



Educational Status Of Tribal Women Of West Bengal: Special Reference To The Puruliya District

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Abstract:

Education is the main key parameter for human development. India in pre and post independence scenario achieved a lot in educational area. But the scenario not exactly same for all like the backward class Tribals. The term 'Scheduled Tribes' first appeared in the Constitution of India. Scheduled Tribes (also known as "Tribals" or "adibasi/adivasi") are specific indigenous peoples whose status is acknowledged to some formal degree by national legislation. According to Census-2011, the number of scheduled tribes in India is 10,42,81,034 which is 8.6% of the total population of India. A total of 9,38,19,162 people belonging to Scheduled Tribes reside in rural areas whereas 1,04,61,872 people in urban areas. West Bengal has the total number of the population 9,13,47,736 in which 52,96,953 (5.79% of the total population) are Tribal people (census 2011). As per census 2011, the literacy rate among tribes (58.96%) is found to be far below the overall literacy of the country (74.04%), whereas, in West Bengal, the literacy rate among tribal communities 57.92% is found to be far below the overall literacy of the state 77.08%. According to census 2011, Schedule Tribe literacy rate (gender wise) in West Bengal for male 68.16% and for female 47.71%, where as this rate of literacy in Puruliya (one of the Schedule Tribe populated district in West Bengal) for male 67.84% and for female 39.77%. In case of Schedule Tribe female literacy rate of Puruliya observed far below than overall Schedule Tribe female literacy rate of West Bengal 47.71%. This study provides educational status of the Schedule Tribe women of West Bengal and Puruliya district. Try to analyze the tribal women educational scenario of Puruliya district with respect to India and West Bengal. Also, the study point out the reasons for backwardness of tribals specially tribal women of West Bengal and Puruliya district regarding literacy rates and various aspects.

Keywords: Scheduled Tribe (ST), Tribal women, Backward, Literacy rate, educational status.

I. Introduction:

"Education is one thing no one can take away from you." -ELIN NORDEGREN.

"You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation".
-Brigham Young.

India is the largest democratic country in the world with different caste, religion, culture. Upper class, middle class, lower class people are present in the society. Among the different classes some portions are very much neglected from early days. Tribals are one of them. This section is considered the most under privileged and deprived section of Indian society. Government has taken several steps and initiatives for

upgradation of socio-economic and educational status of tribals from post independence stage but the actual development of the tribals till not up to the mark.

According to the census 2011, in India, 10.2 crore tribal people share 8.6% of total population. But the literacy rate of Schedule tribes(58.96%) is very much low compare to overall literacy rate(74.04%) in India, also if we consider the case of tribal women the literacy rate become very low(49.35%) compare to overall literacy in India (census 2011).

In West Bengal, as per Census2011, tribal population is 52,96,963 , which is about 5.8% of the total population of the State. The overall schedule tribe literacy rate (57.92%) and the schedule tribe women literacy rate (47.71%) of West Bengal far below from the overall literacy rate(74.04%) of India. The scenario of tribal women educational condition in West Bengal not moves in a proper way for upliftment.

If we analyze the educational status of the district of Puruliya which is one of the tribal populated district in West Bengal, observed the literacy and socio-economic scenario is in a below average position. We will see that over the last few decades, growth rate of literacy and development among the tribals of this peripheral area is not satisfactory. The discriminating scenario cleared by the fact of literacy rate of all social groups in Puruliya 64.48%, tribals 53.80 % and tribal women 39.77% (census 2011) with respect to India.

II. Review of related Literature:

1) A comparative study of the Educational status of Tribals in West Bengal: With Special Reference To The District of Purulia- Shyamal Kumar Daripa (International Journal of Research in Social Sciences, October 2017): The objective of the paper is to uphold the educational status of the tribals in West Bengal with special emphasis on the district of Puruliya, which happens to be the most vulnerable district in West Bengal, in terms of literacy, poverty, health.

2) Educational Status of the Tribal West Bengal: Special References to the Paschim Medinipur District- Parikshit Chakraborty(Global journal of sociology and anthropology,2019): Education is the one of the most essential elements of human resource development.

3) Tribal Development in India - Status and Strategies - Dr. P. Viswanadha Gupta (International Journal of African and Asian Studies, 2018)-India has the worlds' second largest tribal population next only to the African continent. As per the census of 2001, Scheduled Tribes population constitutes 84.32 million which is about 8.2 percent of India's population. There are 664 tribal communities of which 75 are categorized as primitive Tribal Groups. The tribal communities speak in about 105 native languages.

