



Status of Primary Education of Scheduled Caste Children

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Abstract:

The National Achievement Survey, conducted to evaluate the learning achievement of Class I-V students, found SC students underperforming compared to general students. With this background an attempt was made with the objectives to analyse the Present Position of Male and Females Literacy Rate in India. To analyse the Difference between General Population and Scheduled Castes for Education. To find out the State Wise Enrolment in Classes I-V-SC Students. Scheduled Castes: Social Context and Current Educational Situation. In the present study the main emphasis is given to the problem facing educational level in Indian Schedule Caste children and State Wise School Drop-Out Rates among the I-V-SC Students. To conclude, as education of women brings out change of the standard of living and their entire family system.

Keywords: *Current Educational Situation, Primary education, SC Students, Schedule Caste children*

1. Introduction

The Scheduled Caste population constitutes India's most vulnerable group, estimated at 138 million people. Scheduled Caste are also referred to sometimes as Scheduled Castes (SCs) after a schedule drawn up by the Government of India, and are placed at the bottom of the social and economic hierarchy of the caste system. Due to their place within the caste system, this group has suffered discrimination and exclusion in all its dimensions for centuries. This group has been historically deprived access and entitlements not only to economic rights but also to social needs such as education, health and housing. Discrimination and exclusion in access to sources of income (land, capital and education) has led to high levels of economic deprivation and poverty among SCs.

Scheduled Caste experience an exceptionally high dependence on manual wage labour for their source of income due to restriction in access to fixed capital assets, low level of skill due to restrictive access to education and high unemployment, underemployment and low wage rates due to discrimination in the labour market. Research indicates that in the post-liberalization period (1999-2000), 35 per cent of Scheduled Caste in India was living below the poverty line, as compared with 21 per cent among the non-SCs/STs, termed in the data as 'Others'. Empirical evidence indicates that children from the SCs social group suffer from exclusion and discrimination as well in terms of education and access to health services. A child's wellbeing with respect to her health, nutrition and education is a consequence of complex interactions of multiple determinants. With respect to health and nutrition, 'dietary intake and infection' are some crucial determinants. These two, in turn, are governed by the level of food security in the

household, access to health resources and the adoption of 'appropriate child care behavior'. One of the basic aspects that govern the level of households' food security is the economic capacity of the household.

However, in India, the position of a family within the social/caste hierarchy also determines its access to capital assets, income, employment, education and health services. In the present time, "caste-based customary laws relating to property rights, employment, wage, education has been replaced by a more egalitarian legal framework, under which the untouchables have an equal access. However, despite this change in property rights the access of untouchables to the income earning assets, such as agricultural land and other capital assets has not improved much.

Today Education System in India can be divided into Many Stages:

- Pre- Primary - It consists of children of 3-5 years of age studying in nursery, lower kindergarten and upper kindergarten. At this stage student is given knowledge about school life and is taught to read and write some basic words.
- Primary - It includes the age group of children of 6-11 years studying in classes from first to fifth.
- Middle - It consists of children studying in classes from sixth to eighth.
- Secondary - it includes students studying in classes ninth and tenth.
- Higher Secondary - Includes students studying in eleventh and twelfth classes.
- Undergraduate - Here, a student goes through higher education, which is completed in college. This course may vary according to the subject pursued by the student. For medical student this stage is of four and a half years plus one year of compulsory internship, while a simple graduate degree can be attained in three years.
- Postgraduate - After completing graduation a student may opt for post-graduation to further add to his qualifications.

2. Objectives of this Study

1. To analyze the Present Position of Male and Females Literacy Rate in India.
2. To analyze the Difference between General Population and Scheduled Castes for Education.
3. To find out the State Wise Enrolment In Classes I-V-SC Students.
4. Scheduled Castes: Social Context and Current Educational Situation.
5. In the present study the main emphasis is given to the problem facing educational level in Indian Schedule Caste children and State Wise School Drop-Out Rates among the I-V-SC Students.

3. Present Position of Male and Females Literacy Rate in India

In spite of the forceful intervention by a bastion of female privilege, feminist critics, constitutional guarantees, protecting laws and sincere efforts by the state governments and central government through various schemes and programmes over the last 62 years and above all, the United Nation's enormous pressure with regard to the uplift of the plight of women in terms education is still in the state of an enigma in India for several reasons. The 2011 Census report indicates that literacy among women as only 65.46 percent it is virtually disheartening to observe that the literacy rate of women India is even much lower to national average i.e. 74.04. The growth of women's education in rural areas is very slow. This obviously means that still large womenfolk of our country are illiterate, the weak, backward and exploited. Moreover education is also not available to all equally. Gender inequality is reinforced in education which is proved by the fact that the literacy rate for the women is only 65.46% against 82.14% of men as per 2011 Census.

