

Project Report

Impact of COVID 19 pandemic on tribal students

Submitted by

Dr. Simran Nag (Fellow)

Under the Supervision of

Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, IAS (Director, TRI)

Dr. Abdul Khabir, JKAS (Deputy Director, TRI)



TRIBAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
Jammu and Kashmir.

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Tribal Affairs Department,
Govt of Jammu & Kashmir

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

“It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is education which will enlighten the down-trodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom.”—B.R Ambedkar.

Though this quote holds much optimism, at the same time it is very unfortunate to say that the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic has had and still continues to have serious socio-economic repercussions around the globe. With the estimated job loss reaching 400 million globally alongside a mammoth footfall in economic growth, the pandemic has devastated all forms of livelihood. With mandatory regulations such as lockdowns and curfews, social distancing norms and enhanced restrictions on freedom of movement, the pandemic has inflicted a deadly blow on trade and commerce dismantling economic growth and prosperity worldwide. To put it another way, backwardness in education is part and parcel of the greater economic backwardness in the global pandemic. In 1951, the literacy rate of tribals was only 3.46 per cent.

The Central and State governments attach greater importance to the economic progress of the Scheduled Tribes. In 2002 the 86th amendment of constitution of India brought right to education as fundamental right in part III of the constitution, the same amendment also inserted article 21A, which made right to education as fundamental right between the age 6-14 years, also article 45 provides that state should endeavour to provide early childhood education and care for all children up to 6 years of age. The students coming from the marginalised section of the society cannot by any means avail quality

education therefore, it is important and need of the hour to pay more focused attention to pre-school education by providing adequate financial, enhancing resources, and stretching their arms in creating a good quality school which can be accessible to all children. Article 336(25) of the Constitution of India refers to the Scheduled Tribes as those communities, who are scheduled and listed under Article 342 of the Constitution.

Reports of the International Labour Organization and the World Bank shed light on unemployment, malnutrition, educational inaccessibility, and other inequalities consequential to the pandemic. The direct effect of the pandemic has been devastating, notably on the vulnerable sections of society. As we can see in the various human rights reports published globally, it was observed that around 476 million indigenous people groups around the world are facing challenges to adapt to the changing environment. When it comes to education, post 1992 the education development suggested by the National Policy of Education 1986, the flagship program which runs on three basic levels, 'primary' 'secondary' and 'tertiary', because of the complex problem at the primary level it faces in most parts of tribal India, it has a bearing of low tribal participation precisely at the secondary and the tertiary level; therefore, special attention has to be provided to the primary educations to bridge the gap and provide best to these learners. The Commission of the government namely the Scheduled area and Scheduled Tribes Commission (1960-61) chaired by Shri U.N Dheberand the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) have closely examined the low education level in tribals and found out that the problem of absenteeism, stagnation and dropouts among tribal students are greater than other social groups. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru pleaded that the development of the tribals should be along the lines of their genius and effort should be made not to impose anything on them

from outside, in addition to this the Prime Minister has also suggested promotion and encouragement to tribal traditional art and culture, also further adjustment of the timing of schools, vacations and holidays of schools to suit the tribal social and cultural life. It also proposed creating an ambiance of tribal culture in school since most of them live with the fear of being left out of the mainstream civilization (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, 2014).

It is obvious that the impact of covid-19 was also evident in the education system of the country, resulting in the closure of the educational institutions like schools and colleges, initially, most governments had decided to completely shut down the schools to reduce and slow down the impact of Covid-19. The year 2019-2020 was the most challenging in the entire human history and also affected the education sector immensely. With mandatory regulations such as lockdowns and curfews, social distancing norms and enhanced restrictions on freedom of movement, the pandemic has inflicted a deadly blow on trade and commerce, dismantling economic growth and prosperity worldwide. Further widening the gulf between the pre-existing problems and further made it difficult for the students especially to the students coming from the underprivileged section of the society the Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes, making it difficult for them to achieve their goals. Since the abrupt ending of the academic year has led to serious unfinished learning, there has been a rise in the number of dropouts of high school students, especially those coming from low-income families and marginalized sections of society such as those North-Eastern who are less likely to go for post-secondary education.