4) A Comparative Study of Educational Status among Tribals in West Bengal -Kamruzzaman Mollah (INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH EXPLORER, 2018)-This paper highlights the educational status of Tribals in different districts of West Bengal.

5) "TRIBAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN INDIA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES" -Dr. Ranvir Singh(International Journal of Research in Social Sciences, April, 2018)-Indian Tribes are the oldest inhabitants of India. In modern age these tribes are facing lots of challenges and problems for their survival.

6)Political Economy of Tribal Development: A Case Study of Andhra Pradesh -M.Gopinath Reddy K. Anil Kumar(CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES, February 2010):The tribal population in the State of Andhra Pradesh, and in the country as a whole, is the most deprived and vulnerable community that faces severe economic exclusion.

7) DISTRICT CENSUS HANDBOOK, PURULIYA, VILLAGE AND TOWN DIRECTORY, part-XII A Census of India 2011.

8) DISTRICT CENSUS HANDBOOK, PURULIYA VILLAGE AND TOWN WISE PRIMARY CENSUS ABSTRACT (PCA) part XII B, census of India 2011.

III. Methodology and source of data:

Puruliya district, a part of 'Jangalmahal' in West Bengal and where the tribal density is very high according to census 2011. Educational status of the district not up to the mark compare to the overall literacy of West Bengal specially the problem is more distinct for tribal women. Some group of extremists active here for a long time as well as poverty, hunger, illiteracy issue dominate the development of tribals. In this study special importance given to the status of tribals and tribal women education. Secondary data have evaluated from Indian census 2011 and 2001, primary census abstract (PCA) of West Bengal, data has also taken from Statistics of School Education 2010-2011, some published articles in renowned journal with authentic data.

IV. Result analysis and discussion:

Table 1: Shows the Literacy Rates of Scheduled Tribes and Total Population in India (1961-2011)

Year	Schedule Tribe(ST) (%)	Total population (%)	Gap between ScheduleTribe and total population (%)
1961	8.53	28.3	19.77
1971	11.30	34.45	23.15
1981	16.35	43.57	27.22
1991	29.60	52.21	22.61
2001	47.10	64.84	17.74
2011	58.96	74.04	15.08

Source: Census of India, Registrar General of India

The table – 1 displays the literacy rate of schedule tribe and total population of India from census data 1961 to 2011, which also displays the gap between schedule tribe and the total population in India. From 1961 to 1981 Schedule Tribe and total population gap continuously increased. Whereas from 1991 to 2011 the gap continuously decreasing because of some helpful policy introduced by Indian government, educational awareness increases, free basic education encourage tribal people to move forward.

Table 2: Shows the State-wise Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribe women (Census 2011)

State/UTs	Total Schedule tribes(%)	Schedule tribe women(%)
Andhra Pradesh	49.2	40.1
Arunachal Pradesh	64.6	58.0
Assam	72.1	65.1
Bihar	51.1	40.4
Chhattisgarh	59.1	48.8
Goa	79.1	71.5
Gujarat	62.5	53.2
Himachal Pradesh	73.6	64.2
Jammu & Kashmir	50.6	39.7
Jharkhand	57.1	46.2
Karnataka	62.1	53.0
Kerala	75.8	71.1
Madhya Pradesh	50.6	41.5
Maharashtra	65.7	57.0
Manipur	77.4	72.7
Meghalaya	74.5	73.5
Mizoram	91.5	89.5
Nagaland	80.0	76.9
Orissa	52.2	41.2

Rajasthan	52.8	37.3
Sikkim	79.7	74.3
Tamil Nadu	54.3	46.8
Tripura	79.1	71.6
Uttar Pradesh	55.7	43.7
Uttarakhand	73.9	63.9
West Bengal	57.9	47.7
A & N Islands	75.6	69.9
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	61.9	50.3
Daman & Diu	78.8	71.2
Lakshadweep	91.7	87.8

Some of the State and UTs namely Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi and Puducherry have no Tribal population Source: Census of India 2011, Registrar General of India.

The table– 2 displays the state wise literacy rate of schedule tribe as per 2011 census. The tribal literacy rate in West Bengal is 57.9%, where tribal women literacy rate 47.7%. This table illustrate the tribal literacy rates of different states of India and union territories where mentioned some states (Punjab, Haryana)and union territories (Puducherry) have no tribal population. Apart from this, the major tribal literacy rates in Lakshadweep which is 91.7% and the lowest tribal literacy rates in Andhra pradesh which is 49.2%. According to the table states like Andhrapradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh have tribal women literacy rate less than 50%.

