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+91 99405 72462



+9163819 07438



ijmrsetm@gmail.com



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Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Promoting Higher Education among Tribal Girls in Jharkhand

Vivek Raj Jaiswal

Asst. Professor, Dept. of Education, Bharathi College of Education Kandari Mandar Ranchi Jharkhand, India

ABSTRACT: This article explores the significant role of NGOs in promoting higher education among tribal girls in Jharkhand, India. NGOs implement programs such as awareness campaigns, financial support through scholarships, skill development, and leadership training. By advocating for educational rights and engaging communities, NGOs empower tribal girls to pursue higher education and achieve socio-economic development. This analysis underscores the transformative impact of NGO interventions, highlighting their importance in creating equitable educational opportunities for tribal girls.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment, Inclusivity, Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the heart of India's eastern region lies Jharkhand, a state rich in cultural heritage and home to a significant tribal population. Amidst its lush landscapes and vibrant communities, however, lie persistent challenges, particularly concerning access to education, especially for tribal girls. Non-Governmental Organizations¹ (NGOs) have emerged as instrumental actors in addressing this disparity, actively working to promote higher education among tribal girls in Jharkhand. Through a range of innovative programs and initiatives, these NGOs play a pivotal role in breaking down barriers, empowering girls, and fostering inclusive development. This essay explores the multifaceted role of NGOs in advancing the educational aspirations of tribal girls in Jharkhand, highlighting their efforts in raising awareness, providing financial support, nurturing skills and leadership qualities, advocating for policy change, fostering community engagement, and ensuring sustained monitoring and evaluation. By delving into the transformative impact of NGO interventions, this analysis underscores the critical importance of collaborative action in realizing the educational rights and aspirations of tribal girls in Jharkhand, paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tripathy et al. (2011) conducted a cluster-randomized controlled trial in rural Jharkhand and Orissa to assess the impact of community mobilization on maternal and newborn health. The intervention, facilitated by ASHAs through participatory learning cycles, aimed to identify and address local health issues. Villages were randomized into intervention and control groups, with ASHAs supporting women's groups in health-related activities. The study's primary endpoint was neonatal mortality over 24 months, with additional measures of healthcare practices. This research underscored the potential of community interventions to improve health outcomes in marginalized rural areas.

Gupta (2011) analyzed the role of the NGO Paschim Banga Kheria Sabar Kalyan Samiti (PBKSKS) in poverty alleviation among the Kheria Sabar community in West Bengal. The ethnographic research highlighted the NGO's achievements in social and economic empowerment through targeted interventions. PBKSKS's efforts in addressing local needs and fostering community participation were instrumental in improving living standards. Gupta's work underscored the importance of grassroots organizations in tackling rural poverty and emphasized the need for localized, bottom-up approaches to development.

Dholakia and Bajpai (2011) evaluated the performance of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) under India's National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). Through surveys and focus groups in five states, the study assessed ASHAs' recruitment, training, responsibilities, incentives, and supervision. The findings indicated that while ASHAs played a critical role in improving maternal and child health, there were gaps in training and support structures. The paper recommended improvements in ASHA training programs and incentive systems to enhance their effectiveness.

¹Leverly, Sally (2008). ["NGOs, the UN and APA"](#)



Dholakia and Bajpai emphasized the importance of ASHAs in achieving health-related millennium development goals in rural India.

Sinha and Gaurav (2013) examined the role of universities and NGOs in promoting regional knowledge economies through community service learning (CSL). They argued that universities often prioritize academic goals over community engagement, which hampers their potential to contribute to the knowledge economy. In contrast, NGOs, driven by the needs of the people, emerged as significant agents of social change. The case study from Jharkhand illustrated how NGO-university partnerships could foster research networks and entrepreneurial ventures aligned with global economic trends. This chapter highlighted the necessity of such collaborations for regional economic development.