Table 1. Literacy Rate in India

YEAR	PERSONS	MALES	FEMALES
1901	5.3	9.8	0.7
1911	5.9	10.6	1.1
1921	7.2	12.2	1.8
1931	9.5	15.6	2.9
1941	16.1	24.9	7.3
1951	16.7	24.9	7.3
1961	24.0	34.4	13.0
1971	29.5	39.5	18.7
1981	36.2	46.9	24.8
1991	52.1	63.9	39.2
2001	65.38	76.0	54.0
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46

Source: Census of India (2011)

3.1 General Population Vs Scheduled Castes for Education

In general, the most encouraging part of the contemporary trend is, that there is a greater desire among Scheduled Castes for education. Even the most lagging groups of Scheduled Castes have come to realize this need and are trying to catch up with literacy levels achieved by the affluent in the national mainstream. This could be partly confirmed by the rising literacy level of these groups. The rising level of literacy is also accompanied by a rising trend of more enrolments in primary school grade as will be revealed from the Table below:

Table 2. Scheduled Castes Enrolments in Primary School

(In percent)

Year	General Population	Scheduled Castes
1961	24.02	10.27
1971	29.45	14.67
1981	36.23	21.38
1991	52.10	37.41
2001	65.0	54.69

In 1961, while literacy amongst of the general population was around 24%, the literacy amongst of the Scheduled Castes was only 10%. Thirty years after, in 1991 the literacy amongst the Scheduled Castes has increased to a little more than 37% in, comparison with 52% of the general population and further to about 55% compared to 65% of the general population.

Source: Mia HRD'

4. Enrolments in Primary School of Scheduled Castes

The total number of Scheduled Castes enrolled at the primary (I-V), school education from 2008-09 to 2010-11 increased by Boys, 325028, Girls, 255037 above stages of school education.

Table 3. State Wise Enrolment In Classes I-V-Sc Students

Sr.	States/UTs	2009-10 (P)		2010-11 (P)	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1	Andhra Pradesh	687649	674318	688025	669934
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0
3	Assam*	144206	141256	144206	141256
4	Bihar	1368496	985387	1523161	1217353
5	Chhattisgarh	237790	220256	252547	232200
6	Goa	1033	1070	1142	1059
7	Gujarat	231294	224708	231294	224708
8	Haryana	395669	357383	350259	313142

9	Himachal Pradesh	91555	87036	90993	86681
10	Jammu & Kashmir*	49616	42874	49616	42874
11	Jharkhand	437955	408727	381126	364925
12	Karnataka	550105	517509	540574	504930
13	Kerala	122439	115965	117204	111105
14	Madhya Pradesh	1095038	1009291	914165	885581
15	Maharashtra	780700	721535	767031	712644
16	Manipur	4896	4406	5292	4986
17	Meghalaya	2759	2970	2750	2336
18	Mizoram	415	332	5	9
19	Nagaland*	0	0	0	0
20	Orissa	441197	423885	439488	422966
21	Punjab	540219	468118	540219	468118
22	Rajasthan	956392	812197	906750	794989
23	Sikkim*	3154	2943	3154	2943
24	Tamil Nadu	783320	744966	757539	726879
25	Tripura	41851	40246	37379	35840
26	Uttar Pradesh	3171033	3109371	3968653	3686572
27	Uttarakhand	149917	146757	150720	148105
28	West Bengal	1379448	1332915	1129003	1044817
29	A&N Islands	0	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	3777	3212	4124	3529
31	D&N Haveli	378	301	325	268
32	Daman & Diu	415	344	357	295
33	Delhi	95990	81284	96603	85682
34	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0
35	Pondicherry	10627	10411	10657	10284
	INDIA	13779333	12691973	14104361	12947010

