

## **A study on socio-economic awareness of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people in Dhalai district of Tripura**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Social and economic justice, security, equality of status and opportunities are guaranteed by the constitution of India for all her citizens. But even after 73 years of independence our society is confronting with the problems of social inequality. We are fighting for reservation of backward classes, and there is a heinous struggle and competition for incorporating names into the list of below poverty line. All these aspects of our present society reveal a gloomy aspect that truly points out the failure of a welfare state. This study is an attempt to find out reasons behind the social backwardness of the Scheduled Caste (SCs) and Scheduled tribe (STs) people in the Dhalai district of Tripura. Keeping this idea in view the present study was planned to investigate the awareness of SC and ST people in respect of socio-economic condition. To make the study effective, 180 SC and 180 ST people from the target population were selected as sample. The main objective of the study was to estimate the levels of socio-economic awareness among the SC and ST people. The present study is mainly based on the government reports and field survey. A critical analysis of data revealed that the awareness score of the SC people reflects higher than ST people in respect of Socio-economic conditions. It was also found that the SC male people shows higher awareness score than that of ST female people in respect to socio-economic awareness.*

**Key words:** Awareness, Scheduled caste (SC), Scheduled tribe (ST), Socio-economic condition.

### **Introduction:**

Since independence the Indian Government has been devoting their special attention to uplift especially the weaker sections of the Indian society and therefore, through planned action a number of welfare schemes and programs have been adopted for their betterment. In this connection reservation policy for the weaker sections has been taken into account through Constitutional measures by the Government, such as reservation of seats for admission to educational institutions, jobs, election to Assembly, Parliament, local bodies etc. After independence Government as well as voluntary organizations are paying special attention to education as a key factor for bringing about social-economic change in the backward class of people.

There are many reasons for the poor rate of development of the SC and ST people. One of the most important issues is that they are not aware about the different facilities for them and systems of life. It is a common experience that the SC and ST people do not show adequate interest about education of their children due to poor economic conditions, social prejudice etc. It has also been found that most of the people of the SC and ST groups are not properly aware about the financial assistance, for education of their children and their economic development schemes. Keeping this in view the present study is conducted on the SC and ST people of Dhalai district to estimate their awareness about Socio-economic condition.

**Objectives of the study:**

1. To estimate the levels of socio-economic awareness among the SC and ST people.
2. To find out their awareness about traditional and modern social values, customs and norms.
3. To find out their awareness about savings and investment.
4. To find out their awareness about assets and properties.
5. To find out their awareness on social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs.

**Hypotheses of the study:**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in Socio- economic awareness between SC & ST people in Tripura.

H<sub>02</sub> There is no significant difference between the male & female population with regard to socio-economic awareness in the Dhalai district of the state of Tripura.

**Study Area:**

Located in the North-eastern part of India, the Dhalai district of Tripura covers an area of about 2312.29 Sq Km. The total population of the district is 378230 (Male and Female are 194544 and 183686 respectively) as per 2011 Census report. Out of total population, the SC and ST population are 16.31% and 55.68% respectively. Socio-economically it is the most backward district of the state. The Dhalai district was selected for the study as the percentage of SC and ST population is about (16.31% +55.68%) 71.99% in the district, which is greater than that of the average rate (16% + 31%) 47% in the state (Tripura).

**Methodology:**

To carry out the study, the following procedures have been followed-

**Population and Sample:**

All the SC and ST people live in the Dhalai district of Tripura state considered as the population of the study. However, it is not possible to carry out the investigation with the total population. Therefore, it becomes necessary to select the representative samples for the study. So a good numbers of the SC (180) and ST (180) were selected as samples from the target population.

**Sampling:**

Purposive and Random sampling technique are used for selection of samples.

**Tools used in this study:**

The following tool was used in the study:

An awareness scale to estimate the levels of awareness of the SC and ST people in respect to Socio-economic conditions.

**Data collection and analysis:**

The investigator collected response sheets from different situations. In case of village records door-to-door investigation was made. But in case of data related to awareness, response sheets were collected and these were scrutinized and evaluated with the help of prefixed norms. *Three point rating* scale was used to transform qualitative data to quantitative scores. After receiving data, these were tabulated according to the objectives of the study. Measures of central tendencies, percentage calculation, Chi-square test and p-value were used for analysis of data.

