



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

SCHEDULED TRIBE STUDENTS FACED PROBLEMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL: A STUDY

KEY WORDS: Higher Education, ST students Problems, ST students in West Bengal.

Haru Roy

M.Phil.Scholar, Department of Education, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India.

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the different barriers faced by the Scheduled Tribes (ST) students at the higher education level in West Bengal. The subject of the present study has selected purposefully six General Degree colleges from Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur districts under Vidyasagar University in West Bengal. A total of 140 ST students are randomly selected for this purpose. The criteria measured in this study are parameters of levels of barriers. The investigator tries to construct the name of the total (Questionnaire) and applying the selected total number of students. All this checklist data has been analyzed by measures of central tendency, graphical representation, and percentile ranking to find out. The result of findings, following suitable discussion to draw conclusive remarks.

INTRODUCTION:

Education is a key component of the Human Development Index. Social mobility of a backward community could be ensured and accelerated by providing education to that particular community. Thus it is important to analyze the educational attainment of tribal to get a clear picture of their educational status in the state of West Bengal and accordingly the steps should be taken to make education accessible to the tribal community. So, Education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of the Scheduled Tribes. Education is in fact, an input not only for the economic development of tribes but also for the inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life.

West Bengal is home to a large variety of indigenous people. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in West Bengal all over India. Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is in fact, an input not only for the economic development of tribes but also for the inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. It is an activity, or a series of activities, or a process that may either improve the immediate living conditions or increase the potential for future living. It is the single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for sustained improvement in their well-being.

In this context, the investigator has taken in this paper to search and analyze the different barriers to Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

- **Gupta's (2006):** This paper highlights the issues and concerns of the educational scenario of Tribals in India. The paper suggests that in order to mainstream the tribal population it is important to make them socialize which could be possible through quality education.
- **Sridhar (1996):** Described in his study that most of the tribal communities are linguistically heterogeneous in their mother tongue owing to the diverse number of tribal communities present in the country. Sometimes the tribal communities live in such areas where the dominant language is more than one.
- **Pradhan and Pattnaik (2006):** aimed at exploring the quality of education in 142 Ashram Schools which was meant for the tribal students of Koraput district. The prime objective of the study lay in surveying the grass-root level realities of these schools appropriating to variables like teaching-learning process, social and physical environments of school, infrastructure, daily life activities, and teaching workforce.
- **Sahu (2013):** Highlights the collaboration between government schools and private organizations that aids

towards maximum enrolment of tribal children in schools, thus enhancing hope amongst the tribal's regarding a better future for their children.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The investigator had taken up the present-oriented study entitled "Scheduled Tribe Students Faced Problems in Higher Education in West Bengal: A Study".

DELIMITATIONS:

The study had many delimitations due to unavoidable Proper manpower and infrastructure. Therefore, the study was delimited in following –

1. The study delimited within only Purba-Medinipur and Paschim-Medinipur district.
2. The study was conducted on only 140 sample units.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To find out the different problems faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal.
- To examine the social, psychological, language, and other barriers existing in the Scheduled Tribe students.
- To analyze the barriers that Scheduled Tribe students faced with different members of the teaching-learning process.
- To help to overcome the different barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal.
- To investigate the Scheduled Tribe students' attitude in a better and progressive way in the future.

STUDY DESIGN:

The case Study framework was designed in this study with the help of a random sampling technique. The sample consisted of higher education level students in terms of those people, who currently studied at Higher education, in Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur, they are pursuing a certain level of degree. The study was implemented on a total number of 140 sample units and the researcher used the adopted self-made scale under the guidance of an expert.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The significance of the study stems from the following factors:

- An investigation like this will be relevant to the field of higher research.
- The investigator helps to identify the different barriers that exist amongst the Scheduled Tribe students in higher education. The identified barriers have certain reasons behind them. That has also been identified through the study. Also, the implication of the different barriers to the lives of the students could be derived from the study.
- The investigator has already worked on the barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education. This

study identifies and analyses the barriers in detail in higher education in West Bengal.

