

CHAPTER X PERSPECTIVES FOR TRIBAL EDUCATION

The Constitution of India explicitly announced in the year 1950 to protect the tribals from social injustice, all forms of exploitation and promote with special care their educational and economic interests (Note.20, pp.17). Ever since the declaration was made, Government have been engaging their attention to find out ways for effective execution of the promise,

In the year 1954 Tribal Development blocks were started with areas of high tribal concentration and were gradually extended to all those areas having two-third tribal population. By the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan all the Tribal Development blocks covered 40 per cent of the total tribal population in the country. Dr.B.D. Sharma the erstwhile Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Government of India, now Vice-Chancellor of North-Eastern Hill University admits, "Thus the position was that even after four Five Year Plans bulk of the tribal people were outside the ambit of an intensive tribal development programme". He adds, "At this stage it was also noted that the economic and social condition of dispersed tribal communities was much worse than those living in compact tribal majority areas" (Note. 39, pp. 1). Thus it is evident that after 20 years of intensified developmental operation for upliftment of the tribal communities the success achieved is disproportionate to the expenditure incurred in that connection.

The Prime Minister of India after reviewing the tribal development position issued a detailed Minute on the 19th June, 1974 in which directions were given to change the strategy of tribal development. Accordingly the tribal development problems were divided into two broad categories : tribal majority areas (Area development approach) and dispersed tribals (Family-oriented approach). Special attention was also to be given to the primitive tribes wherever they lived within the areas of tribal concentration or outside.

On the basis of the previous experiences of tribal development in Tribal Development blocks, the new strategy emerged with the objective of covering the entire tribal population. The new strategy emphasised on formulation of separate Subplans with specific objectives to narrow the gap between the level of development of tribal and nontribal areas. For operational purposes the tribal Subplan areas have been organised into integrated Tribal Development Projects/Agencies in which a package of services are implemented for an integrated and allround development of the tribal communities. The integrated approach was considered superior to sectoral approach because development in a particular sector did not result in improvement of the conditions of the tribes in general.

During the Fifth Five Year Plan period the Subplan strategy was implemented for the first time. Due to lack of experience the Subplans during the Fifth Plan, to a considerable extent, were summation of disaggregated programmes of different sectors. Flow of funds for execution^{of} the tribal development programmes were limited to Rs.1102.00 crores for the entire country. During the Sixth Plan period developmental efforts were co-ordinated, correlated and consolidated to produce more fruitful results.

One of the significant improvements during the Sixth Plan is the identification of 245 Modified Area Development Approach pockets, commonly known as MADA pockets as units of special development programmes out of which 37 have been identified in Orissa. Thus by the end of the Sixth Plan the tribal development problems were attacked from four different approaches, namely (i) Tribal Subplans, (ii) MADA pockets, (iii) Micro-Projects for the primitive tribes and (iv) family-oriented poverty amelioration schemes.

The objectives and strategy incorporated in the Report of the Working Group on development of Scheduled Tribes during the Seventh Five Year Plan attaches utmost importance to the programmes of educational development among the tribal communities in the following words.

"Education generates awakening which enables appreciation of a need to develop economically. It also fortifies one endowed with good education against outside interference with his economic prosperity. Advancement of education among the Scheduled Tribes is, therefore, a prime need for more reasons than one. Even with substantial effort mounted in this sector in the preceding decades, the literacy amongst the Scheduled Tribes has risen from 8.5 per cent in 1961 to a little over 16 per cent in 1981, with problems of non-enrolment and dropouts continuing to cause anxiety. Rationalisation of the educational administration in the tribal areas while giving a boost to adult, nonformal and women's education appears to be a special need in the tribal scene. It has also to be appreciated that formal schooling has not been very attractive to the children of the tribal communities jettisoned as they are between typical social and economic constraints. Accordingly a higher priority to education programmes and provision of a larger component of vocational courses would be very beneficial in this context. Efficiency and self-reliance can be ensured in no better manner than through an educational programme having an adequate vocational bias (Note. 57, pp.15).

