



A Study On The Impact Of Education In The Tribal Sector Of West Bengal And Its Contribution To Social Development

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Abstract

One of the most important components of any civilization, education is essential for the growth of the individual. It serves as a tool for raising standards of living and achieving a long, healthy life. Only 58.96% of Indian tribal people are literate, which is much less than the country's total literacy rate. The focus of the current study was on West Bengal's need for tribal development. West Bengal's overall literacy situation is unsatisfactory. Finding out the changes in literacy and educational level of tribal pupils in various West Bengal districts is the main goal of the research project. The harsh truth is that indigenous students continue to lag behind in many areas and must overcome numerous obstacles, despite numerous constitutional provisions and programmes for the trials. The ability to learn is a key factor in changing the cultural norms and lifestyles of tribal pupils, as well as their attitude and ability to become economically independent. It has been acknowledged that education is a crucial component in tribal students' growth. This essay's goal is to explore how education affects tribal communities and how it contributes to the social development of tribal sector of West Bengal. The material used in the current work was obtained exclusively from secondary sources, including the West Bengal and India Censuses of 2001 and 2011, as well as other related academic studies. According to the study's findings, education benefits tribal students.

Keywords: Tribal community, Education, Policies, Social development, Educational Achievement.

1. Introduction

The Scheduled Tribes are given special status under the Indian Constitution (STs). The STs make up around 8% of the Indian population and are once known as adivasis, vanbasis, tribes, or tribals. There are around 573 Scheduled Tribes spread across the nation, each of which speaks a unique language distinct from the one that is most often used in the State in which they reside. In India, there are more than 270 of these languages (Adhikari, 2021). There are approximately 67.8 million tribal people in India, according

to the 2001 census. Compared to other nation states in the world, India has the most tribal inhabitants. Even though they are regarded as the country's original inhabitants, tribal people lack access to basic necessities for daily existence. In addition to being socially, economically, and educationally backward, they also experience widespread discrimination. They have been taken advantage of in a number of ways, including forced eviction from their homes and land alienation in the name of development. Tribal people have always had a deep relationship with the forest or environment, and this relationship is reflected in their culture, customs, and traditions as well as their way of life.

One of the fundamental prerequisites for creating men and establishing nations is education. For the development of human resources, it is essential. Education transmits information, abilities, and character. To meet the requirements of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the governments of India began to rely more heavily on literacy initiatives that emphasised the 3Rs (Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic) (al., 2021). The report makes an effort to critically evaluate the statistics and state of education among Tribes throughout India against the backdrop of the New Education Policy, which is likely to be introduced soon. One of the main forces driving change in the direction of progress is education. Literacy and educational attainment are strong indicators of social and economic development among the backward groups, and education is in fact an input not only for the economic development of Scheduled Tribes (ST), but also for the inner strength of the tribal communities that helps them in meeting the new challenges of life.

1.1. Background of the study

Education is the cultural process that turns each newborn human infant into a contributing adult in a particular human culture. Backwardness in education has a clear gender component. High levels of structural inequality, based on the institutions of caste and ethnicity, are a defining feature of Indian society. Despite making up a sizeable portion of the country's population, India's tribal community is numerically a small portion of the entire population. Tribal and indigenous people make up roughly 8.6% of the nation's population in India and 5.50% of the population of West Bengal, respectively. The Scheduled Tribes, often known as "Adivasis," refers to the indigenous occupants. They were perpetually socially and geographically isolated for much of history (Calder, 2021). They were dispersed over numerous biological zones and belonged to multiple races with varying cultural traits, varied languages, and varied religions. They have been culturally impacted by the Sanskritization process, and other displacing factors have made them a minority in society.

It is not advisable to study development in isolation. Development does not equate to the rise of a small number of wealthy people. Development cannot occur, according to Amartya Sen (1999), unless human capabilities are fully addressed and marginalised people' plights are remedied. He actually emphasised the capabilities and human freedoms, which can only be realised when the general public is assured of their right to political freedom, access to economic possibilities, social opportunities, transparency,

and security. These circumstances are related even if they are distinct from one another (Chandra Guru, 2020). Even though tribes are developing in India, the pace of growth has been rather sluggish. It is still a truth that many indigenous women may have missed out on educational chances at various points, and in order to empower them, various skill training programmes must be created and implemented.