- The investigation aims at focusing on policies and programs that would work for the development of the Scheduled Tribe students. This will also help the teachers and officials to implement some necessary steps to improve the teaching-learning process so that the communication process of the tribal students gets refined and the level of education is improved in general.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS:

Testing of question:

Q₁ Which of the list of barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal?

After observing the total number of a checklist (140 samples), the list of barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal as following:

- Barriers to Communicating with Friends/Classmates.
- Barriers to Sharing linguistic problems with Classmates and Teachers.
- Barriers of Sharing Non- Academic Problems with Teachers.
- Barriers to Communicating with Other Officials in College.
- Barriers to infrastructure facilities in College.
- Barriers to Medium of instruction.
- Barriers to comfort College timing.
- Barriers of Students inside the Classroom.
- Barriers of Regards to Extra-Curricular Activities.
- Barriers to teachers' Co-operation and Effort.

Q₂ What are the levels of different barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal?

After observing the total number of the checklist (140 samples), a descriptive table was prepared to make the conception clear in respect of the percentile.

Table-1: Percentage of Different Levels of Barriers

Sl. No	Different Levels of Barriers	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Level of comfort while Communicating with Friends/Classmates.	36%	32%	25%	1%	3%
2.	Level of comfort in Sharing linguistic problems with Classmates and Teachers.	15%	17%	24%	36%	4%
3.	Level of comfort in Sharing Non-Academic Problems with Teachers.	12%	24%	6%	44%	8%
4.	Level of comfort while Communicating with Other Officials in College.	17%	30%	11%	40%	3%
5.	Level of comfort with infrastructure facilities in College.	28%	32%	3%	41%	5%
6.	Level of comfort with Medium of instruction.	22%	35%	13%	23%	6%
7.	Level of comfort while College timing.	18%	15%	4%	51%	13%

8.	Level of the comfort of the Students inside the Classroom.	17%	21%	6%	50%	4%
9.	Level of comfort with Regard to Extra-Curricular Activities.	37%	30%	9%	18%	6%
10.	Level of teachers' Co-operation and Effort.	18%	34%	2%	41%	4%
11.	Level of awareness about Announcements and Notices.	15%	26%	7%	43%	10%
12.	Level of comfort with Non-Tribal Students.	21%	37%	12%	25%	6%
13.	Level of extra effort to be put in by teachers.	50%	30%	8%	8%	3%
14.	Level of the problem of an insufficient number of teachers.	61%	22%	10%	2%	4%
15.	Level of the absence of teachers in remote areas.	12%	24%	8%	45%	11%
16.	Level of Indifferent attitude of the tribal parents.	4%	16%	16%	29%	34%
17.	Level of reasons for Poverty and hunger.	31%	29%	11%	18%	10%
18.	Level of Meager scholarship by Govt.	19%	52%	9%	17%	3%
19.	Level of Ineffective reservations for admission.	16%	38%	10%	27%	9%
20.	Level of student attitude of a high percentage of drop-outs.	34%	40%	16%	7%	3%

Q₃ What are the most significant barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal?

After observing the total number of the checklist (140 samples), The investigator postulated the following most significant barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal:

• Barriers to sharing linguistic problems with Classmates and Teachers:

The problem of language and communication slows down the educational attainment of tribal students. Despite several policy documents and a constitutional provision (350A) recognizing that linguistic minorities should be educated in their mother tongue at the primary level, there is practically no education in Scheduled Tribe languages. This includes even those like Santali, Bhili, Gondi, or Oraon which are spoken by over a million people (Nambissan, 2000). But, the non-availability of teachers known tribal language and textbooks in tribal languages become challenges in their educational achievement.

• Barriers of Medium of Instruction:

Language is one of the important constraints of tribal students which prevents them to access education. Tribal students speak their dialect while teaching in primary classes is through the state language. This language problem makes students disinterested in their studies as they cannot read the textbooks written in an unfamiliar language.

