
A Comparative Analysis of Eklavya Model Residential Schools of Tipa and Chawngte, Mizoram

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Abstract

The study focused on the comparison of the functioning and infrastructural amenities in EMRS of Tipa and Chawngte, Mizoram. It encompasses the various management and infrastructural factors which are pre-requisite for a school to function for the welfare of the teachers and students. The study also highlighted the enrollment, dropout and pass out rates of the schools under study and the importance of not only recruiting trained teachers but also retention of the teachers to reduce dropout rates of students. Though the schools are well equipped in terms of infrastructural facilities, the students have no access to computer and internet connectivity and there is lack of funds for students to participate in non- academic activities. An inference drawn from the study is that the policy makers must revisit the existing guidelines of EMRS for the improvement of the schools not only in the study area but also across India.

Keywords:

EMRS;
infrastructure;
enrollment;
dropout;
pass out.

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1. Introduction

Education in its general sense is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, values, benefits and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, or research. Education may also include informal transmission of such information from one human being to another. Education frequently takes place under the guidance of others, but learners may also educate themselves. Any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational.

A right to education has been recognized by some governments. At the global level, Article 13 of the United Nations' 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognizes the right of everyone to an education. Although education is compulsory in most places up to a certain age, attendance at school often is not, and a minority of parents choose home-schooling, sometimes with the assistance of modern electronic educational technology (also called e-learning). Education can take place in formal or informal settings.

2. Genesis of Eklavya Model Residential Schools

Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) started in the year 1997-98 to impart quality education to ST children in remote areas in order to enable them to avail of opportunities in high and professional educational courses and get employment in various sectors. The schools focus not only on academic education but on the all-round development of the students. Each school has a capacity of 480 students, catering to students from Class VI to XII. Hitherto, grants were given for construction of schools and recurring expenses to the State Governments under Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the scheme of 'Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS)' for classes VI to XII during 1997-1998 under Article 275(1) of the Indian Constitution on the pattern of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya. Till date, 197 EMRSs have been sanctioned by the Ministry in various parts of the country, out of which, 129 EMRSs are fully functional and the remaining 68 EMRSs are under construction. At present around 8 EMRS are in operational in Mizoram.

Eklavya schools are at par with Navodaya Vidyalaya and will have special facilities for preserving local art and culture besides providing training in sports and skill development. Across the country, as per Census 2011 figures, there are 564 such sub-districts out of which there is an EMRS in 102 sub-districts.

EMRS has vision of catalyzing socio-economic development of the most underprivileged groups in India i.e. the Scheduled Tribes (STs), in a coordinated and a planned manner considering it as an effective instrument for their holistic empowerment. EMRS has mission for imparting quality education to ST children by establishment of Eklavya Model Residential Schools in order to enable them to avail high and professional educational courses and to get employment in various sectors. EMRS will ensure them opportunities at par with non-ST populations thereby providing impetus to the overall development of tribal population in the country.

EMRS is one of the most important schools in Mizoram since the objectives and visions of the scheme are different from many existing schools in the State. EMRS contributes many distinct features and role in tribal students and education system in Mizoram. It is therefore necessary to study the work process and progress status of EMRS in Mizoram to know whether it will be beneficial for the society of Mizo.

Since the objective of EMRS is to provide quality middle and high-level education to Scheduled Tribes (ST) students in remote areas, it has great influence in the tribal state like Mizoram. EMRS and its mission also enable tribal students to avail of reservation in high and professional educational courses and as jobs in government and public and private sectors but also to have access to the best opportunities in education at par with the non-ST population. It is really a matter to investigate the development of EMRS so that it will become more and more popular and people also start adapting to it.

Objectives of the Study

1. To conduct a comparative analysis of the management practices employed in the EMRS of Tipa and Chawngte.
2. To assess the infrastructural amenities provided by both schools with a focus on enhancing the educational experience and well-being of the students.
3. To suggest measures for the improvement of the schools for further policy implications.

4. Methodology

The study is based on primary data. A structured questionnaire was prepared to capture the management, infrastructural facilities, enrollment, dropouts and passed out of the EMR schools in Tipa and Chawngte for the periods of 2021-2023. To analyse the management/ functioning, 27 indicators were employed and 35 indicators were utilized to examine the infrastructural facilities of the schools. Secondary sources were also obtained from various journals, books and other relevant e-resources. The data collected were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools.

