Level of Educational Aspiration and its predictors: A study of Tribal and Non-tribal students of Government Schools

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ABSTRACT *The male literacy rate of tribal population in Madhya Pradesh is 53.55 and female literacy rate is 28.44 as per 2011census. Government of India initiated a number of schemes to improve the rate of enrolment, retention and achievement level of tribal children in school education yet the efforts have not yielded desired results. A number of studies have found the low educational aspirations of tribal students as a key factor in school dropout and their low achievement and it continues to remain a matter of serious concern for governments as well as educationist. With Educational Aspirations in focus, the present study was planned to ascertain the difference and relationship between the tribal and non-tribal students with regard to their educational aspirations and academic achievements and also to identify the strong predictor/s for Educational Aspirations from among the Academic Achievement, Gender and Caste. With this objective in view, a sample was taken from the government schools of Bhopal, having tribal students on roll. Selection of schools was made through purposive sampling. Random Sampling Technique was used in selecting students of secondary level of the schools, as respondents. The sample consists of 120 students, consisting of 60 tribal students and the rest non-tribal ones. To measure the educational aspiration, Yasmin Ghani Khan's Level of Educational Aspiration Test (LEAT) was used. For measuring achievement an adapted version of the achievement test consisting of sub tests i.e. language, mathematics, science and social studies as prepared by Dr. Naushad Husain and Sheba Hasan was administered. The treatment of descriptive and inferential statistics of the sample revealed that students belonging to scheduled tribal community are at par with their non-tribe counterparts in respect of their Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement. Significant and positive correlation exists between academic achievement and level of educational aspirations. As regards the caste, it was found that a positive and significant correlation exists between level of educational aspirations and academic achievement of general category students. But in the case of scheduled tribe students it is positive and very low and not significant. The stepwise regression analysis depicted that Caste and academic achievements significantly predict the level of educational aspirations. The multiple correlations, demonstrated positive correlation subsisting between level of educational aspirations and caste and academic achievement. Regression analysis confirms that predictors have significant standardized regression weight (F=5.649 sig. at 0.01 level). This suggests that the model is a good fit for the data as its p-value is .001.*

Keywords: *Academic Achievement, Caste, Educational Aspirations, gender, Secondary Education, Tribes and Non-tribe,*

India is homeland to a number of tribal communities with diverse eco-cultural, socio-economic and geographical backgrounds. The term tribe or tribal is not defined anywhere in the Constitution of India although the Article 342, Scheduled Tribes (STs) represents the tribes or tribal communities that are notified by the President. Tribes are neither a caste nor a part of the traditional Hindu caste structure. Schedules Tribes in India are more like the "indigenous" or "native people" in other parts of the world. There are over 700 Scheduled Tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India, spread over different States and Union Territories of the country. Many tribes are present in more than one State. The largest number of communities listed as Scheduled Tribes are found in the State of Odisha. As per the 2011 census, scheduled tribes comprise about 8.6 percent of India's population and the state Madhya Pradesh holds first rank among all the States/Union Territories (UTs) in terms of 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups and 12th rank in respect of the proportion of ST population to total population. There are 46 recognized Scheduled Tribes in Madhya Pradesh, three of which have been identified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (earlier termed as Primitive Tribal Groups--PVTGs), who are characterised by:- a) a pre-agriculture level of technology; b) a stagnant or declining population; c) extremely low literacy; and d) a subsistence level of economy.

As a matter of fact Scheduled Tribes who have been, historically, out of the mainstream development initiatives partly due to the still continuing socio-economic barriers and partly due to the inadequacy of the Government programmes in reaching these disadvantaged groups. They still find themselves too difficult to compete with other sections of the society. As per Census (2011) figures, literacy rate for STs in India

improved from 47.1 percent in 2001 to 59 percent in 2011. Literacy rate among ST males increased from 59.2 percent to 68.5 percent and among females, from 34.8 percent to 49.4 percent during the same period. Literacy rate for the total population has increased from 64.8 percent in 2001 to 73 percent in 2011. Thus, there is a gap of about 14 percentage points in literacy rate of STs as compared to the all India literacy rate. ST female literacy rate is lower by 15 percentage points as compared to overall female literacy rate in. In 2011, literacy rate of Madhya Pradesh reached 70.6 per cent as compared to 63.7 per cent in the year 2001. During the last decade the rise in literacy rate of Madhya Pradesh is 6.9 percentage points. As per 2011 census the male literacy rate of tribal population in Madhya Pradesh is 53.55 and female literacy rate is 28.44. Government of India initiated a number of schemes for the uplifting educational status of tribal population. But still it is a wild goose chase.

