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An Analysis of Gender-Based Educational Participation Inequality among Tribal Population in Rajasthan at the District Level

MOHAN LAL MEENA*[1], ANAMIKA SHARMA[2] AND ALKESHWARI NEGI[3]
[1]CSSEIP, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (India)
[2]Director, Vertus foundation, New Delhi (India)
[3]Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh (U.T.) India

ABSTRACT

This research study examines the gender-based educational participation inequality among the tribal population in Rajasthan at the district level. Despite significant efforts to promote education and achieve gender equality in educational opportunities, disparities persist, particularly among tribal communities. This study aims to identify and analyse the factors contributing to the educational participation gap between male and female among tribal populations in Rajasthan. The research utilizes a quantitative approach, employing data from the Census. District-level data is collected and analysed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the educational disparities. Key indicators, including enrolment rates, dropout rates, and literacy rates, are examined to assess the extent of gender-based inequality in educational participation.The findings reveal a considerable gender gap in educational participation among the tribal population in Rajasthan. Factors contributing to this disparity are investigated, including socio-economic factors, cultural norms and practices, accessibility of schools, and infrastructure facilities. The analysis also considers the role of government policies and initiatives in addressing these inequalities.The study highlights the importance of recognizing the unique challenges faced by tribal communities and formulating targeted strategies to bridge the gender gap in educational participation. It emphasizes the need for empowering women's through educational opportunities to promote their social and economic well-being. The research findings can provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and organizations working towards inclusive and equitable educational systems in tribal areas.

Key Words : Gender-based inequality, Educational participation, Tribal population, Rajasthan, District-level analysis, Socio-economic factors

INTRODUCTION

Tribal education is important for several reasons. Education is a fundamental human right, and providing access to quality education for all individuals, regardless of their background, is essential for achieving social justice and equity (Chakraborty, 2010 and Das, 2016). Additionally, education plays a key role in promoting economic development and reducing poverty, which is especially critical for tribal populations who often experience high levels of poverty and marginalization. Despite the importance of education, tribal education in India is lacking in many ways. There are several reasons for this. One reason is the historical marginalization of tribal populations, which has led to their exclusion from mainstream society, including access to education. Additionally, many tribal communities live in remote and geographically isolated areas, which makes it difficult to provide access to schools and teachers. Furthermore, there is a lack of infrastructure and resources for education in many tribal areas, including a shortage of qualified teachers, poor school facilities, and inadequate learning materials. Cultural and linguistic barriers also contribute to educational inequality among tribal

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populations, as many tribal communities have their own unique languages and cultural traditions, which are not always recognized or valued by mainstream educational institutions. Finally, there are often social and economic barriers to education for tribal populations, such as poverty, child labour, and early marriage, which can prevent children from attending school and completing their education (Beteille, 2002; Jena, 2011; Kukreja, 2015). All of these factors contribute to the lack of education among tribal populations in India, and addressing them will require a comprehensive and sustained effort from policymakers, educators, and communities. The status of education among tribal populations in India is a complex issue. While efforts have been made to improve access to education for tribal communities, there are still significant gaps in terms of enrolment, retention, and quality of education. According to the 2011 Census of India, the literacy rate for tribal populations was 59.1%, compared to the national average of 74.0%. However, this figure masks significant variation across different tribal groups and regions. In Rajasthan, the status of education among tribal populations is relatively poor compared to the rest of the state. Tribal communities in Rajasthan face several challenges that prevent them from accessing quality education, including poverty, lack of infrastructure, and social discrimination. According to the 2011 Census of India, the literacy rate among tribal populations in Rajasthan was 47.7%, compared to the state average of 66.1%. This figure is lower than the national average literacy rate for tribal populations, indicating that there is a significant gap in education levels between tribal communities in Rajasthan and the rest of the country. One of the main challenges faced by tribal communities in Rajasthan is the lack of access to schools. Many tribal communities in the state live in remote areas, and there are often no schools or inadequate infrastructure to support education. Additionally, poverty is a significant barrier to education, as many families cannot afford to send their children to school or provide them with the necessary materials (Kumar, 2014; Mahapatra, 2014; Mohanty and Jena, 2016; Pattnaik, 2014).

Review of Literature :

Gender and Educational Attainment among the Scheduled Tribes in India" by Sonalde Desai examines gender disparities in educational attainment among Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India, using data from the National Family Health Survey. The authors find that ST girls have much lower educational attainment levels than ST boys, and this gap is larger in rural areas than in urban areas. They also find that maternal education significantly predicts children's education, particularly for girls. Gender Disparities in Education among Tribal Populations in India" by Krishna Chaitanya Vadlamannati (2018)uses district-level data to examine gender disparities in educational attainment among tribal populations in India. The author finds that the gender gap in educational attainment is larger among tribal populations than the general population, and this gap is particularly pronounced in Rajasthan. The study suggests that factors such as poverty, social norms, and poor infrastructure contribute to this disparity.Gender Disparities in Educational Attainment among Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan: An Empirical Analysis" by Renu Kumari (2019) examine gender disparities in educational attainment among Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan. The author finds that ST girls are significantly less likely to be enrolled in school than ST boys, and that this disparity is larger in rural areas than in urban areas. The study suggests that poverty, lack of school access, and social norms contribute to this disparity. Gender Inequality in Education among Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan: An Empirical Analysis" by Nandini Devi and Asha Kumari (2020) examines gender inequality in educational attainment among Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan, using data from the Census of India. The authors find that ST girls have much lower levels of educational attainment than ST boys, and that this gap is larger in rural areas than in urban areas. The study suggests that poverty, social norms, and lack of school access are important factors contributing to this inequality (Prasad, 2013; Priyadarshini, 2016; Rao, 2017; Sahu and Pal, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

