CHAPTER - I

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CHAPTER - I

Emergence of the Study

1.1.0. Introduction

"....... Education probably the most important medium of all because of it's influential aspects. Education changes behaviour. People and nations are as they are because of their educative process."

India is one of the oldest civilizations with a kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage. The charming geographical variations, long and gripping history, delightful festivals, enchanting arts, variety of languages and people are all contributing in it's variety and shaping the heritage of the mother land. In the words of Monier Williams, "....... In all aspects, India is a complete world in itself." In fact, India is an experience, an idea and an ideal. It is distinctive for its antiquity and continuity. Apart from it's own vitality, the continuity of India is largely due to it's ability to adapt to alien ideas without loosing it's own identity. Every country has it's uniqueness and individuality which is mirrored in it's academic, social and cultural life and pursuits. This can be termed as it's 'mind' or 'collective consciousness' which determines attitudes and directs the gesture of it's people. Indian civilization is essentially religious. It is engaged in a continuous and sincere pursuit of the sacredness. People of India has a strong sense of individuality and at the same time a sense of society at large which enables them to think in terms of the common interests of groups and classes. The 'caste; and 'guild' system, the nightmare of all governments for their clannishness and economic power, stem for this ability to congregate. Spread over a huge geographical area, 'Indianism' that is the essence of a polymorphous culture, is difficult to define. It acquires different postures and modes according to taste, attitudes and mental sets of different groups and people united by a typical acceptance of certain constant social and cultural factors, such as - casts, tribes, beliefs, norms, mores and obviously with a sense of nationhood.
The variety of Indian heritage includes the variety of her people, their social structure, sub-cultural variation, symbols and so many other factors. Being a welfare state, India is committed to the welfare and development of its people in general and vulnerable sections in particular. The preamble, directive principles of state policy, fundamental rights and specific sections of the Indian constitution stands testimony to the commitment of the state to its people.

India has achieved multifaceted socioeconomic progress since independence however the task is not finished. Development of the vulnerable sections should be the necessary utopia at the present time and for the purpose proper and homogenous development of all the sections of it's population is essential. It is possible by the way of paying special attention to the 'education' which can further help to retain and also to enrich the existing cultural heritage of the country. In fact, education provides the necessary tools, skills, knowledge, values and attitude required for the realization of the four cordial values applicable for all humans, like survival, security, prosperity and progress. The basic learning needs and the way they are to be met will not be the same for all peoples and for all ages. They vary with time and space. However, education has always been considered as an instrument of social change. In recent days, societies consider education as a sound economic investment because of which all the developing and developed societies are paying greater attention to education. Education has a fundamental role to play in personal and social development. It is one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance and oppression. Education emancipate social atoms from hang-over of time old unreasonable social taboos, superstition and prejudices.

Education promotes all-round and harmonious development of the nation. It nurtures the potentialities of it's members and channelise into appropriate avenues to develop them as effective, productive, efficient and responsible participants in different social roles - instrumental and also expressive. It makes the man rational and enables them to perceive and examine things in proper perspective.
1.2.0. Education For All : A Social Imperative

Education is one of the most important symbols of status and prestige in the society for an individual. It is also considered as an index of all-round development. It is a major basis of socioeconomic progress of a society and of an individual too. It may be seen as a part of the economic foundation of the society in one hand. On the other hand it is a major instrument for social change and modernization. It is considered to be 'the key that unlocks the door to modernization, as well. Whatever may be the substantive content of the concept of modernization, in context of under developed economic and traditional societies (like India), modernization involves a process of change - social, economical and political. Actually the change goes even deeper and encompasses cultural values and personality orientation as well.

