

Impact of Education on Political Awareness of Tribal Women of Udaipur District of Southern Rajasthan



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Abstract

The status of Indian women has undergone change with more and more women. The question of gender equality is still the main concern in India as majority of the rural Indian women remain uneducated or less educated and also economically dependent on their male family members. India has a patriarchal society where the goal of equality between men and women is actually guaranteed by the country's Constitution.

When we discuss tribals, they have been subjected to the worst type of exploitation. They are deprived of many civic facilities and isolated from modern and civilized way of living in the age of globalization, privatization and liberalization. They are alienated from their own land, forests and other resources. The tribal women is forced to adhere certain norms which may even take away her freedom, rights, and even her dignity. The fact remains that a large number of tribal women have missed education and in order to empower them there is a great need of providing opportunities so as to enable them to assume leadership qualities for economic self reliance and even social transformation. The paper is an attempt to seek impact of education on tribal women in South Rajasthan.

Keywords: Tribal Women, Education, South Rajasthan.

Introduction

India's development since independence has been a curious mix of paradoxes. On the economic front, it has made impressive progress, emerging as the growing economy in the world but the development of tribal population in India has been a major concern of the government, voluntary agencies, NGOs, social reformers, social scientists etc. Tribal are the people who are historically, socially and economically deprived and compounded by the exploitation all throughout the history.

Unity in diversity is one of the most prominent feature among the people of India. Among the diversified population a significant portion is comprised of the tribal people, the original inhabitants of the land. The tribal culture of India and their traditions and practices pervade almost all the aspects of Indian culture and civilization. The tribal societies have experienced religious and other cultural inclusion in to the so called universal or dominant culture and consequently faced the problem of identity crisis. Even after independence the tribal communities continue to face the major brunt of uneven nature of India's development across regions as well as states. The people in these areas are extremely poor; moreover the case is worse in the case of tribal women. Tribal women known for their deep association with the forests are economically active lot but nevertheless, they suffer disproportionately more from illiteracy, poverty and social abuse.

Review of Literature

A.K. Tripathi and M. Tripathi, *Tribal Women in India (2017)* provide a deep study and analyze the status of tribal women in Indian society. It examines the anthropological aspects of the tribal society both historically and developmentally. It depicts a picture of tribal system with reference to various tribal cultures; kuki people, Apatani people, Munda people, Andamanese people, Bodo people, Bhil people, Khasi people, Gondi people and Chakma people. It also comments on various forms of deprivation from which tribal women suffer and emphasizes on the need of education for tribal women empowerment.

Ramesh Panwar, *Tribes and the Indian Society* (2011) provides a brief picture of intellectual and cultural property rights of indigenous and tribal people, racial ethnic and tribal philanthropy. It also highlights on the origin and the problems of social exclusion among tribes and tribal society. It tries to find out the means and aims of tribal exclusion and inclusion and the consequences of the same with some instances.

Dinesh Sharma, *Tribal Development Schemes in India* (2012) highlights the approaches and issues in tribal development in India. He comments that education plays a major role in tribal development. He also presents a brief picture regarding the protection and safeguards for the scheduled tribes, and other backward classes either specially or by way of insisting on their general rights as citizens with the object of promoting their educational and economic interest and of removing the social disabilities in Indian Constitution. He also comments on the National Policy on Tribal People in India and the role of NGOs in tribal development.

Susheela Kaushik, *Panchayati Raj in Action: Challenges to Women's Role* (1996) points out that reserving seats for women and scheduled castes and tribes has sent waves of enthusiasm and hopes among the weaker sections of Indian society. Focusing on women, she mentions that women are gearing up for challenge to enter in politics in the spirit of self governance as committed citizens. She says that training to women members is needed to fulfil the gaps on issues like local government, functions, the intricacies of planning and management and the resolution of public and private challenges. Training should be imparted before and after the elections, she suggests.

Tribals and South Rajasthan

South Rajasthan consists of the 5 tribal districts of the state and being inhabited dominantly by the local tribal families, who have been deprived of their access to main stream of development and their means of living is mainly dependent on rain fed agriculture, labour, migration, small dependence on forest and also on few locality based small enterprises. They comprise a substantial indigenous minority of the population of India.

