

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background

The Constitution of India, in Article 46 of Part-IV¹, enjoins upon the State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes (SC) and the Scheduled Tribes (ST). Article 38 (2) also enjoins upon the State to minimise inequities in income and status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.

According to Census of India (2011), the SCs (including Adi Dravidar²) and STs constitute twenty *per cent* and one *per cent* respectively, of the total population of Tamil Nadu. The Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department (AD&TW Department) was set up³ in 1988 with the objective of uplifting of the economic status and improving the standard of living of SC/ST people on par with the other sections of society. In order to enhance the literacy rate and educational standards of SC/ST students, the AD&TW Department is running various residential schools and hostels and also implementing various scholarship schemes - both the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and the State funded schemes. In addition to the above schemes, the AD&TW Department is also providing educational scholarship, through a special Post Matric Education Scholarship Scheme to Adi Dravidar converted to Christianity (SCC) students, who cannot avail benefits under the Post Matric Education Scholarship Schemes of the Union Government.

1.1.1 Comparative population and literacy rates of SCs/STs

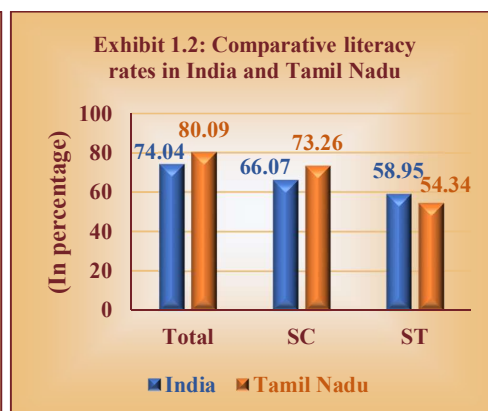
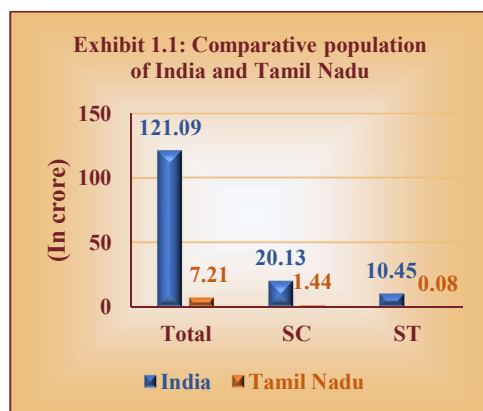
The comparative population and literacy rates of the SCs/STs in the country and in Tamil Nadu are given in **Exhibits 1.1** and **1.2**.

Abbreviations used in this Report are listed in the Glossary at Page 98.

¹ 'Directive Principles of State Policy'.

² Adi Dravidar, i.e., 'Original native or indigenous people of Dravida land' is a term used in Tamil Nadu to denote Dalits. As per 2011 Census of India, they make up about half of Tamil Nadu's SC population.

³ By bifurcating the Social Welfare Department.

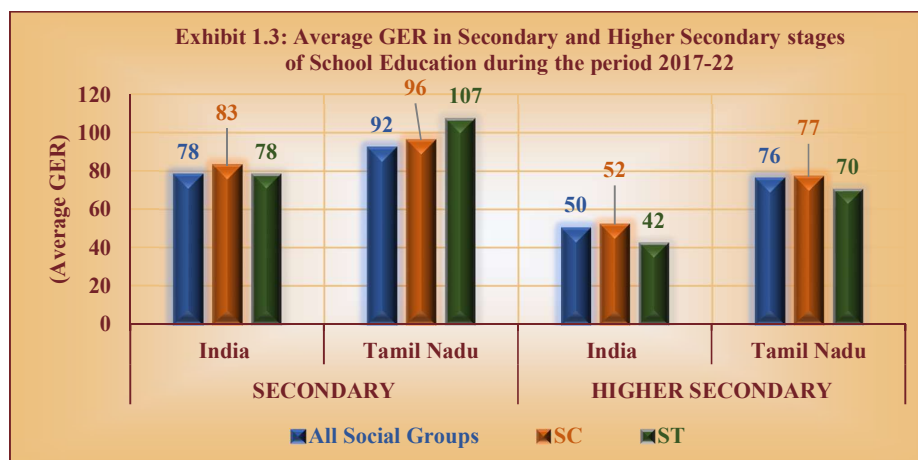


(Source: Census of India, 2011)

As seen from **Exhibit 1.2**, except for the literacy rate of ST, the literacy rates of the total population and SC population in Tamil Nadu is higher than that of the national rates.

1.1.2 Gross Enrolment Ratio of SC/ST students in secondary and higher secondary stages of School Education

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) compares the enrolment in a specific level of education to the population of the age group that is most age-appropriate for that level. The GER of SC/ST students in Tamil Nadu in secondary stage (Classes IX and X) and Higher secondary stage (Classes XI and XII) of School Education during the period 2017-22, as per the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE +)⁴, is given in **Appendix 1.1** and the average GER for the period is given in **Exhibit 1.3**.



