

ISSUES OF TRIBAL EDUCATION IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ODISHA

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Abstract:

The objective of this paper is to analyse the education status of tribal with literacy rate, gross enrolment ratio, dropout rates and Gender Parity Index in India with special reference to Odisha. The study is based on secondary data from Census of India, 2011. It compares the education status of tribals with others. For this it uses (i) Sopher's disparity Index, (ii) Co-efficient of Equality and (ii) Gender parity index. The main findings of the study are: i) The literacy rate of male, female and total population of scheduled tribes in the scheduled states are lower than the non-scheduled states. The gross enrolment ratio is higher in class I to V which is 137.2 for ST boys and 136.7 for ST girls. The Gender Parity Index for ST children is almost same as all categories of children except for class XI to XII.

Key Words: Drop out, Education, Enrolment, Literacy, Tribes

Introduction

The Scheduled Tribe populations are more than 10.2 cores in India. It constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Census of India, 2011). Some studies reveal that rather than various Government policies the Scheduled Tribe population lacking behind the development process. The poverty rate is high in the scheduled tribe areas than the non-scheduled tribe areas due to the lower literacy rate. Lower literacy rate leads to poor level of skill in the working sector and that leads to lower earning. Through promotion of education, there is some possibilities to increase the manpower and later it accelerate the earning power of the tribal peoples. For that purpose the Government intervention is required. By providing some supportive measures like stipend, hostel, ashram school, different type of tribal institution, chief rate of study loan, reservation policies, it can improve the tribal education. The difference between the tribal literacy and general literacy is reducing but how long it will take to converge the situation that is in important issue. Now privatisation of education made it more difficult for the ST people to reduce the gap between general to tribal people. Number of private sector is increasing in the field of education. And the rate of return is too high than the Government sector. The operation of private market is operating but it is only meant for the people of higher categories and rich people. So everyone can't take the benefit of this privatisation. And due to lack of finance, corruption it shows Government failure to fulfil the target.

Education is an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. Literacy and educational attainment are powerful indicators of social and economic development among the backward groups in India. Currently, the tribes lag behind not only the general population but also the Scheduled Caste population in literacy and education. This disparity is even more marked among Scheduled Tribe women, who have the lowest literacy rates in the country (Maharatna, 2005). The male-female gap in literacy and educational attainment among the scheduled tribes is significant. Education, especially in its elementary form, is considered of utmost importance to the tribals because it is crucial for total development of tribal communities and is particularly helpful to build confidence among the tribes to deal with outsiders on equal terms. Despite the sincere and concerted efforts by the government for the overall development of the scheduled tribes, they are still far behind in almost all the standard parameters of development. They are not able to participate in the process of development, as they are not aware of most of the programmes and policies made for their upliftment. This is mainly due to the high incidence of illiteracy and very low level of education among the tribal people. Hence, the educational status of the scheduled tribes 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. So, education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of the Scheduled Tribes. In this context, the objective of this paper is to analyse the trend of literacy rate, gross enrolment ratio, dropout rates and Gender Parity Index of tribal education in India.

There exists a substantial amount of literature on the condition of tribal education in India. In a study on tribes of Andhra Pradesh, K. Sujatha (1994) contends that the perspective adopted for educational development of tribal communities fails to adequately address the specific disadvantages characterizing the tribal population. She found that one of the major constraints of tribal education at the planning level is the adoption of a dual system of administration. Rani, M (2000) observed in her study that due to the language barrier the tribal children are unable to establish communication link with the teacher and thus leading to the termination of their education in some point or the other. Vaidyanathan and Nair, (2001) suggested that teacher motivation contributes more to teaching – learning process than teacher competence. Gautam, V. (2004) in his article found that high “dropout” rates among tribal children He analysed that due to wrong medium of instruction, the appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal areas and communication gap between the teachers and tribal children are the causes of high dropout rates in tribal schools. Lal, M. (2005) found that among all school dropouts, Adivasis and Dalits form the biggest group. Further, the largest group amongst them is girls. Sedwal, M. and Kamat, S. (2008) focused on issues related to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes – groups which are recognised for affirmative action within the Constitution of India. Abdulraheem, A. (2011) explained that education as an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy and the policies have to focus on inclusive rather than divisive growth strategies.

