

Inequality of Access to School Education among Social Groups in Tamil Nadu and India: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

This paper examines the level literacy of different social groups in India and state of Tamil Nadu. This study highlights present condition of literate in SCs, STs and other social groups in India and Tamil Nadu. This study also highlights on school enrollment, gender disparities, locational disparities and dropout rate of India and Tamil Nadu.

Keywords: Literacy, SC, ST, Tamil Nadu, India.

1. Introduction:

India has one of the most illiterate in the world and at the same time the level of literacy in India had increased considerably due to different policy of union and state government since independence. Constitution of India ensures free and compulsory education for all children at the age of 14. As a result, level of literacy was 36.39 per cent in 1961 has increased to 80.33 per cent in 2011. Nevertheless, the growth of literacy have uneven development among different region and different social groups. In this context, this study examines the educational development in general and particularly focus on different caste and regional perspectives. In the caste compositions Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), general and gender perspective of literacy and regional level Tamil Nadu to compare with all India perspectives.

As per 2011 Census, total population in Tamil Nadu has 72147030 and at the all India level, 5.9 percent of population in Tamil Nadu. Among the total population of Tamil Nadu, 51.60 per cent were lived in urban areas and 48.40 per cent in rural areas (see table 1). Nonetheless, India has 68.85 per cent were lived in rural areas and 31.15 per cent lived in urban

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areas. This clearly evidenced that the urbanization of Tamil Nadu has higher than all India level. Tamil Nadu has one of the state have better Human Development Index than all India level and Tamil Nadu has third rank in terms of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) next to Maharashtra and Gujarat. However, across social groups existence in educational inequality.

In the social composition of population in Tamil Nadu, SCs were 1, 44, 384, 45 and STs were 7, 946, 97, which constitute 16.52 per cent and 0.90 per cent respectively. In the spatial distribution, majority of SCs and STs were lived in rural areas. For SCs, 65.62 per cent in rural areas 34.38 per cent in urban areas and STs, 83 per cent in rural areas 16.92 per cent in urban areas in Tamil Nadu. At the all India level, the proportion of SCs were 13.27 per cent and STs were 6.89 per cent. Majority of SCs (76.40 per cent) and STs (90.0 per cent) were lived in rural areas Thus, among the social groups, majority of STs were lived in rural areas, followed by SCs and other social groups.

This paper is organized as follows. After the introduction, second part provides sources of data on school education. Third section on present level of literacy among different social groups in all India and Tamil Nadu. Fourth section discuss on school enrollment at primary level among different social groups in India and Tamil Nadu. Fifth section discuss on gender inequality at the primary education level in India and Tamil Nadu. Sixth section on present different causes of dropout of school and different level of magnitude among social groups in India and Tamil Nadu. Final section provides conclusion.

2. Data:

The major sources of data in the study as Census reports, National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSOs), Ministry of Human Resources Development, and Educational Survey by National Council of Educational Research and Training.

3. Level of Literacy among Different Social Groups:

Generally there are two sources to measure the level of literacy in India; Census report and NSSO report. The Census report provide only for SCs, STs and general category and NSSO provided on one more category of OBCs. As per as Census (see table 1), the proportion of literacy of general, SCs and STs had increased at all India and Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu had

better position than all India level in general and SCs category and STs had less than all India level. STs Literacy rate in Tamil Nadu had 41.5 per cent in 2001 and 54.3 per cent in 2011 and on the other hand, at all India level 47.1 per cent and 59.0 per cent in the above respective period.

Table 1
Level of Literacy in 2001 and 2011

State/Country	2001 Census			2011 Census		
	General	SC	ST	General	SC	ST
Tamil Nadu	73.5	63.2	41.5	80.1	73.3	54.3
India	64.8	54.7	47.1	73.0	66.1	59.0

Sources: *Census of India 2001 and 2011*

NSSO data also revealed that the level of literacy of Tamil Nadu had better position than India (see table 2). In the gender perspective of all India and Tamil Nadu indicated female were less than male and in gender gap shown that the higher level of SCs and OBCs category than STs and others. This also exposed that STs Male and female in Tamil Nadu were lag behind than any other social groups in Tamil Nadu and all India level.