The fallout because of the pandemic has severely threatened the prospect of the current generation and constrained their

opportunity far into adulthood, to put it another way, backwardness in education is part and parcel of the greater economic backwardness. Students are forced to take up employment during covid-19 and many could never be able to continue their studies because of lack of income and food security as an upshot of the covid-19 outbreak. Racial and caste discrimination have been prevalent in India from time immemorial. Times of crisis such as these reinforce such disparities among the people. This trend is visible in the case of Covid-19 as well, which has triggered major unemployment and economic crumbling. In India too, with limited options for employment and other government regulations, a large number of the tribal population is left to live their life in shackles. Their very existence was challenged as they are dependent on wages of daily labour to make their ends meet. Subsidized government food kits and supplies from civic groups turned out to be their major source of livelihood during these times. With little to no income at disposal, these groups struggled to satisfy their basic necessities. Among them, the women and children were the worst affected. Pregnant women were left with no access to nutritious food and benevolence. Children were deprived of their nutritious diet upon the closure of schools. As education turned digital, students belonging to these tribal communities were left outside of the educational spectrum. They were denied of their right to education enshrined under Article 21A of the Constitution of India. Without access to education, many of the children were forced into child labour under hazardous circumstances, making them vulnerable and unprotected. On top of the existing economic disparities, caste-based discriminations continue to be a major reason for the societal divide. Several studies in support of the above argument have been carried out and all beyond reasonable nexus indicates that despite the various government programs designed for this purpose, caste still

stands to be the single major factor for the low educational mobility of Scheduled Tribes.

Historically, the Scheduled Tribes have lived in the most remote parts of the country, inside the forests and grasslands, where there is an abundance of natural resources which can be used as a means to sustain their livelihood. This geographical isolation is yet another factor for their exclusion from mainstream news and media. The inaccessibility to digital medium coupled with the lack of infrastructural adequacies like poor network coverage escalates the trauma faced by the students belonging to these tribal communities. Since schools ensured nutritious mid-day meals and free rations as part of the nationwide food security program, students were given a chance for overall development to curb the problem of malnutrition among vulnerable populations. This along with the real-time guidance of teachers and scope for extracurricular activities like sports and art, schools pre-covid19 used to be enriching and engaging. In fact, the school and college dropout rates are lowest among these sects in India according to the surveys. However, with the evolution of digital education as the standard mode of education, and with the absence of personal care and mentoring by the teachers, the tormented students belonging to these communities were shadowed with depressions and doubts about their future. Online classes failed to address the need for personal care and attention. With mounting tensions and insecurities at home, digital learning turned out to be muddled and troublesome for most of the students. Devastatingly, as a direct consequence of this, a tribal student committed suicide in India's most literate State; Kerala, for the reason that digital education was inaccessible and for the fear of being left out of the education spectrum. This suggests that despite various steps and initiatives taken by the Government in this regard like providing tablets, smartphones, laptops and monetary incentives, etc, a large section of the students belonging to

the tribal communities were not beneficiaries of any of these schemes or initiatives.

With the lack of financial means to support digital education and growing concerns over the social and the digital divide, the future of these students does not look so promising unless the authorities are willing to step up and find amicable solutions to this problem. Furthermore, prolonged closure of schools can negatively impact the physical and mental well-being of such children. Prompt remedial measures must be implemented by the authorities to make sure these children are not denied their fundamental right to education. The present research investigates and analyses the impact of COVID 19 on school dropout rate among tribal community children in Jammu and Kashmir. Appraising the socioeconomic conditions of these communities along with their concerns over digital education, the availability of technology to the students in the growing popularity of digital education. Mediums such as smartphones, televisions, PCs, etc. are used for this purpose. The one alarming concern, however, is the accessibility to these mediums and an in-depth analysis on the impact of Covid19 among the tribal student community is established.

Education, being the dream window to a prosperous future and a means to poverty alleviation and employment, a study of this stature is vital for establishing a socio-economic development plan for facilitating the education of the tribal community in India, the Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes of Jammu and Kashmir in India are no exception to this. This research has primarily relied on the indices of illiteracy, dropout rates and the dilapidated conditions of these not-so-privileged communities. In light of this, data has been collected for GER, NER, Promotion rate, Repetition rate and Dropout rate both gender wise and level of school education for the two

consecutive sessions i.e., 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 with the following objectives:-

- 1) To evaluate the GER, NER, Promotion rate, Repetition rate and Dropout rate for the session 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.
- 2) To compare GER, NER, Promotion rate, Repetition rate and Dropout rate for different level of school education for the session 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- 3) To compare the GER, NER, Promotion rate, Repetition rate and Dropout rate for the session 2019-20 to that of 2020-21.
- 4) To compare the GER, NER, Promotion rate, Repetition rate and Dropout rate of boys with that of girls at each level for both the session and between both the sessions also.

CHAPTER –2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to UNESCO, approximately 0.32 billion students in India have been affected by school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic (UNESCO 2020). Of these, almost 84% reside in rural areas while 70% attend government schools. As of 2015, the average dropout rate across secondary schools in India was 17.06% with higher numbers for rural areas (NUEPA 2016).