1.2. The Study Area

West Bengal, which is situated on the country's eastern side, has a border with Bangladesh. The state extends latitudinally and longitudinally from 21°38'N to 27°10'N and 88°50'E to 89°50'E. According to the 2011 census, West Bengal had 21463270 people overall, making it the seventh most populous state in India. It also had the second-highest population density with 1029 people per square kilometre. The state's Human development index (HDI) is 0.492. (2008).

List of Scheduled Tribes of West Bengal	
1. ASUR	21. KORWA
2. BAIGA	22. LEPCHA
3. BEDIA, BEDIYA	23. LODHA, KHERIA, KHARIA
4. BHUMIJ	24. LOHARA, LOHRA
5. BHUTIA, SHERPA, TOTO, DUKPA, KAGATAY, TIBETAN, YOLMO	25. MAGH
6. BIRHOR	26. MAHALI
7. BIRJIA	27. MAHLI
8. CHAKMA	28. MAL PAHARIYA
9. CHERO	29. MECH
10. CHIK BARAIK	30. MRU
11. GARO	31. MUNDA
12. GOND	32. NAGESIA
13. GORAIT	33. ORAON
14. HAJANG	34. PAHARIYA
15. HO	35. RABHA
16. KARMALI	36. SANTAL
17. KHARWAR	37. SAURIA PAHARIA
18. KHOND	38. SAVAR
19. KISAN	39. LIMBU
20. KORA	40. TAMANG

Figure: 1. District Map of West Bengal



2. Literature Review

There is a lot of literature on tribal development and the rise of tribal education. Virginius Xaxa (2015) asserts that other than providing the tribal people with safety nets, the colonial state did little to enhance their socioeconomic circumstances. He claims that the same programme was maintained in post-independence India with only minor changes, such as the allocation of a specific number of seats in state-sponsored educational institutions and public agencies. These rules designated 7.5% of the positions in the federal and state governments for tribe members (S.K., 2020). This has given them access to a wide range of government services. Despite the fact that reservations offer employment chances, many times the reserved seats go unfilled since the applicants

lacked the appropriate education and abilities. The situation is considerably worse when there is a quota for higher grade services because there aren't any people that meet the requirements.

According to Pradhan and Sanjay Kumar (2011), tribal people continue to lag behind non-tribal people despite special programmes like Ashram schools, the introduction of vernacular at the elementary level, and instruction in regional dialects. Government officials and decision-makers ought to make every effort to raise their educational status in such situations. The 2007 article by Arun Kumar Ghosh offers in-depth research on the tribal education in West Bengal and Jharkhand. Few tribal people, according to him, urgently require special attention for basic education and literacy. He talks about the reasons why the tribal populations of "Ho" and "Mahali" in Jharkhand and "Lodha" in West Bengal have low literacy rates. He notices that compared to their male counterparts, these tribal enrollment rates for women are significantly lower. Following primary education, a further steep fall in enrollment was seen, and this pattern persisted for both males and females. Because youngsters must help their family members with planting, weeding, plantation, and harvesting tasks, the dropout rate is higher during the cultivation period (Prasasti, 2021). Another important reason why indigenous children drop out of school is economic hardship. The author makes a number of recommendations to achieve gender equity in education, including encouraging parents to send their daughters to school, customising the curriculum to meet the requirements of tribal children, and providing separate restrooms for girls.

2.1. Education

Education is concerned with how people live their lives. Its purpose is to raise people's quality of life. Every hour of a person's life is spent learning something new. Every event, no matter how minor, leaves its stamp on the individual. Learning is a continuous process that involves being exposed to new information, concepts, and experiences both formally and informally. Additionally, it involves the systematic formal transmission of knowledge, skills, ideas, values, norms, and attitudes (Google, 2020).

The primary role of education has been to preserve and disseminate some of society's cultural treasures. Education, according to Short (1971), is the guardian of a society's identity. Only by making education accessible to every member of society has education been able to fulfil its conservative role as the keeper of society's identity.

Education will improve one's chances of finding a better job and becoming a leader in society's politics, all of which together will raise one's social standing and reputation. In everyday situations, education takes on a powerful role by preparing people to handle complex life tasks (Kalam, 2020). The distribution of the younger generation into diverse roles is facilitated by the educational process and the numerous specialisations and certification levels that go along with it. Greater social and occupational mobility as well as a fundamental break with the status quo are the outcomes.

