



Original Article

A Geographical Study of Educational Status of Tribals in Forest Villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil, Nandurbar District (Maharashtra)

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Abstract

The researcher has focused on a geographical, social, and economic study as well as the educational status of tribals in forest villages of Dhadgaon (Akrani) Tehsil in Maharashtra state. This study region is one of the very remote areas within the Satpura mountain range and Narmada river basin of Maharashtra. Tribes live in the forest and use its resources for their own survival. Every human being is dependent on the basic needs of food, clothes, shelter, education, and medical facilities. Education facility is a fundamental part of every human being. Article 21- A have provide free and essential education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen years, but the researcher has focused on the isolated area of the Satpura mountain region of Nandurbar District, Maharashtra. In the last seven decades, the Government of India has focused on the educational policy for every Indian, but the socio-economic standard of the study region is very low. Tribal education status is very low in the selected study region of Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District due to the poor financial condition and migration, neutral attitudes of parents towards education, as well as other issues like transportation, the dropout ratio of students, and absences of teachers in schools. Tribal education is affected and failing to provide proper educational facilities to running schools by the geographically isolated, hilly, and forested 73 forest villages in Nandurbar District of Maharashtra. This paper is based on empirical research methods, and the researcher has used the statistical data from the Indian census report of 2011 as well as a review of the literature, including information from various reports, research studies, fact-finding studies, and the limited fieldwork by the author in the study region. The researcher has gone through educational status and surveyed and analysed 73 villages of Dhadgaon tehsil.

Keywords: – Forest Village, Tribal People, Education, Literacy, Illiteracy.

Introduction

According to recent data, the educational attainment of tribal communities in India, categorized as Scheduled Tribes (ST), is significantly lower compared to the national average, with a literacy rate around 72.1% as per the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report, highlighting a significant gap in educational access and achievement for tribal populations. The Constitution of India has provided for the free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a fundamental right in such a manner as the state may, by law, determine under Article 21-A, meaning that every child has a right to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school that satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

Education is a powerful tool for reducing poverty, unemployment, and inequality; improving health and nutrition, and promoting sustained human development-led growth (World Bank 2004). "Education for all people is a necessity of life and the most influential agent of development. Further, education is also regarded as "a critical input for economic and social development. This is crucial for building human capabilities and widening the horizon of opportunities." (Tripathy 2010). The researcher has focused to the geographical study of tribal in forest village in Nandurbar district, Maharashtra.

Objectives

1. To study the present condition of education among tribal's in forest villages of Dhadgaon tehsil.
2. To study the approach of tribal's in forest villages.
3. To investigate Problems of education.
4. To know the available educational facilities in the forest area.

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Study Region

Dhadgaon (Akrani) Tehsil lies in the North Western part of Nandurbar district. Akrani Tehsil extends between 21°49'27" to 21° 82' North latitude and 74°13'01" to 74°21' East longitude. The study area is part of the northern region of the Satpura Mountain; the piedmont plain, the Satpura hills, stretches from east to west, which is occupied by the Satpura Mountain, and also some part of it is under the Narmada Valley Region. Forest villages are located to the isolated region, Hilly, and non-developed region of Satpuda foothill and part of Narmada valley region of Maharashtra. 81,675 populations has Possess the study region. The researcher has studied the Dhadgaon tehsil in photo plate No. 1 and photo plate No. 2.