Past evidence suggests that short term disruptions in schooling often lead to permanent dropouts among the poor (Reddy and Sinha 2010). One reason for this is the loss of parents' employment for which child labour is leveraged as a substitute.

The inevitable economic backlash of the lockdown is likely to reduce the earning capacity for many poor households and may increase the opportunity cost of sending children to school, especially in rural India. As a result, children may be pushed into the labour market (Bharadwaj et al. 2019).

Dropout rates are likely to be even more severe for girls who are often left out of household resource allocation decisions (Prakash et al. 2017). Girls may also be required to undertake additional household responsibilities as parents increase their own labour hours to cope with economic distress.

Similarly, these economic shocks are likely to have a greater impact on children from communities that are marginalized on the basis of their caste, tribe and religion, and already experience higher dropout rates (NUEPA 2016).

Dropping out, in turn, may lead to increases in child marriages, domestic violence, early pregnancies and a plethora of other development issues (Birchall 2018). Without school fee waivers in the interim, dropout rates are likely to get further exacerbated as educational expenses become unaffordable for many.

As per census 2011, the Jammu and Kashmir has population of 12541302 among which males are 6640662 are males and 5900640 are females. The population of scheduled tribe is 1493299 which constitutes 11.9 % of the total population of the state. Among all tribes the Gujjar tribe has highest population of near about 763806 which is 69% of total tribal population in Jammu and Kashmir. Bot is the second populous tribe having 96,698 followed by Bakarwal having 60,724 (census report 2011). The scheduled tribe act of J&K was primarily enacted in 1989 in which eight tribal communities were identified as scheduled tribes (Jammu and Kashmir scheduled tribes order ,1989)and the four communities Gujjar ,Bakarwal,Gaddi and Sippi were notified as the Scheduled tribes vide the constitution (scheduled tribes order (Amendment) Act, 1991). The constitution of Jammu and Kashmir has recognized twelve tribes including Gujjar, Bakarwal, Balti, Beda, Bot (Boto), Brokpa(Drokpa), Changpa, Gari, Mon, Purigpa, Gaddi, and Sippi. During 2001 census all these twelve scheduled tribes were first time enumerated officially. Balti, Purigpa and Gaddi constitute 10.2% of total S.T population . Sippi, Changpa, Mon, Garra and Beda constitute 1.9% of total S.T population. Beda is smallest group with a population 128. The literacy rate of scheduled Tribe is 50.6%. which is much lower than the national average literacy rate. The male literacy rate is 60.6% and the female literacy rate is 39.7% . (census report 2011)

U. J.Sofi (2014), examined the educational status of Gujjar and Bakarwals tribes of Jammu and Kashmir. In this study, the researcher

observed the literacy rate of both tribes is very low as compared with other tribes of Jammu and Kashmir because of reasons long distant schools, teachers not willing, absence of teachers as well as poorly motivated teachers, lack of parental resources to pay for uniform, book, stationary, etc, and migratory lifestyle.

A study of the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) report, an organization named Dalit Adhikari Andolan found that 56% of the students who were surveyed for the purpose of accessibility of online classes belonged to the marginalized communities having annual income ranging from Rs. 20000-40000 and were unable to access the digital or online classes during the pandemic. Along with this 73% of the respondents belong to the particularly vulnerable tribal groups who have no access to online classes during the Covid Pandemic. The report has focused on the impact of the pandemic on the Dalit and Adivasi student in achieving higher education and the multiple layers of class and class hierarchical layers, Dalit and tribal students have to overcome (Sarah Khan, 2021).

In August, Educational Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that around 15 crore children are currently out of education system. The Unified District Information System for Education reported similar dropout numbers.

The figure for dropouts at the secondary level was as high as 17%, and then there are children who have never been enrolled. These challenges amplified with the impact of temporary school closures due to Covid-19. Research indicates that these numbers will only increase due to the long-term effect of the pandemic. However, girls are more at risk as, according to the National Right to Education forum's policy brief, 10 million girls are at risk of dropping out.

The digital divide and loss of learning continuity have further increased these gaps and decreased confidence in children. In a study by ChildFund India, 64% of the children expressed that they may drop out if not provided additional educational support.

