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Scheduled caste and scheduled tribes access to education in India

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Abstract

The holistic development of any caste, creed tribe depends upon the educational achievement that particular group. In India both Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people faced several socio-economic anomalies since historical times. For their welfare and development several initiatives were taken by both Union and State Governments since the adoption of democratic Constitution in 1950. Realizing the importance of education for their overall development special educational schemes and programmes were evolved. But even today their educational achievements were far behind other population. This is especially true in case of girls. Hence in this paper an attempt is made to analyze the present educational status of Scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes.

Keywords: Scheduled caste scheduled Tribes access education in India

Introduction

India is a welfare State, committed to the welfare and development of its people in general and of vulnerable sections in particular. Preamble, Directive Principles of State Policy, Fundamental Rights and specific sections, namely Article 38, 39 and 46 in the Constitution of India stand testimony to its people. As a matter of strategy, the Government of India has resorted to planned development for minimizing inequality in income, status and opportunities for its people. This strategy is directed to secure distributive justice and utilization of economic resources to sub-serve common good.

Development is essentially a process of change initiated with an objective of improving the quality of life. For certain sections of society, who are considered as weaker sections, the process of change would aim at bringing them into the mainstream of socio-economic system. It is also necessary to ensure that there is no discrimination against any section of our society. In India, certain social groups such as the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) have historically been disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Constitutional provisions

Article 46 of the Constitution states that, "The State shall promote, with special care, the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of social exploitation". Articles 330, 332, 335, 338 to 342 and the entire Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution deal with special provisions for implementation of the objectives set forth in Article 46. These provisions need to be fully utilised for the benefit of these weaker sections in our society.

After independence, the Government of India has taken number of steps to strengthen the educational base of the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Pursuant to the National Policy on Education-1986 and the Programme of Action (POA)-1992, the following special provisions for SCs and STs have been incorporated in the existing schemes of the Departments of Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Education:

- a. relaxed norms for opening of primary/middle schools; a primary school within one km walking distance from habitations of population up to 200 instead of habitations of up to 300 population.

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- b. Abolition of tuition fee in all States in Government Schools at least up to the upper primary level. In fact, most of the states have abolished tuition fees for SC/ST students up to the senior secondary level.
- c. Incentives like free textbooks, uniforms, stationery, schools bags, etc., for these students.
- d. The Constitutional (86th Amendment) Bill, notified on 13 December 2002, provides for free and compulsory elementary education as a Fundamental Right, for all children in the age group of 6-14 years.
- e. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)(External website that opens in a new window) is a historic stride towards achieving the long cherished goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time bound integrated approach, in partnership with States. SSA, which promises to change the face of elementary education sector of the country,

aims to provide useful and quality elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age group by 2010.

Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Educational Status Literacy level and educational attainment are vital developmental indicators in a developing nation like India as they are key variable of measure of development as they indicate quality of life, awareness level and also level of skill of people in the society. Better literacy and educational level definitely have a positive impact on the health parameters. Education parameters have an equal weightage in the Human Development Index as well. Considering the importance of education, India has enacted Right to Education to ensure free and compulsory Education for children in the age group 6- 14 years.

The Level-wise enrollment of Scheduled Caste students in India is presented in table 1 from 2005-06 to 2014-2015.

Table 1: Level-wise Enrolment of Scheduled Caste Students

Level/ Year	Primary (I-V)			Upper Primary (VI-VIII)			Secondary (IX-X)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005-06	140	113	253	53	38	91	23	15	38
2006-07	145	118	263	55	40	95	25	16	41
2007-08	137	126	263	53	46	99	24	18	42
2008-09	140	127	267	56	49	105	28	22	50
2009-10	135	125	260	58	51	109	30	24	54
2010-11	140	129	269	60	53	113	31	26	57
2011-12	148	139	287	63	59	122	35	31	66
2012-13*	141	132	273	65	61	126	NA	NA	63
2013-14*	136	127	263	66	63	129	36	32	68
2014-15*	134	126	260	67	64	131	37	34	71

Data Source: (i) figure from 2001-02 to 2011-12: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (website: <http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>)

(ii) Figure for 2012-13 & 2014-15: National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi (website: <http://dise.in/>), NA-Not Available

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It is evident from table 1 that 5 out of 10 years of study the boys enrollment at primary level registered negative growth rate. On the other hand in case of girls negative growth rate in enrollment at primary level is registered 4 out of 10 years. In the overall total enrollment at primary level 4 years registered negative growth rate. Highest positive growth rate is registered in 2011-12 academic year. At upper primary level no negative growth rate is registered in case of girls. It means the enrollment of girls at upper primary level is going up year by year. With regard to boys in 2006-07 only negative growth rate in enrollment is visible. With regard to

secondary level education no negative growth is registered in girls enrollment as well as total enrollment for which data is available. In case of boys in 2006-07 negative growth rate is registered. It is important to note that the enrollment of Scheduled Caste girls is sharply increasing than the boys at three levels of education. Within 10 years of study the girls enrollment at secondary level increased more than double.

Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes Students

The Level-wise enrollment of Scheduled Tribe students in India is presented in table 2 from 2005-06 to 2014-2015.

Table 2: Level-wise Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes Students

Level/ Year	Primary (I-V)			Upper Primary (VI-VIII)			Secondary (IX-X)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005-06	75	66	141	25	20	45	9	6	15
2006-07	76	68	144	26	21	47	10	7	17
2007-08	77	70	147	26	21	47	10	7	17
2008-09	78	72	150	27	23	50	11	8	19
2009-10	77	72	149	28	24	52	12	9	21
2010-11	77	72	149	28	26	54	12	10	22
2011-12	79	74	153	29	27	56	14	12	26
2012-13*	78	74	152	33	31	64	0	0	29
2013-14*	76	71	147	33	31	64	17	15	32
2014-15*	73	68	141	34	32	66	17	16	33

Data Source: (i) figure from 2001-02 to 2011-12: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (website: <http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>)

(ii) Figure for 2012-13 & 2014-15: National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi (website: <http://dise.in/>) NA-Not Available

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As per table 2 the enrollment of Scheduled Tribe girls is constant for 3 consecutive years (2008-09 to 2010-11). From 2012-13 onwards the girls enrollment was showing downward trends. In case of girl's enrollment last 2 years of study is showing negative growth rate of -3 per cent at primary level. In case of boys negative growth rate is registered in 4 out of 10 years of study at primary level. At primary level no negative growth of Scheduled Tribe boys and girls is visible. With regard to secondary education none

of the academic years registered negative growth rate. It is pertinent to note that the actual number girl enrolled at primary level is increased by 2 lakhs. Contrary the boy's enrollment at primary level is decreased by 2 lakhs. At upper primary level as well as secondary levels the girls enrollment is sharply increasing than the boys.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Caste Students
The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Caste students at national level is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Caste Students

Level/ Year	Primary (I-V) 6-10 Years			Upper primary (VI-VIII) 11-13 Years			Elementary (I-VIII) 6-13 Years			Secondary (IX-X) 14-15years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005-06	126.3	110.2	118.6	81.0	65.1	73.5	109.5	93.7	102.0	54.8	40.3	48.1
2006-07	131.6	115.4	123.8	83.1	67.3	75.7	113.5	97.8	106.0	58.3	44.6	51.9
2007-08	125.5	124.3	124.9	82.1	78.1	80.2	109.3	107.3	108.4	55.81	49.0	52.64
2008-09	129.2	127.7	128.5	86.8	83.3	85.2	113.3	111.2	112.3	66.17	58.71	62.68
2009-10	125.1	125.5	125.3	89.6	86.8	88.3	111.9	111.1	111.5	71.2	63.9	67.8
2010-11	130.6	132.2	131.4	93.8	90.5	92.2	116.9	116.5	116.7	73.8	67.3	70.7
2011-12	121.7	123.6	122.6	89.8	91.3	90.5	109.8	114.9	108.2	74.5	72.9	73.7
2012-13*	115.9	117.7	116.8	96.7	103.0	99.7	109.1	112.6	110.8	NA	NA	NA
2013-14*	112.1	114.0	113.0	95.0	102.0	98.3	105.9	109.7	107.7	78.2	79.4	78.7
2014-15*	110.7	113.2	111.9	97.2	105.5	101.0	105.8	110.5	108.0	81.6	83.9	82.7

Data Source: (i) figure from 2001-02 to 2011-12: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (website:

<http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>)

(ii) Figure for 2012-13 & 2014-15: National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi (website: <http://dise.in/>)

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It is evident from table 3 that at primary level the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of girls is higher than the boys from 2009-10 onwards. It means large number girls in 6-10 years age group is enrolling in schools than the boys. With regard to upper primary education the GER of girls is higher than the boys from 2011-2012 onwards. At overall elementary level also the same trends are noticeable. At secondary level education the GER of girls is higher than the boys in 2013-14 and 2014-2015. The GER Rate of boys

is gradually increasing in case of upper primary and secondary levels of education. But, in case of primary and elementary levels the boys GER is showing downward trends. The total GER rates of Scheduled Caste students are showing positive trends during 10 years of study.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Tribe Students
The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Caste students at national level is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Tribe Students