Table 2
Level of Literacy among Different Social Groups

Social Groups	Tamil Nadu				All India			
	Person	Male	Female	Gender Gap	Person	Male	Female	Gender Gap
STs	68	73	62	11	67	75	67	8
SCs	75	82	67	15	69	78	60	18
OBCs	82	89	76	13	75	84	66	18
Others	93	96	93	3	85	90	79	11

Source: 71st Round of NSSO, Report No.575

4. School Enrollments at Primary School:

According to the 8th All India Educational Survey revealed that the 1st Standard of enrollment at the national level was 12,40,19,536 boys were 51.65 per cent(6,40,51,724) and girls 48.35 (5,99,67,812) per cent. At the Gross Enrollment ratio was 94 per cent. In the social composition, SCs at primary stage was 18 per cent of total enrollment and these rural was 18.75 per cent and urban was 15.45 per cent. For STs children, total enrollment was 10.76 per cent and rural was 12.67 per cent and urban was 4.32 per cent. For O.BCs, the total enrollment was 40.02 per cent and in rural areas was 40.91 per cent and 37.77 per cent in urban. The educationally backward minorities' communities' enrollment was 10.08 per cent and among these 9.08 per cent in rural

and 13.40 per cent urban (Eight All India Educational Survey Report 2016)

At the total enrollment of primary level (1 to 5th standard) at all India level has 22,682,122 and Tamil Nadu has 12,280,408 (see table 3). Different social groups at the all India level indicated that general category as 54.19 per cent, followed by other social groups was 29.31 per cent, SCs was 11.42 per cent and ST was 5.07 per cent. At the state level of Tamil Nadu has the total number of enrollments has 12280408. In the different social category, general has 52.69 per cent, others have 33.01 per cent, SCs has 13.46 per cent and STs has 0.84 per cent.

Table 3
Primary Education (I-V) Enrollments among Social Groups

Social Groups	Region	Number			Per cent		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Gender Gap
Tamil Nadu							
General	Rural	1891358 (29.71)	1759318 (29.75)	3650676 (29.73)	51.8	48.19	3.61
	Urban	1461611 (22.96)	1358744 (22.98)	2820355 (22.97)	51.85	48.17	3.68
	Total	3352969 (52.67)	3118062 (52.73)	6471031 (52.70)	51.81	48.18	3.63
SC	Rural	551815 (8.67)	522726 (8.84)	1074541 (8.75)	51.35	48.64	2.71
	Urban	298327 (4.69)	279936 (4.73)	578263 (4.71)	51.59	48.4	3.19
	Total	850142 (13.36)	802662 (14.00)	1652804 (13.46)	51.43	48.56	2.87
ST	Rural	42729 (0.67)	36789 (0.62)	79518 (0.65)	53.73	46.26	7.47
	Urban	12233 (0.19)	10817 (0.18)	23050 (0.19)	53.07	46.92	6.15
	Total	54962 (0.86)	47606 (0.80)	102568 (0.84)	53.58	46.41	7.17
Others	Rural	1177828 (18.50)	1088395 (18.40)	2266223 (18.45)	51.97	48.02	3.95
	Urban	930669 (14.62)	857113 (14.49)	1787782 (14.56)	52.05	47.94	4.11
	Total	2108497 (33.12)	1945508 (33.00)	4054005 (33.01)	52.01	47.98	4.03
All	Rural	3663730 (57.55)	3407228 (57.61)	7070958 (57.58)	51.81	48.19	3.63
	Urban	2702840 (42.46)	2506610 (42.39)	5209450 (42.42)	51.88	48.12	3.77
	Total	6366570 (100)	5913838 (100)	12280408 (100)	-51.84	48.16	3.68
India							