GDP , ST Literacy rate, All Literacy rate (1961-2011)							
	GDP at (current price)	ST Literacy rate			Total literacy rate		
year	GDP	Total	Male	Female	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
1961	17049	8.54	13.83	3.16	28.3	40.4	15.4
1971	44382	11.39	17.63	4.85	34.4	46	22
1981	136838	16.35	24.52	8.05	43.6	56.4	29.8
1991	531814	29.6	40.65	18.19	52.2	64.1	39.3
2001	1991982	47.1	59.17	34.76	64.8	75.3	53.7
2011	8353495	63.1	71.7	54.4	74.04	82.14	65.46

Status of Tribal Population in India

The tribal population constitutes a majority in the north eastern states of Mizoram and Lakshadweep (94.4 per cent), Meghalaya (86.1 per cent), and Nagaland (86.5 per cent). The states with minimum Scheduled tribe groups are Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Delhi and Pondicherry. India has total tribal population of 10.43 cores which is 8.6 per cent of total population of India as per 2011 census.

scheduled tribe population 2011 (India)			
	Total	Rural	Urban
Total Population	104281034	93819162	10461872
Decadal Change(2001-2011)	23.7	21.3	49.7
%of ST to Total Population(2001)	8.2	10.4	2.4
%of ST to Total Population(2011)	8.6	11.3	2.8

Source: Census of India

Trend in the Literacy rate of tribes in India (1961-2011)

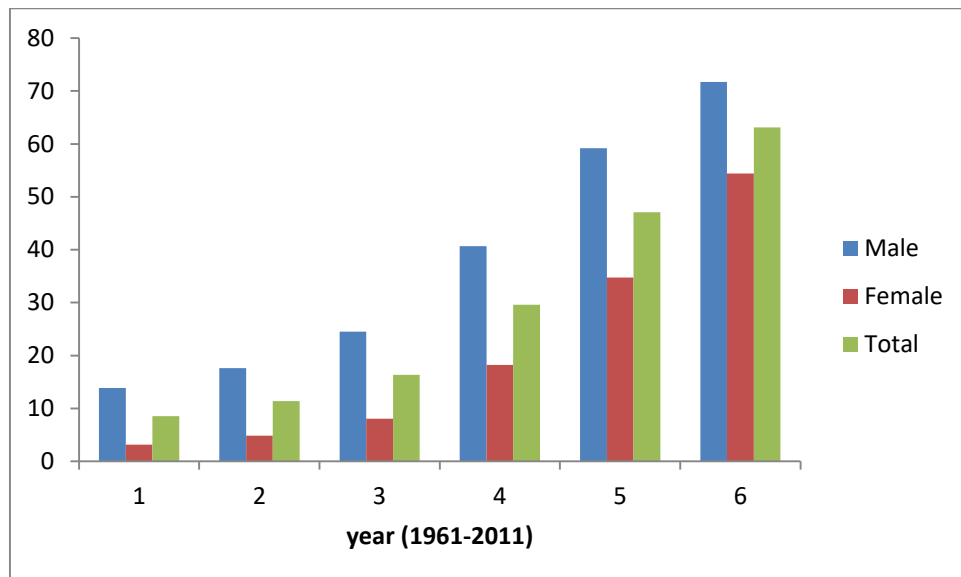
The percentage of literacy of tribes was only 8.54 per cent in 1961 which has increased to 63.1 per cent in 2011. But female literacy of tribes is only 54.4 per cent compared to male literacy of 71.7 per cent. During the post-Independence period, the Indian government implemented legislation and allocated funds to facilitate access to enrolment in primary education (grades I-V) in India. As a result, both literacy rates and gross enrolment ratios of boys and girls across the general population have increased substantially during the past 50 years.

Literacy Rate of ST in India (1961-2011)				
Year	Male	Female	Total	
1961	13.83	3.16	8.54	
1971	17.63	4.85	11.39	
1981	24.52	8.05	16.35	
1991	40.65	18.19	29.6	
2001	59.17	34.76	47.1	

2011	71.7	54.4	63.1
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Source: National Commission for SCs & STs, Fifth Report & Census, 2011

The literacy rate among ST boys is 71.7 per cent and among girls is 63.1 per cent. So, there is a significant improvement in ST literacy from 1961 (8.54 per cent) to 2011 (63.1 per cent).



Source: National Commission for SCs & STs, Fifth Report & Census, 2011

Enrolment Ratio of ST students

Gross enrolment ratio of ST boys is more than ST girls in all classes. The gross enrolment ratio is higher in class I to V which is 137.2 for ST boys and 136.7 for ST girls but it is only 90.7 and 87 in class VI to VIII. It implies that the tribal enrolment declines significantly in higher class.

Enrolment Ratio of ST students		
GER	ST Boys	ST Girls
CLASS(1-V) (6-10 YRS)	137.2	136.7
CLASS(VI-VIII)(11-13 YRS)	90.7	87
CLASS(IX-X)(14-15 YRS)	57.1	49.1
CLASS(XI-XII)(16-17 YRS)	32.7	24.8
CLASS(I-XII)(6-17 YRS)	96.8	92.8

The dropout rate of ST children is higher as compared to all children in India.