5. Comparative Analysis and Results

The EMRS of Tipa and Chawngte were compared based on several indicators such as the functioning, infrastructure, enrollment, drop outs and pass outs students. The two schools are hypothetical assumed to be the same since they are set up under the same guidelines, however, this study was conducted to analyze whether there exist similarities and variations among the two EMRS.

Functioning of the EMRS

The position of school leadership plays a pivotal role in the holistic development of educational institutions. Beyond classroom instruction, it holds equal significance in directly and indirectly shaping students' progress. Numerous research studies have underscored the critical importance of school leadership in promoting equality across diverse student demographics, particularly among marginalized groups. Effective school leadership ensures that educational resources and facilities cater to the individual learning needs of all students. Moreover, leadership authority at all levels is instrumental in overseeing strategic directions, implementing policies and initiatives, and providing guidance to address the myriad challenges encountered by schools. Table 1 below presents comparison in the functioning of the schools based on select indicators and the data were obtained from both the principals of EMRS Tipa and Chawngte.

Table 1: Management of the EMR Schools on Selected Indicators-I

Sl.	INDICATORS	Tipa		Chawngte	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Availability of course content separately for the school		√		√
2.	Inclusions of local relevant curriculum		√		√
3.	Availability of school academic calendar	√		√	
4.	Students' daily routine is arranged in a systematic order as per the requirement of the students	√		√	
5.	Sufficient number of teaching and non-teaching staffs		√		√
6.	Participated in the recruitment process of teaching and non-teaching staff	√			√
7.	Financial problem in running the school properly		√		√
8.	Involved in the admission process of the school	√		√	
9.	Teachers are permitted to be engaged for tuition class		√		√
10.	Remedial classes/ extra classes for students	√		√	
11.	Parent's Teacher meeting	√		√	
12.	Satisfied with the school campus	√			√
13.	Morning assembly for students	√		√	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As presented in Table 1 above, both the schools under study did not have a separate course content for their school, they are following the pattern of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The local related issues are not included in their curriculum design. The schools followed the academic calendar prescribed for them and they prepared the daily routines for each class depending upon the requirement of the students. The principal is involved in the admission process of the students and also played an active role in the recruitments of the teaching and non-teaching staff but the number of teachers and staff are highly inadequate to meet the demand of the students and the schools. Both the schools do not face financial problems for smoothly running the schools, this may be attributed to the fact that these EMRS are funded by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. The teachers are not permitted to give tuition to the students over and above the number of teaching hours assigned to them though they are permitted to offer remedial classes. Parents and teachers' interaction are held at regular intervals and students' morning assemblies are conducted every working day. Based on the 13 indicators listed above in Table 1, both the schools are similar in 12 indicators and differed only in 1 indicator. i.e., satisfaction regarding the school campus where Tipa EMRS are satisfied with their campus, Chawngte EMRS is not satisfactory. An inference that can be drawn here is that the EMRS of Chawngte is having a scope for improvement in upgrading their school campus.

The following table, Table. 2 highlights 14 indicators to compare the managements of the two EMRS. The indicators are related to classroom teachings, developing students' abilities, teachers' activities in maintaining quality teachings and others.

Table 2: Management of the EMR Schools on Selected Indicators-II

Sl.	INDICATORS	Tipa		Chawngte	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Rewards to Meritorious students	√		√	
2	Practise gender equity	√		√	
3	Purchase of teaching- Aids	√		√	
4	Emphasis on activity-based learning	√		√	
5	Allocated of enough funds for field trips and projects		√	√	
6	Teachers evaluate class notes regularly	√		√	
7	Conduct of assessment or tests frequently	√		√	
8	Opportunity to teaching and non-teaching staff for professional development	√		√	
9	Separate time slots for students to access computers		√		√
10	Allocated of funds for participation in school/national level sports meet	√		√	
11	Opportunities to students to expose to school-level curricular competitions	√		√	
12	Organising science exhibitions in the school		√		√
13	National and state festivals celebration	√		√	
14	Are there regular interactions between you and the hostel superintendents?	√		√	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Awards to meritorious students can be great motivators for promoting academic excellence and good behavior. They are often used to recognize hard work and achievements while creating opportunities for students to develop self-confidence and leadership skills. Both the EMRS awarded meritorious students by giving them certificates and other items which will motivate and help them in enhancing their learning abilities. The concept of gender equity recognizes that boys and girls have different needs and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes. In the EMR schools of Tipa and Chawngte gender equity is being followed by inculcating fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between boys and girls. The use of teaching aids can facilitate the learning process of the students by making the process less time consuming and interesting, the schools under study often purchased teaching aids that enables the students to use their hearing and seeing abilities thereby improving their learning potentials. As presented in the Table above, the principal of Tipa EMRS stated that though activity-based learning is promoted in the school, the funds availability for students' field trips and projects is rather limited whereas, the funds allocated for this in EMRS Chawngte is not limited. In view of the importance of field trips and project works in promoting critical thinking and enhancing their observational skills, more funds must be allotted for field trips and projects in the EMRS of Tipa. Teachers in both the schools are carrying out their duties diligently such as conducting tests and evaluating class notes. Moreover, the teachers and staff of these schools are given an opportunity for professional development by letting them undergo various training programs. Though the schools under study are well-equipped with computers and its accessories which are mainly used for running the day-to-day requirements of the schools. However, separate time slots for students to access these