K. Suri. (2014), in this study Reseracher found the challenges of elementary education among scheduled tribes of Poonch district. This study found that tribal children of this area is poor in education due to the reason of seasonal migration, lack of awareness in considerisation of the importance of education., withdraw their children from the schools., lack of proper infrastructure in schools. Teacher absenteeism is quite common, have no subject teachers at elementary level , The dropout rate is quite high among girls due to the lack proper hygein. also no proper security in the area where KGBVs have established

Z. Abass. et-al (2015) ,this study examined the socio-economic and educational status of tribal(Gujjar and Bakarwal) of Jammu and Kashmir. Reseracher shows that the socio- economic and educational status is not satisfactory due to their illiteracy and poverty. Their educational status is very low as compare with J&K as well as India.

S. Kumar (2015), find out literacy disparity among the scheduled tribes, scheduled caste, and non-SC/ST. This study shows the literacy rate of ST is extremely lower than the other twoand the women educational status is worst than the SC and Non SC/ST. The researcher was also given the reason of low educational status of ST and ST women, the reason is the poverty of families, child labour, not affording for educational expenses and lack of awareness of government policies and programmes.

K. Suri &P. Raina(2016) , this “study of Educational status of tribal Bakarwal”shows that Barkarwal tribes have very low literacy rate

as compared other tribes .very low percent of the children have continuous education after primary and secondary schooling due to their seasonal migration.Reseracher also underline the reason of low status of education in Bakarwal community,the study highlights that huge number children quite school in primary standard due to the herd buffaloes ,goats,etc to the higher reaches during summer season.they left education because mobile school facility is only upto primary standard.After primary standard there is no mobile school facilities.study also highlight the fact that they have not in favour of girl education,because they marriage them in early age due to the fear of insecurity as their seasonal migration.lack of educational facilities,lack of interest of parents ,teacher not willing to go these hard place is also highlight in the study.

V. Sharma (2017), in his of “Study of Educational Status of Tribal Gujjar Children” shows that Gujjar tribes are highly illiterate than others.very low percent of the children have continuous education after primary and secondary schooling, but Gujjar tribes are highly backward in education as well as their socio-economic .Their income source is livestock .Reseracher also underline the reason of low status of education in these community,this study highlights that huge number children quite school in primary standard due to the herd buffaloes ,goats,etc to the higher reaches during summer season.they left education because mobile school facility is only upto primary standard.After primary standard there is no mobile school facilities.study also highlight the fact that they has not in favour of girl education, because they marriage them in early age due to the fear of insecurity as their seasonal migration. Lack of educational facilities, lack of interest of parents, teachers not willing to go this hard place.

M.Y. Wani & R. T. Islam (2018), in the study of “Educational Status of Tribal of Jammu & Kashmir: A case study of Gujjars and Bakarwals”, observed that highest percent of Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes was illiterate and having primary qualification, few person was higher qualification. Researcher also gave the reason of backwardness of education in their community; follow the traditional occupation, unawareness about education, lack of educational facilities, and lack of Road connectivity to rural and urban area, financial problem.

J.V. Arun & A. Prem .kumar(2019), in this study “Dynamics of Tribal Education in Jammu and Kashmir” researchers examined tribal literacy rate, gross enrolment ratio, dropout ratio and gender parity index for the state of J&K. In this study researcher found gap of literacy rate of tribal of Jammu and Kashmir is higher than the India’s average literacy rate, also found gross enrolment ratio of tribal student of J&K at the India level. The dropout rate of tribal girls is higher than boys in both primary and elementary level of education.

M. Hussain & F.A. Lone (2021), examined the educational status of Dard tribe of Ladakh and explained the reasons of high school dropouts and non-enrolment among tribal children as well as to identify the determinant responsible for the poor quality of educational infrastructure. Researchers concluded the literacy rate of Dard tribes is not only low but also shows higher level of gender gap.

CHAPTER–3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is designed in a descriptive manner. The data was primarily collected for the year 2019-20 and 2020-2021 from secondary sources like corresponding websites, journals, research studies, news portals and other publication. The sample size was based upon the Unified District Information System For Education Plus (UDISE+) report 2019-20 and UDISE+ report 2020-2021 published by Ministry of Education, Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India.

In J&K a total of twelve communities were given the status of Scheduled tribe which are: -

1. Balti,
2. Beda,
3. Bot/ Bota,
4. Brokpa/ Drokpa/ Dard/ Shin,
5. Changpa,
6. Mon,
7. Garra,
8. Purigpa,
9. Gujjar,
10. Bakerwal,
11. Gaddi and
12. Sippi.

As the 2011 census the total Scheduled Tribe population of J&K is 1,493,299 which constitute 776,257 males and 717,042 females with a literacy rate of 50.56% and sex ratio 924. Among all the districts of J&K Rajouri and Poonch district consist more than one fourth ($1/4^{\text{th}}$) of the total ST population.

