SECONDARY EDUCATION AMONG SCHEDULE CASTE (SC) AND SCHEDULE TRIBE (ST) WOMEN IN WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT
Schedule caste (SC) and schedule tribe (ST) contribute about one-fourth population in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-linguistic country, India. SC and ST women that constitute approximately one-eighth of total population in India and one-seventh in West Bengal cannot be ignored. But their educational, social, economical and caste status remains far behind the normal. An effort has been made to investigate the trends of secondary education of SC and ST women in West Bengal, India. The percentages completed at least at secondary level of education of SC and ST female in West Bengal remained much lower than that of all other persons in India and West Bengal, Muslim persons in India, all other females in West Bengal, SC and ST males in West Bengal for the period 1953 to 2001. Their percentages completed at least at secondary level of education slowly developed from 1953 to 2001. The percentages completed at least at secondary level of education of SC and ST females in West Bengal were far below (>25%) from that of all other persons in India from 1991 and very close to 25% for all other persons in West Bengal from 1976 confirming the educational backwardness of SC and ST females in West Bengal.

KEYWORDS: SC and ST women, Educational backwardness, Secondary education.

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