



Holistic Tribal Education: A Case Study of Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences in Odisha, India

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Abstract

Education is both an indicator and an instrument of development, and its attainment is a major factor behind the accumulation of human capital. Literacy is a useful indicator of the relative development of a society. The Constitution is unequivocally committed to bring about social justice and equality of all citizens as well as to the responsibility of the state to preserve, protect and assure the rights of the marginalised groups and minorities. The importance of non-government actors lately has assumed center stage in realising the educational rights of vulnerable groups like the tribals. The paper analyses the role, pattern and impact of Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in imparting elementary, secondary, higher and professional education free of cost. The aspects of vocational training, professional education, multi-lingual education, language barrier and culture components are also dealt with while analysing the model of education the organisation provides. The paper also delves into the innovation in education for imparting holistic education to the tribal children and youth.

Keywords: Scheduled tribe, holistic education, drop-out rate, change agents, child labour, women empowerment, human development index, diversity, intergenerational poverty chain.

Introduction

The greatest challenge for policy makers and stakeholders in the development process is to bring about social change by ameliorating the socio-economic conditions of tribals. According to the 2001 Census, India has 84.3 million Scheduled Tribes comprising 8.1 percent of the total population of the country and constitutes about 23% of the total population of the state of Odisha¹. Scheduled Tribes constitute the weakest section of India's population. The Human Development Indices of the tribals also shows that their condition continues to be much lower than the rest in terms of visible parameters like education, health, income, etc. The invisible parameters of cultural and geographical exclusion are not even considered. The Scheduled Tribe population registered poverty rates significantly higher than the rest of the population. While the Scheduled Tribe population below poverty line in the rural areas stands at 47.2%, in urban areas it is 39% as per the report of the planning Commission of India in 2005-2006². Though the poverty rates have declined among Scheduled Tribes, they have done so at a slower rate than for the rest of the population.

Education is both an indicator and an instrument of development, and its attainment is a major factor behind the accumulation of human capital. Literacy is a useful indicator of the relative development of a society. It is widely realised that societies with a higher percentage of literates have higher levels of development. Educationally the tribal population is at different levels of development but overall the formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups. Poverty is an

important factor contributing to the low literacy rates, high dropout rates and low participation in higher education among the Scheduled Tribe population. Among tribes, a significantly higher proportion of females are illiterate as compared to males. In addition, the proportion of males completing different levels of school education (primary, middle, and secondary) is higher than females. The rates of non-enrolment and dropout are also more worrying. The present system of education in tribal areas is unsatisfactory due to several factors. These can be categorised as: teacher absenteeism, student centered learning, apathy of teachers, unsuitable school timings, lack of participation of the core stakeholders primarily the parents in the management of schools, and the prevalence of physical punishment for students³.

Odisha Scenario: Odisha has 62 Scheduled tribes and out of this 13 communities have been identified as primitive or Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Low level of literacy and educational backwardness among the tribal communities can be attributed to various factors centering around chronic poverty. The state of literacy and educational status of tribals in Odisha is dismal. As per 2001 Census, the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of the State of Orissa is 8,145,081. This constitutes 22.1 percent of the total population of the State and 9.7 per cent of the total tribal population of the country. The state holds 3rd and 11th rank among the States/UTs in terms of ST population and the proportion of ST population to total population of the State respectively. The decennial growth of ST population has been 15.8 per cent, which is 0.5 per cent lower than the growth of population (16.3

