CHAPTER SIX
Summary, Conclusion and Suggestions

The present research work is on the elementary education of the tribal girls in Odisha. Access to education remains a serious problem in much of the developing world, despite repeated promises to universalize participation in basic education. Being rich in human resources, India plays a great role worldwide in the creation and dissemination of knowledge systems. Despite harbouring a vast resource pool that contributes significantly to the world community, on an average in India, a girl child receives less than two years of schooling while a boy gets about three years (PROBE, 1999). Of about 130 million children who attend primary schools in India, less than 50 percent reach the middle school level, barely 8 percent reach the secondary level and only 6 percent reach the senior secondary level. Furthermore, age old disparities because of caste, class and gender manifest themselves in the education system in several different ways- often perpetuating deprivation and denying sections of the Indian society the potential benefits of schooling (Batra, 2009).

India has passed the Right to Education Act (2010) which guarantees all children free access to education from 6-14 years of age. But there is a long road to travel to make this obligation reality. Disparities remain large between the states, between the regions and between the majority population and Scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. More importantly, gender is associated with large differences in access to education in tribal areas comparison to urban areas. Efforts to reduce the differences in participation and progression at elementary level through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have resulted in some diminution in the gaps between the groups. But gaps remain and access is also very unevenly available within groups of children from SCs and STs and specifically girls’.

The education of ST girls is a serious issue as they are often double disadvantaged, due to both their social status and their gender. Gender equity is a major concern, as the dropout rate is higher among the ST girls at elementary level. Girls are particularly disadvantaged because family and social roles do not prioritize their education. Over the last two decades, the government has increased elementary provision in and near tribal hamlets, and this has significantly increased rates of enrolment. However, issues of quality and relevance of schooling for ST children have barely received any attention from the national government. The failures of tribal education especially for girls are complex in nature. There is a strong correlation between the factors for the STs education and the poor quality of infrastructure and teaching, and a curriculum that does not relate to the socio-cultural lives of the STs nor teaches about their history, the problem of language and communication and the distance of
schools from the community and tribal hamlets, have all contributed to the communities’ disenchantment with schooling.

6.1 Theoretical Perspective

There are quite a large number of scholars who have discussed about the role of education in the developmental process and also study social inequality in education. Let us begin the analysis by differentiating the concepts of difference and inequality. Andre Beteille (1980) has pointed out that nature only presents us with differences or potential differences. Culturally prescribed norms convert differences into inequalities: differences become inequalities only with the application of scales which are not given to us by nature but are culturally constructed by particular human beings under particular historical conditions.

Sociology of education is the study of how social institutions and individual experiences affect educational processes and outcomes. Education has always been seen as fundamentally optimistic human endeavour characterised by aspirations for progress and betterment. Education is understood to be a means of overcoming handicaps, achieving greater equality and acquiring wealth and status for all. The Sociology of education has mirrored the larger theoretical debates’ in the discipline of Sociology. From its roots in the classical sociology of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim to the contemporary influences of Symbolic Interactionism, Postmodernism, and Critical theory, sociology of education research has been influenced by a number of different theoretical perspectives. For the present study some of the theories used in the analysis and interpretation. The suitable of the approaches for the work are Bourdieu’s Cultural capital, Sen’s Capability Approach and Althusser’s Ideological Aparatus.

6.2 Research Questions:

Bearing this context in mind, the present study seeks to answer the following questions related to girls’ education in the mining pocket of tribal Odisha:

- Why be the tribal education in general and girls’ education in particular not successful over years?
- How do the industrialization and globalization process affect tribal life and as well as their education pattern?
- What are the measures taken by the Government for the development of tribal girls’ education?

6.3 Objectives
Based on the above research questions, the present study makes an attempt to examine the following broad objectives:

- To identify the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the tribes in Joda Block of Keonjhar district.
- To elucidate the cause of absenteeism and drop-out among tribal girls in elementary level in the mining pocket of Joda block.
- To scrutinize the policies and programmes for the development of girls education in the study area.
- To analyze the role of mining (CSR) in the tribal education as well as development.