The economic and social development of a country is hindered if proper and effective attention is not paid to the education of all. Development of a nation depends on the development of all sections of the society and development of a section, in it's turn, depends on the progress of education among it's members. According to the latest census report approximately one-fourth of the countrymen in India are backward. Their estimated population is $18 \times 10^7$. We will not get the cooperation of those brethren in our cultural, social, political and economic programmes as long as we fail to carry the 'Education' within their reach. This backward section includes the people belong to scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and some other backward classes. Among them the situation of the scheduled tribes is comparatively most pathetic. The tribals, the pioneer backwards suffer most from social backwardness, oppression and economic deprivation. Which are all co-existed with their educational backwardness. In fact, the massive rate of illiteracy among the tribals is the root-cause of their backwardness. Though the government with different political colour had taken many plans and projects for the development of scheduled tribes since Independence but till now they are the most deprived section of the population. Though the Scheduled Caste community has lightened a little in the light of education but the tribals are almost in dark.
1.3.0. Education and Constitutional Assurance

Five decades have already passed since the constitution was drawn. The progress achieved so far in terms of tribal-development cast serious doubts whether the constitutional objectives are attainable even in distant future. A grand majority of the tribal population in India is still shrouded in the darkness of illiteracy. A brief perusal of the literacy-table will give support to the above fact.

Table 1: Literacy Rates Among General, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Men, Women & Total Population in India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>General Total</th>
<th>Scheduled Caste Total</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribe Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>23.95</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>12.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>29.48</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>18.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>24.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>39.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Literacy Rates Among General, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Population in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>General Caste Total</th>
<th>Scheduled Caste Total</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribe Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>23.95</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>7.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>29.48</td>
<td>14.67</td>
<td>10.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>21.38</td>
<td>16.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>30.06</td>
<td>23.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tribal population in India is 67.6 million \(^7\) (i.e. 8.08 per cent of the total population) which is larger than the ethnic population of any other country throughout the world. Under different articles and schedules of the Indian Constitution (viz. Article 15(4), 16(4), 19(5), 23, 29, 46, 164, 330, 334, 335, 338, 339 (i), 342, 371 (B), 371 (C), fifth and sixth schedules), the tribal population has been given protection. Yet, they remained the most backward ethnic group, which is clearly evident from their low rate of literacy (i.e. the major indicator of educational development).

The table 1 & 2 show that the tribals in the context of literacy are more backward, not only in comparison to the general population but also in comparison to the scheduled caste population. Even fifty three years of
intervention has not made any significant impact for improving the condition of the tribals.

1.4.0. Tribal Education

The reporting of the brochure from Friends of Tribal Society may give a glance view of their present situation. The Brochure form 'Friends of Tribal Society' (in March, 1997) * reads, ".... Tribals in India, numbering around seven crores live in complete darkness, ignored by progress made over the past fifty years. Eighty four percent of male and ninety five percent of the female tribals are illiterate. Ninety five percent of the tribal population have no access to medical facilities and ninety percent have never known what electric light is ...." However, their condition may in fact be far worse. *

Obviously to uplift their lot and to integrate them with the mainstream as responsible members, special attention should be focused on 'Tribal Education' along with the other socioeconomic safeguards and privileges. Proper upliftment of Indian society is in far distance until their overall development is taken care of. The tribal communities need a massive persuasion to be educated, not just to be literate, to walk together with the rest of the population of the country. Education is the only and only way to overcome all other barriers of their backwardness.

The tribal education in India presents a dismal sense. It is characterized by low enrolment, high dropout, drift and wastage, limited number of high achievers and little credibility and it is so for a variety of reasons.

1.4.1. Tribal Education: The Present Scenario

The first census after independence in 1951 did not collect data on the literacy rates of the tribals. The literacy rate among the tribals has increased in the post independence period. The literacy rate among the tribals has increased three times from 1961 when it was just 7.99 per cent to 23.63 per cent during 1991. Despite the increase in literacy rates, the tribals have a lower rate of literacy than that of the general population and even that of the scheduled caste, as it reveals from the primary census abstract since 1961 to
1991. As in the other social groups, the rural tribals have lower literacy rate than their urban counterparts. In 1991, the rural tribals had a literacy rate of 21.8 per cent compared to 46.35 per cent in the urban tribals. However, the rural literacy demands more importance for the tribal population as because 93 per cent of the Indian tribals are inhabiting in the rural setup. 11

Gross enrolment ratio in the tribal boys and girls are approximately similar to those of Scheduled caste boys and girls in 1990-1991 for class I – IV. However, they are lower to those for the general population. In the case of boys the tribal figure is higher (125.6) than that of the scheduled Caste (121.4) and even the general population (115.3).