Dropout rate among ST Boys and Girls				
Class	ST (Boys)	All (Boys)	ST (Girls)	All (Girls)
Classes I - V	37.2	28.7	33.9	25.1
Classes I - VIII	54.7	40.3	55.4	41
Classes I - X	70.6	50.4	71.3	47.9

Source: Statistics of School Education 2010-2011

Methodology:

The analysis of the present paper is based mainly on secondary data collected from Economic Survey of Orissa, Statistical Abstract, Orissa Development Report (2002), Orissa Human Development Report (2004), Office of the Directorate of Public Instruction (DPI), Government of Orissa, Census of India, New Delhi, etc. Accordingly, the 30 districts of the state are grouped into two broad categories on the basis of ST population: (i) Scheduled Districts and (ii) Non-Scheduled Districts. Gajapathi, Koraput, Malkanagari, Mayurbhanj, Nabrangpur, Sundargarh, Rayagada are considered as the scheduled districts of the state as it contains more than 50% of ST population.

It makes a comparison of the situation of the tribal with others by using (i) Sopher's disparity Index, (ii) Co-efficient of Equality and (ii) Gender parity index.

i. The Gender Disparity index in Literacy

The gender disparity index in literacy is calculated by using Sopher's Disparity Index with the help of the following formula:

$$\text{Disparity Index} = \text{Log} (X_2/X_1) + \text{Log} [(Q-X_1)/(Q-X_2)]$$

Where, $X_2 > X_1$ and $Q = 100$, $X_2 = \text{Male Literacy Rate}$, $X_1 = \text{Female Literacy Rate}$

The higher the value of the index higher is the extent of gender disparity.

ii. Co-efficient of Equality in Education

The coefficient of equality is estimated by using the following formula:

$$Q = (E_t / E_o) / (P_t / P_o)$$

Where $Q = \text{Coefficient of equality for Scheduled Tribes}$

$E_t = \text{Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes in any particular types of education.}$

$E_o = \text{Enrolment of other communities in the same type of education}$

$P_t = \text{Population of Scheduled Tribes}$

$P_o = \text{Population of other communities.}$

If the value of co-efficient of equality is 100, it indicates that Scheduled Tribes are availing the same facility of education like others. If it is less than 100, it indicates that these communities are lagging behind their counterparts. This would provide us the educational status of Scheduled Tribes and Non Scheduled Tribes.

iii. Gender Parity Index in Enrolment (GPI)

$$\text{GPI} = (\text{ENR G} / \text{ENRB}) * 100$$

Where $\text{ENRG} = \text{Enrolment of girls}$

$\text{ENRB} = \text{Enrolment of Boys}$

If the value of GPI for example is 86, it implies that there are 86 girls per 100 boys.

Inter district Variation in Literacy Rate:

There is variation in literacy rate between different districts and within different districts there is variation in literacy rate between ST and all population. Within each group of population the variation is found between male and females. The inter districts variations in literacy rate are reflected through coefficient of variation 2011. It is found that the coefficient of variation in literacy rate for the ST population is higher than that of the general group of population. Within each category of population the coefficient of variation of females is much higher than that of males.

Variation in Literacy Rate in Odisha,2011						
	All Population			ST Population		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Scheduled Districts						
Mean	43.71	56.34	31.13	30.17	42.8	17.9
SD	11.92	12.7	11.35	13.64	15.99	11.69
CV	27.27	22.55	36.45	45.22	37.35	65.32
Non-Scheduled Districts						
Mean	66.91	79.51	53.98	43.03	58.25	27.38
SD	10.22	7.94	12.54	8.76	9.53	8.34
CV	15.27	9.98	23.24	20.36	16.35	30.46
All						
Mean	60.72	73.33	47.89	39.6	54.13	24.58
SD	14.79	13.9	15.83	11.57	13.25	10.08
CV	24.36	18.96	33.06	29.22	24.49	40.45

Gender Parity Index in Enrolment

The enrolment of boys is always found to be higher than that of girls. By estimating the gender parity index in enrolment, it shows the ratio of girl's enrolment to boy's enrolment. The gender parity index of ST children is always lower than that of non ST children. Across regions, the gender parity index is the lowest in the scheduled districts and highest in non-scheduled districts for both ST and non-ST children. The lower enrolment of girls than boys among the scheduled tribes is attributed mainly to (i) extremely low female literacy rate (among tribal females), (ii) low percentage of female teachers and (iii) low percentage of tribal teachers. Many studies have documented that the girl's education is significantly influenced by mother's education. The low female literacy among the tribal females may be one of the significant factors for low enrolment of ST girls.