The paragraph epitomises the policy and approach of Government in respect of educational development of the tribals during the Seventh Plan. The Working Group strongly felt that education is the key to all development and education can be an input for economic development likely to yield rich dividends. Therefore, maximum importance should be given to development of education in the tribal communities.

Since independence Government have been trying to remove the educational disparities between education of the tribals and nontribals. All efforts have been made in the past to provide incentives like payment of stipends, scholarships providing hostel facilities and supply of books, uniforms, stationeries to the tribal students but the progress made in the direction is not significant.

In the field of education, enrolment, dropout and literacy position, these are the three important aspects on which educational development can be roughly assessed. It has been seen that gross enrolment ratio in 6-11 age group is 99.57 per cent in case of nontribal children in 1984-85 whereas it is 77.93 per cent in case of tribal children. In the 11-14 age group the gross enrolment ratio for nontribal children is 51.54 per cent as against 21.05 per cent for the tribal children.

Dropout in case of nontribal children in 6-11 age group is 40 per cent in 1982-83 whereas it is 75.48 per cent in case of tribal children. Similarly at the Middle school stage dropout in case of nontribal children is 57.58 per cent whereas it is 84.11 per cent in case of tribal children.

As far as literacy position is concerned the literacy percentage of all communities is 34.12 according to 1981 census but the corresponding percentage for the tribals is 13.95.

The disparity in development of education of the nontribals and tribals stand pronounced in the three parameters described above. The dropout rate is alarmingly high at the primary stage and calls for immediate attention. Educational backwardness of the Scheduled Tribes is reflected in the low literacy among them. Literacy position is always taken as an index of the progress of education. The tribal literacy position is a pointer towards making educative efforts manifold. Enrolment could not make headway due to nonprovision of schools within easy walking distance from the residence of children. Though tribal ecology is mainly responsible for nonprovision of schools, alternatives have not so far been provided. Nonavailability of right type of teachers with necessary knowledge and orientation in tribal language and culture is another major factor responsible for spread of education at a slow pace. Payment of stipends, scholarships is made as a measure of reimbursement of the cost of education after it is incurred. This delayed payment is responsible for dropout of a large number of tribal students. Delayed supply of reading and writing materials also reduces the desire of the

tribal children for education. Thus a large number of factors handicap promotion of education among the tribal communities.

Constraints and resources have been held responsible for restricting the progress of education in the State. Yet during the Sixth Plan liberal expenditures have been made to implement the educational programmes for the tribal communities. The State Departments of Education and Harijan and Tribal Welfare incurred the following expenditures.

Source of funding	flow of funds to tribal subplan area.		
	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85
		Rupees	in lakhs

State plan funds	1021.54	530.44	635.44
Central/Centrally sponsored Schemes.	243.27	184.55	306.79
Special Central Assistance	578.82	185.61	284.44

	1843.63	900.00	1226.67

The expenditures during the Sixth Plan period were made on the following major development programmes in education sector. These were mainly expansion activities undertaken in the subplan areas alongwith continuance of the previous programmes,

- opening of 616 new primary schools,
- upgradation of 450 three class Lower Primary to Upper Primary schools
- Opening of 1400 part-time nonformal centres
- Upgradation of 190 Upper Primary schools to M.E. schools.
- Opening of four seven class residential higher Primary schools.
- Appointment of 500 additional teachers in Primary schools
- Construction of 809 teachers' quarters
- Introducing 615 elementary school complex
- Payment of grant-in-aid to 19 new private high schools.

- maintenance of 72 High Schools, 40 Ashram Schools and 34 residential Sevashrams in Subplan area.
- payment of pre-matric scholarships to 35,436 Scheduled Tribe 29,055 Scheduled Caste children.
- supply of free nationalised Text books to 1,24,028 Scheduled Tribe and 3,07,174 scheduled caste students.
- construction of 22 girls' hostels and other minor programmes. (Note.74, pp.135).

Implementation of all these schemes has considerably improved the educational scene of the tribal areas. The quantitative expansion in education sector has, no doubt, created awareness in the tribal areas which is likely to generate motives among the tribals for education. Qualitative improvement of education should also receive equal weightage. The state Department of education concentrated its efforts in consolidation and improvement of existing institutions during the year 1983-84 rather than expanding the facilities any further. The right approach is to strike a balance between quality and quantity while planning for development of education.