In order to analyse and visualize educational levels among the scheduled tribes population aged 7 and above, data from the Census of India conducted in 2011 was used. Specifically, Table C-08 (ST) was referred to for obtaining the required information. This table provides detailed data on educational attainment categorized by age, sex status of scheduled tribes. The educational levels considered include primary education, middle school, secondary education, higher secondary, diploma/ certificate, graduate, and above.To calculate the percentage of each educational level, the total population of scheduled tribes aged 7 and above was used as the

denominator. The percentage was calculated by dividing the population for each educational level by the total population and multiplying by 100.To visually represent the data, a bar diagram was created using Microsoft Excel. This type of chart is effective in illustrating the distribution and comparison of educational levels among the scheduled tribes population. The bars in the diagram represent each educational level, and the length of each bar corresponds to the percentage of the population with that particular level of education.By analysing and interpreting the bar diagram, one can gain insights into the educational profile of the scheduled tribes population and observe any trends or disparities in educational attainment based on age and gender.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

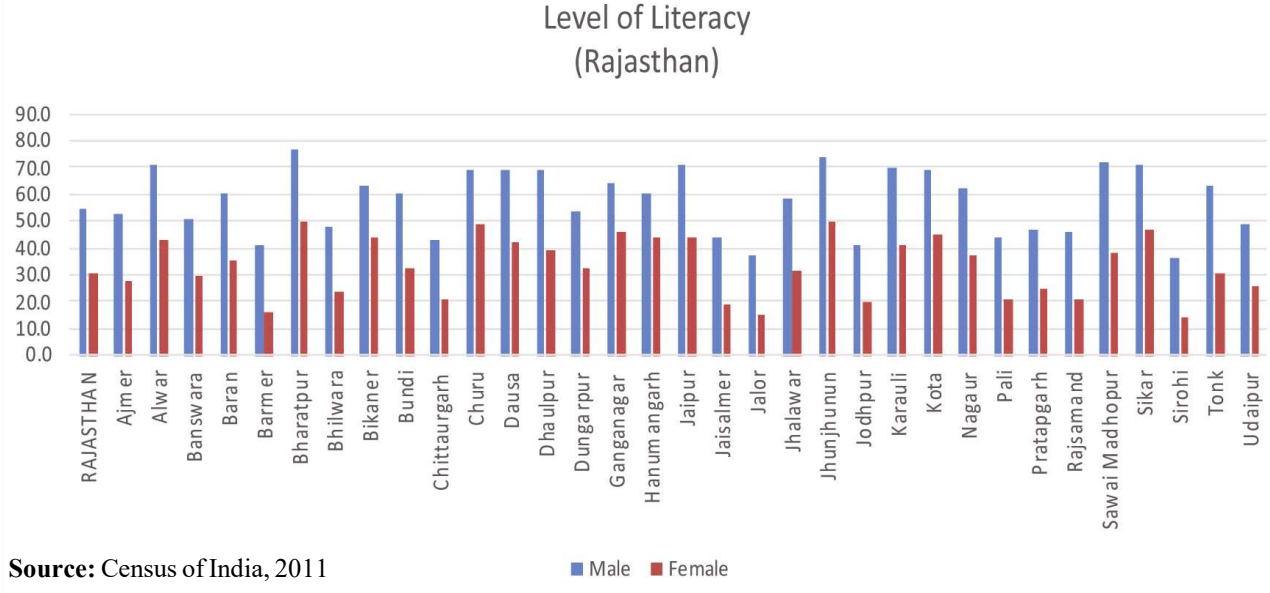
Level of Literacy :

The overall literacy rate of Rajasthan is 43.1%, with a significant gap of 24.5% between male and female literacy rates.The district with the highest overall literacy rate is Jhunjhunun with 62.1%, followed by Bharatpur (63.9%) and Alwar (57.6%).The district with the lowest overall literacy rate is Sirohi with 25.5%.There is a significant difference between the male and female literacy rates in all the districts, with males having a higher literacy rate than females.The district with the highest male literacy rate is Bharatpur with 76.4%, while the district with the lowest male literacy rate is Sirohi with 36.4%.The district with the highest female literacy rate is Jhunjhunun with 49.9%, while the district with the lowest female literacy rate is Sirohi with 14.1% (Fig. 1).

