

Empowering Indigenous Minds: A Critical Assessment of Challenges in “Tribal Education in Odisha”



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ABSTRACT

Indeed, India boasts the second-largest tribal population globally. Nevertheless, despite seven decades of independence, tribal communities continue to face significant disadvantages and social backwardness in various crucial domains including healthcare, education, employment, and empowerment. Among these critical areas, education stands out as a paramount necessity for the upliftment and progress of tribal societies. The state and central governments have launched numerous initiatives aimed at educating tribal communities. However, it is disheartening to note that a significant portion of these programs has fallen short, achieving only 10 percent of their intended targets. Consequently, a substantial number of tribal individuals are unable to access education at different levels. This educational disparity is primarily attributed to the high illiteracy rates prevalent among the tribal population when compared to the Scheduled tribes. In this regard, this comprehensive literature review aims to furnish a contemporary assessment of the present state and formidable obstacles confronting tribal education in India as well as the state. It's important to note that this paper relies entirely on secondary information gathered from a range of research studies conducted in Odisha and from various government sources. The findings derived from this review can offer valuable insights for the formulation and implementation of initiatives aimed at enhancing tribal literacy and promoting inclusive growth prospects.

Keywords: Tribal population, inclusive growth, Educational disparity.

1. Introduction

India possesses the world's second-largest tribal population, surpassed only by the continent of Africa, with approximately 104 million individuals. This figure surpasses the populations of France and Britain, and it is four times greater than the entire populace of Australia. Typically, these tribal communities inhabit regions closer to hill areas, forests, coastal areas, and islands, where they make efficient use of natural resources to meet their daily needs. These challenging and remote geographical areas have led to the isolation of tribal communities from the broader Indian society, as noted in [1]. This isolation is evident in various aspects, including language, dialects, physical characteristics, and population size. The lifestyle of these tribes significantly differs from that of non-tribal populations, as observed by Preet in 1994.

The term "tribe" is defined as a distinct social group characterized by specific geographical locations, dialects, cultural homogeneity, and a cohesive social structure, according to the anthropology dictionary [1]. In 1911, the Indian Imperial gazetteer provided a definition of a tribe as "a group of families sharing a common name, using a common dialect, residing in or claiming a common territory, and typically not practicing endogamy, although it may have originally done so" [2]. Prior to 1919, these communities were categorized as the 'Depressed Classes.' However, in 1919, the Indian Franchise Committee introduced distinct designations for these classes in census reports, and by 1931, they were referred to as "primitive tribes." It was not until the 1951 order that they came to be officially recognized as "scheduled tribes" [3]. During the British colonial era, the tribal regions in India were subjected to British control. This was done with the aim of enhancing revenue collection and enforcing a standardized legal and administrative framework across the entire colony, as noted in [5]. Additionally, this approach permitted tribal communities to maintain their distinct socio-economic and cultural practices, effectively keeping them isolated from the national mainstream and resulting in their relative backwardness. Numerous anthropologists, such as Elwin, have made significant contributions by studying various facets of tribal life, as highlighted by Sahay in 1998. In the post-independence era, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru placed a strong emphasis on tribal development. His approach was centered on preserving traditional institutions, customs, and practices through the Panchsheel policy. This policy comprised five principles that discouraged radical alterations to the traditional and cultural way of life. It underscored that development should not be linked solely to the enrichment of a select few individuals.

Citation: Liji panda, and Parikshita Khatua (2026). Empowering Indigenous Minds: A Critical Assessment of Challenges in “Tribal Education in Odisha”. *Journal of e-Science Letters*.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51470/eSL.2026.7.2.84>

Received: 08 March 2026

Revised: 12 April 2026

Accepted: 09 May 2026

Available: June 13 2026

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Roy Burman argued that the introduction of new laws meant to safeguard tribal populations has paradoxically resulted in increased exploitation of these communities. He asserted that genuine development can only occur when local people are actively engaged in the process. To address this, Burman suggested a tailored approach in which planners thoroughly examine local concerns and prepare development strategies accordingly, as discussed in his work from 2009.