THRUST AREAS FOR TRIBAL EDUCATION DURING THE SEVENTH PLAN

In view of the backwardness of education in tribal areas special programmes have been prepared in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Planning Commission. The strategies have been developed on the basis of the previous experiences of educational achievements in tribal areas. These programmes are to be implemented during the Seventh Plan period.

Universalisation of elementary education - High priority has been accorded to the programme of universalisation of elementary education of the children in the age group of 6-14 in the tribal areas. It has been proposed to prepare master plans at the district level to identify the deficiency areas and to make good the deficiency within a specified time frame.

Appointment of local teachers - Local persons who belong to the particular sub-culture of tribal areas are to be given preference in appointment of school teachers.

Curriculum renewal - The curriculum is proposed to be redesigned in the light of the requirements of the tribal communities. Text books are to be prepared taking themes from the tribal societies, traditions and customs, festivals and experiences.

Vocational bias - Provisions are made for introducing a variety of vocational courses at the higher secondary (+2) stage suitable for the tribal areas and tribal children. Opening of government high schools - Adequate number of government high schools are proposed to be opened in tribal districts during the Seventh Plan.

Provision for collegiate education - For poor and meritorious tribal youths aspiring for higher education a well-equipped college will be opened in each district for providing higher education facilities in the home districts of tribal children.

Expansion of hostel facilities - Steps will be taken for expansion of hostel facilities in the primary, middle and high schools for both boys and girls with matching assistance from Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Teachers' quarters - Provision for residential accommodation of teachers serving in tribal areas are proposed to be made to reduce teacher absenteeism.

Residential Schools - Low literary areas and tribal groups are to be identified including primitive tribes for opening of residential type of institutions for promoting education among them.

Equipments - Steps are proposed to be taken for improvement of infrastructural facilities in shape of providing teaching equipments and games and sports materials to schools located in tribal areas.

Incentives - Educational incentives will continue to encourage enrolment and retention of pupils and to reduce absenteeism,

School timings - Change of school timings and rescheduling vacations keeping in view the local situations, climatic conditions, occupational patterns of the local people, and festivals observed in the localities are proposed to be made. Pilot studies are to be undertaken to recommend change in school timings and vacation patterns.

School complex - School complex programme is to be strengthened for effective supervision of the institutions.

Adult Education - Greater efforts are to be made for promoting adult education in tribal areas in view of the low literacy among the tribes. Efforts are proposed to be made to spread literacy education among the tribals, particularly among the women who are at a very low level of literacy. This programme is proposed to be executed through the traditional social organisations of the Scheduled Tribes.

Rationalisation of administration - The Working Group on development of Scheduled Tribes during Seventh Plan feels the urgency for rationalisation of administration of educational institutions in tribal areas. They recommend to bring all the institutions under one umbrella. Education Department may be entrusted with control, management and supervision of the schools. Duality of control has not generated good effect in the past.

RESOURCES

A good number educational development schemes have been dropped in the past due to constraints of resources. It has also been remarked by

many authorities connected with tribal education that inadequacy of investment on development of education of tribals is the main factor responsible for the present plight in the field. Provision of resources, therefore, is the most important consideration while planning for education of the tribes.

The Seventh Plan has been prepared for the Subplan area with flow of resources from different sources. An outlay of the order of Rs. 10526.21 lakhs has been proposed for the Seventh Plan which will be drawn from the general education sector and special type of education programme run by Harijan and Tribal Welfare Department of the State Government. The proposed outlay for education comprises of the following components.

