



A Study of the Effectiveness of the Government Hostel Scheme for Scheduled Tribe Boys and Girls in Maharashtra State

KEYWORDS

Effectiveness, Government Hostel, Scheme, Scheduled Tribe, students etc.

Dr. Prabhakar S.Chavan

Associate Professor, Department of Continuing and Adult Education and Extension Work, S. N. D. T. Women's University, Mumbai – 400020, Maharashtra, India.

ABSTRACT India is a welfare country, committed to the welfare and development of its people and of vulnerable sections in particular. Provision of quality education is an important tool for empowering the weaker sections. The Government of India is providing financial assistance to various states for implementing schemes for the development of Scheduled Tribes. Government of Maharashtra is implanting hostels scheme for Schedule Tribe students since many years. This study aims to reveal whether the scheme is implemented as per the objectives envisaged, and if not, how the scheme can be modified for the betterment of the beneficiaries. Study suggest some recommendation for better implementation such scheme in the state level. The study concludes that functioning ST Government hostels are satisfactory. However, there is scope for further improvement in day-to-day management of these hostels.

1. Introduction:

Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education of Scheduled Tribes assumes added importance in the sense that it elevates their social status and equips them with the acumen to take advantage of the emerging opportunities, both in employment and other economic activities. Article 16 of the constitution enables the central Government to make special provisions for the socio-economic development of the deprived sections of the society to enable them to share the facilities at par with the rest of the society. Education is pivotal and foundational for any kind of socio-economic development. India is a welfare country, committed to the welfare and development of its people and of vulnerable sections in particular. The constitution of India envisages special protection for socially and economically deprived sections of the society for ensuring their rapid economic development and achieving equality with others. Provision of quality education is an important tool for empowering the weaker sections (<http://tribal.nic.in>).

The preamble, directive principles of state policy, fundamental rights and specific sections, viz., Articles 38, 39 and 46 in the constitution of India, stand testimony to the commitment of the state to its people. Socially disadvantaged groups of scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes have received special focus over the years for their social and economic advancement. Government has taken several steps for framing appropriate policies needed to design and implement various welfare programmers for achieving the objective of creating favorable environment to ensure speedy socio economic development of STs.

2. Background of the Scheme:

Government of India is providing financial assistance to various states for implementing schemes for the development of Scheduled Tribes. One of the schemes namely Government hostel for Schedule Tribe students, is being implemented since many years.

There is a need to evaluate the functioning of the hostel and other facilities provided in the hostel, periodically. Hence this study will reveal whether the scheme is implemented as per the objectives envisaged, if not how the scheme can be renewed or modified for the betterment of

the beneficiaries. Moto of the scheme is to "provide the higher education opportunity among the Schedule Tribe boys and girls".

3. Objectives of the Scheme:

The main objectives of the scheme are:

- to retain the boys & girl in school education so that Schedule Tribe students are not denied the opportunity to continue their study due to distance to school, parents' financial affordability and other connected societal factors; and
- to make secondary and senior secondary, higher education accessible to a larger number of Scheduled Tribe students (<http://mhrd.gov.in>).

4. Government Hostel Scheme for Tribal Students:

The scheme of Government hostels for the tribal girl students has been initiated at first time in third five year plan in the year 1989-90 separately. The scheme of hostels for Schedule Tribe students' has been started. Both the schemes were joined and new scheme, i.e., "Government hostels for Schedule Tribe boys /girls" has planned.

The objective of this scheme is to facilitate the tribal boys/ girls for secondary and higher education and their progress. To provide lodging, boarding, education and other required educational facilities to economically deprived student of a tribal family from remote area are the important objectives of this scheme. (Annual Tribal Sub-Plan -2012-13).

5. Research Methodology:

In the present study the researcher has used the descriptive type research in which survey method is adopted. The present study was conducted in 13 ST Government hostels for boys and girls in the area of the Rest of Maharashtra Statutory Development Board, Mumbai. The hostels selected for the purpose of the present study belong to 9 Districts (located in Maharashtra State), namely:

- Thane,
- Raigad,
- Pune,
- Nasik,
- Dhule,

- Naudurbar,
- Jalgaon,
- Ahmednagar, and
- Satara.

