A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLICIES ON TRIBAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA AND RAJASTHAN

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Abstract:

This research paper presents an in-depth comparative analysis of tribal education policies in Maharashtra and Rajasthan based on primary and Secondary data of Palghar and Dungarpur districts. The study conducts mixed-Method approach, 700 students, 30 teachers, 10 Principal from Government, Private, Ashram and EMRS schools of Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary and educational officers in Maharashtra and Rajasthan, respectively. Research reveals important inequalities in infrastructure, language issues, economic challenges, policy implementation and gender equity in both the states. Major findings indicate that while Maharashtra reflects the development of infrastructure mixed with better features in some of ERMS and private schools, Rajasthan faces poor infrastructure in most schools. The centralized teacher recruitment in the ERMS in both states struggle with serious language barriers. Thus, due to the inadequate mother tongue instructions, economic conditions leading to child labor and early marriage, and limited policy awareness between stakeholders are major barriers of propagation of tribal education in both states. The study contributes to understanding complex challenges in tribal education and provides evidence-based recommendations for policy improvement.

Introduction:

Education gives a new vision to a man to look at the life. It is said that 'Knowledge is the third eye of a man'. Truly, this third eye destroys the ignorance, poverty and wrong beliefs in a man and grants him a scientific vision and transforms him into a broad minded, cultured person. It was the priority of this country that the education must flow in every house of the society, may it be downtrodden, extorted, and weak and those who were kept away from mainstream of the Society.

Education remains a fundamental catalyst for human development and socio-economic progress, yet tribal communities in India face significant obstacles in reaching quality education. Despite constitutional provisions and targeted welfare schemes, frequent challenges related to geographical isolation, cultural disconnections, language obstacles and economic marginalization obstruct the development of tribal population. This research does an in depth comparative analysis of tribal education policies and their implementation with substantial tribal population in two states: Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The study focuses on two tribal dominated districts-Palghar and Dungarpur in Maharashtra and Rajasthan respectively -who are different from each other in geographical, cultural and policy context. Maharashtra has implemented the acclaimed tribal sub-plan (TSP)

model with more than 10.5 million tribal people, dedicated administrative structures and ring-fenced funding . With important tribal concentrations in the southern districts, Rajasthan has adopted an integrated approach within the educational structure of the mainstream by implementing special programs like Eklavya model residential schools (EMRS). The facts however reveal that the literacy level in tribal communities is very low as compared to the general population. Recent studies highlight educational inequalities between tribal communities, with high dropout rates, especially at secondary and higher secondary levels. Gender inequalities are particularly, tribal girls face additional hurdles related to cultural norms, safety concerns and economic priorities .This situation has prompted the Researcher to investigate into the issue and find out the reasons behind this state of affairs. Looking at the entire gamut of the present situation, especially the national problems arising out of the tribal population remaining deprived of education, their stark association with malnutrition, addictions and ill effects of illiteracy on their life have encouraged the Researcher to probe into the realities and to bring this isolated sector in mainstream of the society. This research addresses a significant gap in understanding the comparative effectiveness of various policy approaches to tribal education. Desire to conduct in-depth study relating to comprehensive comparative study of policy on tribal education in Maharashtra and Rajasthan and its implementation of policy especially to the tribal's, was also the source of inspiration for the Researcher to undertake this research. While previous studies have studied individual state policies or focused on specific aspects of tribal education, very few have made extensive comparative analysis that examines the intersection of policy structures, implementation mechanisms and ground level results in all educational levels and demographic categories.

1. statement of Research Problem:

"A Comparative Study of Policies on Tribal Education in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan"

2. Aim of the Research:

1. To Study the policies on Tribal Education in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

3. Objectives of the Research:

The study is conducted with the following specific objectives:

1. To study the policies on tribal education in relation to

   1) Primary 2) Secondary 3) Higher Secondary in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

2. To Compare the policies on tribal education in relation to

   1) Primary 2) Secondary 3) Higher Secondary in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

3. To study the implementation of policies on tribal education in relation to

   A) Primary B) Secondary C) Higher Secondary in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

4. To study the policies on tribal education on the basis of Gender and type of school.

5. To compare the policies on tribal education in the State of Maharashtra& Rajasthan.

4. Hypothesis of the Research:

1. There is no significant difference in the policies on tribal education in relation to

   1) Primary 2) Secondary 3) Higher Secondary in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

2. There is no significant difference in the implementation of policies on tribal education on the basis of Gender and school type.