<u>Sources of funding</u>	<u>Outlay (in lakhs)</u>
General education sector State Plan	Rs. 5695.13
Central/Centrally sponsored schemes	Rs. 1369.49
Special Central assistance	Rs. 845.00

Total education sector	Rs. 7909.62
Backward Classes sector State Plan	Rs. 386.54
Central/Centrally sponsored schemes	Rs. 15.33
Special Central Assistance	Rs. 2214.72

Total Backward Classes Sector	Rs. 2616.59
Total education programme	Rs. 10526.21

Under the present set up of administration there is parallel¹ planning for development of education in the tribal areas of the state. The Department of Education plans for development of education for all the areas and the Department of Harijan and Tribal Welfare also plans and executes educational programmes. It is for this reason the Working Group on development of Scheduled

Tribes strongly recommended for rationalisation of administration of educational institutions in tribal areas in order to place the control and administration under one department. Of course there is no duplication of programmes or wastage of efforts in the field as the area of operation is almost different for each department except upgradation of educational institutions. However, there are reasons for rationalising the administration of education in tribal areas:

The State Department of Harijan and Tribal Welfare proposes to undertake the following special type of educational programmes under Backward Classes Welfare sector during the Seventh Plan period.

- Construction of incomplete school and hostel buildings.
- Continuance of High Schools, Ashram schools and residential Sevashrams.
- Upgradation of L.P. to U.P. standard Sevashram.
- Electrification of educational institutions
- Provision of drinking water facilities in residential schools and
- Award of pre-matric scholarships/stipends.

The proposed outlay for the above programmes is Rs.1200.33 lakhs for the Seventh Plan (1985-90).

With a view to reducing the high rate of dropouts at the primary school level it has been proposed to construct 1200 low cost hostels at the rate of one hostel for each Gram Panchayat situated in the tribal Subplan area in a phased manner. By 1.9.84 as many as 139 hostels were completed and 569 were under construction. 492 such hostels are yet to be constructed. 261 hostel buildings are to be constructed with the funds already provided in the Sixth Plan budget and 231 hostels are proposed to be constructed during the Seventh Plan.

Providing hostel facilities in the primary schools of the tribal areas is necessary to prevent low enrolment and high dropout which has been

suggested by the present author in the profile for Keonjhar district (Note.43, pp.72). The problems of low enrolment and retention are likely to be tackled to a large extent by provision of residential facilities in the primary schools.

The State Department of Education has fixed the following physical targets for spread of general education in the tribal Subplan area. These measures have been proposed to be taken with a view to providing better educational facilities within easy reach of the people.

<u>Description of the programme</u>	<u>Physical Targets</u>
- Appointment of primary school teachers	800
- Appointment of nonformal teachers	800
- Appointment of teachers in aided M.E. Schools	100
- Construction of primary school buildings	200
- Appointment of teachers in aided secondary schools	4491
- Appointment of lecturers in private colleges	1160
- Opening of adult education centres	1280

In addition to the above programmes the Department of Education has drawn up an action plan for expanding educational opportunities and promoting cocurricular activities among tribal children continuing in Schools. The projected need is to the tune of Rs.845.00 lakhs during the Seventh Plan period. The detailed scheme is given below with the proposed amount of provision.

<u>Schemes</u>	<u>Proposed provision Rs. in lakhs</u>
- Opening of preprimary classes in low literacy tribal blocks	100.00
- Establishment of residential girls high schools with secondary training wings to turn out women teacher trainees for tribal areas	20.00
- Opening of residential High schools in tribal areas	130.00

-	Construction of residential quarters for Primary school teachers in tribal areas	125.00
-	Construction of hostels in upgraded M.E. Schools in 118 blocks for converting them to residential schools	250.00
-	Construction of addl. class rooms for primary schools in tribal areas	125.00
-	Grant to High Schools in tribal blocks for promotion of local games and sports	10.00
-	Grant to Bharat Scouts and Guides	5.00

	Total Special Central Assistance	845.00

The State Department of Harijan and Tribal Welfare have prepared another plan for continuance and development of educational institutions run by them. They have also planned removing physical deficiencies from the educational institutions with an estimated cost of Rs.2258.72 lakhs to be received as special central assistance. The detailed programme is given below.

	Rupees	in
	----- lakhs -----	
-	Continuance of 33 High Schools, 21 Ashrams and Kanyashrams, all the Sevashrams of U.P. standard and 1000 low cost hostels during the the Seventh Plan	1481.93
-	Construction of 15 Residential Sevashrams, construction and improvement of 14 High Schools, construction of 18 hostels with electrification and drinking water facilities	403.95
-	Supply of beds, utensils and furniture for boarders of residential schools	8.05

-	Enhancement of boarding charges of different type of residential Schools	236.71
-	Development of Agriculture in High School and continuance of modern trades	20.68
-	Supply of library books to High Schools	2.09
-	Enhancement of stipends	60.31
-	Giving Vocational bias	40.00
-	Admission of S.T. students to Public Schools	5.00

		2258.72

PRIORITY AREAS

Priority areas have been identified under the Seventh Plan Schemes for education to be executed on a preferential basis.

