

Importance Of Higher Education For Tribal Upliftment In India

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Abstract: The paper aims at analyzing the importance of higher education for tribal upliftment in India. The percentage of literacy of tribes was only 8.54 percent. But in 2011 it has increased to 63.1 percent. No doubt it is a success in the primary level. But in higher education representation of tribal students is very discouraging, only 4.2 %. This paper discusses the problems faced by the tribal students to take part in higher education with some suggestions at the end.

Keywords: Higher Education, Socio-cultural development, Tribal Empowerment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is regarded as one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. It acts as a most important component in the all round development of individuals enabling them to greater consciousness and understanding of their social, political, economic and cultural lives. Education is a process that improves the immediate condition of living and also increases the potential for living in future. Through education an individual or a society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. Professor Amartya Sen rightly opined that education is an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy.

It is a well-known fact that educational background of tribal population in India is very discouraging as compared to the rest of the population. The tribes not only lag behind the general categories but also the other backward and minority groups. The condition is even more detrimental in the case of tribal women who have the lowest literacy rate.

During the post-independence period legislation was implemented and funds were allocated in order to facilitate the access to primary education by the Government of India. It resulted in the increase literacy rate from 1961 (8.54 %) to 2011 (63.1 %). The gross enrolment ratio is higher in the lower classes (I-V) which is 137.2 for ST boys and 136.7 for ST girls. But in upper primary (VI-VIII) it is only 90.7 and 87

respectively which signifies enrolment decline of tribes in higher classes.

The enrolment of tribes in higher education is very much discouraging. The estimated total enrolment in higher is 28.56 million with 15.87 million boys and 12.69 million girls. Only girls constitute 44.4 % of the total enrolment. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education in India is 20.4 (for male population is 21.6 and for female it is 18.9). But the Scheduled Tribes in Higher Education constitute only 4.2 % [4.21 for male and 4.12 for female (Census 2011)].

So it is the time to be focused on the spread of higher education among the tribal population for their upliftment.

II. WHAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education includes teaching, research and social services activities of universities and within the realm of teaching, it includes both the undergraduate level (sometimes referred to as tertiary education) and the graduate (or post graduate) level (sometimes referred to as graduate school). Higher Education specifically refers to post-secondary institutions that offer associate degree or PhD. Degrees or equivalents. Most professional education is included within higher education and many post graduate qualifications are strongly vocationally or professionally oriented. [Dalip Kumar].

III. IMPORTANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

According to 2011 Census the tribal population constitutes 8.6 % of the total population (104 million) of India. The tribal population is 10.43 crore of which 89.97 % of them live in rural areas and 10.03 % in urban areas. These people are socially, educationally and economically backward, who have been living in hills, forests or remote places. They are considered as backward community as they have low social position, lack of general educational advancement in the major sections of the community, inadequate or no representation in government services and inadequate representation in the field of trade, commerce and industry. Moreover, they live in isolation and not yet sufficiently assimilated in the mainstream population.

Level/ Year	Secondary (IX-X)			Senior Secondary (XI-XII)			Higher Education		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1980-81	NA	NA	NA	2	1	3	NA	NA	NA
1983-84	NA	NA	NA	3	1	4	NA	NA	NA
1986-87	NA	NA	NA	4	2	6	NA	NA	NA
1989-90	NA	NA	NA	6	2	8	NA	NA	NA
1990-91	NA	NA	NA	6	2	8	NA	NA	NA
2000-01	7	4	11	3	2	5	NA	NA	NA
2005-06	9	6	16	4	2	6	4	2	6
2006-07	10	7	17	5	3	7	4	3	7
2007-08	10	7	17	5	3	8	6	3	9
2008-09	11	8	19	5	4	9	6	3	9
2009-10	12	9	21	6	4	10	7	4	11
2010-11	12	10	22	6	5	11	7	5	12
2011-12	14	12	25	7	6	13	7	6	13
2012-13(P)	15	14	29	7	6	12	7	6	13
2013-14(P)	16	15	32	7	6	14	NA	NA	NA

P-Provisional, NA-Not Available

Table 1: Level wise enrolment of scheduled tribe students

NOTE: from 1980-81 to 1990-91, figures for class XI-XII include class IX-X

DATA SOURCE:

FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION:

- ✓ figure for 1980-81 to 2011-12 taken from the publication Statistics of School Education.
- ✓ figure for 2012-13(P) & 2013-14(P) taken from U-DISE-NUEPA.

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION:

- ✓ figure for 1980-81 to 2009-10 from the Statistics of Higher and Technical Education Publication.
- ✓ figure for 2010-11 to 2012-13(P) taken from AISHE.

