

# Analysis of Challenging Issues and Prospects of Tribal Education in District Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh, India

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**Abstract-** Education is one of the essential requirements for man-making and nation-building. It is necessary for the development of human resources. The standard of life mostly depends upon education level. Tribes are geographically and socially isolated and have their own distinctive culture. A Scheduled Tribe is a community living in a forest or well-demarcated area with its own culture, religion, language, and strong specific ethnic identity. Anuppur is one of the tribal-dominated districts of Madhya Pradesh, where 47.85% are tribal people of the district's population. The district's literacy rate is 67.88%, where 78.26% are male and 57.3% female. At the same time, the literacy rate of the tribes in the district is 58.54%, where 69.35% are male and 48.01% are female. According to the above segment, the literacy of the tribes is lower than the total literacy rate of the district. The enrolment of tribal students in an educational institute in 2016-17 is 65% in primary school, 61% in high school, 37% in higher education, and 32% in vocational and other institutes.

In the Anuppur district, the economic condition of the tribal people is low because they primarily engage in agriculture and allied activities. Therefore, they are not given proper support for educating children. Due to this, their generation gets trapped in this trap; they cannot move forward. The socioeconomic conditions of the tribal communities will be better after increasing the level of tribal education. The studies on tribal education suggest that the policymaker's approach paid little attention to culturally linked education. For the improvement of education level, it is essential to bring awareness among them, as well as there is a need to reach various schemes of the government in the right way. This paper aims to analyze the status of tribal education, the trend of enrollment ratio in educational institutes, challenging issues, and suggestions for improving tribal education in the study area.

**Keywords:** Tribes, Education, Enrolment Ratio, Challenging issues, and Suggestions

## INTRODUCTION:

Education is a determinant aspect of knowledge, representing man's third eye. This aphorism means that ability/knowledge opens man's inner eye, flooding him with spiritual and divine light and forming the provision for his journey through life. Through education, the development of every aspect of human life becomes possible. Knowledge protects an individual like a mother, inspires him to follow the path of good conduct as the father does, and gives the pleasure that one's wife provides. (<http://bednotes.blogspot.com/2013/08/>). Literacy is one of the most paramount indicators for indicating socioeconomic development trends in society. The spread of literacy is mainly associated with the changing patterns of modernization, civilization, urbanization, industrialization, skill, communication, commerce, and many more technological features. Indian ancient literature has described education as essential for enhancing human characteristics and society. From this perspective, Gurukul was famous for the learning and training of education in the ancient era.

According to Rigveda, "Education is that which makes man self-reliant and selfless." According to Upanishads, "Education is that whose end product is salvation." Seen from this perspective, the various views of great academicians and thinkers deserve mention. Kautilya explains, "Education means training for the country and love for the nation." Gandhi's, "By education, I mean all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind, and spirit." Zakir Hussain "Education is the work of the whole life. It begins from the time of birth and continues till the last moment of death." (Dash, Nikunja Ranjan, 2015). Nelson Mandela emphasized education's importance and said, "Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world." Education is a stairway to the growth and development of humankind. Education shapes society into a better world. It is essential to understand the importance of education in today's society. (<https://sarrauteducacion.com/2022/02/23/what-is-the-importance-of-education-in-the-modern-world/>).

Education is clearly recognized as one of the significant components of policies aimed at solving issues of paramount importance. Improving poverty, and public health, reducing infant mortality, protecting the environment, strengthening human rights, developing international relations, and profit cannot be achieved without educational policies (UNESCO, 2010). On the other hand, illiteracy takes away from man's dignity, perpetuates ignorance, poverty and mental isolation, deters peaceful and friendly international relations and hampers social advancement, economic growth and political maturity (Sawant and Athawale, 1994). Literacy plays an important role in determining the level of society not only from an economic point of view but also as a good sign

for a healthy environment (Coulombe et al., 2004). In general, higher literacy is a good indicator of a sound economy as well as a quality of life (Sundaram, 1985). Lower literacy is a hurdle not only for the economy but also for society (Mulimani and Pujar, 2015). Literacy denotes the most basic and essential education for eradicating poverty and mental isolation, cultivating peaceful and friendly international relations, and permitting free play of demographic processes (Chandna & Sidhu, 1980). UNESCO defines literacy as the “ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute and write material associated with varying contracts”. According to the census enumeration, ‘a person, who can read and write with understanding in any language, is considered to be ‘literate’ (Joshi, 1999; Hassan, 2005; Dutta and Sivaramakrishnan, 2013). Albert Einstein also defined “Education as not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think” (Naik, K. S. Divakara, 2017). Education may also be remembered that education is not an intangible term. It leads to the formation of cultural, economic, personal, intellectual, scientific, social, and spiritual advancement. To look at it another way that education is the process of developing the mind for the betterment of the individual and society. Education is a procedure of learning or acquiring knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs, and habits. There are numerous steps involved in obtaining and imparting education in the entire process. Teaching, training, conversation, research, storytelling, and other interactive activities are all included in education.