NONFORMAL EDUCATION

It has been strongly felt that the formal education could not attract the tribals to its fold. The formal education which is conducted in schools on a full-time basis is unattractive to the tribal communities on the economic front. The tribal would engage his child in some work which would supplement the family income. The Seventh Plan Working Group on Development of Scheduled Tribes have suggested that opportunity cost should be paid to the tribal for parting with the economic endeavour of his child. The loss which the tribal faces by sending his son or daughter to school should be recompensed by Government. It is, therefore, suggested that nonformal education centres should be provided in the tribal areas where work and education can go together.

VOCATIONAL BIAS

There are provisions for vocational training in traditional crafts like carpentry, tailoring, stone carving, type writing in the existing high schools run by the Harijan and Tribal Welfare Department in a limited way.

In order to adjust to the changing needs of time a reorientation is being contemplated subject to availability of adequate resources for introducing vocations like motor cycle repairing, pump mechanic, watch repair, transistor repair, electric line repair, etc. for which there is heavy demand in society. This would provide an opportunity to the learner to earn a livelihood when necessary margin money is advanced to him by the Tribal Development Credit Corporation or any other Cooperative organisation or Bank. There is a criticism that training in these vocations can be imparted in a more effective way in the Technical Training Institutes run by the Industries Department. There is some point behind this criticism but the Technical Training Institutes are supposed to impart this training to a limited number of students. They cannot give a vocational bias to the students in general.

The vocational bias and work experience through a vocation are the crying needs of the present day education. A question may arise regarding posting of specially trained teachers before introducing the vocations. But such problems may be scaled over by training some teachers of the schools or a group of persons technically trained in different vocations may be posted at the Sub-Division level who by turn attend schools to impart training in his subject. A detailed programme may be worked out for implementation of the scheme. An annual requirement of Rs.10,00 lakhs has been estimated for introduction of the scheme during the Seventh Plan.

Expansion of hostel facilities-

All the high schools and Ashram schools and some Sevashramas run by the Harijan & Tribal Welfare Department have hostel facilities attached to the schools. Hostel buildings have been constructed to provide residential facilities to the tribal children. 139 low cost hostels have been functioning and 539 are under construction. Yet there is proposal for construction of 492 hostels during the Seventh Plan. Even then these provisions are inadequate to meet the demands. Hostel facilities are essential to obviate the difficulties relating to nonprovision of schooling facilities within easy reach of the children.

Parental education-

Most of the tribal children who are admitted to schools are first generation learners. Education of the parents imparted through the adult education programmes is a dire need for the tribal areas. Moreover low literacy among the Scheduled Tribes, particularly among tribal women calls attention of the administration to provide intensive adult education facilities in tribal areas. The adult education programme may be implemented with greater emphasis through traditional tribal social organisations.

Evaluation and monitoring-

The field of tribal education is a virgin field for work. Most of the practices are being tried out on experimental basis. Some of the experiments succeed where as some others fail. There is much to learn from successes and no less from the failures. Hence, both the results of experimentation should be furnished to the planning machinery as feed back. Unfortunately that is not done. As has been discussed earlier all the efforts employed for development of the Scheduled Tribes through the Tribal Development Blocks could not achieve the desired results from 1950 to 1974. The government machinery remained in dark for a period of twenty years or more due lack of proper monitoring and evaluation. A sound monitoring system is, therefore, an immediate need. A monitoring system should be set up from the grass-root level for periodic assessment of the progress achieved and the failures confronted with. A regular feedback from the field will remove a large number errors and defects faced in the process of implementation of schemes.

