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**LEVEL OF LITERACY AND GROSS ENROLMENT RATE OF  
SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA**

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**Abstract**

*The present discuss about the level of literacy and Gross Enrollment Rate of Scheduled Tribes in India. The secondary data on education were collected from various sources like Census, annual reports of Ministry of Education, Government of India and various state level reports. The study found that, level of literacy rate of STs in India had enhanced both male and female. However, STs level of literacy lag behind than general level and Scheduled Castes (SCs). The STs female literacy rate is lag behind than all other social groups. For the Gross Enrolment rate had improved since primary education to higher education for both male and female STs. The notable feature is that the female enrolment had higher than male enrolment in the primary education. However, in the secondary, followed by senior secondary and higher education female enrolment had lag behind.*

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### Introduction

As per 2011 Census, general population in India has 121.0 crore, Scheduled Castes (SCs) is 20.1 crore and Scheduled Tribes (STs) is 10.4 crore. In the spatial distribution, general population in rural area is 83.3 crore and urban area is 37.7 crore. For SCs population is 15.4 crore in rural area, 4.7 crore in urban area. STs in rural area is 9.4 crore and 1.0 crore in urban areas. There are 705 tribes are identified in India. Among these social groups STs are the most deprived groups in India. STs are socially excluded due to cultural traditions and isolation forms the main stream groups. STs are multidimensional deprivation in education, health, income and poverty in India. In the context, the present paper examines level of literacy, gender gap in the literacy and their level of Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of ST.

### Level of Literacy of General Population

As per Census of India the level of literacy rate in India had increased over the periods (see table 1). In 1951 the literacy rate was 18.33 per cent, increased to 28.30 per cent in 1960s, 34.45 per cent in 1971, 43.57 per cent in 1981, 52.21 per cent in 1991, 64.84

per cent in 2001 and 72.99 per cent in 2011. The literacy rate of person was 18.33 per cent in 1951 to increased 74.04 per cent in 2011. Literacy rate of male was 27.16 per cent in 1951 and 82.10 per cent in 2011 and for female literacy rate was 8.86 per cent and 65.50 per cent in the above respective periods.

The female literacy rate had lower than male literacy rate in all Censuses and at the same time the gender gap had declined in the last three decades. The proportion of gender gap was 18.30 per cent in 1951 and the highest proportion of gender gap was 26.62 per cent in 1981 and decline to 16.60 per cent in 2011. The interesting fact is that the female growth rate was higher than male growth rate in all decades and as a result the gender gap had reduced over the periods. For growth rate of literacy of a person was 0.54 per cent in 1951 to 1961 and for male was 0.33 per cent and female was 0.42 per cent in the above stated periods. In 2011, the growth rate was 0.12 per cent for person, 0.08 for male and 0.18 per cent for female. In 1981, the growth rate of literacy was 0.20 per cent for person, 0.18 per cent for male and 0.26 per cent for female.

**Table 1, Literacy Rate, Gender Gap and Growth Rate of Literacy in India**

Year	Persons	Male	Female	Gender Gap	Growth Rate of Person	Growth Rate of Male	Growth Rate of Female
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	18.30	-	-	-
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35	25.05	0.54	0.33	0.42
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.99	0.17	0.12	0.30
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	26.62	0.20	0.18	0.26
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84	0.16	0.12	0.24
2001	64.84	75.26	53.67	21.59	0.19	0.15	0.26
2011	74.04	82.10	65.50	16.60	0.12	0.08	0.18

Source: Census of India, 1951-2011

**Level of Literacy of Scheduled Tribes and Gender Gap of Scheduled Tribes in India**

The STs have low level of literacy rate in India compared to other social groups in India. The literacy rate of STs was increased over the periods (see table 2). As per Census, the level of literacy was 8.54

per cent in 1961 and to 59.0 per cent in 2011. To compare with STs level of literacy to general population lag behind and the gender gap have much higher than general gender gap.