General	Rural	49589101 (41.10)	43508859 (40.98)	93097960 (41.04)	53.26	46.73	6.53
	Urban	15773462 (13.07)	14043879 (13.23)	29817341 (13.15)	52.91	47.09	5.82
	Total	65362563 (54.17)	57552738 (54.21)	122915301 (54.19)	53.17	46.82	6.35
SC	Rural	11161946 (9.25)	9712770 (9.15)	20874716 (9.20)	53.47	46.52	6.95
	Urban	2648055 (2.19)	2381061 (2.24)	5029116 (2.22)	52.65	47.34	5.31
	Total	13810001 (11.44)	12093831 (11.39)	25903832 (11.42)	53.31	46.68	6.63
ST	Rural	5585480 (4.63)	4761881 (4.49)	10347361 (4.56)	53.97	46.02	7.95
	Urban	619199 (0.51)	548269 (0.52)	1167468 (0.51)	53.03	46.96	6.07
	Total	6204679 (5.14)	5310150 (5.01)	11514829 (5.07)	53.88	46.11	7.77
Others	Rural	25753302 (21.34)	22880756 (21.55)	48634058 (21.44)	52.95	47.04	5.91
	Urban	9532381 (7.90)	8323826 (7.84)	17856207 (7.87)	53.38	46.61	6.77
	Total	35285683 (29.24)	31204582 (29.40)	66487265 (29.31)	53.07	46.93	6.14
All	Rural	92089829 (76.32)	80864266 (76.17)	172954095 (76.25)	53.25	46.75	6.49
	Urban	28573097 (23.68)	25297035 (23.83)	53870132 (23.75)	53.04	46.96	6.08
	Total	120662926 (100)	106161301 (100)	226821227 (100)	53.20	46.80	6.39

Source: 8th Round of All India School Education Survey

In the spatial distribution of enrollment of primary education show that 76 per cent in rural area and 24 per cent in urban area at the all India level. However, Tamil Nadu has 58 per cent in rural area and urban area has 42 per cent. Among the social groups in all India rural enrollment indicated that 41 per cent for general, 9.20 per cent in SCs, 4.56 per cent in STs and 21.44 per cent in others. On the other hand, in urban enrollment 13.15 per for general, 2.22 per cent for SCs, 0.51 per cent for STs and 7.81 per cent for others. State of Tamil Nadu, urban enrollment for general 29.73 per cent, followed by 8.75 per cent in SCs, 0.5 per cent in STs and 18.45 per cent in others. Rural enrollment of social groups in Tamil Nadu has 22.97 per cent for general, 4.71 per cent for SCs, 0.91 per cent for STs and 14.56 per cent in others. It has been observed that rural enrollment of STs was higher proportion than SCs, general and other social groups.

Gender analysis, in all social categories both at the all India level and in the state of Tamil Nadu the proportion of girls enrollments has lower than boys both in rural and urban areas. Among different social groups, STs has the higher proportion of gender gap than any other social groups. At the all India level, 7.77 per cent for STs, followed by 6.63 per cent of SCs, 6.35 per cent of general, 6.14 per cent for Others. At the Tamil Nadu, 7.17 per cent in STs, followed by 4.03 per cent in others, 3.63 per cent in general and 2.87 per cent in SCs, Thus SCs has lower proportion of gender disparities than all other groups. In the spatial distribution of gender disparities revealed that different pictures. At the all India level, rural has higher proportion than urban in all social groups except other social category. In Tamil Nadu has contrast to all India level, urban disparities as higher proportion in general and SCs category and on the STs and Others registered rural disparities has higher than urban.

5. Gender Inequality:

School education as classified into four categories; (i) primary refer to 1st standard to 5th standard, (ii) upper primary is 6th standard to 8th standard, (iii) secondary is 9th standard and 10th standard and (iv) 11th and 12th standard. An examination of gender parity index shows that lower level at the stage of primary level of school than upper primary, secondary and senior secondary both in Tamil Nadu and all India level (see table 4). The gender gap has gradually widen from primary to senior secondary level in all social groups both in Tamil Nadu and all India. Among the social groups, STs were low level of gender parity index than SCs and other social groups in all level of primary education in Tamil Nadu and as well as at India level. But at the senior secondary level of SC, STs, and others revealed that the state of Tamil Nadu higher level of gender disparities than all India level.