The scheduled tribes form 12.44% of the total population of Rajasthan. The tribal population in Rajasthan is concentrated in belts running from Sirohi through the Udaipur, Chittorgarh and Banswara districts to Bundi, Kota and Sawai Madhopur.

The Udaipur district is located between latitude 23^o46' to 26^o2' N and longitudes 73^o0' to 74^o35' E. Jhadol and Kherwara which are the parts of the study of this paper, are backward tehsils having all the three backward productive sectors (agriculture, general industries and small-scale industries).

Constitutional Safeguards for Tribals

The Indian Constitution provides a number of provisions to ensure development and protection to tribal culture and society. It has tried to ensure the support for the less privileged sections of society. By providing reservations legislatures and government

jobs their participation in the affairs of the state was ensured. Article 330, 332, 334 and 335 of the Indian Constitution provides various reservation to tribals in order to bring them into mainstream.

The article 15(4) empowers the state to make any special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes. Whereas the article 17 powers the state to abolish untouchability.

Problems of Tribal Women

The status of tribal women in India needs special attention. Tribal women are discriminated against three times over : they are poor, they are women, and they are tribals. Women are discriminated due to several historical, religious and other reasons. She is made to undergo the feelings of being inferior. She is denied the prospects for personal expression. The situation is even worse among tribal communities or primitive societies, which constitute approximately 7.5 percent of the total population of the country.

Tribal women are discriminated against not only by people of higher castes, but also within their own communities. These women are active in economy and household activities but the decision making in the family and leadership positions in the organizations and local bodies have until not been held by them. Women are considered too inferior in status to voice their views and concerns even in matters which have a direct bearing on their own health and well-being. There are many factors responsible for the low status of tribal women such as inaccess to education, malnutrition, early marriage, health and sanitation, lack of awareness regarding their rights, ignorance about plans and policies meant for their development, economic dependence on their male counterparts, burden of household activities etc.

Importance of the Study

India is a home to a large variety of indigenous people. The scheduled tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups. Education is the primary agent of transformation towards development. The proposed research paper seeks to focus upon the impact of education on the political consciousness of tribal women in the Udaipur district of South Rajasthan. Udaipur is a pre-dominantly tribal area. The focus is on the political awareness of the tribal women in the sampled area because this is the aspect which has not been explored till now in great detail. We see that lot of funding for various plans and policies is available in this area for the development of tribal women but still they are neglected section of the society.

The study is basically based on empirical study which will bring out significant sociological aspects of tribal society in Rajasthan.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the impact of education on tribal women in Udaipur district of South Rajasthan.
2. To look into the social obstacles in the political awareness of tribal women in Udaipur district.

- To analyze the political awareness of tribal women in Udaipur district.
- To evaluate the inter relationship between education and level of awareness with special reference to the tribal women.

Research Methodology

For the proposed study, Udaipur district of South Rajasthan is selected through purposive random sampling. Among the districts of South Rajasthan, only Udaipur district is one which comprises of tribal and non tribal populations. Therefore through purposive random sampling technique, Udaipur district is selected. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, two tehsils were selected randomly from the Udaipur district. These are Jhadol and Kherwara. Through purposive random sampling, three Gram Panchayats were selected from each tehsil. These all Gram Panchayats are in the distance of 15 to 30 kms. from their own tehsils.

The sample size is 200 which is explained by the following chart.

Description of the Sample Size of the Respondents in Udaipur District

District	Tehsils	Gram Panchayat	No. of Respondents	Total
Udaipur	Jhadol	Brahmanoka Kherwara	33	100
		Khaker	33	
		Ohra	34	
	Kherwara	Kanpur	33	100
		Theekwas	33	
		Navadra	34	
		Total		200

According to this sample size, the interview schedule was filled up by the respondents. The present study is based on primary data and Education is a variable which has been used for the proposed study. Education plays a key role in the process of development in all societies. Education level was further categorized in four groups - Illiterate, Primary, Secondary, and above Secondary. The interview schedule was prepared by the researcher for the proposed study. The interview schedule is useful for both literate and illiterate respondents. Therefore the use of interview schedule was selected. Total 12 Questions were included in the interview schedule in which closed, open ended and mixed type of questions were involved. The collection of the data, classification, tabulation and indication were used to analyze the data systematically. While doing analysis, the percentage method has been used.