(P):

stands

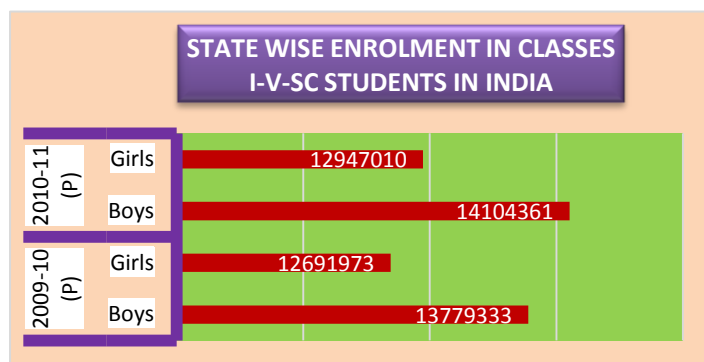
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Data for the year 2010-11 has been repeated from 2009-10 for these states,

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

5. The Scheduled Castes: Social Context and Current Educational Situation

The Scheduled Castes constitute around 16 per cent of the Indian population today. There are marked state and regional variations in terms of these proportions. Punjab has the highest



proportion at 28 per cent. Among the larger states, (barring the North Eastern, where high tribal concentrations exist) Gujarat has the smallest percentage of SCs at 7.41%. From a sociological point of view, apart from their increasing visibility the most significant contemporary fact concerning the Scheduled Castes is their growing political assertion and identity formation as 'dalit'. As pointed out by

Beteille, it is not easy to form a single consistent view of the present position of the Scheduled Castes because the regional diversity is so large and the balance between continuity and change so uncertain¹. Whereas in the past the social condition of the Scheduled Castes was governed strongly by the ritual opposition of purity and pollution, the calculus of democratic politics has become important today.

Urban migration, education, occupational change and religious conversion have been pursued by the scheduled castes as key strategies of socio-economic emancipation, status change and

acquisition of a new social identity. They have achieved varying degrees of success. Anti-caste and dalit movements have provided the bases for political consciousness and assertions of new self-consciousness and new self-respecting collective identities grounded in both moderate-reformist and radical ideologies. Contemporarily, the rigours of pollution, social practices of untouchability and social relations of servility vary greatly in different parts of the country. The widespread upsurge of atrocity signifies continued caste based oppression. Caste and occupation were closely interlinked in the traditional socio-economic order, and the lowest manual and menial occupations were reserved for the SC. The link has gradually been broken but not completely. There have been shifts to caste free occupations. Changes took place with the arrival of new opportunities in rural employment and petty business as well as through education based occupational and social mobility in rural and urban contexts. However, economic exploitation and economic disadvantage and continued concentration in menial occupations continue to sustain and reinforce the degraded social position of the majority of the SC. Rural SC are predominantly landless and impoverished agricultural labour. Women are multiply subordinated.

In general the reduction of disparities and inclusion within “mainstream” urban and rural society has taken place in predominantly stigmatised, exploited and oppressive ways for vast sections of SC, particularly for those located in the relatively more tradition-bound and socio-economically “backward” states/areas. Under the post 90s impact of global processes the poorest SC have been most adversely affected and become more poverty stricken. Studies have pointed out to growing incidence of poverty, rising levels of rural unemployment, wage squeeze, rising levels of mortality and illness as well as declining levels of consumption shares, real wages and consumer monthly per capita expenditure among the SC.

5.1 Overview of Education in India and the Extent of Social exclusion of Scheduled Caste Children

There has been a significant increase in overall literacy rates and school participation rates across the country since the early 1990s. Gender and social disparities have also

6. Problems of Education

Problems of education are found in each and every country in the world. These Problems vary in their kind and degree, but they are there throughout the world. However, some general questions pertaining to education arise in each country. Some examples of these questions are: Is the current system of education suitable to cope with the national needs and aspirations. Do the schools of today fulfill the expectations of the people? Have enough facilities and resources been organized for education? Thus people are everywhere aware of the basic problems of education.

6.1 First and the Worst Problem of Education in India

Several surveys conducted over the years have clearly shown the low level of learning among a wide number of students that prevails across the length and breadth of India. The ASER Survey 2011, which was an all India representative survey of school children in rural areas found that only 58% of children enrolled in classes 3 to 5 could read Class – I text. Less than half (47%) were able to do simple two digit subtraction. And only half of the children in classes 5 to 8 could use a calendar. These were not difficult tasks by any stretch of imagination. Several such surveys with dismal levels of learning among children in rural areas keep coming out. But surprisingly even urban areas don't seem to be doing any better.