The current generation requires education to improve their employment prospects and become better citizens. People must recognize the importance of literacy and education for society to secure a higher-paying job through schooling. Modern civilization has difficulties, and the educated sector can tackle many of these concerns by honing problem-solving skills. Only when we observe economic prosperity does the significance and importance of education in society become obvious. Academicians and educated personnel collaborate to achieve economic objectives. Their accomplishments have a positive impact on the lives of people from underprivileged communities. The educational level of a country's population has a significant effect on its economic prosperity. “Education means a lot in everyone's life as it assists in learning, knowledge, and skill, which absolutely changes the mind, the personality and helps achieve encouraging attitudes” (Chakraborty, P. 2019). Education is one of the essential keys to any society's social and economic development. Education creates the power to walk, think, and understand the right path, making them self-reliant in life. Education is an essential medium for the upliftment of the economic and social conditions of the tribals. Education is an input for the economic development of the tribals as well as the inner strength that helps them face various challenges in life. Education is essential for the overall development of the tribal communities, especially in helping build trust among the tribes for contact and relations with outsiders. The government is running various schemes for the overall development of tribals, but their effect is negligible due to their not being appropriately implemented. Due to a lack of education, they cannot participate in the development process, as they are unaware of the various schemes and policies made for upliftment. Therefore, the role of the government in the direction of improving the educational status of the tribals is significant. It is well known that the tribals' educational background is very low compared to the rest of the population. Therefore, it is essential to improve their education to improve their economic and social conditions. Only then can they come into the mainstream of society. “Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is an input not only for the economic development of tribes but also for the inner strength of the tribal communities, which helps them meet the new challenges of life. It is an activity or a series of activities, or a process that may either improve the immediate living conditions or increase the potential for future living. It is the single most important means individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being” (Sahu, K. K., 2014).

“Education is the sole means to establish peace and unity globally, and education is the key to tribal development. Education is one of the means of development that transfers society from backward to developed. The nation's culture and socioeconomic progress are based on citizens' educational status” (Gangele, A., 2019). Scheduled Tribes are scattered in different parts of India and represent a heterogeneous group. The nature of heterogonous is observed in language, cultural and traditional practices, socioeconomic status, livelihood and settlement pattern. Mostly they are suffering from various problems, i.e., exploitation, forced migration and displacement due to mining and industrialization and poverty is the main problem. The literacy rate of tribal women is very low and there is still a great extent of the gap between males and females of Scheduled Tribes in India. Unawareness of several government programs, policies, schemes, etc and participation among them are the main reasons for the inferior level of education as well as literacy. The medium of instruction in educational institutes is an obstacle to the progression of the education of tribal children in rural areas in India (Basha, 2018).