The Present study was conducted in Nasik and Thane ATC Blocks for study the educational development of ST students residing in Government hostels. According to the Annual Tribal sub - plan 2012-13, Tribal Development Department, Government of Maharashtra there are 471 hostels for ST students at the state level. The universe for the present research includes the 254 hostels. The sample for the present study will be 13 hostels (5% of the universe). In 2012, there were 24036 students residing in ST Government hostels. From the total of 254 hostels, 13 hostels were selected by using the random sampling frame (Information brochure 2011-12).

This study is sponsored by Rest of Maharashtra Statutory Development Board. Thane & Nasik ATC regions are included in the rest of Maharashtra statutory development board. Therefore, Thane and Nasik ATCs are chosen for this study as per the break up given below:

Table – 1: Total Number of Hostels Functioning in Regional Division

S. No.	Regional Division	Total no of Hostels functioning		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1	Nasik	107	69	176
2	Thane	50	36	86
	Total	157	105	262

6. Universe and Sample Size:

Out of 262 ST Government hostels for boys and girls functioning in the two regional divisions in the Maharashtra state as on date (<http://mahatribal.gov.in/>) only 13 hostels located in the Nasik & Thane regional division of state were selected. Thus, 262 of 5% that means only 13 hostels were selected which constitute a universe for the present study. Thus, the study is based on 13 ST hostels of the two regions selected under the coverage of study as under.

Table – 2: ST Government Hostels by Regional Division

S. No.	Regional Division	ST Government Hostels		Total
		Boys	Girls	
1	Nasik	5	4	9
2	Thane	2	2	4
	Total			13

7. Discussion:

Under this department in a hostels admitted students get stomach full lunch & dinner, breakfast, milk, boiled eggs for non vegetarian students, biscuits apples for vegetarian students. Along with this, non vegetarian food once in a week, salads once in a week is supplied. Under this scheme notebooks, books, educational material, residence etc. facilities are also provided at free of cost. Apart from this students are given monthly stipend to meet their miscellaneous needs.

Table – 3: Regional -Wise Division of ST Government Hostels Functioning & Admitted Students in Maharashtra State

S. No.	Regional Division	Total no of Hostels functioning			Admitted student		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	total
1	Nasik	107	69	176	13001	6780	19781
2	Thane	50	36	86	5426	2659	8085
3	Amravati	57	45	102	5485	3473	8958
4	Nagpur	65	52	117	5897	3569	8466
	Total	279	202	481	28809	16481	45290

(Source: Annual Tribal Sub-Plan -2012-13)

During the year 2013-14, Tribal Development Department is seeking online admission forms along with necessary documents on the website <http://tribal.maharashtra.gov.in> for the admissions in the boys and girls hostels and for the fulfillment of Indian Government scholarship & for the tuitions fee.

Table – 4: Level Wise Monthly Stipend Rate of ST Government Hostels

S. No.	Level of Hostels	Monthly stipend as per GR 1.11.2011
1.	For the student of Zone level Hostels	₹ 800/-
2.	For the student of District level Hostels	₹ 600/-
3.	For the student of Taluka level Hostels	₹ 500/-

(Source: Information brochure of Tribal Development Department Government of Maharashtra, Year 2011-12)

In respect of inmates (i.e. 1300 boys and girls), parents & opinion leaders were selected under the sampling frame. Minimum of five percent of population (262) of the total inmates (1300) were selected for interview. For the purpose of the research, the sample was drawn from 13 hostels. The categories of personnel interviewed from each ST Government hostel included: ST students residing in hostels, non-resident ST students, parents of resident and non-resident ST students, Opinion leaders, and NGO members.