Photo Plate No. 1

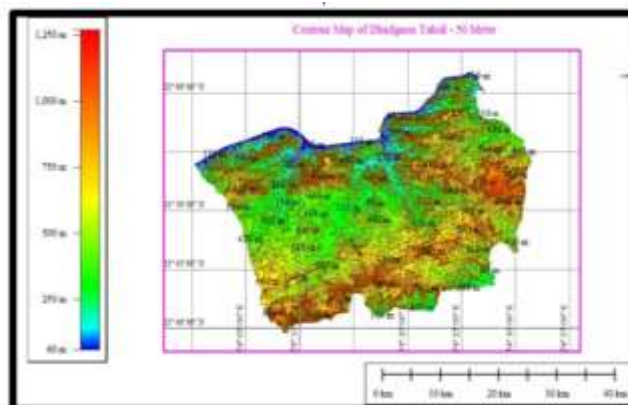
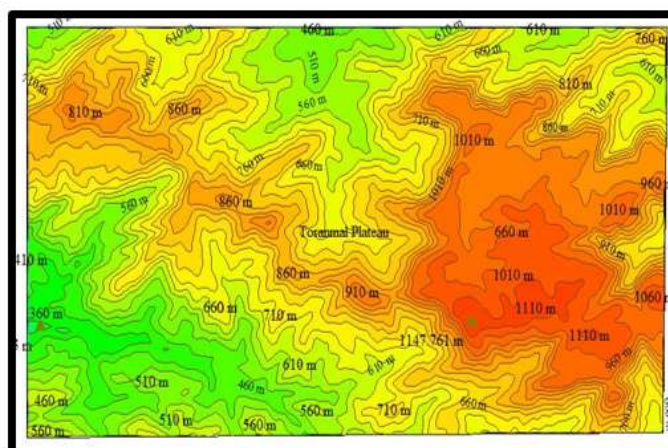


Photo Plate No. 2



Methodology

Researchers have selected them for the empirical study. It is based on a descriptive research methodology and utilises survey methods with villagers, observation, group discussion, home visits, etc. The study is based on the primary data collected from 73 forest villages in Dhadgaon tehsil. Secondary data has been collected from district administrative offices, tribal welfare offices, government reports, gazetteers, the Indian Census Report of 2011, research publications, the Statistical Review Book, e-books, e-journals, Gramsevak, Sarpanch & Zillah Parishad Schools & NGOs and Government records, etc.

Discussion

The literacy rate of India in 2011 was 74.04%. The Male literacy rate is 82.14% and the Female literacy rate is 65.46%, according to Census 2011. All over India, male literacy is 82.14% and female literacy is 65.46%. Among the Indian states, Kerala has the highest literacy rate at 93.91%, and then lowest in Bihar at 63.82%. (**Govt of India, 2011**) Education plays a crucial role in the economic development of tribes in the study area of Nandurbar district, as it helps break cycles of deprivation and improves employability. The significance of good education is providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to access better employment opportunities, participate actively in the market, overcome social barriers, and empower them to manage their resources effectively, thereby enabling them to improve their overall socio-economic status and contribute meaningfully to the national economy; essentially acting as a tool for social mobility and upliftment within tribal communities. Education helps the tribal communities gain awareness of their rights and empowers them to advocate for their interests, leading to better access to resources and social services. Education helps deprived classes have social mobility. Education helps tribal people become more employable. Education is a tool for economic betterment and societal change. Education is one of the tools for transmitting culture, accumulated knowledge, and experience of society. Maharashtra, the third largest state in the country, is ranked second among the states in terms of the recorded forest area. The Western Ghats of the state have a vibrant biodiversity. Literacy and education play an important role in the development of any society. Literacy is the ability to read & write with understanding in any language. Higher levels of literacy and education lead to greater awareness and also contribute to the improvement of economic conditions. A person who can neither read nor write or can only read but cannot write in any language is treated as illiterate. (**Census of India- 2011**).

The government has been making the tribals aware of the value of the land. The slogan that echoes among the tribals today is **Hum Sabhi Ka Yahi Naara Hai—Jameen, Jal, Jungle Hamara Hai (Land, Water, and Forest—That is our Heritage)**, but

they are not aware of the educational status of tribals in Maharashtra. Tribals residing in remote areas are still lacking of common infrastructure facilities of road and communication, health and education, and safe drinking water, which do not allow them to absorb technological and financial facilities provided by the government. The government too has not played a positive role in the educational status of tribals in 73 forest villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil in Nandurbar District. Most of the primitive tribal groups live in hilly, forested, and isolated pockets of Dhadgaon Tehsil in the Nandurbar District of Maharashtra. Most of the villages are located in forested, geographically isolated, interior areas of the Satpuda Mountain and near the backwater of the Narmada River. This area is adjoining forests without proper basic services and facilities in Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District. A few of the study villages were cut off from the mainland, and the only way to reach them was through waterways.