per cent). The State has a total of sixty two (62) Scheduled Tribes, and all have been enumerated at 2001 census. The overall literacy rate of the STs has increased from 22.3 per cent in 1991 to 37.4 per cent in 2001. Despite this improvement, the literacy rate among the tribals is considerably below the national average (47.1 per cent). Male literacy has increased from 34.4 per cent to 51.5 per cent while female literacy has gone up from 10.2 per cent in 1991 to 23.4 per cent during 1991-2001. Among tribal literates, 44.7 per cent are either without any educational level or have attained education below primary level. The proportion of literates who have attained education up to primary and middle levels constitute 28.7 per cent and 13.7 per cent respectively. Literates, who are educated up to matric/secondary/higher secondary etc. have a share of 11 per cent only. Graduates and above are 1.5 per cent while nontechnical and technical diploma holders constitute less than half per cent (0.4 per cent). The data on the education levels attained by all STs show that the drop-out rate is high after primary level as the percentage of middle level literates is half that of the primary level. It declines sharply from the higher secondary level onwards, as the percentage of students after matriculation drops down to nearly one third in higher secondary or Intermediate level. 13. Out of total 21.4 lakh tribal children in the age group 5 -14 years, only 9.8 lakh attend school constituting 45.8 per cent. Alarming, as many as 11.6 lakh children in the corresponding age group do not go to school. With this dismal state of affairs not only government but also civil society organisations have come forward to ameliorate the condition. Many NGO run educational organisation has mushroomed in the recent times. They involve with the communities directly and are trying to fill in the gaps that the government is unable to fulfil⁴.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary sources were used for coming to inferences and analysis. Primary sources include first hand interview method with the officials of the organisation. Special open ended questions were set for the interview of the tribal students of the institute to form the case studies. The information about the successful students was cross-checked with newspaper clipping on them. Participant observation method was used and all the facilities of the organisation were visited. Secondary sources like the census report, planning commission report, annual report, evaluation report of the organisation and different books and articles were used. A descriptive approach has been adopted with use of case study method for research purpose.

Results and Discussion

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) is a residential institute for 22,500 neglected and deprived tribal children, founded by Dr. Achyuta Samanta, located in eastern part of the country at Bhubaneswar, Odisha (India) enrolled currently in march 2015. As a model institution in the country meant for the

tribal population (covering 62 tribes including 13 primitive tribes), it provides education (from Standard I to Post Graduation), accommodation, food, health care, study material, clothing, vocational training (farm and non-farm sector), games and sports, computer education etc. to the students totally free of cost. It was established in the year 1993 looking at the growing problems of illiteracy, poverty, malnutrition, child labour, growing radical armed movements etc. among tribes in the poverty stricken districts of Odisha which constitute about 23% of the total population. The Human Development Indices (HDI) of the tribals also shows that their condition continues to be much lower than the rest in terms of visible parameters like education, health, income, etc. The invisible parameters of cultural and geographical exclusion are not even considered. The Scheduled Tribe population registered poverty rates significantly higher than the rest of the population. The KISS tribal students are encouraged to bring in desirable changes in their village by actively participating in the transformation process - rather than looking for greener pastures elsewhere. They are molded as 'change agents' of their community.

It is worth noting in a nutshell the cursory case history of the man, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, who founded Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and relentlessly working for indigenous empowerment. Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction. How prophetic is this can be known from the saga of a poor man's journey to opulence. Opulence that is not for self-appropriation but for the upliftment of underprivileged tribal populace of Odisha and neighbouring states. Dr Achyuta Samanta, who lost his father at a tender age of four, had not inherited any parental property. As a toddler he grew up to face the world in abject poverty. Though stuck in the quagmire of poverty he was able to complete his M.Sc in Chemistry and get a lecturer job. But he had some innovative ideas in his mind both catering to knowledge economy and finding sustainable solutions for children and youth cutting across different strata of society. With a paltry sum of US \$100 in 1992, against all odds he went on to create an Industrial Training Centre (ITI) which proliferated into world class state-of-the-art University named KIIT University in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India. Almost parallel was the germination of a small school for the indigenous aborigines dwelling in slums of Bhubaneswar in 1993, which was manifestation of his compassionate and humanist self with a passion for an equitable society, later christened as Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) - world's largest free residential tribal/indigenous institute. He considers the tribals/indigenous populace to be the solution and not passive beneficiary as the students are moulded as 'change agents' of their respective societies. Achyuta Samanta is an educationist and social entrepreneur par excellence. He can be seen as the harbinger of 'coalition of conscience' - for this model to emulate adapting to socio-cultural economic sphere hence contributing to nation building.