(Source: Annual UDISE + Reports during the period 2017-22)

As seen from above, the GER of all social groups, SC and ST in the secondary and higher secondary stages of School Education in Tamil Nadu has been consistently higher than the national average during the period 2017-22.

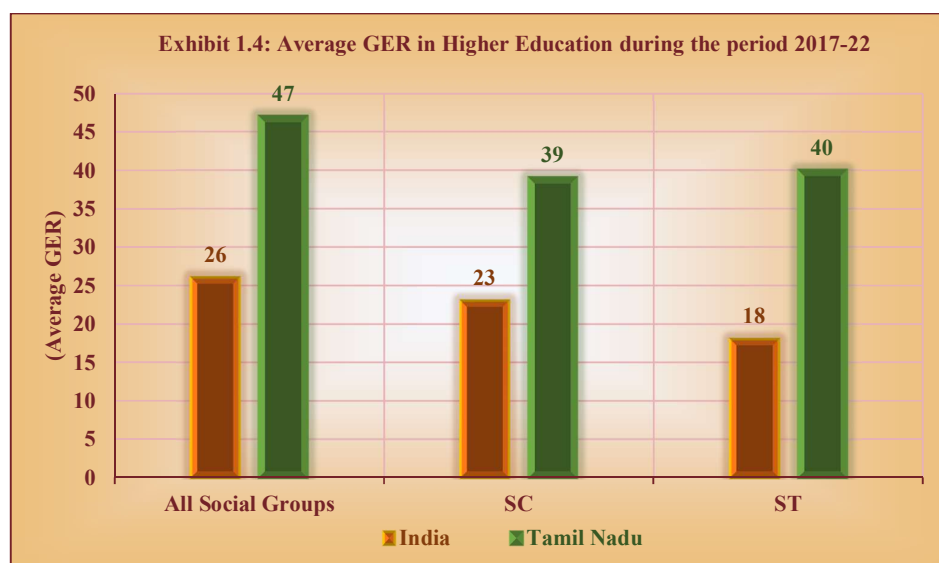
⁴ UDISE+ is a Management Information Systems initiated by Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, GoI covering more than 14.89 lakhs of schools, 95 lakhs of teachers and 26.5 crores of children.

1.1.3 Gross Enrolment Ratio of SC/ST students in Higher Education

Higher Education is defined as the education⁵, which is obtained after completing 12 years of schooling or equivalent and is of the duration of at least nine months (full time) or after completing 10 years of schooling and is of the duration of at least three years.

The objective of Post Matric Scholarship Schemes for SC/ST students, apart from providing/supplementing financial assistance to eligible students, is also to appreciably increase the GER of SC/ST students in higher education⁶.

Every year, GoI⁷ releases a report on ‘All India Survey of Higher Education’ (AISHE) that provides extensive data on various indicators of Higher Education in India. As per AISHE, the GER of SC/ST students in Higher Education for the period 2017-22 is given in **Appendix 1.2** and the average GER for the period is given in **Exhibit 1.4**.



(Source: AISHE 2021-22)

As seen from **Appendix 1.2** and **Exhibit 1.4**, the GER of Tamil Nadu in Higher Education, has been consistently much higher and is way ahead than the national average during the period 2017-22.

1.2 Centrally Sponsored Scholarship schemes for SC/ST students

The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE), implements, through the States/Union Territories, the CSSs of ‘Pre-Matric Scholarship to the

⁵ Whether of the nature of General, Vocational, Professional or Technical education.

⁶ As per PMS-SC Guidelines, 2021, the endeavor of the Government is to raise the GER of SCs in higher education from 23 *per cent* to the national average of 27 *per cent* in the next five years. Similarly, the GER in Higher Secondary education of SCs has also to increase in the next five years. Towards this end, special focus of the implementing agencies was required to achieve the goal.

⁷ Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education.

Scheduled Caste students' (Pre MS-SC) and 'Post Matric Scholarship to Scheduled Caste Students Scheme' (PMS-SC) with objectives to support, through financial assistance, parents of SC children for education of their wards.

Similarly, the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) implements, through the States/Union Territories, the CSSs of 'Pre-Matric Scholarship for Scheduled Tribe Students Studying in Classes IX & X (Pre MS-ST) and 'Post Matric Scholarship' (PMS-ST) for students belonging to ST for studies in India.

1.3 Organisational structure of AD&TW Department

The AD&TW department is headed by the Secretary to Government. At the State level, the Directorate of Adi Dravidar Welfare (Dte of ADW) and the Directorate of Tribal Welfare⁸ (Dte of TW) are headed by the Director of Adi Dravidar Welfare (DADW) and Director of Tribal Welfare (DTW) respectively.

