



## SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF TRIBALS IN EDUCATION AND STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION – ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

*India advocates inclusive growth, but due to lack of education, the marginalized sections are being excluded from the inclusive growth. The constitution has earmarked certain special provisions to enable SC'S and ST'S to access education. The issues of inclusion and discrimination assume special importance in the Indian context where in Scheduled Tribes who constitute nearly one eighth of the Indian population has tragically suffered from social exclusion. ST's still face social exclusion and discrimination in their daily lives, their voice of their rights, entitlements dignity and justice are frequently suppressed with atrocities on them by other caste groups. This happen so even after comprehensive constitutional safe guards and laws entered over years for the protection and development of SC'S as well as ST'S.*

*Indian constitution has made specific provision for promoting literacy among the tribals. Article 46 contains a directive to the state government to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the public and in particular of scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes. Besides constitution, several education policies and programmes appointed from time to time have suggested several measures for promotion of literacy among the tribals. In spite of several programmes were implemented still vast percentages of tribals are excluded as literates. This is much more in the case of females.*

*In this backdrop an attempt is made to examine the cause for exclusion of tribals, impact of educational policies and constitutional provision on inclusion of tribals in terms of literacy. Finally, suggestion were drawn for inclusion of excluded tribals in literacy.*

### KEYWORDS:

*Constitution, Educational Policies, Social Exclusion, Social Inclusion, Literacy.*

### INTRODUCTION

The Scheduled Tribes population of the country, as per the 2011 census, is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6 per cent of the total population. The population of Scheduled Tribes had grown at the rate of 23.66 per cent during the period 2001-2011. More than half the Scheduled Tribes population is concentrated in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

Scheduled Tribes communities live in about 15 per cent of the country's areas, in various ecological and geoclimatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development. While some tribal communities have adopted a mainstream way of life, at the other end of the spectrum, there are certain Scheduled Tribes, 75 in number known as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, who are characterized by (a) a pre-agriculture level

of technology; (b) a stagnant or declining population; (c) extremely low literacy; and (d) a subsistence level of economy.

While the tribal population in some states is low when calculated as the percentage of the total tribal population of India but it constitutes the majority within the state or UT itself. A very sizeable segment of tribal population, as stated earlier, resides in the states of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Orissa, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

There are over 700 Scheduled Tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India, spread over different States and Union Territories of the country. Many tribes are present in more than one state. The largest number of communities listed as Scheduled Tribes are in the state of Odisha i.e.62.

## CONCEPT OF SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

The term 'social exclusion' and 'social inclusion' are two terms most widely used in recent years by politicians, social scientists and the public as well. The term social inclusion was originated in French social policy in the 1970s. It came into play in the 1980s economic crisis when state sponsored republican tradition of solidarity was in vogue. By the year 1990 the term was theorized by scholars like Bourdieu and Luhmann. The latter clarified the concept in the following terms.

The concept of inclusion means the encompassing of the entire population in the performances of the individual function systems. On the one hand, this concerns access to these benefits and on the other, dependence of individual modes of living on them. To the extent that inclusion is achieved, groups disappear that do not or only marginally participate in social living.

Social exclusion has to be seen as an institutionalized form of inequality, the failure of society to extend to all sections of its population, the economic resources and social recognition which they need in order to participate fully in the collective life of the community. Social exclusion is a kind of mechanism by which 'accesses and recognition is granted or denied. Economic theory suggests the distinction between 'open' and 'closed' groups as one way of understanding access and exclusion. Open groups are those which achieve their objectives by expanding their membership because the benefits they seek increase with the increased membership and outweigh the recruiting bringing new members. Closed groups like trade unions, on the other hand, achieve their objectives by restricting their membership on the basis of some agreed set of rules.

Another way to look at the mechanism of exclusion is the distinction between 'given' and 'chosen'. While chosen groups are obviously ones which individuals join of their own accord, and which they are also able to exit of their own accord, they are not all equally 'open'. 'Given' groups, on the other hand, are by definition are closed groups with the additional features that they are less easy to join and less easy to abandon. The socially ascribed character of certain group identities and memberships, which given them the appearance of being 'given' and unchangeable, reminds us that there are group based constraints on individual choice and that not all such constraints are economic in nature. People are not always in a position to choose who they are, where they belong and how they wish to be perceived for person who have little to do with what they own or earn.

