

Education among tribals of Gujarat

Dr. Chandrakantbhai Upadhyay*
Shri Arunbhai Patel**

“Human beings understand that education is an inevitable wealth, necessary to accomplish the ideals of Peace, Liberty and Social Justice, to combat the challenges which lie ahead in the realm of future”. This is said in the UNESCO report “Learning the treasure within” of International Commission on Education for 21st Century; describing education as an indispensable ideal. The Commission supports the view that education has to play very significant role in the development of an individual and the society. Of course, the Commission certainly believes that education is not a panacea to solve all the problems. Nevertheless, education is powerful enough to cultivate the capacity for achieving sustainable development in harmonious environment.

Indeed, deprived section of people, including tribal community needs to develop these capacities to the greatest extent. This is a well known fact and need no elaboration. Education is imperative for catalyzing social development among tribals. We have tried to attempt here to deliberate on education among tribals and identify several constraints in its way.

As per 2001 census, the literacy rate for the entire nation is 64.8 percent, whereas it is 47.1 percent among schedule tribes. Considering all the States and Union Territories, Gujarat rank at no.17 among the list of 35. However, in terms of literacy rate among schedule tribes, Gujarat ranks at no. 19 among the list of 30 States/UTs. Thus, the tribal communities both in India at large, and in Gujarat State in particular lag behind their counterpart in other States/UTs and other communities of Gujarat also. However, we have statistics to prove that the literacy rate of tribals has been constantly on increase in last five decades. In 1961, for example, the literacy rate of Gujarat State was 30.45 percent and that of S.Ts in Gujarat State was 11.69 percent only; the difference being 18.76 percent. Gradually, in all the decades, the literacy rate among people of Gujarat at large and among STs of Gujarat in particular, rose considerably. Now on one hand, the

* Director, Tribal Research and Training Institute, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

** Research Officer, Tribal Research and Training Institute, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.

literacy rate show a rising trend; but simulataneously, the difference of literacy rate among non-tribals and tribals shows an increasing trend; which is a cause of great concern for all of us. Even as on to-day, the difference is as high as 22 percent. e.g. when the literacy rate among people in Gujarat, according to 2001 census has reached 69.14 percent; the corresponding figure for the same census year for tribals has been 47.74 percent, with a great difference of 21.40 percent.

It should be mentioned that, there have been several additional and special arrangement for education in tribal areas. There are 458 Ashramshalas; 89 post-basic schools; 935 hostels for tribal boys and girls, 53 Model Residential Schools; 19 Eklavya Residential Schools, 1 Military Training School, 23 dry hostels, 50 Government Hostels, coverage of 5838 students under talent pool and supply of text books to 12,835 tribal students - all these only in tribal areas. Dispite of all these efforts, it needs to be seriously considered as to what can be attributed for such a vast range of difference in literacy rate among tribals and non-tribals.

**Literacy rate among general population and also among schedule tribes
decade-wise**

Decade	Total Population of the State (in lakhs)	Total Population of S.T.s (in lakhs)	Percentage with respect to people of the State	Literacy among general Population %	Literacy among S.T.s %	Difference rate between the two %
1961	206.33	27.54	13.35	30.45	11.69	18.76
1971	266.97	37.34	13.99	35.79	14.12	21.67
1981	340.86	48.49	14.23	43.70	21.10	22.54
1991	413.10	61.62	14.92	51.15	29.67	21.48
2001	506.71	74.81	14.76	69.4	47.74	21.40

It was also specifically observed that effective literacy rate among female in 2001 census was found to be less than 30 percent. The least literate women are to be found in (1) Amirgadh and Danta Talukas of Banaskantha District (2) Khedbrahma Taluka of Sabarkantha District (3) Ghoghamba Taluka of Panchmahal District (4) Garbada, Dahod, Devgadbaria and Dhanpur Talukas of Dahod District (5) Chhota Udepur and Quant Talukas of Vadodara District and (6) Kaprada Taluka of Valsad District. In order to raise

literacy rate among women in these 11 talukas, Government shall have to take several measures such as establishment of Girls Hostels, Girls Schools, Model Residential Schools, Post basic Schools, Primary Schools, Ashramshalas for Girls, Eklavya residential school as also allowing additional seats in such schools/hostels for girls; to attract them to educational institutions. such, to-day Government re-imburses the college fees of self-finance colleges in respect of tribal girls; but now the Government should also consider to re-imburse the fees for hostels of the said colleges too.

