



## **ATTITUDE OF MUSLIM PEOPLE WITH SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND LOCATIONAL VARIANCE TOWARDS THEIR GIRLS' EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL**

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### **Abstract:**

The study focuses on the attitude of parents from tribal communities in West Bengal towards their daughters' higher education, in terms of levels of education and socioeconomic status. The level of education is low among scheduled tribes of India due to a lack of education awareness. The aim of this study is to examine the attitude of tribal parents towards the higher education of their daughters in relation to levels of education. The study is based on quantitative data. The primary data was acquired from 400 parents, through a random sampling technique, from specific tribal areas in West Bengal. India is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country. People belonging to many religions, such as Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Christianity live in the country. This largest minority community has been converted to the lowest socio-economic stratum in post dependent India. They have lagged behind the Schedule Castes in many walks of life. They are educationally most backward, economically poor and politically a powerless community of the country in general and of West Bengal in particular.

**Key Words:** Education, Muslim, Socio-Economic Development, West Bengal, Awareness, Tribal

### **Introduction:**

Participation in a Pluralistic Society. In addition to helping students who are marginalized in education, anti-bias education is necessary for all students to learn the skills they need to participate in today's pluralistic society. Young children learn implicit biases, so they must learn through formal education how to recognize and mitigate the harm of biases. Anti-bias education teaches students to recognize their privileges, especially those who are less affected by intersections of bias. Pratto and Stewart (2012) said, "Members of powerful groups-do not realize that they are privileged because they don't have the social-comparison information to recognize the discrimination, ... poverty, ... (and) prejudice they don't experience, but which" people affected by biases do experience. Socioeconomic status (SES) is probably the most widely used contextual variable in education research. Increasingly, researchers examine educational processes, including academic achievement, in relation to socioeconomic background carried out the first meta-analytic study that reviewed the literature on this subject by focusing on studies published before 1980 examining the relation between SES and academic achievement and showed that the relation varies significantly with a number of factors such as the types of SES and academic achievement measures. The second factor is societal change in the United States, specifically in parental education and family structure. During the 1990s, parental education changed dramatically in a favorable direction: Children in 2000 were living with better educated parents than children in 1980. Likewise, reductions in family size were also dramatic; only about 48% of 15-to18-year-old children lived in families with at most one sibling in 1970, as compared with 73% in 1990.

### **Literature Review:**

Kumaravel Udayakumar et.al (2022) Socio-economic characteristics play an important role in students' academic performance. The socioeconomic factor of an individual is usually measured by education, employment-status and the income of his/her parents, which determine an individual's or a group's standard of living. The earlier studies on this subject investigated the socio-economic factor that impacted students' academic performance at the higher secondary school level of education. The present study examines the impact of socio-economic factors on the academic performance of higher secondary school students. The sample for this study was gathered from 764 higher secondary school students in Salem District of Tamil Nadu, in India. The present study has found that the educational levels of the mothers and their occupation factors considerably impact their children's academic performance. The influence of Father's education and employment status is on a moderate level. The income of the family has negatively impacted the students' academic performance at 1% level significant. However, the types of schools and mediums of education also have a strong bearing on the students' academic performance at the higher secondary level. This study concludes that there is a direct relationship between socio-economic factors and the academic performance of higher secondary school students.

Mohd Tariq Mi et.al (2020) "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved". – B R Ambedkar. Education is the right of every individual regardless of religion, caste and region. Female education plays an important role in all-round improvement and progress in the society. If women are educated whole family as well as society is educated. Without women education, a nation can't progress. Present study analysed thoroughly the literature review of both western and in Indian context and found that the educational status of Muslim female at higher level of education is very low in percentage among all other Indian communities. So, by keeping this in mind present study highlighted various factors that are responsible for low educational status of Muslim females at higher level of education and also provide some recommendation and suggestions.