Thus, in totality, social exclusion denotes the following characteristics of a society at large or individuals at least.

- i) Inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life.
- ii) Distance and alienation from a so called mainstream society.
- iii) Isolation from major mechanisms which produce or distribute social resources.

Social exclusion is a broader concept. It is a related concept with unemployment and poverty, but not an identical one with them. Social exclusion is a relative term particular to a place or country on certain circumstances. It is always related to a social agent or agents. Exclusion is also dynamic term depending upon people's immediate condition.

## SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION – THE INDIAN CONTEXT

The issues of exclusion and discrimination assume special importance in the Indian context wherein Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), who constitute nearly one-eighth of the Indian population, have traditionally suffered from social exclusion. While these population groups are numerically important, they continuously lag behind the other social groups in various social, economic and political indicators of development. Their progress in terms of attaining higher levels of development is much slower than that of other social groups, particularly other caste Hindus and religious minorities except Muslims. (Much of the differences in development outcomes on several indicators for SCs as compared to other social groups are seen in the historical disadvantage of SCs affected by the caste system). The organizational scheme of the caste system is based on division of people in social groups in which the occupations and property rights of each individual caste are predetermined by birth and hereditary. The assignment or divisions of occupations are considered socially inferior with low social status for those engaged in them. The caste system based economy is maintained or enforced through the instruments of social ostracism with justification and support from philosophical elements in Hindu religion. Though such caste system has diluted of the years with the constitutional safeguards after the Independence, SCs still face social exclusion and discrimination in their daily lives. Their voice for their rights, entitlements, dignity and justice are frequently suppressed with atrocities on them by other caste groups. This happens so even after comprehensive constitutional safeguards and laws enacted over the years for the protection and development of SCs as well as STs.

### LITERACY PROMOTION MEASURES FOR ST's

Indian constitution has made specific provisions in Article 15(4) and 46 for promoting literacy among the Tribals. Article 15(4) is an exception to the fundamental rights of the people of equal treatment irrespective of religion, caste, race, sex granted under Article 15(4). It empowers the state to make any special provision for advancement of any socially or educationally backward class of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Article 46 contains a directive to the State Government Tribes. Article 46 contains a directive to the State Government to promote with a special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the public and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Besides the constitution, the main basis of educational policy in India is emphasizing the recommendations of the several commissions and committees appointed from time to time to suggest reforms in the educational system so as to meet adequately the new demand of the country. The education commission policies and programmes, which include Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), Kothari Education Commission (1964-69), National Policy on Education (1986) Programme of Action (1992) Yashpal Committee (1993) emphasized the need based education for tribals.

National Policy on Education, 1986 again revised in 1992 launched special drive to improve the educational status of Scheduled Tribes. The National Programme of

Nutritional support to primary education on the mid-day meal act as a support service to increase retention rate. Following the specific emphasis of National Policy on Education (1986) on the need for the expansion of formal and non-formal primary and adult and literacy education with a priority on reducing the disparities on enrollment for students of ST's. Ministry of Human Resource Development initiated a series of centrally sponsored schemes like operation Black Board in 1986, District Institutes of Education and Training in 1988, Total literacy campaigns in 1988, and minimum levels of learning in 1989. Consequent upon the revision of the National Policy for Education by the Central Advisory Board on Education in 1992, the District Primary Education Programme has been introduced with Central Assistance to increase enrollment, retention and equality in primary education in the districts with below average literacy rates.

Concerning education to the disadvantaged sections, the Draft National Policy on Education (1979) expressed grave concern over the dismal educational condition of certain disadvantaged sections of the society including SCs and STs. It stated:

“While there has been considerable expansion in all sectors of education in our country in balances and inequalities still per SC, ST Girls, Scheduled Castes and Tribes, landless labourers, backward classes and urban slum poor generally continue to lag behind in education. Special effort must be made to identify the problem in these cases and to bring all such people into the fold of education.”

