

Educational Status of the Underprivileged Classes in Jammu and Kashmir: A Reflection on Pre and Past Abrogation of Article 370

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Despite the Indian Constitutional provision for free and compulsory education, some underprivileged classes, such as OBC, SC, and ST, are still considered socially and educationally deprived in many parts of India. The level of education in a community is a good indicator of its progress towards development. The primary focus of this research is to investigate the educational status of underprivileged classes in India, with particular reference to Jammu and Kashmir, before and after the abrogation of Article 370. Secondary sources such as research papers, government statistical data, articles, websites, and so forth are used to collect the data for the present study. The main objective of this paper is to study the educational status of underprivileged classes (OBC, SC, and ST) in J&K after the abrogation of Article 370. The present study's findings indicate that the educational status of the underprivileged classes has risen since the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: educational status, underprivileged classes, Article 370, Jammu and Kashmir

INTRODUCTION

In India, many students who belong to the underprivileged classes of society face significant challenges in accessing quality education. Poverty, inequality, and cultural obstacles are all socio-economic issues that contribute to these challenges (Borooah, 2005). Poverty is the major challenge that often forces students to drop out of educational institutions and work for their survival. In addition to that, discrimination based on caste, gender, or religion further marginalizes certain people by denying them equitable access to education (Bhatla, 2016). Moreover, sometimes, due to gender bias in society, some parents prioritize boys' education over girls', which is a constraint for girls to access schooling. Despite these challenges, various government and non-governmental organizations are trying to bridge the gap by

offering free education, scholarships, and infrastructure development in underserved and rural communities (Sundaram & Tendulker, 2003). In addition, provisions like free and compulsory education for every student up to 14 years of age under Article 21A ensure that every child has the right to receive an education. Further, seats are reserved for students in educational institutions who belong to underprivileged classes such as OBC, SC, and ST.

After the independence of India in 1947, many princely states strategically emerged as integral parts of it. The states of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) were among them. The last Dogra ruler of J&K, Maharaja Hari Singh, signed the instrument of accession on 26th October 1947, which legally ceded this state as an integral part of India. This state has been granted special status under Article 370 or Article 35A of the Indian Constitution. It had the right to follow its state constitution, apart from the Indian constitution. However, this special status was temporary, but it remained for more than 70 years. Article 35A grants the state legislature of J&K the right to provide privileges and opportunities only to this region's people who have the state subject (permanent resident certificate) (Aggarwal, 2024).

Jammu and Kashmir had constitutions but did not follow all the Indian constitutional provisions. Before the abrogation of Article 370, even the RTE (Right to Education) Act was not applicable here. However, it has educational provisions such as the Jammu and Kashmir School Education Act 2002. The state has rules for admission criteria, reservation, and student scholarships. On 5th August 2019, Article 370 was considered ineffective by both houses of the Indian parliament. From this historic day, the J&K was considered the same as other states of India and got the status of union territory. At present, all the provisions of the Indian constitution apply to J&K, including the RTE Act. The main aim of the present paper is to study the educational status of students who belong to underprivileged classes in J&K before and after the abrogation of Article 370 and the implementation of the RTE Act. Therefore, the following objectives are framed for the current study:

1. To study the educational status of underprivileged classes (OBC, SC, and ST) nationally.
2. To compare the pre and post-educational status of underprivileged classes (OBC, SC, and ST) in J&K after abrogation of article 370.

METHODOLOGY

The present research is based on secondary sources. This article is an attempt to study and compare the educational status of Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Caste (SC), and Scheduled Tribe (ST) at the national level and in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. A database has been created to attain the study's objectives, including research papers, government statistical data, articles, and websites. The data from secondary sources was critically analyzed using quantitative and graphical methods.

FINDINGS

Educational Status of Underprivileged Classes in India

The underprivileged classes of Indian society constitute that group of people who lay behind to enjoy a quality life. These classes are often discriminated against by mainstream people physically, mentally, emotionally, educationally, socially, and culturally (Bhoi & Lakra, 2022). Underprivileged classes can be defined as those groups of people who suffer from racial or ethnic prejudice (Maurya, 2022). Further, they are also discriminated against based on their culture and jobs. Moreover, the caste-based society makes them handicapped based on their socio-economic status as well as the caste in which they were born. Due to societal barriers, they cannot grow themselves and enhance their natural potential. Furthermore, they are also harassed based on culture and social practices. Further, they are still restricted, even today, from enjoying their fundamental human rights in rural areas of the country.