The "NUA MAN NUA SAPAN" (New Minds, New Dreams) program of KISS envisage a system of genuine and sustainable

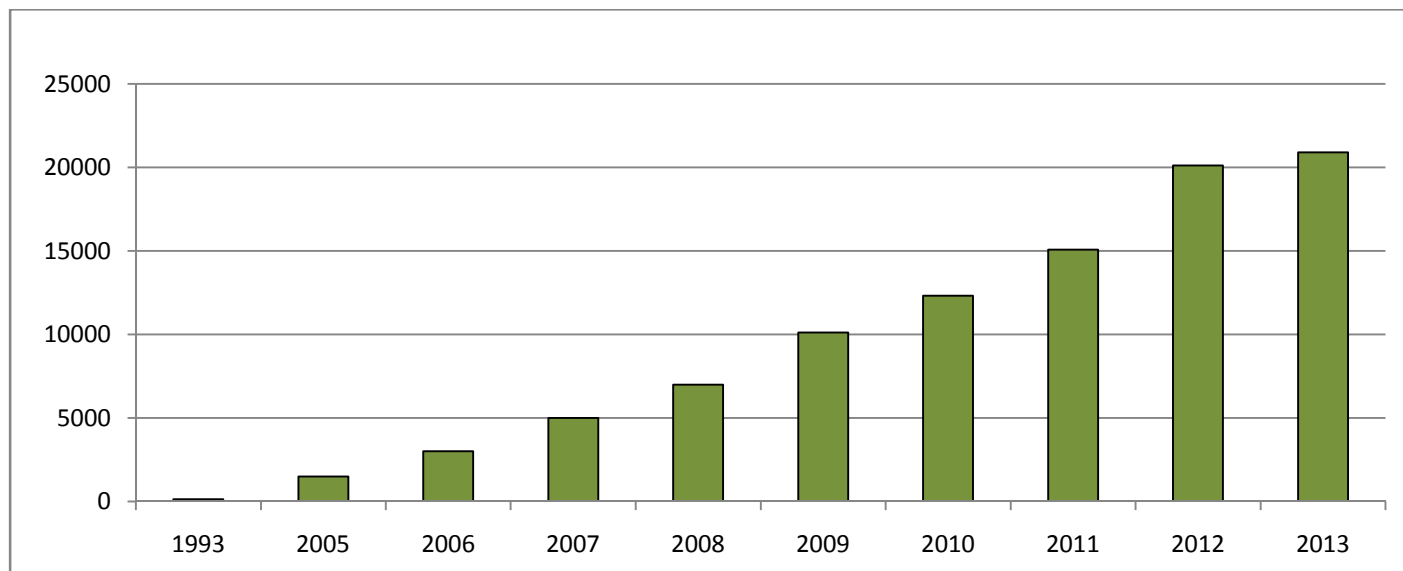
approaches to win the confidence and love of tribal population. Creating sustainable educational models and opportunities for tribal kids: There is no substitute to education in empowering and enlightening the tribal communities. Sadly the educational facilities available in the interior areas are not so motivating for tribal. Apart from this, there is added pressure of poverty which make them drop their schooling at primary class itself. They earned their bread by grazing cattle and collecting forest produce. Only a sustainable and tailor made model of education could provide requisite level of motivation as well as developing vocational skill can solve their typical problem. With this objective of exposing tribal kids to a sustainable model of modern education, kids from different tribal pockets are admitted in Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), Bhubaneswar. Preference was given to kids from interior and worst extremist affected villages. It is ensured that they get free education along with vocational training from class 1 to post-graduate level.

With the support of United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) from 2009, KISS has been endeavouring to hone the abilities and skills of its tribal children through Life Skills Education (LSE) and Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health (ARSH) in order to enable them to deal with the demands and challenges in their life effectively. The proposed intervention in KISS aims at building institutional capacity and networking with other potential institutions to overcome knowledge and skills deficit in the state for the promotion of LSE. KISS is also implementing LSE and ARSH program in 30 districts of Odisha reaching 70 thousand children in the state in support of Odisha state government. KISS is implementing the English Access Microscholarship Program from 2009 which is a flagship program of US Department of State where the purpose of the program is to make the study of English more easy and accessible to the economically deprived indigenous students. UNICEF in association with KISS has established a Children Development Resource Centre (CDRC) as part of the larger UNICEF-KIIT University joint initiative for the Centre for Children Studies (CCS). The goal is to promote evidence-based policy making by building a knowledge base through action research and other development programmes on children's issues focusing on the state of Odisha Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) enrolled 225 students in 2003 and had a total strength of 225 in 2004, 1500 in 2005, 3000 in 2006, 5000 in 2007, 7000 in 2008, 10112 in 2009, 12310 in 2010, 15083 in 2011, 16500 in 2012 and 20000 in 2013 as is depicted in figure-1⁵

