



## A STUDY OF TRIBAL EDUCATION IN INDIA : BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD

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**Abstract:-** In the current COVID-19 pandemic period is a major barrier to the education of the tribes. The purpose of this study is to bring Tribal educators back into the mainstream of education in COVID-19 pandemic period and improve their quality of life. sample of 40 different level student from 120 Students of Savar community in Amdobe village from Bongaon Sub-division, North 24 Parganas. Qualitative method is used for data analysis. The researcher observed the ST boys and girls in this group for a long time in COVID-19 situation and collected their information by interviewing them. Researcher analyze their own perspectives and judgments from the data they collect and identify educational barriers and with several suggestions to overcome this barriers. This study helps in the COVID-19 Pandemic period and its aftermath understand the educational barriers and remove the educational barriers for different Tribes, in India.

**Keywords:-** COVID-19 Pandemic Period, Tribal educators, Own perspectives, Educational barriers, Several suggestions.

**Introduction :** - People of different religious, communities , castes and tribes live in this vast and divers India . About 8.06% (2011) of the total population in India are people of aboriginal race of tribe . According to the 2011 census , 8.72% of the country in scheduled tribes of these , 4.12% are men and 3.83 million are women . Male literacy is 68.20% and female literacy is 47.70% . According to sociologist Gillian and Gillian , “In any part of a local primitive group , those who live within the same geographical boundaries , whose language is the same , who follow the same culture are called tribes . “According to DL Majumder, a tribe is a group of family members who have a common name, whose members live in a certain territory . They speak the same language and follow certain rules in marriage, profession or industry and a well developed system of mutual duties . In accordance with article 342 of the constitution, Scheduled Tribes shall mean those tribes which are recognized by the State . So is the tribe and a social group, who speak a particular language. Maintains a special cultures . Common Territory , Common Language , Endogamy , One Name, Common Culture , Economic Self-Sufficiency , Political Organization etc. are the characteristics of the tribal community. Here is a list of Schedule tribes in the Tribal community in India.

### The list of State based Scheduled Tribes is –

State	Schedule Tribes
Andhra Pradesh	Andh and Sadhu, Andh, Bhil, Bhaghata, Dhulia, Rona, Kolam, Gond, Thoti, Goundu, Kammara, Savaras, Dabba Yerukula, Sugalis, Nakkala, Pardhan, Gadabas, Chenchus A.K.A Chenchawar, Kattunayakan, Jatapus, Manna Dhora
Arunachal Pradesh	Singpho, Monpa, Abor, Sherdukpen, Garos, Hajong, Chutiya.
Assam	Khasis, Chakma, Dimasa, Gangte, Garos, Hajong, Chutiya.
Bihar	Gond, Birjia, Asur, Savar, Parhaiya, Chero, Birhor, Santhals, Baiga.
Chhattisgarh	Nagasia, Biar, Khond, Agariya, Bhattra, Mawasi, Bhaina.
Goa	Varli, Dubia, Siddi, Dhodia, Naikda.
Gujarat	Patelia, Bhil, Dhodia, Bamcha, Barda, Paradhi, Charan, Gamta.
Himachal Pradesh	Swangal, Gujjars, Lahaulas, Khas, Pangwala, Lamba, Gaddis.
Jammu and Kashmir	Balti, Garra, Sippi, Bakarwal, Mon, Gaddi, Purigpa, Beda.
Jharkhand	Gonds, Birhors, Savar, Mundas, Santhals, Khaira, Bhumji,
Karnataka	Gond, Patelia, Barda, Yerava, Bhil, Koraga, Adiyani, Iruliga.
Kerala	Malai, Aarayan, Arandan, Uralis, Kurumbas, Arandan, Eranvallen.
Madhya Pradesh	Kharia, Bhila, Murias, Birhors, Baigas, Katkari, Kol, Bharia, Khond, Gonds.
Maharashtra	Warlis, Khond, Bhaina, Katkari, Bhunjia, Rathawa, Dhodia.
Manipur	Thadou, Aimol, Maram, Purum, Kuki, Monsang, Angami.
Meghalaya	Pawai, Chakma, Raba, Hajong, Lakher, Garos, Jaintias, Khasis.
Mizoram	Dimasa, Raba, Chakma, Lakher, Khasi, Synteng, Kuki, Pawai.
Nagaland	Nagas, Angami, Sema, Garo, Kuki, Kachari, Mikir.