1. Forest Region of Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District

A researcher has focused on four forests in the Dhadgaon forest areas. 1. *Akrani Forest Area*, 2. *Bilgaon Forest Area*, 3. *Kakarda Forest Area*, 4. *Toranmal Forest Area* of Dhadgaon tehsil.

Akrani Forest Area	Bilgaon Forest	Kakarda Forest	Toranmal Forest
Pimpalchop, Atti, Keli, Shikka , Nimgavhan, Domkhedi, Shelgada, Makadkund, Goradi, Kumbhari, Roshamal Kh, Kuktar, Akwani, Shelda, Khardi Bk, Kamod Bk, Rajbardi, Sindvani Katra, Telkhedi, Mankhedi Kh, Chikhali, Kuklad, Jarali, Kamod Kh, Chandsaili Chhinalkuwa, Gaurya, Sirsani, Pimpalbari, Bijari, Chinchkathi,	Junana, Mal, Khardi Kh, Bilgaon, Udadya, Bhadal, ,Khutwada, Sadri, Bhamane , Bhusha, Genda, Warwali, Kuwarkhot, Shelkui, Bori, Trishul, Bhabri Sawaryadigar	Bodala, Kelimojara, Khadkale Bk, Khadkale Kh, Zummad, Maktarzira, Mandvi Bk, Nigadi, Tembhurni, Mandvi Kh, Valval, Vavi,	Sawarya, Toranmal (ju), Phalai, Kelapani, Japi, Khadki, Lekhada, Sindidigar,
35	18	12	08

The researcher has used statistical data and calculations based on the census report 2011. Data have been analysed and discussed with necessary statistical techniques, and inferences are drawn based on them. Table no. 1 shows the socially and economically backward 73 forested villages in Nandurbar District of Maharashtra. The Maharashtra government has failed to provide proper education, health, transportation, and infrastructural facilities for 73 forest villages in the Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District.

2. Socio-Economic Background of forest villages.

Tribal peoples are not getting access to basic public facilities, like health care, education, and transport systems. It is their right, but they do not have proper educational facilities in the forest villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil in Nandurbar District. Still, the tribal educational status is very low in Dhadgaon Tehsil in Nandurbar District

Particular	Household Popu	No of Persons		
		Total Popu.	Male	Female
Total	13222	81675	40513	41162
Percentage (%)	40.05	41.72	49.6	50.4
Thousands	0	0	0	1016.01
Population of Child		Tot. Pop.0-06	M Pop.0-06	F Pop.0-06
		18093	9019	9074
		22.15	49.84	50.15
		0	0	1006.09
Population of S T		ST	Male ST	Female ST
Total		80181	39737	40444
Per. (%)		98.17	49.55	50.44
Thousands		0	0	1017.79
Source: Indian Census Report 2011				

Table no. 2 shows that the researcher has analyzed the sample studied as per the 2011 Indian Census Report, with 73 forest village Households having a population of **13222**. There are **81675** total populations out of 80181 tribals (**98.17**) who live in four groups of forest areas in Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District of Maharashtra.

3. Male and Female Ratio

Scheduled tribe population by sex is **40513 (49.6%)** male populations, and the female population is **41162 (50.4%)**. Sex Ratio among Scheduled Tribes by residing is thousands of male and female populations: **1016.01**, and the child population of 0-6 age is **18093**, with the male child population being **9019 (49.85%)** and the female child population of the 0-6 age group being **9074 (50.15%)** in the forest villages of Dhadgaon tehsil. As per the census report of India (2011), the normal sex ratio of Nandurbar District has a sex ratio favouring males, i.e., 978. The male and female ratios is very uneven in the 73 forest villages of Dhadgaon. The Tehsil Female Sex Ratio is very High in the village of **Goradi- 1200.00**, **Thuwani- 1211.54**, **Nimgavhan- 1320.51**, **Mandvi Bk-1350.25 per 1000 person**. Group "B" 40" Forest Villages, Group "C" 27, Group "D" 2 Forest Villages Male and Female ratio is very irregular lowest female ratio Two Forest Villages in Group "D" **Warwali-733.33** and **Rajbardi- 779.30**. One of the Remarkable villages is Warwali (F.V.) village in Akrani Tahsil has the lowest population (26) among the villages of the district.