6.4 Conceptual Framework

In this study there are three key concepts: tribe, education and development. In sociological literature, there is a long and inconclusive discourse on concept of tribe. However, for the purpose of analysis, the present study confines itself to scheduled tribes only, as defined by the Government of India. Though the concept of education is very broad, the study focuses on elementary level and be specified to 6th to 8th class. Development is used for the study through the initiatives of both government and private i.e. through the corporate social responsibility. It can be viewed in terms of changes in the quality of education and infrastructure in the school mainly the school building and boundary, electricity and safe drinking water facilities.

6.5 Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research is just what it sounds like, describes the attitudes and behaviours observed during the investigation. The present study is confined only to Joda block under the district of Keonjhar, Odisha. There are 154 schools in Joda block and out of those, 43 schools are elementary level, which covers the universe of the study. For the present study the data were collected from eight elementary level schools in the mining areas of the Joda block. The student and teachers in these eight schools and the inhabitant of the twelve villages coming in and around these school areas were covered for the research study. Three Mining companies, which are working for the developments of girls’ education, constitute the sample of the present study.

The sample schools and these villages have been selected on the basis of the following criteria.

- Most of the inhabitants of these villages are from Munda and Bhuyan tribes.
The literacy rate is very low in Joda block especially for the girls and women.

The area is based on the core of mining activities.

Unit of study for the present research are the students and teachers in the schools and parents and drop-out girls from the family and they are all contacted for gathering primary data. The researcher has also discussed with the BRCC and CRCC members about the functioning of the schools and contacted with Human Resource Officer of these mining companies for the issues and development of tribal education for particular girls. In this research stratified random sampling has been used as a procedure for selecting respondents for the study. It involves selecting research participants based on their membership in a particular subgroup or stratum. Sample size comprises a total of 290 respondents. Out of which 150 respondents are from students’ category and 30 are teachers from these schools, parents sample size is 100 and the numbers of drop-out students are 10. All these respondents were covered for the primary data. The study is mixed in nature and based on triangulation methods. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, which were done with different pre-set schedules such as (a) interview schedules for students, (b) interview schedules for teachers and (c) interview schedules for parents. All the interview schedules included closed as well as open-ended questions. Case study method was used for the drop-out students. These schedules primarily aimed at collecting information from the students, teachers and parents with regard to the socio-economic and cultural profile and the factors affecting education of girl children. The focus group discussions were with Block Resource Centre Co-ordinator (BRCC), Cluster Resource Centre Coordinator (CRCC) at cluster level and Human Resource officer of the mining companies for the present research.

The data were collected from two sources such as primary and secondary. The primary data was collected from the respondents through direct face to face interview and case study method. The secondary method was resorted to clarify certain basic concepts and in this context the books, journals, periodicals etc. were extensively reviewed, the internet browsing was made to get the current and updated data about the study.

6.6 Major findings

The tribes in the sample areas have varied socio-economic spectrums. Most of them are working in mines or related activities and wage labourer. Out of the total respondents, 65 per cent of them said that, their income is less than Rs.3000 per month and 30 per cent of respondents said that, they have monthly income in between Rs.3000-4000. About 86 percent
of tribals are illiterate with the mean score .84 and majority of the tribal parents don’t know their actual age in the study area.

The areas where the tribals or labourers lived, they called it ‘hutting’. Most of the huttings and tribal villages or basties don’t have proper basic necessities such as drinking water, electrification, communication. Due to lack of basic amenities, they lived with negative conditions in the interior areas. The tribals in the study area are in the habit of collecting minor forest produce extensively for their own consumption and also for sale as a secondary source of income. The important items of forest collection include *mohua flowers and seeds, mango, honey, tamarind, harida, amala, sal seeds* and leafs, various types of *green leaves, mushrooms, edible roots and tubers*. They also collect firewood, thatching grass, fibers for rope-making and different types of herbs and shrubs of medicinal value for their daily life. They prefer Rice as their main food. They are fond of a home-made rice beer (*Handia*) and distilled country liquor (*daru*). They collect edible roots and fruits from the nearest forest. Tribal people are also preferred to eat worms (*Kai*) in rainy seasons.