Overall, the data suggests that there is a significant gender gap in literacy rates in Rajasthan, with females lagging far behind males. Some districts, such as Jhunjhunu and Bharatpur, have relatively high literacy rates, while others, such as Sirohi, have very low literacy rates. These observations indicate that there is a need for targeted efforts to improve literacy rates in Rajasthan, especially for females.

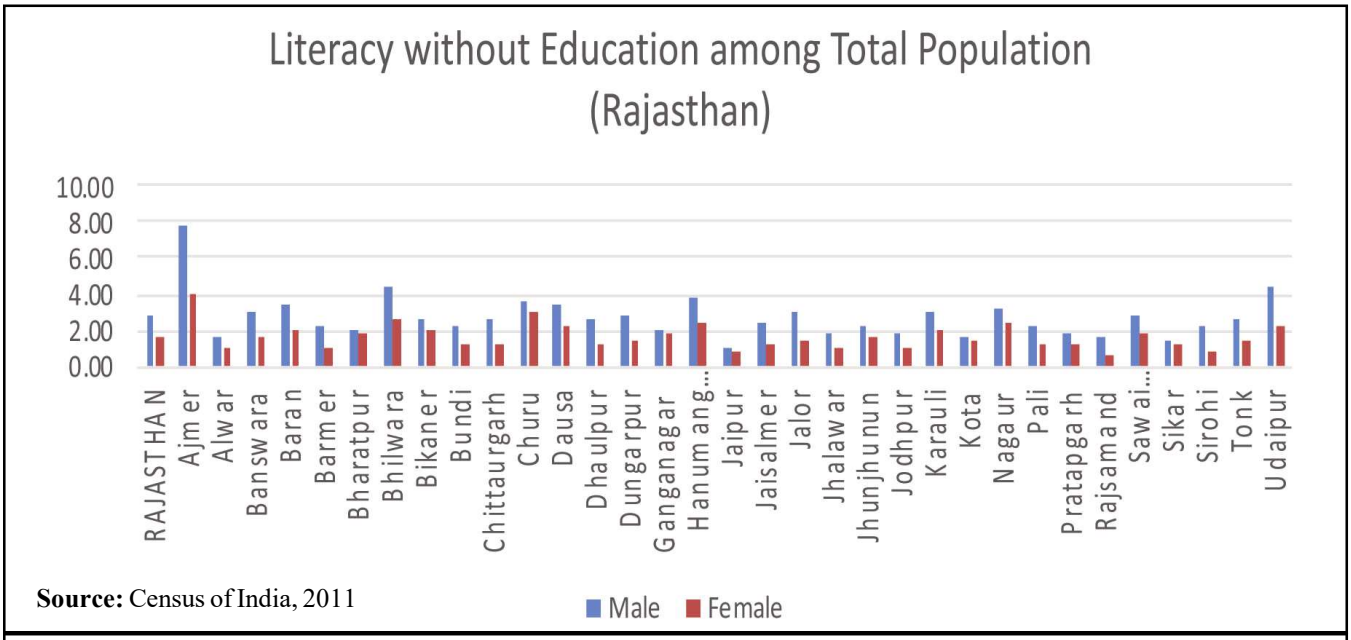
Literacy without Education among Total Population:

The highest percentage of literate individuals without formal education among the total population is in Ajmer district, with 5.95% of the total population being literate without formal education. The lowest percentage is in Jaipur district, with only 0.99% of the total population being literate without formal education.The district-wise distribution of literate individuals without formal education among the total population is quite varied, ranging from a high of 5.95% in Ajmer to a low of 0.99% in Jaipur. Some other districts with high percentages of literate individuals without formal education include Alwar, Banswara, and Churu, while districts like Jaisalmer, Rajsamand, and Sirohi have very low percentages.When it comes to gender, the data shows that the percentage of literate individuals without formal education is generally higher



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 1 : District wise difference in literacy level of male and female among ST in Rajasthan, 2011



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 2 : District wise difference in literacy without education of male and female among ST in Rajasthan, 2011

among males than females in each district. However, the difference is not significant, and the percentage of literate females without formal education is still quite substantial in many districts (Fig. 2).