Education based analysis

Table - 1
Q. Do you give Vote?

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	24 (20.51%)	36 (43.38%)	60
Primary	60 (51.28%)	35 (42.17%)	95
Secondary	25 (21.37%)	10 (12.05%)	35
Above Secondary	8 (6.84%)	2 (2.40%)	10
Total	117 (100%)	83 (100%)	200

Asian Resonance

Table - 1 reveals that out of total sample of 200 tribal women, 58.5% (117) give vote according to their knowledge and understanding while remaining 41.5% (83) give their vote according to the order of the head of the family.

Table also depicts that the highest number of votes are given by those respondents who belong to the primary level of education, that is, 60 respondents with percentage of 51.28 of the 117 respondents. These respondents have given their votes on the basis of their self-decision and knowledge followed by the secondary level with 21.37%, illiterate level with 20.51% and least was of above secondary that is 6.84% respectively. Thus the table clears that the respondents who are educated participate more actively in giving vote as compared to the illiterate.

The table concludes that in surveyed area, 60% of the respondents who are illiterate give their vote according to the order of the head of family instead of their own understanding and knowledge.

Table - 2

Q. Do you know the Chief Minister of Rajasthan?

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	15 (13.27%)	45 (51.72%)	60
Primary	57 (50.44%)	38 (43.68%)	95
Secondary	31 (27.43%)	4 (4.60%)	35
Above Secondary	10 (8.86%)	0 (0.00%)	10
Total	113 (100%)	87 (100%)	200

Table - 2 reveals that out of total 200 respondents, 113 of them, that are 56.5% know that, who is the Chief-Minister of Rajasthan state and 87, that is 43.5% are those respondents who do not have any idea about the Chief-Minister of Rajasthan state.

Table also shows that out of 113 respondents, more than 50% have given right answer in relation to the Chief-Minister of Rajasthan state and they belong to the primary level of education followed by 27.43% in secondary level, 13.27% in illiterate level and 8.86% in above secondary level of education respectively.

One point is clear from the table that though the total number of the respondents is less from the above secondary level, that is only 10 but in relative form, the numbers of respondents are 100% in this category who have knowledge about the Chief-Minister of Rajasthan state. This clears that education play an important role and those who have taken higher education have better knowledge than the other respondents.

Table - 3 depicts that large number of respondents that is, 119 (59.5%) out of the total 200 had no idea about that, in politics 50% seats are reserved for women, while 81 (40.5%) of the respondents have idea regarding the reservation. This is well reflected in the table-3 as given below.

Table - 3
Q. Awareness about 50% Reservation of Women in Politics.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	12 (14.81%)	48 (40.34%)	60
Primary	33 (40.74%)	62 (52.10%)	95
Secondary	30 (37.04%)	5 (4.20%)	35
Above Secondary	6 (7.41%)	4 (3.36%)	10
Total	81 (100%)	119 (100%)	200

Table Shows that out of these 81 respondents, 33 respondents, that is, 40.74% are those who come under the category of primary level of education followed by 30 (37.04%) in secondary level of education, 12 (14.81%) in illiterate level and least that is 6 (7.41%) are of above secondary level of education. Thus it is clear that education again play important role for better knowledge.

Table - 4 shows that out of total 200 tribal women, 198 respondents, that are 99% had given answer that elections are held after every 5 years while rest of them, that is only 2 respondents had given wrong answer replying that Vidhan Sabha elections are held in every two years. This is well shown below-

Table-4
Q. Knowledge regarding the Election held by Vidhan Sabha.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	0 (0.00%)	60 (30.30%)	60
Primary	2 (100.00%)	93 (46.97%)	95
Secondary	0 (0.00%)	35 (17.68%)	35
Above Secondary	0 (0.00%)	10 (5.05%)	10
Total	2 (100%)	198 (100%)	200

Table also reveals that the respondents who belong to illiterate, secondary and upper secondary level had given 100% answer in favour of that elections are held after every 5 years except the respondents of primary level where 97.9% are in favour of the same. Thus the table concludes that knowledge of a primary level respondent is not up to the mark as compared to the other category of the respondents.