The tribal population in India, although relatively small in number, is incredibly diverse. They predominantly live in remote areas across the entire country. As per the 2011 Census, tribes make up 8.2 percent of India's total population, which amounts to over 104 million individuals. India recognizes 461 distinct ethnic groups as Scheduled Tribes (S.T.s), with nearly 273 of these groups having unique languages and cultures that set them apart from the mainstream population. According to the Indian Anthropological Survey, there are currently 4,635 tribal communities residing in India. Despite their significant presence, Scheduled Tribes have historically been marginalized and excluded from the benefits of development, and their access to education remains woefully inadequate even seven decades after India gained independence.

2. EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF TRIBALS

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a crucial component of nation-building and human advancement. It is widely acknowledged that education plays a pivotal role in attaining development objectives, enabling economically and socially disadvantaged individuals to break free from poverty and engage fully as active citizens. This perspective is endorsed by various scholars and organizations, including the World Bank in 1990, Amartya Sen in 1999, and Jean Drèze in 2006.

Numerous global human rights treaties have affirmed the importance of education as a fundamental right. These include agreements such as the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1981). These international conventions underscore the significance of ensuring equal access to quality education for all individuals, regardless of their background or gender.

The United Nations took a significant step towards promoting education for all by incorporating it into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. The MDGs aimed to provide free and universal primary education to all individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity. It's noteworthy that the 2010 Education for All report, as highlighted by Ramachandran in 2009, indicated progress towards achieving this goal.

Education and literacy serve as powerful indicators of both social and economic development and are essential components of the resilience and progress of tribal communities. Tribal development has been a matter of considerable importance for various stakeholders, including the government, voluntary organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and social reformers. It is crucial to approach tribal development holistically, focusing not only on the growth of a select few affluent individuals but on uplifting the entire community. This inclusive approach recognizes that the well-being of tribal communities is a collective endeavor that involves addressing education, literacy, and a range of socio-economic factors to foster sustainable development.

Professor Amartya Sen has emphasized that education plays a pivotal role in achieving all-inclusive economic growth. Inclusive growth, which encompasses the well-being of all segments of society, is a fundamental aspect of development. To achieve this, it is imperative to bring together and uplift the disadvantaged, marginalized, and weaker sections of society. Education is a key tool in this effort, as it not only fosters economic opportunities but also empowers individuals from these groups to participate fully in the development process, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and prosperous society. In India, free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 is recognized as a fundamental right and is guaranteed by various articles of the Indian constitution, as highlighted by Batra in 2005. The government plays a significant role in this by running or providing funding for approximately 80 percent of all officially recognized elementary schools. This makes the government the largest education provider in the country, a fact noted by Bhatta in 1998. When it comes to literacy and education, tribal communities in India have historically trailed behind both the general population and the Scheduled Caste population, as noted by Maharatna in 2005. This disparity underscores the need for targeted efforts to address educational challenges within tribal communities and bridge the gap in access to quality education and literacy rates. This paper has the objective of conducting a thorough review of existing literature regarding the present conditions and pressing challenges in tribal education within the Indian context. Through this comprehensive literature review, it seeks to offer insights and perspectives on various facets of tribal education in the country. To support its findings, the paper has gathered data from a variety of government sources, including the Census of India 2011, Internet Selected Educational Statistics, Government of India, Ministry of Human Resources, National Commission for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes, Statistics of School Children, committee reports on tribal affairs, and more.