4. Educational Backwardness or Illiteracy:

Most of the respondents fall in the age group 30-40 years. Further, it was noted that those who were above 60 years constituted only 45 percent of the population. This indicated a shorter life span of the population due to poverty, malnutrition, and lack of adequate health facilities prevailing in the study area. Material status showed that most of them were married. Examination of the family system followed by the population indicated that most of them followed the nuclear family, leaving around 100 percent of those who professed the Hindu religion. The educational status of the respondents showed that the highest number of the 51311 illiterate population was 62.82%. Presently, 42 villages/padas are unconnected from the road network to the tehsil. These villages are under forest area whose proposals are sent to the forest area by PMGSY, and 12 villages are under submergence, and no connectivity is required there due to the submerged area. Mountains and Submerged Back water of Narmada River. Therefore, the aims of **Education For All (EFA)** have not been achieved in forested villages in Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District.

Particular	No of Literacy & Illiteracy Person		
Educational Status	Popu. of LIT	M_LIT	F_LIT
Total	30364	16909	13455
Percentage	37.17	55.68	44.31
	No of Illiteracy		
Educational Status	Illiteracy	Male ILL	F. Illiteracy
Total	51311	23604	27707
Percentage	62.82	46	54

Source: Indian Census Report 2011

Table No.3 and Graph No. 1

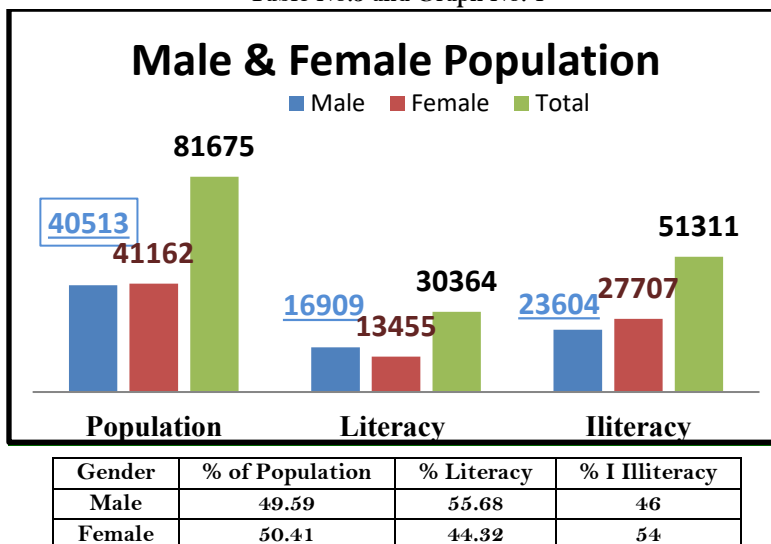
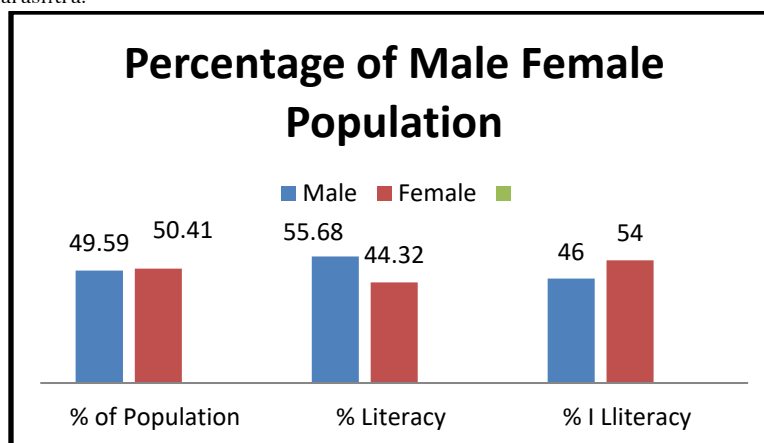


Table No.4

Presently, run the field of 14 clusters and 346 ashrams and ZP schools in Dhadgaon Block, but they have not provided good and proper education facilities for the forest villages in Dhadgaon Tehsil. Tribals in forest villages have faced various physical and geographical barriers in Satpuda. Most of the tribal families are 100 percent illiterate in forest villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil in Nandurbar District, Maharashtra.