Table 1: District-Wise Distribution of ST Population In J&K as per census 2011

S.No.	District	ST Population	%Out of total ST Population
1	Jammu	69193	4.63
2	Samba	17573	1.18
3	Kathua	53307	3.57
4	Udhampur	56309	3.77
5	Reasi	88365	5.92
6	Doda	39216	2.63
7	Kishtwar	38149	2.55
8	Ramban	39772	2.66
9	Rajouri	232815	15.59
10	Poonch	176101	11.79
11	Srinagar	8935	0.60
12	Ganderbal	61070	4.09
13	Badgam	23912	1.60
14	Anantnag	116006	7.77
15	Kulgam	26525	1.78
16	Pulwama	22607	1.51
17	Shopian	21820	1.46
18	Baramulla	33705	2.52
19	Bandipora	75374	5.05
20	Kupwara	70352	4.71
21	Leh	95857	6.42
22	Kargil	122336	8.19
	Total	1493299	100

Parameters

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GRE)

GRE is the total enrolment in a particular level of school education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the Population of the official age-group which corresponds to the given level of school education in a given school year.

Example: GER primary = Enrolment in class 1 to 5 ÷ projected population in age group 6- 10 years.

Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)

NER is define as the total number of pupils enrolled in a particular level of school education who are of the corresponding official age group expressed as a percentage of the population of the official age-group which corresponds to the given level of school education in a given school year.

Example: NER primary = Children of age 6-10 years enrolled in class 1 to 5 ÷ projected population in age group 6-10 years.

Promotion Rate

Proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are enrolled in the next grade in the following school year.

Repetition Rate

Proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are enrolled in the same grade in the following school year.

Dropout Rate

Proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are no longer enrolled at any grade in the following school year.

*The following identity is maintained while preparing the estimates of promotion rate, repetition rate and dropout rate:

Each of Promotion Rate, repetition Rate and Dropout Rate is non negative and $\text{Promotion Rate} + \text{Repetition Rate} + \text{Dropout Rate} = 100$

CHAPTER-4

RESULTS

4.1 Projected Population of Scheduled Tribes By Age Group (2019)

As per the Report of the Expert Group on Population Projections 2011-2036, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, July 2020 the Projected Population for the year 2019 for children falling in the age group of 6-13 years is 1,41,279 (Boys), 1,27,872 (Girls) & 2,69,151 (Total); age group 14-15 years of children is 35,175 (Boys), 29,177 (Girls) & 64,352 (Total) and age group of 16-17 years is 30,078 (Boys), 24,835 (Girls) & 54,912 (Total).

Table 2: Projected Population-ST (2019)

S.No.	Gender	Age6-13	Age 14-15	Age 16-17
1	Boys	1,41,279	35,175	30,078
2	Girls	1,27,872	29,177	24,835
	Total	2,69,151	64,352	54,912

4.2 Projected Population of Scheduled Tribes By Age Group (2020)

As per the Report of the Expert Group on Population Projections 2011-2036, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, July 2020 the Projected Population for the year 2020 for children falling in the age group of 3-5 years is 45,268 (Boys), 44,204 (Girls) & 89,472 (Total); age group 6-10 years of children is 75,461 (Boys), 71,129 (Girls) & 1,46,590 (Total) and age group of 11-13 years is 59,618 (Boys), 51,544 (Girls) & 11,1162 (Total).

Table 3: Projected Population-ST (2020)

S.No.	Gender	Age 3-5	Age 6-10	Age 11-13
1	Boys	45,268	75,461	59,618
2	Girls	44,204	71,129	51,544
	Total	89,472	1,46,590	11,1162

4.3 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by Gender and Level of School Education - Scheduled Tribe (2019-20)

GRE is the total enrolment in a particular level of school education, regardless of age. It is expressed as a percentage of the Population of the official age-group which corresponds to the given level of school education in a given school year.

The GRE for the year 2019-2020 was evaluated based upon the level of school education which is divided into five categories i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8), Elementary (1-8), Secondary (9-10) and Higher Secondary (11-12). The GRE for both boys and girls and the total GRE of all the five respected categories is mentioned in table no. 4.

Table 4: GRE- ST (2019-2020)

S.No.	Levelof School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	106.0	105.1	105.5
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	65.1	66.1	65.6
3	Elementary (1-8)	89.0	89.5	89.2
4	Secondary (9-10)	51.0	47.1	49.2
5	Higher Secondary (11-12)	24.8	21.5	23.3

4.4 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by Gender and Level of School Education - Scheduled Tribe (2020-21)

The GRE for the year 2020-2021 was evaluated based upon the level of school education which is divided into five categories i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8), Elementary (1-8), Secondary (9-10) and Higher Secondary (11-12). The total GER was maximum for Primary (1-5) i.e., 115.3 and minimum for Higher Secondary (11-12) i.e., 37.1.

