

## **Educational Problems of Mahali Tribe in Urban Area of Purulia District**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In this research paper, we delve into the educational challenges faced by Mahali people, focusing on their status within the educational system, the issue and rate of student dropouts, educational and different social problems facing by the Mahali people due to poor education in the urban area of Purulia District. A survey was conducted for each household of Reny road Mahali para and Khejuriya danga. This study found the major causes for poor education are financial problems, language difference, lack of motivation, lack of learning materials, participation in income-generating activities, and management of household responsibilities. This study focuses on the present educational state of Mahali community, highlighting challenges and continuous efforts by the Central Government and regional governments to improve and maintain the well-being of tribes in a given circumstance. Also, in this paper, an attempt has been made to analyse the causes of poor educational status of tribal students, to find out the suggestive measures for further improvement in tribal literacy rate and also makes different admirable recommendations to overcome barriers like Proper awareness campaign, motivating all the parents to send the children to school , creating awareness to the tribal families about the education facilities provided by the Government, vocational institutes for tribal children etc.

**Keywords:** Mahali, Education, Urban area, People, Tribal.

### **INTRODUCTION**

*“Education is the most important weapon with which you can change the world”*  
~Nelson Mandela.

Education is one of the main drivers of change towards development. Education is a significant tool that helps in the creation of a well-developed and advanced country. Especially in a growing country like India with a population of more than 142.9 crores, education is the key to a better standard of living and a successful future. Education is the right of every Indian person, regardless of their socioeconomic status. It supports a government that comprises a polite and well-mannered society.

The Scheduled Tribes, India's most vulnerable communities, are specified in Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution. Article 342 informs Scheduled Tribes of their educational opportunities. They are one of the most deprived and marginalized groups with respect to education.

India's indigenous tribes are the country's earliest inhabitants. According to Census 2011, tribes constitute 8.6% of our total population and out of which only 58.96% are literate compared to 72.99 % for the total population of India. Education to Scheduled Tribe children is important not just due to a Constitutional Obligation to Equality of its citizens but it is a crucial input in the nation's development of Tribal Communities. So far, the Tribal people have lagged in education owing to external as well as internal constraints, socio-economic and cultural background of the Tribals and Psychological problems of first-generation learners.

For promoting effective growth and development of the country, it is necessary to put emphasis upon the impartment of basic literacy skills among tribal students. Traditionally tribal communities are referred to as adivasis. They constitute about nine percent of the population of India. Despite the diversities in their community culture, history, norms, values and practices, and non-tribal relationships with the adivasi world, approximately 87 million Indians come under the adivasi population. In India, tribal communities are found mostly in the states of Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and West Bengal. There have been changes made to the educational system in tribal communities.

Educational Safeguards for Tribals in the Constitution of India:

The framers of the Indian Constitution have prescribed some acts to improve the education of tribals in India.

- Article 46 of the Constitution orders the promotion of special education and economic interests of economically disadvantaged sectors of society, notably Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- According to Article 350A, each State, as well as every public body within such a State, must try to offer suitable infrastructure for guidance in the home language to children from dialectal minority groups at the primary level of schooling.
- Article 45 provides for obligatory and free schooling for children.
- Article 29 (2) No citizen shall be refused entrance to or financial support from any State-run educational institution solely on the basis of spirituality, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, vernacular, or any combination of these factors.

Aside from constitutional provisions, the major pillars of India's educational policy are appointed committees and commissions.

- Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme (RGNF):

The programme offers financial aid to tribal students pursuing higher education. The fellowship is only valid for five years. This grant is open to any tribal student who has finished their postgraduate studies. This Scheme was implemented in 2005-06.

- The Ashram school establishment plan:

This Framework for the Emergence of Ashram Schools Throughout Tribal Subdivision is an initiative funded by the government that establishes Ashram School systems for both girls and boys. in extremist-affected regions. The states are responsible for the operation and upkeep of these schools.

- Vocational Education in Tribal Communities:

The primary goal of the tribal vocation training system is to prepare ST children for a variety of vocations and self-employment, as well as to improve their socio-demographic situation by increasing their incomes. The provision applies to all states and UTs.

- Scheduled Tribes Overseas Scholarship Program:

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs established the National Overseas Scholarship for ST Candidates (ST) to aid Scheduled Tribe students. The scholarship provides financial assistance to selected individuals who want to pursue Masters-level international education, as well as Doctorate and Post-Doctoral Research Projects in Mechatronics, Technology, and Scientific Research.