All the efforts to improve the rate of enrolment, retention and achievement level of tribal children in school education has not yielded results that may be characterized as being up to the mark. Most of the studies (Anitha 2000; Kanungo on Dungaria Kandho2005; Mohanty 2012) show that the factors related to physical infrastructure, medium of instruction, teachers and socio-cultural background of children have negatively been affecting the schooling of tribal. A number of studies showed the low educational aspirations of tribal students are a key factor in school dropout and their low achievement and it remains a matter of serious concern for government as well as educationist.

Aspiration, basically, is an expression of the will to achieve and improve. The educational aspiration is the educational goal which students set for themselves. Operationally, Educational Aspiration may be defined as the student's ability to identify and set goals for the future, while breathing in the present to work toward those goals. The individual's aspiration level is an important motivating factor in his/her career. Level of aspiration is usually influenced by two types of factors, viz; (i) Environmental factors and (ii) Personal factors. Environmental factors include determinants like parental ambitions, social expectations, peer pressure, social values, competition, group cohesiveness, etc. On the other hand, personal factors play dominant role in determining his/her level of aspiration as the child grows older and becomes more aware of his/her abilities and interests. The personal factors include determinants such as wishes, personality, past experiences, values, interests, sex, socio-economic background, etc.

Copious researches have been done on academic competence and personality traits of scheduled caste and tribes. Rawat (1991) found that the non-tribal students were not different from tribal students in achievement and general mental ability. Bhatt (1992) found that children of disadvantaged group were lagging behind in logical reasoning abilities, but the boys seemed to be generally ahead of girls. Ameerjan and Thimmappa, (1993) found that there was no significant association between intelligence and academic achievement of socially advantaged and disadvantaged students. Gupta (1995) found that advantaged group students were more creative and their academic performance was superior to that of the disadvantaged students. The students of disadvantaged group attain better logical reasoning abilities, but they do not have good academic achievement. Hart & Risley (1995) found that the performance of disadvantaged students did not automate the kinds of fundamental thinking process that are required for dealing with curricular issues. The disadvantaged students lack in the ability to process ideas and abstractions.

Mavi and Patel, (1997) found that there was significant difference in academic achievement of tribal and non-tribal students. They were significantly different in their personality, intelligence, level of aspiration and academic achievement, but not in self concept. Chopra, (1966) revealed that the lower academic performance of Scheduled Caste students is comparatively due to their poor home environment. When the students were matched for parental occupation, the difference in their mean high school marks did not turn out to be statistically significant. Srivastava (1966) laid emphasis on tribal education and found that there are problems in tribal education and he devoted attention towards the problem. Chandrasekharaian (1969) found that the participation of students at school performance was largely affected by the economic conditions of the family. There was very low enrolment in schools; most of them were studying in municipal primary schools. The percentage of failure among SC was highest. Naik (1969) worked on the tribal students of Madhya Pradesh and traced the impact of education on family and kinship, leadership, occupational patterns and community obligations. He found that different facts of life are differently affected by education. People are not attached to education if it does not bring quick economic advantages. Das's (1991) study showed that non-scheduled tribes students were very high in respect to educational aspiration and vocational aspiration levels as compared to scheduled tribe students. Male students were found to be having a higher aspiration level than girl students. Vyas (1992) found that Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Caste groups differ significantly in terms of academic achievement but not in self concept and locus of control.

A number of scholars have questioned the causal relationship between aspirations and school achievement and found that it is no longer possible to predict school achievement on the grounds of aspirations or vice versa. Many students from different ethnic, racial and socio-economic backgrounds are likely to develop high educational and occupational aspirations that are unrelated to their present or future school performance (Mickelson 1990; Hanson 1994; Schneider & Stevenson 1999; Goodman et al. 2011; Carter-Wall & Whitfield 2012; Cummings et al. 2012; Gorard et al. 2012; St Clair et al.2013).