8. Key Findings:

Key findings of the study are presented below:

- **Type of ST Hostel Building:** In most cases, over 53 per cent of ST hostels are run in private building, whereas 46 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that ST hostel are running in Government buildings. It is clear that majorities are private hostel buildings than Government hostel buildings.
- **Availability of Infrastructural Facilities in the ST Hostels:** A large majority (more than 65 per cent) of the hostels have facilities like 'water- aqua guard /earth run pot/filter/ pump/ bore well and clean drinking water'. 'Wash room facility', 'electricity ' and ' a security guard ', In about 100 per cent of the cases facilities like dining room, dining table , library were not available in the ST Government hostels and in about 85 per cent of the cases 'reception hall ,telephone, hot water, vacuum cleaner facilities were not available in the ST Government hostels. Over 15 percent of hostels had facilities such as talking wall, generator, first aid box, clock, mirror, cable as reported by the inmates.
- **Basic Facilities Available Per Room in the ST Hostels:** A large majority (about 90 per cent) of the inmates were 'satisfied' with electricity bulb /tube light,

fan, carpet, mattress and quilt facilities available in the room of the ST hostel, further, a majority (over 80 per cent) of the inmates were 'satisfied' with the Iron/steel bed, woolen blanket pillow, bucket facilities provided to the inmates in the ST hostel. In addition about 40 per cent of the inmates were 'satisfied' with the table, chair, cupboard and steel plate with compartments provided in the ST hostels. About 100 per cent of the inmates were 'not satisfied' with the Tiffin box with four compartment, in addition to this inmates responds like-well working condition, sufficient ,bad condition, and insufficient. *Furthermore*, over 58 per cent of the hostellers are 'satisfied' with the food provided in the hostel, about 53 per cent of the hostellers were 'satisfied' with the reading room facilities available in the hostel, and about 50 per cent of the hostellers were 'satisfied' with the recreational and medical facilities available in, the hostel. About 46 per cent of the hostellers were 'satisfied' with the visitor's room facility available in the hostel. Over 25 per cent of the inmates stated that 'mug, dustbin 'and cupboards were not available in the ST hostel. By and large the inmates were partially satisfied with the hostel facilities.

- **Additional Facilities provided by the Hostel for Girl Students:** Over 46.5 % respondents stated that a monthly period/menses record register is maintained in case of girl students. 294 goals (45.2 %) stated that the management maintains records to verify regularity. 234 (36.0 %) stated that extra allowances were for sanitary napkins/ cosmetics. On the other hand, 560 (86.15 %) were of the opinion that the management does not ensure "confidentiality of messages and letters" in case of girl students.
- **Major Problems faced by the Management:** According to the opinion of the warden/ hostel managements the major problems faced by them were irregularity of grants, in some cases private hostel building ,discipline related problem of inmates, safety and security of the inmates, and some problems relating to interference of local political leaders in the hostel affairs.
- **Impact of Stay in the ST Hostel on Students' Personal Life - Positive Impact:** Respondents felt that there was a positive impact mainly on physical, economic and social aspects. It was found that in almost all the cases the students perceived that their staying in the hostel had enriched their physical life by providing them physical security, fulfilling their basic physical needs, and improvement in their health status. The data also indicated that out of the total of 650 student, most (over 40 per cent) reported that their stay in the hostel improved their health & hygiene status, about 30 per cent of those student have reported that their stay in the hostel has helped them in fulfillment of them basic needs and about 29 per cent reported that the stay provided them with 'a more secure environment within the hostel.

Out of a total of 650 students, about 51 per cent of students perceived that their staying in the ST hostel helped to develop friendships. About 12 per cent of students perceived that their staying in the ST hostel helped them in developing more social contacts, about 9 per cent of the students reported that their staying in the ST hostel provided them a sense of social security, and about 5 per cent of the students have stated that their staying in the ST hostel improved their social and life skills ' and , The remaining 5 per cent of the students stated that their staying in the hostel Improved them prestige in the community. Over 17 percent of the students felt that staying in ST

hostel improved their participation in social and cultural activities

9. Conclusions and Recommendations:

Brief description of major conclusions and recommendations is presented below:

- The Tribal Development Department running Schedule Tribes Government hostels for boys and girls have by and large followed the standard norms prescribed by the Government of Maharashtra for provision of buildings, amenities and facilities in the ST hostels, appointment of hostel staff and the constitution of hostel management committees, maintenance of all necessary records and reservation policy in admission of the student
- It is observed that there is no regular inspection of the ST hostels either by the PO or ATC. The frequency of the visit on an average is 0.92 percent of the hostels were inspected so far by the inspection committees appointed by Tribal Development Department, Government of Maharashtra
- Majority of respondents (40 – 80.%) are satisfied with facilities provided to them in the ST hostel .However, they demanded more facilities like, aqua-guard for safe and pure drinking water, computer/laptop and Internet facilities
- About 56 percent of the students have selected that they face some problems during their stay in the ST hostel due to private hostel building .but majority (about 100 per cent) of the students are 'satisfied' with stipend facilities available in the hostel. However, they were not satisfied with medical facilities.
- Most (about 45 per cent) of the respondents have rated the overall food given to the respondents as 'good'. In over 50 per cent of the cases the inmates reported that they are give special food like chicken, 38 percent inmates reported that they were giving in mutton. By and large, the respondents have rated the overall food within the ST hostel as satisfactory.
- In almost (40%) of the cases the students reported that their stay in the ST Government hostels enriched their life as far as the physical, social and economic aspects are concerned. However, some of them also reported negative impact like feelings of loneliness, insecurity and restricted social contacts respectively.
- The relations between ST hostel authority and students (inmates) were reported to be good in about 90 per cent of the cases. Similarly the relations between hostel management and inmates and among the inmates were reported to be good in majority of the cases.
- The Opinion leaders & NGOs member were reported that the facilities in the ST Government Hostels were satisfactory butt not up the mark. These hostels were not properly maintained, the hostel buildings were on the rental basis & not in good condition, the quality of food served to the inmates was poor and there was no proper arrangement of health care for the inmates.
- The hostel authority working in the hostels complained that the staff strength was inadequate, some of them were temporary in service and their grievances were not heard.

10. Suggestions for Scheme Improvement:

Brief description on suggestions for scheme improvement is presented below:

- Functioning ST Government hostels are satisfactory. However, there is scope for further improvement in day-to-day management of these hostels. Hence, it is recommended that the authorities of the Department

of Tribal Development should pay at least two visits in a year and conduct an on - spot inspection of each hostel.

- Before starting any new ST hostel, authorities must ensure that they have all the necessary facilities like Government building with suitable environment, and required infrastructure. In addition, adequate funds should be made available on time. It is, therefore, suggested that the respective Department of State Governments should ensure that the required facilities are available, and only then sanction for the hostel should be accorded.
- Though most of the hostels have maintained proper record the funds, recurred expenditure on salaries, educational materials etc. records maintained are not uniform and are not updated in all the hostels. Hence, it is suggested that the format in which the records of acquired assets are maintained be prescribed by the Department of Tribal Development and authorities should pay surprise visits to the ST hostel
- It was observed during the visits that the department has not appointed sufficient staff necessary for day-to-day working of the hostels. As a result, the inmates have to suffer many problems. We, the research team, therefore, suggest that the concerned department should prescribe a uniform 'staffing pattern' based on the strength of inmates in the ST Government hostel. In addition, there is a lack of staff as per the requirement. There, is, thus, an urgent need to fill this gap in manpower.
- At the hostel level, there are various management committees constituted in majority of the hostels, but the average number of meetings conducted in a year is not adequate, i.e., around 2. It is necessary that the hostel management committees meet every month to review the regular working of the hostels, and also to finalize the minutes of the meeting.
- It is suggested that for proper and efficient functioning of the ST Government hostels, a yearly visit to every hostel by the Inspection Committee must be ensured. *Most importantly*, frequency of such visits should be 2 or more in a year, if the situation demands.
- The population of ST students is increasing every year. A large number of students have to find the accommodation in a town or city for pursuing higher education. The hostel is the safest place for them to stay. *However*, the present number of ST hostels is far less than the requirement. This was the scenario in all the districts covered by the study. The study team, therefore, suggests to the concerned authorities that the Department should sanction more ST hostel with all the required facilities.
- The study team has discovered that the existing hostel facility scheme is not suitable for students with disabilities and special needs. For instance, there are students with physical disabilities (e. g., blind students) who require specific infrastructure. This aspect requires "*urgent and special attention by the concerned officials*".