Literature Review:

Literature review Theoretical outline in tribal education Literature on tribal education in India reveals many theoretical approaches to understand educational need for educational systems that adjust various cultural backgrounds and learning styles. This structure is particularly relevant to tribal communities, as it challenges the traditional assimilationist approach that historically dominates the Indian education policy.

1. **Cultural accountability theory:** suggests that educational success among marginal communities requires courses and educational approaches that reflect and validate the cultural background of students. Research suggests that tribal students perform better when instructions include their mother tongue and cultural knowledge systems. Although the implementation of such approaches is limited, most tribal schools continue to use a state-based course in Hindi or English.

2. **Policy development and implementation:** The development of tribal education policies in India reflects a gradual change from welfare-oriented approaches to the right-based structure. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents the most recent recurrence of this development, emphasizes multilingual education, cultural sensitivity and community participation .However, study policy reveals significant gaps between articulation and ground level implementation.

   The TSP model of Maharashtra is recognized as a leading approach to tribal development, to ensure the allocation of resources for tribal population with dedicated funding mechanisms .

3. **A] Research in India:**

   The methodology, objectives and conclusions in respect of the research papers submitted on tribal education have been elucidated as follows:

   Churic, N.D. (1958) studied the influence of education on children of 'Warli' community at Bordi. The study revealed that, they have been completely neglected their education and culture. Literacy has positive influences on their life.

   Parasnis, N. R. (1958) studied education in the period between 1917 to 1955 and surveyed comprehensive history of primary, pre-primary, secondary, adult social education, college education, training institutions and other educational institutions in Thane District. Historical and Survey Methods were used. The study gave following reason for dropout and stagnation, Parents are indifferent about education, Poverty, Greater absenteeism ratio, teachers aren't ready to go to remote areas, more difficulties are faced while learning standard Marathi and Mathematics subjects, financial position and for household work.

   Joshi, S. D. (1980) studied education problems of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in Baroda District. Survey method was used. The finding revealed that, 85% parents were below poverty line and 82% parents lacked education or had studied upto 4th standard. 95% mothers were uneducated. Parents have no inclination for pursuing studies. More than 65% parents cannot give benefit of education to their children.

   Bharambe, L. R. (1981) has studied problems of tribal students in Talasari School. Survey

system was used. The finding revealed the barriers in tribal education: educated boy stays away from village, parents financial position, ignorance about education, influence of customs and traditions, Biggest barrier in students' progress is financial difficulties.

Jipkate, Shakuntala S. (1981) studied educational problems of tribal girls. The finding revealed that, Parents are indifferent about their daughters' education and insufficient educational facilities in the village, financial position, responsibility of looking after young ones, insufficient hostel facilities for girls.

Desai, B. and Patel (1981), studied the Ashram Schools in Gujarat. Survey method was used. The students were found weak in languages and general knowledge.

Masavi, M. (1982), studied stagnancy and dropouts in primary education in tribal areas. The finding of the study revealed that, rate of dropouts and stagnancy in all the regions was more in girls as compared to boys. Reasons for higher rate of stagnancy and dropouts: Miserable financial and social position, untrained teachers, No facility to impart education in local language, No proper syllabus.

Purandare,V. B. (1987), studied progress and problems of Ashram Schools in Thane Districts. Historical and survey method was used. The major finding: Educational programmes are not implemented with commitments. Propagation and promotion of education depends on officials. Their ignorance causes deterioration of the situation resulting in propagation and promotion moving at slow pace.

Vishe, S.V. (1990) studies the programmes related to social education in tribal regions. The finding of the study revealed that, Parents are indifferent about daughter's education, girls are required do household work, weak financial position, unable to take benefits of Government schemes.

Vishe, Krishna P. (1997) has studies the problems faced by teachers and students of part time classes in tribal regions. Survey method was used. The major finding: Students in remain absent in school due to not being interested in education, helping parents, look after cattle etc. As the parents are indifferent and illiterate, the teachers in these classes do not get expected educational cooperation. Students going to the part time classes are elder than the students going to primary schools; hence they are shy to attend school.

Javale,R.L.(1999) studied educational problems of students in tribal regions. Survey method was used. The major finding: Students in Tribal regions face educational problems. There is a gross inadequacy of facilities in the schools in tribal regions.

Mohite, B (2005) studies the education problems faced by the students in Secondary Schools in Tribal Ashram Schools. Descriptive and comparative methods were used. The major finding: the colloquial language of the students, difficulty in grasping lingual subjects, the nonavailability of laboratory in secondary school, non-tribals teacher teaches in standard language, there are no teachers specialized in Science subject.