Devi and Govt (2013) examined the role of NGOs in poverty eradication in India, aligning with the Millennium Development Goals. Since independence, numerous economic strategies aimed at equitable growth and social justice have been implemented. NGOs, leveraging local resources and knowledge, played a crucial role in uplifting marginalized communities through innovative programs. The study highlighted the significant impact of NGOs on poverty reduction and women's empowerment over the past two decades. Devi and Govt emphasized the need for continued support and collaboration between NGOs and governments to achieve sustainable development goals.

Higham and Shah (2013) explored the impact of education and affirmative action on adivasis in Eastern India. They found that while affirmative action enabled adivasis to access new rural jobs, it also created new inequalities. Reserved jobs, often low-paid and insecure, led to a "culture of emulation" among educated adivasis, increasing disparities within the community. The study highlighted the complexities of affirmative action as both a beneficial and contradictory resource. Higham and Shah concluded that addressing these emerging inequalities required a nuanced understanding of caste, ethnicity, and class dynamics.

Agarwal and Agarwal (2015) discussed the synergy of business, government, and society (BGS) in addressing livelihood issues of the Sabar tribe in Jharkhand. The chapter highlighted a project where a local NGO collaborated with government and business entities to train the Sabars in handicraft production. Despite facing marketing challenges, the involvement of MBA students helped develop effective solutions. This case study demonstrated how multi-sectoral collaboration could address social issues and promote sustainable development. Agarwal and Agarwal emphasized the potential of BGS synergy in enhancing tribal livelihoods and preserving cultural heritage.

Ashok (2017) presented a case study on a cooperative model for tribal women in Jharkhand, initiated by PRADAN. The project aimed to empower small and marginal farmers by organizing them into self-help groups and cooperative societies for broiler poultry farming. Women received training and support for poultry rearing, with the cooperative managing input procurement and marketing. The cooperative's success in ensuring economies of scale and fair-trade practices highlighted the model's potential for economic empowerment. Ashok's study showcased the effectiveness of cooperative structures in improving livelihoods for tribal women.

Lhamu (2018) explored the challenges faced by India's scheduled tribes, a marginalized group constituting 8.06% of the population, in the context of development policies. The study highlighted that development initiatives often ignored the tribes' voices, leading to ineffective outcomes. The top-down approach, without beneficiary consultation, failed to achieve desired targets. The state and NGOs have made efforts post-independence to address these issues, but results have been mixed. Lhamu emphasized the need for inclusive development models that respect tribal culture and identity, and the importance of involving tribes in policy formulation and implementation.

Zabi (2018) investigated the role of communication in enhancing rural education in India. The research focused on developing a communication strategy to strengthen the educational foundation in rural villages near Ranchi. Field visits revealed that effective communication, employed by some NGOs and self-help groups, significantly improved student engagement and awareness. The study synthesized various communication approaches and suggested strategic interventions for better educational outcomes. Zabi's work highlighted the transformative power of communication in rural education and the importance of tailored strategies to address local educational challenges.

Zabi, S. (2020). Communication is a vital factor in student learning and empowerment. An appropriate strategy to effectively communicate with the learners can be an enabling tool in a strong educational foundation in rural in India. Based on an extensive study in some schools of rural Jharkhand, this study suggests some models of development support communication to improve the capabilities of students by making them more alert, aware and receptive. This paper analyses the various communication approaches ranging from mass communication and entertainment education,



interpersonal communication, participatory development communication, advocacy and social mobilization to suggest a synergistic communication intervention for behavior change.

Khanna, S., & Jha, E. (2022). Economic Growth and Decent Work is a Sustainable Development Goal that aims to promote fair and long-term economic growth, as well as full and productive employment and decent work for all. In terms of children, Target 8.7 aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. Child labour is a societal issue that has impacted the entire world, which is why studies have been conducted in different regions of the globe. Child labour policies in India pledge to putting an end to child labour. India is expected to struggle to meet SDG 8.7, according to projections. Poverty, cultural norms that condone child labour, a lack of sufficient economic options for adults and adolescents, migration, and natural disasters are all contributing causes to child labour and exploitation.

III. AWARENESS AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Community Workshops and Seminars: NGOs organize interactive workshops and seminars in tribal areas to engage families and communities, raising awareness about the importance of education for tribal girls. These events provide a platform to discuss the benefits of higher education, dispel myths, and address concerns, encouraging parents to support their daughters' educational aspirations.