Odisha	Gadaba, Ghara, Kharia, Khond, Matya, Oraons, Rajuar, Santhals.
Rajasthan	Bhils, Damaria, Dhanka, Meenas, (Minas), Patelia, Sahariya.
Sikkim	Bhutia, Khas, Lepchas.
Tamil Nadu	Adiyan, Aranadan, Eravallan, Irular, Kadar, Kanikar, Kotas, Todas.
Telangana	Chenchus
Tripura	Bhil, Bhutia, Chaimal, Chakma, Halam, Khasia, Lushai, Mizel, Namte.
Uttarakhand	Bhotia, Buksa, Jaunsari, Kol, Raji, Tharu.
Uttar Pradesh	Bhotia, Buksa, Jaunsari, Kol, Raji, Tharu.
West Bengal	Asur, Khond, Hajong, Ho, Parhaiya, Rabha, Santhals, Savar.
Little Andaman	Jarawa
North-East	Abhors, Chang, Galaong, Mishimi, Singpho, Wancho

The several Programs being implemented by the government for development the education of Scheduled Tribes are :-

**Eklavya Model School:** Residential School based on Navodaya Model to be opened in each tribal block by 2022.

**Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme (RGNF):** RGNF was introduced in the year 2005-2006 with the objective to encourage the students belonging to ST community to purpose higher education.

**Pre -Matric Scholarship Scheme:** This scheme has been in existence since 1944-45. According to this scheme, annual pre-matriculation students belonging to ST community are given financial grants.

**Post- Matric Scholarship Scheme:** The scheme is for post matriculation boys and girls of ST community whose family income is less than 10800per annum. Here students of any course, professional or non profetional, will be given financial assistance.

**Vocational Training Center in Tribal Areas:** The aim of this scheme is to develop the skill of ST students depending on their qualification and present market trends.

**Ashram Schools:** This fund are provided to States for setting up residential schools for ST for primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary levels of education.

**Scheme of hostel for ST Boys and Girls:** The objective of this scheme is to promote literacy among tribal students by providing hostel conformation to such ST students who would otherwise have been unable to continue their education because of their poor economic condition and the remote location of their villages. This program is fully operational as per the Tenth Five Year Plan.

**Book Bank:** According to the scheme, measures are taken to reduce the drop-out rate of ST students in various professional educational institutions. The central assistance to state Administration for setting up Books Bank is limited to the following ceiling or actual cost of the set, it less than the demand. At present, the state and central governments spend 50% here.

**Scheme of Top class Education for ST student:** The scheme was launched in 2007-2008 by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the top class education of Scheduled Tribe students. According to this scheme, government and private 125 institutes in various fields such as medicine, management, engineering, law and commercial courses, Under this scheme, scholarships are given to 625 students per year.

**National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Higher Studies Abroad:** This scheme was first introduced in the year 1954-1955. This was non plan scheme which became a plan scheme from 2007-2008. Under this scheme financial assistance is given to selected ST students in higher education (Masters, Doctoral and Post Doctoral stage).

**Coaching for Schedule Tribe Students:** STs very weak socio-economically and their environment is very low. To improve their standard of living and to help them get out of this predicament, the government has arranged special coaching for them so that they can get job opportunities. The financial norms of the scheme have been revised during 2007-2008.

**Strengthening Education Among Scheme Tribe Girls in Low Literacy Districts:** This is a Gender scheme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The objective of this scheme is to bridge the literacy gap between general female population and Tribal women. The scheme covers 54 districts in 12 State and Union Territory where the ST population is 25% or more, and ST female literacy is below 35% or its fraction as per census 2001. The scheme is implemented by non-governmental institutions and autonomous societies of the State Government.

**Tribal Research Institute:** Here are fourteen Tribal research institutes by Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura. The task of this research institute is to collect information for the errors in the learning of STs and take appropriate measures to address them.

The researcher has selected the Savar community of Amdobe region of Bongaon SOB-division of North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal for his research work. Researcher have been monitoring their children's education for a long time. Researchers have identified a number of problems or barriers that have been encountered in the COVID-19 Pandemic period. The researcher also mentioned ways to overcome all these barriers from the point of view of his research.

**Significance of this Study:** Education is the only tool for the development of the individual, society and the nation. Various programs have been adopted and launched at different times in independent India for the development of education of the lower castes of the country. Currently, there are several barriers to the implementation of this program due to various reasons. The biggest barriers have been encountered in the current COVID-19 pandemic period. The Schedule Tribes have always been socio- economically backward,



they have been more vulnerable in the COVID-19 pandemic period. Many families have lost their works are unable to afford double meals, are notable to wear them properly, their sons and daughters how much they lack. The school-going children of this community have forgotten about education as they have been at home for a long time. Many children have forgotten as much as they are learning the alphabet. Due to the closure of schools and other facilities, the implementation of government education program has been severely hampered. Researchers have identified several barriers of the Tribal education and have also given some suggestions to overcome the barriers. Through which the implementation of the education program on the boys and girls of the Schedule Tribes is now possible. This study is significant in this regard. It is also significant is removing the barriers that are being faced by other Troubled communities like Schedule Tribes education.

