

# EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

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**Abstract-** The Scheduled Tribes is the most socially and educationally disadvantaged groups in India. ST has different histories of social and economic deprivation and the underlying causes of their educational marginalization are also strikingly distinct. The main aim of education is to change the cultural norms and patterns of life of tribal women to make them economically independent, to organize themselves to form strong groups so as to analyzed their situations and conditions of living, understand their rights and responsibilities to enable them to participate and contribute to the development of women and the entire society. Despite these efforts the performance of the tribes in education is much lower than the Scheduled Castes. The present study was undertaken based on secondary data. The studies suggest that the policy makers approach paid little attention to culturally linked education. This has led to drop outs and directly impacted their overall educational status.

**Keywords:** Primary Education, Dropouts, Literacy Rate and Tribes

## 1.INTRODUCTION

Tribal groups are the earliest settlers of India. In India, there are more than 400 tribal groups that constitute eight percent of the nation's total population [1] [2]. Around 87 million persons have been enumerated in the country as members of Scheduled Tribes (ST). ST also referred to as adivasis (original inhabitants' from Adi 'old' and vasi 'those who stay') are spread all over India with major concentrations across the central, northeast and western regions. The states, with tribal populations reported, within each group are as follows: the northeastern group consists of Mizoram (95 percent), Meghalaya (81 percent), Nagaland (73 percent), Arunachal Pradesh (62 percent), Manipur (26 percent) and Tripura (17 percent), the central group includes the states of Chhattisgarh (30 percent), Jharkhand (28 percent), Orissa (23 percent), Madhya Pradesh (21 percent) and Bihar (0.4 percent) and the remaining group encompasses Rajasthan (14 percent), Gujarat (11 percent), Maharashtra (11 percent), Andhra Pradesh (7 percent), Karnataka (6 percent) and Goa (5 percent); any other states have a very small proportion of the tribal population [3]. According to 2011 census Scheduled Castes (SC) and ST comprise only about 16.6 percent and 8.6 percent respectively in India. In our country the total number of tribal communities recognized by the government is 645.

Education is viewed as a standout amongst the most essential and potential instrument for the advancement of a country. Globally, 123 million youth (aged 15 to 24) lack basic reading and writing skills. 61 percent of them are young women. Gender gaps in youth literacy rates are also narrowing. There were 95 literate young women for every 100 young men in 2010, compared with 90 women in 1990. "The National Policy of Education", 1986 updated in 1992 paying greater attention to the education of the educationally backward minorities in the interested of equality and social justice. In our country "Programme of Action", (POA), 1992-launched two new centrally sponsored scheme during 1993-94. These are- Scheme of "Area Intensive Programme (AIP)" for educationally backward minors and Scheme of "Financial Assistance" for Madras education. Educationists thus make every effort to develop fully the intellectual potential of the students and make efforts to see that their potentialities are fully acknowledged and channelized for the benefit of the individual in general and that of the society in particular [4].

STs are socially and economically weaker and also under object poverty and live in subsistence economy and general backwardness. This is because of their health which is a cause and consequence of poverty [5]. So, education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of the ST. The educational status of the ST and the role of governance in this direction are highly essential. It is well known that the educational background of tribes is very discouraging as compared to the rest of the population. The term 'double disadvantage' has been used to characterize the socio-economic and spatial marginalization of Scheduled Tribes in India [6]. Contemporary society can't perform its attempt of economic development, technological improvement and social movement without completely exploiting the capacities of its nationals. In this context, the objective of this paper is to analyze the trend of literacy rate, gross enrolment ratio, dropout rates and Gender Parity Index of tribal education in India.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The data for the present study have been collected from various sources which have been duly acknowledged. Census of India, 2011 and the report on selected educational statistics, published by the statistics division, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, New Delhi.

### 3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The ST is the most socially and educationally disadvantaged groups in India. STs have different histories of social and economic deprivation, and the underlying causes of their educational marginalization are also strikingly distinct. However, a comparison of educational outcomes among SC and ST yields a common picture that the government has sought to address through a common set of policy prescriptions. India made a constitutional commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 nearly sixty years ago. The goal, which was expected to be achieved by 1960, remains elusive, even now. There is an increased demand for education among the SC and ST [7].