It is imperative to have an in depth study and understanding of change that KISS has brought about in tribal children through some case studies. The case study will depict the life changes and availailing of life chances for being enrolled in a particular innovative educational model-

Case Study 1: "This visit to America has been quite a learning experience for me, something I had never dreamt of," said 15-year-old Jayanta Majhi of his participation in the U.S. Cultural Immersion program. Jayanta and his family are members of the Dongria Kondh community, a primitive tribal group of Odisha, India. In 2006, poverty caused him to drop his studies in order to help his father with their only source of livelihood – collecting and selling forest produce and cultivation in small land-holding. A year later, the people of his village intervened to introduce Javanta's family to KISS so he could receive a free holistic education. The institution partners with several organizations including the Department of State, which made it possible for Jayanta to be selected for the cultural immersion exchange program. He is the first Dongria Kondh student to visit the United States from the entire state of Odisha. During his trip to the U.S. Cultural Immersion Institute, Jayanta attended workshops on leadership and global issues. He also visited important U.S. landmarks including the Washington monument and the Statue of Liberty. Jayanta credits his success to KISS, and the Access program he recently enrolled in to improve his English language skills. He is also extremely grateful to the U.S. Government for the U.S. visit, "Not only did I get a chance to visit America but I have also made friends from all over the world," adds a beaming Jayanta.

Case Study 2: Seema Hansdah is a fourth year student at Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS). After completing her 12th at Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and scoring commendable marks in her exam, she was one among the meritorious students from KISS to get a seat in the medical college. It was dream come true for Seema, who aspired to be a doctor from the childhood, but had never thought that she could achieve this at KISS. Seema gets thrilled thinking of the day when the founder of the organisation gave her an opportunity out of the many equally competent tribal girl and boys who aspired for a medical seat at KIMS. "She says I am the lucky one as I am a girl" and the founder of the organisation chose me as he believes in women empowerment". Seema belongs to a very poor Santhali tribal family from the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. Her father is a sharecropper and earns additional income through daily labor while her mother is a home maker. She also has a younger brother and sister studying at the village government school who aspire to be students of KISS. Among the other major feats of Seema was the moment when she was chosen as one of the few students to travel to the USA for the English Access Alumni Exchange Programme. Seema is currently a resident at the medical college and aims to open a small health centre at her village in the future. She recently put forth her achievements at a National seminar "Reaching Out to Tribal Adolescents: Needs, Priorities and Response" under the theme organized by UNFPA in New Delhi.



Source: Project and Research Office, KISS, Bhubaneswar

Figure-1
Growth of Number of Students

Case Study 3: Rajkishore Murmu is a santhali boy from Kheojhar and he joined at the young age of 7. He belongs to a family of 7 members and lost his father at a very young age. When he was a kid he used to herd cows in his village to support his family with the little money he got. His elder brother used to work in Bhubaneswar and that is how he heard about KISS and was admitted into the school. Since he was a child he loved playing sports but in his village he did not know about the existence of sports like cricket, football or rugby. Rugby itself as a sport was introduced at the institute in 2006 and he started playing it from 2007 and it was in this year that he got to go to England to play the sport at a tournament. Rajkishore Murmu not only excelled in the game but led his team as a captain and helped his team win the Under-14 Rugby World Cup. Today apart from completing his graduation at the institute, Rajkishore spends most of his time practising and taking part in many international and national rugby championships along with his team as the captain.

Case Study 4: Bahalin Minz, is a 3rd year Science Graduate from Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), Bhubaneswar. She belongs to the Oran tribe from the remote village of Chungimati in the Sundergarh district of Odisha. Her father is a farmer and her mother, a homemaker. Her father could barely afford her school fees, but Bahalin being a good student wanted to pursue higher education. Bahalin believed that “where there is a will, there is a way” therefore, she tried every possible means and found herself at KISS, where she could pursue her dreams of higher education without having to pay. Bahalin has displayed her talents at various forums like “The ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Youth Forum” as a part of the Indian delegation, held in Bali, Indonesia in 2012. The Forum was organized through a partnership of UN agencies, young people, civil societies and the private sector. Her participation was sponsored by UNFPA because of her inherent talent. She has also participated in a live

discussion with the UN secretary General Mr Ban Ki Moon in the year 2013 on the occasion of International Youth Day. Bahalin is now in her final year of her graduation and hopes to achieve some good job for herself.