### Review of Literature

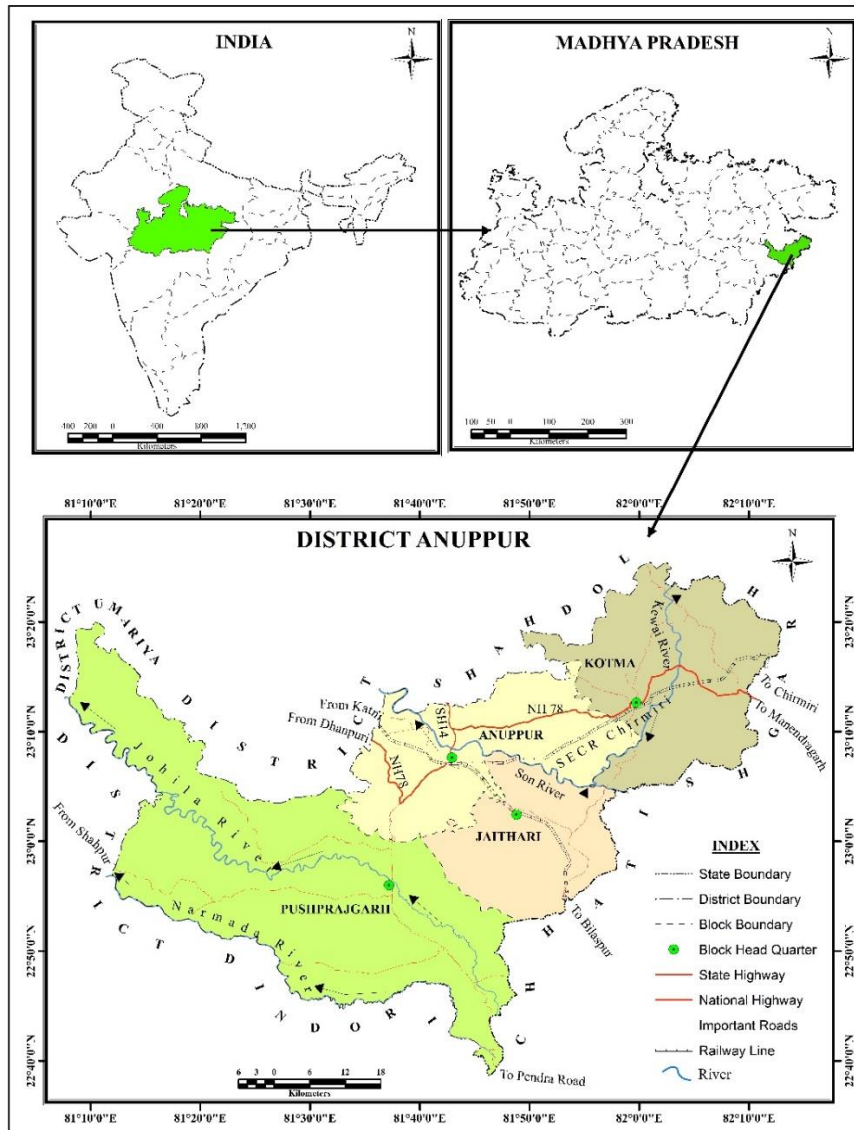
There are many works done in the field of tribal education. Sahu, K. K. (2014) studied “challenging issues of tribal education in India”. In the study, she analyses the status of tribal education with literacy rate, gross enrolment ratio, dropout rates, and gender parity index in India. In the study, she found that the literacy rate of the tribal population is low, and the rate of dropout of the children decreased. Srinivas and Devoji (2015) study the health and educational status of tribal women in the Telangana state. They found the various problems of tribal women's and suggested different planning. Brahmanandam T. and Babu T.B. (2016) studied “educational status among the scheduled tribes: issues and challenges”. He believes that education is a critical tool for improving the economic and social conditions of society's underprivileged groups. Upmanyu (2016) observed the major challenging problems of tribal education. Daripa, S.K. (2017) Studied “Tribal Education in India: Government Initiative and Challenges”. In the study, he analyses the tribal education status and focuses on government initiatives to promote education among tribals and the challenges faced by the tribals to achieve education. Ramachandran and Deepan (2017) observed the educational status of scheduled tribes in India. They focus on a job-oriented education system.

### Study Area Profile

District Anuppur was formed on 15 August 2003 by separating it from District Shahdol. District Anuppur is surrounded by Shahdol district in the north, Umariya district in the west, Dindori district in the south-west, Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi and Manendragarh

districts of Chhattisgarh state in the south and east. District Anuppur is situated between 22° 70' to 23° 25' North Latitude and 81°10' to 82° 10' East Longitude, and its total geographical area is 3,74,671 hectares (figure 1). The district of Anuppur is divided into four blocks: Anuppur, Jaithari, Kotma, and Pushprajgarh. District Anuppur is famous for its natural beauty, ancient historical heritage, and tourist places, from where the three perennial Narmada, Son, and Johila rivers originated. In the District of Anuppur, 7,49,237 people lived in 2011, with a 47.85% tribal population.

**Figure 1: Location Map of District Anuppur**



*Source: Toposheet of District Anuppur, 2013*

### Research Objective

The main objective of the research is

- To examine the status and disparity of tribal education.
- To find out about Challenging issues of Tribal education and suggest the planning for improving tribal education.