**Analysis and Interpretation of Objectives:****Analysis of data related to objective – 1**

**(Objective-1: To estimate the levels of Socio-economic awareness among the SC and ST people.)**

**Table – 01: Mean scores of the SC and ST populations on the dimension of SEA.**

Categories	N	M
SC population	180	116.20
ST population	180	115.25

[\*The cut point score is 100, between two levels of awareness that is 'aware' and 'less aware'.]

The above table 01 shows that the mean awareness scores of the SC and ST populations are higher than the cut-off point score that is, 100. On the other hand, the mean awareness score of SC group is slightly higher than the ST group about Socio-economic condition and factors relating to their social life.

**Table – 02: Distribution of the SC and ST populations based on the cut-off point score between two levels of SEA. (district level data)**

Category	N	Above cutting point	Below cutting point
SC	180	123	57
ST	180	126	54
Total	360	249	111
%	100	69.16%	30.83%

[\*The cut point score is 100, between two levels of awareness that is 'aware' and 'less aware'.]

The table 02 indicates that 69.16% of total SC and ST people were above the cutting point score i.e.100 about their Socio-economic condition. On the other hand 30.83% of SC and ST people were below the cut-off point on socio-economic condition.

**Table – 03: Distribution of the SC and ST populations based on the levels of socio-economic awareness (i.e. High, Average & Low awareness groups)**

Category	High group		Average group		Low group		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
SC	48	26.6	75	41.67	57	31.66	180
ST	41	22.78	85	47.22	54	30	180

The above table 03 shows the percentages of population belonging to the SC and ST community with their level of awareness. It was found that 31.66% of SC population showed a low level of Socio-economic awareness while 30% of ST population showed a low level of Socio-economic awareness. Results indicate that 26.67% SC people showed a high degree of awareness, but in case of ST group it is 22.78%.

#### Analysis of data related to objectives – 2, 3, 4 & 5

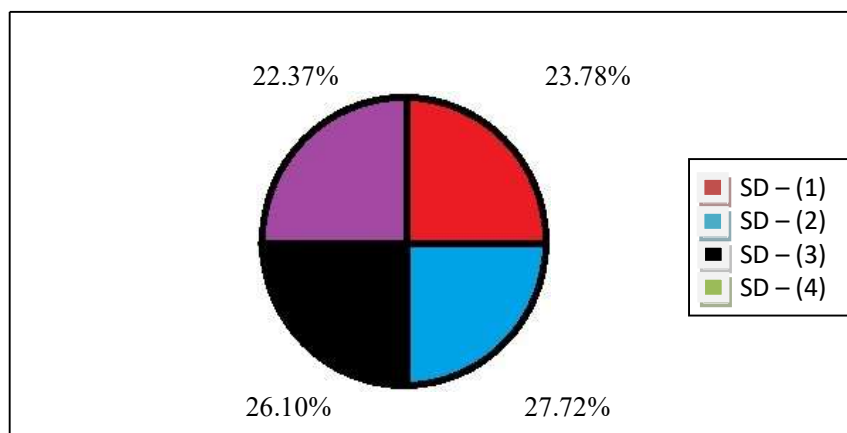
**(Objective-2: To find out their awareness about traditional and modern social values, customs and norms.**

**Objective-3: To find out their awareness on savings and investment.**

**Objective-4: To find out their awareness on assets and properties.**

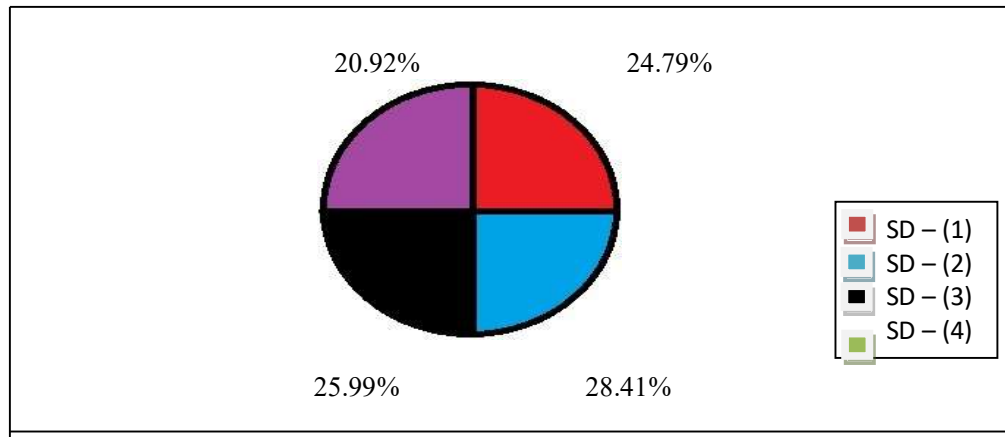
**Objective-5: To find out their awareness on social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs.)**

[Socio-economic awareness was classified into four sub-dimensions: (1) Traditional, social values, customs and norms, (2) Savings and investment, (3) Assets and properties and (4) Social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs. This was done to indicate the nature of awareness under the broad areas].