computers are not allotted in both the schools. This particular factor shows that despite the fact that Information Technology (IT) subject is a compulsory paper in their curriculum, the students have no access to computer and internet connectivity. A recommendation that can be made here is that both the schools must allot time slots for students as per their IT syllabus with the assistance of their concerned subject teacher. In both the schools, funds are allocated for field trips and national sports meet. Though funds are provided for participation in school level curriculum exhibitions in EMRS Tipa, funds for the same is not allocated in EMRS Chawngte. In EMRS Tipa, opportunities for school level competitions and exhibitions are given to students whereas in EMRS Chawngte, these opportunities are not open for students. Science exhibitions were never conducted in both the schools. National and state levels festivals are both celebrated in the schools. Since EMRS are residential schools, the principals often consulted the hostel wardens in matters relating to the welfare of the hostellers. Based on the above 14 indicators, it can be concluded that both the EMRS are similar in 12 indicators. At the same time, they varied in indicators 5 and 11 i.e., funds allocated for field trips and projects and opportunities given to students for their exposure in school levels curriculum-based competitions.

Infrastructure:

When considering which school to enroll in, both students and parents frequently contemplate the quality of the school's infrastructure as a primary consideration. School infrastructure encompasses all the physical structures and facilities that the school provides. While education primarily relies on curriculum design, teachers' expertise, and teaching methods, the environment in which learning takes place also significantly impacts students' academic development. A conducive, tranquil, and supportive atmosphere plays a crucial role in fostering students' academic growth. Therefore, a well-designed school infrastructure should create a conducive environment where students feel comfortable, safe, and can concentrate on learning, with ample resources and amenities to support their educational journey.

Table 3: Infrastructure of the Schools-I

Sl	Indicators	Tipa		Chawngte	
		Good	N. A	Good	N. A
1.	Principal Room	√		√	
2.	Staff Common Room	√		√	
3.	Office Room	√		√	
4.	Classrooms	√		√	
5.	Visitor's Room		√	√	
6.	Science Laboratories	√		√	
7.	Computer Laboratories		√	√	
8.	Internet connectivity in the computer room		√	√	
9.	Library	√		√	
10.	Availability of books in the library	√		√	
11.	Toilet facilities	√		√	
12.	Drinking water Facilities	√		√	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Upon observation of Table 3, it is evident that the schools are equipped with various rooms designated for the principal, staff, office, and science laboratories, yet notably lacks a visitors' room and absence of a computer laboratory and internet connectivity in EMRS Tipa. However, the presence of a well-furnished library stocked with diverse reading materials for students is commendable. Additionally,

the maintenance of toilets and drinking water facilities are satisfactory in both the schools. It is imperative to highlight that computer laboratories are indispensable resources in schools, essential for fostering students' learning and technological skills. Such facilities not only prepare students for technical careers but also for thriving in today's digital world. Moreover, the significance of internet connectivity cannot be overstated. It serves as a gateway to a vast reservoir of knowledge, aiding students in reinforcing curriculum concepts and accessing information vital for their daily lives. Therefore, it is advisable for the EMRS Tipa to consider establishing a computer laboratory with internet connectivity to enrich students' educational experiences and equip them with essential skills for the future. Out of the 12 indicators listed in Table 3, EMRS Tipa and EMRS Chawngte are similar in 9 indicators but EMRS Chawngte fared better in 3 indicators namely, visitors room, computer and internet connectivity.