Table - 5 depicts that, 136 respondents out of the total 200 that is 68% had idea about the Member of Legislative Assembly or Vidhayak and his name while 64 that is 32% have no idea for the same. This is well reflected below-

Table - 5
Q. Responses regarding the name of MLA in the area of the Respondents

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	18 (13.23%)	42 (65.62%)	60
Primary	79 (58.09%)	16 (25.00%)	95
Secondary	31 (22.79%)	4 (6.25%)	35
Above Secondary	8 (5.82%)	2 (3.12%)	10
Total	136 (100%)	64 (100%)	200

Table also clears that out of 136 respondents, the highest respondents are under the category of primary level of education that is 79 (58.09%) followed by the 31 (22.79%) in secondary level, 18 (13.23%) in illiterate level and 8 (5.82%) in above secondary level respectively. Thus table concludes that those who are educated or literate have better knowledge than the illiterate respondents. The number of illiterate respondents is more than 65% out of total 64 respondents who have no knowledge related to the Member of Legislative Assembly or Vidhayak of the surveyed area.

Table - 6 depicts that out of 200 surveyed respondents, 108, that are 54% have knowledge about the new scheme which was started by the Panchayat in their area for the development. While 92, i.e. 46% do not have any idea related to the same.

Table - 6
Q. Knowledge of Respondents related to the New Schemes started by the Panchayat.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	17 (15.7%)	43 (46.7%)	60
Primary	52 (48.2%)	43 (46.7%)	95
Secondary	31 (28.7%)	4 (4.3%)	35
Above Secondary	8 (7.4%)	2 (2.3%)	10
Total	108 (100%)	92 (100%)	200

Table also clears that out of 108 respondents, the highest share was of 48.2 which are primary educated followed by 28.7 of secondary level, 15.7 of illiterate level and rest 7.4 was of above secondary level of education. This concludes that respondents who are secondary level educated have good knowledge and awareness.

Table - 7 indicates that 187 of the 200 respondents did not meet with any leader or an administrator to discuss their personal problem with them. Rest 13 that is only 6.5% meets with the leader or an administrator for their problems.

Table - 7

Q. Responses related to the Discussions made with the Leader or an Administrator.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	0 (0.00%)	60 (32.1%)	60
Primary	0 (0.00%)	95 (50.8%)	95
Secondary	10 (76.9%)	25 (13.4%)	35
Above Secondary	3 (23.1%)	7 (3.8%)	10
Total	13 (100%)	187 (100%)	200

The table also shows that out of 13 respondents, the respondents in the secondary level of education are very high with percentage of 76.9% followed by 23.1% of above secondary level of education who discuss their problems with the administrator or leader of the area. On the other hand, this proportion are nil in the illiterate level as well as in the primary level of education group.

Table - 8 reveals that only 24 of the respondents know about the Right to Information Act. Rest of 176 of the total 200 does not have any idea regarding to the Right to Information Act.

Table - 8

Q. Knowledge regarding the Right to Information.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	1 (4.2%)	59 (33.5%)	60
Primary	0 (0.00%)	95 (53.97%)	95
Secondary	17 (70.8%)	18 (10.2%)	35
Above Secondary	6 (25.0%)	4 (2.3%)	10
Total	24 (100%)	176 (100%)	200

Table also shows that share of respondents who know about this Act was highest from the secondary level where 70.8% of the respondents have an idea of the RTI Act followed by 25% in above secondary level, 4.2% in illiterate level and nil is from primary level.

Table - 9 is related to the Public Services Guarantee Act as shown below-

Table - 9

Q. Responses of Respondents regarding awareness of Public Service Guarantee Act.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	0 (0.00%)	60 (31.6%)	60
Primary	0 (0.00%)	95 (50.0%)	95
Secondary	7 (70.0%)	28 (14.7%)	35
Above Secondary	3 (30.0%)	7 (3.7%)	10
Total	10 (100%)	190 (100%)	200

Table - 9 shows that out of 200 respondents only 10 that is 5% have heard about the Public Services Guarantee Act while remaining 190, that is 95% of the respondents do not have any idea related to this Act.