The ultimate objective of this biased behavior is to exclude such disadvantaged persons from mainstream social activities, depriving them of their basic life and liberty. Furthermore, it also tends to keep them separated from society, depriving them of economic and intellectual ability so that they would

serve the rich and dominant members of society (Ramavath & Krishnaiah, 2023). Besides this, numerous challenges, such as land and property-related rights, affect their social and cultural status. Although the Constitution of India has granted equal rights to all its citizens, discrimination is still practiced against marginalized groups on social, economic, and cultural grounds, hindering the development of society (Bhatla, 2016). The current article focused on the educational status of three social categories of India: backward class (BC), scheduled castes (SC), and scheduled tribes (ST).

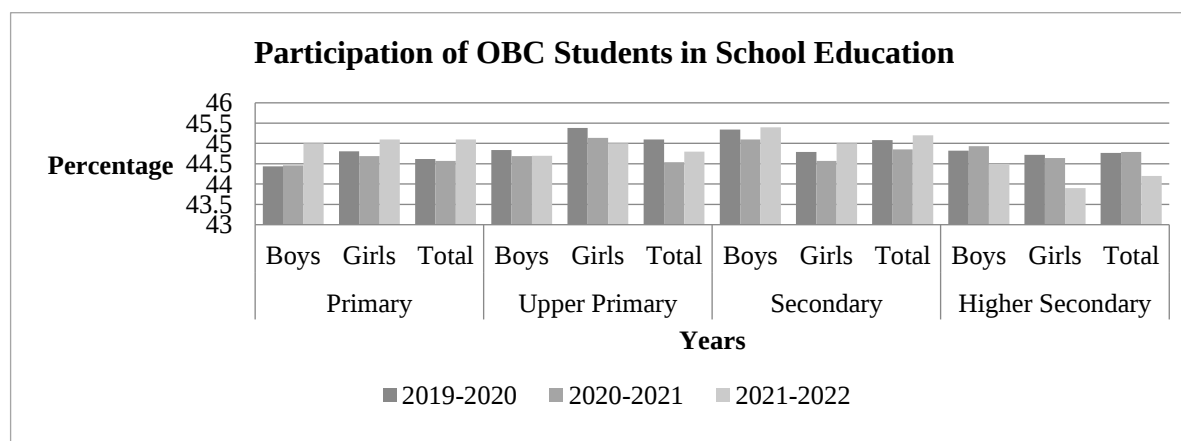
Backward Classes (BC) /Other Backward Classes (OBC)

The Indian government uses the phrase "backward class" to refer to castes that have educational and social disadvantages. These castes face social problems like poverty, low status, and illiteracy (Goyal & Dharmendra, 2014). Three commissions were constituted for backward classes in India. The first commission was set up in 1953 under Shri Kaka Kalelkar's chairmanship, also known as the Kaka Kalelkar Commission. The Commission had been charged with establishing standards for granting concessions to "socially and educationally backward classes" beyond scheduled castes and tribes. According to this commission, 2399 castes came under backward classes in the entire country. Moreover, it also classified 837 castes as the most backward communities in India. Further, a second commission was set up in 1979, known as the Mandal Commission. It identified 3743 communities or castes as backward classes in India. Moreover, this report declares that the OBC group accounts for 52% of the country's population. Furthermore, a new commission named the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was set up in 1990 as a permanent body to examine and recommend including and excluding communities or castes in the OBC list. According to the last census of India, OBCs constitute 44% of the Indian population (NBCB, 2022).