People think of education as a strong tool for establishing modern society. In other words, the most significant tool for socioeconomic mobility in the modern world is education. It is believed that education is a necessity for economic growth. According to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2003), education is a prerequisite for progress. Sen (1999) described education as freedom. The ability of an individual to carry out a specific social function is crucial for growth (Kennedy, 2020).

2.2. Tribe

Generally speaking, the word "tribe" conjures up images of primitivism, barbarism, and wildness. However, this idea very recently came into existence. It has been utilised politically since the emergence of colonialism. Knowing the fundamental characteristics of the colonised population was one of colonialism's requirements so that local cultural elements and sentiments could be either appropriately harmonised or eliminated as needed during different periods of colonialism. Consequently, the phrase was found to be beneficial not just among the recently discovered people in distant regions of America, Africa, and Australia but also in the more developed regions of India, China, and the Arab world (ing, 2021).

According to Verrier Elwin, the word "tribe" has a Latin basis, and the middle English word "Tribuz," which referred to the three divisions that the early Romans were divided into, eventually developed into the present English word "tribe." Similar to this, different authors have used different nomenclature to define the tribes. They were renamed from "Backward Hindus" by Ghurye to "Submerged Humanity" by Das and Das, while others called them "Aboriginals," "Primitive Tribe," "Adivasi," "Vanyajati," "Vanabasi," "Adimjati," and "Pahari" (Tirpude College of Social Work, n.d.).

Tribe has undergone additional change in the years following independence. There is no definition or criteria for the Scheduled Tribes in the Indian Constitution (for Constitutional provisions for Scheduled Tribes see Appendix. 2). The Scheduled Tribes are defined as "those tribes or tribal communities, or portions of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities, as are deemed under Article 342(i) to be the Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution" in Article 366(25) of the Constitution (Lal, 2021). According to Article 342(i) of the Constitution, "The President may, after consultation with the Governor of a State or that of a Union Territory, by public notification, specify the Tribes or Tribal Communities or Parts of the Tribal Communities or Parts which shall, for the purposes of this Constitution, be deemed as Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be." While the Scheduled Tribes are determined by the President pursuant to Article 342(i) of the Constitution through a public notification, the Parliament may, by law, include or exclude any tribal community in any state or union territory, or any portion thereof, from the list of Scheduled Tribes.

2.3. Research Gap

From the literature that has been reviewed thus far, it can be inferred that although not many, a sizable number of research have attempted to analyse the relationship between social development and education. However, no study has yet attempted to evaluate the role that education plays in the social development of West Bengal's tribal people. The majority of works on tribal development have generalised the idea of scheduled tribes as one single homogenous group, adding further complexity to the research area, it is crucial to highlight after carefully examining the works of the famous scholars on the subject. Despite the fact that tribal communities are diverse and do not belong to a single homogenous group, the majority of published works tend to concentrate on tribal communities as a whole (Radhakrishnan, 2020). Due to the lack of relevant study on tribal people, this research endeavour attempts to take a thorough look at the problem and come up with workable solutions to the current gaps. There is a large research vacuum that needs to be addressed with the aid of our proposed research because there is a severe lack of concrete literature on the tribal sector of West Bengal.

2.4. Statement of the Problem

When it comes to their accomplishments in the areas of economy and education, the scheduled tribe population as a whole is still far behind the non-scheduled population. Throughout the entire plan period, many measures have been adopted to close gaps and speed up development, particularly among the Scheduled Tribes. However, there hasn't been much progress toward improving "quality of life." An integrated strategy is necessary for a thorough comprehension of the issues pertaining to tribal development (Sachidananda, 2020). The current study primarily examines the effects of education in West Bengal's tribal community as well as the habitat and socioeconomic advancement of the state's Scheduled Tribe population during the course of the Plan.

2.5. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this paper are:

- To examine the effects of schooling in West Bengal's tribal area.
- To evaluate the West Bengal Scheduled Tribes' educational advancement programmes.
- To emphasise the importance of education for tribal development.
- To determine the relationship between social development and education.

3. Research Methodology

Essentially, this is a descriptive or analytical essay. The data was gathered from a variety of books, scholarly articles, newspapers, journals, and trustworthy websites. The theoretical study has been supported by a few maps, illustrations, and graphs. The secondary data sources on which this essay is based. Past field studies, pertinent books, journals, census data, and reports make up the secondary sources. A random sampling approach is used to acquire data from the respondents. The sample size is 200 in this study.

3.1. Hypothesis

H1: There is significant relationship between education and social development.

H2: There is no significant relationship between education and social development.