Imran Maqbool Khan (2019) Muslim consumer segment has become the Fourth 'Billion' consumer segment after three biggest consumer groups in China, India, and women overall. Muslim consumer segment is increasing faster than the other consumer segments. Similarly, Muslim tourists are growing rapidly all around the world. The growing number of Muslim consumers worldwide makes Muslim consumers one of the most interesting topics in the tourism studies. Tourism phenomenon is significantly associated with socio-cultural extents of the society. However, within Muslim consumer segment mostly studies are done on Men; whereas Muslim women are equally playing an important role in the family decision-making, particularly in holiday decision-making. By understanding the needs of the Muslim women tourists, tourism marketers can effectively and efficiently interact with Muslim women tourists, respond to their questions, and communicate the right message. Future research can replicate this research to explore the empowerment of Muslim women living in other parts of the world. Future studies can also explore the influence of religion in the empowerment of Muslim women.

Timur Kuran (2018) This essay critically evaluates the analytic literature concerned with causal connections between Islam and economic performance. It focuses on works since 1997, when this literature was last surveyed. Among the findings are the following: Ramadan fasting by pregnant women harms prenatal development; Islamic charities mainly benefit the middle class; Islam affects educational outcomes less through Islamic schooling than through structural factors that handicap learning as a whole; Islamic finance hardly affects Muslim financial behavior; and low generalized trust depresses Muslim trade. The last feature reflects the Muslim world's delay in transitioning from personal to impersonal exchange. The delay resulted from the persistent simplicity of the private enterprises formed under Islamic law. Weak property rights reinforced the private sector's stagnation by driving capital out of commerce and into rigid waqfs. Waqfs limited economic development through their inflexibility and democratization by restraining the development of civil society. Parts of the Muslim world conquered by Arab armies are especially undemocratic, which suggests that early Islamic institutions, including slave-based armies, were particularly critical to the persistence of authoritarian patterns of governance. States have contributed themselves to the persistence of authoritarianism by treating Islam as an instrument of governance. As the world started to industrialize, non-Muslim subjects of Muslim-governed states pulled ahead of their Muslim neighbors by exercising the choice of law they enjoyed under Islamic law in favor of a Western legal system.

Danielle N. Lussier et.al (2016) Gender-based inequality is often regarded as a salient characteristic of Muslim societies, yet few works have systematically compared the status of women in Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Fish (2011) finds a gender gap in structural indicators of inequality in Muslim-majority countries that cannot be explained by levels of economic development, raising questions about whether attitudes favoring inequality are more prominent among Muslims. We investigate the impact of structural-situational factors and religious identification on attitudes toward gender-based inequality using hierarchical-level models. We find that: (1) Muslim self-identification and the size of a country's Muslim population predict attitudes supportive of inequality; (2) an individual's gender has a stronger effect on attitudes than does religious identification; and (3) measures of structural inequality also shape attitudes. The effects of these variables remain strong when we consider other contextual elements, such as gross domestic product per capita, education, age, location in the Middle East, and fuels dependence.

#### **Attitudes of Tribal Parents towards Higher Education of Girls in West Bengal:**

There is socio-economic discrimination among the STs of West Bengal from the perspective of gender biases in issues of health and education. In the Nadia district of West Bengal, tribal parents were more concerned about the higher education of their children because they believed that this would improve their economic status. Female literacy rate in tribals is much low as tribals are not interested to send their female girl child to higher educational institutions. As per census report 2011 in West Bengal, the literacy rate among female tribal communities 57.97% is found to be far below the male literacy of the state 77.08% The differences between males and females in the perspective of educational status may be due to a number of factors, for example, females face the problem of discrimination due to a lack of social awareness, prejudice, and cultural stereotypes regarding the higher education of girls in West Bengal. The positive attitude of STs towards the higher education of girls is due to an altered perception of tribal parents; they realized that their SES can be improved by education.

**Methodology:**

The research is based on quantitative primary data which was collected through field visits conducted in certain areas of West Bengal. The primary data was acquired from 400 tribal parents through a random sampling technique. Additionally, the paper is also focused on the analysis of secondary data from census 2011 which examines the demographic profile STs in India. Both the primary and secondary data give a better interpretation of the SES of tribal communities in West Bengal.

**Analytical Statistical Tools Used to Interpret the Primary Data:**

Both the primary and secondary data were analyzed by statistical tools. The primary data was analyzed using descriptive statistics regarding the economic and social development of STs in the sample areas of West Bengal. The objectives of the paper are justified by an independent t-test and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) model.