TABLE 1
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA
(IN PERCENTAGE)

Academic Year	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Higher Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2019-2020	44.44	44.81	44.62	44.84	45.38	45.1	45.34	44.79	45.08	44.82	44.72	44.77
2020-2021	44.46	44.69	44.57	44.69	45.14	44.54	45.1	44.57	44.85	44.93	44.64	44.79
2021-2022	45.0	45.1	45.1	44.7	45.0	44.8	45.4	45.0	45.2	44.5	43.9	44.2

FIGURE 1
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN INDIA (IN PERCENTAGE)



Tables 1 and Fig. 1 depict the enrollment of OBC students at the primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels in the last three academic years, according to available data on the

government website under UDISE reports. It shows that in the academic year 2019-2020, the enrollment of boys at the primary level was 44.44%; it increased in 2020-2021 (44.46%) and further increased in 2021-2022 (45%). Furthermore, it has been analyzed that the girls enrollment rate at the primary level was 44.81% in the years 2019–2020, which further decreased in 2020–2021 (44.69%) and then again arose in the academic year 2021–2022 (45.1%). Moreover, it has been observed that the total enrollment rate of OBC students at the primary level was 44.62% in 2019–2020, which declined in 2020–2021 (44.57%) and again arose in 2021–2022 (45.1%).

The enrollment rate of boys in the upper primary was 44.84%, which started to decrease in the next academic session, i.e., 2020–2021 (44.69%), and slightly increased in 2021–2022 (44.7%). Similarly, the girls' enrolment rate was 45.38% earlier but declined in the academic years 2020–2021 (45.14%) and 2021–2022 (45%). Furthermore, the above data shows that the total enrollment of OBC students at the upper primary level has decreased in the last three academic years, i.e., 2019-2020 (45.1%), 2020-2021 (44.54%), and 2021-2022 (44.48%).

From the above data, a similar enrollment pattern has been observed among boys and girls, and the total enrollment of OBC students at the secondary level of education in recent years (increased, further decreased, and then again increased). Boys enrollment 2019-2020 (45.34%), 2020-2021 (45.1%) and 2021-2022 (45.4%). Girls enrollment 2019-2020 (44.79%), 2020-2021 (44.57%) and 2021-2022 (45%). Total enrollment: 2019-2020 (45.08%), 2020-2021 (44.85%) and 2021-2022 (45.2%).

Further, at the higher secondary level, it has been observed that boys' enrollment was 44.82% in 2019-2020; it increased in 2020-2021 (44.93%), and in the next academic session, 2021-2022 it declined up to 44.5%. A similar pattern has been observed in the total enrollment of OBC students: 2019-2020 (44.77%), 2020-2021 (44.79%) and 2021-2022 (44.2%). However, a decline has been observed in girls' enrollment in 2019-2020 (44.72%), 2020-2021 (44.64%) and 2021-2022 (43.9%).

TABLE 2
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA (IN PERCENTAGE)

Academic Year	Male	Female
2018-2019	50.83	49.17
2017-2018	50.54	49.46
2020-2021	49	51

FIGURE 2
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

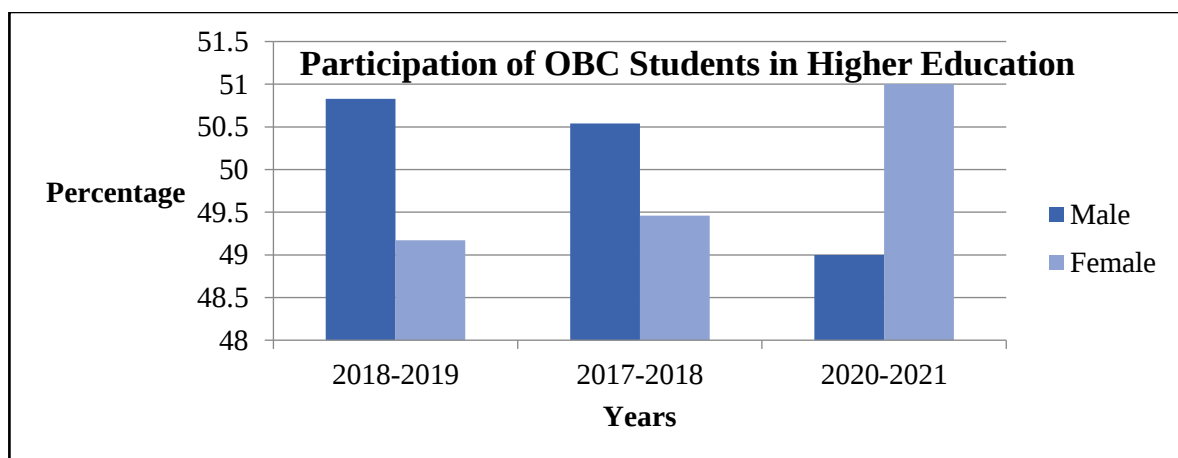


Table 2 and Fig. 2 clearly show the participation of male and female students in higher education. The above data has been collected from AISHE reports. From the data, it has been observed that the ratio of male OBC students has decreased in the last three academic years. However, the enrollment rate of female students has increased in recent academic years.