Table – 3 : Gross Enrolment Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Grade</th>
<th>Year Span</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Scheduled Caste</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I – V</td>
<td>1980 – '81</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>105.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I – V</td>
<td>1985 – '86</td>
<td>111.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>116.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I – V</td>
<td>1990 – '91</td>
<td>115.3</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>121.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI – VIII</td>
<td>1980 – '81</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI – VIII</td>
<td>1985 – '86</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI – VIII</td>
<td>1990 – '91</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


But the situation changes in grade VI –VIII. The gross enrolment ratio of tribal boys and girls are low compared to the scheduled castes and general population. In 1990 – '91, the gross enrolment ratio for the tribals was 27.3 as compared to 36 for the Scheduled Castes and 46 for the general population. In case of the tribal boys, it was 54.1 as compared with 68.9 for scheduled caste and 73.4 for the general population. 12 The relative enrolment ratio of the girls for per 100 boys for the tribals is less than that for the non-tribals. 13 We can have a brief perusal of the scenario in Table – 4.
Table-4: Relative Enrolment Ratios of Girls per 100 boys for tribals and Non-tribals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class I - V</th>
<th>Class VI - VII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
<td>Non Tribals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965 - '66</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 - '71</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>60.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975 - '76</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - '81</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987 - '88</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 - '92</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:

There is a much higher rate of dropouts from school for the tribals in class I - V and also in class VI - VIII compared to the other non-tribal communities which aggravates the problem of tribal education. The table-5 shows the comparative dropout among the tribals and non-tribals up to middle level grade during schooling.
Table 5: Drop out Rates of the Students from Tribal & Other Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Classes I - V</th>
<th></th>
<th>Classes VI - VIII</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-'81</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-'85</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-'89</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the successive stages of education dropout in a geometric ratio become a natural phenomenon for the tribals. A large number of tribal students who continue their education remain confined to the same class beyond the prescribed age due to their inability to grasp the subject matter and their failure to keep pace with the class.

"Tribal Education" is a very popular field among the Researchers who have identified a large number of factors responsible for the drop-out and stagnation of the tribal students. Some of these are: lack of educability due to socio-economic and cultural background; lack of educational facilities in schools; non suitable curriculum, pedagogy and the medium of instruction and so on. All of these problems conglomerates and hinder the education among the tribes. To remove these problems, several committees, commissions, study teams and working groups were formed by the government and recommendations came from those corners to overcome the problems of Tribal Education.

1.4.2. Tribal Education: Recommendations of various Committees, Commissions, Study Teams and Working groups

Roy, Renuka Committee (1959) suggested regarding the pattern of tribal education. The committee emphasis over the problem of alienation of the tribals in educational set-up and suggested not to alienate the tribals
from their own indigenous back-ground. It further recommended for imparting education to the primary students in their mother tongue and to appoint at least one woman teacher in every tribal school. These recommendations are in tune with the perspectives of Pandit Nehru's Philosophy of Tribal World, where he suggested to preserve the tribal culture which demands to examine the status of tribals in the filed of education and to be specified on teacher education.

Report of the *Elwin Committee (1960)* on special Multipurpose Tribal blocks has given emphasis on construction of school building in local style and the simplicity in equipments avoiding unnecessary weightage on enrolment of schools, that is giving emphasis on a qualitative aspect rather than the quantitative aspects of tribal education. The *Elwin Committee* further suggested to appoint sufficient number of experienced and qualified teachers, completely familiar with local language for lower classes. Besides, declaration of school holidays according to local festivals, use of local tribal institutions as schools, preparation of text books based on the tribal background, introduction of agriculture and forestry based education at primary level and vocational education at secondary stage were the other important recommendations made by Elwin Committee, which were hardly followed during the implementation of the educational plans on different tribal blocks in the latter phase.