**Analytical Statistical Tools Used to Interpret the Secondary Data:**

The secondary data regarding the SES of STs was analyzed using descriptive statistics and interpreted through graphs and figures. The methodological framework of this paper provides an approach to examine the attitudes of tribal parents towards the higher education of girls accordingly to their SES and education levels. There are some limitations to this research which include a small sample population and the focus on a quantitative data collection technique.

**Results:**

**Demographic Profile of Sts in India:**

**Trends of ST Populations:**

The ST population expanded from 2015 to 2020, and the highest proportion of ST populations are located in rural areas of India (Table 1).

Table 1: St Population In India: Census 2015 to Census 2020

Census	The Population of STs/ Million			Growth Rate		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
2015	30.1	29.3	0.77			
2016	38.0	36.7	1.2	26.2	25.1	67.6
2017	51.6	48.4	3.2	35.8	31.9	147.3
2018	67.7	62.7	5.0	31.2	29.6	56.4
2019	84.3	77.3	6.9	24.5	23.2	39.5
2020	104.2	93.8	10.4	23.7	21.3	49.7

**Trends of ST Proportions:**

The proportion of STs in India, in both rural and urban areas, increased between 2015 and 2020 (Table 2).

Table 2: The St Proportion In India: Census 2015 to Census 2020

Census Year	Percentage of ST in the Total Population of India		
	Total	Rural India	Urban India
2015	7.0	8.0	1.0
2016	7.0	8.4	1.3
2017	7.6	9.2	2.0
2018	8.0	10.0	2.4
2019	8.2	10.5	2.5
2020	8.6	11.4	2.9

**Female Literacy:**

Abject illiteracy for various reasons among Muslim women lies at the root of the endemic backwardness of the community. In the state, the literacy level of women is about 51.61% which is 26 percentage points less than male literacy. This indicates that there is a large gap between male and female in terms of literacy. The literacy rate of male and female of various religious communities varies from one religion to another and from one district to another. In the following table 3.4 sex wise literacy of Muslim and Hindu is presented. The following table shows that at state level, literacy rate of Muslim women is 49.75% and the male literacy is 64.61% which results in 14.86 percentage point difference between both the sexes. Among Hindu female literacy rate is about 63.09% against the male literacy rate of 81.12% and it creates a gap of 18.09 percentage points. From this it is clear that the gap is less among Muslim community as compare to Hindus in terms of literacy rate.

Table 3: District Wise Difference in Literacy Rate by Sex and Religion

Districts/State	Religion	Male	Female	Difference
<b>WB</b>	<b>Muslims</b>	<b>64.61</b>	<b>49.75</b>	<b>-14.86</b>
	<b>Hindus</b>	<b>81.12</b>	<b>63.09</b>	<b>18.09</b>
Darjeeling	Muslims	60.86	37.92	+22.92
	Hindus	80.78	63.67	17.11
Jalpaiguri	Muslims	64.98	45.01	-19.97
	Hindus	74.14	53.50	20.64
Koch Bihar	Muslims	64.59	47.11	-17.87
	Hindus	79.30	58.79	20.51
Uttar Dinajpur	Muslims	45.98	25.50	-20.48
	Hindus	68.76	45.77	22.99
Dakshin Dinajpur	Muslims	72.81	61.33	-11.48
	Hindus	72.42	52.34	20.08
Malda	Muslims	51.56	38.68	-12.88
	Hindus	65.80	44.00	21.80
Murshidabad	Muslims	54.21	42.76	-11.45
	Hindus	71.36	55.72	15.64
Birbhum	Muslims	68.28	50.97	-17.31
	Hindus	72.24	51.88	20.36
Bardhaman	Muslims	75.54	61.39	-14.15
	Hindus	79.43	60.97	18.46
Nadia	Muslims	54.42	44.03	-10.39
	Hindus	78.13	64.46	13.67
North 24 Parganas	Muslims	71.41	58.13	+13.28
	Hindus	87.62	75.71	11.91