It is observed that, the tribals, despite their poverty and struggle for survival, have tried to retain their rich and varied heritage of colourful dance and music forming integral part of their day today life. Tattooing was practiced among the tribal women in the study area. The tribals also perform various types of festivals related to their traditions and culture like Maghe Parab, Thakurani Osa, Asarhi Puja and Baa Parab. The tribal population suffers from infant mortality on account of under-nutrition, poor maternal health as well as endemic malaria and other localized

Most of the tribal parents do not like to send their girl children to distance place for studying because girl children do all the domestic chores and they cannot afford their expenditure for education and for the safety of the girl children. Tribal parents think that, education is not necessary for the girls. About 25 per cent of the respondents said that, they send their girl children to distance place, because girls should read more and they will get jobs. The study shows that, socio-cultural problems are more complicated than the economic problem. Tribal people have attachment towards their age-old socio-cultural traditions. Most of the girls perform routine duty from courtyard to working field, houses to jungle, from kitchen to school. The girl child takes part in all the domestic chores when her parents are in outside and early marriage of tribal girls is another problem for their education. It is found from the data that, there is no suitable physical home environment for the development of formal education. These poor and ignorant tribal people are regularly taking the rice beer (*handia*) and alcohol. It directly affects the economy of family as well as their children's
education. Most of the parents’ show little interest towards their girls' education and 85 percent of the respondents stated that, they never went to school to consult with teachers for their girls’ education and they don’t have any idea about their study and results. The high frequency of drop-out is observed due to the lack of awareness of tribals about the significance of girls’ formal education.

From the eight schools where I collected the data, it is found that, by the time they reach in the 8th class, the drop-out rate reaches at its peak. Most of the students are in class 6th and 7th. In the age between 12-15 years, with the average mean age 1.37. The actual strength of the schools is 60-80 students, whereas the total strength of the schools is 150-200 students. 24.7 percent of students have no idea about the student strength in their school. Out of the total respondents 36.7 percent stated that they have 4-6 brothers and sisters. All the respondents said that they help their parents instead of education. They don’t find time to read at home. Tribal girls help their parents in various activities; mainly they do all the household activities and also collect woods from jungle and take care of their younger brothers and sisters, for which they have no interest in their education. 90 per cent of the students are first generation learner. Language is a major hindrance in the tribal education. 48.7 per cent of students viewed that they understand the regional language but it is observed that majority of the respondents can’t write and read their textbook languages properly. The studied tribal groups are bilingual i.e. Own mother tongue and local Odiya language. 66 per cent of the tribal girls don’t understand their lessons in the school and they said that, math, science and English are the difficult subject for them. It is evident from the study that, 78 per cent of the students are not able to finish their home works which are given by the teacher. The reason lies behind is that they don’t understand the lesson in the class room and nobody helps them to complete the task.

Although the government seems to be serious in improving universal elementary education, and has taken many initiatives and launched many schemes towards this goal, the results are not up to the mark. It is clear from the data that most of the schools have lack of basic facilities like lack of class rooms, insufficient bench and desks, lack of drinking water and toilet facilities. It is also found that, there are a sizeable number of schools in the study area with an inadequate number of teachers and also women teachers. The study found that the tribal girls are coming to school from the distance places. 40 per cent of the respondents stated that they are coming to school from 2-3km. distance. Quite a significant proportion of the beneficiary sample students of the concerned schools have delivered a negative opinion regarding Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) scheme. The insufficient and delay supply of textbooks and irregularities of teachers are reasons for the low performance of the students.
From the data, it is observed that CSR took the initiatives endeavouring to improve the quality of life of the people in the areas it operates in. Realizing the importance and relevance of education, they have taken a number of initiatives for the development of tribal education. Through their CSR activities they provided merit scholarship to the students, constructed additional classrooms to improve student classroom ratio, providing desks and benches to build a proper teaching learning environment and also providing drinking water for safe drinking water facility in the schools in various parts of the Joda block. For infrastructural development, they constructed boundary wall to safeguard children and for kitchen gardening and giving toilet facility to make school more gender friendly and better sanitation. Their CSR activities on educational initiatives impacts on improvements of basic literacy and numeracy skills, improving retention and lowering drop-out rates, minimizing absenteeism among students and teachers and ensuring enrolment and retention of every child.