Table 4: Infrastructure of the Schools -II

Sl	Indicators	Tipa		Chawngte	
		Good	N. A	Good	N. A
1.	School Bus facility		√		√
2.	Emergency Fire exits	√		√	
3.	Fire extinguishers	√		√	
4.	Indoor stadium		√		√
5.	Playground	√		√	
6.	Fans in the classrooms	√		√	
7.	First aid facilities	√		√	
8.	Campus security guard		√	√	
9.	Store room	√		√	
10.	Sports goods	√		√	
11.	Learning aids	√		√	
12.	Recreational room		√	√	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The schools under study do not offer transportation services for students, which is understandable given its residential nature where all students reside on campus. It is commendable that the schools are equipped with fire extinguishers for emergencies and provides a playground for outdoor activities. Additionally, classrooms are fitted with fans, learning aids are readily available, and there's a designated storage room for school materials. However, notable absences include an indoor stadium for indoor sports and a recreational room for both students and teachers in EMRS Tipa. Furthermore, in EMRS Tipa, the lack of security personnel raises concerns regarding the safety of the school and its students whereas EMRS Chawngte is having campus security guard and recreational room for students, faculty and staff. Analysis from Table 4 suggests that the school should prioritize the establishment of an indoor sports stadium to provide students with opportunities to engage in non-academic activities and develop their sporting abilities. Additionally, the presence of an indoor stadium can facilitate the discovery of talents beyond academic excellence. Moreover, the provision of a recreational room would foster peer relationships and interpersonal skills among students of EMRS Tipa. Furthermore, ensuring the safety of the school environment is paramount. Implementing security measures, such as employing security guards, can safeguard the school premises without compromising students' educational experiences. Thus, investing in security personnel can provide the necessary protection while maintaining a conducive learning environment. Out of the 12 indicators, EMRS Chawngte's performance is better than EMRS Tipa in 2 indicators i.e., campus security guard and recreational room.

Table 5:Infrastructure of the School -III

Sl. No.	Indicators	Tipa			Chawngte	
		Good	M	N. A	Good	N.A
1.	Blackboard/whiteboard	√			√	
2.	Condition of tables and chairs	√			√	
3.	Well-ventilated classrooms	√			√	
4.	Presence of nurse	√			√	
5.	Teaching staff quarters	√			√	
6.	Ramps in the school for the disabled	√			√	
7.	Conditions of paths linking the buildings		√		√	
8.	Road connectivity of staff quarters via classrooms		√		√	
9.	Campus environment and it's building construction	√			√	
10.	Conditions of building roof	√			√	
11.	Are there any types of facility for the visually impaired students?			√	√	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Where, M= Manageable

The school's writing boards, including whiteboards and blackboards, are well-maintained, and the classrooms are adequately ventilated. A healthcare provider, in the form of a nurse, is available on campus to address students' medical needs during school hours. Additionally, residential quarters are provided for the teaching staff, and disabled-friendly ramps are installed throughout the school premises. However, in EMRS Tipa there is room for improvement in the connectivity of roads within the school campus, as the current conditions are barely manageable. Despite being environmentally friendly and having well-maintained roofs, the EMRS Tipa lacks facilities for visually impaired children. This deficiency underscores the school's inadequacy in accommodating visually impaired tribal children. It is essential to recognize that visually impaired children have the same rights as their non-impaired counterparts. Therefore, school authorities must prioritize accommodating visually impaired students to promote equity within the school's operations. Implementing facilities and resources tailored to the needs of visually impaired students will ensure inclusivity and accessibility, aligning with principles of equity and diversity in education. From the 11 indicators of Table 5, EMRS Chawngte can be seen to execute better infrastructural facilities than the EMRS Tipa in 3 indicators.

Enrollment, Dropout and Pass out of Students:

The intensifying competition among educational institutions has led to a notable ripple effect: the increased demand for schools to improve their methods of addressing applicants' inquiries and concerns. The debate surrounding the impact of school size has a rich history. Advocates of larger schools argue that they offer a broader range of curricular and extracurricular activities. Conversely, supporters of smaller schools contend that larger institutions may overlook individual students, while smaller ones provide a more personalized approach. The size of a school is a significant factor that policymakers can influence, and it serves as a potential indicator of school quality. By carefully considering the implications of school size, policymakers can make informed decisions to ensure that educational institutions are equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students. The following table presented the enrollment of students in both the schools during 2021-2023. Mentioned may be made here that EMRS of Tipa and Chawngte were established in 2021 and the study period for enrollment covers 2021-2023 academic year.