Scheduled Caste (SC)

The Scheduled Castes (SC) occupy the lowest status in the socio-economic hierarchy of Indian society (Raghavendra, 2020). They represent the majority of the depressed classes. Professor M.N. Srinivas (1966) described that people who belong to the scheduled caste are considered low-caste people and are engaged in low-ranking occupations by the upper caste of society. The upper castes discriminate against these castes. Historically, they were not accepted by the upper caste. They are distributed across India. Borooah's (2005) study on caste inequality and development in India found that unequal treatment of SCs and STs accounts for at least one-third of the income disparities between upper and lower castes. Sundaram and Tendulker's (2013) study found that SCs are the most deprived of society regarding their socio-educational status.

TABLE 3
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS IN SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA (IN NUMBERS)

Academic Year	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Higher Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2019-2020	1,21,44,471	1,14,37,238	2,35,81,709	65,04,612	61,80,479	1,26,85,091	36,37,939	33,82,489	70,20,428	22,69,832	22,06,346	44,76,178
2020-2021	1,22,10,294	1,14,67,526	2,36,77,820	63,18,605	60,25,076	1,23,43,681	36,74,333	34,14,628	70,88,959	23,84,527	23,13,737	46,98,264
2021-2022	1,21,61,928	1,13,79,977	2,35,41,905	64,72,072	61,59,990	1,26,32,062	33,91,116	36,27,466	70,18,582	25,97,858	25,05,366	51,03,224

FIGURE 3
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN INDIA

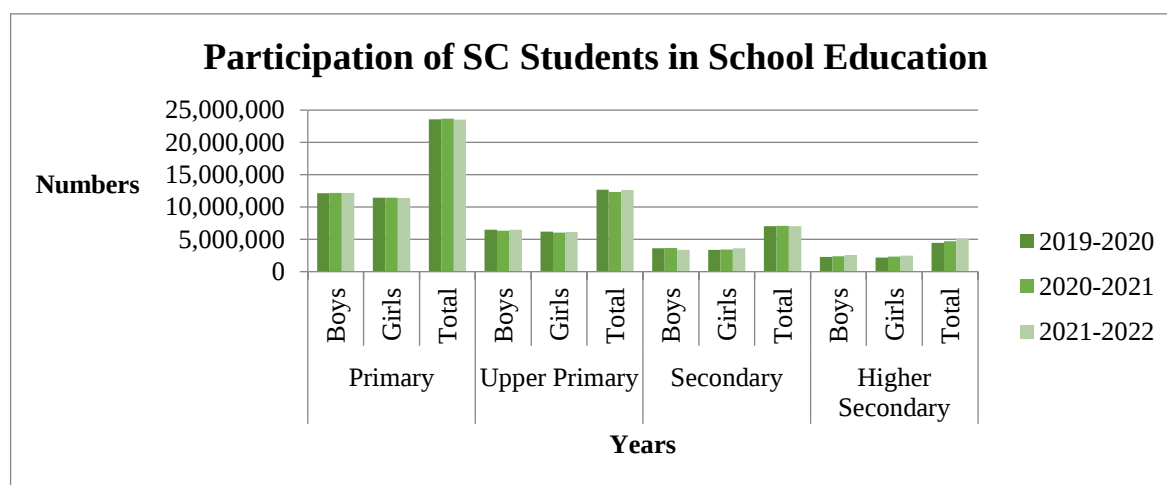


Table 3 and Fig. 3 depict the enrollment of SC students at the primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels in the last three academic years, according to available data on the government website under UDISE reports. It shows that in the academic year 2019-2020, the enrollment of boys at the primary level was 1,21,41,471; it decreased in 2020-2021 (1,22,10,294) and further increased in 2021-2022 (1,21,61,928). Furthermore, it has been analyzed that the girls enrollment rate at the primary level

was 1,14,37,238 in the years 2019–2020, which further increased in 2020–2021 (1,14,67,526) and then declined in the academic year 2021–2022 (1,13,79,977). Moreover, it has been observed that the total enrollment rate of SC students at the primary level was 2,35,81,709 in 2019–2020, which arose in 2020–2021 (2,36,77,820) and then declined in 2021–2022 (2,35,41,905).