The data indicate that, majority of the respondents (70 per cent) are male and most of them are married in these schools. Majority of the teachers are B.A. and B.A.; BED. However, most of teachers are staying far away from the school and they come to school by bike/cycle. Most of the schools constructions are mixed of tile and Pucca class rooms and huts. According to the data, 90 per cent of the respondents are not satisfied with the infrastructural and schooling facilities. The reasons for dissatisfaction on the infrastructure facilities are the condition of the roof and wall is very poor and shortage of class rooms, and teaching-learning material. All most all the teachers opined that there is no vocational training for the tribal girls and the syllabus and curriculum of schools are not related to the tribal culture and their traditions. Most of the teachers stated that tribal girls have no interest in their studies because of poverty and illiterate parents and their helping hand in household activities. About 70 per cent of the teachers said that, girls are remaining long time absent in schools during their festivals and also in rainy days. The study reveals that, 65 per cent of the respondents opined that, it is very difficult for them to understand the present curriculum and most of the girl students are facing problems in English, math and science and there is no special coaching for the underratrte tribal girl students. 90 per cent of the respondents agreed that, the problem of language is an important factor for the tribal student and most of the teachers viewed that they are using Odiya language as their medium of instruction. All the teachers suggested that due to MDM scheme, there is increasing rate of enrolment. However, 70 per cent of the teachers are not satisfied with Government’s various schemes. According to the CRCC and BRCC, teachers are not regular, systematic and student friendly in the schools of tribal areas and there is lack of trained teachers from the local tribal community in these schools.
It assumed from the overall scenario is that though there has generally been a marked progress in provision over the last few decades, there are still some interior forest areas and tribal clusters that are missing out of the Government provisions.

Physical locality continues to be an important factor for predicting the tribal girl child attendance in school, continuation in the basic schooling which is also an important cause for enrolment and drop out. Schooling within easy access has been relatively poor for the ST girl children as compared to the mainstream population.

M-D-M has an immense positive impact in terms of higher enrolment and in present levels it has been proved that, it is also a deciding boost for class room hunger and it enhances nutrition which ultimately increases not only school enrolment but also fights against the nuisance like malnutrition and underweight issues. It seems that it signifies the contributory approach of increase in the number of attendance in the school.

The study suggests that physical/infrastructural facilities are totally insufficient and particularly awful in schools accessed by STs in rural area. As mentioned earlier the majority of ST girl children are in regular in government schools. School buildings are in a dilapidated condition and basic equipments are not available adequately. Both the teacher and student mentioned about the poorest of physical infrastructure and basic amenities afflict schools in sample tribal areas. There is also a high incidence of very poorly and irregularly functioning schools. Exceedingly insufficient teaching staff members have been a most crucial factor of unequal provisioning. Multigrade teaching and dual use of hostel rooms were found from the study.

The problem of insufficient number of teachers has been compounded by the lack of enthusiasm among teachers, which is reflected in the phenomenon of teacher absenteeism. Teachers for ST children primarily belong to non-tribal backgrounds. They are highly irregular in attendance since they live outside the villages. This is a common feature found in schools which is located in remote areas. Dysfunctional and poorly school environments, inadequate number of teachers, insufficient teaching quantum ranging from absence of teaching to the adoption of most conventional and uninteresting teaching methods, together makes for a situation where the teaching transaction is poor and scarce. Teaching- learning resources like blackboards, chalk, texts and other reading material, equipment, and teaching aids are always in short supply and of poor quality or simply non-existent. The infrastructure for education and its quality is not good, is reported by the teachers in most of the schools. Recent policy changes and in the budget, which cuts ban on the new recruitment of teachers
permanently, and a growing reliance on contract teachers have compounded the crisis caused by historical neglect. In spite of some quantitative gains considerable qualitative setbacks are being practised by neglect regions and peoples.