### Objective of the Study:

- (i) To know about scheduled Tribes.
- (ii) To concepts about the way of life of Scheduled Tribes and their current socio-economic status.
- (iii) To know about the various educational programs adopted for the expansion of education of Scheduled Tribe boys and girls.
- (iv) To know about the various barriers of education of Schedule Tribe boys and girls in the present COVID-19 pandemic period.
- (v) To know about different opportunities of education of Schedule Tribe boys and girls in the COVID-19 pandemic period.

### Delimitation of the Study:

The present study delimited with

- (i) Only Bongaon Sub-division in West Bengal.
- (ii) Only Schedule tribe on Savar community.
- (iii) Only COVID-19 Pandemic period.
- (iv) Only barriers of education of Schedule Tribe.

**Sample of the Study:** The study was conducted on a sample of 40 different level student from 120 Students of Savar community in Amdobe village from Bongaon Sub-division, North 24 Parganas. By used purposive sampling technique.

**Tools:** Researcher have also used observational methods to understand the educational problems of boys and girls in this community and a self development structured and unstructured interview schedule was used to collect the information.

**Discussion:** The researcher interviewed 40 different levels of ST students and observed their behaviour. This interview method is structured unstructured. Out of these 40 students, 16 are elementary level students, 6 are secondary level students, 5 are higher secondary level students, 5 are B.A level students, 4 are M.A level students, 4 are studying Jobs. Data collected through observations and interviews show that the COVID-19 pandemic period encountered a number of barriers in their education. Researcher analyzed their own perspectives and judgments from the data and the researcher analyzes the current situation and studies the pinpoint of his research, he makes several suggestions to overcome these barriers.

### Barriers:

Some of the most important barriers are highlighted and several suggestions how these barriers can be overcome to make ST's education more effective.

### Poverty:

Poverty is a barrier that has affected various areas of education due to poverty STs are facing various obstacles in getting education. For example, the main purpose of their life is to alleviate the poverty of the family. Because of this, boys and girls are employed in the family profession from an early age. They do not go to school regularly, and in the current COVID-19 situation, they have forgotten about education. All the government program for their financial support are currently unable to alleviate poverty. As a result, poverty has become a major obstacle behind their current education system.

In order to solve this problem of poverty, the teachers, the social club, the government and the NGOs all have to come forward and play a specific role. The government will increase their expenditure on education. The social clubs will provide some financial and other assistance to poor families to alleviate their poverty and make them aware of education. The teacher will arrange for them to get various scholarships. NGOs will solve their educational, health, nutrition and other problems.

**Hunger:-** The children of S.T community have been hungering in COVID-19 pandemic period. Due to hunger, their food content has come down to a low level. The youngest children in the school have done a lot of quality work to satisfy their hunger. Researcher have seen them quench their hunger by picking up paper, water bottles, broken items and selling them. In the pursuit of this hunger they have forgotten about education.

To overcome this condition in the COVID-19 situation, the amount of food that is given to the family instead of the mid-day meal at school should be increased. Besides, teachers, conscious citizens of the society should all come forward in this regard. The extra food that every ordinary family has collected has been given to them. The government has to increase the amount of 'Ration' for them.

**Drug Addiction:-** Researcher have observed that the parents of a family live a very hard working and narrow life they run the family with great difficulty. Both husband and wife become addicted to get rid of family deprivation, abuse, frustration, etc. which has an effect on their children. They even have sex in front of boys and girls while intoxicated. As a result, children have to be mentally disorder. The quality of life of STs is further deteriorating during the COVID-19 Pandemic Period. In return, boys and girls have been deprived of normal life and having an impact on his educational life.



There are several treatments and approaches to overcome this condition. Teachers and volunteers raise awareness about drugs among parents of all these families. Bringing more intoxicated people home (Medical center for addicts) and arranging treatment. The voluntary organizations have to interact with them more. Literate adults and make them dream about the future.

**Child Labour:-** Child labour has long been a barrier to education. Although child labour can be controlled by government law, it is now re-emerging among STs in the COVID-19 pandemic period. At present, due to poverty the children of all these families have to be joined in various works. In such situation they have forgotten about education.

The first step in preventing child labour is for parents of all these families to make the right choices about their future. The teacher has to take some responsibility. The teacher will explain to the parents of their family about the need for education. The government will provide financial assistance to all these families according to the child.

