



Status & Impact of Ashram Schools for Scheduled Tribe Children – Special reference to Gujarat state

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Abstract –

Ashram shala is one of the key institutes for spreading primary education among tribal groups, Shri A V Thakkar eminent worker was pioneer of the Ashram shala Yojana. On the bases of Mahatma Gandhi's basic education concept whole Yojana was woven. Since 1920 social reconstruction workers were using this institute as tool of change in tribal life. Now a days TDD is the granting these shalas, how it benefited? what is its importance? Ashram shals are playing any roll in change of tribal life? are the key questions, we try to find out it and make suggestion of base of collected information direct from horse mouth.

Key Words: Tribal, Ashram Shala, Basic Education, Accommodation, Nutrition.

1. Introduction

The origin of the ashram schools functioning in the state of Gujarat is in the basic education or new training of Mahatma Gandhi. The Kocharab Ashram and the Harijan Ashram established by Mahatma Gandhi in Gujarat are excellent examples of this. The basics of basic education in the ashram school have come from these ashrams. Mahatma Gandhi's main objective behind establishing the ashram was to prepare freedom fighters for the freedom struggle and to run constructive programs. Later, Mahatma Gandhi also linked basic education with ashram life. Creative activists associated with the creative program with Mahatma Gandhi went to different areas and established organizations. Various activities were started by these organizations, such as ashrams to educate the people, spinning or weaving to alleviate poverty and unemployment, alcoholism to free people from addiction, khadi to live a simple life, industries to teach people industries, untouchability to eliminate social discrimination. Etc. Creative programs have been done to awaken, organize and empower people of different societies.

Among the 18 creative programs of Mahatma Gandhi, basic education was one of the important programs. Basic education (basic

education) became an important part and value in the ashrams established by Mahatma Gandhi and in the ashram, schools started by creative activists who embraced the Gandhian ideology. 'Is. With the efforts of Sukhdevbhai in 19th, the first ashram school was established in Mirakhedi village of Panchmahal district (now Dahod district), which was inaugurated by shri Thakkarbapa. Then With the efforts of shri Jugatram Dave and Shri Narharibhai Parikh in 1923, another ashram school was started in Sarbhon village of Surat district. Then in 1928, in Vedchi village of Surat district, Through the efforts of Jugatram Dave, a third Ashram School was established, which was renamed as "Ashram Udyogshala". The work of teaching industry along with education was also started here. Literacy was taught in the ashram school, but it also played a role as a center of the freedom struggle. The main objective behind starting an ashram school in a tribal area was to build honest leadership from the tribal and to make the tribal equal citizens of India by carrying out welfare activities like education and economic development among the tribal through local tribal leadership.

After independence, when the Ashram School Scheme was started by the Government of India in 1953-54, only 3 (three) Ashram Schools were registered in the government files. In 1960 From Greater Maharashtra to Gujarat became a separate state, there were 41(Bharti Desai and Anil Patel: Ashram Schools of Gujarat: An Evaluation Study”, p.15) ashram schools functioning in Gujarat. "As on the end of March 2019, as per the government records, there are a total 559{Commissioner, Tribal Development - As per the list of Gujarat State, Ashram School and post Basic Ashram School Branch (dated 30-06-2017)} ashram schools functioning in the state of Gujarat, in which there are 452 primary ashram schools and 107 post basic and higher post basic ashram schools". Ashram schools played an important role in raising the level of education among the tribal people of Gujarat. Ashram schools in the tribal areas have done a useful and commendable job of education reform by providing three facilities to the tribal children namely education, accommodation and food.

2. Research method

The present research has been conducted under the title “Status & Impact of Ashram Schools for Scheduled Tribe Children – Special reference to Gujarat state”. Objectives of this study such as (1) to know the education system, condition and quality of the ashram school, (2) to check the condition, quality, nutritional and health status of the food provided to the students, (3) to check the physical and infrastructural facilities and its condition, (3) students, teachers And research has been done keeping in view the questions of the administrators as well as (2) the effects of ashram schools on the tribal society. In this study, out of 6 ashram schools providing primary education for tribal children, 6 ashram schools have been selected as sample (unit) as per 10%. This research has evaluated the structure of the ashram school, all aspects related to education, accommodation and catering as well as whether the ashram schools are functioning as per the norms of the government.