As per 2001 census, among some of the schedule tribes of Gujarat, the literacy rate is less than 40 percent. These tribes include Bharwad, Charan, (Gir area), Kathodikatkar, Kolgha, Nayak-Nayakada, Padhar, Rabari, Rathwa, Varli, Kotwalia etc. It is therefore imperative that something needs to be done on priority basis to bring these tribes into educational mainstream at the earliest. On the other hand, there are certain schedule tribes which have shown good progress in the sphere of education. These tribes are Barda, Bavcha, Chaudhari, Dhodiya, Gamit, Kunbi, Patelia, Pomla, Siddis etc. They have shown more than 50% literacy rate. The literacy rate (2001) among all schedule tribes of Gujarat is shown below :

Schedule Tribes of Gujarat, Population and Education (2001)

Sr.No.	Name of Schedule Tribe	Population (No)	Literacy (%)
1.	Barda	775	70.06
2.	Bavcha, Bamcha	4,125	65.64
3.	Bharwad (Gir)	1,619	34.47
4.	Bhil-Garasiya-Dholi Bhil	34,41,945	44.29
5.	Charan (Gir)	2,481	30.48
6.	Dhanka, Tadv, Valvi, Tertariya	2,52,637	52.88
7.	Chaudhari, Chaudhara	2,59,735	62.13
8.	Dhodiya	5,89,108	75.95
9.	Halpati, Talaviya	5,96,865	47.82
10.	Gamit, Gamta, Govit, Mavchi	3,54,362	52.91
11.	Gond-Raj-gond	2,152	50.39

Sr.No.	Name of Schedule Tribe	Population (No)	Literacy (%)
12.	Kathodi-Katkari	5,820	23.54
13.	Kokna-Kokani-Kukha	3,29,496	51.46
14.	Kolgha, Koli-dhor, Tokre-koli	48,419	38.26
15.	Kunbi (Dang)	43,292	63.41
16.	Nayka-Nayakada	3,93,024	35.57
17.	Padhar	22,421	32.13
18.	Paradhi-Phanse	2,872	55.45
19.	Pateliya	1,02,510	60.78
20.	Pomla	819	55.57
21.	Rabari	15,417	37.48
22.	Rathwa	5,35,284	36.81
23.	Siddi	8,662	59.65
24.	Varli	2,55,271	32.06
25.	Vitoliya, Kotwaliya, Barodiya	21,453	38.45
26.	Non-clasified	41,335	62.35
	Total (Gujarat)	74,81,160	47.74

Source : Land and People of Indian States & Union Territories, in 36 volumes, Gujarat

Literacy Rate among Schedule tribes : District wise (2001)

Sr.No.	District Name	Literacy Rate %		
		Total	Male	Female
	Gujarat	47.7	59.2	36.00
1.	Kutch	28.3	40.1	15.3
2.	Banaskantha	29.9	42.3	16.3
3.	Patan	52.2	67.2	35.4
4.	Mahesana	60.9	71.1	48.3
5.	Sabarkantha	52.8	65.9	39.8
6.	Gandhinagar	71.4	69.7	61.4
7.	Ahmedabad	56.4	67.00	44.4
8.	Surendranagar	36.9	47.8	24.9

Sr.No.	District Name	Literacy Rate %		
		Total	Male	Female
9.	Rajkot	64.6	71.1	57.1
10.	Jamnagar	43.0	50.5	34.7
11.	Porbandar	30.8	36.9	24.1
12.	Junagadh	48.8	59.3	37.5
13.	Amreli	63.3	73.3	51.4
14.	Bhavnagar	62.7	73.8	50.0
15.	Anand	41.9	52.8	29.6
16.	Kheda	44.5	56.8	30.8
17.	Panchmahal	44.1	58.3	29.2
18.	Dahod	37.7	50.8	24.6
19.	Vadodara	39.0	51.8	25.4
20.	Narmada	53.8	67.5	39.7
21.	Bharuch	51.3	63.1	38.9
22.	Surat	51.4	60.2	42.5
23.	Dangs	59.1	69.4	46.8
24.	Navsari	61.0	70.4	51.6
25.	Valsad	54.2	64.3	44.0

Provision made for Tribal Education and Expenditure incurred (in lakhs)

Sr.No.	Year	Provision	Expenditure
1.	2005-06	19,012.55	19,855.15
2.	2006-07	20,013.00	18,974.49
3.	2007-08	23,133.87	21,676.57
4.	2008-09	25,633.85	24,754.94
5.	2009-10	26,928.35	33,968.24
6.	2010-11	34,452.27	22,030.93 (upto Dec.10)

Source : Commissioner, Tribal Development Department, Gandhinagar.