• Barriers of reasons for Poverty and hunger:

The economic condition of tribal people is so poor that they do not desire to spare their children or their labor power and allow them to attend schools and colleges. Poverty and hunger are the main reasons for the non-participation of tribal students in higher education. Though the Indian Constitution

secures free universal education, this often does not include costs of uniforms, textbooks, travel to school, meals, and other associated expenses which become a burden to most tribal families, and enrolling girls for higher education becomes a luxury to them.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS:

Q₁ It has been found that the different barriers of Scheduled Tribe students in higher education are conducted into different determiners. Determiners are Curriculum, Atmosphere/ Classroom Environment, Self-perception/ interest, Friends/Classmates, Teacher, Parents' socio-economic status, Other (Achievers)/ Evaluation system.

Q₂ (From Table-1) It has observed that there are barriers in the opinion of strongly agree like the level of comfort while communicating with Friends/Classmates, level of comfort with regards to Extra-Curricular Activities, level of comfort with infrastructure facilities in College, level of extra effort to be put in by teachers, level of problem of an insufficient number of teachers, level of Indifferent attitude of the tribal parents, level of student attitude of a high percentage of drop-outs. There are barriers in the opinion of strongly disagree like the level of awareness about Announcements and Notices, level of comfort while College timing, level of comfort in Sharing Non- Academic Problems with Teachers, level of absence of teachers in remote areas, level of Indifferent attitude of the tribal parents, level of reasons for Poverty and hunger and level of Ineffective reservations for admission.

Q₃ It has found that the most significant barriers faced by Scheduled Tribe students in higher education in West Bengal like as barriers of sharing linguistic problems with Classmates and Teachers, Medium of Instruction, Reasons for Poverty and hunger, Indifferent attitude of the tribal parents, Infrastructure facilities in College, Insufficient number of teachers, Comfort College timing, Absence of teachers in remote areas, Student attitude of a high percentage of drop-outs, Ineffective reservations for admission and meager scholarship by Govt. etc.

CONCLUSION:

Still, in the 21st century, Scheduled Tribe in West Bengal is marginalized in all spheres- Socially, economically, educationally, and politically despite various progress and advancement, most of them are completely dependent on cultivation, forest product, and haunting, etc. Therefore, it is important to think seriously about educational empowerment and inclusive growth of tribal people by ensuring coordination and cooperation between different departments of Government (the Tribal Welfare Department, School Education Department, etc), Non- Government Organization, Local Self Government, and Community people especially the Scheduled Tribe themselves in the formulation and implementation of programmed and policies towards spreading of social equity and education among tribal people.

REFERENCES:

1. Ahmed, Aijazuddin, 1984, Education of the Scheduled Tribes: Some Aspects of Inequality, New Delhi: National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration.
2. J.B.G. (ed.), Education, Society, and Development: National and International Perspective. New Delhi: NIEPA.
3. OrawDipankar and Toppo. Daly. (2012). Socio-cultural traditions and women education in tribal society a study on tribal population. International Journal of Current Research, 4(12),307-312.
4. Mishra, N. 2007. Participatory Water Management and Sustainable Tribal Livelihood: Study of a Pani Panchayat in Southern Orissa, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.
5. Heredia, R. C. (1995). Tribal Education for Development Need for a Liberative Pedagogy for Social Transformation. *Economic and Political Weekly*.
6. K.K.Sahu. (2014). Challenging Issues of Tribal Education in India. *Journal of Economics and Finance*, 3(2), 48-52.
7. Mahajan, S. (2012). Some Issues in Higher Education. *Economic & Political Weekly*, xlvii(31), 20-23.

8. Nambissan, G. B. (2000). Identity, Exclusion, and the Education of Tribal Communities. In R. Wazir, *Gender Gaps in Literacy and Education* (pp. 175-224.), New Delhi: Sage Publication.
9. Roy Burman, B.K. 1993. 'Tribal development in world-system perspective', *Social Change*, 23 (2-3): 27-32.
10. Sandhya Rani. G, N. Rajani& P. Neeraja. (2011). International Conference on Social Science and Humanity IPEDR. Singapore: IACSIT Press.