In the early days of this study, literature was reviewed by reading literature related to the ashram school. Visit schedule, questionnaire, focused group discussion and observation list were then prepared to collect primary information related to the ashram school. In the present research, the administrators, principals, teachers, students, parents and alumni associated with the ashram school have been selected as the informants. Detailed information was obtained from various brochures in this study. If you look at these forms and the number of informants, you can see the primary information sheet-2 of the ashram school, Schedule-2 visit of the administrators, Schedule-2 of the principal-teacher visit, Schedule-2, Student visit form-214, Student health check-up form-215, Educational quality measurement test sheet-215 of the students. Parent Visit Schedule-20, Teacher-Focused Group Discussion-2, Student-Focused Group Discussion-2, Parent-Focused Group Discussion-2, Visit Schedule-218 of Alumni who have completed primary education and Observation Form-2. An average of 6 to 7 by researchers and surveyors in each ashram school.n-depth information has been obtained by adequate investigation of various aspects related to the ashram school by investing day and night.

The conclusions of the study were finally drawn on the basis of encoding, classification, information processing (data entry), tabulation, interpretation and analysis of the information obtained from the respondents in this study. Major findings of the study areas,

3. Summary of the study

3.1 Conditions of Ashram School (Education, Accommodation, Meals) and Impact on Tribal Society

Ashram School is a system that provides triple facilities of education, accommodation and meals to tribal children. The educational, physical and mental development of the tribal children today as well as the awareness of education among the tribal people is due to the Ashram School. Today, the development of

the Ashram School has been going on for almost a century. And it shows that his contribution to the overall development of the tribal community has been invaluable.

Tribal children get both education and training through ashram schools operating in the state of Gujarat. In other words, in the ashram school, the children acquire literacy as well as basic education, which helps in shaping the life and development of the tribal students. These ashram schools are from Std. 1 to 8 and in which 90% girls and 40% boys are admitted. Most ashram schools have a school-hostel joint, meaning that students stay and sleep in the same room as they study. Ashram schools have a large shortage of classrooms as per the norms as well as shortage of academic and non-academic staff, lack of physical and infrastructural facilities, poor quality of food and accommodation issues. Efforts are being made by the principals, teachers, the governing body and the government to address these issues, but in some ashrams these efforts have been minimized.

There are also some positive aspects of ashram schools, such as the literacy rate of tribal in the state of Gujarat today and the role of ashram schools in educating children in the tribal community. That is why Ashram School is becoming a blessing and helper for the tribal children.

Opinions have been obtained from the students, principals, teachers, administrators and parents associated with the ashram school on the status of the ashram schools functioning in the state of Gujarat at present, what kind of questions they have and what solutions they can have. The various aspects of ashram school examined here such as quality of ashram school education, nutritional / quality of food, health of tribal children, condition of physical-infrastructural facilities and effects of ashram school on tribal society are not measured by any specific instruments, criteria or method. Information has been obtained in the form of opinions through visit schedule, visit guide, focused group discussion and observation sheet.

3.2 Status of education and learning process in Ashram schools

Ashram schools functioning in the tribal areas of Gujarat have a basic education structure. In this basic education framework, the work that students do from waking up early in the morning to going to bed at night is considered as a part of basic education. Students are provided with textbook knowledge, as well as getting up early in the morning for basic education, cleaning the yard, cleaning the bathroom, picking vegetables, baking bread, serving, cleaning the rooms, washing one's own clothes, watering the school trees, etc. Craft training is also provided. Various activities are continuously carried out in the ashram schools for the betterment and holistic development of the students through education and basic education.

Special priority is given to the children of economically weaker and migrant families for admission in the ashram schools. In the process of this admission, the application form is filled as per the government rules and admission is given on 'first come first' basis. At present 63.12% students studying in Ashram School cover 50 km. or come from farther than that as well as 14.71% students cover 100 km. or even come to study from a greater distance. As some of the ashrams are excellent in terms of education, accommodation and food arrangements, the tendency to send children to study in distant ashram schools is more prevalent among the parents.