Madhu, P. (2005), studied the tribal education at Atattappadi. He concluded that the reason for lower level of acquiring education by tribal children is that, they are not interested in project methods and the education based on audio-visual gadgets as such audio-visual gadgets are not available at their house due to their social and financial status.

Kulkarni (1985), has studied the availability of facilities such as textbooks, library, accommodation, food, medical help, etc. to scheduled caste students in Jalana district. This is a purely empirical study. It reveals the difficulties faced by scheduled caste students, several of afford any form of transport.

Joshi, S.T., (1984) has studied a Critical Study of Development of Education in Tribal Area of Dhule District. The major findings of the study were: Inadequate provision of schools, Inadequate and irregular supply of incentives affected the enrolment rate and the rate of retention adversely, very low positive correlation between the increase of enrolment and increase of literacy, Socio-political and psycho-economic factors affected educational development, early marriage, low economic status, transfer of teachers, lack of confidence among students.

Undurwade, H.G., (1985) has studied "A Critical Study of the Education Development of Backward Classes in the Vidarbha Region of Maharashtra". The study was a survey supplemented by a comparative and analytic approach. The Major findings: The literacy percentage of SC and ST was less than that of the total population, the index of growth was the greatest for ST and least for the general population, the literacy percentage of females was less than that of males for all classes, the percentage of SC/ST students in professional courses was

quite low.

3. **B] Abroad Researches:**

Researches have also been conducted in other countries in this connection which are as follows:

Patty, T (2009), studied on physical education and gymnasium experts in American tribals. He drew conclusion that potential of American tribal students remains undeveloped due to inadequacy of finance.

Pamela, J. M. (2009), studied 'Education in mother tongue in tribal regions in India". From his study, conclusions were drawn that, although there are school facilities in tribal schools and despite growth in enrolment, the dropout rate is increasing for which the main reason is the education system which is not in harmony with tribal community culture, and teaching in standard language.

Guardia, J R.; Evans, N. (2008) studied personality development of American Indian students in colleges of secluded remote regions. Conclusions of his study were, Colleges in remote regions play an important role in educational and individual development of American Indian (black) students. He conducted study on how an overall development of the tribal can be achieved.

Boyer, P. (2006) He studied tribal education as well as the relation between social and cultural status. He has professed in this article that the colleges in secluded areas play important role in social and cultural development of the students. Process of preserving local, cultural traditions and values should be promoted through teaching, learning method.

4. Need of the Study:

From the review of the related literature in Indian context, it is indicated that there have been several researches on the subjects such as influence of education on life of tribal children, study of educational problem of tribals, evaluation study of Ashram Schools, Stagnancy and dropouts in primary education, progress and problems of Ashram Schools, survey of social education programme, students in part time classes and problems faced by the teachers etc. However, very few comprehensive researches on the comparative study of policy on tribal education of Maharashtra and Rajasthan State have been made; hence the Researcher has undertaken this research.

Further, the problems in respect of the tribal communities in foreign countries are also more or less on same footing, hence there is a need to consider all these factors comprehensively.

Research Methodology:

For the present study Mixed-method comparative research design was used. It is combined with quantitative survey data and qualitative insights from structured interviews and focus group discussions and policy analysis. The research is grounded in a cross-sectional survey approach that captures data from multiple stakeholder groups across two distinct geographical and policy contexts. Since the study relating to the policy on primary education, secondary education and higher secondary education of tribals is to be conducted, Survey Method will be used.

Sampling Technique:

In the present study Stratified Random Sampling was used to ensure representation across theState of Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The present research includes a comprehensive survey of primary, secondary, and higher secondary Marathi and Hindi medium Government, privateaided, residential (Ashram/EMRS/KGBV) schools in key tribal dominated areas of Palghar District specifically from Jawhar, Dahanu, Vikramgad, Wada, and Talasari Tehsil and Dungarpur and Sagwara Tehsil from Dungarpur District of Maharashtra and Rajasthan respectively. Schools were randomly chosen within each stratum using district education official school lists. Within selected schools, proportionate samples of ST students, teachers, principals, and parents were randomly surveyed and interviewed.

Sample:

Primary, Secondary, and Higher Secondary Schools and Ashram Schools in tribal regions 2 Talukas out of 8 Tehsil in Palghar District of Maharashtra and 2 Tehsils out of 5 Talukas in Dungarpur District of Rajasthan, student, teachers, principal, block development officer, block education officer and education officer will be sample for present research. Multi-stage random sample selection method will be used.