**Fig. 01**

The figure above indicates the average weightage-percentages in four sub – dimensions of Socio-economic awareness. It has been found from the results that the SC population gave slightly more weightage on the sub – dimension-2 (Savings and investment) of Socio-economic awareness and least weightage was given on the sub-dimension-4 i.e. on Social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs.



**Fig. 02**

The above figure indicates the average weightage-percentages in four sub–dimensions of Socio-economic awareness. It has been found from the results that the ST population gave slightly more weightage on the sub – dimension-2 (Savings and investment) of Socio-economic awareness and least weightage was given on the sub-dimension-4 i.e. on Social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs.

### **Analysis and Interpretation of Hypotheses:**

The Collected data is done on three point Likert scale reflecting degree of preference (That is Agree, Undecided and Disagree) of the respondent in the particular item. Degree of preference is converted into numerical, “3” for Agree; “2” for Undecided and “1” for Disagree which are in categorical scale and forms non-parametric data. Hence investigator has used **Chi-square test** and **p-value** analysis for double confirmation for the hypothesis test.

### **Chi-square test:**

To calculate chi-square, the investigator has used **Pearson's chi-squared test** where, response categories in Likert scale are combined to get Observed Score ( $f_0$ ), Expected Score ( $f_e$ ) to get Chi-Score. Here,

The calculation of the Chi-Square statistic is quite straight-forward and intuitive:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e} \text{----- (1)}$$

Where

f<sub>o</sub> = the observed frequency and

f<sub>e</sub> = the expected frequency

**p-value:**

Using Ms excel, p value is calculated using the the formula “=CHISQ.TEST (expected\_range, observed\_range)”

Using the below condition we Reject or fail to Reject the Null hypothesis. Here, α is the level of significance which is 0.05 level for the present study.

<i>p-value &lt; α</i>	Reject <i>H</i> <sub>0</sub>	----- (2)
<i>p-value &gt; α</i>	Fail to Reject <i>H</i> <sub>0</sub>	

**Analysis of data related to Hypothesis-1**

**(H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant difference in Socio- economic awareness between SC & ST people in Tripura.)**

**Table-04: Observed score for Socio-economic awareness of SC and ST.**

Observed(f <sub>0</sub> )	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
SC	85	68	27	180
ST	81	73	26	180
Total	166	141	53	360

**Table-05: Expected score for Socio-economic awareness of SC and ST.**

Expected(f <sub>e</sub> )	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
SC	83	70	27	180
ST	83	70	27	180
Total	166	141	53	360

Using above equation (1) we get

**Table-06: Chi-square score for Socio-economic awareness of SC and ST.**

Chi-Square	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
SC	0.0530	0.0875	0.0054	0.1460
ST	0.0530	0.0875	0.0054	0.1460
Total	0.1060	0.1751	0.0109	<b>0.2920</b>

**Degree of Freedom (df) = (C-1) x (R-1) = (3-1) x (2-1) = 2**

Tabulated Value	5.99146
p-value	0.852511626

As Calculated Value (0.2920) < Tabulated Value (5.99146), we fail to reject the Null hypothesis.

**Also, for p-value**, 0.852511626 > 0.05, using (2) we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

That is there is no significant difference between the SC and ST population with respect to Socio-Economic awareness.

#### **Analysis of data related to Hypothesis-2**

(**H<sub>02</sub>** There is no significant difference in Socio- economic awareness between Male & Female in Tripura.)

**Table-07: Observed score for Socio-economic awareness of Male and Female.**

Observed(f <sub>0</sub> )	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
Male	113	80	33	226
Female	53	61	20	134
Total	166	141	53	360

**Table-08: Expected score for Socio-economic awareness of Male and Female.**

Expected(fe)	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
Male	104	88	33	226
Female	62	52	20	134
Total	166	141	53	360

Using above equation (1) we get

**Table-09: Chi-square score for Socio-economic awareness of Male and Female.**

Chi-Square	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
Male	0.7386	0.7952	0.0050	1.5388
Female	1.2457	1.3411	0.0084	2.5952
Total	1.9843	2.1363	0.0134	<b>4.1340</b>

$$\text{Degree of Freedom (df)} = (C-1) \times (R-1) = (3-1) \times (2-1) = 2$$

Tabulated Value	5.99146
p-value	0.112462955

As Calculated Value (4.1340) < Tabulated Value (5.99146), we fail to reject the Null hypothesis.