CONSTRAINTS

Tribal ecology-

The major constraint in expansion of educational facilities in tribal areas is their ecology. The tribal settlements are very small in size. The habitations are small clusters of houses having population limited to 100 in most of the cases. The location of the habitations are in the jungles,

quite distant from one another. They do not satisfy the prescribed norms for opening of schools. There is a need to review and revise the norms for opening of schools in tribal areas. Out of two norms of population and distance, the population norm may be relaxed in order to provide schools in tribal habitations. Alternatively hostel facilities are to be provided to the tribal children living in smaller habitations.

Finance-

Inadequacy of available funds is a constraint in development of educational institutions. It is alleged that large investments in pucca buildings is a wasteful expenditure in tribal education. Nonavailability or delayed availability of construction materials like cement, iron rods etc. in remote interior area deters the progress of building infrastructure. It has been found that in case of certain tribal communities modern structures run counter to the tradition and sensibility of the children of those tribes. Therefore, with a view to economising the construction and harmony of environment indigenous materials and specifications may be utilised.

Dual control of institutions-

The working groups on tribal development of the Sixth Plan as well as of the Seventh Plan have unequivocally suggested for putting an end to the multiplicity of controlling agencies of the educational institutions. Both the groups have recommended for rationalising the administration by transferring the educational institutions from the State Department of Harijan and Tribal Welfare to the Department of Education through a process of gradual change over. But this has not been done so far at the State Government level. May be, the administrative department is not interested in making over the institutions.

Cultural alienation-

Under the present set up of educational administration the school environment is entirely different from the social and cultural environment of the tribal areas. The differences are in relation to the language used as medium of instruction, contents taught in text books and the teacher who teaches in the school. The curriculum adopted in tribal schools has hardly any relevance to the tribal situations. Therefore, there is a need to modify the curriculum and text books which may reflect the tribal culture and life.

Lack of incentives for the teachers-

The teachers are to serve in remote tribal areas where there are no medical and communication facilities. Unless some special allowances are paid to them, they are not supposed to do justice to their jobs. The inconveniences experienced by the teachers should be recompensed by Government. Recently Government of Orissa have provided for special allowances for the employees serving in tribal areas but the amount is inadequate.

Medium of instruction-

Article 350 A of the constitution of India lays down that it shall be the endeavour of every state and of every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minorities groups (Note. 20, pp. 124). Providing primary education through the mother tongue of the tribal children remains a problem due to multiplicity of tribal languages in the state, undeveloped form of the languages, lack of scripts and written form for such languages. Some steps have been taken in Orissa to prepare text books and primers using the tribal languages of different regions like the northern Orissa, Southern Orissa and Western parts for classes I and II. The undertaking is still in experimental stage. The tryout results are awaited.

Lack of infrastructure at the institution level-

During the Fourth All India Educational Survey operation it was observed that 4023 Primary, 53 Middle and 7 Secondary schools did not have buildings for their accommodation of which 1980 are in Koraput district (Note. 5). Majority of the buildingless schools are in tribal districts. Similarly large proportion of the schools in tribal areas do not have libraries, games and sports materials and teaching equipments and science apparatus which are the minimum requirements for effective teaching. It is, therefore, necessary to prepare masterplans at the level of Circle Inspector of Schools after locating the deficiencies. Provisions should be made as early as possible to remove the deficiencies.

Lack of quality of education--

Most of the educational programmes undertaken during the post independence period for the Scheduled Tribes have aimed at quantitative expansion. To a certain degree this was inevitable in the context ^{of} meagre educational facilities available in tribal areas. But situations have in the meantime changed. Education is now demanded in many tribal areas. The Working Group on Development of Scheduled Tribes during the Seventh Plan state that, "some studies have revealed that the hiatus in the cultural idiom of conventional education and tribal ethos has eroded its acceptability to the tribals"(Note.57,pp.147). The low enrolment and high dropout could be explained in terms of this gap between the tribal culture and conventional education. This gap need be bridged as early as possible. The present day dynamics indicate that many tribal communities are making a quick march towards modernisation and acculturation. This march is likely to obliterate the trace of their traditional cultural heritage. It is necessary that experts in the field should take steps for preservation of the useful parts of their culture through documentaries of tribal life particularly their dance, music, community life, youth organisations linked with education.