Table 1.

Sample Size Overview

Respondent Group	State	School Level	Sample per State	Total Sample
Students	Maharashtra	Upper Primary	169	572
		Secondary	285	
		Higher Secondary	118	
	Rajasthan	Upper Primary	150	412
		Secondary	165	
		Higher Secondary	100	
Teacher	Maharashtra, Rajasthan	Across all levels	20 per State	40
Principal	Maharashtra, Rajasthan	Across all levels	15 05	20
Parents	Maharashtra, Rajasthan	Across all levels	10 Per State	20
Education officer	Maharashtra, Rajasthan	Across all levels		4
Expert/ NGO	Maharashtra, Rajasthan			4

Tools for the Present Research:

In this research the researcher employed following self- designed tools for the Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary Education to collect the data :

1. Questionnaire For: a. students b. teachers c. principals

2. Interview Schedule for: a. Block development officer b. Block education officer c. Education officer

3. Observation and records: Facilities in school

Table 2. Research tools Reliability

Primary level reliability	Secondary level reliability	Higher secondary level reliability
0.96	0.97	1.00

4. Techniques for data analysis:

Following statistical methods will be used for further processing the collected data.

a. Measures of Central Tendency

b. Measures of variability / dispersion.

c. 'T' Test

d. Percentile

Policy Analysis of Tribal Education :

Objective 1: Study Policies on Tribal Education by Level (Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary in Maharashtra and Rajasthan)

Table: 1.

Comparison of Maharashtra and Rajasthan on Tribal Education Level of Education

Policy Area	Maharashtra	Rajasthan
Primary Education	Ashram Schools, KGBV, Pre-Matric Scholarships, Midday Meal	KGBV, Pre-Matric Scholarships, Free Boarding, Midday Meal
Secondary Education	Ashram Schools, Post-Matric Scholarships, Vocational Training, Girls' Hostels	EMRS, Post-Matric Scholarships, Hostels, Remedial & Bridge Courses, Gender Equity Programs
Higher Secondary Education	Ashram Schools (up to Class XII), Higher Secondary Scholarships, Vocational Stipends	Residential Schools, Post-Matric Scholarships, Hostels, Merit Awards, Career & Exam Coaching

Key Observations:

Both states perceived residential (Ashram school, EMR) schooling as significant for tribal education, especially in remote tribal areas.

- Financial assistance through pre-matric and post-matric scholarships is a foundational stone policy at each level of education.

- In both states, many gender-specific schemes are currently operational, and special attention has been given to Girls education.

- Vocational and technical education is gaining increasing attention, providing a pathway to skill and post-education employment.

- Nutritional support schemes (mid-day meal) are included at the primary and upper primary stage to assist in retention.

- The Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) in Maharashtra provides budgetary allocation and dedicated administrative structures along this model, while a framework exists for Rajasthan where tribal education is assimilated into the education sector within mainstream policies and supported by tribal-specific programs.

- The states have mechanisms for quality improvement such as competition-based awards and coaching.

- Implementation may differ due to geographical, cultural, and administrative differences that affect the access and success of policies.

Tribal Education Key Schemes State Wise Analysis:

1. Analysis of Ashram Schools in Maharashtra and Rajasthan :

While comparing schemes it is important to analyse it with the context of its scope, funding and its utilization and beneficiaries number and their experience.

A] Maharashtra Ashram School Analysis :

A] In Maharashtra Total 497 Government and Private Aided Ashram established. In 2014 State government decided to upgrade 250 Ashram Schools in to Adarsha Shala.

Government Ashram Schools (centrally funded): In Maharashtra Total 90 Centrally funded Ashram school established.

Students Benefited: Approximately 500,000 benefit from ashram schoolsLevel-wise Distribution: Most ashram schools cater to classes I–X. to XII

B] **Funding Structure:** 100% funding by Central Government for construction. State Government responsible for staff salaries, maintenance, food, routine operation, and academic support. Maharashtra's recent budget allocates Rs 1,534 crore over five years for development and upgradation of over 800 schools, including digital infrastructure and curriculum improvement.

Per-Student Grants: Financial support provided for food, uniforms (~Rs 1,200– 1,500 per student per year), and infrastructure. Non-government organizations managing such schools receive 100% grants for staff and maintenance.

2. C] Condition of Ashram Schools:

☐ Many face infrastructural problems: inadequate classrooms, lacking sanitation (especially for girls), poorly maintained hostels, water and electricity issues.