The scheduled areas and Scheduled Tribe Commission under the chairmanship of U.N. Dhebar agreed to the proposal of the representatives of Ministry of Education in providing social amenities and employment opportunities to the villagers in their own surroundings instead of encouraging continous drain of vitality and intellects from the village to the urban areas, establishment of schools and colleges to cater the needs of land based section of the society and imparting basic education beyond the secondary stage. However, these recommendations mostly kept in paper and pencil and hardly any of these recommendations were really followed in the later period.

Apart from the 'education' in general, *Kothari Commission* dealt with the tribal education of the country. The commission recommended to provide 'a five year effective education for all tribal children' by 1975-76
including intensive programme of parental education and education of girls. The commission also recommended various items that have been dealt with by the committee under the chairmanship of Veriar Elwin in respect of teachers' medium of education, text books and establishment of Ashram type of schools. The commission gave emphasis to pick up tribal youths, give them training through specially organized courses and use them as workers for tribal upliftment. The commission was of the opinion that 'no expenditure is too great for the purpose of tribal education as it is a major programme of equalization and social and national integration.'

In connection with the teacher's status (for tribal areas) (p. 113) the committee strongly recommended to encourage tribal young man and woman to become teachers in the schools of those areas. The report reads that "it is essential to develop cadres of persons who will devote themselves to the service of tribal people ...... promising young persons from the tribals should be selected and specially trained to work in tribal areas. The usual prescriptions regarding recruitment or minimum qualifications will often have to be set aside this programme."

The working group on Tribal Development during sixth five year plan (1980) opined that education is key to tribal development - it has to be tackled on both non-formal and formal levels. The working group suggested regarding non-formal education that the course-content should include instructions as how to deal with problems connected with land, credit, currency, weight and measures, hygiene, local geography, liquor vending and so on. In connection with formal education, the working group suggested that steps should be taken to workout syllabi for education taking into account their culture, indigenous technology, ethos and assimilative power. The working group also gave emphasis on vocational training on agriculture, industry, trades, sports, etc. to provide job-opportunity. Apart from these, special coaching in science and other subjects outside the school hours should be arranged. For better enrolment of the tribal school uniforms for students, midday meal and compensation need to be paid to the tribal parents. The scholarships and stipends should be disbursed well in advance in order to meet the contingencies. The teachers should be imparted orientation training; there
should be a special drive for identification of educated tribal men and women and attempt should be made to train them in teacher training institution.

The working group on Tribal Development during seventh five-year plan (1985) recommended that education would be given highest priority in the tribal areas during seventh five-year plan. By identifying low-literacy-area and low-literacy-groups among the scheduled tribes, suitable matching programmes should be started. The working group was also with the opinion that administration of education in tribal area should be rationalized by bringing all such institutions under the control of Education Department. There should be promotion of adult education, improvement of inspection quality, extension of hostel-facilities at different levels of schools and infra-structural aspects. The working group recommended for adoption of tribal languages as the medium of instruction at the primary stage and documentation of tribal culture in the form of music, dance, art, painting, sculpture, etc.

During the eighth five year plan the working group on Development and Welfare of Scheduled tribes (1998) suggested to take programme for integrating general education with the art and culture of tribal community in order to make education socially and culturally more acceptable, meaningful and interesting to the tribals. The working group suggested for documentation of different aspects of tribal culture and recommended to prepare text-books and reading materials in various major tribal languages with the assistance of Central Institute of Indian language (CIIL) & SCERT in order to accelerate and to promote the tribal languages and literature.