3.2. Tools for data collection

In a research process, the choice and preparation of instruments and technologies for data collecting is crucial. The effectiveness and applicability of a research tool may have a significant impact on the study's conclusion. The researcher employed a variety of instruments to get information from the respondents in order to achieve each objective, including questionnaires, schedules for statements of opinion, and organised interview schedules (Shukla, 2020). By consulting the specialists, the content validity of the tools that had been produced was guaranteed. The English version is appended to the Bengali-prepared tools. The qualitative method was used for the current investigation. The data have been analysed using SPSS 25.0.

3.3. Data Collection Methods

The researcher used a variety of approaches and procedures to investigate the study's stated aims and collect relevant data from the chosen sample. Any research study's methodology heavily relies on the appropriateness and viability of the data collection techniques. The researcher cannot properly and honestly conduct his investigation without choosing and using the right and effective procedures and approaches. The following methods of gathering data were used: questionnaires, a list of opinion statements, structured and unstructured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis.

3.4. Tools for Data Analysis

3.4.1. Descriptive Statistics: Describing or summarizing features from a group of data with a descriptive stat is called descriptive statistics. The process of using and analyzing these stats is called descriptive statistics.

3.4.2. Correlation: Connection or dependence in measures refers to any observable relationship—whether causal or not—between two stochastic components or bivariate data. But broadly speaking, "association" may show any kind of relationship, in estimations it conventionally implies how much two or three elements are sprightly related.

3.5. Sampling Technique

The random sampling method has been applied. The randomization of test results is taken into consideration by the random sampling technique, which means that each example has a similar possibility of being chosen to represent the entire population. It is seen as one of the most notable and direct data grouping procedures in research fields

(probability and experiences, math, etc.). It thinks about reasonable data combination, which permits studies to reach honest outcome.

4. Data Analysis

This research is qualitative in nature. As a result, the study combined qualitative research techniques with simple statistical techniques like percentage analysis to explain and analyse the data and to substantiate the claims. The required data is used to offer descriptive information. To evaluate and analyse the data, descriptive statistics are also used.

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Describing or summarizing features from a group of data with a descriptive stat is called descriptive statistics. The process of using and analyzing these stats is called descriptive statistics.

Table: 1. Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Education	200	1.40	4.80	3.5990	.87523	-.646	.172	-.864	.342
Social Development	200	1.60	4.60	3.4650	.71536	-.069	.172	-.900	.342
Valid N (listwise)	200								

Table 1 demonstrates that for our investigation, the variations in education and social development are statistically significant. Education has a greater mean value than social development.