Table 5: GRE- ST (2020-2021)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	116.4	114.2	115.3
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	67.2	69.6	68.4
3	Elementary (1-8)	94.7	95.5	95.1
4	Secondary (9-10)	55.8	50	53.2
5	Higher Secondary (11-12)	41.2	32.2	37.1

4.5 Net Enrolment Ratio (GER) by Gender and Level of School Education - Scheduled Tribe (2019-20)

NER is the total number of pupils enrolled in a particular level of school education who are of the corresponding official age group expressed as a percentage of the population of the official age-group which corresponds to the given level of school education in a given school year.

The NRE for the year 2019-2020 was evaluated based upon the level of school education which is divided into five categories i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8), Elementary (1-8), Secondary (9-10) and Higher Secondary (11-12). The NRE for both boys and girls and the total NRE of all the five respected categories is mentioned in table no. 6.

Table 6: NER-ST (2019-2020)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	73.2	75.4	74.2
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	45.3	48.1	46.6
3	Elementary (1-8)	69.4	72.3	70.7
4	Secondary (9-10)	33.4	33.	33.5
5	Higher Secondary (11-12)	22.9	23.2	23.1

4.6 Net Enrolment Ratio (GER) by Gender and Level of School Education - Scheduled Tribe (2020-21)

The NRE for the year 2020-2021 was evaluated based upon the level of school education which is divided into five categories i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8), Elementary (1-8), Secondary (9-10) and Higher Secondary (11-12). The total NRE was maximum for Primary (1-5) i.e., 81.7 and minimum for Higher Secondary (11-12) i.e., 29.0.

Table 7: NER-ST (2020-2021)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	80.8	82.7	81.7
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	45.9	48.	47.1
3	Elementary (1-8)	73.2	7.2	74.6
4	Secondary (9-10)	34.7	34.8	34.7
5	Higher Secondary (11-12)	29.3	28.6	29.0

4.7 Promotion Rate by Level of School Education and Gender-Scheduled Tribe (2019-2020)

Promotion rate is define as the proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are enrolled in the next grade in the following school year.

The promotion rate for the year 2019-2020 was evaluated on the basis of three categories of level of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8) and Secondary (9-10). The same is depicted for boys, girls and total in table no. 8.

Table 8: Promotion Rate-ST (2019-2020)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	95.6	95.6	95.6
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	96.3	96.1	96.2
3	Secondary(9-10)	81.1	81.4	81.2

4.8 Promotion Rate by Level of School Education and Gender-Scheduled Tribe (2020-2021)

The promotion rate for the year 2020-2021 was evaluated on the basis of three categories of level of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8) and Secondary (9-10). The total promotion rate was maximum for upper primary (6-8) i.e., 96.5 and minimum for primary (1-5) i.e., 95.

Table 9: Promotion Rate-ST (2020-2021)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	95.4	95.7	95
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	97.2	95.7	96.5
3	Secondary (9-10)	96.9	95.2	96.1

4.9 Repetition Rate by Level of School Education and Gender-Scheduled Tribe (2019-2020)

Repetition rate is define as the proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are enrolled in the same grade in the following school year.

The repetition rate for the year 2019-2020 was evaluated on the basis of three categories of level of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8) and Secondary (9-10). The same is depicted for boys, girls and total in table no. 10.

Table 10: Repetition Rate-ST (2019-2020)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	0.5	0.5	0.5
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	0.6	0.5	0.6
3	Secondary (9-10)	2.2	2.0	2.1

4.10 Repetition Rate by Level of School Education and Gender-Scheduled Tribe (2020-2021)

The repetition rate for the year 2020-2021 was evaluated on the basis of three categories of level of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8) and Secondary (9-10). The total repetition rate was maximum for secondary (9-10) i.e., 0.49 and minimum for primary (1-5) and upper primary i.e., 0.1.

Table 11: Repetition Rate-ST (2020-2021)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	0.1	0.1	0.1
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	0.1	0.1	0.1
3	Secondary (9-10)	0.4	0.4	0.4

4.11 Dropout Rate by Level of School Education and Gender-Scheduled Tribe (2019-2020)

Dropout rate is define as the proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are no longer enrolled at any grade in the following school year.

The dropout rate for the year 2019-2020 was evaluated on the basis of three categories of level of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8) and Secondary (9-10). The same is depicted for boys, girls and total in table no. 12.