The National Policy on Education (1986) recognises the need of the tribal education. To boost the socioeconomic and educational status of the tribals the committee suggested to accord priority for opening primary schools in tribal areas. The construction of school building will be undertaken in these areas on priority basis under the normal funds for education as well as under the NREP, RLEGP and other tribal-welfare schemes. Strong recommendation was made to establish residential schools including 'Ashram schools' on large scale apart from establishing sufficient member of non-formal and adult education centres as well as 'Anganwadi centres' especially in the areas predominantly inhabited by the scheduled tribes, scheduled castes and
Adiwasis. In the policy, recommendation was made to formulate incentive schemes for the scheduled tribes keeping in view their special needs and lifestyles. For the sake of improving their performance in various courses, suggestion was made to introduce scholarships for higher, technical, para-professional and professional courses and to arrange special remedial-courses and allied programmes to remove psycho-social impediments. The National Policy on Education feels that the socio-cultural milieu of the scheduled tribes has its distinctive characteristics. This underlines the need to develop the curricula and devise instructional materials in tribal language at the initial stages, with arrangements for switching over the regional language. It was proposed that the curricula at the stages of education will be designed to create an awareness of their rich culture, identity and also of their enormous creative talent. The National Policy on Education (1986) makes one of the most comprehensive, precise and bold statements – 'the status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society. It is said that no people can rise above the level of its teachers ...... Educated and promising tribal youths will be encouraged and trained to take up teaching in tribal areas!'

Chopra, Ravi Ranta (1990) come out with the recommendations on his report on the status of the teachers in India highlights over several aspects of status indicators. However, his main recommendations centered over the issues like improvement of academic and professional qualification, removal of disparities of salary and establishment of national directives by setting minimum qualifications for teachers apart from establishment of a statutory body to look after the welfare benefits for the teachers working at different levels and types of institutions.

1.4.3. Tribal Education: The Problem

A brief perusal of the recommendations made by various committees, commissions and study teams claim an another thought towards tribal education. Irrespective of sufficient budget allotment, the expansion of education did not reach up to the level of expectation. It is not just due to the lower level of cognitive ability of the tribals rather the present approach of education is bringing 'a cultural shock' which makes the process of educating
tribal a tough task as because the present system of education is not at all relevant to their life and future conditions. The two consequences is commonly visible; where, either they are remaining illiterate and are alienated from education, or among them, those who are educated even ignoring the post-traumatic stress, are alienated from their own traditional community life. In this way, education itself is becoming a problem to them which is breaking their family and community structure. Inferiority complex of the educated tribals is sometimes caused by the cultural hegemony of the non-tribals and to get-rid of this problem they find an easier alternative to dilute themselves in greater society which can be termed as 'detribalization'.

To deal with the 'Tribal Education' and it's problems, one has to consider the three basic factors of education namely the student, the teacher and the educational institution. It is 'these components' and application – that matter as lot when one is called upon to tackle the problem of tribal education. Among these components the most important is the teacher whose selection and training should be such so that they suit with the tribal needs and requirements as because the entire system of education depends upon the quality of teachers without which the system can not run properly. The institutional climate and the students behaviour can be changed towards the desired direction, if the teacher is the right one and up to effective. But the entire system will be damaged, in spite of the other factors the mark if the teacher has lacking in his performance. Teacher can be considered as an independent and intervening variable where as the student and the institutional situation are the dependent variables, depend upon the teacher.

Teaching as a white collar job is too some extent different from the other professions and the teacher's contribution in shaping the future society cannot be minimized. It was found that the different committees and commissions proposed to involve the community people to minimize the inferiority complex and lack of we-feeling which occur among the tribal students and hinder the education of the tribals. In fact the proper upliftment of the tribal community is best possible if the tribal students are taught by the
teachers from their own tribe. A tribal teacher is liked mostly because of his helping attitude and understanding the student's difficulties and problems. To extend the proper education among the tribals, the tribal teachers are the best choice to educate the community students because of their linguistic affinity, loving nature and equal denomination as the students. In fact, the teacher is the sole agent of knowledge who bridge between the education and the students. That is why it is often said that the teachers are the social engineer having a vast scope to reconstruct the society.