The enrollment rate of boys in the upper primary was 65,04,612, which started to decrease in the next academic session, i.e., 2020–2021 (60,25,076), and further increased in 2021–2022 (64,72,072). Similarly, the girls' enrolment rate was 61,80,479 earlier, but it declined in the academic year 2020–2021 (60,25,076) and then increased in 2021–2022 (61,59,990). Furthermore, the above data shows that the total enrollment of SC students at the upper primary level has increased in the last academic year, i.e., 2019-2020 (1,26,85,091), further decreased in 2020-2021 (1,23,43,681), and again arose in 2021-2022 (1,26,32,062).

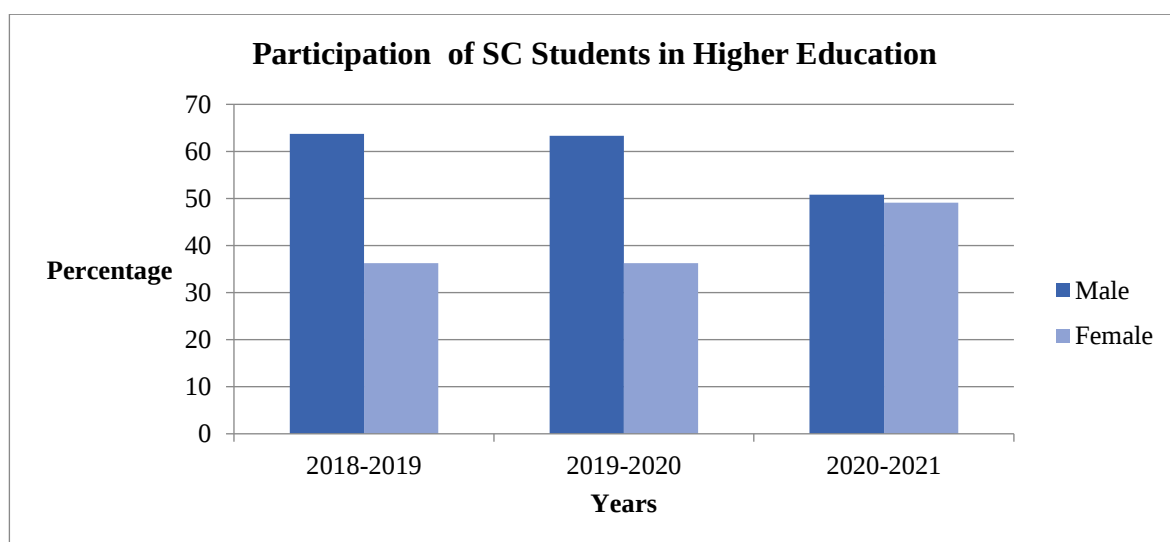
From the above data, it has been observed that there were 36,37,939 in 2019–2020 at the secondary level, which further increased in 2020–2021 (36,74,333) and then declined in 2021–2022 (33,91,116). However, the enrollment rate of girls increased in the last three academic years: 2019-2020 (33,82,489), 2020-2021 (34,14,628), and 2021-2022 (36,27,466). Further, the enrollment rate of total students was 70,20,428 in the academic year 2019-2020, which further increased in 2020-21 (70,88,959) and then declined in 2021-2022 (70,18,582).

From the above data, it has been observed that there has been an increase in the enrollment rate of boys, girls, and total students of SC at a higher secondary level of education in the last three years. Boys enrollment in 2019-2020 (22,69,832), 2020-2021 (23,84,527), and 2021-2022 (25,97,858). Girls enrollment is in 2019-2020 (22,06,346), 2020-2021 (23,13,737), and 2021-2022 (25,05,366). Total enrollment: 2019-2020 (44,76,178), 2020-2021 (70,88,959), and 2021-2022 (51,03,224).