**Table 3.1- Literacy Rate among STs and All**

Year	Scheduled Tribes			All		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1961	13.33	3.16	8.53	40.40	15.35	28.30
1971	17.63	4.85	11.30	45.96	21.97	34.45
1981	24.52	8.04	16.35	56.38	29.76	43.57
1991	40.65	18.19	29.60	64.13	39.29	52.21
2001	59.17	34.76	47.10	75.26	53.67	64.84
2011	68.50	49.40	59.00	80.90	64.60	73.00

Sources: Office of Registrar General India.

The above table show that the literacy rate of all population increased 10 percent from 28.30 in 1961 to 34.45 percent in 1971. But, the ST literacy was increased only three percent from 8.53 percent in 1961 to 11.30 percent in 1971. Male literacy rate increased 10 percent in every census but the female literacy rate of general population was increased at diminishing rate. Like that male literacy of ST population was increased 16.35 percent from 24.52 percent in 1981 to 40.65 percent in 1991. It is increased 68.50 percent in 2011. Female literacy of ST population increased 16 percent from 18.19 percent in 1991 to 34.76 percent in 2001. It is observed that female literacy in general and ST population was low compared with male literacy. Half of the female had educated among the general population but in ST female population not reach half.

The Indian government lays emphasis on primary education up to the age of fourteen years and made free for children for 6 to 14 years of age or up to class VIII under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RCFCEA) 2009. Education in India is provided by the public sector as well as the private sector, with control and funding coming from three levels: central, state, and local. The various articles of the Indian Constitution provide for education as a fundamental right. Being illiterate, the tribal people cannot become acquainted with development in science and technology. Due to illiteracy, people of those communities are totally ignorant of basic principles of health which makes them an easy prey to diseases. For a tribal family to send a boy or a girl is essentially a matter of economics and entails dislocation in the traditional pattern of their labour force. Many tribal's retain from sending children to school due to loss of good characteristic of the labourforce and the fear of expenditure on education [8].

**Table 3.2- Literacy Rate (Age Group)**

All Categories Age group	Total			SC			ST		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
All Ages	73.0	80.9	64.6	66.1	75.2	56.5	56.5	68.5	49.4
10-14	91.1	92.2	90.0	90.3	91.5	89.0	89.0	88.3	84.4
15-19	88.8	91.2	86.2	87.1	89.7	84.1	84.1	85.7	74.6
20-24	83.2	88.8	77.3	79.1	86.2	71.6	71.6	79.6	59.0
Adolescent (10-19)	90.0	91.7	88.2	88.8	90.6	86.8	86.8	87.1	79.9
Youth (15-24)	86.1	90.0	81.8	83.3	88.1	78.0	78.0	82.9	67.1

Sources: Office of Registrar General India.

The above table shows that 77.3 percent of the female have literacy in the age group of 20-24. But in SC female population and ST female population was low like 71.6 and 59 percent. Female literacy was very low compared with male literacy among the total population, SC and ST. It can be observed those females are not entered to study graduate among SC and ST. Most of the parents are like to arrange marriage life to their female children. The increase in the number of schools is also reflected in the ratio of primary to upper primary schools which clearly shows the impact of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) under which a large number of schools have been opened in the recent past. Improvements in the physical access to elementary education by providing primary and upper primary schools seems to have also impacted on the ratio of upper primary sections to lower primary sections. Consequently, the educational status of SCs is significantly better in the Southern and Southwestern states of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, where strong SC liberation movements and broad based anti-Brahmin movements emerged in the context of the anti-colonial struggle for independence. For a variety of complex

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reasons, such movements had a comparatively weak presence in North India [9]. The majorities of SC individuals work as landless agricultural labourers or are engaged in what is considered 'coolie' work. While SCs have traditionally been denied education, even those with education have experienced very limited social mobility due to caste-based opposition to their occupational mobility [10].