Earlier studies on aspirations and school achievement have primarily focused on the question whether or not aspirations can be used as a vehicle to raise school achievement (Goodman et al. 2011; St Clair & Benjamin 2011; Gorard et al. 2012; Gutman & Schoon 2012; Rose & Baird 2013; St Clair et al. 2013). The conclusion of most of these studies is that the evidence to link raising aspirations with improving school achievement is either very slim or highly questionable. Some of these studies have pointed out that some students (e.g. working class) tend to hold high aspirations even beyond what the labour market can support (St Clair et al. 2013), which has led the researchers to question the assumption among politicians and policy makers that raising aspirations will enhance educational achievement (St Clair & Benjamin 2011; Carter-Wall & Whitfield 2012; Gorard et al. 2012). Additionally, having high aspirations without being able to achieve them would negatively influence students by causing disappointment, frustration and arguable social withdrawal, or at least would result in a 'lost talent' (Hanson 1994). The worth asking question is whether the tribal students having low educational aspirations and low achievement only because they belong to some tribal community or other related variables matter. The tribal and non-tribal students from same socioeconomic status and same locality may be taken for the study and comparison may be made.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the level of educational aspiration of scheduled tribes' students enrolled in state run schools.
- To study the level of educational aspiration of non-scheduled tribes' students enrolled in state run schools.
- To study the academic achievement of scheduled tribes' students enrolled in state run schools
- To study the academic achievement of non-scheduled tribes' students enrolled in state run schools
- To find out relationship between level of educational aspirations and academic achievement of scheduled tribes and non-scheduled tribe students of state schools.
- To find out the strong predictor/s for Educational Aspirations among Academic Achievement, Gender and Caste of Secondary School students.

Methodology:

The research design for the present study is descriptive research of the survey type. It aimed to find out the relationship of educational aspirations with academic achievement of scheduled tribes and non tribal secondary level students of Bhopal. The population of this study comprises of all the scheduled tribes and non-scheduled tribes secondary schools students in Bhopal

The Sample:

The study was conducted in the eight Government schools in Bhopal with concentration of tribal students, many of whom are migrant labour from Khandwa, Betul and other tribal concentrated areas. Purposive sampling has been done for selection of the schools. Only those schools were selected which are situated in tribal pockets. These schools are located near to tribal hostels. Random Sampling Technique was used in selecting students of the school as respondents. The sample consists of 120 students, consisting of 60 tribal students and the rest non-tribal ones.

Tools of the study:

To measure the educational aspiration Yasmin Ghani Khan's Level of Educational Aspiration Test (LEAT) was used. The test contains 30 items dealing with various aspects that have an immediate or backhanded effect on the level of instructive desires and achievement of students of upper primary school. The reliability coefficient of the test was found to be 0.89 Validity of the test was found to be 0.66. For measuring achievement an adapted test prepared by Dr. Naushad Husain and Sheba Hasan was administered consisting of sub tests i.e. language, mathematics, science and social studies.

Data Collection:

For seeking approval and procuring required participation the researcher informed the School authorities about the purpose and method of the study prior to data collection. The researcher asked the students to fill

in the questionnaire in their classroom during the school days. The LEAT was filled in by the students in the first half of the school and achievement test was given in the later half.

Analysis and Discussion

Table-1: Levels of Educational Aspirations of Secondary Level Students

Variable	Level of Educational Aspirations (in percent)		
	High	Average	Low
Scheduled Tribes	10	83.4	6.6
General category	5	78.4	16.6

Table-1 shows the percentage distribution of level of educational aspiration of scheduled tribe and general category students. The data shows that 10 percent of tribal and five percent general category students were Highly Realistic having well defined Academic goals. On the other hand, 83 percent of the scheduled tribe students and 78 percent of general category students scored below the Average or Realistic (optimistic) category. It was found that one-sixth of the general category students and mere 6.6 percent of scheduled tribe students were Unrealistic and carefree towards academic achievement. On the basis of the data it may be said that most of the students possess average level of educational aspirations and that they are realistic in their approach.

Table-2: Comparison of Level of Educational Aspirations of ST and General Category students

Variables	Caste	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Level of Educational aspiration	Scheduled Tribes	17.4	3.69	-2.61 NS
	General category	19.1	3.28	

Table-2 shows a Mean value of level of educational aspirations of the schedules tribe and general category students. Table shows that students of both the category were, on an average, having realistic and normal level of aspirations (17.4 and 19.1 **consecutively**). It also reveals that the variation in educational aspiration is not on the basis of caste/category. There is no significant difference in educational aspirations of scheduled tribes and general category students (t =2.61).

Table-3: Comparison of Level of Educational Aspirations of Male and Female students of ST and General Category

Variables	Gender	Scheduled Tribes			General category		
		Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Level of Educational aspiration	Male	19.33	2.5	.243	18.2	2.3	.460.
	Female	19.09	3.5		17.4	3.8	

The **Table-3** shows the mean value of level of educational aspirations of male and female students of ST and General Category. Table shows that male and female students in both the category possess realistic and normal level of aspirations and there is no significant difference in the educational aspirations of male and female of both the communities.