### Data Base and Methodology

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through observation and group discussion with tribal people regarding challenging issues of tribal education in the study area. The secondary data is collected from the District Census Handbook and District Statistical Yearbook of the District Anuppur District. I have used statistical techniques for data analysis where tables and graphs have been created. Arc GIS software (version 10.8) is used for map-making.

Sopher's Disparity Index has been used to calculate the disparity of total, gender and tribal literacy. The Sopher's Disparity Index technique helps measure the relative disparity between two variables (male and female or total and tribal populations). The value of the Disparity Index is zero in the case of perfect equality. Thus, the greater the value of the Disparity Index, the higher the extent of disparity and the lower the value, the lower the disparity (Sopher, 1974).

$$DIS = \log(X2/X1) + \log(100-X1)/(100-X2)$$

Where DIS= Sopher's Disparity Index,

X1= Value of deprived group(female),

X2= Value of dominant group(male), and

$X2 \geq X1$

### Spatial Distribution of Tribal Population

**Table 1: Population Distribution of District Anuppur, M.P. (2011)**

Blocks	Population										
	Total	Rural	%	Urban	%	Tribal Population					
						Total	(%)	Rural	(%)	Urban	(%)
<b>Kotma</b>	1,20,533	58,147	48.3	62,386	51.7	33,992	28.20	23,186	68.2	10,806	31.80
<b>Anuppur</b>	3,05,877	1,79,834	58.8	126,043	41.2	103,377	33.80	78,452	75.9	24,925	24.10
<b>Jaithari</b>	92,822	84,426	90.9	8,396	9.1	44,433	47.87	42,866	96.5	1,567	3.50
<b>Pushprajgarh</b>	2,30,005	2,21,589	96.4	8,416	3.6	1,76,741	76.84	173,123	97.9	3,618	2.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,49,237</b>	<b>5,43,996</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>2,05,241</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>3,58,543</b>	<b>47.85</b>	<b>3,17,627</b>	<b>88.6</b>	<b>40,916</b>	<b>11.40</b>

Source: District Census Handbook, Anuppur, 2011

The total population (Table no. 1) of the district Anuppur is 7,49,237, where 72.6% live in rural areas and 27.4% in urban areas. In the district of Anuppur, 3,58,543 are tribal populations (47.85% of the total population), where 76.84% are in Pushprajgarh block, and 47.87% in Jaithari, 33.8% in Anuppur block, and 28.2% people's lives in the rural areas in Kotma block respectively. Maximum tribal people live in rural areas in the district because their dependencies are mainly based on primary economic activities. 88.6% tribal population lives in the rural area, where 97.9% are in Pushprajgarh block, 96.5% in Jaithari block, 75.9% in Anuppur block, and 68.2% in Kotma block. Only 11.4% tribal population lives in the urban areas, where the highest is in the Kotma block (31.8%), and the lowest is in the Pushprajgarh block (2.1%). The highest tribal population living in the rural areas in the Pushprajgarh block (76.84%) and the lowest in the Kotma block (28.2%).

### Literacy Level of Tribal Population

Table 2 and figure 2 present the literacy of district Anuppur at the block level according to the 2011 census. The total literacy of the district Anuppur is 67.88%, where 78.26% are male and 57.3% are female. The highest literacy rate is in the Kotma block (74.06%) and the lowest in the Pushprajgarh block (60.9%).

**Table 2: Literacy of District Anuppur, M.P. 2011 (in %)**

Blocks	Literate Population (%)					
	Total	Total		Tribal Population		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Kotma</b>	74.06	83.77	64.05	59.66	71.15	48.81
<b>Anuppur</b>	71.91	82.02	61.41	59.68	70.50	49.29
<b>Jaithari</b>	63.37	73.85	52.89	55.93	66.44	45.73
<b>Pushprajgarh</b>	60.9	71.8	50.02	59.33	70.19	48.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>67.88</b>	<b>78.26</b>	<b>57.3</b>	<b>58.54</b>	<b>69.35</b>	<b>48.01</b>