Case Study 5: Hadi Dhangada Majhi is a 19 year old Bonda (primitive tribe) indigenous Boy. Hadi belongs to a family of seven siblings and his father. His father is a farmer and he is the eldest of all. Two of his siblings work as sharecroppers to add to the family income. All these adversities of life refrained Hadi from achieving education that he wanted to achieve in his village. A mediocre boy, Hadi Dhangada Majhi had his heart and soul entrenched in sports and without opportunity. He was enrolled in his village school, however his priorities changed by the time he reached class IV. Midway through his education he had to put aside his hope to be educated and assist his father in getting some income into the family. However 5 years hence he got the opportunity to return to being educated again when teachers and counsellors from KISS introduced him to the institute. His journey hence has been one of great wonder and joy for him. Though average at his students, he has however marked his spot by being a sports champion. He started playing Kabaddi and with the help of coach and mentors at KISS he soon represented Odisha at national level meets. Hadi soon switched to rugby and soon became very comfortable with the game. In 2007, Hadi was part of a team of twelve that embarked on a journey to England. The tournament progressed and Hadi along with his team romped past teams from Zambia, Romania, Switzerland and Kenya before meeting South Africa in the finals. The final was also a one sided affair with KISS winning 19-7 and becoming the Under -14 World champions. Hadi met people from different cultures and the opportunity was enormous. However, he would still continue thinking about his roots. Hadi came back to India to a hero’s welcome. Hadi says that he would like to stay in KISS till he

graduates and he cannot even contemplate a life beyond KISS for the support and bonhomie he received from KISS. His aim is to become a sports person and a coach; and he would love to train his people in sports.

Different interventions of KISS and its impact from its inception are: Bridging the Language Gap: For some, language is a road to upward mobility and for others it is a barrier to even the marginal life of choice and dignity. Slow shift to the mainstream language without disturbing the roots by KISS is seen as a determinant of access to resources to alleviate extreme poverty and hunger. Early socialization of the child at KISS amongst the senior students of the same tribe and unrelenting endeavor of tribal teachers bringing cultural awareness and sensitivity to the classroom has helped in tribal students excelling in multi-language system of pedagogy. Many students have presented papers, obtained distinction in essay writing, debates etc. in Indian and English languages. Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in collaboration with Bernard van Leer Foundation from 2013 has instituted the “Early Childhood Program” through mother tongue based Multilingual Education by establishing India’s first resource centre along with a learning lab for the promotion of mother tongue based early childhood education among the indigenous population.

Breaking Intergenerational Poverty Chain: Quality education concomitantly with vocational training (‘earn while you learn’) keeping in view the present economic trends and market potential has enabled them to remit some money back home and have gained suitable employment or become self-employed. Hence, sustainable livelihood for tribals is being addressed. Many KISS students joining higher professional courses in KIIT University as 5% of the seats are reserved for KISS tribal students; have resulted into jobs, white collar jobs, self-employed jobs etc. which is a testimony of positive impact of KISS intervention.

Reaping the Benefit of ‘Holistic Education’ and Defying Stereotypes: Innovative learning materials like using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials for the indigenous tribal adolescent students, Storytelling, Interactive Multimedia Sessions, Life skill Education (LSE), English Access Classes, Coaching Classes, Cultural Activities, Vocational Activities, Yoga and Sports conglomerated with tribal cultural awareness and sensitivity in the classroom etc. adopted by KISS has made the students successful in both academic and non-academic sphere.

Arresting Drop-Out and Stopping Child Labour: Provisions of free education, food, health facilities, vocational activity, cultural activities rooted in their tradition and sports concurrently with a playful and interesting learning atmosphere at KISS has been successful in arresting drop-out. The enrollment and retention at KISS is cent-percent. The spillover effect has also stopped child labour.