If we look at the learning process and the state of education in the ashram schools, the overall condition of reading, writing, and arithmetic according to the level is found to be poor in the students. Ashram students find it difficult to read Gujarati according to their level and Hindi and English are foreign languages for them. The students of Std. 5 to 8 were very confused if they were given addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of three to four numbers and very few students

could solve such sums. Many reasons may be responsible for this situation, but in the current study of 68 ashram schools, there are 265 (62.75%) permanent teachers as against 408 permanent teachers, while there is a huge shortage of 143 (37.25%) permanent teachers, which shows that on an average of 2 (two) permanent teacher posts are vacant in each ashram school functioning in the tribal areas of Gujarat. In some ashram schools, due to the special shortage of teachers, the education of the students is not spoiled and the educational work is carried out by the government by hiring traveling teachers or by hiring contract based assistant teachers by the governing body. These teachers leave the ashram school due to high salaries in other schools and the education work of the children is incomplete or deteriorates. It is not a permanent solution to have a traveling teacher or a contract based assistant t teacher in the ashram schools instead of a permanent teacher, but the appropriate solution is to hire a permanent teacher for the subject.

Students get two pairs of uniforms in ashram schools, bath-washing soap, scalp oil, notebooks etc. In some ashrams, students are provided with plate-bowl-glass, bed sheets, mosquito nets, warm clothes etc. which is a good thing. All these items are required to be provided by the Government to every Ashram School. The Ashram School organizes various activities for educational development for the students such as festivals and programs are celebrated, appropriate discussions on problems and arrangements of education are held by the parents' conventions. When programs organized by the district education department such as science fairs, sports competitions, students and teachers of Ashram schools are less involved in programs like oratory and drawing competitions, is one of the problems that is constantly raised by students and teachers. The environment of the ashram school for children is 4.41% educational and satisfactory. In fact, the atmosphere of some other ashrams seems to be less educational and satisfactory.

3.3 Meal status, nutrition and health of students in ashram schools

The Ashram School provides students with the threefold facility of accommodation and meals along with education. In terms of food arrangements in the ashram schools, it is seen that in 98.53% of the ashram schools, government approved food menu has been prepared, out of which 92.65% meals are given to the students according to the food menu. Some ashrams offer meals based on the availability of local grains, pulses and vegetables by making general changes in the menu. In 83.82% Ashram School, students are given hot or dry breakfast in the morning and in recess as well as hot meal in the afternoon and evening. Breakfast includes potato pauwa, roasted or boiled beans, mamara, roasted goundnuts-gram etc. as well as bread, bhakri, maize / millet bread, green vegetables, beans, dal-rice, kheechadi-kari etc. In this meal, students also get a meal with sweets at least once in a month in 94.12% of the ashram schools. 93.75% students like the food provided by the ashram schools so much that they feel like at home. The meals given to the students in the ashram school are found to be 76.47% nutritious. If we look at the condition and quality of food in the ashram school, the condition of food in South Gujarat seems to be more qualitative and satisfactory as compared to saurashtra, north Gujarat and central Gujarat. But in some ashrams, food is found to be unhealthy and in small quantities.

In the ashram schools where the condition of food is poor, seems less nutritious, some diseases related to physical and mental health are found in the students. In the ashram schools, the common ailments like fever, cold, vomiting, diarrhea, cough are common to the students and the medicine is given from the first aid kit kept in the ashram school. When the general illness does not get cured in two-three days, the student is taken to a government or private hospital and the teacher accompanies him. In addition to common

diseases, anemia, worm-borne diseases, vitamin deficiencies, skin diseases, etc. are also found in the students of the ashram school. Some students have a general difficulty seeing what the teacher writes on the board or hearing what the teacher speak. These students may have general vision or hearing ailments, which should be properly examined by a doctor at the ashram school. Sick cell has been found in 12 students and thalassemia - jaundice in one student. In addition, some students experienced physical and mental fatigue after eating, playing a normal game or reading and writing, which can be attributed to the food provided to the students in the ashram school, nutrition, hygiene, hygienic habits, health condition, etc. Thus, ashram schools do not have well-equipped restaurants (with proper seating arrangements) for students to have a good meal. Moreover, lack of adequate amount of common medications for the disease when students fall ill in some of the ashram schools.