Table 3: Shows the District Wise Distribution of Scheduled Tribes and schedule tribe women in West Bengal (Census 2011)

District	Total	%	Females	%
Bankura	368690	6.96	185223	3.50
Bardhaman	489447	9.24	245866	4.64
Birbhum	242484	4.58	122697	2.32
Dakshin Dinajpur	275366	5.20	137341	2.59
Darjeeling	397389	7.50	200138	3.78
Howrah	15094	0.28	7333	0.14
Hooghly	229243	4.33	115994	2.19
Jalpaiguri	731704	13.81	365836	6.91
Coochbehar	18125	0.34	8737	0.16
Kolkata	10684	0.20	4955	0.09
Malda	313984	5.93	156456	2.95
Murshidabad	91035	1.72	44872	0.85
N 24 Pargana	264597	5.00	130418	2.46
Nadia	140700	2.66	69558	1.31
Paschim Medinipur	880015	16.61	440184	8.31
Purba Medinipur	27952	0.53	13756	0.26
Puruliya	540652	10.21	268849	5.08
S 24 Parganas	96976	1.83	47781	0.90
Uttar Dinajpur	162816	3.07	80985	1.53

Source: Census of India 2011, Registrar General of India

The table 3- shows Paschim Medinipur(16.61%), Jalpaiguri(13.81%),Puruliya(10.21%) mainly three schedule tribe populated district in West Bengal and Kolkata (0.20%), Howrah (0.28%), Coochbehar (0.34%) and Purba Medinipur (0.53%) have the lowest tribal concentration according to census 2011. The table shows here schedule tribe women concentration order is–Paschim medinipur(8.31%), Jalpaiguri(6.91%),Puruliya(5.08) which is also same as total schedule tribe concentration.

Table 4: District Wise Distribution of the Illiterate and Literate Scheduled Tribe women in West Bengal according to Census 2011 (Top four schedule tribe populated district)

District	Illiterate				Literate			
	Total	%	Female	%	Total	%	Female	%
Paschim medinipur	425617	16.19	256220	9.74	452973	17.03	183264	6.89
Jalpaiguri	357956	13.60	207899	7.90	373748	14.03	157937	5.93
Puruliya	290678	11.04	176915	6.72	249974	9.38	91934	3.45
Barddhaman	257030	9.76	151329	5.75	232417	8.72	94537	3.55

The table 4 - shows the top four district wise illiterate and literate distribution of total scheduled tribes and schedule tribe women in West Bengal as per census 2011 report. Paschim Medinipur has the maximum percentages of illiterates concentration i.e. 16.19% (where female 9.74%) whereas, Jalpaiguri has 13.60% illiterates tribal population (where female 7.90%) and followed the sequence of illiterates tribal districts Puruliya exhibits 11.04% (where female 6.72%), Barddhaman 9.76% (where female 5.75%).

The table also illustrates the district wise literates' distribution among the tribal population of West Bengal. In Paschim Medinipur contribute major tribal literate people 17.03% (where female 6.89%) out of the total tribal population of West Bengal. Where, the Jalpaiguri district has 14.03% (where female 5.93%), Puruliya district has 9.38% (where female 3.45%) literate tribal population out of the total number of tribal population in West Bengal.

Finally, the table showed the illiteracy and literacy rate among the tribal population, where illiteracy rates are very high compared to their literacy.

Table -5 : Comparative analysis of percentage of Schedule Tribe literacy rate by gender among India, West Bengal and Puruliya district, according to Census 2011:

	Literacy rate of all social group (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Gap between male and female (%)	Tribal literacy rate (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Gap between male and female (%)
India	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68	58.96	68.53	49.35	19.18
West Bengal	77.08	81.69	70.54	11.15	57.92	68.16	47.71	20.45
Puruliya	64.48	77.86	50.52	27.34	53.80	67.84	39.77	28.07

Source: Census 2011

Table 5 shows Comparison of overall ST literacy rate of Puruliya with India and West Bengal.

It is very clear from the above table that the status of tribal education of India is not in a good condition and situation is even very much poor in Puruliya one of the district of West Bengal. According to census 2011 literacy rate of Schedule Tribes in India is 58.96% where in Purulia it comes down to 53.80% and it is also far below from West Bengal average tribal literacy rate which lies in 57.92%. So we find a gap here of 4.12% and the gap is even higher if we compare it with schedule tribe literacy rate of India which is 5.16% higher. So by analyzing the above table it is evident that the tribal educational scenario in Puruliya district is really a matter of concern now a days.