Graph No. 2

Narmada Navnirman Abhiyan (NBA) was a non-violent movement led by Medha Patkar. Narmada Navnirman Abhiyan (NBA) is one of the public trusts that has provided free education facilities, advocacy, health, rehabilitating and developing displaced people, protecting land and forest rights, and promoting education in indigenous communities. The mission also focuses on women's employment, food, and the environment. The NBA's slogans included "Vikas Chahiye, Vinash Nahin!" (Development

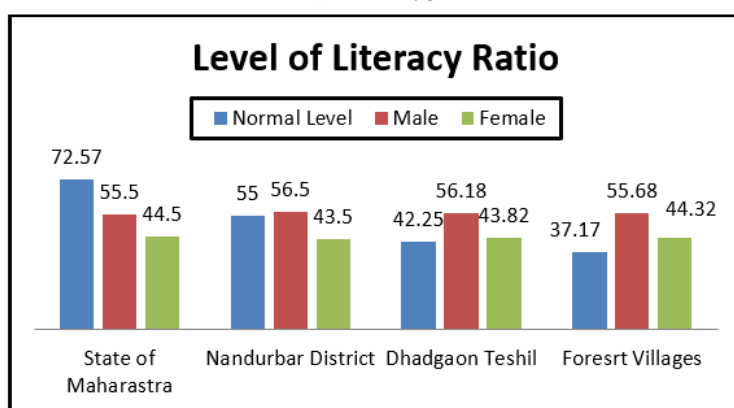
wanted, not destruction). Narmada Navnirman Mission has worked to integrate displaced Indigenous children into mainstream education and society in the Life Schools (Jivan Shala) in the Narmada Valley of the Satpuda Region in Maharashtra as well as Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

6. Educational Status of Tribals in Forest Villages:

Education is a vital tool for empowering tribal communities in India and driving their economic development by providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to participate actively in the modern economy and improve their livelihoods. Poverty and lack of education are very closely related... The social and geographical isolation of the tribal communities is the cardinal factor responsible for the slow progress of education among them.”(Dani, 1979). The researcher has focused on the normal level of literacy at the state level to study the region. So the normal literacy level in Maharashtra is **72.57%**. Nandurbar District has the lowest literacy level, which is **55%**, and Dhadgaon Tehsil has the lowest literacy rate, which is **42.25%**, I have focused on 73 selected forest villages; they have the lowest literacy rate, which is only **37.17%**. (Indian Census Report 2011). The literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes is considerably lower than the national average, indicating a significant educational disadvantage. The literacy of the tribe was 8.53% in 1961, which has increased to 58.96% in the year 2011. The researcher has analyzed the selected sample village’s educational status, which is 37.17% very low according to the national, state, and district literacy ratio to the census 2011.

Level	Normal Level	Level of Literacy Ratio	
		Male	Female
State of Maharashtra	72.57	55.5	44.5
Nandurbar District	55	56.5	43.5
Dhadgaon tehsil	42.25	56.18	43.82
Forest Villages	37.17	55.68	44.32

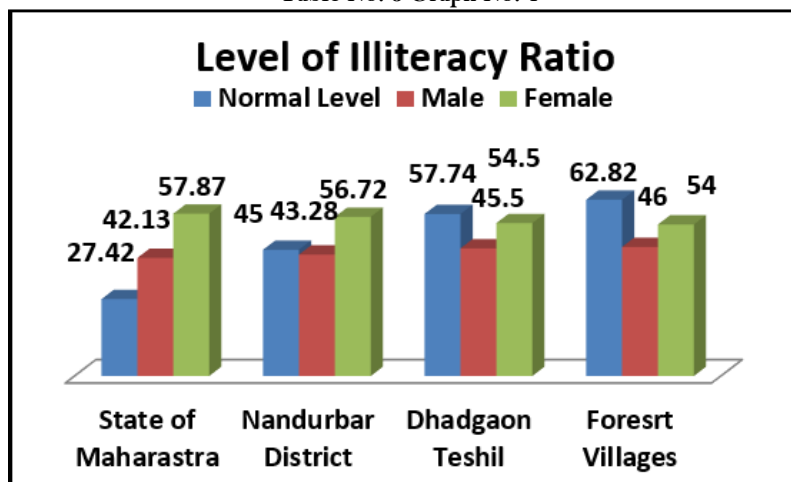
Table No. 5



Graph No. 3

Level	Normal Level	Level of Illiteracy Ratio	
		Male	Female
State of Maharashtra	27.42	42.13	57.87
Nandurbar District	45	43.28	56.72
Dhadgaon Tehsils	57.74	45.5	54.5
Forest Villages	62.82	46	54