Level/ Year	Secondary (IX-X) 14-15years			Senior Secondary (XI-XII) 16-17years			(IX-XII) 14-17 years			Higher Education 18-23 years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2001-02	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	31.0	19.8	25.7	5.8	2.6	4.2
2002-03	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	30.5	20.5	25.7	5.6	2.4	4.0
2003-04	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	32.4	21.0	27.0	6.2	3.1	4.7
2004-05	43.3	30.5	37.2	21.5	12.6	17.2	33.0	22.0	27.7	6.3	3.5	4.9
2005-06	44.7	33	39.1	21.7	13.1	17.5	33.7	23.4	28.7	8.6	4.7	6.6
2006-07	47.5	35.6	41.8	23.4	14.7	19.2	35.9	25.3	30.8	9.5	5.5	7.5
2007-08	48.8	37.2	43.27	24.3	16.2	20.33	36.9	26.9	32.1	12.4	6.7	9.5
2008-09	51.7	40.7	46.37	27.7	19.4	23.62	40.3	30.3	35.4	11.6	6.7	9.2
2009-10	55.3	45.8	50.7	31.3	22.6	27.0	43.8	34.6	39.3	13.1	7.5	10.3
2010-11	57.1	49.1	53.3	32.7	24.8	28.8	45.4	37.3	41.5	12.9	9.5	11.2
2011-12	56.7	50.6	53.8	35.4	29.0	32.3	46.9	40.7	43.9	12.4	9.7	11.0
2012-13(P)	62.6	61.2	61.9	32.3	29.0	30.7	48.6	46.4	47.5	12.4	9.7	11.0
2013-14(P)	67.5	66.7	67.1	35.5	33.2	34.4	52.8	51.4	52.1	NA	NA	NA

P- Provisional NA- Not Available

Table 2: Gross enrolment ratio (GER) scheduled tribe students

DATA SOURCE:

FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION:

- ✓ figure for 2001-02 to 2011-12 taken from the publication Statistics of School Education.
- ✓ figure for 2012-13(P) & 2013-14(P) taken from U-DISE-NUEPA.

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION:

- ✓ figure for 2001-02 to 2009-10 from the Statistics of Higher and Technical Education Publication.
- ✓ figure for 2010-11 to 2012-13(P) taken from AISHE.

GROUP-WISE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AND REPRESENTATION OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES IN INDIA (01.01.1971 TO 01.01.2010)

Year (Point of Time)	Groups	Total No. of Employees	Representation of Scheduled Tribes	
			Scheduled Tribes No.	Percent %
01 01 1971 (85 Public enterprises)	Group 'A'	31311	53	0.17
	Group 'B'	35751	57	0.16
	Group 'C'	351347	4519	1.29
	Group 'D' (Excluding Safai Karamcharis)	129220	7680	5.94
	Total	547629	12309	2.25
	Group 'D' (Safai Karamcharis)	5551	77	1.39
Grand Total	553180	12386	2.24	
01 01 1980 (177 Public enterprises)	Group 'A'	93984	623	0.66
	Group 'B'	97756	1329	1.36
	Group 'C'	1274581	98329	7.71
	Group 'D' (Excluding Safai Karamcharis)	353981	38083	10.76
	Total	1820302	138364	7.6
	Group 'D' (Safai Karamcharis)	36030	1492	4.14
Grand Total	1856332	139856	7.53	
01 01 1999 (238 Public enterprises)	Group 'A'	207424	5838	2.18
	Group 'B'	175326	7180	4.09
	Group 'C'	1115312	90551	8.12
	Group 'D' (Excluding Safai Karamcharis)	428341	48717	11.37
	Total	1926403	152286	7.91
	Group 'D' (Safai Karamcharis)	25961	778	2.99
Grand Total	1952364	153064	7.84	
01 01 2001 (238 Public enterprises)	Group 'A'	203329	6167	3.04
	Group 'B'	191715	8831	4.61
	Group 'C'	942496	83051	8.82
	Group 'D' (Excluding Safai Karamcharis)	366882	43046	11.73
	Total	1704422	141095	8.28
	Group 'D' (Safai Karamcharis)	21234	726	3.42
Grand Total	1725656	141821	8.22	
01 01 2004 (189 Public enterprises)	Group 'A'	165320	6032	3.65
	Group 'B'	158822	8980	5.73
	Group 'C'	714125	67396	9.44
	Group 'D' (Excluding Safai Karamcharis)	258663	32073	12.4
	Total	1294930	114481	8.84
	Group 'D' (Safai Karamcharis)	17778	568	3.19
Grand Total	1312708	115049	8.76	
01 01 2010 (206 Public enterprises)	Group 'A'	261072	13993	5.35
	Group 'B'	208501	13117	6.29
	Group 'C'	742516	51884	6.98
	Group 'D' (Excluding Safai Karamcharis)	221159	27546	12.45
	Total	1433248	106540	7.43
	Group 'D' (Safai Karamcharis)	34162	1462	4.27
Grand Total	1467410	108002	7.36	

SOURCE: Public Enterprises Survey of various Years, Department of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Govt. of India.

