

Disparities in Education among Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe Women of Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal

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ABSTRACT: There are several diverse classifications in Indian society, including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, each of which has a unique position for women. The widespread view is that there is evidence of female gender disparity in many social groupings. The purpose of the current research is to examine the gender disparity in sex ratios between SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur as well as the gender disparity in literacy rates between SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal and to find out the Gender Inequality in Gross Enrolment Ratio (5-19 years) among SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal. It includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Census report and other government records have been followed for required information. Secondary data have been collected by following different books, journals and internet sources. It was urged that government attention should be given to the gender problem in every sector of society. It is important to keep monitoring the contribution of women to West Bengal's economy and to increase their financial involvement in society. Also, it is necessary to enhance the execution of programmes that currently focus on women and have objectives specifically for women.

KEYWORD: Indian Society, Gender Disparity, Scheduled Castes, Socioeconomic Growth.

Introduction: One of the most effective and crucial tools for the growth of any society is education. This is especially true for the less fortunate members of society. For them, education is a component of socioeconomic growth that boosts their confidence and equips them to take on new and unexpected tasks. India has historically had a caste-based, caste-dominant social structure. The Scheduled Caste continues to be at the bottom of the Indian caste system. The SC group makes up 20.1 crore people, or 16.63 percent of India's overall population, according to the Census of India (2011). Inequality in many spheres of socioeconomic life is a result of disparities in educational opportunities. Despite seven decades of independence, Indians from Scheduled Castes remain less educated than other castes. The representation of Scheduled Caste in the educational setting is quite low as a result of discrimination and social isolation. The policy's creators responded by introducing a variety of community educational institutions. The overarching goal of all educational safeguards is to raise SC to the same level as the other advanced societies. In actuality, however, the educational disparity in the SC population is made worse by this educational opportunity.

Education is the cultural process that turns each newborn human child into a contributing adult in a particular human culture. Backwardness in education has a clear gender component. (2011) Raji et al. High levels of structural inequality, based on the institutions of caste and ethnicity, are a defining feature of Indian society

(Thorat & Motilal, 2005). While making up a significant portion of the country's population, India's tribal community is numerically a tiny portion of the entire population.

Background of the Study: India's post-liberalization era (beginning in 1991) is unquestionably noteworthy due to the country's significantly altered economy, society, and way of life. India is now a developing country in the fields of consumer, business, and international politics. The liberalization of policy has a significant impact on the field of education as well. It's debatable if one impact is more favourable or bad than the other. According to the 2011 Census, 74.04% of the population nationwide and 77.08% of the population in West Bengal are literate. From a long time ago, West Bengal's literacy rate and growth have been fairly close to the national average. The situation with literacy and education after 68 years of independence is not worse, but the pace of improvement is not adequate. The most significant issue with literacy is concealed in its raw statistics, which includes disparities in literacy across castes, religions, demographic groupings, male-female disparities, etc. For instance, West Bengal's overall literacy rate is 77.08, while only 57.92% of the state's Scheduled Tribes are literate.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Waris and Viraktamath (2013) India has investigated the gender gap and women's empowerment. They suggested that disparities between men and women are particularly glaring in areas like as involvement in public life, economic growth, health and education, and violence against women. The four categories of economic involvement and opportunity, educational achievement, political empowerment, and health and survival were also looked at.

Jayachandran (2014) research was done on the causes of gender disparity in emerging nations. Moreover, he claimed that the lack of economic progress is the root of gender disparity. This research also demonstrates how there is a significant gender disparity in many situations in emerging nations. In India, female labour force participation is lower than in many other developing market countries and has been falling since the mid 2000s, according to research by Das et al.

Chatterjee (2014) It was found that tribal women's position in terms of education, work, and health is poor when compared not just to tribal males but also to women in the general population. She asserted that the majority of those indigenous women work in agriculture. They recommended that families have enough money to get out of poverty, since this would increase the enrollment of female students and lessen gender inequity.

Rationale of the Study: There are certain numbers of castes or communities within the scheduled caste population in each of our nation's states. All of the states, with the exception of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, have a specific percentage of Scheduled Caste residents. Among the Scheduled Castes, there are several subcaste groupings, including 101 in Karnataka, 76 in Tamil Nadu, 93 in Odisha, 66 in Uttar Pradesh, and 65 in Uttarakhand. The SC has been divided into 60 castes, and West Bengal is not an exception. According to the Indian Council of Social Science Research survey, the majority of the state's SC population belongs to one, two, or three castes (V.P.Shah, 1982). In Gujarat, the Mahyavanshi caste is the most prevalent caste, followed by the Pulayans in Kerala, the Mahar in Maharastra, the AD-Dharmis in Punjab, the Adi-Dravidians in Tamil Nadu, and the Chamar in Haryana. West Bengal compares a certain caste's dominance among SCs to that of the other states. West Bengal has a total population of 91,276,115 people, of whom 21,463,270, or 23.15 percent, are members of the SC. The dominant sub-caste community group such as R ajbanshi(17.71%), Namasudra (16.33%), Bagdi(14.25%), Poundra (11.42%), Bauri(5.72%), Chamar (4.84%), Jalia Kaibarta (2.65%), Hari(2.01%), Dhoba (1.80%) Dom (1.64%), Sunri(1.57%), Lohar (1.47%), Mal (1.43%), Malo (1.41%), Kaora (1.27%) and Tiyaar (1.06%) has more than one percent of population to total SC population. The other 44 communities share 14.5% of the total SC population in West Bengal with