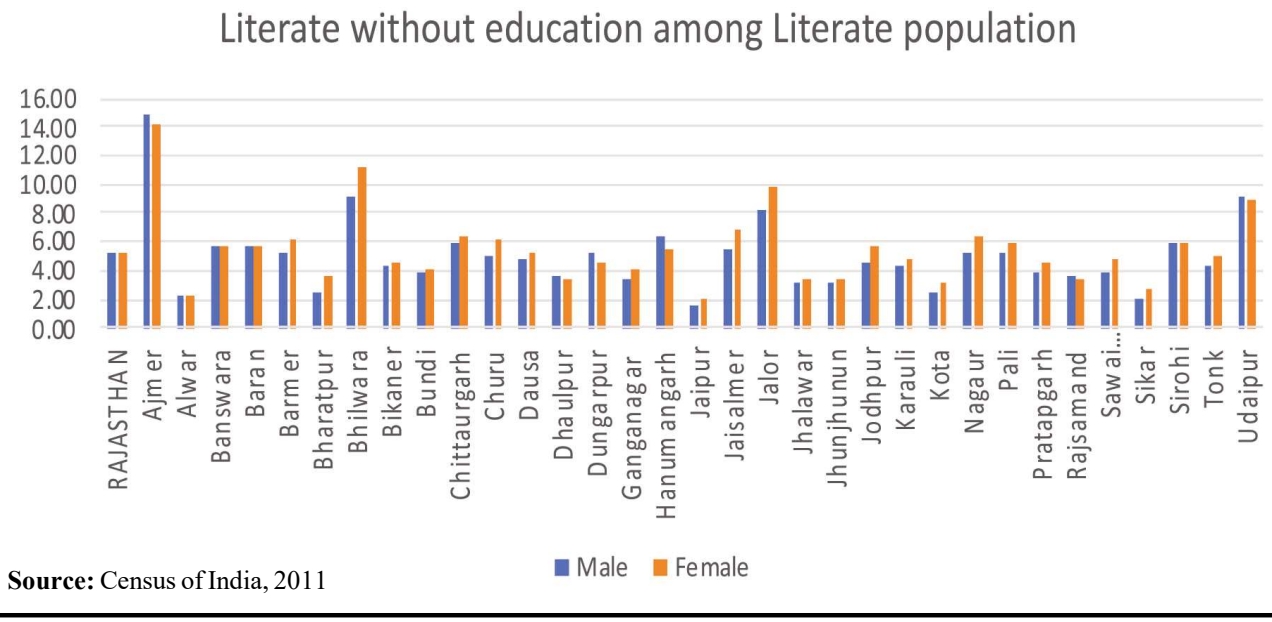
Overall, the data suggests that while Rajasthan has made significant progress in terms of literacy, there is still a need to improve access to formal education and to ensure that individuals who are already literate can continue to develop their skills and knowledge and government should lay down more flexible policies for the female education.

Literate without education among Literate population:

The percentage of households with no educated member among the literate population is higher for females than males in all districts.The district with the highest percentage of households with no educated member among the literate population for both males and females combined is Ajmer (14.61%), followed by Bhilwara (9.81%), Udaipur (9.08%), Chittorgarh (6.14%), and Baran (5.78%).The district with the lowest percentage of households with no educated member among the literate population for both males and females combined is Jaipur (1.70%), followed by Bharatpur (2.94%), Kota (2.77%), Alwar (2.31%), and Jaisalmer (5.82%).For males, the district with the highest percentage of households with no educated member among the literate population is Bharatpur (13.54%), followed by Churu (9.94%), Jaipur (10.65%), Karauli(10.08%), and Jhunjhunun (11.97%).For females, the district with the highest percentage of households with no educated member among the literate population is Alwar (4.97%), followed by Dausa (4.18%), Bharatpur (7.05%), SawaiMadhopur (3.28%), and Nagaur (2.97%) (Fig. 3).

Proportion of population having Matriculation:

Matriculation education refers to secondary or high school education, typically completed by students between the ages of 14-18 years.Looking at the data, the proportion of males and females having matriculation education is higher in urban districts compared to rural districts. For example, the districts of Bharatpur, Churu, Dausa, Hanumangarh, Jaipur, Jhunjhunun, Karauli, Kota, Sawai Madhopur, and Sikar have relatively higher proportions of both males and females having matriculation education. These districts are all relatively more urbanized compared to other districts in Rajasthan.On the other hand, the districts of Barmer, Jaisalmer, Pali, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand, and Sirohi have relatively lower proportions of both males andfemales having matriculation education. These districts are relatively more rural and may face challenges in providing access to education, especially for girls.Furthermore, the data shows that there is a significant gender gap in educational participation in many districts. In most