Positive Behavioural Changes and Personality Development:

The approaches to education is towards overall personality development of tribal boys and girls; develop a deep sense of social responsibility, expose to the life opportunities and developing competencies to contribute effectively in the socio-economic development of the country. Life Skills Education (LSE) and Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health (ARSH) integrated with the formal education has helped in restricting the tribal children and youth in engaging in smoking, substance abuse, consumption of alcohol, unprotected sex etc. The wise words of numerous intellectuals from different walks of life comprising- Academicians, Politicians, Scientists, Activists, Legal Luminaries etc. along with other endeavors/methodology of KISS has helped in generating and promoting the sense of critical thinking, problem solving, competence, self-efficacy, self respect and positive self-image among tribal children. This has led to them in becoming responsible citizens of the country.

Promoting Gender Equality, Women Empowerment and Checking Child Marriage (from 1993 to till date):

Gender and development is an accepted perspective in practical development work. The tribal girls at KISS are at equal footing with their male counterparts and have brought laurels in all spheres including academics, sports, etc. Tribal girl of KISS have joined higher education such as medicine, engineering, law etc. KISS tribal girls also excel in sports as they have represented India in Commonwealth and Asian Games. KISS encourages girl education through its innovative teaching methods. The free education, food, health facility etc. has elongated the educational-period of tribal girls. Awareness about repercussions of early marriage has resulted in checking this menace. This has converted these girls from being considered ‘liabilities’ in to ‘assets’ and be the change agents for their respective communities.

Improved Health Conditions from (1993 to till date):

The widespread malnutrition, absence of safe drinking water and sanitary living conditions, poor maternal and child health services and ineffective coverage of national health and nutritional services are contributing factors to dismal health conditions prevailing among the tribal population in India. Nutritious food is served at KISS which checks malnutrition. To overcome these impediments and looking at their health needs KISS has made necessary medical arrangements. A 100 bedded Dispensary with qualified and experienced doctors and other adequate staff and equipments has been provided for the wellbeing of the students. Provisions have been made for the free treatment, medicine and regular health checkups for the students. A 1500 bedded hospital of KIIT group of institutions is also present to cater to the difficult cases of health problem of KISS students. This has curbed the health ailments of tribal students of KISS. The tribal adolescent girls are the future mothers hence special care is provided for their mental and physical health. Girls receive individual counseling for their health issues. There is a counseling room for girls that has been made more user-friendly with the addition of posters and reading materials. The health counseling for girls in KISS dispensary has been strengthened with

gynecologists, who counsel students on healthy and hygienic practices. In the long run it would be very helpful for reducing the maternal mortality rate. Immunization drive is also taken up by KISS for its students. Students get awareness regarding the combat of HIV/AIDS. The children are made aware about how to combat Malaria and other diseases which affect 25% of the population of Odisha. This way the superstitions in the tribal culture relating to health and hygiene are not followed after exposure to modern know-how. With the support of United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), KISS has been endeavouring to hone the abilities of its indigenous children through Life Skills Education (LSE) and Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health (ARSH) in order to enable them to deal with the demands and challenges in their life effectively. The proposed intervention in KISS aims at building institutional capacity and networking with other potential institutions to overcome knowledge and skills deficit in the state for the promotion of LSE. KISS is also implementing LSE and ARSH program in 30 districts of Odisha reaching 70 thousand children in the state.

Mitigating ill-effects of voluntary/involuntary displacement of tribal communities (Year 2007 to till date): The voluntary and involuntary displacement of many tribal communities by development-projects/industries often result in impoverishment. In order to check their vulnerability due to displacement, KISS has enrolled children of the displaced families and the ones supposed to be displaced by various development-projects. Tribal youths from the project affected areas are given vocational and industrial training so that they are absorbed in the industries coming up in their areas and thus get the fruits of development.

Celebrating Diversity: KISS is home to 62 tribes including 13 primitive tribes. Students from various tribes celebrate tribal festivals like Sakrat Parab, Maghe Parab, Chaita Parab etc. and other festivals like Jagannath Rath Yatra, Holi, Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, Basant Panchami etc. with traditional fervor thereby celebrating diversity. The tribal form of poems, art, craft and music has been a part of KISS through various manifestations. There has not been any case of diversity becoming a bottleneck for bonhomie among the students of different tribes. KISS always blossoms with new founded kinship and fraternity. They have contributed to make the campus a vibrant and disciplined one. Each sub-culture has enriched the campus. Diversity has been made a strength and KISS 'celebrates diversity'.