3.4 Condition of physical and infrastructural facilities of the ashram school

Ashram School is a system of education, food and accommodation for the children of poor, vulnerable and displaced families of the tribal community. Most of the ashram schools look very beautiful from the outside, but when we check the condition of their education, food, accommodation and physical-infrastructural facilities, we realize its reality. It is the responsibility of the government and the governing body to build physical infrastructure in the ashram schools. Here is a description of the physical and infrastructural facilities available to the tribal children in the Ashram schools.

Some of the governing body of the Ashram Schools, in the tribal areas runs educational institutions like high Schools, PTC Colleges, B.Ed. Colleges etc. and work for educational reform in the tribal areas. Apart from this, they also run adult literacy, self-reliance programs,

skill development programs, awareness programs, etc. to awaken the tribal community. The land of 86.77% ashram schools operating in the tribal areas is owned by the Board of Directors and 10.29% ashram schools are run on the land of government and 02.94% of the private individuals. As per the norms of the government, the board of directors or social organization for starting an ashram school should be allowed to set up an ashram school only if it owns 10 acres or more of land, but 58.82% of the ashram school have less than 10 acres of land. But the government has given permission to run ashrams. It is a matter of inquiry as to why the government has given permission to start an ashram school even though the land is scarce. Out of the ashrams which have more or less land, 67.65% of the ashrams cultivate this land and cultivate local grains, pulses, vegetables, horticultural crops etc. and use it for economic gain and student meals. Some ashram schools also do animal husbandry along with farming and give cow-buffalo milk to the children for dinner, which is a rare number. While 19.11% of the governing bodies do not own more land than the building and yard of their ashram school.

The attendance rate of students in the ashram schools is very high, in which more than 80% of the students were present in the ashram schools according to the approved number of students. While in 16% of the ashram schools some students went home and there was a general absence. But in 4% of the ashram schools, the number of students was less and the classrooms seemed empty. According to the establishment of academic and non-academic staff in the ashram schools, there are many vacancies, in which 265 (62.75%) of the permanent teachers have been filled as against 408 permanent teachers. 143 (37.25%) permanent teacher posts are vacant. That means an average of two permanent teachers post is vacant. Same is the case with non-academic employees, 186 (68.38%) cook-job vacancies have been filled against 272 employees. This means 86 (31.62%) posts are vacant. That means an average of one to two

cooks-vacancies were vacant. The vacancies of academic and non-academic staff in the ashram schools have a special impact on the education, food and accommodation of the tribal students, so the government should take it seriously and take steps to get the vacancies of teachers and cooks filled in the ashram schools.

The condition of blackboards, chokedusters and notice boards in the ashram schools is satisfactory. During the teaching work in the ashram schools, 48.53% of the children study in the classrooms sitting on the floor and nothing is laid on the floor. Classrooms have good table-chair facilities for teachers, but they are poor in terms of quality. There is no separate ground for students to play in 68 out of 65 ashram schools. Children are seen playing games in the courtyard of the ashram school and play with the sports equipment provided by the government. In 94.12% of the Ashrams, students get clean drinking water, out of which 88.24% of the Ashrams do have jugs or pots for drinking water, but some Ashram schools do not have such facilities and students drink water directly from the tap. The pure drinking water in the ashrams often comes from boreholes or wells. In summer, there is a shortage of drinking water in central and north Gujarat and then arrangements are made for preparing food and drinking water in the ashram school by ordering tankers. All the ashrams have the necessary facilities for electricity, but when it rains heavily in the monsoons, there are many problems with electricity in the ashrams and there is no special alternative to electricity. Ashram schools and hostels do not have adequate light (bulb, tube light) or fan facilities according to the number of students. Light facilities are also rarely seen in the latrine bathroom.

More than 31 registers are maintained for the educational and administrative work of the ashram school and more than 21 registers are maintained for making the hostel easy to attain and tidy. The information that is frequently

sought by the government in schools and hostels is found to be updated, while other registers are not kept up to date. Most of the ashrams are planted with flowers, plants and trees which make the atmosphere look beautiful. Small and large gardens have also been set up in 22% of the ashrams and children use them for playing or sitting. Out of 68 Ashram Schools, 81% of the Ashram Schools have satisfactory educational arrangements, 93% of the hostel accommodation and sleeping arrangements and 93% of the mess arrangements are satisfactory. Here we examined the positive and negative conditions in the physical and infrastructural facilities of the ashram schools. The poor condition of physical and infrastructural facilities can be rectified if both the government and the governing body make positive efforts to rectify the situation.