Figure: 2. Descriptive chart of education

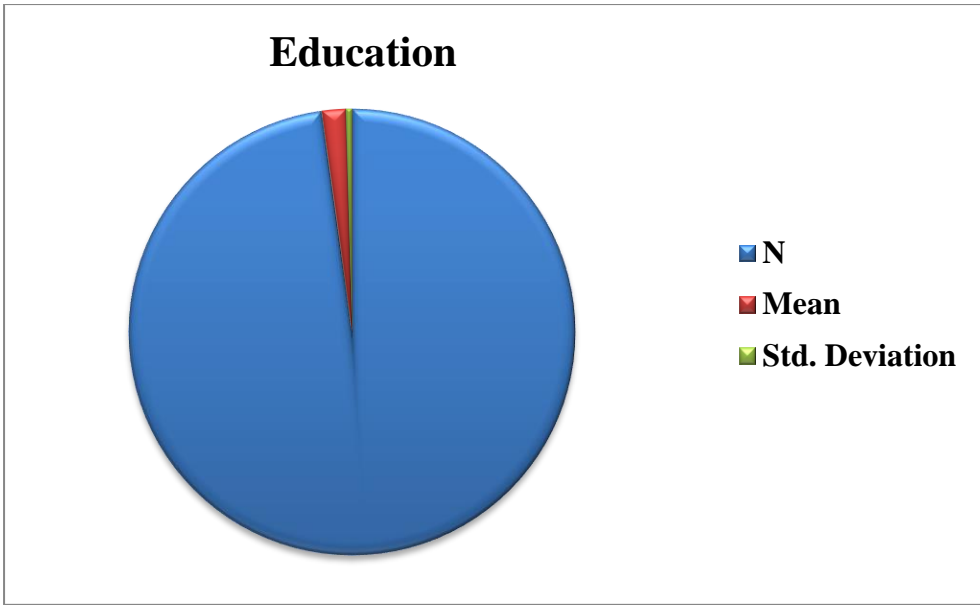
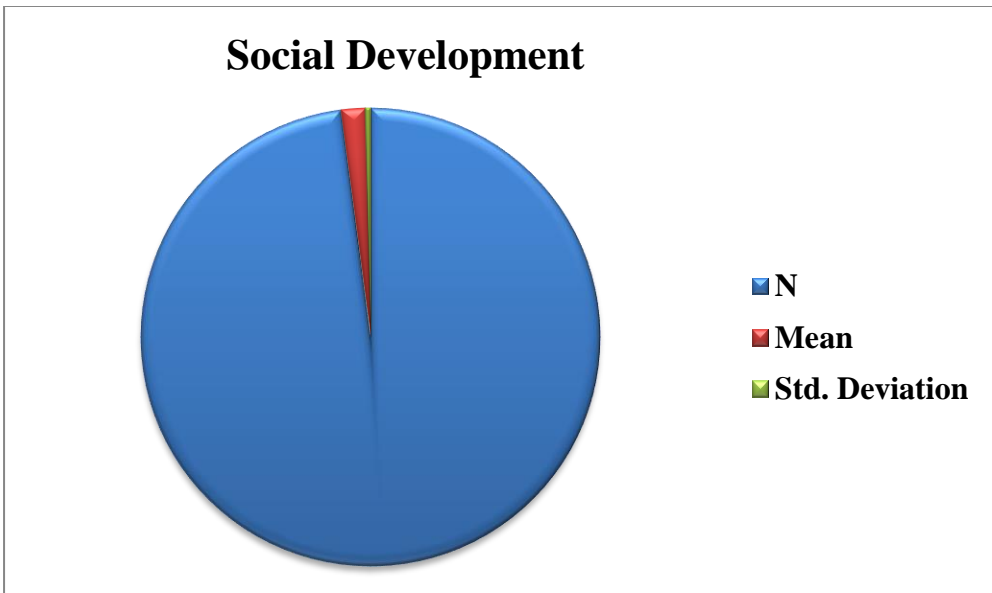


Figure: 3. Descriptive chart of social development



4.2. Non-parametric Correlations

Table: 2. Spearman Correlation

Correlations				
			Education	Social Development
Spearman's rho	Education	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.142*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.02	0.01

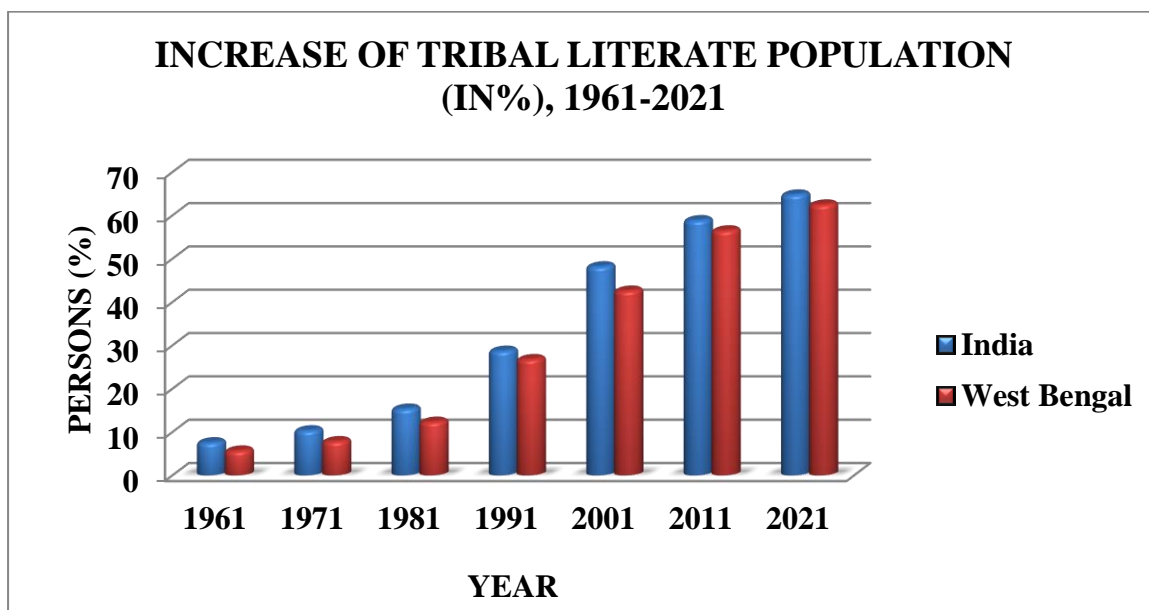
	N	200	200
Social Development	Correlation Coefficient	.142*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.01	0.02
	N	200	200
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

According to above Table 2, it is clear that there is only a weak correlation between education and social development ($r=.142$).