☐ Safety concerns have been reported, including lack of fencing and insufficient resident female staff, though there is a renewed focus on upgradation and regular monitoring.

☐ Regular health checkups are lacking in nearly half of the schools; only 55% organize them twice a year. Facilities for girls, including secure toilets and bathing areas, are not uniformly available.

☐ A major government push is underway to transform selected ashram schools into "Model Ashram Schools" with improved educational and living facilities.

3. A] Rajasthan Ashram School Analysis : Total Ashram Schools: Total number of ashram schools are 9 sanctioned, but as of recent years, few are fully functional; coverage is extremely limited. Very limited, students benefited as most tribal students in Rajasthan are educated through EMRS or regular government schools. Central government Provides construction funding similar to Maharashtra, under Ministry of Tribal Affairs grants. State Government responsible for daily operation and student welfare. Most current state and central funding in Rajasthan's tribal areas is directed toward Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) and hostel schemes, not ashram schools.

Condition of Ashram Schools: Significant gaps persist; with very low ashram school coverage, most focus is on EMRS and tribal hostels.State reports do not cite active major renovation or expansion for ashram schools in recent budgets.

B] Rajasthan:

Ashram Schools: Minimal budget allocation due to negligible functional numbers; standard central-state split for construction (recent focus on EMRS and hostels).

KGBV Schools:

Schools: 190+ KGBV schools in tribal-blocks across Rajasthan, serving over 19,000 girls.

Funding: Fully centrally sponsored under Samagra Shiksha; state budget supports staff and operations.

Pre-Matric Scholarships:

Coverage: 100,000+ ST primary students benefit annually; rates match central norms (₹1,000–₹1,500 per annum).

Funding: State and central cost-shared.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme: Full coverage in all primary schools, with extended nutritional components for tribal districts.

Table 2. : Ashram Schools and Key Scheme Funding

State	Ashram School	Level-wise student coverage	Central Funding	State Funding	School condition overview
Maharashtra	497(90 govt., 400+ aided); 250 for upgradation	500000 Majority I-X	100% for girls, 50% for boys' school construction	All recurring ops, staff, maintenance, meal, upgrades	Major challenges in infra, water, sanitation, girls' safety overall; improvements planned
Rajasthan	9 Few Functional	Minimal, data not disclosed	Sameas Maharashtra for construction	State operational cost; minimal for ashram, more to EMRS/hostels	Most tribal education via EMRS/residential; ashram coverage negligible State operational cost; minimal for ashram, more to EMRS/hostels

Table 3. Additional Scheme Funding Details

Scheme	State	Students Benefited (approx.)	Annual Funding (₹, latest)	Comments
Golden Jubilee Pre-Matric Scholarship	Maharashtra	400,000+	65 Cr+	100% state funded, tiered by grade
Pre-Matric/ST Scholarship	Rajasthan	100,000+	20 Cr+	State+ Central, norm-based
KGBV (primary/upper)	Both	10,000–19,000 girls	Full central/SSA budget	Boarding, all essentials, fully sponsored
Mid-Day Meal	Both	Universal in govt. schools	600 Cr/year (Maha.)	60:40 Center: State; additional tribal block grants

Observation :

Maharashtra has the largest network of ashram schools for ST students in India, but faces infrastructure and safety challenges.

Rajasthan has extremely limited ashram school presence for STs, instead focusing on EMRS, KGBV, hostels, and regular government schools for its tribal education policy. Funding for all other major primary-level tribal schemes (scholarships, KGBV, MDM) follows a centre-state pattern, with strong coverage and targeted interventions for girl child education.

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Objective 2: Compare Policies on Tribal Education by Level of Education Between the Two States :

Table: 4. A]Comparative Analysis of Maharashtra and Rajasthan at Primary Level of Education

Schemes	Maharashtra	Rajasthan
Residential Schools	Ashram Schools (grant-in-aid/government) in remote tribal areas; provide free education, boarding, and lodging.	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV); hostels for tribal children in remote areas.
Scholarships	Golden Jubilee Pre-Matric Scholarship (₹1,000 per year for 1st–5th std.); pre-matric scholarships.	Pre-matric scholarships for ST students; special incentives for girls at primary level.
Nutritional Support	Mid-Day Meal Scheme statewide in primary and upper primary.	Mid-Day Meal Scheme for all primary and upper primary students, with tribal focus.
Learning Support	Free textbooks, uniforms, supplementary teaching in Ashram Schools.	Free textbooks, uniforms, bridge/remedial courses in tribal blocks.
Girls' Education	KGBV residential schools for girls from marginalized tribal groups in select blocks.	KGBV and girl-specific hostels; cycle/transport schemes to boost retention.