The Government of India reviewed the progress of education in 1985 and published a discussion documents and subsequently formulated the National Policy on Education (NPE) of. A programme of Action too was chalked out in 1986. In these documents, the detailed proposals and Schemes to be pursued for the improvement of educational status was given. The following measures are initiated to bring the STs on par with others.

1. Priority to open primary schools in tribal areas. The construction of school buildings are undertaken in these areas on a priority basis under the normal funds for education, as well as under NREP, EGP, Tribal Welfare Schemes etc.
2. The Socio-cultural milieu of the ST's has its distinctive characteristics including in many cases their own spoken language. This underlines the need to develop the curricula and devise the instructional material in tribal languages at the initial stage, with arrangement for switching over to the regional language.
3. Educated and Promoting ST youth are encouraged and trained to take up teaching in tribal areas.
4. Residential schools including Ashram schools are established on a large scale.
5. Incentive schemes are formulated for the STs keeping in view their special needs and life styles. Special remedial courses and other programmes to remove psychological impediments are provided to improve their performance in various courses.

6. Anganwadis, non-formal and Adult Education centers are opened on a priority basis in areas predominantly inhabited by STs.
7. The curriculum at all stages of education is designed to create an awareness of the rich cultural identity of the tribal people as also of their enormous creative team.

### **SARVA SIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)**

The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) which was launched in the year 2000 which aims to achieve universal elementary education has a special focus on education of the tribal children. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan recognizes the varied issues and challenges in tribal education in view of the heterogeneous structure of tribal population in the country. The issues and challenges in tribal education can be categorized as external, internal, socio-economic and psychological. The external constraints are related to issues at levels of policy, planning and implementation while internal constraints are with respect to school system, content, curriculum, pedagogy, medium of instruction etc. The third set of problems relates to social economic and cultural background of tribals and psychological aspects of first generation learners.

#### **Some of the interventions being promoted in State under SSA include:**

- Setting up schools, education guarantee centres and alternative schools in tribal habitations for non-enrolled and drop out children.
- Textbooks in mother tongue for children at the beginning of the primary education cycle, where they do not understand the regional language. Suitably adapt the curriculum and make available locally relevant teaching learning materials for tribal students.
- Special training for non-tribal teachers to work in tribal areas including knowledge of tribal dialect.
- Special support to teachers as per need
- Deploying community teachers
- Bridge Language Inventory for use of teachers
- The school calendar in tribal areas may be prepared as per local requirements and festivals.
- Anganwadis and Balwadis or crèches in each school in tribal areas so that the girls are relieved from sibling care responsibilities.
- Special plan for nomadic and migrant workers.
- Engagement of community organizers from ST communities with a focus on schooling needs of children from specific households.
- Ensuring sense of ownership of school communities by ST communities by increasing representatives of STs in VECs/PTAs etc. Involving community leaders in school management.
- Monitoring attendance and retention of children
- Providing context specific interventions eg. Ashram School, hostel, incentives etc.

**Table-1 Exclusion of Tribals (in percent)**

Year	General	ST Total	General Male	ST Male	General Female	ST Female
1961	28.31	8.53	40.40	13.8	15.34	3.2
1971	34.45	11.30	45.95	17.6	21.97	4.9
1981	43.67	16.35	56.50	24.5	29.85	8.0
1991	52.21	29.60	64.13	40.6	39.29	18.2
2001	65.38	47.10	75.85	47.10	54.16	26.1
2011	74.04	58.96	82.14	68.5	65.46	49.4

Source : Censuses of India 2011

Though several programmes were implemented for promotion of literacy among tribals. It may be noted from table-1 that still vast percentage of tribals are excluded as literates. This is much more in the case of females.