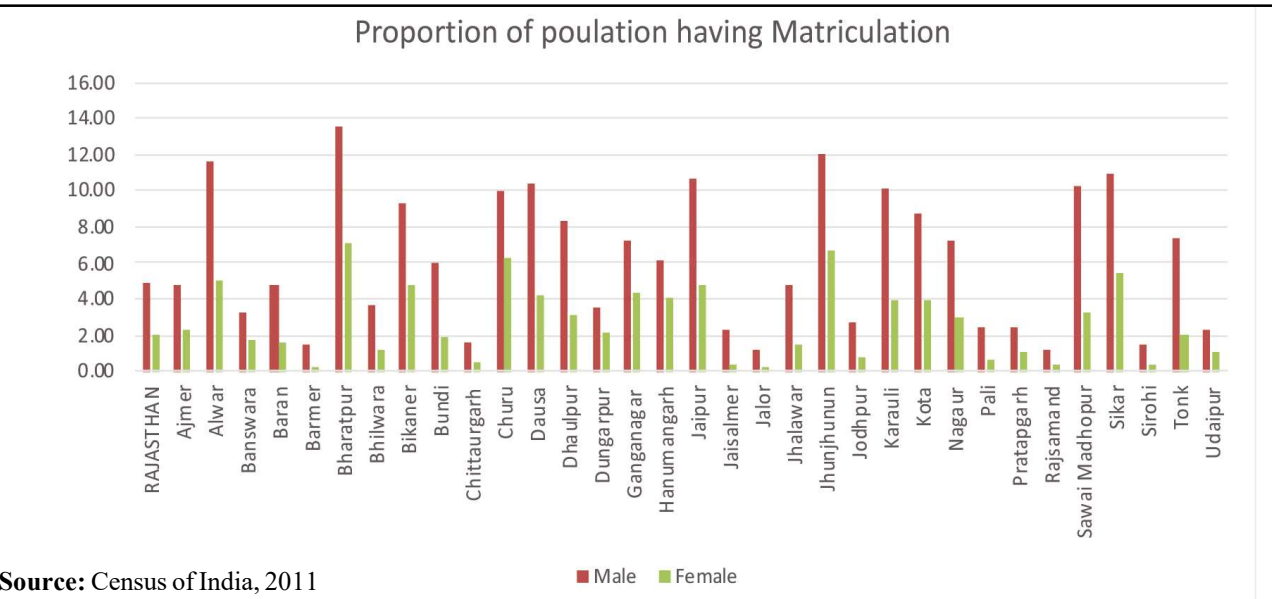


Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 3 : District wise difference in literacy without education among literate population of male and female among ST in Rajasthan, 2011

districts, the proportion of males having matriculation education is higher than that of females. This is particularly evident in rural districts likeBarmer, Jaisalmer, Pali, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand, and Sirohi. This indicates that there may be cultural, social, and economic barriers preventing girls from accessing education in these areas.

The data highlights significant disparities between male and female ST populations in terms of educational attainment. In almost all districts, the percentage of male ST population with Matriculation level of education is higher than that of female ST population. The district with the highest percentage of male ST population with Matriculation level of education is Kota (27.57%), while the district with the highest percentage of female ST population with Matriculation level of education is Ajmer (14.38%) (Fig. 4).



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 4 : District wise difference in population having Matriculation of male and female among ST in Rajasthan, 2011

These data show the need for focused efforts to promote education among the ST community in Rajasthan, particularly among females. The government and civil society organizations should work towards increasing access to education and providing support to female students to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to pursue education and achieve their potential.

Proportion of population having Intermediate:

According Fig. 5 in Rajasthan, there is a significant difference in the percentage of male and female Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations who have completed intermediate education. The intermediate level of education is also known as 10+2, which includes 11th and 12th standard education.

District-wise data indicates that the percentage of male ST population with intermediate education is higher than the female ST population in almost all districts. For instance, in Banswara district, 1.87% of male ST population completed intermediate education, while only 0.82% of the female ST population completed the same level of education. Similarly, in Dungarpur district, 2.01% of male ST population completed intermediate education, while only 1.04% of female ST population did so.

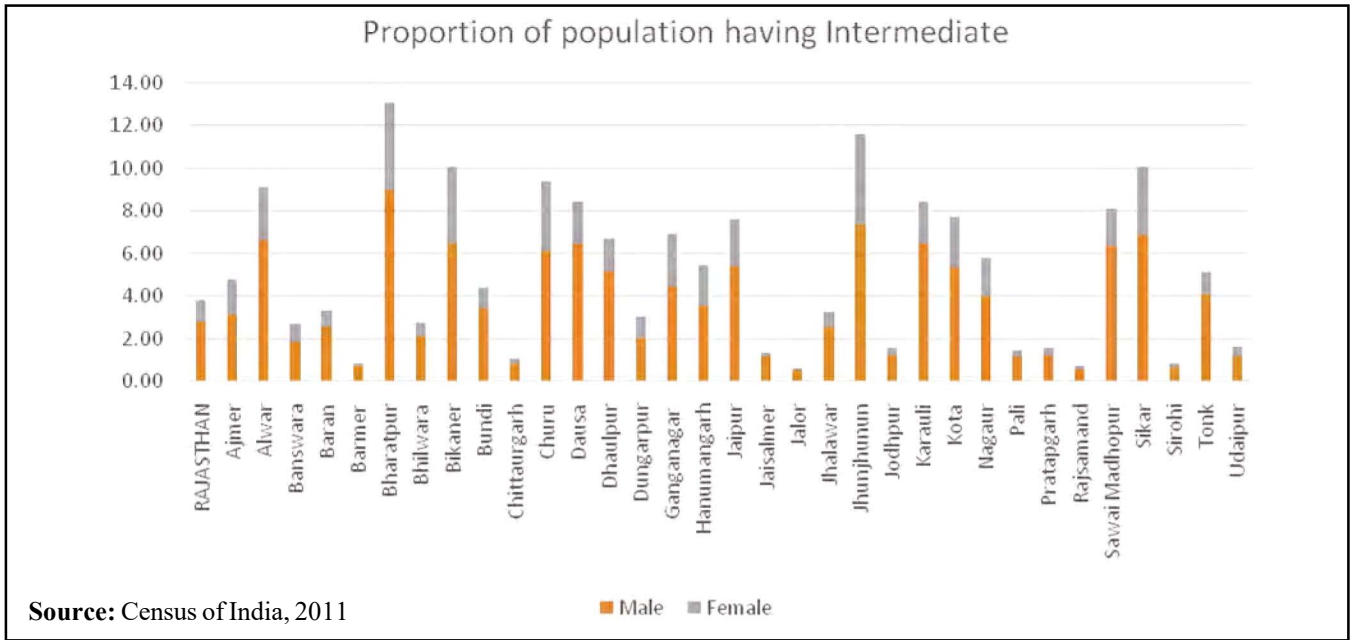
This gender disparity in intermediate education among ST population in Rajasthan is due to various factors such as poverty, lack of access to education, and societal norms that restrict girls' education. Poverty is a significant factor that limits girls' education in rural areas, as families often prioritize boys' education over girls. Girls face various social, cultural, and economic educational barriers, including child marriage and early pregnancy.