Table 1: State-wise S.T.s Population according to Census 2011

S.I. No.	State/Union	Scheduled Tribe Population		
		Males	Females	Person
1	Jammu & Kashmir	776,257	717,042	1,493,299
2	Himachal Pradesh	196,118	196,008	392,126
3	Punjab	0	0	0
4	Chandigarh	0	0	0
5	Uttarakhand	148,669	143,234	291,903
6	Haryana	0	0	0
7	Delhi	0	0	0
8	Rajasthan	4,742,943	4,495,591	9,238,534
9	Uttar Pradesh	581,083	553,190	1,134,273
10	Bihar	682,516	654,057	1,336,573
11	Sikkim	105,261	101,099	206,360
12	Arunachal Pradesh	468,390	483,431	951,821
13	Nagaland	866,027	844,946	1,710,973
14	Manipur	588,279	579,143	1,167,422
15	Mizoram	516,294	519,821	1,036,115
16	Tripura	588,327	578,486	1,166,813
17	Meghalaya	1,269,728	1,286,133	2,555,861
18	Assam	1,957,005	1,927,366	3,884,371
19	West Bengal	2,649,974	2,646,979	5,296,953
20	Jharkhand	4,315,407	4,329,635	8,645,042
21	Odisha	4,727,732	4,863,024	9,590,756
22	Chhattisgarh	3,873,191	3,949,711	7,822,902
23	Madhya Pradesh	7,719,404	7,597,380	15,316,784
24	Gujarat	4,501,389	4,415,785	8,917,174
25	Daman & Diu	7,771	7,592	15,363
26	D & N Haveli	88,844	89,720	178,564
27	Maharashtra	5,315,025	5,195,188	10,510,213
28	Andhra Pradesh	2,969,362	2,948,711	5,918,073
29	Karnataka	2,134,754	2,114,233	4,248,987
30	Goa	72,948	76,327	149,275
31	Lakshadweep	30,515	30,605	61,120
32	Kerala	238,203	246,636	484,839
33	Tamil Nadu	401,068	393,629	794,697
34	Puducherry	0	0	0
35	A & N Islands	14,731	13,799	28,530
	India	52,547,215	51,998,501	104,545,716

Table 1 presents the state-wise population of Scheduled Tribes based on the 2011 census data. The table highlights that the Scheduled Tribes population is notably high in Madhya Pradesh State, with 15,316,784 individuals belonging to this category. Conversely, there are no tribal communities in the states of Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Pondicherry. Goa, on the other hand, has a comparatively small tribal population, consisting of only 149,275 people.

Table 2: Comparative Literacy Rates of S.Ts and Total Population from 1961 to 2011

Census Year	Total Population	Scheduled Tribes	Gap
1961	28.3	8.53	-19.77
1971	34.45	11.30	-23.15
1981	43.57	16.35	-27.22
1991	52.21	29.60	-22.61
2001	64.84	47.10	-17.74
2011	72.99	58.96	-14.03

Literacy serves as a crucial developmental benchmark when assessing tribal communities. Table 2 provides a comparative overview of literacy rates among Scheduled Tribes (S.Ts) and the overall population from 1961 to 2011. It is evident that the literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes has experienced notable improvement over this period. However, there has consistently been a considerable disparity in literacy rates between tribal communities and the general population over the past six decades. This disparity was most pronounced in 1981, with a gap of 27.22 percent when compared to the total population. It has since reduced to 14.03 percent in 2011, reflecting positive progress but highlighting the need for further improvements in tribal literacy rates.

3. CHALLENGING ISSUES OF TRIBAL EDUCATION

Tribal societies are often characterized by their relative stability and slow pace of social change, primarily due to their economic underdevelopment. In response to this, governments in many developing countries, including India, have placed significant emphasis on the development of tribal communities, as noted by Nithya in 2014. These efforts aim to address socio-economic disparities, improve living conditions, and promote inclusive growth among tribal populations.

The various tribal welfare programs in the country can indeed be categorized into three primary areas:

1. **Protective Measures:** These include initiatives aimed at safeguarding the constitutional and legislative rights of tribal communities, ensuring their protection under the law.
2. **Mobilization Initiatives:** These encompass policies like political reservation, educational reservations, and job quotas designed to provide tribal populations with representation and access to political, educational, and employment opportunities.
3. **Development Initiatives:** This category consists of programs focused on promoting economic and social development within tribal communities. These initiatives span economic development projects and improvements in areas such as education and healthcare, all aimed at enhancing the overall well-being of tribal populations.

One significant initiative in this regard is the 'National Education Policy' of 1986, which involves the establishment of additional primary schools in tribal areas and the creation of residential schools specifically for tribal children, as outlined by the Government of India in 1986. These efforts aim to address educational disparities and provide better access to quality education for tribal communities.

Education policies aimed at mitigating educational disparities among disadvantaged groups, including tribal communities, have consistently featured in all the five-year plans in India. These policies have consistently sought to improve the literacy rates and overall educational outcomes of tribal populations. The overarching goal has been to ensure that tribal communities have equitable access to quality education and opportunities for educational advancement, thus addressing historical educational inequalities.