Gender Parity Index in Enrolment			
Districts	All Children	Non ST Children	ST Children
Scheduled Districts	0.78	0.81	0.74
Non-Scheduled Districts	0.85	0.86	0.8
All	0.83	0.85	0.77

Coefficient of Equality in enrolment between ST and Non-ST

The Coefficient of equality in primary schools for the scheduled and non-scheduled districts are 85.61 and 115.9 respectively and for the country it is 107.5. It indicates that Scheduled Tribes in Non-Scheduled districts are availing the better educational facilities when compare to STs of Scheduled districts.

Coefficient of Equality in Enrolment (ST and Non ST)			
Districts	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Scheduled Districts	86.61	91.45	79.15
Non-Scheduled Districts	111.9	123.8	100
All	107.5	119.5	93.9

Gender Disparity in Literacy Rate

The literacy rate of females is always found to be lower than male. As stated earlier, the literacy rate of ST females is extremely low particularly in the scheduled districts, which ultimately leads to a higher gender disparity in literacy rate. We have estimated the Gender disparity rate by using Sopher's Disparity index formula given earlier.

Gender Disparity Index in Literacy Rate		
Districts	2001 Census	2011 Census
Scheduled Districts	3.3	2.04
Non-Scheduled Districts	2.4	2.01
All	1.94	1.92

Special Schools for ST and SC in Orissa			
	Sevashrams	Ashrams	Kanyashrams
1995-96	951	109	34
1996-97	940	110	35
1997-98	910	110	37
1998-99	919	112	37
1999-00	919	112	37
2002-03	919	112	37

Source: Economic Survey, Government of Orissa.

Problems of Tribal Education

By studying some review of literature these issues and problems are found in the field of tribal education. They are as follows:

Medium of Language – Language is one of the important constraints of tribal children which prevents them access to education.

The Location of the Village - The physical barriers creates a hindrance for the children of a tribal village to attend the school in a neighbouring village.

Economic Condition - The economic condition of tribal people is so poor that they do not desire to spare their children or their labour power and allow them to attend schools.

Attitude of the Parents - As education does not yield any immediate economic return, the tribal parents prefer to engage their children in remunerative employment which supplements the family income.

Teacher Related Problems - In the remote tribal areas the teacher absenteeism is a regular phenomenon and this affects largely the quality of education.

Lack of Proper Monitoring - Proper monitoring is hindered by poor coordination between the Tribal Welfare Department and School Education Department.

Government Policies and Programmes for Tribal Education

Starting from the First Five Year Plan Period 1 (1951-1956) the government is steadily allocating financial resources for the purpose of tribal development. Towards, the ends of the plan (1954), 43 Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects (MTDPs) were created. During the Third Five Year Plan Period (1961-1966), the government of India adopted the strategy of converting areas with more than 66 per cent tribal concentration into Tribal Development Blocks (TBDs). By the end of Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974), the number of TBDs in the country rose to 504. Additionally, in 1972 the Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy (TSP) was implemented by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. TSP was based on twin objectives of socio-economic development and protection against exploitation. It was generally implemented in the areas where the Scheduled Tribe population was more than 50 per cent of the total population.

The PESA (The Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996

It is mandatory for the States having scheduled areas to make specific provisions for giving wide-ranging powers to the tribes on the matters relating to decision-making and development of their community. A centrally-sponsored government scheme of ashram schools exclusively for ST children from elementary to higher secondary levels was initiated in the 1970s. But the poor quality of education in ashram schools, however, has undermined confidence in education as a vehicle for social mobility.

The Janshala Programme is a collaborative effort of the Government of India (GOI) and five UN Agencies – UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO and UNFPA – a community based primary education programme, aims to make primary education more accessible and effective, especially for girls and children in deprived communities, marginalised groups, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes/minorities, children with specific needs.

Conclusion

In view of the above findings the following suggestions may be considered:

- i) Extensive literacy campaign in the tribal dominated areas may be undertaken on a priority basis to literate the tribal in general and the tribal females in particular in order to create awareness about their rights to education and other fundamental rights.
- ii) The primary schools need to be provided within the habitation of the tribals and more of tribal teachers need to be appointed in these schools located in tribal areas.
- iii) It is also felt that in the context of a less developed region (scheduled districts) in a less developed state it is not higher education but effective literacy and at least primary education would prove to be more effective to make them participate in the process of developmental activities.

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