Table 3

NOTE: Group 'A' : Executive level; Group 'B' : Supervisory; Group 'C' : Workmen/Clerical level; Group 'D' : Semi-skilled/unskilled labour.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHEDULED TRIBE EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS (BY CATEGORIES)

Years	Officers	Clerks	Sub Staff	Total
1978	2.12	63.45	34.43	100
1980	7.60	59.02	33.38	100
1988	16.19	58.02	25.79	100
1990	17.22	55.90	26.88	100
1999	23.73	50.88	25.39	100
2000	24.62	49.83	25.55	100
2004	33.34	42.25	24.41	100

Source: Thorat and Senapati 2007

Table 4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHEDULED TRIBE EMPLOYEES IN INSURANCE JOBS (BY CATEGORIES)

Year	Service Groups				Total
	A	B	C	D	
1993	4.37	10.42	70.04	15.18	100
2000	9.18	10.62	69.89	10.30	100

Source: Thorat and Senapati 2007

Table 5

Higher education is an effective instrument of upward social mobility as it helps in socio-cultural development as well as community empowerment through various skills and training.

IV. GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND SCHEMES

As educational development is an avenue to economic and social development and tribal empowerment, the Education Division of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs with the Ministry of Human Resource Development administer various schemes to enhance access to education for tribal students through construction of hostels for Scheduled Tribe Students, Establishment of Asharam schools, Establishing Vocational Training Centres, providing scholarships for promoting higher learning such as Pre-matric Scholarships, Post-matric Scholarships for top class Education, Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship and National Overseas Scholarships for ST students. In spite of governmental effort the Scheduled Tribes in India are far behind in Higher Education as compared to other categories. Only those STs who have better economic condition was the first to take part in the field of education and be benefitted from public funds. The benefits of the welfare schemes remain out of reach from the tribes with miserable economic conditions.

V. PROBLEMS FACED BY TRIBAL STUDENTS OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The scheduled tribe children suffer from a feeling of inferiority from early childhood due to their lower social status and in course of time these feelings get reinforced by experience and interaction with others which develops low self esteem of themselves in them.

They lack guidance and knowledge about the mechanics and procedures of obtaining education in higher levels.

Being the first generation learners the students of these groups show poor performance in academic ability and educational achievement.

Due to lack of confidence and inferiority complex they cannot involve themselves in new environment and remain isolated from broader educational field.

Poverty is one of the major problem that compels the Scheduled Tribe students to discontinue their studies after primary education as they have to take part in some economic activities to support their family. Besides, the expenditure of higher education in the parents.

The vocational aspect of education rather than general higher education appeals to them more as it is concerned with economic returns.

The scheduled tribe population have no educational traditions in their families. So children of these groups lack interest in higher education.

The families of these groups do not play a cooperative role in imparting higher education to their children.

Moreover, the peer students of other categories and teachers show neglect and sometimes humiliation underestimating the possibilities of the of the ST students and advise them to terminate their education at the end of the schools level.

Language becomes a barrier for obtaining higher education for tribal students as it is not possible to continue studies in different tribal languages and knowledge in English language is an essential for higher studies.

Poor attendance and performance of teachers in the tribal schools is also responsible for the decrease of development of tribal education.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Our dream to be a developed nation will never come true without ensuring social equity and empowerment to tribal people. Hence few suggestions can be useful in further development of tribal population through higher education.

It is essential to ensure easy access to basic education for all scheduled tribe children especially for all the girls.

Panchayet Level Committee have to be formed for the proper implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhijan and also to ensure the access to higher education for all scheduled tribe children.

Self-help groups have to be formed for the dissemination of knowledge.

Vocational training and computer training have to be imparted through special camps and necessary financial assistance to be provided.

Provision have to be made for more freedom and choice for selection of courses and combination of courses.

More Polytechnics and professional colleges have to be established in the rural areas.

Higher Education, at present is moving forwards e-education which depend largely on availability of infrastructure, special softwares, broadband internet access and the mind set of the teachers as well as students. The tribes can easily access to higher education through e-learning which

is possible only if government takes initiative for establishing institutions in this regard.

Establishing non-formal education, adult education and open school and universities and improving their quality and functioning will be helpful in this respect.

High achievers in education should be provided additional incentive and support for further progress.

More low cost hostel facilities for the tribal students should be provided.

Teachers should be sympathetic enough and have special training for teaching, counseling and guiding the tribal students.

Special training in English language should be provided to tribal students which is a must still now, to access higher education.

VII. CONCLUSION

As first generation learners the tribal students have to face social, psychological and cultural barriers to get education which results in absence of tribes in academia and higher education. For the inclusive development of nation they should have equal representation in the field of Higher Education and employment in public and private sectors. This

will be possible if their problems will be treated sympathetically helping them to be included in the mainstream population.

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