Table 6: Total Number of Enrollment in the Schools during 2021-2023

	Tipa				Chawngte			
Class	2021-2022		2022-2023		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
VI	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
VII	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
VIII	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
IX	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
X	-	-	15	15	-	-	15	15

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Based on the data provided in the table, it is evident that EMRS Tipa has consistently enrolled 30 students in each class from 6 to 9, comprising 15 boys and 15 girls annually. The total enrollment for the academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 is 240 students. Enrollment in EMRS Chawngte is also the same with Tipa during the study period i.e., 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic years. There was a notable increase in enrollment from 120 to 150 students in both the schools in the academic year of 2022-2023 which is attributed to the introduction of class 10 in the school. Class 11 is to be started in the next academic year in both the schools and class 12 by the second academic year i.e., by 2025.

The drop outs from both the schools during the same period is presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Number of Dropouts during 2021-2023

Classes	Tipa		Chawngte	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
VI	1	1	-	-
VII	-	-	-	-
VIII	-	-	-	-
IX	-	-	-	-
X	4	-	-	-

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data in the above table indicates that, from EMRS Tipa, two students from class 6 dropped out due to health reasons and four boys dropped out from class 10. The primary reason cited for these four dropouts is the exit of qualified teachers from the school for better job opportunities. Consequently, the principal hired temporary teachers, whose teaching methods were reportedly not suitable for some students, leading to their dropout. During the same period, there are no dropouts from EMRS Chawngte. From this observation, it can be inferred that retaining teachers in the EMRS system is crucial. Enhancing incentives for teachers could be a potential solution to this issue. By offering better incentives, such as improved salaries, professional development opportunities, and supportive working environments, schools can enhance teacher retention rates. This, in turn, would positively impact student retention rates and overall academic performance. Therefore, prioritizing measures to retain qualified teachers can significantly contribute to the long-term success of the school and the academic achievement of its students.

The number of students pass out from schools from different classes is a definitive factor in the academic activity of schools, since grades are reflection of expectations of students' achievements as well as the schools. Table 8 below presented the number of pass out from both the schools during the study period, i.e., two academic years.

Table 8: Passed outs during 2021-2023

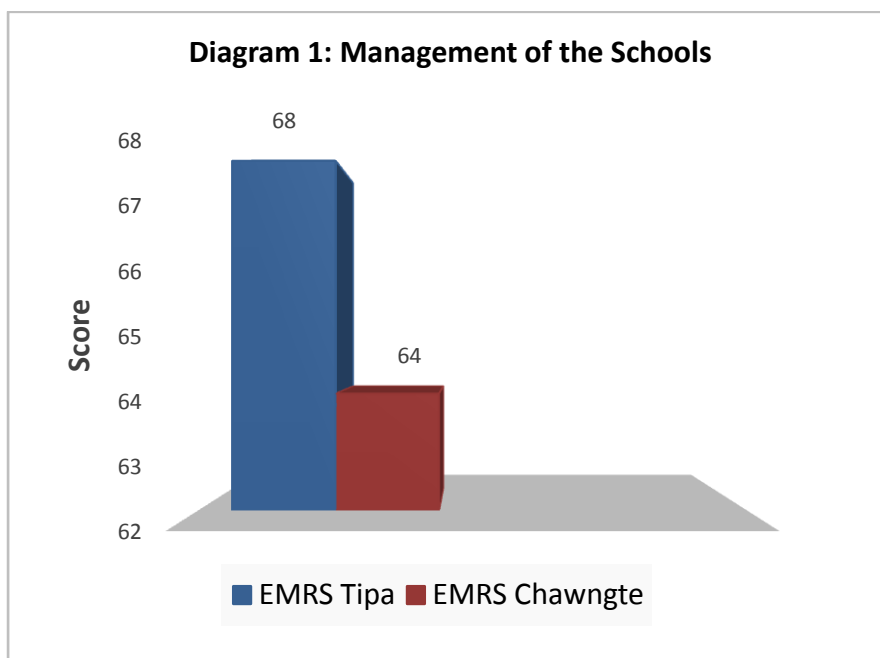
Class	Tipa				Chawngte			
	2021-2022		2022-2023		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
VI	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
VII	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
VIII	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
IX	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
X	-	-	8	9	-	-	5	7

Source: Field Survey, 2024

During the entire period of assessment in both the schools, all students from class 6 to 9 succeeded in completing their courses and conceded their grades. However, in EMRS Tipa, out of the 15 boys and 15 girls enrolled in class 10, 8 boys and 9 girls succeeded, i.e., 7 boys and 6 girls failed their examinations. Likewise, in EMRS Chawngte, out of the 15 boys and 15 girls enrolled in class 10, 5 boys and 7 girls passed their examination and 10 boys and 8 girls were unsuccessful. The primary reason for some students' lack of success is their insufficient proficiency in English, which impedes their learning not only in this subject but also in other subjects. One recommendation for the school is to hire teachers who possess skills in improving students' English language abilities. Even if temporary teachers need to be recruited, they should ideally be trained educators who have passed the Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET). This would ensure that students receive quality instruction that can enhance their learning potential across various subjects.