- The Dhebar Commission and The Kothari Commission:

The Dhebar Commission of 1960 highlighted specific factors for tribals' educational backwardness. They were broad generalizations such as improper and unappealing instructional techniques used by instructors, and so on. It also touched other problems like poor economic condition and subsistence economy.

The Kothari Commission has also highlighted that the tribals deserve education with great emphasis and attention (Kothari 1966).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Saraswati Hansda and Dr. Sunita (2018) Acharya accessed the educational status among the Santal tribes in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The findings showed that engagement among youngsters of the Santal tribes in the Odisha district of Mayurbhanj is quite low. Participation of Santal children in the field of higher education is also very low.

Basanta Kumar Bindhani (2021) conducted a research on status and problems of educational scenario among the tribals in Koraput district of Odisha. The literacy rate in the studied population was 32.4%, and the major causes of school dropout and absenteeism were economic problems, household work, lack of interest in the study, earning member of the family, parents not engaged in studies, distance of schools and difficulties in accessing school, and language of teaching difficulty.

Ms. Alankrita Gangele and Dr Harisingh Gour (2019) accessed the tribal educational status in India, the galore issues and challenges of play roles as an educational barrier. It was found that tribal community in both rural and urban is

facing various social and psychological problems in getting education. Educating tribals is not a routine duty like educating non-tribals, and the government has to take unique efforts to educate them.

Rajani Meena and Dr. Jyoti Yadav studied on educational status of tribal in India with special highlight on the educational status of tribes in Rajasthan. According to the findings, the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes in 1961 was 8.53 percent. The literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes rose to 58.96% in 2011. Therefore, even today tribal are struggling to get education. Currently the literacy percentage of Rajasthan's urban areas is 96% and the rural areas is 51.7% in Rajasthan. And overall tribal literacy percentage is 52.8% in Rajasthan.

Digambar Naik, Ramanath Gorain and Prasanta Mallik (2020) focused on the current status of tribal education, highlighting challenges and ongoing measures undertaken by the Central Government and Regional government to improve and maintain the well-being of tribes in a particular circumstance. The study findings revealed that language problem, indifferent attitude towards change and development, mass poverty, irregular attendance in school, unpleasant and boring curriculum, insufficient teaching materials, non-availability and untrident teachers are the major causes of low educational status of the tribal children.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are:

- To explore the educational status of Mahali tribe
- To find out the problems of Mahali tribal education
- To find out the different social problems due to poor education