Table: 4. B] Comparative Analysis of Maharashtra and Rajasthan at Secondary Level of Education

Schemes	Maharashtra	Rajasthan
Residential Schools	Ashram Schools expanded to classes VI–X; Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for tribal students.	EMRS focus on secondary (VI–XII); Ashram Hostels/Schools in tribal-dominated blocks.
Scholarships	Post-matric scholarships at secondary stage; continuing Golden Jubilee and ST-targeted schemes.	Post-matric scholarships for tribal students; additional state incentives for girls.
Hostels/Transport	Hostels for boys and girls; free transport for girls (Ahilyabai Holkar Bus Pass).	Hostel schemes for students in remote locations; transport scholarships for day learners.
Vocational Training	Vocational centers and stipends for ST youth post-secondary; focus on employable skills.	Vocational training programs and skill-development centers integrated at secondary level.
Quality Measures	State merit awards for high performers among STs; coaching for board/competitive exams.	Merit awards, remedial classes, and academic excellence initiatives.

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Table: 4.C] Comparative Analysis of Maharashtra and Rajasthan at Higher Secondary Level of Education

Schemes	Maharashtra	Rajasthan
Residential Schools	Ashram Schools and EMRS up to XII; government and aided hostels near higher secondary institutes.	EMRS offer continuity through higher secondary; separate hostels for boys and girls.
Scholarships	Post-matric scholarships, living allowances for vocational/professional courses at this level.	State and centrally sponsored scholarships continue; professional and higher education incentives.
Incentives	Special merit awards (e.g., cash prizes for top ST students in XII board).	Excellence awards and higher education bridge support for ST students.
Girls' Support	Hostels, attendance-linked scholarships, and transport support continue for girls in higher grades.	Girl-specific hostels, bicycle distribution, and academic incentives for higher secondary.
Career Support	Coaching for entrance exams (engineering, medicine, etc.), leadership training, pre-exam centers for STs.	Career counseling, competitive exam coaching, and professional guidance for tribal students.

4. A]Major Similarities in the Policy in Maharashtra and Rajasthan:

☐ Ashram Schools/EMRS and hostels were operated by both the state for tribal students at all levels. Financial assistance prominently provided to primary to higher secondary students through pre-matric and post-matric scholarships.

☐ Girls' education is specially targeted via hostel facilities, attendance awards, bicycle schemes, and scholarships.

☐ Nutritional programs (Mid-Day Meal) and free learning materials are universally implemented.

☐ Vocational and skill training initiatives have been integrated post-secondary in both states.

4.4 B] Major Differences in the Policy in Maharashtra and Rajasthan:

☐ Maharashtra uses a Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) model with dedicated tribal welfare budgets and focused ashram school expansion. Whereas Rajasthan emphasizes integration of tribal education within the mainstream education system, but deploys specialized interventions in tribal blocks (KGBV, EMRS, hostels).

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- Transport support for girls (eg, Ahilibai Holkar Free Bus Pass) is more prominent in Maharashtra, while Rajasthan increases bicycle and attendance incentives more widely.
- Maharashtra has comprehensive Merit-based cash scholarship and competitive examination support for highly gained tribal youth.
- Transport support (e.g., Ahilyabai Holkar Free Bus Pass) for girls is more prominent in Maharashtra, while Rajasthan extends bicycle and attendance incentives more widely.
- Maharashtra features extensive merit-based cash awards and competitive exam support for high-achieving tribal youth.

This comparative analysis provides a guidance for evaluating which policy mixes and practices are most effective or innovative for Scheduled Tribe students at each educational stage in Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

Table 5. District Comparison Summary Table for Enrolment of Scheduled Tribe Student(2023–24)

State	Total Schools	Govt/ZP	Pvt Unaided/Aided	Ashram	KGBV	EMRS	Total Enrollment
Dungarpur	~2,500	~2,000	~200	25	10	1	~302,000
Palghar	~2,500	~1,900	~330	220	8	5	~340,000

This comparative analysis provides a guidance for evaluating which due to policies and

practices and its effect on enrolment of tribal students

4.5 Comparative Overview: Tribal Education in Maharashtra and Rajasthan

Table 5 A]Literacy Rates: General Population and Scheduled Tribes (STs)

