

Education level, Occupational Aspirations in Mining Affected Districts

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ABSTRACT

This paper covers education interventions in two Mining Affected Districts of India, Betul (Madhya Pradesh) and West Singhbhum (Jharkhand), through District Mineral Foundation under various programs run there but altogether lack of innovation and more bureaucracy restrict effective interventions in education sector. Eventually, occupational aspirations among youths of these districts are more towards government jobs, and they have less interest in entrepreneurship and economic aspects. Proper utilization of mining area funds can help in enhancement of education level in these districts, fear of government officials in innovation failure, less power to decentralized bodies in reality and many more problems at district level to be catered properly so that the Education Level of Mining Districts of India will enhanced as compared to other developed districts. prevention, and intervention models should be urgently developed by the government, health care personnel, and Education in India is being provided by both the sectors -public and private; however, financial controls and supervisions are under the central, state and local government. Constitution of India provides free and compulsory elementary education as a fundamental right to children between the ages of 6 and 14. The rationale behind such a provision was to make all the citizens of the country literate so that they could become productive members of society.

KeyWords: Mining, Occupational Aspiration, Intervention model, Mineral Foundation

From 1995, Mid-day meal provisions were made to boost to Universalization of Elementary Education for increasing enrolment, retention and attendance in primary classes by supplementing nutritional requirements of children attending primary schools¹. Though, there were pros and cons in this scheme, unlike other schemes, it has supported a lot in enrolment of students at the elementary level, however, quality and education and learning level of students was always a matter of debate. The pandemic due of COVID 19, when classroom teaching suffered a lot and digital education escalated at individual and community level, this scheme helped poor families to feed their children through cash transfer and groceries at door step. However, millions of children are still out of school, a majority are from marginalized communities including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and religious minority groups. Challenges remain because most of the children who are in school are not learning at grade appropriate levels. Low quality teaching and learning practices are also the cause of lower school attendance and children drop out.

The expansion in the field of professional education has been phenomenal since globalization and liberalization in the country and enough opportunity for private sector to play is remarkable. There is a rising awareness of the importance of knowledge as the propeller of the new economic order in the globalized world. The economies of the world are getting integrated and are mainly knowledge driven. The transition to a knowledge-based society requires a continuous supply of professionally skilled human resources. The economic growth of India has boosted a lot to the metropolitan students; but rural resource-poor parts of our country such as mining affected areas haven't created interest in the youths to get professional education.

Metals are extracted from their ores, Indians had been conscious about the presence of these minerals in our ancient literature too, but there isn't much effort being done to procure them. The history of mineral extraction in India dates back to the days of the Harappan civilization. Extraction of minerals started post-independence in our country.² The wide availability of the minerals provides a base for the growth and development of the mining sector in India. The country is endowed with huge resources of many metallic and non-metallic minerals. Mining sector is an important segment of the Indian economy. Since independence, there has been a pronounced growth in the mineral production both in terms of quantity

and value. India produces 95 minerals, which include 4 fuels, 10 metallic, 23 non-metallic, 3 atomic and 55 minor minerals. The total value of mineral production (excluding atomic & fuel minerals) during 2019-20 has been estimated at Rs.1,23,588 crore in which metallic minerals is Rs. 60,822 crore or 49.21% of the total value and non-metallic minerals including minor minerals is Rs. 62,766 crore or 50.79% of the total value³. Though these mining areas have provided significant inputs in Indian economic development, however, local dwellers of these areas have failed to excel as it was desired.

Government of India has introduced reforms to open up the mineral sector to ensure its contribution in achieving the national policy goals. Major reforms include enactment of the Mines and Mineral (Development & Regulations) (MMDR) (Amendment) Act, 2015. Here, District Mineral Foundation (DMF) was instituted through an amendment under India's central mining law—the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act (1957) — with a precise objective to 'work for the interest and benefit of people, and areas affected by mining-related operations. Conceptualized about a decade ago to address the ironic inequality in India's mining districts, where the richest lands are inhabited by some of the country's poorest and most deprived, DMF came into effect to eradicate this inequality and ensure socio-economic and environmental justice to these people.

District Mineral Foundation (DMF) is a trust set up as a non-profit body, in districts affected by the mining works, to bring about change in the lives of the people living in these mining affected areas. It is funded through the contributions from mineral royalty. Its manner of operation comes under the jurisdiction of the respective State Government. Further, recognizing that people's relevance and participation lies at the core of this institution, the objective and functioning of DMF has been tied to three primary laws of the land — the constitutional provisions as it relates to Fifth and Sixth Schedules for governing tribal areas, the provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996, and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006—in short the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Under this scheme, Rs. 40,998 crores have been collected as on 28 Oct 2020. More than 1,30,000 projects have been sanctioned under PMKKKY.

The PMKKKY has mandated 60% of the funds to be utilized for High Priority Areas, such as (i) Drinking water, (ii) Environment preservation and pollution

control, (iii) Health care, (iv) Education, (v) Skill development, (vi) Welfare of women, children, aged and disabled people, & (vii) Sanitation and 40% of the funds to be utilized for (i) Infrastructure - Roads & physical infrastructure, (ii) Irrigation & (iii) Watershed development. It is expected that the projects implemented under PMKKKY will help create a congenial mining environment, ameliorate the condition of the affected persons, and create a win-win situation for the stakeholders.