## **METHODOLOGY**

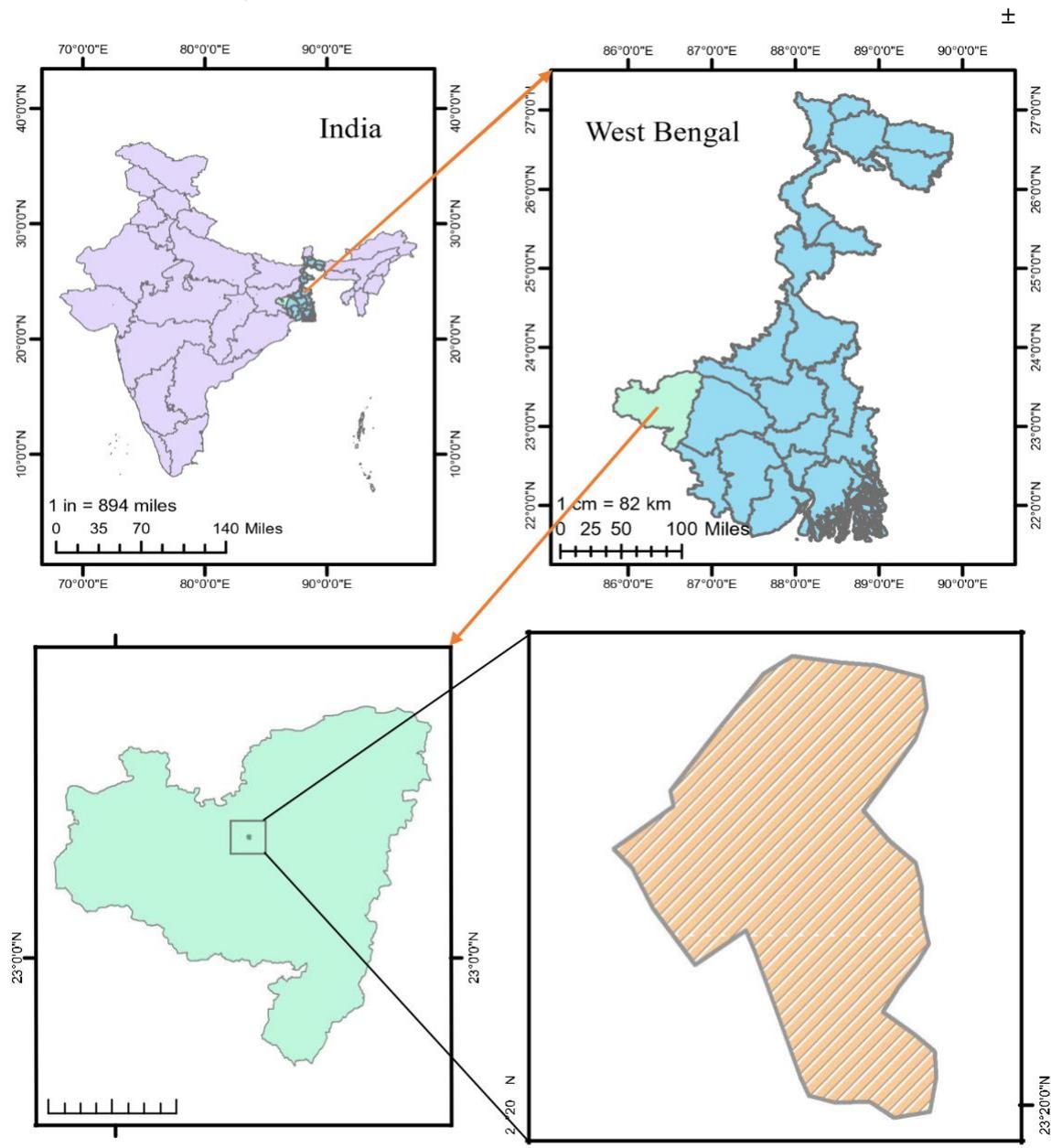
### **Sample Size**

The present study was carried out in Reny road Mahali para and khejuriya danga of Purulia district. A survey was conducted for each household that were selected randomly from the study area. Data regarding the educational status of the respondents (n=79) were collected by using schedules. Subsequently 79 children, adolescents and adults aged between 5 to 25 were selected purposively in terms of educational profile.

### **Study Area**

This study on education of Mahali tribe is conducted in an urban area of Purulia district which is Reny Road Mahali Para (ward no. 21) and Khejuriya Danga (ward no. 16). Purulia is a town and municipality in the West Bengal state of India. It is the administrative centre of the Purulia district. According to the 2011 census, West Bengal has 40 different forms of S.T, and Mahali is one of them.

### Location of Study Area



#### Legend

-  Ward No. 16 & 21
-  Purulia
-  West Bengal
- 

Map Source: ArcMap 10.7.1

### Tools and Techniques for Data Collection

Both primary and secondary sources are utilized for this study. Primary data is collected from each household and the study area through interviews and participant observation. The following approaches have been adopted for the study: 1. participant observation, 2. focused group discussion (FGD), 3. semi-structured

and informal interviews, and 4. household surveys. Secondary data was used for the review of the literature and the development of the research. For secondary data, we explored Google, e-books, online journals, research sites, etc. The study considered both qualitative and quantitative factors.

## **MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Educational Status of Mahali Tribe in Urban Area of Purulia District**

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Number of Respondents (5-25year Age)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Primary</b>	19	24
<b>Secondary School</b>	45	57
<b>Undergraduate</b>	14	18
<b>Postgraduate</b>	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	

*Table 1 Educational Status of Mahali Tribe in Urban Area of Purulia District*

The above table represents the level of education among the Mahali tribe of 5 years to 25 year age group. Out of the total 79 respondents 19 people are attended primary school or studied up to primary level. The table also revealed that secondary level education gave the maximum number of people which respectively 54% or 45 people out of the total respondents. Only 14 people which is 18% are only attended college in the study area. And only 1 person in 79 people is postgraduate. It is clear from the view of table that the percentage of higher education is very low. The Mahali people of this region are unable to progress beyond school and college. After studying in school and college they leave studies for some reasons. It is known from the table the educational status of the Mahali people is worrying and the educational status of the Mahali people of this region must be improved.

### **Dropout Rate**

The dropout rate is the percentage of students who quit school during the school year, as well as those who finish the grade/year level but do not enrol in the next grade/year level next year, which is compared to the total number of students enrolled the previous school year. It is a critical indicator reflecting lack of educational development and inability of a given social group to complete a specific level of education.