Preservation of Nature (1993 to till date): Tribal life is intimately connected with the forests. For centuries the tribals have lived in or in the fringes of forests and depended entirely on forests for their livelihood. KISS has been sensitizing the tribal students regarding the conservation and protection of forest in order to curb climate change. It makes the students aware by observing different red letter days for the protection and preservation of the forest. In 'KISS-GREEN' drive, many children have adopted trees. The tree bears the name of the child and the child takes care of the tree with a great deal of love and care. The tribal child has established the bond faster because of

his roots in the forested tribal land; hence, KISS has linked sylvan cultural roots with the saplings.

Spillover Effect on Tribal Communities: The tribal children have become change agents of their respective communities. The general tribal populace back in villages has indeed been at receiving end of the shift in practices and modern know-how without dislocation of the cultural roots of their children at KISS. There has been paradigm shift in the perception of looking at problems that they encounter; which comprise awareness about education, health practices/problems, sustainable livelihood, Government provisions, female infanticide, child marriage and sensitizing them of their rights. The parents meet held in KISS, where 40,000 tribal parents attend, also has played a pivotal role in exchanging and conglomerating their best practices and modern progressive knowledge emanating from KISS. In other words, KISS has not only 'educated tribal children' but also has 'raised tribal populace'.

Bridging the Elite and Non-Elite: The economically poor students of KISS engage with the Elite students of KIIT group of institutions. The elite students of KIIT, which is a self financing university, become mentors of KISS students. They help them in their education and other exposures. This is to bridge the social barrier between children and youth coming from different socio-cultural milieu.

Realizing vertical economic mobility rather than horizontal: The youths of KISS after getting professional and higher education along with vocational training have successfully climbed the economic ladder and joined white collar jobs rather than working in industrial sectors as daily wage laborers. Hence KISS has been able to break horizontal mobility of tribal populace.

Conclusion

The constitutional underpinnings in the development of education policy have implications for the manner in which its delivery is conceptualised. The role of state is particularly strong in cases where poverty and social exclusion make it difficult for sections of the population to access private provision. Nevertheless, the NGOs, corporate bodies under corporate social responsibility and other civil society organizations have come forward in taking this mettle of education. Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) is a model educational institution primarily meant for tribal students which aims and endeavors for providing holistic education. All these substantial steps and solutions offered and implemented by KISS have been systematically contributing to the United Nations Millennium development goals (MDGs). Some of it include-integrated holistic education, nutritious food, arresting drop-out rate, improved health conditions of the tribal children, 'earn while you learn' scheme (vocational training) where the students send some money back home consequently, acting a catalyst to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. The vocational training has enabled the tribal youth to gain suitable employment or become self

employed. The tribal students get wide exposure by travelling and meeting students and dignitaries from various parts of the world during various programmes. Gender equality is also followed, where the girl child gets equal exposure as compared to her male counterpart which is usually lacking in the tribal areas. The multilingual laboratory and use of tribal teachers by KISS meant for bridging the language barrier and to bring cultural sensitivity is one such step. The real challenge for KISS would be to match the scale of operation with quality education and to this effect it has taken many steps in terms of reducing teacher-student ratio, value added programs like Life Skill Education, English Access Microscholarship Program, Early Childhood based Multilingual Program, Intel and TCS collaborations and many others. The various research questions which unfolds from the present study are i. How to strengthen the cultural roots in an urban context?, ii. The very exclusivity of only tribals in the institute and not in a diversified socio-religious context, iii. Further research and engaging in advocacy for tribal specific curriculum- which the government has to engage in, iv. Replication of the model in socio-cultural milieu. Many of these research questions though is being addressed by Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) but a

more discourse is needed by researchers and discussion at policy level ought to be engaged with to bring a tribal student friendly milieu in the classrooms and educational institutes. Tribal children need to be cushioned with culture-specific and appreciation of their ancestor's historiography in their learning process.

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