The poor educational achievements of Scheduled Tribes can be best understood in the context of deeply embedded caste and social hierarchies that are enacted and expressed in everyday social interactions of community, school and economic life. Functional from pre-colonial times, the system of socially sanctioned discrimination and prejudice against communities designated as outside the caste system has had far-reaching impacts on the self-worth, dignity and economic life of ST groups. The exclusion of Scheduled Tribes, is based on a different set of economic and cultural factors that have little to do with caste ideology. Scheduled Tribe groups have traditionally lived in more remote areas of the country and in closer proximity to forests and natural resources. The remote and difficult geographical terrain inhabited by Scheduled Tribes has isolated them from mainstream Indian society. This has afforded them a measure of cultural autonomy and economic independence. Traditional Scheduled Tribe communities value their close relationship to nature and make optimal use of the natural resource-base for their daily sustenance. However, modernization and accumulative processes of production have resulted in massive encroachment into their natural habitats. This has in turn resulted in displacement, poverty and heightened levels of exploitation through a system of bonded labour. The term 'double disadvantage' has been used to characterize the socio-economic and spatial marginalization of Scheduled Tribes in India.

### Faces of Exclusion:

Exclusion from basic education for Scheduled Tribes is a complex socio-political process that has multiple roots and causalities. The Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) has developed a framework of 'Zones of Exclusion' to examine access and to describe the various spaces where cohorts of children are included, excluded, or are at risk of exclusion. Of the six zones identified in the CREATE model, this paper, is most concerned with:

**Zone 1** children who have never been to school, and are unlikely to attend school.

**Zone 2** children who enter primary schooling, but who drop out before completing the primary cycle.

**Zone 3** children who enter primary schooling and are enrolled but are 'at risk' of dropping out before completion as a result of irregular attendance, low achievement, and silent exclusion from worthwhile learning.

Initial access has little meaning unless it results in; (i) regular attendance; (ii) progression; (iii) meaningful learning; and (iv) appropriate access to post-primary education. The achievement of genuine access and equity require reforms that address problems in each of the Zones of Exclusion in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. As will become clear in subsequent sections, education reforms in India have so far focused on Zone 1, that is, ensuring Scheduled Tribes students can enroll in school. Education reforms that also engage the other Zones of Exclusion are crucial to guaranteeing equity of opportunity for ST children.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for Scheduled Tribe students at Primary, Upper Primary and Elementary levels are given in Table 2. In 2014-15, there has been marginal decline in GER at Primary level from 113.2 in 2013-14(p) to 109.4 in 2014-15(P).

However, at Secondary, Senior Secondary and Higher Education levels the GER has increased over the years as given in Table 3. The GER for ST students are 72.2 per cent and 38.8 per cent, respectively at the Secondary and Senior Secondary levels as per 2014-15 AISHE Reports, while that at Higher Secondary level is abysmally low at 13.3 per cent.

Although, the Drop-Out Rates in School Education for Scheduled Tribe Students have progressively declined for different classes during 2011-12 to 2014-15, the situation is still alarming. Out of every 100 ST students admitted in Class I, nearly 48 drops out between Class I and VII and nearly 62 drops out between Classes I and X, as per 2013-14 provisional estimates are given in table- 4. Drop-out rates and slightly higher among the boys compared to those among girls across all categories.

**Table-2 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) among Scheduled Tribe Students**

Level/ Year	Primary (I-V) 6-10 Years			Upper Primary(VI-VIII) 11-13 Years			Elementary (I-VIII) 6-13 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12	117.8	115.6	116.7	76.8	74.1	75.5	103.0	100.6	101.8
2012-13(P)	115.7	113.5	114.6	86.2	86.5	86.4	105.1	103.9	104.5
2013-14(P)	114.4	111.9	113.2	90.5	92.2	91.3	105.9	105.0	105.5
2014-15(P)	110.6	108.2	109.4	93.0	95.2	94.1	104.4	103.7	104.0

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

## Reasons for high drop-outs among tribal students

The High Drop-out among Tribal Students can be explained in terms of various arguments. We can classify these arguments into two categories; economic and non-economic. The economic arguments are based on the traditional theory of human capital investment. The theory propounds that investment in education by an individual is determined by equating the marginal cost in terms of foregone earnings from foregone leisure to the marginal benefit of spending additional time in particular, higher earnings as an adult. Subsidies in the form of lower fees or scholarships provided to the students affect the marginal schooling in the same way as would a decrease in the child wage rate: They reduce the shadow wage of children's time in activities than school. The benefit to schooling in terms of earnings depends on how time the individual spends working as adult. However, as they accumulate schooling, they receive higher wage offers. Assuming diminishing marginal returns to schooling, at some point, the marginal benefit of schooling will no longer exceed the marginal cost. These considerations lead us to expect that

over the short run, the program is likely to decrease working (assuming the substitution effect continues to dominate the income effect), but over the longer run, the program might increase working. This argument could explain why the drop-out rates increase as the ST students move up in years of schooling.