Despite several policy documents and a constitutional provision (350A) has recognized that linguistic minorities should be educated in their mother tongue at primary level and in matter-of-fact there is no education in Scheduled Tribe languages. Teachers are predominantly from non-ST communities. And despite the pedagogic significance of initial instruction in the mother tongue, teachers do not bother to learn the tribal language even after several years of teaching in the tribal areas. One of the important causes in the educational problems in the study area is lack of accountability structures.

Depending on levels of cultural assimilation and adaptation, several Scheduled Tribes may not look for schools to educate their children in their own native language. Indeed, for many Tribal parents, the main advantage of schooling is that it gives access to the new languages, new occupations and a new life and enables interaction with the non-tribal world. The findings of the research are also consistent with socio-economic perspectives as it was found that elite tribal students are successful in primary level because they have money to buy education. The elite tribal parents have the economic capacity or money to buy private tuition and the educational expenses. Which is the result of the spread of industrialisation and also due to mining activities and it creates the new cultural exposure of the middle class groups in the old traditional society.

First, this expression of trust by the powerful elite and its allies will set the entire government school system on a crucial itinerary of recovery to its heyday of the 1970s before the middle class began its “grand” escape from government schools to private schools. The talk of poor infrastructure, teacher absenteeism, vacant teacher posts, ill-paid and untrained Para-teachers, hostile pupil-teacher ratios, multi-grade teaching, and lack of teaching/learning material and missing or non-functional toilets will, in the foreseeable future, become outdated. A self-governing, decentralised and participative system of authority will replace the regal mode. The curricular and pedagogic quality of teaching will improve, and the teachers will begin to innovate, create and even question the Macaulayian texts, content and evaluation norms. The state, even at this neoliberal stage, will stop spreading the falsehood of “resource crunch” and begin to increase allocations for education as a political priority since the children of the ruling class and its beneficiaries are studying there.
6.8 Conclusion:

Education is perceived as a crucial process of planned change. It is seen as the key instrument for bringing about a social order based on value of equality and social justice. In expansion and democratization of the education system, the two primary egalitarian goals are the universalisation of elementary education and the educational “upliftment” of disadvantaged groups.

Education in India has always been a significant instrument for social and economic transformation. Educated and skilled population not only drives national/economic development but also ensures personal growth. The challenge to ensure education for all requires concerted efforts to strengthen the education system at all levels particularly in elementary education. It is a well-known fact that basic education improves the level of well-being among individual, especially with regard to life expectancy, infant mortality and nutritional status of children. Social justice and equity are by themselves are strong arguments for providing basic education for all. Education is an effective instrument not only for the development of one’s personality, but also for the sustained growth of the nation. Elementary education in India, therefore, is the foundation for the development of every citizen and the nation as a whole.

The importance of education in India is indeed rising with the passing of time. Though India has always been a great source of learning for many years, it still needs to improve not just on the quality of education but also on the number of people being educated. In India, still many are deprived of education mainly due to poverty and less accessibility of educational services. The lack of education, adds to the vulnerability of children for forcing them into social evils of child labour and early marriage. The Indian education landscape has seen significant developments during the 11th Plan. There was a surge in school enrolments, and gender and social category gaps in enrolments narrowed considerably. Expansion of school infrastructure and facilities significantly has widened access to schooling, and incentives and child entitlements, such as textbooks, mid day meals and uniforms began reaching a considerably large number of children.

Promoting girls’ education has been a priority in India for over a century, but discrepancies still persists in learning opportunities. Education in public schools for rural poor girls and women is largely limited to acquiring literacy and numeracy. The excessive emphasis on meeting quantitative targets through free and compulsory primary education schemes is referred to as dichotomization of educational provision into ‘access first’ vs.
‘quality later’. Deprived children, including large numbers of girls, are offered this quality-compromised free education through what is formally known as ‘transitional school’. Competing and consecutive political ideologies have all resulted in more education and progress towards EFA, but of low quality, where the poor and deprived, particularly girls, suffer the most. The state takes the approach not to ‘waste’ resources on pumping funds into the ‘uninterested’ section of social groups in the form of expensive high quality education.