TABLE 4
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA
(IN PERCENTAGE)

Academic Year	Male	Female
2018-2019	63.73	36.27
2019-2020	63.34	36.27
2020-2021	50.78	49.12

FIGURE 4
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA



From Table 4 and Fig. 4, it is clear that the enrollment of female students at higher education levels is lower than male students in the academic year 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. However, in the recent annual report of AISHE 2020-2021, it is found that the ratio of female students has increased.

Scheduled Tribe (ST)

Tribal groups were the first settlers in India. In India, around 400 tribal groups account for 8% of the overall population (Saha, 2023; Mitra and Singh, 2008). The country has over 87 million Scheduled Tribe (ST) members. ST, also known as Adivasis, originates from the original inhibitions of Adi, which means "old," and Vasi, often known as "those who stay." They are primarily found in India's central, northeastern, and western parts.

TABLE 5
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF ST STUDENTS AT SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA
(IN NUMBERS)

Academic Year	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Higher Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2019-2020	65,94,413	62,07,467	1,28,01,880	33,56,619	33,56,619	65,50,523	18,00,746	18,00,746	35,34,257	9,50,153	9,56,661	19,06,814
2020-2021	65,16,917	61,44,941	1,26,61,858	34,00,246	32,50,552	66,50,798	18,25,512	17,68,779	35,94,291	9,85,982	10,07,701	19,93,683
2021-2022	64,57,620	60,85,033	1,25,42,653	34,43,461	32,97,583	67,41,044	14,91,489	14,91,517	29,83,006	11,26,730	11,54,683	22,81,413

FIGURE 5
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF ST STUDENTS AT SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA

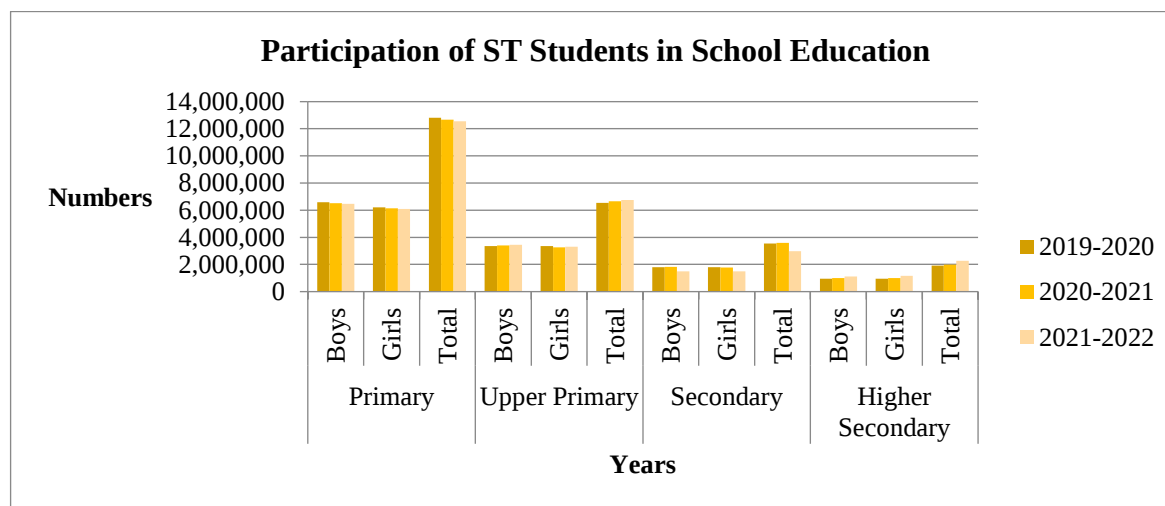


Table 5 and Fig. 5 depict the enrollment of ST students at the primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels in the last three academic years, according to available data on the government website under UDISE reports. It shows that in the academic year 2019-2020, the enrollment of boys at the primary level was 65,94,413; it decreased in 2020-2021 (65,16,917) and again decreased in 2021-2022 (64,57,620). Furthermore, it has been analyzed that the girls enrollment rate at the primary level was 62,07,467 in the years 2019–2020, which further decreased in 2020–2021 (61,49,441) and then again declined in the academic year 2021–2022 (1,13,79,977). Moreover, it has been observed that the total