6.2 Facts and HOLES in Education System

- If one can write his/her name correctly in any language is considered to be educated or literate.
- Student politics is also a major issue, as many institutions are run by politicians.
- Ragging used to be a major problem in colleges

- Engineering, medical and other lucrative seats are sometimes sold for high prices and ridden with nepotism and power-play.
- The presence of a number of education boards (SSC, ICSE, CBSE, IB) leads to non-uniformity.

6.3 The main reasons for the very low literacy rate among SCs children could be some or all of the following

- The Lack of educational resources especially in rural areas.
- Privatization of schools and colleges.
- Extreme poverty, because of which they cannot afford the expensive fees for the private schools.
- The demand for an increase in the Dowry for educated girls.
- Humiliation and bullying by the high caste students and teachers.

6.4 Inequality and Social Exclusion Faced by SCs Children

Discussion in the preceding section provides empirical evidence on caste- based exclusion and discrimination faced by SCs Children in multiple realms of the Indian society. The evidence revealed significant disparities across social groups the level of deprivation in terms of poverty and its factors like access to capital assets, employment, wage earnings and education as estimate in the year 2000. SCs were the disadvantageous group in each factor that determines the level of poverty. For instance, access to capital assets like land is particularly low among the SCs due to their traditional exclusion from ownership of property. This feature in turn determines the 'kind' of occupation that is pursued: limited access to fixed capital assets for this social group has led to exceptionally high dependence on manual wage labour for their source of income. Moreover, SCs also suffers from high rate of under-employment and low wage earnings; hence the cumulative impact of these handicaps is reflected in high degree of poverty. Historically, SCs have also faced restrictions in attaining education which is reflected in their low literacy rates and level of education. Low level of human capital among the SCs affects their capacity to participate in better economic activities such as regular salaried jobs and leads to dependence on irregular daily wage employment. Empirical evidence indicates that children from the SCs social group suffer from exclusion and discrimination in terms of education, incidence of child labour, good health and access to health services.

6.5 State Wise School Drop-Out Rates among the SC Children's

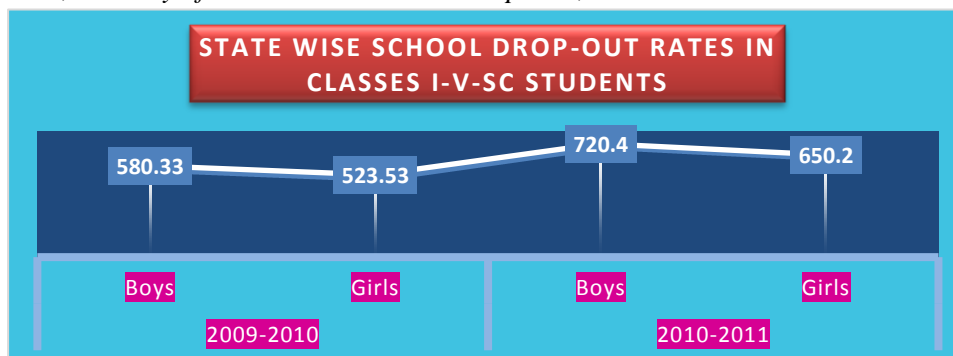
At the State Wise School Drop-Out Rates in Classes I-V-SC Students level, the states in which the attendance rate was below the overall Boys Average 650.365, Girls Average 586.865, were Bihar Boys drop-out rates total 91.82, Girls 85.6 (2010 to 2011), Rajasthan Boys drop-out rates total 99.45, Girls 103.68 (2010 to 11), Chhattisgarh Boys drop-out rates total 79.79, Girls 80.18 (2010 to 11), Madhya Pradesh Boys drop-out rates total 57.96, Girls 47.41 (2010 to 11). Odessa Boys drop-out rates total 37.27, Girls 32.39 (2010 to 2011), Punjab Boys drop-out rates total 14.44, Girls 24.43 (2010 to 11), Uttar Pradesh Boys drop-out rates total 79.85, Girls 41.35 (2010 to 2011) and West Bengal Boys drop-out rates total 49.4, Girls 41.35 (2010 to 2011). The states in which the attendance rate was relatively very high dropout rates Rajasthan Boys 99.45, Girls 103.68 (2010 to 11), Bihar drop-out rates Boys 91.82, Girls 85.6 (2010 to 2011), and Gujarat drop-out rates Boys 94.79, Girls 85.38.