At the district level, the District Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Officers (DADTWO) and Project Officers (Tribal Welfare) work for the welfare of SCs/STs. The District Collectors co-ordinate and monitor all SC/ST welfare programmes with officers⁹ of AD&TW department.

1.4 Audit approach and methodology

Audit objectives

The objectives of this PA was to ascertain whether:

- the process of planning, with regard to identification of beneficiaries, was robust and comprehensive;
- the financial management including release, timeliness of release and utilisation of funds was prudent and in conjunction with the stated objectives;
- the implementation of the schemes was effective; and
- a proper monitoring system exists in implementation of the Schemes.

⁸ Bifurcated from the Dte of ADW with full financial and administrative control from 01-04-2018.

⁹ DADTWOs, PO (TW) and District Managers of Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Limited.

Audit Criteria

The audit criteria for assessing the various Educational Scholarship Schemes were derived from:

- Scheme Guidelines for the CSSs of ‘Pre-Matric and Post Matric Scholarships for SC¹⁰/ST¹¹ students for studies in India’;
- Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) Scheme guidelines for various State sponsored Educational Scholarship Schemes; and
- Policy Notes, Performance Budgets of AD&TW department, Government orders and departmental instructions issued by GoTN from time to time.

Audit Scope and Sampling

This PA covered the implementation of the CSSs of Pre-Matric and Post Matric scholarships to SC/ST students during the period April 2017 to March 2023. The field audit was conducted between July 2022 to December 2023. Audit involved scrutiny of records and other documents at the Secretariat, Dte of ADW, Dte of TW, offices of DADTWOs in the eight sampled districts¹² and at 242 sampled educational institutions¹³ in the sampled districts (**Appendix 1.3**).

In addition to the above mentioned four CSSs, this PA has also covered five State sponsored Educational Scholarship Schemes/Incentives, which are dealt separately in **Chapter VI**.

Audit methodology

The audit methodology involved analysing and correlating various databases held by different departments so as to verify the process of implementing the various scholarship schemes covered in this PA. Accordingly, relevant databases for the period 2017-23, were obtained in soft copies from various Departments/Offices/Agencies¹⁴. Some of the key audit findings of data analysis of databases/data dumps were then corroborated with the physical documents held at two¹⁵ out of the eight sampled districts and the sampled educational institutions therein so as to include illustrative cases for major Audit findings.

¹⁰ Issued by MoSJE. (a) For Pre MS-SC: In September 2017, September 2019 and March 2022 (for the period 2021-26). (b) For PMS-SC: In April 2018 and March 2021 (for the period 2020-26).

¹¹ Issued by MoTA. (a) For Pre MS-ST: In July 2010 and for the period 2021-26. (b) For PMS-ST: In July 2010 and April 2022.

¹² Chennai, Coimbatore, Erode, Kanniyakumari, Perambalur, Thoothukudi, Tiruchirappalli (Trichy) and Tirunelveli.

¹³ (a) Pre MS-SC: 70; (b) PMS-SC: 67; (c) Pre MS-ST: 25; (d) PMS-ST: 42 and (e) PMS-SCC: 38.

¹⁴ (a) Dte of ADW; (b) Dte of TW; (c) Directorate of Technical Education, Chennai; (d) Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency; (e) The Controller of Examinations, Anna University, Chennai; (f) Directorate of School Education, Chennai; (g) Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Chennai and (h) O/o PAG (A&E), Tamil Nadu.

¹⁵ Coimbatore and Tirunelveli. These two districts were selected as most of the key Audit findings emanating out of data analysis were highly prevalent in the sampled institutions of these districts.

An Entry Conference was held on 03 November 2022 with the Additional Chief Secretary to Government, AD&TW department to discuss the audit objectives, scope and methodology. An Exit Conference was held on 15 May 2024 with the Secretary to Government, AD&TW Department (Secretary) and officers of the Department to discuss the audit findings. The replies/views of the Government were considered and suitably incorporated in this report.

1.5 Acknowledgement

Audit acknowledges the co-operation extended by the AD&TW Department, the Directorates of AD Welfare and Tribal Welfare, the DADTWOs and all the sampled educational institutions in the eight sampled districts in smooth conduct of this PA.

1.6 Audit Findings

The audit findings are grouped under the following five chapters:

Section A: Pre-Matric and Post Matric Scholarship for SC students

- ❖ Chapter II : Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students
- ❖ Chapter III : Post Matric Scholarship for SC students

Section B: Pre-Matric and Post Matric Scholarship for ST students

- ❖ Chapter IV : Pre-Matric Scholarship for ST students
- ❖ Chapter V : Post Matric Scholarship for ST students

Section C: State Sponsored Educational Scholarship Schemes

- ❖ Chapter VI : Implementation of State sponsored Schemes and Incentives