enrollment rate of ST students at the primary level was 1,28,01,880 in 2019–2020, which arose in 2020–2021 (1,26,61,858) and then declined in 2021–2022 (1,25,42,653). The enrollment rate of boys in the upper primary was 33,56,619, which started to increase in the next academic session, i.e., 2020–2021 (34,00,246), and further increased in 2021–2022 (34,43,461). However, the enrollment rate of girls was 33,56,619 earlier; further, it declined in the academic year 2020–2021 (32,50,552) and then decreased in 2021–2022 (32,97,583). Furthermore, the above data shows that the total enrollment of ST students at the upper primary level has increased in the last academic year, i.e., 2019-2020 (65,50,523), further increased in 2020-2021 (66,50,798), and again arose in 2021-2022 (67,41,044). From the above data, it has been observed that there were 18,00,746 in 2019–2020 at the secondary level, which further increased in 2020–2021 (18,25,512) and then declined in 2021–2022 (14,91,517). However, the enrollment rate of girls decreased in the last three academic years: 2019-2020 (18,00,746), 2020-2021 (17,68,779), and 2021-2022 (14,91,517). Further, the enrollment rate of total students was 35,34,257 in the academic year 2019-2020, which further increased in 2020-21 (35,94,291) and then declined in 2021-2022 (29,83,006). From the above data, it has been observed that there has been an increase in the enrollment rate of boys, girls, and total ST students at a higher secondary level of education in the last three years. Boys enrollment in 2019-2020 (9,50,153), 2020-2021 (9,85,982), and 2021-2022 (11,26,730). Girls enrollment is in 2019-2020 (9,56,661), 2020-2021 (10,07,701), and 2021-2022 (11,54,683). Total enrollment: 2019-2020 (19,06,814), 2020-2021 (19,93,683), and 2021-2022 (22,81,413).

TABLE 6
PARTICIPATION OF ST STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA
(IN PERCENTAGE)

Academic Year	Male	Female
2018-2019	59.36	40.64
2019-2020	58.21	41.79
2020-2021	49.37	50.63

FIGURE 6
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF ST STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

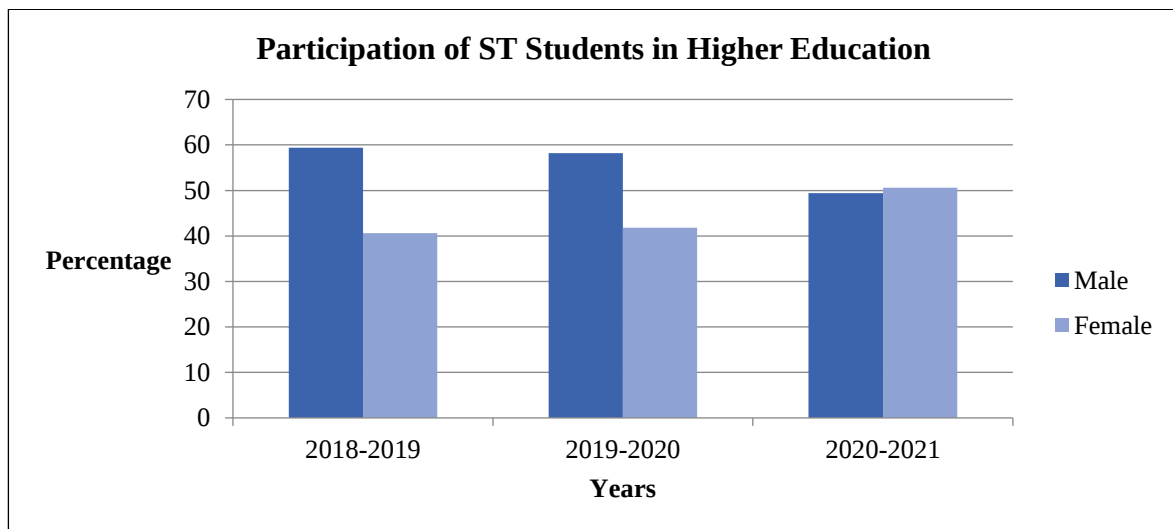


Table 6 and Fig. 6 depict that the ratio of female students was 40.64% in the academic year 2018-2019, which increased in academic years 2019-2020 (41.79%) and increased to 50.63% in 2020-2021.