**Table 2**

**Level of Literacy of Scheduled Tribes in India**

Year	Person			Gender Gap
	Total	Male	Female	
1961	8.54	13.83	3.16	10.67
1971	11.39	17.63	4.85	12.78
1981	16.35	24.52	8.04	16.47
1991	29.60	40.65	18.19	22.46
2001	47.10	59.17	34.76	24.41
2011	59.00	68.53	49.35	19.10

Source: Census of India 1961-2011

**GER of Scheduled Tribe Students**

STs, GER in school education and higher education also increased over the period. In 1986-87, the GER of primary (I-V and age group of 6 to 10) was 90.1 per cent, which included 111.0 for male and 68.0 per cent for female (see table n no 3). This GER have increased to 106.7 per cent in 2015-16 and among these male was 107.8 per cent and female was 105.7 per cent. During the same period, the upper primary school GER also improved both male and female. GER in upper primary level was 34.1 per cent and among these male was 45.6 per cent and female was 21.9 per cent in 1986-87. This trend increased to 96.7 per cent in 2015-16, which include male was 95.4 per cent and female was 98.2 per cent. The combination of primary and upper primary level of education (I to VIII and 6 to 13 age groups) was 69.6 per cent, male was 87.1 per cent and female

was 51.2 per cent in 1986-87. In 2015-16, GER was increased double the rate, which was 103.3 per cent and among these males was 103.4 per cent and female was 103.1 per cent.

In the secondary level of education (IX-X and the age group of 14 to 15 years), GER was 37.2 per cent, for male was 43.3 per cent and female was 30.5 per cent in 2004-05 (see table 4). This GER was increased to 75.4 per cent in 2015-16, male was 73.7 per cent and female was 75.4 per cent. During the same period, the senior secondary level (XI-XII and the age group of 16 to 17 years) of GER was 17.2 per cent, male was 21.5 per cent and female was 12.6 per cent in 2004-05. In 2015-16, GER increased to 43.1 per cent, it included 43.8 per cent for male and 42.4 per cent for female.

In the level of higher education (in the age group of 18 to 23) of GER for ST was 4.2 per cent in 2001-02, for male was 5.8 per cent and female was 2.6 per cent (see table No 5). In 2010-11, the GER was 11.2 per

cent and among these males was 12.9 per cent and female was 9.5 per cent. In 2015-16, the level of GER was 14.2 per cent, for male was 15.6 per cent and female was 12.9 per cent.

**Table 3**

**Gross Enrolment Rate for Primary, Upper Primary and Elementary Schools**

<b>Schedule Tribe Students</b>									
<b>Level / Year</b>	<b>Primary ( I - IV ) 6 - 10 Years</b>			<b>Upper Primary ( VI - VIII ) 11 - 13 Years</b>			<b>Elementary ( I - VIII ) 6 - 13 Years</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
1986-87	111.0	68.0	90.1	45.6	21.9	34.1	87.1	51.1	69.6
1990-91	125.4	81.4	104.0	53.9	26.7	40.7	99.6	60.2	80.4
1995-96	115.0	80.2	96.9	57.3	35.0	46.5	105.7	75.1	90.9
2000 - 01	116.9	85.5	101.1	72.5	47.7	60.2	102.5	73.5	88.0
2005 - 06	131.4	121.1	126.4	77.5	64.9	71.5	111.9	101.3	106.7
2006 - 07	134.4	124.0	129.3	80.2	68.2	74.4	114.7	104.2	109.6
2007 - 08	136.4	130.6	133.6	81.1	70.2	75.8	116.3	108.9	112.7
2008 - 09	137.5	133.9	135.8	85.7	76.4	81.2	119.0	113.4	116.3
2009 - 10	136.8	134.1	135.5	87.4	81.2	84.3	119.1	115.2	117.2
2010 - 11	137.2	136.7	137.0	90.7	87	88.9	120.5	118.7	119.7
2011 - 12	117.8	115.6	116.7	76.8	74.1	75.5	103.0	100.6	101.8
2012 - 13	124.2	121.6	122.9	97.1	99.9	98.4	114.8	114.2	114.5
2013 - 14	114.4	111.9	113.2	90.5	92.2	91.3	105.9	105.8	105.5
2014 - 15	110.6	108.2	109.4	93	95.2	94.1	104.4	103.7	104.0
2015 - 16	107.8	105.7	106.7	95.4	98.2	96.7	103.4	103.1	103.3