Table 5 also shows Comparison of schedule tribe male and female literacy:(scenario of tribal women literacy)

According to census 2011, which reveals the reluctance of tribal women in pursuance of education? Analyzing male and female literacy rate of tribal community of Puruliya district and compare it with national and state level literacy rate of Schedule Tribe male and female as well as with the literacy rate of all social groups it is seen that the tribal male literacy rate is more or less equal (<1%) compared with the tribals of India, West Bengal and Puruliya district but it differ a lot if we consider the literacy rate of all social group respectively. Scenario of female literacy rate in India is more vulnerable, literacy rate of tribal women in India, West Bengal and Puruliya district lies below 50% level with specific value 49.35%, 47.71% and 39.77% respectively. It is observed that the difference of Schedule tribe women literacy rate and literacy rate of women of all social groups at national level is 16.11%, and it goes up to 22.83 in case of West Bengal but the gap between literacy rate of tribal women and women of all social group is lesser in puruliya which is about 10.75%. But the scenario of tribal women education of puruliya is very much alarming as its literacy rate less than 40%. Also the gap between male female Schedule Tribe literacy rate in Puruliya is 28.07%, which is also very higher than india and West Bengal. So the district needs special care for development of tribal women education.

Table 6: Changing pattern of tribal women literacy rate in puruliya from Census 2001 to 2011:

State/district	literacyrate of Schedule Tribe census 2001(%)			literacy rate of Schedule Tribe census 2011(%)			Change of total literacy(%)	Chang e of male literac y(%)	Change of female literacy(%)
	Total	male	femal e	Total	male	femal e			
India	47.10	59.2	34.8	58.96	68.53	49.35	11.86	9.33	14.55
West Bengal	43.4	57.38	29.15	57.92	68.16	47.71	14.52	10.78	18.56
Puruliya	42.64	61.26	23.4	53.80	67.84	39.77	11.16	6.58	16.37

According to census 2001 and 2011 the tribal women literacy rate of Puruliya is 23.4% and 39.77%.

So the decadal growth is 16.37%. But it is lower than the tribal women decadal growth of West Bengal 18.56%. The growth rate not up to the mark. According to census 2011 the district has tribal women literacy less than 40% (39.77%).

V. Reasons for Backwardness of Schedule tribe women in Puruliya:

Puruliya is one of the most backward districts of west Bengal in terms of poverty, education, health. According to census 2011, 64.48% people are literate (all social groups) which is far below than the state average, and status of tribal literacy is even worse, here only 53.80% tribal people and only 39.77% tribal women are literate. There are several reasons for its educational backwardness of tribal women, main reasons are as follows.

1. Poverty is a common feature of this dry land. Agriculture production is very low in Puruliya because of the shortage of rain fall and industry is not flourished properly. The socio-economic structure prevents tribal women education.
2. Women education always neglected in the poor families.
3. For more than a decade some extremist political activities were in operation in this region and in consequence affected the investment here and due to this entire district is suffered regarding economical and educational initiatives.
4. Lack of adequate girls' school in tribal areas affected educational enhancement.
5. Absence of basic infrastructural amenities (Toilet, water resources, electricity) in the school is one of the important reason for sluggish growth of literacy among tribal women.
6. Reluctance of the female teachers to work in remote areas of the district also make barrier in development of education.
7. Lack of awareness of the parents about the importance of girls education, is one of the reason of educational backwardness.
8. Some parents hesitate to send their daughter to co-educational institution also wrong conception of girls health and hygiene.

VI. Concluding Remarks:

“To educate girls is to reduce poverty.” -Kofi Annan

“When girls are educated, their countries become stronger and more prosperous”
- Michelle Obama

Education is the key to the development of many people or community or state. Though the tribal development is taking place in India since post independent phase to the current time but till now it is below borderline, specially the scenario of tribal women education. Without educating women it is not possible to develop a society. Tribal women education is a problem from post independence scenario.

Some socio-economic condition, extremist political environment and lack of awareness are the main barriers of development of tribal women education. According to Census 2011 literacy rate of tribal women is 39.77 % ,which is very much alarming. School dropout, girl child early marriage, stereotypic teaching pattern are some burning problems cited in women education in the interior region.

Thus the study tried to give the alarming scenario of the tribal education and may be some proper steps initiate by government would eradicate this imbalance prevailing among the district.

Central government and West Bengal government take lots of initiative, where ‘kanyashree prakalpa’ by West Bengal government and ‘Beti bachao beti padhao’ one of them to solve the problem of women education.

Both governments tried to reduce the problems of tribal people and also need general awareness to meet at confluence of education.

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