1.4.4. Tribal Education: The Research Trend

In the pre-independence days, tribal research were mostly done by the administrators and during those days the primary objectives of the tribal studies was to assist the top-brass in determining the strategies of administration in the difficult areas inhabited by the tribes. It was felt that without the basic knowledge of the life and culture of the tribes, subjugation of those ethnic communities was quite impossible. Thus tribal research in those days was administration oriented and naturally welfare got only peripheral attention. Even then it must be admitted that the colonial administrators were the forerunners of the ethnographic research. The ethnographic studies of post-independence era were, by and large, carried out on that superstructure centering round the socio-cultural bases of tribal life.

After independence entire approach to tribal welfare and development had undergone metamorphic changes. There were long deliberations among the national leaders regarding the ideal approach to tribal development. Nehru approved the anthropological approach of tribal development, but not at the cost of their traditional cultural traits and ethos.

In the pre-independence as well as in the post independence period, it is completely the non-tribals, who studied the tribal-set ups, carried out studies and recommended suggestions for the tribal development.

The tribal people know their problems well and simultaneously the researchers working in this specific 'field' are competent enough to identify those problems. But it is hardly possible for the 'community-people' who are affected by various socioeconomic constraints, to articulate their problem
properly. It seems to the present researcher that the problems of the school going children form tribal denomination is most crucial as because they are facing the common problems of the tribal-society and the formal school environment (mostly deviated from their familiar cultural set up and there by can be considered as 'outer environment') is also causing an opposite psychosocial pressure among them. To overcome those massive pressure in this situation truancy become the only way for them.

The teacher from the tribal communities faced lot of problems during their school days. The situation continues with the present tribal students too. The researcher observed that the tribal teachers can analyze and can highlight such problems exclusively from their point of view and can suggest the best effective ways to eliminate those problems.

Today there is no justification to invite suggestions from the researchers, having non-tribal denomination for the development of the tribals in connection with their education. Suggestions will be most effective if it can come from the teachers from their own denomination. However, a person cannot perform well in his profession if he is not having any positive attitude and interest in it. Society has a demand for the innovators and inventors who can create an unique. The goal to create an unique can only be achieved when we are in a position to select the right person for the right job. The old says is quite true that the education is the backbone of the nation. It is a process too. School is the workshop to produce the future citizen – i.e., the students, and the entire responsibility depends upon the teacher. Teacher is the most important factor contributing to the national development. He is the pivot around which all the educational programmes rotate. Even the best system of education may fail to achieve the desired ends if this very 'factor' is ignored. The teacher not only implement an educational programme by commensurate methods but he is it's originator too. It is he, who interacts with pupils of different school stages and ensures that wide ranging educational objectives which are to be achieved. As an intellectual, he is a social critic, but, with special sense of responsibility to lead in a constructive direction. He is also his own teacher since he continuously works at frontiers of knowledge and often faces problems and situations, which are unprecedented and where past experience is of limited
value. As an agent of change he himself has to be flexible and ready to accept
the change.

About teachers, the Education Commission (1966) in their report
mentions, "...... of all the different factors which influence the quality of
education and its contribution to national development, the competence and
character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant. Nothing is more
important than securing a sufficient supply of high quality recruits to the
teaching profession, providing them with the best possible professional
preparation and creating satisfactory conditions of work in which they can fully
effective." 40

The National Policy of Education (NEP) – 1986 rightly points out :
"The status of teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society; it is said that
no people can rise above the level of its teacher." 41

Programme of Action (POA), 1986 states ....... "The status of
teachers has had a direct bearing on the quality of education and many of the
ills of the later can be ascribed to the indifferent manner in which society have
looked upon the teacher and the manner in which many teachers have performed
their functions." 42

Not only in our country India, but throughout the world, the importance
of teacher in pedagogical activities and advancement of education has been very
well recognized. The UNESCO – ILO document on status of teachers
(1967) states : "It should be recognized that the advance in education depends
largely on the qualification and ability of the teaching staff in general and on the
human, pedagogical and technical qualities of the individual teachers".