**Table 3.3 - Gross Enrolment Ratios (Ger)**

Level Year	Primary (I - V) 6 – 10 Years			Upper Primary (VI - VIII) 11 – 13 Years			Elementary (I - VIII) 6 – 13 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12	117.8	115.6	116.7	76.8	74.1	75.5	103.0	100.6	101.8
2012-13	115.7	113.5	114.6	86.2	86.5	86.4	105.1	103.9	104.5
2013-14	114.4	111.9	113.2	90.5	92.2	91.3	105.9	105.0	105.5
2014-15	110.6	108.2	109.4	93.0	95.2	94.1	104.4	103.7	104.0
2015-16	107.8	105.6	106.7	95.4	98.2	96.7	103.4	103.1	103.2

Sources: Office of Registrar General India

It is observed from the above table that from 2011-12 to 2015-16 the girl enrolment in school was very low compared with boys in primary school that is 115.6 in 2011-12 to 105.6 in 2015-16. In upper primary school the girls enrollment low compared with boys enrolment in 2011-12. But the girl enrolment was increasing from 86.4 in 2012-13 to 98.2 in 2015-16. The girl got more opportunity to studied upper primary. Overall girl's enrolment in I-VIII class was increasing at diminishing rate. As per the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2012, 96.5 percent of all rural children between the ages of 6-14 were enrolled in school. This is the fourth annual survey to report enrollment above 96 percent. 83 percent of all rural 15-16 year olds were enrolled in school. However, going forward, India will need to focus more on quality. According to current estimates, 80 percent of all schools are government schools making the government the major provider of education. However, because of poor quality of public education, 27 percent of Indian children are privately educated. With more than 50 percent children enrolling in private schools in urban areas, the balance has already tilted towards private schooling in cities; even in rural areas, nearly 20 percent of the children in 2004-5 were enrolled in private schools. A centrally-sponsored government scheme of ashram schools exclusively for ST children from elementary to higher secondary levels was initiated in the 1970s and continues to the present [6]. Primary school teachers freely expressed opinions about the 'in educability' of SC and ST children. Such biased views, she reports, were expressed less by middle and secondary school teachers in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh [11].

**Table 3.4 - Gross Enrolment Ratios**

Level Year	Secondary (IX – X) 14 – 15 Years			Senior secondary (XI – XII) 16 – 17 Years			Higher education 18 – 23 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12	56.7	50.6	53.8	35.4	29.0	32.3	12.4	9.7	11.0
2012-13	62.6	61.2	61.9	32.3	29.0	30.7	12.4	9.8	11.1
2013-14	70.3	70.1	70.2	36.7	34.1	35.4	12.5	10.2	11.3
2014-15	71.8	72.6	72.2	39.8	37.8	38.8	15.2	12.3	13.7
2015-16	73.7	75.4	74.5	43.8	42.4	43.1	NA	NA	NA

Source: @ Statistics of School Education, M/o Human Resource Development (MHRD), Unified- District Information System for Education (U-DISE), All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Reports, MHRD

The cross enrolment ratio of secondary (IX-X) 14-15 years in India was continuously increasing from 53.8 in 2011-12 to 74.5 in 2015-16. It is same in boys and girls enrolment ratio. Only 74.5 percent are enrolment in secondary. But the enrolment of senior secondary total was only 43.1 percent. It is same in boys and girl. It can be observed that from 2011-12 to 2013-14 the enrollment of higher education (18-23 years) was constant that is 11 percent. It was increased 3 percent in boys and total and increased 2 percent in girls. Most of the students take the support of tuition and coaching centers to pass the course and for preparing for engineering entrance examinations, whereas, they do not get the same in higher education [12].

