leave because some vital works to be done at home.)	ℐℋℐ

Findings

- This study shows that there is large student teacher ratio in the government schools. The enrolment of the girls' students and tribal student is appreciable, however the enrolment ratio of children with disability is almost negligible due to lack of proper infrastructure and resources. There is need to focus on the upliftment of the indigenous languages.
- The schools are facing several issues like discipline, absenteeism of students, teacher burnout due to overloading of administrative and government paper works. There are no proper administrative staffs for clerical jobs and lack of resources and educational funds

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for proper functioning of the schools. There is negative attitude towards the indigenous languages as they see no future in these languages.

- There is lack of adequate computers in the ICT laboratory with no internet facility and no library. There is also lack of separate classroom for dance/music/ art and sports equipment. The major concern is hygiene and sanitation, lack of cleanliness.

The major findings are identified in this study is depicted in table 7 and reasons of these problems are found during the investigation are also mentioned in the below table.

Table 7: Major Findings

S.No.	Findings	Reasons
1	Discipline	The discipline issue is majorly found in class IX students especially in Govt. school. The primary reasons are large student-teacher ratio and lack of qualified counsellor in the schools who can determine the root cause of such issue.
2	Absenteeism	Several pupils are absent from their respective institutions, which influences their academic growth. **Reasons**: non-conducive and abusive environment at home, both parents show negligence towards education. Both parents are working and students have to take care of their siblings. Many students absent during harvesting seasons and few has to go for other home related work.
3	Non-Educational Work	Teachers are bound to do the non-educational activities and generally engaged in Government paper works like updating Aadhar and bank account of the students, polio mission and other non-academic work which hinder their academic responsibilities. The overloading work and stress causes teacher burnout.
4	No Administrative Employee	In almost all school there is no administrative staffs and all clerical works are done by principals and teachers.
5	No Promotion of Indigenous Languages	Negative Attitude of teachers, students and parents towards Indigenous languages as they believe that it has no further use in their academic journey. Only few schools are teaching tribal language like Kurukh in their school till class VII. The students show no interest to continue this languages as they think that it has no career in future and brings inferiority complex when they speak publicly.

eISSN 2583-6986

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Volume 03,   Issue 05, May 2024

6	Lack of Resources & Financial Funds	There is major lack of resources in almost all schools as there is no proper equipment for sports, music, art and laboratory work. The schools are also lacking Wi-Fi or internet facilities and has very less computers for student activities. Moreover, there is only one smart board in entire school and very less books in library. There is no medical officer, no counsellor and no clerical staffs in these schools.

Educational Implications & Suggestion

- There is a need to reduce the gap of student-teacher ratio by employing more qualified teachers in the schools.
- The resources and educational funds should be raised to deploy facilities for children with special needs so that inclusion of CWSN can be done with mainstream education.
- There is need to arrange variety of school activities related to indigenous languages so that importance of tribal languages can be adhered.
- There is a need to focus on the factors related to absenteeism and try to resolve by educating the parents so that continuity of education is to be maintained and dropout will be reduced.
- There is a need to employ adequate administrative staffs for clerical works so that principal and teachers can focus on the educational activities.
- There is need to deploy more computers in the ICT lab with internet facilities. Moreover, a library should be assigned with sufficient books.
- The proper sanitation and hygiene in schools should be maintained as it improves retention especially of adolescent girls.
- There is need to foster cooperative federalism so that state and central together resolve issues and challenges encountered in these schools.
- The small sample size and qualitative nature of this research limit the ability to draw generalizability. Further research with more diverse and large sample will be done in future to establish broader applicability of these findings.

Conclusion

To implement the NEP 2020 successfully across the nation, the state governments play significant and imminent role. They need to ensure equity and quality education at the grassroots level with the help of cooperative federalism which make the education system more sustainable so that India become more knowledgeable society. There is a need to look after the tribal education and address the differences and discrepancies that stand in path of the upliftment of this social groups.

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