3.5 Problems of students, teachers and governing bodies

The history of the Ashram School spans a period of about a century. Ashram schools have experienced many ups and downs during this period. Initially the purpose, structure, policy, arrangements, facilities, interest groups and problems of the establishment of Ashram School were different. There are changes in all these aspects in the ashram schools functioning at present and its problems are also different. From the very beginning, the ashram school has three structures related to education, accommodation and catering. When an ashram school has such a large structure, it is natural that students, principals, teachers and governing bodies have many kinds of problems. So, let's try to examine the references to how the ashrams as a whole have problems.

According to 61 principals out of 68 ashrams of the study, 90% of the ashrams run for the purpose for which they were established. But 10% of Ashram schools work by changing its objectives. According to 91% principals, ashram schools follow government policies.

Whereas, 9% of schools are found to be operating to some extent by adhering to these policies and rules. As some of the ashram schools are not functioning as per the objectives and policies laid down under the ashram school scheme, special problems have arisen in the ashram schools regarding special education, accommodation, food and physical-infrastructural facilities of the school and hostel.

Just as there are serious issues of education and accommodation in ashram schools, there are also serious issues of food arrangements. Problems with the food arrangements in the ashram schools are such that in some of the ashram schools the meals of the students are poor, less nutritious meals and insufficient amount of food is provided. Less use of green vegetables in meals, lack of variety in meals, problem of getting wood (fuel) for cooking, smoky black kitchens, inadequate cooking utensils, cooking spaces, mostly lack of restaurants, meals in kitchen or school lobby or in the yard etc. are the problems found with the hostels... As there is no appointment of maids in the hostels of the ashram schools, the teachers have to take care of accommodation and meals in addition to education and they are constantly living under the workload round the clock. Teachers are not given any special allowance for shouldering these responsibilities. The Government should make permanent appointment of warden (male/female) for the management of the hostel of the Ashram School keeping in view the interest of the tribal students or give additional remuneration to the teachers who shoulder the additional responsibilities.

According to the principals-teachers and parents in the ashram schools, most of the problems are about the physical-infrastructural facilities of the school-hostel, which they say should be addressed first. In addition to the fact that some ashram schools have more problems with drinking water in summer and electricity in monsoon, alternative remedies should be considered. Principals and teachers make many efforts to solve the problems

related to the condition of education, accommodation and meals in the ashram school as well as physical-infrastructural facilities, but some ashram schools do not have adequate cooperation from the governing body and do not have sufficient budget to solve such problems. This condition makes the problems more serious. These problems can be avoided or alleviated only if sufficient funds are allocated by the Government for education, accommodation and food arrangements. For the educational as well as physical and mental development of the students, it is necessary to get the financial support of the Government and the cooperation of the governing body.

Students, teachers and governing bodies in ashram schools have many problems related to education, accommodation, food and physical infrastructure. Similarly, parents of tribal students also face many problems like poverty, unemployment, migration for employment, weak occupations, low income, economic exploitation etc. Apart from this, there are serious problems like low literacy in tribal society, high school dropout rate, high rate of malnutrition in tribal children, low awareness among parents about education etc. Ashram schools are beneficial and blessed for the tribal children as they are provided with three facilities of accommodation and meals along with education.

3.6 Impact of Ashram Schools on Tribal Society

The relationship of the ashram school with the tribal society is very old. The ashram school stands first to bring educational awareness in the tribal community. At present the literacy rate of tribals in Gujarat is 62%. Ashram schools have played an important role in achieving this literacy rate. Let us try to understand what has changed in the tribal families and what the impact is on the tribal society through the ashram schools which have been doing excellent work of education and in the tribal areas of Gujarat for years.

According to the parents of the students, getting education in the ashram school has

improved the level of education in 55% of the tribal families. In addition to this, there has been a marked change in the customs, religious practices, language and quality of life of the community as well as the level of employment. The women's education and use of modern tools, technology has seen a drastic change.