To address this issue, several steps can be taken. Firstly, the government should increase access to education in rural areas by building schools and providing transportation facilities to students. Secondly, financial incentives such as scholarships and fee waivers should be provided to encourage girls' education. Thirdly, awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate families about the importance of girls' education and the negative consequences of denying them education.

In conclusion, the district-wise data on the percentage of male and female ST populations with intermediate education in Rajasthan reveals significant gender disparity. To ensure that both male and female ST populations have equal access to education, it is necessary to implement policies that promote education and address the underlying causes of educational inequality.

Proportion of population having technical degree:

There is a significant difference in the percentage of male and female Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations who have a technical degree. A technical degree refers to any formal education beyond the intermediate level



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 5 : District wise difference in population having Intermediate of male and female among ST in Rajasthan,2011

that provides practical skills and knowledge related to a particular trade or profession.The district with the highest percentage of male population having a technical degree is Bharatpur (1.37%), followed by Karauli (1.10%) and Sawai Madhopur (1.07%).The district with the highest percentage of female population having a technical degree is Churu (0.34%), followed by Nagaur (0.30%) and Alwar (0.17%).Overall, the percentage of male population having a technical degree is higher than that of female population in almost all the districts.The district with the lowest percentage of population having a technical degree (both male and female) is Jalor (0.03%).There are some districts, such as Barmer, Jaisalmer, and Sirohi, where the percentage of population having a technical degree is very low for both male and female (Fig. 6).

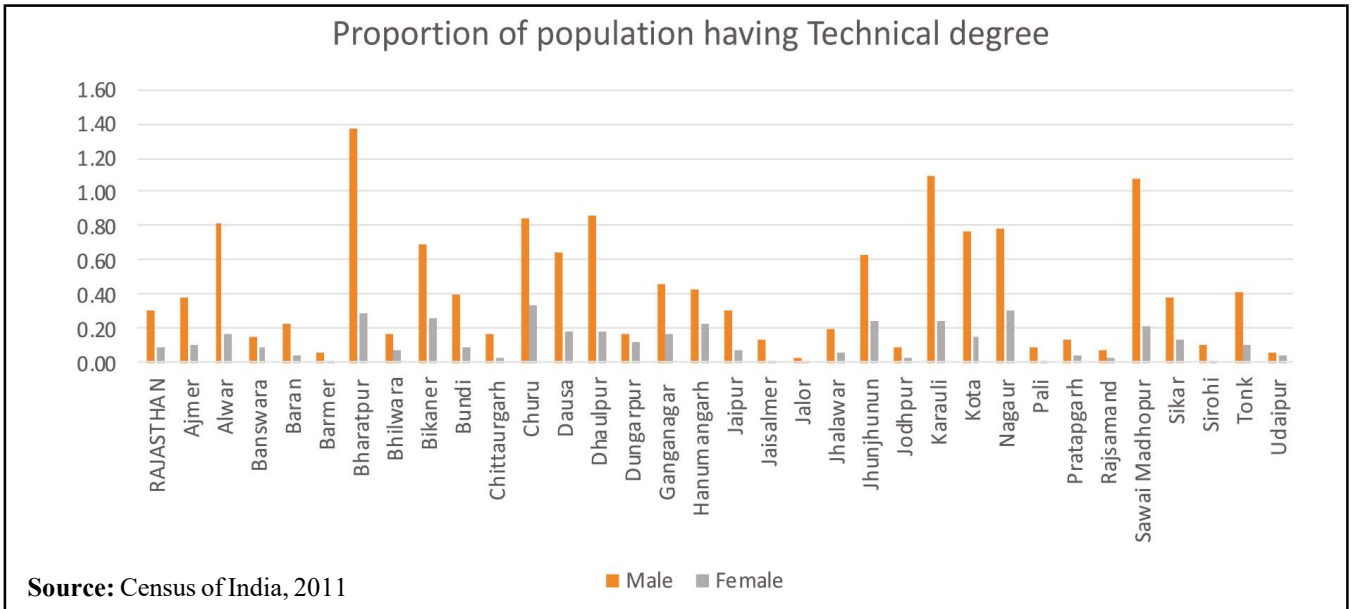
There are some districts, such as Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, and Dungarpur, where the percentage of female population having a technical degree is lower than that of male population.This gender disparity in technical education among ST population in Rajasthan is due to various factors such as poverty, lack of access to technical education, and societal norms that restrict girls' education. Technical education is expensive, and families in rural areas often prioritize the education of boys over girls. Additionally, girls face various social, cultural, and economic barriers to technical education, including gender-based discrimination and a lack of access to training opportunities.