Table 4. State Wise School Drop-Out Rates In Classes I-V-Sc Students

Sl. No.	States/ Union Territories	2009-2010		2010-2011	
		Classes I-V		Classes I-V	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1	Andhra Pradesh	19.21	17.69	20.2	19.0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	100.0	100.0

3	Assam	29.42	24.36	28.8	23.4
4	Bihar	50.92	49.70	40.9	35.9
5	Chhattisgarh	37.49	33.18	42.3	47.0
6	Goa	18.46	10.75	9.8	20.9
7	Gujarat	47.39	42.68	47.4	42.7
8	Haryana	-2.85	-7.66	3.4	0.9
9	Himachal Pradesh	4.76	5.75	6.8	7.8
10	Jammu & Kashmir	-1.84	-4.68	-	-
11	Jharkhand	32.93	33.41	42.0	39.0
12	Karnataka	17.04	15.41	14.4	14.3
13	Kerala	-9.35	-4.91	-	-
14	Madhya Pradesh	25.06	22.91	32.9	24.5
15	Maharashtra	22.60	23.06	24.9	20.2
16	Manipur	36.86	37.82	29.6	28.9
17	Meghalaya	13.07	12.50	15.5	20.2
18	Mizoram	38.30	56.47	-	-
19	Nagaland	-	-	-	-
20	Odessa	20.67	17.49	16.6	14.8
21	Punjab	7.14	11.83	7.3	12.6
22	Rajasthan	49.65	52.28	49.8	51.4
23	Sikkim	30.88	24.50	34.6	28.8
24	Tamil Nadu	-9.08	-8.05	-	0.3
25	Tripura	7.03	4.85	16.6	13.8
26	Uttar Pradesh	46.05	26.25	33.8	15.1
27	Uttarakhand	32.75	29.34	29.9	25.5
28	West Bengal	23.50	19.18	25.9	26.0
29	A&N Islands	-	-	-	-
30	Chandigarh	-56.49	-42.44	-	-
31	D&N Haveli	13.79	9.68	16.9	11.1
32	Daman & Diu	4.00	-3.03	6.6	-
33	Delhi	24.53	21.10	23.5	6.1
34	Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-
35	Pondicherry	-4.75	-7.89	-	-
	<i>INDIA</i>	<i>580.33</i>	<i>523.53</i>	<i>720.4</i>	<i>650.2</i>

Source: GOI, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Selected Educational Statistics, 2010-2011.



7. Conclusion and Suggestions

The above analysis envisages that education is one of the most important social indicators, which are directly linked with economic development. To increase the State Wise School Drop-Out Rates in Classes I-V-SC Students in India, the state wise should concentrate on retention rather than enrolment especially schedule caste communities to reduce social disparities. In addition to universal facilities, universal enrolment and universal retention, the availability of a universally high quality of teaching and learning should also be provided. As a whole, the highest dropout rate is recorded in the Scheduled Caste community, As per the opinions elicited from the local teachers literacy levels of parents and poor economic conditions of the families are found to be

the major reasons for dropouts. Excessive involvement of children in domestic work, household chores, etc., and negligence of parents towards early marriages of girls children are the other causes for the higher dropout rates.

7.1 The following suggestions are being made for improving attendance rate of children

1. The children of scheduled and tribal people should be trained in some handicraft or practical skills.
2. The teacher appointed to teach scheduled caste and tribal children should be given special allowances and residential facilities.
3. Children in schools for scheduled caste and tribal should be given food, clothing, books and stationeries free.
4. Teachers appointed for teaching scheduled caste and tribal children should be trained in training colleges established in their area in order that during the training period they may get acquainted with the life style of the scheduled and tribal people.
5. Teachers appointed to teach scheduled and tribal children should be fully conversant with their culture.
6. Primary education for scheduled and tribal children should be given through their mother-tongue. Suitable books should be published for this purpose in mother-tongue.
7. Facilities in school and school environment should be improved to make schools more attractive for the children. It should be ensured that there is no teacher shortage in schools and classrooms are not over-crowded.
8. The quality of education in schools should improve so that parents feel that the child is learning something worthwhile in school and they no longer remain indifferent about the child's education and unconcerned about whether he/she attends school regularly or not.
9. Teachers in school should be more children friendly and classrooms should be attractive so that children feel enthusiastic about going to school instead of being reluctant or unwilling.
10. The VECs and community members should assume greater responsibility for ensuring regularity of children is going to school. If children are found to be missing classes, the matter should be brought to the notice of parents and teachers who should take necessary corrective action.
11. To reduce the absence rate because of illness or poor health, regular health checkup of students should be carried out and arrangements should be made to enhance medical facilities for school going children.

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