In short, against the provision of Rs. 1,26,622 lakh, from 2001-02 upto 2010-11, (upto Dec. 2010), the expenditure was to the tune of Rs. 1,15,225.79 lakhs.

The tribal population in Gujarat State is 14.76 percent, but the beneficiaries of primary education is 17.10%, and the beneficiaries of secondary education is 12.53%, classified them further, in Arts stream it is 14.68%, in commerce stream it is 3.07 percent and in Science stream it is 7.20 percent, and in vocational courses it is 10.85%. In higher education, the percentage is hardly 1.00 percent.

Education can cure exploitation, curb superstition, bring awareness etc. Therefore, several movements have taken place in tribal areas to get one self if educated. Some of the agitators were Motilal Tejavat, Birsa Munda etc. But the poverty doesnot allow one to get educated. Poverty is a great pollution. Literacy is just another side of a coin. The great number of people are living below poverty line; stay in easternstrip. Therefore, the eastern strip has become a poverty strip and an illiteracy strip. There are many constraints for education among tribals. They are :

1. Lack of awareness among tribals
2. Poor economic conditions among tribals
3. Problems of migration
4. Neglect of girl child/ deploying her services in household work
5. Lack of educational environment.
6. Lack of educational facilities in tribal areas
7. The peculear geographical conditions
8. Lack of pre-primary education programme
9. More wastage and stagnation in education
10. Difficulties in language (They usually use dialect)
11. Child being used as economic earner and deployed in labour work
12. Formal education neglected due to more stress on informal one
13. Both the timings of the schools and holidays donot match with their culture and traditions.
14. Less in clination to get education as it stands to-day

15. Weak basis of subjects like Maths, Science, English
16. Problem of unemployment, especially among teachers, affect other prospective students.
17. Education leads to unemployment and they become useless for traditional jobs.
18. School with only one room, one teacher
19. Lack of seperate toilet, urinals for girls.

Due to these constraints and problems, the tribal children remain out of school. The non-formal education is perhaps relevant to their traditional life-style-collection of minor forest products, agriculture work, hunting, fishery, taking care of siblings, grazing of animals, helping parents; shopping for the family; accompanying parents at the place of migration etc. There are also constrained in going to schools, due to economic/financial problems, inadequate dressings, lack of shoes etc. and difficulties of proper transportation.

What could be done to enhance education among tribals :

- Adequate no.of school-rooms and adequate number of teachers need to be provided alongwith residential accomodation for teachers. A single room school spoils education of all standards.
- Strict action should be taken against teachers remaining absent or not attending schools for full time.
- The MDM scheme should be implemated properly
- The staff members of Ashramshalas need to be provided benefits at par with Panchayat run schools. Like-wise, post-basic school staff should be treated at par with secondary school staff as recognised by Secondary School Examination Board.
- New Ashramshalas should be opened as and when required and they should be above politics.
- Efforts should be made to provide education in Ashramshalas ranging from dialects to international language. It should be at par with mainstream education.
- The children of migrant labourer also need to be educated. For the purpose mobile school or mobile classes could be conducted. Or the children should be specially admited in schools of migrated areas.

- The tribal children need to be oriented with minerals and mineral resources of local areas and should also be provided with education in such technical subjects.
- It should always be before our mind as how to keep away from the red signal provided through UNICEF report, referred to in the beginning of this article : “Often people of religious, linguistic and national minorities and the local tribal people are exploited through pressure and against their own will in the interest of communities having dominance in the State. Many people get now identity and national consciousness; but the rest are left to their culture, languages, religious and traditions; and they have to adjust themselves to the standards and customs of the concerned countries as well as with standards reproduced through national institutions like education and law”.

WHAT DID THE STATE DO FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TRIBALS :

- (1) Special campaign for enrollment of students of school-going age
- (2) State level supervision for growth of qualitative education
- (3) Doodh Sanjeevanee Yojana.

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