According to the members of the governing bodies who run the ashram schools, the level of education of the tribal community has increased due to the fact that the tribal families have received education in the ashram schools. Moreover, there are changes in their social, cultural, religious customs, changes in economic status, increased knowledge of new employment opportunities and changes in farming and animal husbandry practices. In addition, there has been an increase in skill development and political awareness among tribal students as well as a decrease in the proportion of bad habits.

If we look at the effects of ashram schools on the tribal society, we realize that the ashram schools have not only provided education and basic training to the tribal children, but also taught them how to live a life in group. The excellent work of shaping the character of the students and inculcating the cultural values has been done only by the ashram school. Accommodation and meals have been provided to the tribal children along with education in the ashram schools, which has also reduced the issues of accommodation and malnutrition. Families migrating for employment can move to other places to find employment by placing their child in a carefree ashram school and the education of the children does not deteriorate and the problem of dropping out of school becomes negligible.

Thus, the role of ashram schools has been important in raising the level of education of the tribal community and in educating the tribal families. The positive effects of ashram schools are seen in the educational

development of the tribal community and the holistic development of the tribal children.

4. Recommendations regarding the study

4.1 To improve the quality of education in tribal areas, to raise the standard of education, to improve the lives of tribal children, to provide education to poor, migrant and remote rural children, to reduce school dropout rates, to provide accommodation and meals to children There should be ashrams to enable tribal children to get along with other communities and more new ashrams should be opened keeping in view the educational needs of the tribal area.

4.2 In tribal areas, Ashrams with unfinished houses, semi-finished houses, low air-conditioning, rough surface in the ground floor and continuous dripping of water during monsoons should be properly identified and reconstructed by the Government. The work should be done and funds should be allocated separately for it.

4.3 Ashram schools have seen an average reduction of 03 classrooms as per standard 1 to 8, which is a huge shortage of rooms in ashram schools, adequate classrooms should be set up in those ashram schools as per the standard.

4.4 According to the establishment of 68 ashram schools of study, there is a shortage of 143 (37.25%) permanent teachers, while filling the vacancies of teachers in Ashram schools, teachers of all subjects should be recruited subject wise, the proportion of female teachers should be maintained and a person who knows the local dialect of the area should be recruited. It is very important for the ashram school and tribal children that the person selected as a teacher is honest, sincere and dedicated. The government should make it a point for having a member of governing body on the panel for the recruitment of teachers.

4.5 According to the establishment of 68 ashram schools, there is a shortage of permanent cooks. Efforts should be made immediately by the Government to provide nutritious food to the tribal children in the

Ashram schools and to fill the permanent vacancies of non-academic staff for their care. Administrative organizations should be consulted for this recruitment process.

4.6 Not a single new ashram school has been started since 2004. The tribal population has increased in the last 15 years and considering the demand of tribal areas and governing bodies and to raise the level of education of the tribal community should be allowed to open new ashrams as required keeping in view the educational needs of tribal families and children.

4.7 The Government should formulate concrete guidelines for the management of the Ashram School in terms of purpose, goal, structure, implementation, procedures, monitoring, evaluation, availability of human and physical infrastructure facilities. Those governing bodies who do not comply with the guidelines, disciplinary action should be taken against them.

4.8 As per the norms of Ashram School, the rule that children within 5 km from the school premises are not allowed to enter the Ashram School should be repealed. Every tribal child has the right to education in an independent, equal and just manner. The child should be given the right to choose which school to go to

4.9 Ashram schools which do not have a separate office for the principal or a classroom cum office or a residence cum office should have a separate office for the principal in all the ashram schools so that the principal can carry out the educational and administrative work of the school independently and with dignity.

4.10 Tribal children should be given education for Std. 1 to 4 in their own dialect (language) in Ashram School, such as Bhili dialect in Panchmahal and Dahod districts, Dangi dialect in Dang district etc. Gujarati, Hindi and English language subjects should be introduced after Std. 5th.

4.11 In ashram schools, the government gives a grant of Rs. 1500 per student. Whether the amount of this grant is fully utilized by the governing body to provide food, education, health and other items to the students on a

qualitative basis should be constantly monitored and checked by the district authority.

4.12 Some provision should be made for compulsory participation of the students and teachers of the ashram schools in all the activities organized by the district education department such as district level science fair, district level sports festival, teacher training at district level etc.