Table-4: Comparison of Educational Aspirations of Male and Female students

Variables	Gender	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Level of Educational aspiration	Male	18.58	1.74	.466
	Female	18.16	3.81	

The **Table-4** shows a Mean value of level of educational aspirations of male and female students. Table shows the students of both the gender as having realistic level of aspirations. Since there is no significant difference in educational aspirations of male and female students, it means that gender is not a deciding factor of level of educational aspiration.

Table-5: Comparison of Academic Achievement of Male and Female students of ST and General Category

Variables	Gender	Scheduled Tribes			General category		
		Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Achievement	Male	29.40	7.5	2.35	24.2	6.1	1.43
	Female	25.25	5.2		29.5	8.1	

The **Table-5** above shows a mean value of academic achievement of male and female students of schedules tribes and general category students. It shows, on an average, the students of both the category as having

50-58 percent scores. The scores of female students of general category had more deviation than the scheduled tribe female students' scores. The heterogeneity is quite evident in female students of general category. The difference in Achievement scores of male and female is not significantly different. Scheduled tribes male and general category female were at par in achievement.

Table-6: Comparison of Academic Achievement of Male and Female students

Variables	Gender	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Achievement	**Male**	29.13	8.08	2.21
	Female	26.23	6.10	

The **Table-6** shows a Mean value of Academic Achievement of male and female students. Table shows that students scored on an average 26 to 29 which denotes a 47-52 percent. Girls are lagging behind in comparison to their male counterparts but the difference is not statistically significant.

Table-7: Correlation between academic achievement and educational aspirations of ST and General Category students

Variables	Academic Achievement	Level of Educational aspiration
	Scheduled Tribes	**General category**
Academic Achievement		.35**
Level of Educational aspiration	.18	

**.001 level of significance

The **Table-7** shows the correlation between academic achievement and level of Educational Aspiration of General category students and scheduled tribe students. The table revealed that a positive and significant (at 0.001 level) correlation exist between level of educational aspirations and academic achievement of general category students. But in the case of scheduled tribe students it is positive and very low and not significant.

Table-8: Correlation between academic achievement and educational aspirations of Secondary level students

Pair of Variables	N	Pearson Correlation r
Academic Achievement & Educational Aspirations	**120**	. .216*

*.005 level of significance

Table-8 shows the correlation between academic achievement and level of educational aspirations of secondary level students. The table reveals that a significant positive correlation exists between academic achievement and level of educational aspirations of secondary level students.

Regression Analysis

The effects of caste, gender and achievement on educational aspirations were tested by using logistic regression (forward stepwise), adjusting for caste and achievement.

Table 9 A: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.357[a]	.127	.105	3.38705

a. Predictors: (Constant), achievement, gender, caste

The **Table 9 A** indicates a positive multiple correlations (R) between level of educational aspirations and predictors (caste, gender, and academic achievement). The R square designates the combination of three predictors namely, caste, gender, and academic achievement which accounts jointly for nearly 12.7 percent variation in level of educational aspirations. In other words, it may be inferred that caste, gender, and academic achievement contribute almost a 13 percent in the formation of level of educational aspirations. Rest of the variation may be explained by other factors which are not taken up in the study.

Table 9 B: ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	194.435	3	64.812	5.649	.001[a]
	Residual	1330.765	116	11.472		
	Total	1525.200	119			

The ANOVA **Table 9 B** shows that predictors have significant standardized regression weight (F=5.649 sig. at 0.01 level). This suggests that the model is a good fit for the data as its p-value is .001.

Table 9 C: Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	12.013	2.482		4.841	.000
Caste	2.018	.645	.283	3.129	.002
Gender	-.241	.817	-.026	-.295	.768
Achievement	.134	.044	.272	3.062	.003

Dependent Variable: Level of Educational Aspiration

Although it is clear from the table 9A that multiple correlations [(R) .357] is significant and positive between level of educational aspirations and predictors (caste, gender, and academic achievement) but the exact relationship between level of educational aspirations and caste, gender, and academic achievement can be comprehended with the help of the following equation wherein x_1 denotes caste, x_2 denotes gender x_3 is academic achievement and Y denotes level of educational aspirations:

$$Y= 12.013+2.018x_1-.241x_2+.134x_3$$

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Educational aspirations constant caste gender academic achievement

Gender might be a negative predictor value to the dependent variable but it is not significant. Similarly achievement might have positive predictors value but it is also not significant.

$$Y= 2.018+.283x.$$

Further, the above equation denominates the ratio in which the caste factor brings about change in level of educational aspirations. It may be seen that the caste brings about corresponding change in level of educational aspirations.