Level/ Year	Primary (I-V) 6-10 Years			Upper primary (VI-VIII) 11-13 Years			Elementary (I-VIII) 6-13 Years			Secondary (IX-X) 14-15years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2005-06	131.4	121.1	126.4	77.5	64.9	71.5	111.9	101.3	106.7	44.7	33	39.1
2006-07	134.4	124.0	129.3	80.2	68.2	74.4	114.7	104.2	109.6	47.5	35.6	41.8
2007-08	136.4	130.6	133.6	81.1	70.2	75.8	116.3	108.9	112.7	48.84	37.2	43.27
2008-09	137.5	133.9	135.8	85.7	76.4	81.2	119.0	113.4	116.3	51.68	40.66	46.37
2009-10	136.8	134.1	135.5	87.4	81.2	84.3	119.1	115.2	117.2	55.3	45.8	50.7
2010-11	137.2	136.7	137.0	90.7	87.0	88.9	120.5	118.7	119.7	57.1	49.1	53.3
2011-12	117.8	115.6	116.7	76.8	74.1	75.5	103.0	100.6	101.8	56.7	50.6	53.8
2012-13*	124.2	121.6	122.9	97.1	99.9	98.4	114.8	114.2	114.5	NA	NA	NA
2013-14*	114.4	111.9	113.2	90.5	92.2	91.3	105.9	105.0	105.5	70.3	70.1	70.2
2014-15*	110.6	108.2	109.4	93.0	95.2	94.1	104.4	103.7	104.0	71.8	72.6	72.2

Data Source: (i) figure from 2001-02 to 2011-12: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (website:

<http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>)

(ii) Figure for 2012-13 & 2014-15: National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi (website: <http://dise.in/>)

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During 10 years of study the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Tribe girls at primary levels is less than the boys. At upper primary level the GER of girls is higher than the boys during last 3 years of study. At secondary level the GER of girls is higher than the boys. The total GER of Scheduled Caste students are showing downward trends at

primary level. In 2005-2006 the total GER of Scheduled Tribe students is 126.4 per cent and it declined to 109.4 per cent by 2014-2015. But, at primary level the total GER of Scheduled Tribe students increased from 71.5 per cent to 94.1 per cent. The sharp increase in the total GER of Scheduled Tribe students is visible.

Gender Parity Index of Scheduled Castes

The indicator of equality of educational opportunity, measured in terms of school enrolment, is a measure of both fairness and efficiency. Education is one of the most important aspects of human development. Eliminating gender, disparity at all levels of education would help to

increase the status and capabilities of women. Female education is also an important determinant of economic development. Gender Parity Index of Scheduled Caste students in India during 2005-06 to 2014-15 are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Gender Parity Index (GPI) Scheduled Caste Students

Level/Year	Primary (I-V)	Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	Elementary (I-VIII)	Secondary (IX-X)
2005-06	0.87	0.8	0.86	0.74
2006-07	0.88	0.81	0.86	0.76
2007-08	0.99	0.95	0.98	0.88
2008-09	0.99	0.96	0.98	0.89
2009-10	1.00	0.97	0.99	0.90
2010-11	1.01	0.96	1.00	0.91
2011-12	1.02	1.02	1.05	0.98
2012-13*	1.02	1.07	1.03	NA
2013-14*	1.02	1.07	1.04	1.02
2014-15*	1.02	1.09	1.04	1.03

Data Source: (i) figure from 2001-02 to 2011-12: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (website: <http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>)

(ii) Figure for 2012-13 & 2014-15: National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi (website: <http://dise.in/>)

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As per table 4 the Gender Parity Index (GPI) of Scheduled Caste students at primary level in India is favorable to girls from 2009-2010 onwards. At upper primary level GPI is favorable to girls from 2011-12 onwards. The ratio of the number of female students enrolled at secondary level of

education to the number of male students is higher than boys in 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years.

Gender Parity Index of Scheduled Tribes

Gender Parity Index of Scheduled Tribe students in India during 2005-06 to 2014-15 are presented in table 6.

Table 6: Gender Parity Index (GPI) Scheduled Tribe Students

Level/Year	Primary (I-V)	Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	Elementary (I-VIII)	Secondary (IX-X)
2005-06	0.91	0.84	0.90	0.74
2006-07	0.92	0.85	0.91	0.75
2007-08	0.96	0.87	0.94	0.76
2008-09	0.97	0.89	0.95	0.79
2009-10	0.98	0.93	0.97	0.83
2010-11	1.00	0.96	0.99	0.86
2011-12	0.98	0.96	0.98	0.89
2012-13*	0.98	1.03	0.99	NA
2013-14*	0.98	1.02	0.99	1.00
2014-15*	0.98	1.02	0.99	1.01

Data Source: (i) figure from 2001-02 to 2011-12: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (website: <http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>)

(ii) Figure for 2012-13 & 2014-15: National University of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi (website: <http://dise.in/>)

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The data in table 6 shows that the Gender Parity Index (GPI) of Scheduled Tribe students at primary level in India is not favorable to girls during 10 years of study. Whereas, in case of upper primary level of education the gender parity index shows favorable to girls. At secondary level last 2 years of study registered positive Gender Parity Index.

Conclusion

The brief discussion in the above paras shows that the enrollment rate of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe girls have increased gradually compared to boys at upper primary and secondary level. The actual number girl enrolled at primary level is increased by 2 lakhs. Contrary the boy's enrollment at primary level is decreased by 2

lakhs. At upper primary level as well as secondary levels the girls' enrollment is sharply increasing than the boys.

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