4.13 In the ashram schools where the school-hostel is combined, the boys and girls sleep separately in a big hall, the school-hostel buildings should be made separate in the ashram schools and adequate budget should be allocated for it.

4.14 The government should allocate the necessary grant to build new restaurants in all the ashram schools where boys and girls sit and eat instead of having their food in the lobby of the school-hostel or in the courtyard.

4.15 The Government should make it compulsory for warden (male/female) (Total - 02) Permanent posts should be created in the hostels of each Ashram School for the better care of the children in the hostels of the Ashram schools, proper management of the hostel, maintenance of regular registrars etc. He should be recruited as per the norms of the Government. The members of governing body should be involved in this recruitment process.

4.16 The average duty hours of a principal-teacher in a primary school is 6 to 7 hours. But the duty hours of the principal-teachers of the ashram school is 24 hours. However, in some cases, the salary of the principal-teacher of the ashram school is less than that of the primary school. When the ashram school has the responsibility of taking care of the students for 24 hours, the salary and related allowances should be given to the principal-teachers of the ashram school as compared to the principals-teachers of the primary school.

4.17 There are a total of 452 ashram schools functioning in Gujarat for imparting primary education, while there are only 96 post primary ashram schools for imparting secondary education, so that all the students who pass Std-8 from the ashram school do not

get admission in Std-9 post primary Ashram School or other secondary schools and that is why the dropout rate remains very high. Therefore, keeping in view the tribal population, area, number of students passing, etc., special permission should be granted to open new post primary Ashrams schools.

4.18 Under the Dudh Sanjeevni scheme in the tribal areas, in most of the ashram schools, students get 200 gm of milk with flavored milk, this milk is available regularly in all the ashram schools and arrangements should be made at the district level for its effective implementation.

4.19 Arrangements should be made for timely and adequate supply of books, uniforms and other necessities to the students in the month of June when the session begins at the Ashram School.

4.20 To make ashram schools "smart ashram schools", all the ashram schools should be provided with technology equipment and facilities like TV, computer, projector, tablet, smart board, internet etc.

4.21 A brick-and-stone wall or wire fence should be made mandatory around every ashram school building. Special care should be taken to ensure the safety of boys and girls in the ashram school.

4.22 The government should make arrangements for the provision of mattresses, rugs, sheets, bed sheets etc. for the students to sleep in the ashram schools under the ashram school scheme and allocate the necessary budget for the same.

4.23 Ashram school students should be given more computer education in technical training along with school education. Apart from this, girls should be taught sewing, embroidery, beauty parlor, henna art, music-dance, home industry etc. While boys should be taught mobile repairing, wireman, masonry, plumbing work, mechanical work, sports. In short, some special arrangements should also be made for boys and girls to get vocational training.

4.24 The new buildings of the Ashram School should be constructed with advanced facilities like Eklavya Model Residential School. This

means new buildings with full of air light, adequate classrooms and hostel accommodation, adequate educational staff, physical facilities, adequate educational and sports equipment, computer labs, quality food, clean drinking water, electricity, bed sheets, female teachers' ratio, travel exhibitions etc. all matters should be raised qualitatively for the school, students, teachers and principals.

4.25 The PHC / CHC or the district health department should conduct compulsory health check-up of the students in the ashram schools at least every six (6) months and regularly check the condition of the medicines and first aid kits kept in the ashram schools. The report should be sent to the Ashram School Officer of the district.

4.26 Ashram school principals should be trained periodically for proper management and administration, teachers for educational quality improvement and cooks for making nutritious meals.

5. Conclusion

Due to the noble role played by the ashram schools in Gujarat in providing accommodation and food to the tribal children along with education, the standard of education in the tribal areas today is high and satisfactory. Some ashram schools have been weak in assuming this role, there are many problems related to education, accommodation and food. These problems cannot be solved by teachers, principals and the governing body alone. To address these issues, if the government allocates sufficient funds to show a positive attitude towards the ashram school and implements it effectively, these issues can certainly be solved. Ashram schools can become more vibrant if the tribal community is also cooperative and helpful in resolving these issues. In the end, it is no exaggeration to say that ashrams have been and will continue to be a boon for the educational and holistic development of tribal children.

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