Despite the efforts made in the realm of education, it is noteworthy that tribal communities continue to face higher levels of illiteracy compared to Scheduled Castes, as observed in studies by Desai and Kulkarni in 2008, as well as Brahmanandam and Bosu Babu in 2016. These findings indicate that the desired level of development and educational equity has not yet been fully realized for tribal populations, as noted by Chandra Guru et al. in 2015. This underscores the ongoing challenges and the need for sustained efforts to bridge the educational gap and improve the educational outcomes of tribal communities.

A recent study has revealed a high dropout rate of 70.9 percent among tribal students. Additionally, a significant majority, around 87 percent, of the primary workers in these tribal communities are engaged in primary sector activities. Furthermore, more than three-quarters of women from Scheduled Tribes are non-literate. These statistics emphasize that India still faces significant challenges in achieving the universalization of elementary education, as noted by Tilak in 2008. The dropout rates and low literacy levels within tribal communities highlight the need for continued efforts to improve educational access and outcomes for these populations.

Sujatha (1994) identified one of the major challenges in tribal education at the planning level as the adoption of a dual administration system. In her research, Rani M (2000) observed that tribal children often faced difficulties establishing a communication link with their teachers, primarily due to language barriers. These challenges in communication could lead to discontinuation of their education at various points. Addressing such issues, including administrative complexities and language barriers, is essential for improving the effectiveness of tribal education programs and ensuring better educational outcomes for tribal children. The Praitchi committee's report in 2002 highlighted several key barriers to the education of tribal children. These barriers included the expenses associated with schooling, a lack of motivation among teachers, insufficient inspection and oversight of schools, and a growing reliance on private tutoring. Additionally, the report noted that a significant decline in enrollment rates occurred immediately after primary education, which persisted for both males and females. High dropout rates were also attributed to the fact that children were often required to assist their family members during the cultivation season, further impeding their educational continuity. These challenges underscore the multifaceted nature of obstacles faced by tribal communities in accessing and retaining education.

Economic hardship has been identified as another significant factor contributing to the dropout rates among tribal students, as noted by Ghosh in 2007. Additionally, the lack of information facilities and inadequate transportation infrastructure in remote areas pose challenges for tribal education. These problems are exacerbated during the rainy season, as highlighted by Chattopadhyay and Durdhawale in 2009.

It's true that despite the presence of basic educational facilities in tribal villages, many tribal families are unable to fully utilize these resources due to the academic and social disadvantages faced by indigenous households, as mentioned by Bagai and Nundy in 2009. These factors collectively create substantial barriers to accessing and continuing education among tribal communities.

Pradhan (2011) highlights that for tribal families facing severe economic challenges, education is often perceived as a luxury. In many cases, traditional norms and standards, such as the absence of proper toilet facilities, have prevented most tribal girls from continuing their education beyond the 5th grade. This underscores the pressing need to address not only economic barriers but also cultural and infrastructure-related obstacles to ensure equal access to education for tribal communities, particularly for girls.

As a result, the dropout rate among tribal girls tends to rise, as noted by Gaurang Rami in 2012. Often, policymakers have focused on establishing a national curriculum rather than prioritizing skill-based, practical education that could have a more significant and immediate impact on the lives of tribal students, as highlighted by Brahmanandam and Bosu Babu in 2015. This underscores the need for educational strategies that are better aligned with the unique needs and circumstances of tribal communities to reduce dropout rates and improve educational outcomes.

Rupavath's research in 2016 discovered that barriers, including the limited active involvement of tribal children in the school education system, contribute to the marginalization of tribal communities in terms of educational achievement. This underscores the importance of engaging tribal students more actively in the educational process to overcome these challenges.

On a related note, Goyal's argument in 2016 raised concerns about the corruption and abuse of children in residential tribal schools in Maharashtra. Ensuring the safety and well-being of students, especially in residential institutions, is crucial for providing a conducive learning environment. These issues emphasize the need for effective oversight and accountability mechanisms within the education system to protect the rights and interests of tribal children.

Kumar's investigation in 2017 brought attention to the significant issue of extremely low enrollment rates in conflict-ridden areas. In his insightful narrative, Kumar underscored how the ongoing conflict between Maoists and the government in extremist areas, particularly in Chhattisgarh, has negatively impacted the enrollment of students in primary schools.