11. Strategic Interventions:

Presented below are strategic interventions required for the purpose of improving the situation of ST Hostels in Maharashtra State:

- ST Hostel should be started in Government owned building. Where ever it doesn't own any, the state Government should construct at war footing. This will solve many problems.
- More hostels should be established in areas where STs are concentrated.
- The sites for constructing ST hostel should be closer to the existing education institutions.
- There is shortage of space in the exiting hostels. Overcrowding should be avoided. This will help the students to concentrate on their studies. In case of sick students proper care can be given.
- The study materials should be distributed in time before the commencement of regular classes.
- The stipend fixed is not sufficient to meet incidental expenses. as the prices are going up continuously. Stipend should be raised by at least 10-15 percent every year.
- Nutrition is very important for the overall development of the children. Hence it is ensured that they are provided with sufficient nutritious food. In order to maintain quality of food regular quality check by an external authority be made mandatory.
- The computer room, internet connections etc are provided at a priority basis so that students will not suffer any more. This is needed to access the latest information available.
- The library maintenance is found to be very poor at all places. Some responsible person should be recruited to take care of this task books should be purchased at regular intervals.
- There needs to be proper co-ordination between Department of Tribal Development and other relevant Government Department (e.g., revenue, land, health, etc) for procuring land for the new hostel
- Only women wardens should be posted for women's hostel.
- Proper security must be provided to girls as well as boys in the hostels.
- A satisfactory mechanism for implementation of different guidelines, issued by the Tribal Department at the state level should be created.

12. Summing Up:

Functioning ST Government hostels are satisfactory. *However*, there is scope for further improvement in day-to-day management of these hostels. Hence, it is recommended that the authorities of the Department of Tribal Development should pay at least two visits in a year and conduct an on - spot inspection of each hostel. Before starting any new ST hostel, authorities must ensure that they have all the necessary facilities like Government building with suitable environment, and required infrastructure. In addition, adequate funds should be made available on time. To sum up, it is suggested that "*the respective Departments of State Governments should ensure that the required facilities are available, and only then sanction for the hostel should be accorded*".

REFERENCE

1. Annual Tribal Sub-Plan (2012-13) Tribal Development Department. Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai | 2. Chitnis Suma(2005)Educational problems of scheduled caste and schedule Tribe college student in Maharashtra. Department of Sociology TISS, Mumbai. | 3. George S, Naseem D. (2010) Hostel schemes for Dalit students: How inclusive and incentive oriented for higher education? Indian Institute of Dalit Studies. Working Paper Volume IV, <http://dalitstudies.org.in/wp> Retrieved 23/10/13 | 4. Government of India, Planning Commission (2007). Report of the Steering Committee on Empowering the Scheduled Tribes for the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007). Government of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi | 5. <http://mahatribal.gov.in/>, access on November 11, 2013. | 6. <http://tribal.nic.in/Content/CentrallySponsoredSchemeofHostelsforSTBoysandSTGirl>, access on October 08, 2013 | 7. http://mhrd.gov.in/girls_hostel on 17 December 2013 | 8. Information brochure of Tribal Development Department Government of Maharashtra, Year 2011-12. | 9. National Commission for Women (1996) Development of Health Facilities among women belonging to Scheduled Tribe Communities. National Commission for Women, New Delhi | 10. National Commission for Women (1998). Report on Tribal Women and Employment. National Commission for Women, New Delhi. | 11. Wakolkar D. M (2001-2) Evaluation of Working Women's Hostels in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Tirpude College of Social Work Civil Lines, Sadar, Nagpur.