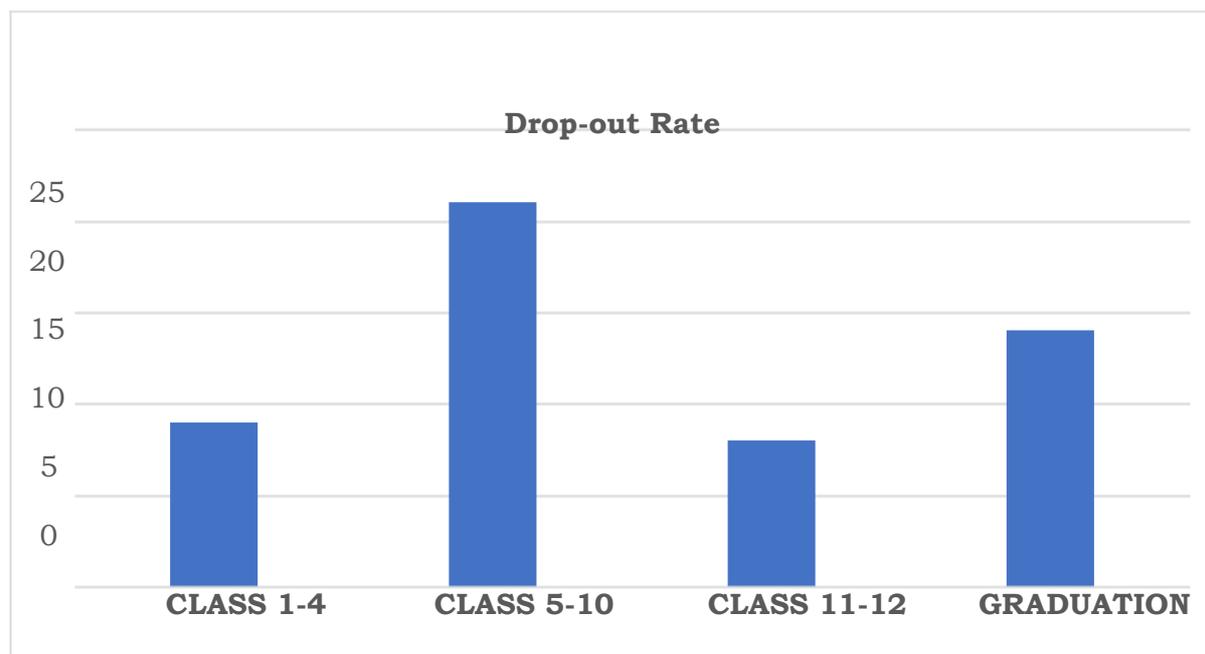


Figure 1 Drop-out Rate

The above table depicts the dropout rate of the respondents of Mahali people of Remy road in Purulia District. Table reveal that dropout rate is very high- 17% in classes I to IV; 41% in classes V to X; 15% in class X to XII; and 27% in college. This indicates that the dropout rates are alarmingly higher in the higher classes. Several factors contribute to the high dropout rates among Mahali tribal students. Socioeconomic challenges, language barriers, early marriage, financial problems and discrimination within the education system are key hindrances to their educational journey.

### Problems Faced by Mahali Community Students in Acquisition of Education

The following are the key issues that Mahali community students face while pursuing an education:

- **Financial Problems:** A certain amount of money is required for a good education. A good study requires certain things, viz textbooks, stationary items, uniforms, bags, transportation costs and learning materials. Most of the Mahali families living in the area have very low family income. Many of them earn money by making bamboo products and selling them in the market. They commonly live in situations of poverty and backwardness. Therefore, due to financial problems, parents encourage their children to work from an early age, and because of this children's education is stopping at an early age.
- **Language Differences:** Language has been one of the most significant barriers in tribal education. Members of the tribe find it difficult to articulate their modern and provincial dialects due to reclusion. The Mahali children of this region speak among themselves in a very common and simple language.

But the school teachers speak in the advanced manner of the city, so the children feel hesitant to talk to the teachers, and do not understand the reading properly. Due to this problem a gap is observed in the communication of students with their teachers.