Patra and Panigrahi (2018) highlighted a substantial gap in both policy formulation and implementation concerning primary tribal education. They emphasized that a lack of understanding of the tribal socio-economic background and cultural knowledge among policymakers in the education sector has contributed to the current challenging situation. Bridging this knowledge gap and developing policies that are more sensitive to the specific needs and context of tribal communities is essential for improving the state of tribal education.

The article by Jha and Jhingran in 2002 strongly advocated for the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the early stages of education, emphasizing its critical relevance in the context of tribal children's education. Recognizing and preserving the cultural and linguistic heritage of tribal communities through education can play a pivotal role in their educational development.

In their 2003 article, Rana et al. discussed the state of primary education in West Bengal. They made a compelling argument that simply improving infrastructure does not guarantee an improvement in primary education outcomes. Instead, the authors stressed the importance of parental involvement in monitoring and governance as the key to enhancing the direct delivery of education and improving literacy levels. This highlights the significance of community engagement and participation in efforts to improve educational quality.

Nair's article in 2007 underscores the significance of non-formal education in tribal areas. Non-formal education programs are designed to cater to children who have dropped out of the formal education system, and they offer flexibility and innovation in various aspects, including organization, teaching methods, content, target learners, and assessment procedures. These programs play a crucial role in addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by tribal children who may not have succeeded in the conventional formal education system. Non-formal education can provide them with alternative pathways to access education and improve their educational outcomes.

Ghosh's article in 2007 focuses on tribal education in the states of Jharkhand and West Bengal, drawing from in-depth literature. One of the key observations made in the article is that the female enrollment ratio among tribal communities in these regions is significantly lower compared to males. In response to this gender disparity, Ghosh presents several suggestions to achieve gender equity in education. These recommendations include motivating parents to send their daughters to school, customizing the curriculum to better meet the needs of tribal children, and ensuring the provision of separate toilets for girls. These measures aim to create a more inclusive and conducive learning environment, particularly for tribal girls, and address gender-based disparities in education.

Primary schooling in India, especially in economically disadvantaged districts, often faces significant challenges and shortcomings. These issues are often attributed to educational planning that does not adequately consider the educational needs and aspirations of impoverished communities. Addressing these challenges requires more inclusive and community-centered educational policies and programs that can effectively cater to the specific needs and circumstances of marginalized populations, including tribal communities and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Chattopadhyay and Durdhawale's 2009 article, which examines primary education in tribal villages of a backward district in Maharashtra, India, through qualitative and quantitative data, sheds light on critical factors affecting education among tribal communities. Their findings indicate that economic instability and financial challenges significantly contribute to the historical disinterest in education within tribal populations. This underscores the importance of addressing economic barriers and creating supportive conditions to encourage greater participation in education among tribal communities. Effective educational interventions should consider and mitigate the economic hardships that often hinder access to quality education in such contexts. The findings of Chattopadhyay and Durdhawale in 2009 suggest that one effective approach to encourage willing participation in primary education among tribal communities is by increasing their income sources. Economic empowerment can serve as a powerful motivator for families to prioritize and invest in the education of their children.

This underscores the importance of holistic development efforts that not only focus on educational access but also address the broader socio-economic context in which tribal communities live.

Additionally, their findings highlight the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in society to tackle the challenge of educating and empowering tribal children. It emphasizes the need for coordinated efforts from governments, non-governmental organizations, communities, and civil society to create an enabling environment for quality education and holistic development among tribal populations. This collective approach is crucial for achieving sustainable progress in tribal education and empowerment. The findings of Chattopadhyay and Durdhawale in 2009 suggest that one effective approach to encourage willing participation in primary education among tribal communities is by increasing their income sources. Economic empowerment can serve as a powerful motivator for families to prioritize and invest in the education of their children. This underscores the importance of holistic development efforts that not only focus on educational access but also address the broader socio-economic context in which tribal communities live.

Sahu's article in 2013 explores the achievement of tribal education in Odisha through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). His argument centers on the idea that PPP initiatives in education benefit both community teachers and community children, serving as a positive signal for the decentralization of education. This suggests that collaborative efforts involving both public and private entities can yield positive outcomes in the context of tribal education in Odisha, contributing to improved educational access and quality for tribal communities. Sahu's suggestion in 2013 that the government should develop innovative approaches to streamline the education system to achieve a higher literacy level among tribal children underscores the need for dynamic and adaptive strategies to address the unique challenges faced by tribal communities in education.