To address this issue, several steps can be taken. Firstly, the government should increase access to technical education in rural areas by building vocational training centres and providing transportation facilities to students. Secondly, financial incentives such as scholarships and fee waivers should be provided to encourage girls' technical education. Thirdly, awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate families about the importance of girls' technical education and the benefits of technical skills.

The district-wise data on the percentage of male and female ST populations with technical education in Rajasthan reveals significant gender disparity. To ensure that both male and female ST populations have equal access to technical education, it is necessary to implement policies that promote technical education and address the underlying causes of educational inequality.

Proportion of population having Graduation:

The percentage of the population with a graduate degree is generally higher for males than females, in almost all districts.The district with the highest percentage of the population with a graduate degree is Bharatpur, with 11.93% for males and 2.72% for females.Other districts with relatively high percentages for males include Alwar (9.77%), Jaipur (9.83%), Jhunjhunun (8.83%), and Sikar (8.36%).For females, other districts with relatively high percentages include Alwar (1.87%), Jaipur (2.71%), Jhunjhunun (3.65%), and Sikar (2.42%).The district with the lowest percentage of the population with a graduate



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 6 : District wise difference in population having Technical degree of male and female among ST in Rajasthan, 2011

degree is Jaisalmer, with only 0.88% for males and 0.09% for females.Other districts with relatively low percentages for males include Sirohi (0.63%), Rajsamand (0.48%), and Dungarpur (1.64%).For females, other districts with relatively low percentages include Sirohi (0.14%), Rajsamand (0.11%), and Pratapgarh (0.14%) (Fig. 7).

The gender disparity in graduation education among the ST population in Rajasthan is due to various factors such as poverty, lack of access to higher education, and societal norms that restrict girls' education. Many families in rural areas do not see the value of investing in higher education, especially for girls. Additionally, girls face various social, cultural, and economic barriers to higher education, including gender-based discrimination and a lack of role models.

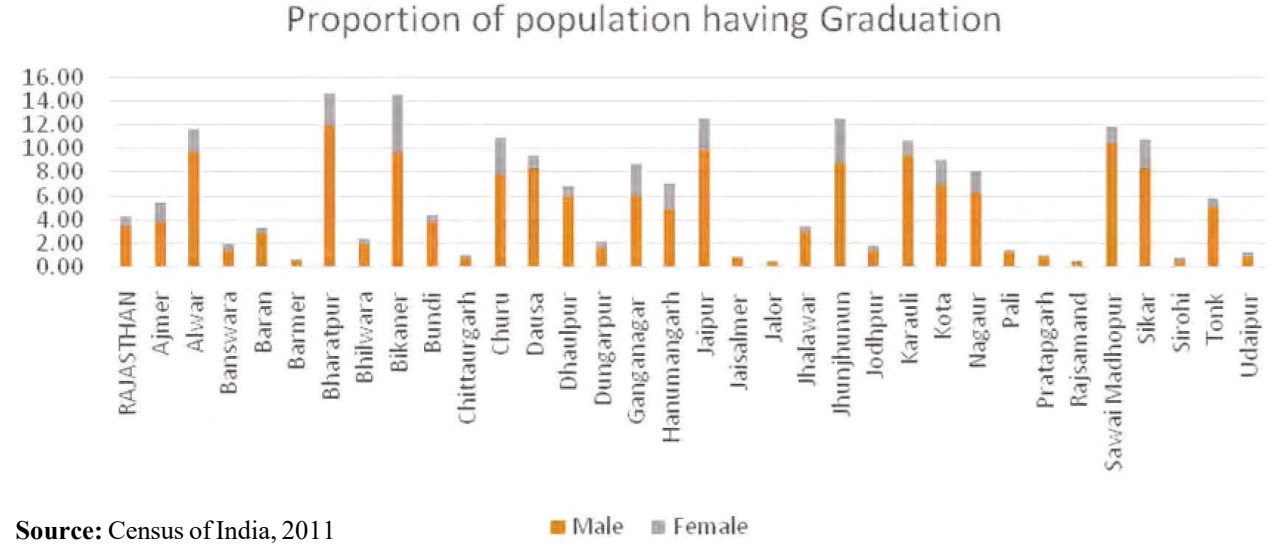
To address this issue, several steps can be taken. Firstly, the government should increase access to higher education in rural areas by building more colleges and universities and providing transportation facilities to students. Secondly, financial incentives such as scholarships and fee waivers should be provided to encourage girls' higher education. Thirdly, awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate families about the importance of higher education and the benefits of a skilled workforce.

The district-wise data on the percentage of male and female ST populations with a graduation degree in Rajasthan reveals significant gender disparity. To ensure that both male and female ST populations have equal access to higher education, it is necessary to implement policies that promote higher education and address the underlying causes of educational inequality.