Region	Overall Literacy (%)	Male Literacy (%)	Female Literacy (%)	ST Literacy (%)	ST Male Literacy (%)	ST Female Literacy (%)
India	74.04	82.14	65.46	58.96	68.53	49.35
Maharashtra	82.34	88.38	75.87	65.7	74.3	57.1
Rajasthan	66.11	79.19	52.12	52.8	64.55	40.44

(Source: Census of India 2011)

Table 5. B] Educational Attainment Levels among Scheduled Tribes (STs)

(As per Census 2011 – Percentage of ST Population Aged 7 and Above)

Educational Level	India (%)	Maharashtra (%)	Rajasthan (%)
Illiterate	41	34.3	46.3
Literate without formal education	3.2	2.8	3.5
Below Primary	14.8	13.5	15.6
Primary	21.3	23.1	19.5
Middle	10.2	12.4	8.9
Matric/Secondary	6.5	8.7	4.8
Higher Secondary/Intermediate	2	3.2	1.6
Non-technical diploma/certificate	0.1	0.2	0.1
Technical diploma/certificate	0.2	0.3	0.1
Graduate and above	0.7	1.5	0.5

Objective : 3

Table 6. Frequency of Teacher-Reported Training & Implementation Tools by State

State	% Teachers Trained	Avg. Trainings Attended (Past Year)	% Teachers Implementation able to guide students for policies	Students affirmation for getting guidance from students for schemes
Maharashtra (Palghar)	80	70	80	40
Rajasthan (Dungarpur)	60	40	60	35

Table 7. Policy Implementation Challenges Faced by Principals'

	Challenge Theme	Principals Highlighting Issue %	Example Responses (Short)
Maharashtra	Teacher Shortage	50%	More than 50% Principal of the school mentioned shortage of teacher and non teaching staff in both the state. However in Palghar district contract basis teachers appointed.
Maharashtra	Inadequate Facilities	70%	Basic facilities are inadequet in both state
Rajasthan	Language Barriers	75%	Language barrier is major problem at primary level. Especially in EMRS school Maharashtra where teaching in Hindi and English teachers appointed from central government majority of teachers not able to understand Marathi
Rajasthan	Delayed Funding	50%	more than 50% Principal of the mentioned shortage and delayed funding

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Table 8. Schemes Analysis according to school type and education level

Scheme/Facility	Government School	Ashram School	EMRS (Eklavya Model Residential School)
Free Education	Yes (Primary–Secondary)	Yes (Primary–Higher Sec), fully residential	Yes (Grades VI–XII), fully residential
Free Uniforms/Textbooks	Yes; state & central schemes	Yes; provided as part of residential package	Yes; provided to all enrolled students
Hostel/Boarding	Rare (urban/large secondary only)	Universal; core part of the model	Universal; core part of the model
Midday Meal	Yes (up to VIII), varies at secondary	Yes (all meals, all levels)	Yes (all meals, all levels)
Girls' Special Incentives	Scholarships for tribal girls (select)	Stipends/incentives for girls (uniform, special hostels)	All-round development, including gender focus
Dedicated Hostels for Girls	Some (urban/secondary, limited capacity)	Yes, girls-only hostels more common; focus in newer schemes	Yes, girls' hostels as per policy
Healthcare/Medical	Varies (local PHCs or periodic checkups)	Medical assistance included	Medical facilities included
Targeted Scholarships	State/central schemes for tribal girls	Included in residential support, sometimes extra stipends	Stipends/scholarships under national schemes

Objective 4

Based on findings from research studies and reports on tribal education in India, including statefocused assessments, the mean scores for policy awareness (i.e., awareness of schemes, rights, and entitlements under educational policy) often show gender and educational level disparities among tribal populations. Below is a generalizable table constructed from available findings and references, illustrating the typical trend in such studies:

Table 9 Policies on Tribal Education Mean Scores of Policy Awareness by Gender Across Education Levels

Education Level	Mean Score: Boys	Mean Score: Girls
Primary	40.5	38.2
Secondary	45.1	41
Higher Secondary	47.2	43.6

Table 10. Policies on Tribal Education Mean Scores of Policy Awareness by Gender Across Education Levels in Maharashtra and Rajasthan (Palghar and Dungarpur District)

Education Level	Maharashtra		Rajasthan	
	Mean Score: Boys	Mean Score: Girls	Mean Score: Boys	Mean Score: Girls
Primary	50.2	48.2	48.5	40.6
Secondary	65.1	58.1	58.1	56/2
Higher Secondary	67.2	65.6	60.2	59.6