School and College Campaigns: NGOs collaborate with educational institutions to conduct awareness campaigns within schools and colleges, targeting both students and teachers. These campaigns include talks, presentations, and interactive sessions designed to motivate tribal girls to pursue higher education, while also providing information about available resources, scholarships, and support services.

IV. SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

NGOs play a crucial role in providing scholarships and financial assistance to tribal girls in Jharkhand, enabling them to access higher education despite economic constraints. These organizations identify deserving candidates based on various criteria such as academic performance, financial need, and community involvement. Scholarships² cover tuition fees, textbooks, and other educational expenses, easing the financial burden on families and empowering girls to pursue their academic aspirations. Additionally, NGOs often offer need-based financial support tailored to individual circumstances, ensuring that no girl is left behind due to lack of resources. NGOs collaborate with local businesses, philanthropists, and government agencies to expand the reach and impact of their financial support programs. By fostering partnerships and mobilizing resources, these organizations maximize the number of scholarships available and enhance the sustainability of their initiatives. Through targeted interventions and strategic allocation of funds, NGOs strive to create equitable opportunities for tribal girls, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder their access to higher education and socio-economic empowerment.

V. SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Tailored Training Programs: NGOs design skill development and vocational training³ programs specifically tailored to the needs and interests of tribal girls in Jharkhand. These programs offer a diverse range of vocational skills such as tailoring, handicrafts, computer literacy, agriculture, and healthcare, equipping girls with practical skills that enhance their employability and income-generating potential.

Holistic Approach: NGOs adopt a holistic approach to skill development, integrating technical training with life skills education, entrepreneurship workshops, and career counseling. By providing comprehensive support, these organizations empower tribal girls to explore diverse career pathways, pursue higher education if desired, or establish their own small businesses, thereby fostering economic independence and long-term sustainability within their communities.

VI. EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Self-Esteem Building Workshops: NGOs conduct workshops and seminars focused on building self-esteem and confidence among tribal girls in Jharkhand. Through interactive sessions, role-playing activities, and group discussions, girls are encouraged to recognize their strengths, embrace their unique identities, and develop a positive self-image, laying the foundation for personal empowerment.

² Peterson, Kay (4 September 2008). "[Financial Aid Glossary](#)"

³ "[Career and Technical Education](#)". edglossary.org. 15 May 2013

Leadership Development Programs: NGOs offer leadership development programs that equip tribal girls with essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, decision-making, and teamwork. These programs provide opportunities for girls to take on leadership roles within their communities, schools, and local NGOs, nurturing their potential to effect positive change and become role models for others. By fostering a sense of agency and responsibility, these initiatives empower girls to advocate for their rights, pursue their aspirations, and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of their communities.

VII. ADVOCACY FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION RIGHTS

Policy Advocacy: NGOs engage in advocacy efforts to influence policy change and promote girls' education⁴ rights at local, regional, and national levels. Through research, lobbying, and coalition-building, these organizations advocate for the implementation of inclusive policies and initiatives that address barriers to education for tribal girls, such as gender discrimination, poverty, and lack of infrastructure.

Community Mobilization: NGOs mobilize communities to support girls' education rights through awareness campaigns, rallies, and community meetings. By empowering parents, teachers, and community leaders to recognize the importance of education for girls and challenging harmful social norms and practices, these organizations create a conducive environment for girls to access and continue their education. Additionally, NGOs work to ensure that girls' voices are heard and valued within their communities, empowering them to actively participate in decision-making processes related to their education and future aspirations.

VIII. CONCLUSION

NGOs in Jharkhand are instrumental in advancing higher education for tribal girls through diverse initiatives. They raise awareness, provide financial aid, and offer skill and leadership training, addressing barriers to education. Their advocacy ensures the rights of tribal girls are recognized and supported. These efforts not only empower individual girls but also contribute to the socio-economic development of tribal communities, fostering a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

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⁴ Osler, Audrey; Vincent, Kerry (2003-12-16). [Girls and Exclusion](#)



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