Source: District Census Handbook, Anuppur, 2011

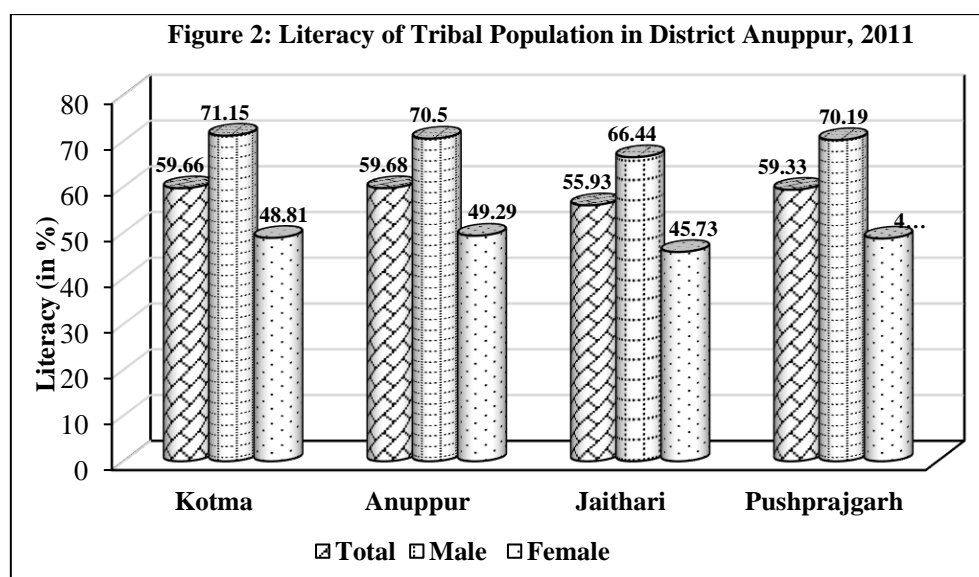


Table 2 also presents the literate population of tribes. In the study area, 58.54% tribal population is literate, of which 69.35% are male and 48.01% are female. If we see the literacy of the tribal population at block level 59.66% in Kotma block (71.15% male and 48.81% female), 59.68% in Anuppur block (70.5% male and 49.29% female), 55.93% in Jaithari block (66.44% male and 45.73% female), 59.33% in Pushprajgarh block (70.19% male and 48.67% female). The table evidently indicates that the literacy of the tribal population is low compared to the total literacy of district Anuppur. The main reason behind this is that they are not much aware of education. They do not understand the importance of education. Their economic condition is also so weak that instead of sending children to school, they use them for work.

Table 3 shows the villages' distribution by literacy rate for the tribal population in the district Anuppur. The total literacy of the tribal people in the district is 58.54%. It is known from this table that there are 238 villages where the literacy rate is 51-60%, and they occupy 45.36% of the total tribal population. Similarly, the literacy rate of 176 villages is 61-70%, where 30.99% of the total tribal population is there, 87 villages have 41-50% literacy, 41 villages have 71-80% literacy, and only 7 villages have the highest literacy rate 81-90%, where only 1.56% of the total tribal population are lives. Thus, the maximum number of villages comes under 51-70% literacy rate, where the tribal population is also highest.

**Table 3: Distribution of Villages by Literacy Rate Range for Tribal Population, 2011**

Literacy Rate (in %)	0	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100	Total
No. of villages	1	0	1	0	8	87	238	176	41	7	0	559
Population Distribution (in %)	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.90	14.77	45.36	30.99	6.41	1.56	0.00	100

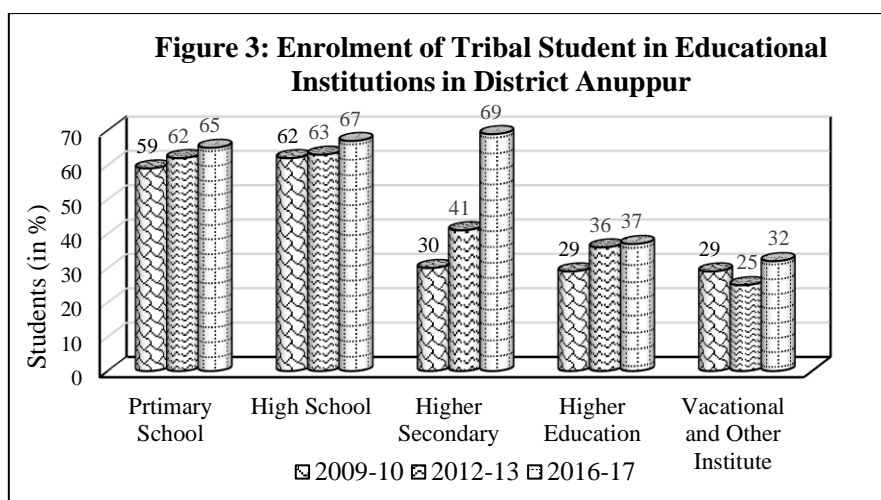
Source: District Census Handbook, Anuppur, 2011