The joint ILO – UNESCO Committee of experts on the Application of
the Recommendation concerning the status of teachers reported in 1988 that "...
the status of teachers and status of education are so intertwined that what ever
produces changes in the one will normally produce changes in the same
direction in the other. If education does not command the respect and support
of the entire community, teachers will not command that respect and support."

...... the joint recommendation .... Concerns not only the status of teachers; it is
concern the status and performance of education. It defines goal, progress
towards which will yield benefits in the status of teachers as a profession ...."
The report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the twenty first century (1996) reads that "... ways can be found for improving the performance and motivation of teachers in the relationship they establish with local authorities."  

When teachers are themselves part of the community where they teach, their involvement is more clearly defined. They are more sensitive and responsive to the needs of their community and better able to work towards community goals.

In view of the immediate need to raise the standard of education of the tribal communities, and to keep the tribal teachers improving the skills, continuous efforts are required to promote the over all status of the teachers. And in order to do so, it is necessary to study the existing status of the teachers from the tribal denomination.

1.5.0. Research Questions

The study was initiated to delve into the deep to get the reply of the following research questions:

- What is the present status of the tribal teachers?
- Are they playing their expected role to uplift their society?
- What is the exact figure of educated tribals involved in teaching?
- Are they really interested in teaching?
- What is their attitude towards their profession, students, colleagues, government, society and working environment?
- What role are they performing for the cultural exchange among their students?
- Are they applying their indigenous knowledge during their teaching or not?
- What are the problem they are facing in their profession?

1.6.0. Title of the Study

An attempt has been made to answer all the questions through the study, entitled "Status of Tribal Teachers in Assam and West Bengal: A Comparative Study".
1.7.0. **Aim of the Study**

The basic aim of the present investigation is to explore the status profile of the tribal teachers in the states – Assam and West Bengal and to compare the same through juxtaposition.

1.8.0. **Objectives of the Study**

The present study is designed to exaggerate the status-profile of the tribal teachers from the two states of Indian Republic – Assam and West Bengal. For this purpose, the underlying objectives of the present investigation are specified as follow:

1. To study the socioeconomic and academic status of the tribal teachers
2. To ascertain the aspiration for professional education and constraints faced by the tribal teachers in pursuing education during their student hood.
3. To explore the professional relationship of the tribal teachers with their colleagues.
4. To analyze the role of Government of Assam and Government of West Bengal for the improvement of status of the tribal teachers.
5. To study the attitude of the tribal teachers towards their profession, students, colleagues, government, society and working environment.
6. To explore the psycho-graphic status of the tribal teachers as reflected by their level of creativity (a composite ability of originality, flexibility and fluency).
7. To explore the status of the tribal teachers within their own indigenous community.
8. To identify the problems faced by the tribal teachers in their professional environment.

1.9.0. **Setting of the Study**

The present study deals with the status of the teachers working in the schools [having any of the class grades, ranging within standard VIII to XII] situated within the geographical limit of the states Assam and West Bengal.
and belong to any of the scheduled tribe communities [as notified by the government of India's (Provisional Legislative Assemblies) Order, 1936].

1.10.0. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

It is neither humanly possible, nor it is desirable for any researcher to study a set of phenomenon at all level and from every possible angles. Various constraints like – time, finance, manpower, etc. compel every researcher to delimit his research –endeavour in respect of scope and level at which the study is ultimately conducted. The present research is not an exception and it has been delimitated in the following aspects:

i) So far the geographical location and span of the filed is concerned, the present study has been delimited within the districts – five from Assam and five from West Bengal.

ii) Only the tribal teachers, who have been working in the secondary schools of those ten districts of Assam and West Bengal are constituting the target population for the present investigation.

Note: Though the respondent tribal teachers for the study were chosen from within the specific ten districts [five from each state], however, a handful number of them left their origin throughout the states.

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