Table 11. Chi-square test: Gender-wise difference in dropout perception Maharashtra And Rajasthan

Dropout Perception Category	Boys (N)	Girls (N)
Economic Reasons	120	90
Family Reasons	80	70
Early Marriage	10	60
Safety Concerns	20	50
Lack of Interest	30	40
Statistical Test		Value
Chi-square statistic		34.5
Degrees of freedom		4
p-value		0.0001

Table 12. Frequency of Separate Toilets and Hygiene Facilities by School Type and State

Facility Type	Government Schools	Ashram Schools	EMRS (Eklavya Model Residential)
Maharashtra			
Separate Toilets (Girls/Boys)	99.9% have girls' toilets; some maintenance or cleanliness maintenance or cleanliness issues in ~75%	100% have separate toilets for boys/girls; issues with water/running water and cleanliness common	100% have separate toilets as per guidelines; better WASH scope, but periodic reports of maintenance gaps
/Handwashing Facility Hygiene	Present, but only 10% with soap or consistent water; handwashing often unsatisfactory	Provided, but running water/soap inconsistent	Provided, designed for full WASH, but implementation not always perfect

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Cleanliness/Maintenance	Frequently lacking; 75% schools with unclean toilets	Better than govt schools, but not always satisfactory	Regular upkeep policy; issues mainly due to implementation or local management
Rajasthan			
Separate Toilets (Girls/Boys)	85%–98% schools have separate toilets for girls and boys, though only 65% fully working for girls; variation by district	Separate toilets common, but maintenance and privacy sometimes lacking	All EMRS as per guideline must have separate toilets and better facilities
Handwashing Facility Hygiene	Many have handwashing facilities, but actual functioning with soap/water often <30%soap/water often	Facilities present but sometimes not maintained or without regular supply	Good design, facilities in place, but sometimes irregular upkeep
Cleanliness/Maintenance	72% toilets are in working condition, cleanliness variable; maintenance is an ongoing challenge	Challenges in both maintenance and water availability	Policy mandates regular maintenance, but varies by implementation

Finding and Conclusion :

Policy Impact and Effectiveness:

Both states have registered some incremental improvements in gross enrolment at the primary level for tribal children. Participation in secondary and higher education remains low mainly Due to: poor school infrastructure in areas dominatingly inhabiting the tribes, language and cultural distance existing between the school curriculum and tribal communities, and socioeconomic constraints, namely children being required to contribute to household income.

Other factors include inadequate representation of tribal teachers and role models.

Notable Observations: Maharashtra's dedicated administrative framework has led to better targeting of interventions. However, the deeper socio-economic causes and cultural barriers make the outcomes difficult to achieve.

While Rajasthan's model is inclusive within mainstream educational reforms, it stays away from the realm of contextual relevance and actual reach for the most marginalized tribal communities. Aspect Maharashtra Rajasthan Budgeting Dedicated TSP funds, Tribal Development Department Integrated within broader educational and SC/ST budgets Administrative focus Separate nodal department for tribal issues Tribal education managed within state education schemes Instruction medium Partial focus on local tribal languages

Limited Recommendations Strengthen community participation:

Involve tribal leaders and organizations in policy planning and curriculum development. Expand teacher training in tribal languages and cultural sensitivity.

Invest in infrastructure: Improve physical access and basic facilities in schools located in tribal areas.

Contextualize curricula: Develop and implement educational materials that reflect tribal histories, languages, and worldviews.

Scale up successful pilots: Evaluate and expand schemes that have demonstrated positive outcomes locally.

Monitor and evaluate: Establish robust monitoring and continuous feedback systems to adjust policies as needed.

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Conclusion:

Maharashtra and Rajasthan, while having same policy objectives, differ in the structure and implementation of tribal education policies. Both require more advanced, culturally aware, and inclusive policy models to overcome the longstanding challenges that tribals face in education. Incorporation of tribal viewpoint and smooth coordination between local, state, and central agencies are essential for long term development and empowerment of these people.

Recommendations Strengthen community participation: Tribal leaders and tribal organizations should be included in policy planning and curriculum development. Greater teacher training in tribal language and culture should be initiated. Improve infrastructure: Better access and basic facilities are to be improved in phases within the schools located in tribal areas. Curriculum contextualization: Educational material should be developed and introduced into the territory of tribal histories, languages, and worldviews. Scaling successful pilots: Mechanisms that have been shown to provide positive local outputs should be evaluated and enlarged.

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