Table 4 and figure 3 present the student's enrolment in educational institutions from 2009-10 to 2016-17 in the district of Anuppur. In 2009-10, 59% of tribal students enrolled in primary school, which increased to 62% in 2012-13 and 65% in 2016-17. Thus, the enrolment of tribal students in primary schools is increasing. Tribal students in high school were 62% in 2009-10, which has risen to 67% in 2016-17. In 2009-10, 30% of tribal students were enrolled in higher secondary school, which increased to 69% in 2016-17. In higher education, the enrolment ratio of the tribal population is insufficient. In 2009-10 the total enrolment ratio in higher education was only 29%, which is slightly increasing and goes to 36% of the total population in the district. Similarly, in vocational and other institutes, it was 29% in 2009-10, which increased to 32% in 2016-17. Thus, it is known from this table that the enrolment of tribal students in an educational institute is growing slightly, indicating a favorable but unsatisfactory situation. The reason for increasing the enrolment of Tribal students is the various schemes being run by the government, but it is not a good status in respect of tribal education.

**Table 4: Enrolment of Students in Educational Institutions in District Anuppur**

Year	Primary School			High School			Higher Secondary School			Higher Education			Vocational and Other Institutes		
	Total	ST	% of ST from total	Total	ST	% of ST from total	Total	ST	% of ST from total	Total	ST	% of ST from total	Total	ST	% of ST from total
2009-10	78,116	45,740	59	36,861	22,975	62	37,819	11,363	30	3,117	915	29	108	31	29
2012-13	64,592	40,222	62	39,366	24,816	63	37,572	15,532	41	3,124	1,140	36	167	42	25
2016-17	52,719	34,030	65	35,495	23,624	67	23,116	15,937	69	3,597	1,339	37	488	156	32

Source: District Statistical Year Book, 2009-10, 2012-13, and 2016-17.



### Disparity Index of Tribal Education

After independence, the government has implemented various programs and policies in different five-year plans to reduce the disparity between tribal education and other populations. Not only initiated steps adopted by the government but also a tribal

ministry is working for the welfare and enhancement of education of the tribal community. Even after, the education of the tribal community is comparatively low in comparison to other populations in the district. In the district of Anuppur, the disparity of tribal education is more compared to the total population. According to table 5, from 2001 to 2011, the tribal education disparity index (Sopher Index) decreased, and the total population's male and female education disparity index (Sopher Index) was also reduced. The education disparity index of tribal, tribal males and females is slightly declining, but it is not in sufficient trend to reduce the disparity between tribal and other communities in the district.

**Table 5: Disparity Index between Total and Tribal Literacy**

Years	Total X <sub>2</sub>	Tribal X <sub>1</sub>	Sopher Index	Total Literacy Rate		Sopher Index	Tribal Literacy Rate		Sopher Index
				Male X <sub>2</sub>	Female X <sub>1</sub>		Male X <sub>2</sub>	Female X <sub>1</sub>	
2001	60.2	23.78	0.4507	73.8	46.1	0.2704	29.87	16.71	0.2796
2011	69.1	65.25	0.0748	80.1	57.9	0.2226	75.35	55.08	0.2031

### Challenging Issues of Tribal Education

The approach adopted by the government for the educational development of the tribal communities has failed to adequately address the specific disadvantages that characterize the tribal population. For example, setting up schools as per the population and distance criteria framed by the government has not benefited tribal places due to their sparse population and sporadic residential pattern. In addition, the complex realities and systems of tribal life have been neglected in formulating policies and programs for tribal education. Apart from this, there is a lack of basic facilities in the schools of tribal areas, and middle and higher secondary school is far away, due to which the interest of children is less. The ratio of students and teachers is incorrect, and many educational institutions run with only one or two teachers; consequentially, the education process is not systematic and proper. Children are not interested in the study if there are no appropriate school runs.

The primary reason for the lack of education among the tribals is poor economic conditions and poverty. The main occupation of the tribals is agriculture, which is based on traditional methods, so productivity remains low. Children also contribute directly or indirectly to increasing the family's income. Such as participating in the family's agricultural work and occupation and household tasks (such as cattle grazing, collecting forest produce, plowing-sowing, fuel and fodder collection, etc.). Because of this, they are unable to go to school.