#### **Linguistic Barriers:**

The tribes have their own language. The members of each tribe use the same language to communicate their views. The home language and the school language of the scheduled tribe are different, as a result, they are facing language problems in their field of education. Although separate language schools have been setup for them to solve this linguistic problem, they have not developed uniformly everywhere. In the current situation of COVID-19 they have not been able to go to school, so they have forgotten the language they were learning in normal school, so they are facing severe language barriers in their current education system.

To solve this language problem, the government needs to increase the number of school in their language and appoint curriculum and trained teachers in their language. In addition, teachers and various NGOs will form small team with the boys and girls of this group so that they do not forget the language of the general school provide linguistic and other training in accordance with the COVID rules. Some advice can be given to theme, such as developing the habit of reading papers and watching movies in that language so that they do not forget the school or regional language.

#### **Barriers of social alienation:**

Each tribe has its own common culture, so they have to deal with a number of problems in interacting with other people in the society. As a result they do not have easy access to educational institutions and other communities and students belonging to scheduled Tribes are isolated in the classrooms. In the current situation of COVID-19 they are facing more special educational problems because they are lagging behind the general society culture. They are falling in socialization and as result social development is not being accelerated.

To solve this barriers, it is very important to bring them back in to the main stream ;of society. For this, the teacher, Social Community and the NGOs have to play a special role. In the current situation of COVID-19 the teacher will associate with the tribe at a specific time in their time and Social Community will interact with them and the NGO will always associate with them. We have to inculcate in them the feeling that we are all civilized members of the same group.

#### **Reluctance to learn:**

In the current COVID-19 pandemic period when the only purpose of survival of such tribal people is to create a great reluctance towards their education, As a result, lack of will has become their main barrier in getting education. They are completely unaware of government programs, As a result, the implementation of government programs is being hampered. Such reluctance has arisen due to their lack of connection with educational institutions for a long time.

There are various ways to overcome this reluctance. For example, the government will arrange special scholarships for the COVID-19 situation according to their previous merits and educational qualifications. In addition, they are not aware of government's programs. NGOs will make them aware of these programs. The present government of West Bengal is raising a awareness about the various educational programs of ST's through door-to-door programs in COVID-19 pandemic period. Special coaching should be arranged in small groups according to the rules of COVID-19. Researchers themselves have made such small groups interested in learning through special coaching.

#### **Administrative problem:**

In the current situation of COVID-19, there are various administrative barriers in implementing the educational programs for ST students. No steps have been taken to properly distribute and implement any administrative plan after how to conduct educational programs on ST students in COVID-19 pandemic period. This has led to many barriers in the education of ST students.

The first step in overcoming this administrative barrier is to take active steps at the highest level of government. The higher leadership will then adopt a number of policies and strategies and implement the curriculum in accordance with those policies and strategies at all lower administrative levels. Some administrative suggestions are given- In this situation a skilled leader must be selected. ST students should be reached by forming small teams. Their education programs need to be included in the door-to-door government program. Special committees should be formed to make arrangements for them to get educational facilities.

#### **Technological barriers:**

Technology is the only tool as a medium of instruction in the current COVID-19 pandemic period. Now technology is the only means of communication between students and teachers, teachers and parents. But ST students are facing various barriers in implementing educational programs due to lack of technology. They are not able to participate in online classes properly. They do not know about the various government schemes that have been setup for their education. Moreover, the government and them are not able to communicate properly due to technical constraints. There are many technological barriers to be faced.



The present government of West Bengal has taken an unprecedented decision to overcome this technological barriers decided to give Tab to every student of class XI and XII. Such programs need to be taken for students of different levels of ST only then their technical barriers will be removed. Besides, they have to be taught the techniques of using technology.

After considering the barriers mentioned above, we can come to the conclusion that, it is not an easy task to overcome the obstacles in the education system of the Tribes in the current COVID-19 Pandemic Period. In a large population Country like India, the government and voluntary organizations need to take more responsibility on issues like poverty. At present all this lower communities are being used for political gain. In addition, HIV/AIDS, homelessness, epidemics, etc. many more barriers are appearing behind their education system. At present, the new challenge for educators is to remove the barriers to their education. The only way for them to get education is through Ashram Vidyalaya. Therefore, the government immediately increase the number of Ashram vidyalaya in their inhabited areas. In addition to learning from each other through local voluntary organizations, helping to understand the local culture, encouraging teachers, bringing together local manpower to provide education, government grants, etc. to overcome their educational barriers. So that they can become citizens of the well-educated world in spite of issues like childhood inequality, injustice and segregation in the current COVID-19 Pandemic Period.

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