Table: 3. Increase of Literate Tribal Population (In %), 1961-2021.

	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
India	07.59	10.35	15.35	28.72	48.2	58.85	64.78
West Bengal	05.69	07.85	12.34	26.79	42.6	56.5	62.48

Figure: 4. Chart of Increase in Literate Tribal Population (In %), 1961-2021.



According to secondary data shown in Table 3, the literacy rate among tribal people is rising.

The percentage of literate people was 7.59 in 1961. In 2021, it rises to 64.78 percent. It increased to 62.48 percent in West Bengal from 05.69 percent. In contrast to non-tribal people, the tribal population has a lower literacy rate, but there are many reasons for this, the three most significant of which are: I the lack of a school in the area; (ii) the poor economic situation, which can make some tribal members apathetic toward pursuing an

education; and (iii) the importance of the curriculum and the mode of instruction in discouraging tribal members from pursuing an education.

5. Result and Discussion

The primary barrier to the advancement of the tribal peoples is a lack of awareness brought on by educational illiteracy. According to our analysis, there is a statistically significant relationship between education and social development. Thus, the hypothesis H1 is accepted and the H2 is rejected. The literacy rate among tribal people is also rising steadily, but it is relatively lower than India among the Scheduled Tribes of West Bengal (Som, 2020).

Education is a crucial component of culture, and it cannot be detached or separated from the society in which people live. However, formal schooling is not valued by the native population. Education and social development are intimately intertwined. It has a vital role in shaping how society develops. On the other hand, the state of social development has an effect on education. As a result, development is both a cause and an effect of schooling. Despite all the plans and arrangements made in this regard, much work still has to be done (Som K. S., 2020). The following is a selection of the selected observations regarding "the function of education in tribe development":

- The most effective and significant method of tribal development is education.
- The only method to raise the social standing of the tribal people is through education.
- The tribal people's access to education will enable them to use government programmes, services, and aid to their advantage.
- The indigenous people's increased representation and political involvement will be facilitated by education.
- The tribal people would benefit from education by being able to work for the government on a salary.
- The tribes will benefit from education by being able to find jobs unrelated to agriculture.
- The tribes' ability to communicate effectively and preserve positive relationships with other societal groups will be aided through education.
- By removing their inferiority feelings, education will assist the indigenous people in interacting with others in a confident manner.
- The indigenous people's education will enable them to express their needs and demands to the authorities.
- The tribes will benefit from education by having improved family circumstances.
- For indigenous people to be free from poverty, education is essential.

6. Conclusion

According to the current study, education is the first requirement for any kind of progress. The study examined the relationship between education and the development of tribal people. It was named "a study on the influence of education in the tribal sector of West Bengal and its contribution to social development." It was an endeavour to research the educational situation and development barriers facing tribal people in general. In the study, distinctive problems that prevented the proliferation of education among them were analysed along with the relationship between education and the social development of tribal communities. The report provided a critical analysis of government involvement in tribal development, notably in the area of education (Vimala, 2020). Among other things, education policy reform is crucial for the socioeconomic advancement and self-determination of tribal people. The study supports the notion that education is a crucial precondition for growth and unquestionably indicated that education has a key role in the development of tribal peoples, especially marginalised groups in society. The study also identified a number of variables that are the fundamental roadblocks to the growth of indigenous communities' educational uplift.

There have been several studies from all over the world on tribal development, social structure, children's educational levels, and other topics, but none have particularly looked at the impact of education on the life skills of tribal students in West Bengal. Even in 2021, West Bengal's literacy situation is unsatisfactory. The largest obstacle to the sustainable development of tribal communities is their under awareness of the policies and programmes that have been created for them. Raising tribal literacy rates is the only way to strengthen these programmes (Werfhorst, 2021). We have hope for the future since the progress made over the past ten years has been positive, and most importantly, the literacy gaps between males and females and rural and urban areas are expected to close. By encouraging them and offering incentives for setting up an educational system, we can improve the quality of life for tribal people.

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