**Source:** Ministry of Human Resources Development, Department of School Education, Government of India, 2018.

**Table 4, Gross Enrolment Rate for Secondary and Senior Secondary Level**

Schedule Tribe Students						
Level / Year	Secondary (IX - X) 14 - 15 Years			Senior Secondary ( XI - XII ) 16 - 17 Years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2004 - 05	43.3	30.5	37.2	21.5	12.6	17.2
2005 - 06	44.7	33	39.1	21.7	13.1	17.5
2006 - 07	47.5	35.6	41.8	23.4	14.7	19.2
2007 - 08	48.84	37.2	43.27	24.25	16.2	20.33
2008 - 09	51.68	40.66	46.37	27.71	19.37	23.62
2009 - 10	55.3	45.8	50.7	31.3	22.6	27.0
2010 - 11	57.1	49.1	53.3	32.7	24.8	28.8
2011 - 12	56.7	50.6	53.8	35.4	29	32.3
2012 - 13	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2013 - 14	70.3	70.1	70.2	36.7	34.1	35.4
2014 - 15	71.8	72.6	72.2	39.8	37.8	38.8
2015 - 16	73.7	75.4	74.5	43.8	42.4	43.1

**Source:** Ministry of Human Resources Development, Department of School Education, Government of India, 2018.

**Table 5, Gross Enrolment Rate for Senior Secondary and Higher Education Level**

Schedule Tribe Students						
Level / Year	(IX - XII) 14 - 17 Years			Higher Education 18 - 23 Years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001 - 02	31.0	19.8	25.7	5.8	2.6	4.2
2002 - 03	30.5	20.5	25.7	5.6	2.4	4.0
2003 - 04	32.4	21.0	27.0	6.2	3.1	4.7
2004 - 05	33.0	22.0	27.7	6.3	3.5	4.9
2005 - 06	33.7	23.4	28.7	8.6	4.7	6.6
2006 - 07	35.9	25.3	30.8	9.5	5.5	7.5
2007 - 08	36.9	26.9	32.1	12.4	6.7	9.5
2008 - 09	40.26	30.33	35.43	11.60	6.70	9.20
2009 - 10	43.8	34.6	39.3	13.1	7.5	10.3
2010 - 11	45.4	37.3	41.5	12.9	9.5	11.2
2011 - 12	46.9	40.7	43.9	12.4	9.7	11.0
2012 - 13	NA	NA	NA	12.4	9.8	11.1
2013 - 14	54.1	50.8	52.5	12.5	10.2	11.3
2014 - 15	56.9	56.1	56.5	12.2	12.3	13.7
2015 - 16	59.3	59.4	59.4	15.6	12.9	14.2

**Source:** Ministry of Human Resources Development, Department of School Education, Government of India, 2018.

## Conclusion

The level of literacy rate of STs in India had enhanced both male and female. However, STs level of literacy lag behind than general level and Scheduled Castes (SCs). The STs female literacy rate is lag behind than all other social groups. The issues related to the level of literacy necessity to expand the number of educational institutions in the tribal areas. For the Gross Enrolment rate had improved since primary education to higher education for both male and female STs. The notable feature is that the female enrolment had higher than male enrolment in the primary education. However, in the secondary, followed by senior secondary and higher education female enrolment had lag behind.

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