The equation given hereunder reveals the ratio subsisting between the Academic Achievement and level of educational aspirations which indicates that the Academic Achievement causes corresponding change in the level of educational aspirations.

$$Y= .134+.272x$$

STEPWISE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 10 A: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.234[a]	.055	.047	3.49560
2	.356[b]	.127	.112	3.37381

a. Predictors: (Constant), caste

b. Predictors: (Constant), caste, academic achievement

The **Table 10 A** shows that Caste is included in the model at first step and it is the single best predictor. Academic achievement is the next best predictor which contributed the second most. The R^2 shows that in first step, caste is accountable for 5.5 percent alone in determining educational aspiration. Whereas in second step, Caste and Academic Achievement jointly accountable 12.7% for determining educational aspiration.

Table 10 B: ANOVA[c]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	83.333	1	83.333	6.820	.010[a]
	Residual	1441.867	118	12.219		
	Total	1525.200	119			
2	Regression	193.433	2	96.717	8.497	.000[b]
	Residual	1331.767	117	11.383		
	Total	1525.200	119			

a. Predictors: (Constant), caste
b. Predictors: (Constant), caste, Academic Achievement
c. Dependent Variable: Level of Educational Aspirations

Table 10 B shows two F values one for each step. Both step have overall significant values, F=6.82, p=.010 for caste alone and F=8.45, p=.000 for caste and academic achievement. The conclusions may be drawn that caste and academic achievement significantly predict the level of educational aspirations.

Table 10 C: Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	15.800	1.009		15.658	.000
Caste	1.667	.638	.234	2.611	.010
2 (Constant)	11.480	1.696		6.767	.000
Caste	2.058	.629	.289	3.273	.001
Academic Achievement	.135	.043	.274	3.110	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Level of Educational Aspirations

The above tables showing the step wise regressions which indicate the multiple correlations (R) between level of educational aspirations and caste is positive, and between the level of educational aspirations caste and academic achievement collectively is also positive. Gender was removed due to its insignificant role. The R square of the caste is 5.5 and the R square of combination of two predictors (caste and academic achievement) is 12.7. It indicates that caste alone contributes nearly 5.5 percent in the formation of level of aspirations, but with the academic achievement **it** accounts for nearly 12.7 percent variation in level of educational aspirations.

The ANOVA table shows that both the predictors (caste and academic achievement) have significant standardized regression weight (F=8.497 sig .001). Caste and academic achievement in all alone significantly predict the level of educational aspirations. Although it is clear from the multiple correlations that positive correlation exists between level of educational aspirations and caste and academic achievement.

From the table 10 C regression equation can also be formulated. The equation given hereunder depicts that the ratio subsisting between the caste and level of educational aspirations indicates that the caste causes corresponding change in the level of educational aspirations.

$$Y= 15.8+1.67x$$

Whereas for second Step,

$$Y =11.48+2.06_{x}+0.135_{x1}$$

Discussion and conclusion

The present study was planned with the objective of ascertaining whether any significant differences exist between the tribal and non-tribal students with regard to their educational aspirations. The another objective of the study was find out relationship between level of educational aspirations and academic achievement of scheduled tribes and non-scheduled tribe students and to identify the strong predictor/s for Educational Aspirations among Academic Achievement, Gender and Caste. The treatment of descriptive and inferential statistics of the data revealed that students belonging to scheduled tribal community are at par with their non-tribe counterparts in respect to their Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement. Whatever the difference exist between the two was not significant. Here an important concern is mentionable that sample was taken from government schools and the two sets of students are coming from the same socioeconomic strata. There was no significant difference between the male and female in their Educational Aspiration. Results indicate a significant positive correlation exists between academic achievement and level of educational aspirations of secondary level students. As regards the caste it was found that a positive and significant correlation exists between level of educational aspirations and academic achievement of general category students. But in the case of scheduled tribe students it is positive and very low and not significant.

The inferential statistics depicts that caste, gender, and academic achievements contribute almost a 13 percent in the formation of level of educational aspirations. It denotes that on the basis of three variables namely caste, gender and academic achievement the level of educational aspirations can be predicted but in 13 percent cases only. Regression analysis confirms that predictors have significant standardized

regression weight (F=5.649 sig. at 0.01 level). This suggests that the model is a good fit for the data as its p-value is .001.

The stepwise regression analysis was applied to make out the strong predictor and it was found that Caste and academic achievement, in all, alone significantly predicts the level of educational aspirations. The multiple correlations, also in the same tune, depicted that positive correlation exists between level of educational aspirations and caste and academic achievement.

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