Table No. 6 Graph No. 4



Gender	Population	Literacy	Illiteracy
Male	40513	16909	23604
Female	41162	13455	27707

Total	81675	30364	51311
Percentage	100	37.17	62.82

The graph no. 5 has shown to the percentage of level of illiteracy ratio 62.82 percent is very high as compared to the National, state of Maharashtra, district of Nandurbar as well Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar. There are no forest villages apart from 73 in Nandurbar District. The District Collector, Nandurbar, has been asked to convert these 73 forest villages into revenue villages. Hon'ble Supreme Court. He has been asked to furnish the latest position as well as to take further necessary action. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has also clarified that FRA envisages recognition and vesting of rights of forest dwellers and other traditional forest dwellers on all forest lands, including those in sanctuaries and national parks, and hence such villages inside these parks are also, therefore, required to be converted into revenue villages. In Maharashtra, barring 73 villages in Nandurbar, all forest villages have been declared as revenue villages. The development of these villages is very slow, and the condition of farmers is very bad. The decision by the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs to convert forest villages into revenue villages in Nandurbar, Maharashtra, is still pending.

7. Problems of development of education facilities in Forest villages of Nandurbar District.

Tribals in forest villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil have faced a lot of physical, cultural, social, and governmental problems. Hence, they are not fully interested in education. Tribal has to need education for the tribals in the Forest Village of Dhadgaon Tehsil in Nandurbar District state of Maharashtra. There are several challenges to education for tribes in forest villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District, including economic backwardness, unhygienic lifestyle, insufficient and inferior quality of food, lack of safe drinking water, social abuse, geographical isolation, inadequate trainee teachers & a shortage of qualified teachers, remote location, and lack of pre-primary education, financial conditions, language problems, poor infrastructure, and transportation. Many children are ill-prepared for school because they don't get proper pre-primary education in anganwadis. So many other reasons that naturally deteriorate all forms of life of the tribals in forest villages of Dhadgaon Tehsil

8. Government initiatives to promote tribal education:

Establishment of Ashram Schools: The government and Zillha Parishad Nandurbar have taken the initiative to establish residential schools and high-quality residential Ekalavya Model Schools specifically designed for tribal students to provide comprehensive education, financial support to scholarships, financial assistance to tribal students, and support in the remote area of forest villages in Dhadgaon Tehsil. Organized an awareness program through the private as well as NGO government of Maharashtra, taking initiatives for the development of tribals' education, health, and hygiene as well as the socio-economic development of the tribals in the forest villages in the Dhadgaon Tehsil of Nandurbar District of Maharashtra.

Conclusion

The researcher has investigated that the literacy ratio is 37.17% very poor in the selected study region of forest villages in Nandurbar District. There is the lowest literacy ratio of tribals in the forest village of Dhadgaon Tehsil. Seems lower in forest villages than in the Dhadgaon Tehsil (42.25%), Nandurbar District of Maharashtra. (55.00%) as well as the state of Maharashtra (72.57%). The forest village's male literacy is 20.70% & female literacy is 16.47%. The illiteracy population of 62.82% of forest villages needs education. Still, the tribal education status is very low (37.17%) due to the geographical isolation, poor financial condition, migration, and neutral attitudes of parents towards education. Other issues like transportation, the dropout ratio of students, and the absence of teachers in schools are such reasons affecting tribal education. 73 forest villages' fail to provide proper educational facilities to running schools of study region. The researcher has find out very unsatisfactory results; tribals, owing to illiteracy or very low educational status, are generally accused of leading a traditional way of life. The government has not provided good educational, health infrastructural, and transportation facilities for forest villages in Dhadgaon tehsil in Nandurbar District of Maharashtra.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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