Table 12: Dropout Rate-ST (2019-2020)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	3.9	3.9	3.9
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	3.1	3.4	3.2
3	Secondary (9-10)	16.2	17	16.6

4.12 Dropout Rate by Level of School Education and Gender-Scheduled Tribe (2020-2021)

The dropout rate for the year 2020-2021 was evaluated on the basis of three categories of level of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper Primary (6-8) and Secondary (9-10). The total dropout rate was maximum for primary (1-5) i.e., 4.4 and minimum for upper primary (6-8) i.e., 3.4.

Table 13: Dropout Rate-ST (2020-2021)

S.No.	Level of School Education	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Primary (1-5)	4.5	4.2	4.4
2	Upper Primary (6-8)	2.6	4.1	3.4
3	Secondary (9-10)	2.7	4.4	3.5

CHAPTER-5

DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the education system in India in number of ways, especially leading to the rise in the school dropout rate in India. COVID-19 pandemic has its impact on all the sections of the society but those belonging to the vulnerable section like the low income families, Scheduled tribes, Scheduled caste has been affected the most. The present study is targeted to study the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the school dropout rate among the tribal students of Jammu and Kashmir. Since education is one of the most important aspect of human life and a pandemic like COVID-19 which resulted in a nationwide lockdown and closure of schools has disturbed the traditional method of education in India and severely affecting the school going children.

The results of present study are discussed below.

5.1 Gross Enrolment Ratio

GRE is the total enrolment in a particular level of school education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the Population of the official age-group which corresponds to the given level of school education in a given school year.

Example: GER primary = $\text{Enrolment in class 1 to 5} \div \text{projected population in age group 6- 10 years}$.

The GER for the five categories i.e., Primary, Upper Primary, Elementary, Secondary and Higher Secondary was found to be increased from 2019-20 to 2020-2021. However, the GRE has shown a declining pattern with increase in level of school of education and this pattern

follows more strongly for 2020-2021 than 2019-2020. Furthermore, when we compare the GRE of boys with that of girls than for both the sessions i.e., 2019-20 and 2020-21 the GRE of Girls is far below than that of boys.

5.2 Net Enrolment Ratio

NER is define as the total number of pupils enrolled in a particular level of school education who are of the corresponding official age group expressed as a percentage of the population of the official age-group which corresponds to the given level of school education in a given school year.

Example: NER primary = Children of age 6-10 years enrolled in class 1 to 5 ÷ projected population in age group 6-10 years.

NER was evaluated for both boys and girls belonging to the category of Scheduled tribe on the basis of level of their school education. Based upon that they were divided into five categories i.e., Primary, Upper Primary, Elementary, Secondary and Higher Secondary. The NER has shown a rise from 2019-20 to 2020-2021 but when we look at the NER for subsequent increasing level of education there has been a fall in both the session (2019-20 and 2020-21). However, this falling pattern is more prominent for the pandemic session i.e., 2020-2021 than that of 2019-2020 and when we compare the NER of boys with that of girls than girls have significantly lower NER than boys for both the sessions.

5.3 Promotion Rate

Proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are enrolled in the next grade in the following school year.

Promotion rate for the session 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 for the three levels of school education i.e., Primary (1-5), Upper primary(6-8) and Secondary (9-10) has not shown much significant change and with the increase in level of school education the promotion rate has remained quite consistent with very slight changes. Similarly when we compare promotion rate among boys than that of girls not much change has been seen.

Repetition Rate

Proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are enrolled in the same grade in the following school year.

The repetition rate has been evaluated for both the genders i.e., boys and girls based on the level of school education which are- Primary (1-5), Upper primary(6-8) and Secondary (9-10) for the two consecutive sessions i.e., 2019-20 and 2020-21.

The repetition rate shows an increasing trend with the increase in level of school education for both the session. However, when we compare repetition rate of 2019-20 to the repetition rate of 2020-21 then the later has slightly lesser repetition rate. The repetition rate among boys and girls does not show much difference for all the three level of school education for both the session.

Dropout Rate

Proportion of pupil from a cohort enrolled in a given level at a given school year who are no longer enrolled at any grade in the following school year.

Dropout rate was evaluated for both boys and girls belonging to the category of Scheduled tribe on the basis of level of their school

education. Based upon that they were divided into five categories i.e., Primary, Upper Primary and Secondary.

The dropout rate has been increasing with the increasing school education level of both the consecutive sessions which are 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. When we compare the dropout rate of each level of school education for the two sessions than there has been a significant rise from 2019-20 to 2020-21. This change was maximum for primary level (1-5) than the other two levels.