these 16 communities accounting for 85.5% of it. Bagdi, Bauri, Chamar, Hari, Dom, Lohar, and Mal are still lagging behind the other main 16 communities in terms of educational advancement.

Objectives: The main objectives of the study are as follows-

1. To study the gender gap in sex ratio among SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur.
2. To find out the Gender Gap in Literacy rate SC ST in Paschim Medinipur West Bengal.
3. To find out the Gender Inequality in Gross Enrolment Ratio (5-19 years) among SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal.

Methodology: The present study includes both qualitative and quantitative data. Census report and other government records have been followed for required information. Secondary data have been collected by following different books, journals and internet sources.

Table-1: Gender Gap in Sex Ratio among SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur West Bengal

District/State	Scheduled Castes(SC)		Scheduled Tribes(ST)		Non-SC/ST	
	Sex Ratio	Gap	Sex Ratio	Gap	Sex Ratio	Gap
Paschim Medinipur	979	21	1001	-1	955	45
WEST BENGAL	951	49	999	1	946	54

The sex ratio of West Bengal is slightly above the national average (940) but remained unfavourable to females (950 in 2011). It is clearly noticed that the Schedule caste sex ratio gap is 21 in Paschim Medinipur and in West Bengal the gap is 49 where as the gap among ST is -1 in Paschim Medinipur and in West Bengal the gap is 1.

Table-2: Gender Gap in Literacy rate SC ST in Paschim Medinipur West Bengal

District/ State	Scheduled Castes (SC)			Scheduled Tribes(ST)			Non-SC/ST		
	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Gap	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Gap	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Gap
Paschim Medinipur	78.58	59.50	19.09	71.04	48.13	22.91	90.15	78.66	11.49
WEST BENGAL	77.22	61.23	15.99	68.17	47.71	20.46	84.22	75.52	8.70

Source: Census of India, 2011

The above table shows that schedule caste male literacy rate is 78.58 where as in West Bengal it is 77.22. SC Female literacy rate is 59.50 in Paschim Medinipur and in West Bengal it is 61.23 which indicate that the gap between Schedule caste male and female literacy rate is 19.09 but in all over West Bengal the gap is 15.99. On the other hand the Schedule tribe female literacy rate is 48.13 in Paschim Medinipur and in West Bengal ST female literacy rate is 47.71. It has been evident that the gap is 22.91 in Paschim Medinipur and in West Bengal the gap is 20.46.

Table-3: Gender Inequality in Gross Enrolment Ratio (5-19 years) among SC and ST in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal.

District/ State	Scheduled Castes (SC)			Scheduled Tribes(ST)			Non-SC/ST		
	Male	Female	Gap	Male	Female	Gap	Male	Female	Gap
Paschim Medinipur	66.31	64.00	2.32	61.41	57.52	3.88	72.66	72.42	0.24
WEST BENGAL	67.91	67.50	0.42	63.87	61.28	2.59	68.34	70.19	-1.85

From the above table it is clear that the gap between male female Schedule Caste is 2.32 in Paschim Medinipur and in West Bengal the gap is 0.42. On the other hand the gap between ST male female is 3.88 in Paschim Medinipur and the gap in West Bengal is 2.59.

Table-6: Gender Parity Index among Different Social Groups in West Bengal, 2011

District/State	Scheduled Castes (SC)	Scheduled Tribe (ST)	Non-SC/ST
Paschim Medinipur	0.836	0.918	0.825

CONCLUSION: It is revealed that the gross enrollment ratio among female is greater comparing to male counterpart in Non-SC/ST category. The Kanyashree Prakalpa Program (started by the West Bengal government in 2013) is thought to increase the education of girls by offering families conditional monetary incentives to keep their daughters in school and put off marriage.

It was urged that government attention should be given to the gender problem in every sector of society. It is important to keep monitoring the contribution of women to West Bengal's economy and to increase their financial involvement in society. Also, it is necessary to enhance the execution of programmes that currently focus on women and have objectives specifically for women. So, it may be inferred that in order to close the gender gap, it is crucial to develop adult literacy programmes, host local seminars, and engage in community discussions.

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