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WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS-2023

BHUBANESWAR, INDIA | 9-14 AUGUST 2023

CRD11. ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND CHILDHOOD

ROUND TABLE TITLE:

DEVELOPING AN INNOVATIVE MODEL OF HOLISTIC EDUCATION FOR ADIVASI CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

While celebrating the 75th year of our Independence, it is very important for us to develop an innovative holistic model of education for the Adivasi children and youth in India as part of the inclusive education. Two major limitations pointed out by scholars researching on the current model of tribal education in India are: (1) it drifts tribal children and youth away from their culture, (2) it does not provide them life-skills. An obvious question is about the sustainability of such a model which fails to make any significant difference to the impoverished existence of the most vulnerable people. Prevailing model of primary and secondary school education inspired by western paradigm of education has failed to deliver the kind of education that Dr. Ambedkar believed was the way forward for empowerment. National Education Policy (NEP-2020) promises to deliver a hybrid model that gives literacy and nurtures indigenous languages by providing lessons in the mother tongue, imparting skills from the beginning of formal education and encourages celebration of native cultural traditions. NEP-2020 promotes 'Integration' rather than the notions of 'isolation' and 'assimilation'. New Education Policy (NEP-2020) promises to deliver a hybrid model that gives literacy and nurtures indigenous languages by providing lessons in the mother tongue, imparting skills from the beginning of formal education and encourages celebration of native cultural traditions. Some institutions in India had started implementing this practice much before the New Education Policy was commenced. Drifting away from Macaulay's model of literacy that is rooted in alien values, these institutions nurture a policy paradigm for imparting education that celebrates indigenous cultures and imparts knowledge through scientific methods. Some agencies and individuals erroneously question this innovative paradigm which is now integral part of new education policy. Motto for any intervention should be the right to self-determination, and children and youth being allowed to make free choice as to what stream of learning s/he wants to follow. This right should be decided by the Adivasi children and youth and NOT by academics sitting in their boardrooms. In four successive sessions, this round table propose to explore various dimensions of innovative model of education that inspires and aspires to inculcate pride in native values with quality learning of formal curriculum by veteran anthropologists who have espoused this cause for years.

Keywords: Holistic Education, Adivasi Children and Youth, Innovative Model of Education

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