- **Lack of Motivation:** The Mahali people lack the sources that are essential in achieving academic goals. When they are unable to understand academic concepts, it is apparent that they are unable to generate good outcomes in tests. As a result of setbacks, they experience low levels of motivation. Low levels of motivation are regarded as the major impediments within the course of achievement of academic goals. Consequently, the students either experience low academic performance or drop out from schools, before their educational skills are honed.
- **Lack of Learning Materials:** A certain learning materials are required for good education. Textbooks, technology, the internet, diagrams, charts, models, posters, and other reading materials are examples. Mahali pupils have a lack of learning tools. They are unable to access sufficient educational resources due to their poverty and lack of financial means.
- **Participation in Income-Generating Activities:** The Mahali tribal community is normally residing in the conditions of poverty and backwardness. They are primarily concerned with making enough earnings to support their living circumstances. The primary occupation is making bamboo artifacts and other than that their income-generating activities that they are engaged in are, daily labour, working in shops, etc. After a certain age the parents of the Mahali boys are usually encourage their children to participate in income-generating activities. The children, particularly girls are encouraged to assist their parents in the bamboo craft and household works. As a result, when children are expected to help their parents in earning money, they face difficulties in their educational pursuits.
- **Management of Household Responsibilities:** In the Mahali community, the children are usually involved in the management of household responsibilities. They assist their parents in various household chores. Specially the girls, who are contributing a significant part in the management of household responsibilities. These include, fetching water, cleaning, washing, preparation of meals, bamboo crafting and looking after younger siblings. Therefore, when children are encouraged to participate in management of household responsibilities, they are unable to attend schools.

### **Different Social Problems Due to Poor Education:**

According to the discussion above, the Mahali community has a variety of social difficulties that have a substantial influence on their general well-being and growth. These issues result from a lack of access to high-quality education and other obstacles that limit their educational potential. Here are some of the many sorts of societal challenges that tribal people confront as a result of their lack of education:

- 1. Limited Economic Opportunities:** Poor education often results in limited skills and expertise, preventing tribal members from obtaining better work prospects. As a consequence, individuals are locked in low-wage positions or are unemployed, resulting in economic hardship and poverty in the neighborhood.
- 2. Early Marriage:** Lack of education leads to early marriage of females, which often results in girls dropping out of school. Early marriage is seen as a societal norm and a measure to safeguard a girl's honor or to enhance family ties. This prevalent mindset is limiting Mahali girls' access to education, since uneducated households prioritize marrying them above investing in their education.
- 3. Health Disparities:** Inadequate education makes it difficult for indigenous people to grasp critical health information and get healthcare services. The Mahali community's lack of awareness and information is contributing to greater prevalence of avoidable illnesses and lower health outcomes.
- 4. Marginalization and Discrimination:** The marginalization of indigenous populations is exacerbated by a lack of education. They may encounter prejudice in a variety of areas of their lives, including work, housing, and access to public services, reinforcing socioeconomic disparities.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the followings measures were recommended to improve the educational status of Mahali tribes in Purulia District.

1. A proper awareness campaign should be established to raise awareness about the value of education.
2. Educated tribal youngsters should be recruited and placed in tribal regions as teachers.
3. Encouraging all parents to send their children to school rather than work.
4. Educating indigenous households about the educational opportunities given by the government.
5. Through effective counseling and supervision, tribal parents' attitudes about schooling should be addressed.
6. Teacher development and intimate relationships for indigenous kids' growth.
7. Vocational institutions for tribal students should be established in order to provide new opportunities.
8. The administration of incentives must be simplified so that students may use all amenities at the appropriate moment.

9. Higher-level authorities should conduct periodic audits of school operations, including teaching techniques, working hours, school days, and attendance records.

## **CONCLUSION**

One of the major problems inherent in the development of the country is to educate the tribal society. Therefore, for the development of tribes, it is very important that every problem be treated as a national problem. Presently, the educational status of tribal is not satisfactory. The research discovered that involvement of the children of the artisan Mahali tribe in Purulia District of West Bengal is quite low, despite the fact that tribal development is seeing a substantial rise in India. In addition, their involvement in higher education is quite low. If the government does not treat this issue seriously, tribal education could turn into distress and despair.

We hope situation will be better in near future and government would take some effective initiatives to eradicate such imbalance prevailing among the district. Government has already introduced many effective programmes like Kannyashree, Sabuj sathi, Jubo shree, and various scholarship for tribal students, these programmes are highly successful to bring the student into the school arena. However, the present study shows a significantly low educational status among the Mahali tribes of Purulia district. Therefore, it is the high time to think seriously concerning tribal education and comprehensive development by the government, planners, administrators, policy-makers and others.

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