CHAPTER-6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Education has both the intrinsic value of being an end in itself and the instrumental value of achieving other desired goals in life. The COVID-19 pandemic is certain to have an unprecedented impact on the global population, but marginalized and vulnerable groups in low-income countries (LICs) are predicted to carry the largest burden. Dr Ambedkar said, “Education is what makes a person fearless, teaches him the lesson of unity, makes him aware of his rights and inspires him to struggle for his rights.” He believed that education is a movement. If it does not fulfil its objectives, it is useless. Unemployment has been rising since the Covid-19 pandemic started in early 2020, which has pushed parents to prioritize survival over children’s education, especially fees in private schools. Challenges such as gaps in learning and access to quality education existed for children from marginalized communities even before the pandemic.

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the tribal school students was assessed in terms of GER, NER, Promotion rate, Retention rate, Dropout rate for the two successive sessions i.e., 2019-20 and 2020-21. The sample size was based upon the Unified District Information System For Education Plus (UDISE+) report 2019-20 and UDISE+ report 2020-2021 published by Ministry of Education, Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India.

All the five parameters GER, NER, Promotion rate, Retention rate, Dropout rate i.e., the year 2019-2020 from primary to higher secondary has shown a decreasing pattern for both the girls and the boys. The pattern was same for the year 2020-2021 also however, this declining pattern was more prominent for the session 2020-21 than 2019-20. This clearly suggest that COVID-19 has adversely affected the students of tribal community as education became inaccessible to them.

When we compare each of the five parameters from primary to higher secondary level for both the genders i.e., boys and girls than the study suggest that the COVID-19 has affected the girls more than the boys in terms of GER, NER and dropout rate. This shows that COVID-19 has further widen the gap of education availability between the girls and the boys.

The research further suggests that:

- The majority of the students prefer physical schooling over online classes primarily due to physical discomforts and hostile environments at home.
- In comparison, male students have better access to online education than female students. Male students are also more ambitious about higher education and employment than their female counterparts.
- Advancement and implementation of education development suggested by the National Policy of Education 1986 focuses on three basic levels, 'primary' 'secondary' and 'tertiary', because of the complex problem at the primary level it in most of tribal India, it has a bearing of low tribal participation precisely at the secondary and the tertiary level.
- There is little to no scope for doubt clarification. This is impacting the quality of education.
- As a result of the ignorance and social isolation of these communities, the majority of the students are unaware of future education prospects. This results in high dropout rates among such students, which is further triggered by the impact of this pandemic.
- Unemployment of parents and limited access to disposable income is affecting digital education.
- Infrastructural inadequacies like interrupted electricity and disrupted internet connectivity are directly affecting digital education.

- Ignorance and lack of awareness are widely prevalent among these communities with respect to government schemes and action plans.
- The government has not yet formulated an effective action plan to ensure the smooth conduct of digital education for the tribal students.
- The Parliament enacted the 'Right to Education Act, 2009' which was followed by the consequential litigation and precedent which made the state obligated for free and compulsory education which is guaranteed under Article 21A which will be enforced against the school defined under section 2(n) of the same Act. Despite all these education provisions the 'Right to Education' is not receiving appropriate aid or grants to meet the expenses from appropriate governments or local authorities from charging capital fees.
- 'Right to Education' cannot be implemented and made successful to the fullest when there is no partnership between government and the parents' role in grooming their wards, which can be only made possible through proper counselling and mentoring of parents.

To ensure the accessibility to digital education, thereby soliciting progress and development for the students in the tribal community, the following suggestions can be implemented:

- Government should initiate schemes and policy frameworks to provide digital accessories and internet connectivity to the tribal students. This can be implemented with the assistance of NGOs and civic groups by organizing fundraising campaigns.
- Emergency establishment of centralized digital classrooms in tribal areas with adequate digital peripherals like televisions, computers and internet connectivity.
- Recruiting and training volunteers for facilitating as Tribal Educational Assistants. These volunteers shall be responsible for ensuring access to digital education to tribal students, addressing their queries and concerns, coordinating activities at ground level and reporting back to the government.

- Periodic review meetings to be hosted between school authorities and parents/children through digital and physical mode. During these sessions, teachers should communicate about the student's academic performances to the parents and mentor and guide them towards improvement.
- Education sensitization and awareness campaigns for parents and students to analyze and understand the importance of education, government schemes and programs.
- Scientific review and revision on the improvement of education among tribal students, sketching the efficiency and effectiveness of government schemes and action plans, and introduction of new measures to curb illiteracy, dropout rates and inaccessibility to education.
- All state, government institutions, national and international agencies also societies should give top priorities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this act.