Panda's 2018 article, focusing on promoting science communication among Scheduled Tribe students through a museum, highlights a critical issue. The argument that tribal students often struggle to adapt to new circumstances and languages, leading to a science curriculum that may not align with their dreams, aspirations, and life pursuits, underscores the importance of tailoring education to the cultural and linguistic contexts of tribal communities. Adapting the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of tribal students is essential for fostering engagement and promoting meaningful learning experiences in science and other subjects.

The author's finding that visiting the museum had a measurable impact on the science engagement of tribal students is significant. This suggests that exposure to museums and interactive learning experiences can indeed stimulate interest and understanding in science among tribal students.

The conclusion that regular visits to the museum could further enhance their interest in studying science underscores the potential benefits of incorporating experiential and hands-on learning opportunities into the educational experiences of tribal students. Such initiatives can contribute to making science education more engaging, accessible, and relevant to their lives and aspirations.

Brahmanandam and Bosu Babu's 2016 suggestion that policymakers have paid insufficient attention to culturally linked education and its impact on tribal communities, leading to dropouts and affecting overall educational status, highlights a critical oversight in educational planning. Recognizing and incorporating the cultural context and heritage of tribal communities into the education system is essential for enhancing their engagement and retention in schools. In their 2018 article, Patra and Panigrahi focused on identifying enrollment, drop-out, and retention patterns in primary schools, particularly among Santali students in two villages of Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal. This kind of research is crucial for understanding the specific challenges faced by tribal students and devising targeted interventions to improve educational outcomes within their cultural context.

The study conducted by Patra and Panigrahi in 2018 delves into the nature of problems faced by school-going children and their parents, particularly among the Santali students in West Bengal. Their findings emphasize that policymaking alone is not the sole solution to increase school enrollments among tribal communities.

Their study suggests several key recommendations for improving educational inclusion among tribals:

1. Recruiting Teachers from Tribal Communities: One recommendation is to recruit more teachers from tribal backgrounds. Having teachers who understand the cultural nuances and languages of tribal communities can foster better communication and engagement with tribal students.
2. Including the Santali Language (Olchiki) as a Medium of Instruction: To address the language barrier, their study suggests incorporating the Santali language (Olchiki) as the medium of instruction at the primary level. This would help remove language-related hurdles faced by tribal students in their learning process.
3. Enhancing Parents' Mentality: The study underscores the significance of improving parents' mindset and attitudes, as this is considered one of the most critical factors influencing the successful development of tribal children. Engaging parents in the education of their children and promoting a positive view of education within the community can contribute significantly to better educational outcomes.

These recommendations highlight the need for a multifaceted approach to address the complex challenges faced by tribal communities in accessing quality education, involving not only policy changes but also cultural sensitivity, language inclusivity, and community engagement.

Conclusion

Tribal populations in many developing countries, including India, represent a substantial portion of the population. Yet, they continue to face significant disparities in various aspects of life, including health, education, employment, and empowerment. Among these, education stands out as a fundamental requirement for the development of tribal communities. Scheduled Tribes, being one of the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, require special attention to ensure their access to elementary education. In recent years, both central and state governments in India have shown a commitment to improving the educational status of tribal communities. However, despite these efforts, challenges persist, and educational disparities among tribal populations remain a significant concern.

Researchers and academicians have devoted considerable attention to studying the accessibility and inequality issues in tribal education. The findings and perspectives presented in this paper reflect the current status and challenges of tribal education in India, drawing from existing literature. The lessons learned from these insights are not only relevant for understanding the educational landscape of tribal communities in India but can also be applied to other developing countries facing similar circumstances. In conclusion, addressing the educational disparities and challenges faced by tribal populations is a critical imperative for achieving inclusive growth and development. It requires sustained efforts, innovative strategies, and a comprehensive understanding of the unique needs and contexts of tribal communities. The findings from this paper provide valuable insights and serve as a call to action for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to work towards more equitable and inclusive educational opportunities for tribal populations, not only in India but also in other developing nations facing similar issues.

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