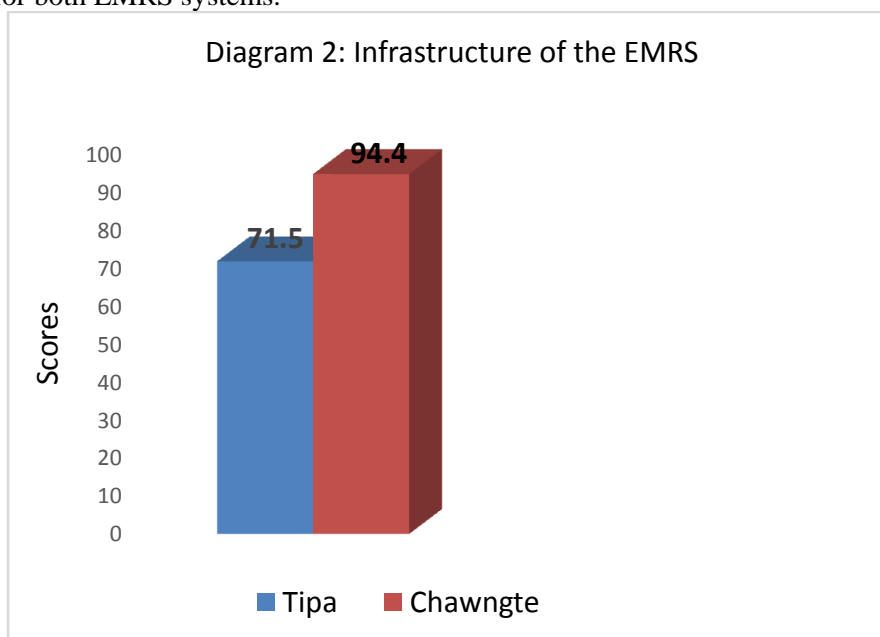
Comparison of Management and Infrastructure of the ERMS based on Ordinal Data

Comparison based on ordinal data i.e., 0 and 1 was done between the two EMRS. For management of the schools under study, 25 indicators were selected and fit in a scale of 0 to 100, then the weight of each indicator is converted to 4 points. The two EMRs were assigned four (4) points in each indicator where their responses were positives and zero (0) where their responses were negatives and the following bar diagram presented their scores.



Based on the scores above, 68 out of 100 for EMRS Tipa and 64 out of 100 for EMRS Chawngte, it appears that EMRS Tipa has a slightly higher score than EMRS Chawngte. However, it is important to note that a score out of 100 may not provide a complete picture of school performance. Other factors can also significantly influence the overall effectiveness of a school. Therefore, while EMRS Tipa may have a slightly higher score, it does not necessarily mean it is performing significantly better than EMRS Chawngte in all aspects of running the administration and daily functioning of the school.

As presented in Tables 3,4 and 5, a total of 35 indicators were utilized to assess the infrastructure of the EMRS. Each indicator was assigned ordinal data values of 0 and 1, which were subsequently scaled to a range of 0 to 100. For positive responses, each indicator was weighted at 2.86 points, while negative responses carried no weight. Consequently, the ensuing diagram depicted the infrastructure scores for both EMRS systems.



In evaluating the infrastructural facilities of the schools, it is evident that EMRS Chawngte surpasses EMRS Tipa, with a score of 94.4 compared to Tipa's 71.5. Recognizing the crucial role of infrastructure in educational settings, it is advisable for EMRS Tipa to prioritize the development of its school campus and environment. This enhancement is essential not only for the students but also for the well-being and productivity of the teachers and staff.

6. CONCLUSION:

Based on the comparative study of EMRS above, it can be stated that in the context of inclusive education, equity ensures that every student can access required educational resources and academic rigorously during the entire span of their formal education, irrespective of their background. Especially, those schools dedicated to the education of tribals need more support on the ground of human resources, expenditures, infrastructures, other relevant resources from the governments or managing bodies to improve school readiness and creating fair, equitable support to meet every need of tribal students. It is urgent to identify barriers to running school activities keeping pace with the students' learning needs to fill in their resource gaps.

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