Reasons for the disparity:

There are several reasons for lower education and literacy rates among tribal females as compared to males in India. These include limited access to education due to socio-economic barriers, cultural and traditional beliefs, gender discrimination, lack of awareness and motivation, early marriage and pregnancy, poor infrastructure and facilities, distance and transportation issues, poverty and financial constraints, and inadequate policies and implementation. Moreover, the patriarchal mindset prevalent in many tribal communities often prioritizes the education of males over females. All these factors together contribute to a significant gender gap in education and literacy rates among tribal populations in India, with females being disproportionately affected. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach that involves targeted interventions to improve access, awareness, and equity in education, along with cultural and social reforms to promote gender equality and empower women in tribal communities. Few reasons are as follows:

– Social norms and cultural barriers: Many tribal communities have deeply ingrained cultural beliefs and practices that restrict female



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 7 : District wise difference in population having Graduation of male and female among ST in Rajasthan, 2011

education. For example, girls are often expected to stay home and help with domestic work or get married at an early age.

- Lack of infrastructure: Many tribal communities live in remote and underdeveloped areas with inadequate infrastructure, such as schools and transportation. This makes it difficult for girls to access education, especially if schools are far away or there is no safe transportation available.
- Poverty: Poverty is a major barrier to education for both males and females in tribal communities. However, girls are often the first to be pulled out of school when families cannot afford to pay for their education or need their help with domestic work.
- Gender-based violence: Gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and assault, is a major concern for girls in tribal communities. This can lead to a sense of insecurity and fear, which may discourage parents from sending their daughters to school.
- Lack of female teachers and role models: In many tribal communities, there is a shortage of female teachers and role models who can inspire and mentor young girls. This can make it difficult for girls to imagine themselves in professional or leadership roles and can limit their aspirations for the future
- Early Marriage: Tribal females are often married at an early age, which prevents them from continuing their education.
- Economic Insecurity: Tribal families often face economic insecurity, which forces them to prioritize their male child's education over female child's education.
- Lack of Access to Schools: Many tribal areas lack proper schools and educational facilities, making it difficult for girls to access education.
- Distance to Schools: In many tribal areas, schools are located far away from the villages, making it difficult for girls to commute to school.
- Child Labour: In many tribal areas, children, especially girls, are expected to work and contribute to the family income, which makes it difficult for them to attend school regularly.

Way forward:

Education plays a crucial role in breaking the cycle of poverty and improving the socio-economic status of individuals and communities. Educated tribal females are more likely to have better health outcomes, make informed decisions, participate in local governance, and contribute to the development of their communities. The following practices can help address gender-based educational participation inequality among tribal population.

- Community involvement: Engaging tribal communities, particularly women, in the education system can help break down barriers and promote a sense of ownership in the process.
- Gender-sensitive policies: Education policies must be designed with a gender-sensitive approach that considers the specific needs and challenges faced by tribal females.
- Addressing socio-cultural barriers: Socio-cultural barriers such as early marriage, social norms, and gender-based discrimination must be addressed to improve the education and literacy rates of tribal females.
- Promoting access to education: Improving access to education for tribal females by providing schools in their communities, transportation facilities, and scholarships can encourage them to attend school.
- Teacher training and support: Providing training and support to teachers can enhance their sensitivity to the needs of female tribal students, which can help to create a more conducive learning environment.
- Focus on vocational training: Providing vocational training opportunities for tribal females can help them gain employable skills, which can improve their social and economic status.
- Improved curriculum: The curriculum should be relevant and responsive to the cultural context of tribal communities, particularly females.
- Improving infrastructure: Investing in infrastructure development, including schools and libraries, can help improve education quality and encourage more tribal females to attend school.
- Leveraging technology: Using technology to deliver education can provide more flexibility and access to tribal females who may not have the means to attend traditional schools.
- Awareness campaigns: Raising awareness among tribal communities about the importance of education and the benefits of educating

females can help to shift attitudes towards education and promote gender equality.

Conclusion:

Tribal female education is important for multiple reasons, including the empowerment of women, the reduction of gender inequality, and the overall development of tribal communities. However, there are various challenges that hinder the education of tribal females in India, such as poverty, lack of infrastructure, social norms, and cultural practices. To improve the literacy rates among tribal females, it is essential to address these challenges through various measures, Tribal female education is important for several reasons. Firstly, education is a basic human right that should be accessible to all individuals regardless of their gender, caste, or ethnicity. By providing education to tribal females, we can ensure that they have the same opportunities as their male counterparts to access education, employment, and other benefits that come with education. Moreover, education plays a crucial role in breaking the cycle of poverty and improving the socio-economic status of individuals and communities. Educated tribal females are more likely to have better health outcomes, make informed decisions, participate in local governance, and contribute to the development of their communities. Additionally, educating tribal females can lead to positive ripple effects in their families and communities. Educated women tend to have smaller families, ensure better education for their children, and promote gender equality within their communities. They can also serve as role models for other tribal females and inspire them to pursue education. In summary, tribal female education is crucial for promoting gender equality, breaking the cycle of poverty, and contributing to the socio-economic development of tribal communities.

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