The education of women in India plays a significant role in improving living standards in the country. A higher women literacy rate improves the quality of life both at home and outside home, by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, and in reducing the infant mortality rate. As an independent group, women constitute 48 per cent of the total population of India. They not only constitute valuable human resource of the country but their development in the socio-economic arena sets pace for sustainable growth of the economy. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles of State Policy. The Constitution officially grants equality to women and also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. However, the varied forms of discrimination those women in India are subjected to is far from positive. The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well accepted. Access to education is critical for benefiting from emerging opportunities that are accompanied by economic growth. Keeping in view of this accepted fact, there has been a thrust on education of girls since independence in order to bridge the gender gap in education in India. Free and Compulsory education up to the age of 14 is the responsibility of the State. And the fulfilment of this obligation is critical for the improvements in educational condition of girls and that of gender equality in universalisation of elementary education (GoI, 2012).

While making sure every child can go to school is an imperative in itself, achieving universal education would also bring about far-reaching development benefits. Failing to further reduce the number of out-of-school children leaves millions in poverty, with bad health and lack of opportunities. The right to education is not just about education, it is a key right that unlocks other human rights and Millennium Development Goals.

Education reduces poverty and promotes economic growth. By making people more skilled and employable, education can provide an escape route from poverty. Sending every child to the school would be an important footstep. The benefits of every child going to secondary school are enormous: As a consequence of the historical gender bias in education, almost two thirds of the world’s illiterate adults are women. Education empowers women to
make key decisions about their lives. Giving equal access to girl child in school is also a crucial factor to reach gender equality. Education has effects far beyond the classroom. Through education, societies foster values, spread ideas and equip their citizens with skills for participation in society. As Nelson Mandela stated, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. Greater gender equality today shapes the norms and cultures as well as the constraints and possibilities of tomorrow’s men and women. A wealth of evidence demonstrates that gender equality begins a virtuous circle of higher productivity, lower poverty, and better development outcomes for generations to come.

Even though the National Education Policy has insisted on teaching for the children in their mother tongues at the primary level, this has not been implemented for the tribals. The educationists have thoroughly neglected the tribal language and culture and have ignored the problems of tribal children while framing books for them. The greatest problem is that the tribals have come to recognize the modernization and the demands of time. But they are not coming forward to bring reforms in the educational status and economic standards. Now a strong development campaign of awareness is needed for this. The voluntary agencies like the various mining companies who are specially indulged in CSR activities should try to launch this campaign on a long term basis with constructive ideas.

6.9 Suggestions:

- The oral tradition in teaching must be an important device to develop the personality of a tribal child from its own cultural environment, instead of creating an artificial blurred personality dissociated with home and school environment.
- To bridge the gap of the socio-cultural environment with that of the school curriculum exploration of rich tribal folklore can be helpful in the promotion of tribal education. More number of residential ashram schools is to be opened in tribal areas and more constructing houses for the teachers.
- To increase dignity of labour in the minds of the children by creating green gardens in the school compound and decorate the classrooms with various art forms by the tribal girls. The text books should be based on the age old knowledge and tradition of the tribals.
- The teachers should establish a healthy rapport with the tribal students and create a positive environment for them. The authorities should take care to supply the books at the proper time. The parents should provide scope for their children to learn their lessons at home and also the vacations of tribal schools must follow the festivals and socio-economic activities of the tribals.
The teachers should have knowledge about the tribal environment and local tradition. The teachers should be given tribal language training. Social source book for teachers may be prepared to develop the tribal knowledge such as folk songs, tales, proverbs, riddles, play songs, traditional games, dance, and music. To impart joy of learning through the folklore and bridge the gap between home culture and school atmosphere.

To organise Mahila Samities to increase literacy among the women and to enhance the attendance rate among the girls. To make the parents understand the value of education through literacy campaigns.