**Also, for p-value**, 0.112462955 > 0.05, using (2) we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

That is there is no significant difference between the Male and ST population with respect to Socio-Economic awareness.

### **Findings:**

#### **It was found from the results that:**

1. Results indicate that the mean Socio-economic awareness scores of SC and ST groups are above the cutting point score i.e.100. On the other hand, the mean awareness score of SC population is slightly higher than the ST population with respect to the Socio-economic condition and factors relating to their social life.
2. Results indicate that 69.16% of total SC and ST population was above the cutting point score i.e.100 about their Socio-economic condition. On the other hand 30.83% of SC and ST population was below the cutting point about Socio-economic condition.
3. The results indicate that 68.33% out of total SC people selected as samples were above the cutting point score i.e.100 about Socio-economic condition, whereas 70% ST people were above the cutting point score i.e.100. A good percentage of SC (31.67%) and ST (30%) people were below the cutting point score about Socio-economic condition.
4. The results show that on average 26.67% of the SC population shows a high level of Socio-economic awareness, 41.67% an average level of awareness and 31.66% of the population a low level of awareness of the dimension selected for the study.



5. The results indicate that on average 22.78% of the ST people showed a high level of Socio-economic awareness, 47.22% showed a medium level of awareness and 30% showed a low level of awareness.

6. Regarding the socio-economic sub-dimensions four areas of socio-economic awareness were specified i.e. awareness towards (1) traditional, social values, customs and norms, (2) savings and investment, (3) assets and properties and (4) social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs. Results revealed that maximum stress has been given on savings and investment by both the SC and ST groups and least weightage has been given on the social protection in regard to facilities provided by government and NGOs by both the groups. It may be inferred from the results that interests of SC and ST people have been growing on savings and investment.

7. The present study conducted on the backwardness of SC and ST people who constitute a very big portion of about (16.31% + 55.68%) 71.99% of the total population in Dhalai district of Tripura. The findings of the study revealed that a large number of people belonging to SC and ST have remained backward in socio-economic conditions and the root cause of such backwardness lies in their lack of awareness. These people are not aware of their rights as guaranteed in our constitution similarly they are not conscious of their duties and responsibilities for the welfare of our country. As a result they are not able to accept the privileges given by the Government and other non-Government agencies also and so the social progress of these people is hampered.

8. There is no significant difference between the SC and ST population with regard to Socio-economic awareness in the Dhalai district of Tripura state.

9. There is no significant difference between the Male and Female population with regard to Socio-economic awareness in the Dhalai district of Tripura state.

### **Suggestions:**

1. There is an urgent need to adopt a comprehensive national policy for the empowerment of SCs and STs with definite goals and targets to be achieved within a specific time frame at national level. The policy so adopted should be able to provide a perspective which ensures that the status of the SC and ST people is raised to that of the rest of the society and they get their due share of benefit from developmental programs.

2. Employment and income generating opportunities through wage or self-employment for not only 100 days but also 300 days in a year under National Rural Employment Guaranty Act need to be ensured.

3. The legal provisions for prevention of alienation and restoration of land for SC and ST people should be extended to the entire state and should not be restricted to Scheduled and notified areas alone.

4. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have an important role in promoting SCs and STs empowerment and awareness towards Socio-economic conditions.

5. It has been noted that the intended benefits of SCs and STs development Programs are not fully reaching the SC and ST population because of gaps in implementation and delivery systems. The SCs and STs developmental Programs cannot be effectively implemented without the active participation of the SCs and STs. Mobilization of SCs and STs through the Gram Sabhas is essential for the effective utilization of the funds for SCs and STs.

6. The provisions of the Panchayati Raj Extension Act, 1996 should be implemented by all the State Governments and release of plan funds every year to the State Governments by the Planning Commission should be made contingent the provisions of this act.

### **Conclusion:**

A comparative analysis in respect of the Socio- economic conditions of the SC and ST people in Dhalai district and of similar backward people in other districts, states or countries is possible by the findings of this study and it can focus upon how far these people in these countries have been successful in receiving government help for developing their Socio- economic conditions and where they have failed to do so. Moreover, through this comparative study in local and national perspective the respective states/countries can find out their failures and drawbacks and adopt appropriate measures to develop the conditions of those backward people.

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