High Priority Sectors



Other Priority Sectors



To know the level of education in Mining Areas, a study of two districts was conducted, Betul (Madhya Pradesh) and West Singhbhum (Jharkhand) with their DMF interventions. They are mineral rich and tribal dominated districts.

Betul District is a part of Madhya Pradesh, a central state of India, it is situated between 21°22' and 22°23' N and 77°10' and 78°33' E on the Satpura plateau. The total area of the district is 10,043 sq.km. The district occupies 4th rank within the state in terms of area. The district extends to about 161 km. District has 10 Development Blocks and 556 Gram Panchayats. According to the 2011 census, the literacy rate of the district is 68.9 per cent and it is positioned at 15th rank in the state. Almost 65 villages of the district don't have primary school. Primary Schools-2119, Middle Schools- 1072, High Schools- 197, Ashram Schools-37, professional institutes-4 and more than 8-degree colleges are operational here to deliver education. PTR is 39, however, in Ghoradongri block and interior of Shahpur blocks PTR is more than 40, and absenteeism of teacher, due to their personal and sometime official matters impact the delivery of education and its quality to the students.

Colleges of Betul district were initially a part of Sagar University till 1995-96, thereafter they have been shifted to Barkatullah University for geographical criteria, however after 17th June 2020, after notification of Chhindwara University almost all colleges and more than 31 thousand students of Betul enrolled by transfer here, fortunately there are opportunities for innovation in the curriculum as per the need and local context. However, nothing could be done in this line.

West Singhbhum district, located in the south part of Jharkhand, is the largest district in the state in terms of geographic area. The district covers an area of 7,224 square kilometers (or 7,22,400 ha). It lies between 21°58" and 23°36" north latitude and 85°0" and 86°54" east longitude. District has 19 Development Blocks and 1069 Gram Panchayats.

The literacy rate of West Singhbhum district is 58.6 per cent, which is lower than the state's average of 66.4 per cent. Among the literate population, male literacy (nearly 71 per cent) is better than the female literacy (about 46.2 per cent). However, for the marginalized sections, the literacy rate is poor. Literacy rate is about 63.7 per cent for SC and about 53.4 per cent for ST population. The number of elementary schools are considerably high as compared to secondary and higher secondary schools, are needed more, as a per number of students available in the district.

Only 50 per cent secondary schools across all the blocks have the required number of classrooms. In mining-affected areas such as Noamundi and Manjhari, only about 40 per cent of schools have SCR less than 30. In Jhinkpani the situation is particularly stack, where only 12.5 per cent of secondary schools meet the Student classroom ratio (SCR) benchmark. The situation worsens for secondary schools where on an average over 70 per cent of the schools do not have adequate teachers.

The coverage of tap water facilities in schools in most rural mining-affected areas is merely around two per cent, a key concern for children's health. In Jhinkpani and Manjhari, none of the schools have tap water facilities.

For Higher Education, Kolhan University was established in 2009 with 14 Constituent Colleges and 12 Affiliated Colleges in East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum and SeraikelaKharswan Districts with more than 80,000 students strength. The University is in the area of tribal region. The Kolhan University has achieved

many milestones by offering many job oriented course, examination pattern for enhancing skill development, but many more things are needed to be done to reach greater heights and enviable grade. Gyan Chand Jain Commerce Collage, Chaibasa, Jawahar Lal Nehru College, Chakradharpur, Tata College, Mahila Collage Chaibasa played a significance role in developing occupational aspirations of college going students here.

In both the mining affected districts, innovations in education, skill development and research in various fields through education have not been seen at all, though few projects started in Jharkhand, but changes in the state policy has drastically impacted on local planning and interest of district administration in carving out new projects in these sectors.

It has been observed that students are more interested in government jobs in both the districts; they are not interested in private sector jobs, but Tata group has impacted to some extent in the mindset of Chaibasa, Jharkhand; however, very few students of this region were thinking elsewhere their careers in geological and mining sector jobs here. Western Coalfields Ltd in central India even could not impact much on the mindsets of youths of Betul, and they could offer labour jobs only to local dwellers, which can be easily seen in the family income enhancement, pucca constructed houses and farm mechanizations; but could not influence the occupational aspirations of youths.

Government is doing enormous efforts at Central, State and Urban Local bodies level for the enhancement of education at large, but the problems of mining affected areas are slightly different across the nation, which need collaboration with Mining and Education departments, which somehow is missing in the research areas, the problems pertain everywhere, and District Mineral Foundations are not able to do as it needed convergence and co-ordination among various line departments. Most of the government departments work in silos and they don't have habits to do the same, in places where elected representatives are proactive, innovation in education initiatives are possible; but involvement of mining affected families are missing in general. More control of state secretariats on DMF fund cause problems in mining prone districts. The Ministry of Mines has to rework and do again a policy research with Niti Aayog, Ministry of Education and few more think tanks to give critical views on Education in Mining areas, further a guideline to promote education level in mining affected areas to be set up, as government functionaries always

have a fear of failure, departmental enquiries and negative motivations, this has to be neutralized so that a multiple collaboration and co-operation would be possible with decentralized bodies in education sector.

Conclusion-

In order to improve the level of education, government both state and central has to frame new changes in the policies and correct the allocation of money towards the improvement of educational standards. A good co-ordination of the government functionaries will enable the youth to attain knowledge and the necessary skills needed to reach to higher levels. An improvement in the teaching-learning environment and social environment.

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