The non-economic reasons which are directly or indirectly responsible for higher drop-out among the ST students are indifferent attitude of tribal parents to their wards' education, tribal concept of learning being different from present schooling system, linguistic problems, problem associated with learning English, problems in learning to read, extreme level of poverty, deprivation and vulnerability, high levels of developmental, social and economic exclusion, low level of access to entitlement, extremely low level of political, social and economic empowerment, poor human development with low level of literacy and access to health care, weak delivery system of public services, fast increasing tendency to misguide and use tribal people in criminal activities like illicit distillation, cultivation of narcotic plants, stealing of forest wealth etc.

**Table-3 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) among Scheduled Tribe Students**

Level/ Year	Secondary (IX-X) 14-15 Years			Senior Secondary(XI-XII) 16-17 Years			Higher Education(I-VIII) 18-23 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12	56.7	50.6	53.8	35.4	29.0	32.3	12.4	9.7	11.0
2012-13(P)	62.6	61.2	61.9	32.3	29.0	30.7	12.4	9.8	11.1
2013-14(P)	70.3	70.1	70.2	36.7	34.1	35.4	12.5	10.2	11.3
2014-15(P)	71.8	72.6	72.2	39.8	37.8	38.8	14.6	12.0	13.3

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

**Table-4 Drop-Out Rates in School Education among Scheduled Tribe Students**

Classes	Classes (I-V)			Classes (I-VIII)			Classes (I-X)		
Year	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2011-12	36.1	34.4	35.3	57.3	57.1	57.2	64.4	67.6	65.9
2012-13	33.3	31.2	32.3	50.6	47.5	49.2	63.2	62.2	62.7
2013-14	31.9	30.7	31.3	49.8	46.4	48.2	63.2	61.4	62.4

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

### Strategies for Inclusive of Tribals:

1. There is also need to open more number of schools in tribal areas and to appoint qualified teachers from the tribal community.
2. Need to bring necessary changes in curriculum to attract the tribal children and to decrease the dropout rate from the schools.
3. Awareness camps should be organized in the tribal areas in order to enlighten the tribal's about the importance of education.
4. Adequate funds are to be sanctioned for construction of school buildings. Care has to be taken to provide basic facilities like drinking water and toilets within school premises.
5. Opening up child care centres, Balwadis and strengthening of Aganwadis to reduce dropout rate.
6. Developmental programmes should be implemented effectively in the tribal areas to improve their economic conditions. As the poverty is one of the major factors either for not joining in the schools or high drop out among the tribal children.
7. In order to check the absenteeism among the teachers proper monitoring mechanism system has to be evolved and stringent action may be initiated against the teachers who are absenting to the duties.
8. There is need to provide incentives to the teachers working hard for reducing the dropout rate among the tribal's and cent percent enrollment.
9. Efforts should be made to teach up to primary level in the mother tongue of Tribal's.
10. Non-Governmental organization working for promotion of literacy may be involved in the literacy promotion programmes.
11. Emphasis should be given by formulating tribal education policy to promote literacy along the girls and high dropout rate. Because, there is wider gap between the boys and literacy rates and also other community girls. For which girl parents may be given priority while extending any benefit from the Government.

### CONCLUSION

Education is the key to Tribal Development. But, the level of participation of Tribal children is at low level. Though the Government has been giving utmost priority for the well being of the ST's after recognizing the isolation of Scheduled Tribes, the constitution of India has made certain special provisions for promotion of educational opportunities. However the pace of development has been slow. It is need of the hour to take concrete steps for the development Tribal

education, otherwise the status of education among the tribals is not satisfactory. Against this background, government should take new initiatives for inclusive growth of tribals by allocating necessary funds and formulate an action policy and adopting intervention strategies so as to provide good opportunities to the tribal children and make them to participate in the economic development of the country.

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