Hugli	Muslims	79.43	67.31	-12.12
	Hindus	83.29	67.51	15.78
Bankura	Muslims	71.81	46.96	-24.85
	Hindus	77.53	50.88	26.65
Puruliya	Muslims	71.32	34.14	=37.18
	Hindus	74.69	37.56	37.13
Mednipur	Muslims	75.05	54.36	=20.69
	Hindus	86.51	66.41	20.10
Haora	Muslims	74.13	60.78	=13.35
	Hindus	85.90	72.82	13.08
Kolkata	Muslims	71.25	63.61	+7.64
	Hindus	86.97	80.15	6.82
South 24 Parganas	Muslims	68.84	50.27	-18.57
	Hindus	83.90	62.94	20.96

This gender gap of both the community varies from one district to another district. Out of 18 districts there are 12 districts in which Muslim gender gap is less than Hindus in the state. These districts are Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Nadia, Hugh, Bankura, and South 24 Parganas. While there are three districts in which the gap between Muslim male and female literacy is more than the Hindus and these districts are Darjeeling, North 24 Parganas and Kolkata. While there are three districts having equal literacy rate among both sexes and between both Muslims and Hindus and these districts are Purulia, Mednipur and Haora. This indicate that the perception among the general public that Muslim women were deprived of education by the male member of the family and by religious obligations. But what we analyze above does not support the above perception. This also supports the above finding that the gap in literacy level between males and females is lowest among Muslims than among the Hindus where the gap is significant.

**Difference in Attitude of Tribal Parents towards the Higher Education of Girls in Relation to their Own Level of Education:**

Table 4 lists the descriptive qualities of statistics comprising sample mean, standard deviation, and description of categorized independent variables (Illiterate, up to secondary and senior secondary level)

Table 4: Descriptive Qualities of Statistics Used to Determine the Attitude of Tribal Parents Based on their Own Education Levels

**Descriptive:**

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Illiterate	131	158.80	29.07	2.54	153.77	163.82	73.00	215.00
Up to Secondary	179	170.92	25.16	1.88	167.21	174.63	112.00	221.00
Senior Secondary Level	90	162.02	18.29	1.92	158.18	165.85	126.00	219.00
Total	400	164.95	25.74	1.28	162.42	167.48	73.00	221.00

An ANOVA analysis indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean 6059.623 in the group and within the group 635.866 (Table 4), therefore it is concluded that there are significant differences in the mean attitude of tribal parents towards the higher education of girls in relation to their own level of education.

Table 5: Statistical Analysis of the Mean Attitude of Tribal Parents towards Higher Education in Girls in Relation to their Own Education Levels

ANOVA					
Attitude					
	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance Value
Between Groups	12119.246	2	6059.623	9.530	0.05
Within Groups	252438.851	397	635.866		
Total	264558.098	399			

F= Calculated Anova value

The difference in the attitude score of tribal parents from rural and urban areas towards the higher education of girls was found to be statistically significant ( $p = 0.05$ ) (Table 6).

**Table 6: The Independent t-Test Calculation**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	109.91	.000	5.92	398.0	.000	15.11	2.55	10.09	20.13
	Equal variances not assumed			7.04	367.42	.000	15.11	2.14	10.89	19.32

**Conclusion:**

The custom of dowry was pervasive in the basti population. It was a central cause for the high drop-out rates for girls (60 percent) and consequent and illegal “early marriage” below the age of 18. The former had everything to do with the “bad reputation” (badnam) a pubescent girl risked developing by being seen in public on her way to school in the basti, a crowded community of strangers (immigrants from other states). Muslims are most educationally backward community as compare to other religious communities in the state. Though they constitute more than 25% of state population their literacy rate is 57% only which is 11 percentage points less than state average (68.64%) and 15 percentage points lower than Hindus (72.44%). Their condition in rural areas is worse as large number of Muslims live in rural areas. Though the difference in literacy rate between Hindus and Muslims in 81 rural areas is less but this difference in urban areas is sharp. There are socio-

economic diversities among tribal parents according to their education status. The analysis of the primary data determined that the educational status of tribal parents differ significantly in their attitudes towards their daughter's participation in higher education. In this study, the educational status of tribal parents was categorized into three categories; illiterate, up to secondary level, and senior secondary level. It was observed that many of the tribal parents were not highly educated but their attitudes were positive and encouraged the participation of their daughters in higher education.

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