Table 4
Gender Parity Index Comparison among Social Groups

Category	Primary		Upper Primary		Secondary		Senior Secondary	
	2014-15	2015-16	2014-15	2015-16	2014-15	2015-16	2014-15	2015-16
Tamil Nadu								
Overall	1.01	1.01	1.03	-	1.04	1.05	1.23	1.22
SC	1.00	1.00	1.02	1.03	1.04	1.04	1.26	1.25
ST	0.98	0.97	1.03	1.05	1.07	1.10	1.09	1.18
India								
Overall	1.03	1.03	1.09	-	1.01	1.02	0.99	1.01
SC	1.02	1.03	1.09	1.10	1.03	1.04	1.03	1.04
ST	0.98	0.98	1.02	1.03	1.01	1.02	0.95	0.97

Source: Educational Statistics at a glance 2018, MHRD, Govt. of India

6. School Dropout Rate:

There are many reasons for school dropout and the major reason as economic and socio-cultural play a significant role to determine the discontinuation of education. In addition to this school related factors, lack of interest in studies, lack of motivation of students or parents, economic opportunity cost of children, availability or demand of child labour in and surrounded area, curriculum, teacher attitude, pupil-teacher ratio, teacher religion, caste, gender form of discrimination, availability and accessibility of school in the villages etc. The recent dropout report of DISE 2014-15 reported shown in the below table 5. At the all India level, primary level of education (I-V standard), girls dropout rate has less than boys in all social category. However, after primary girls dropout has higher than boys in all social category. Among the social category, STs were higher proportion of dropout than SCs and general category. The state of Tamil Nadu has different picture and dropout rate in Tamil Nadu has less than all India level in all standard of school education. The interesting fact that the dropout rate of STs in Tamil Nadu has higher than all India level in VI-VIII standard. STs, in Tamil Nadu substantial level of dropout in all standard of school education.

Table 5
Annual Average Dropout Rate for the year 2014-15

Educational Level	Groups	Tamil Nadu			India		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
(I-V)	General	*	*	*	4.36	3.88	4.13
	SC	0.23	0.10	0.17	4.71	4.20	4.46
	ST	4.89	4.94	4.91	7.02	6.84	6.93
(VI-VIII)	General	*	*	*	3.49	4.60	4.03
	SC	1.69	1.61	1.65	5.00	6.03	5.51
	ST	13.52	13.33	13.43	8.48	8.71	8.59
(IX-X)	General	11.67	4.36	8.10	17.21	16.88	17.06
	SC	15.46	7.75	11.65	19.64	19.05	19.36
	ST	22.58	16.12	19.48	24.94	24.40	24.68
(XI-XII)	General	4.59	2.34	3.41	0.25	*	*
	SC	6.31	3.88	5.01	3.34	3.09	3.22
	ST	8.17	2.25	5.29	*	*	*

Source: DISE 2014-15, NUPEA, New Delhi, Note: * represents drop-out rate have not been reported. -represents negative drop-out rate have not been reported.

7. Conclusion:

Tamil Nadu has one of the better formed state in both economic and social development. The performance of literacy rate in Tamil Nadu had improved over the decades and reduce the gender, caste, location disparities. Nevertheless,, SC and other social groups literacy level in Tamil Nadu has higher all India level but STs in Tamil Nadu lag behind in all India level. This clearly evident that educational policy of Tamil Nadu excluded in STs. Still exist in gender, caste and locational disparities in Tamil Nadu. Hence, policy intervention is necessary to reduce disparities through exclusive policy frame work for STs Children and general girl children. This policy will be addressed both children and adults of all social groups. To improve the level of literacy of children through enhanced accessibilities of primary school at village level and for STs Children to access increased residential schools. At the same time to reduce teacher absenteeism and to improve the economic conditions of STs and SCs ensure to reduce dropout and to enhance school enrollment.

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