**Table 3.5 - Gender Parity Index (GPI) for ST's Students**

Level Year	Secondary (IX – X)	Senior Secondary (XI – XII)	Higher Education
2011-12	0.89	0.82	0.78
2012-13	0.98	0.90	0.79
2013-14	0.99	0.94	0.81
2014-15	1.0	0.95	0.81

Source: Statistics of School Education, M/o Human Resource Development(MHRD), Unified- District Information System for Education (U-DISE), All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Reports, MHRD

### International Journal of Technical Research & Science

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) and percentage of girls' enrolment in Primary and Upper Primary classes presented for the year 2008-09 reveal that there is consistent improvement in the GPI compare to the previous years. No significant difference is noticed in the GPI in Primary enrolment in rural areas (0.94) and in urban areas (0.91) which is quite similar to the situation in the previous year. The boys outnumber girls both at the Primary and Upper Primary levels of education. Every year the GPI for ST in secondary (IX-X) was increased at one percent. The GPI in senior secondary was continuously increased from 0.82 in 2011-12 to 0.95 in 2014-15 and also in higher education 0.78 in 2011-12 to 0.81 in 2014-15. Over a period of time, girls' share in Primary and Upper Primary classes has shown improvement. However, it is lower than the share of boys' enrolment.

**Table 3.6 - Dropout Rate in School Education**

Year Classes	Classes I – V			Classes I – VIII			Classes I – X		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12	36.1	34.4	35.3	57.3	57.1	57.2	64.4	67.6	65.9
2012-13	33.3	31.2	32.3	50.6	47.5	49.2	63.2	62.2	62.7
2013-14	31.9	30.9	31.3	49.8	46.4	46.4	63.2	61.4	62.4

**Source:** Education at a Glance, Dept. of School Education, MHRD.

Poor treatment in schools and loss of self-worth and dignity result in drop outs or poor performance in examinations, thus undermining SC and ST students' opportunities to progress to higher levels of education. This, in turn, has a crippling effect on their ability to compete in the job market and increases their sense of alienation from their communities. Concern about this problem has led sections of SC and ST communities to advocate for separate schools for their children in which they are taught by committed teachers and are able to develop a positive sense of self. Some such schools have been established with support from NGOs and educationists and, in rare cases, on the initiative of the government.

The dropout rate in school education was continuously decreased from 35.5 in 2011-12 to 31.3 2013-14. And also the boys and girl in classes I-V. The people understand the important of girl education. It leads to decrease the dropout rate in classes (I-V), (I-VIII) and I-X. According to United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), In India eight million children never have stepped inside a school and 80 million dropping out without completing basic schooling. There has been progress in implementation of the RTE Act in the past three years but children are still dropping out, not for labour, but because they are not learning anything in schools. Government of India is also focusing on providing quality education at school level. Recently GOI allocated Rs. 65,867 crores has been allocated to the Ministry of Human Resource Development out of which Rs. 27, 258 crore is allocated for SSA and RTE. India has made extraordinary progress over the past decade in increasing access to elementary education, now reaching 96 percent of school-age children. Having brought so many children into school, particularly those from the most vulnerable groups, it is logical to turn attention to retaining them through the elementary cycle.

### CONCLUSION

The main aim of education is to change the cultural norms and patterns of life of tribal women to make them economically independent, to organize themselves to form strong groups so as to analyzed their situations and conditions of living, understand their rights and responsibilities and to enable them to participate and contribute to the development of women and the entire society. There is a wide spread poverty, illiteracy and backwardness among the tribal people which is evident from the census report. The fact remains that a large number of tribal women in rural areas might have missed educational opportunities at different stages and in order to empower them varieties of skill training programmes have to be designed and organized. These include poor infrastructure as well as poorly motivated teachers. So, there is a lack of awareness among the tribal community. Tamil Nadu does not have a problem of attracting children to school and retaining them. The drop-out rate in primary and upper primary schools in Tamil Nadu was also among the lowest in India. Tamil Nadu is placed far better than the northern states like UP, MP and Rajasthan in terms of physical infrastructure or even the southern states, such as Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. This is not surprising because the state has been spending considerably higher amounts per capita than most states for the past several years. The quality can achieve through a drastic changes in the learning methods and techniques, making classroom activities more experimental and enjoyable for the children, improved teacher training, and of course upgrading the school infrastructure. The studies on tribal education suggest that the policy makers approach paid little attention to culturally linked education. This has led to drop outs and directly impacted their overall educational status.

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