Even though elementary education is considered free and children are given additional incentives, it is not accessible in practice for several reasons. First, incentive schemes do not have full coverage in remote areas, thereby limiting their value at the community level. Second, the benefits of many schemes do not reach the beneficiaries. Third, even though incentives such as slates, cycles, and uniforms are given, they are of poor quality and do not arrive on time. Fourth, the distribution of books is appropriate for the students. Fifth, the lack of proper operation of mid-day meals (never getting and lack of nutritious food, etc.) thus defeats the whole purpose of elementary education. Apart from this, expenses keep coming in stationery, copy, clothes, transportation, etc., which are very difficult to bear during studies for tribals. Thus, even the tiny amount of personal expenditure involved in the purchase has severely burdened the family, as their financial condition is frail. The tribals who are somehow able to make their living are deprived of education due to this reason. Language is one of the most affecting reasons for the downward educational status among tribal people. Apart from this, social, economic, political, and physical factors are also involved in the laydown educational system of the tribal population.

### Conclusion and Suggested Planning

There is a need to make further improvements in this direction, and there is a strong need to run the schemes of the government effectively. Also, there is a need to keep monitoring from time to time. "The quality can be achieved through drastic changes in the learning methods and techniques, making classroom activities more experimental and enjoyable for the children, improved teacher training, and upgrading the school's infrastructure. The studies on tribal education suggest that the policymaker's approach paid little attention to culturally linked education. This has led to dropouts and directly impacted their overall educational status" (Ramachandran and Deepan, 2017).

In the district, Anuppur's total of 47.85% is the tribal population, where the literacy rate of the tribal population is 58.54% which is lower than the district literacy rate (67.88%). Most villages have a 51 to 71% literacy rate, and none have more than a 90% literacy rate. The enrolments of tribal students in different educational institutes are increasing in not sufficiently year to year. Education is an essential aspect of the socioeconomic improvement of any society. For the development of the tribal community, it is necessary to make them aware of education and educate them. Due to the economic weakness of the tribal community, they are not able to educate their children, and this cycle continues in this way. There is a need to adopt different dimensions to educate them. For example, there should be the proper operation of the mid-day meal run by the government so that many students can come to school. Most of the students do not have the facility to study at home at night; for this night school should be run, established adult education centers, etc. In addition, the government should appoint tribal members as teachers in tribal-dominated schools. This will surely bring confidence and motivate the tribal students to enroll and continue in the school. Apart from this, more residential schools should be open in tribal-dominated areas, and government rules should be relaxed so that more and more children can enter the school system. Motivating and providing them with facilities for higher education and vocational courses is necessary. Also, there should be no discriminatory behavior in the institutions. Firstly, education should be started in local languages and after developing an understanding of students, it may be changed to global languages. Besides, priority should be given to sector-wise plans and their implementation.

The lack of adequate schools and competent teachers to meet the goals of the Right to Education Act 2009 is another hurdle in achieving the purpose of education in tribal areas. To overcome the current shortage of competent teachers in tribal areas, special efforts should be made to train teachers so that more qualified teachers can join the education system. Including local culture, folklore, music, and history in the curriculum will boost self-confidence in tribal children, thereby attracting them to the school.

Storytelling, theatre, painting, music, and dance performances should be encouraged in schools, apart from the curriculum. Local sports like archery, kabaddi, wrestling, football, and other popular sports should also be introduced in schools to attract children. There should be adequate cultural research and educational centers in the tribal areas to understand better and promote tribal cultures. There is an evident lack of quality education in secondary and higher secondary schools in tribal areas. Governments must set up full residential schools like Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya up to class 12 at the block level to enhance of education ratio so that the all-round development of the students can be done. This will definitely increase the education level of the tribal society and improve the socioeconomic condition.

The government is running various schemes to improve the socioeconomic condition of the tribal people. But the benefits of these schemes are denied. These people cannot get information about the schemes, give bribes to take advantage of the schemes they are unable, etc. This is because other people get the benefits of the schemes instead of not getting them. Therefore, the government must conduct these schemes properly and keep monitoring them to benefit the people of the lower strata of society. Only then will their socioeconomic and educational development take place. "Now the time has come to take a drastic decision and effective plan to reduce the obstacles in pursuance of education by tribal children. Apart from government initiatives, if various NGOs and local media play an important role in creating awareness among the tribals, only then can they bask in the auroral radiance of economic development" (Daripa, S.K. 2017).

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