Table - 10 explains that only 79 (39.5%) of the respondents out of total 200 have an idea about women rights. Large number of tribal women that is 121 (60.5%) does not know about the rights related to women.

Table - 10

Q. Responses regarding idea of the Women Rights by different Education-Group of Respondents.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	13 (16.5%)	47 (38.8%)	60
Primary	31 (39.2%)	64 (52.9%)	95
Secondary	27 (34.2%)	8 (6.6%)	35
Above Secondary	8 (10.1%)	2 (1.7%)	10
Total	79 (100%)	121 (100%)	200

Table also depicts that the highest number of respondents who know about the women rights are 31 (39.2%) of the total 79 respondents belong to the primary educated followed by the 27 (34.2%) of secondary educated, 13 (16.5%) of illiterate and 8 (10.1%) are of above secondary level.

Table - 11 shows that either the respondents able to make any difference between the EVM and ballot paper. The data indicates that out of 200 surveyed women, 190 (95%) of them can find out the differences between the EVM and ballot paper.

Table - 11

Q. Responses related to the Difference between EVM and Ballot Paper by various Education-Groups of Respondents

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	50 (26.3%)	10 (100.00%)	60
Primary	95 (50.0%)	0 (0.00%)	95
Secondary	35 (18.4%)	0 (0.00%)	35
Above Secondary	10 (5.3%)	0 (0.00%)	10
Total	190 (100%)	10 (100%)	200

Out of these respondents, the highest number was of primary level of respondents that is 95 which is 50% of the total 190 respondents. And the least share was of those respondents who belong to the above secondary level that is of 10, is 5.3% respectively.

Table - 12 explains that whether the tribal women know about the free schemes which are being run for tribal women development by the state government. The data indicates that less number of respondents has knowledge about the schemes which are running in favour of them and their number are just 40 out of total 200 which was of only 20%. While large percentage of respondents does not have any idea related to the same.

Table - 12

Q. Awareness regarding the free Schemes started for Women.

Education Level	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	2 (5.0%)	58 (36.3%)	60
Primary	19 (47.5%)	76 (47.5%)	95
Secondary	16 (40.0%)	19 (11.9%)	35
Above Secondary	3 (7.5%)	7 (4.4%)	10
Total	40 (100%)	160 (100%)	200

Table also indicates that out of 40 respondents, 19 are from the primary level of respondents that is 47.5% followed by 16 (40%) of secondary educated, 3 (7.5%) of above secondary and only 2 (5%) of illiterate level respectively.

Conclusion

Education is the key to social development and to convert human population into human resource. The literacy rate of scheduled tribes has improved but it is found less as we see in other social

groups and substantial literacy gap is found between STs and all social groups. Even in 2011, there has been literacy gap of 14.03 percentage points between the two. The literacy level among women from scheduled tribes is very low which shows gender inequality and needs immediate address by the policy makers. Gender ratio in education favours men among STs. Highest priority should be given to education to the marginalized sections of the society because the results of the analysis of the paper shows that due to the lack of education tribal women are missing the basic awareness level regarding political issues. The paper focus on the political consciousness of tribal women of Udaipur district of South Rajasthan but it is true that education is a key to success in all the social, political, cultural and economic dimension of development. The tribal women is forced to adhere certain norms which may even take away her freedom, her control over the traditional productive system and even in some more spheres of life. The fact remains that a large number of tribal women have missed education at different stages. Education for tribal women is more than mere acquisition of knowledge. In the absence of education, the tribal women are unable to access the plans and policies run by government, they are not aware of basic political issues and thus it affects their personality in a negative manner. Therefore it is necessary to educate tribal women in order to create awareness so that they may also enjoy their status as an aware human being. NGOs, media, society, government officials, humanistic approach can play significant role in creating positive environment related to education of tribal women.

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