However, there has been a sudden decrease in the male ratio: 2018-2019 (59.36%), 2019-2020 (58.21%), and 2020-2021 (49.37%).

OBJECTIVE 2

Educational Status of Underprivileged Classes in India.

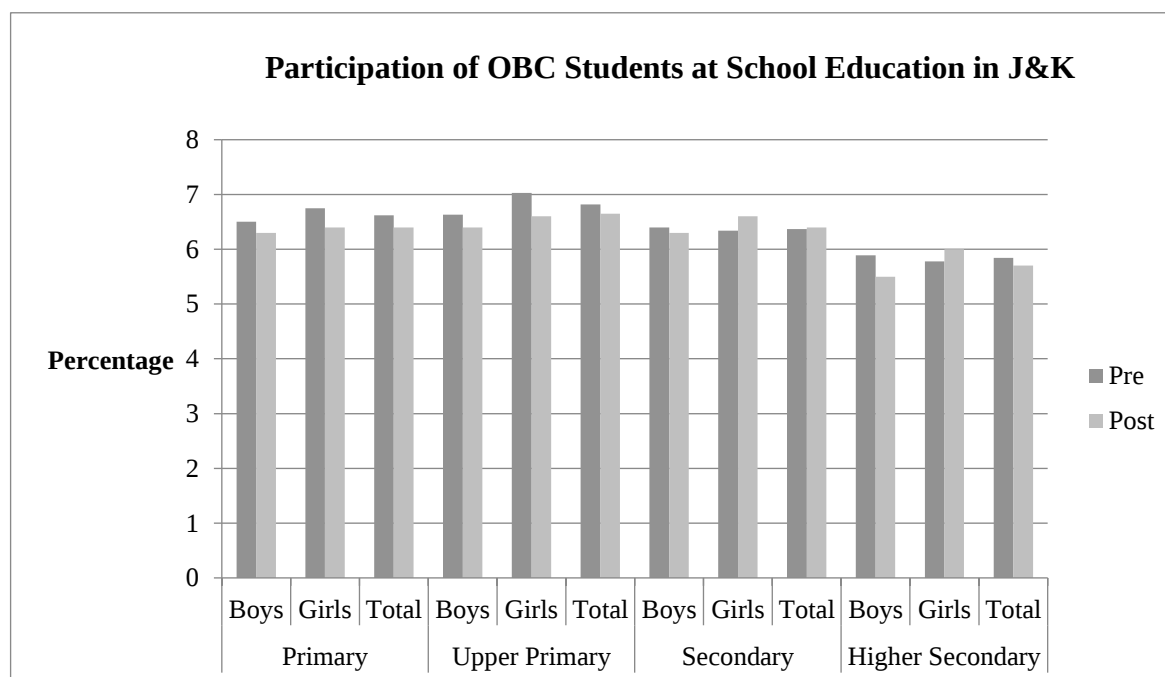
A large population of OBCs, SCs, and STs also exists in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. A brief discussion is given below about the educational status of unprivileged classes in this region before and after the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution.

Backward classes (BC) /Other Backward Classes (OBC)

TABLE 7
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN J&K (IN PERCENTAGE)

Abrogation of Article 370 (Academic Year)	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Higher Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pre (2018-2019)	6.50	6.75	6.62	6.63	7.03	6.82	6.40	6.34	6.37	5.89	5.78	5.84
Post (2021-2022)	6.30	6.40	6.40	6.40	6.60	6.65	6.30	6.60	6.40	5.50	6.0	5.70

FIGURE 7
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN J&K (IN PERCENTAGE)



From Table 7 and Fig. 7, it is clear that the enrollment of OBC students at the primary level was 6.50% before the abrogation of Article 370. Then it declined up to 6.30% after it. Similarly, a decline is

also observed in boys' and girls' enrollment after the abrogation of Article 370. Moreover, declination in enrollment has been seen at the upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels after the abrogation of Article 370.

TABLE 8
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL IN J&K (IN PERCENTAGE)

Abrogation of Article 370 (Academic Year)	Male	Female
Pre (2018-2019)	50.83	49.17
Post (2020-2021)	49	51

FIGURE 8
PARTICIPATION OF OBC STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL IN J&K

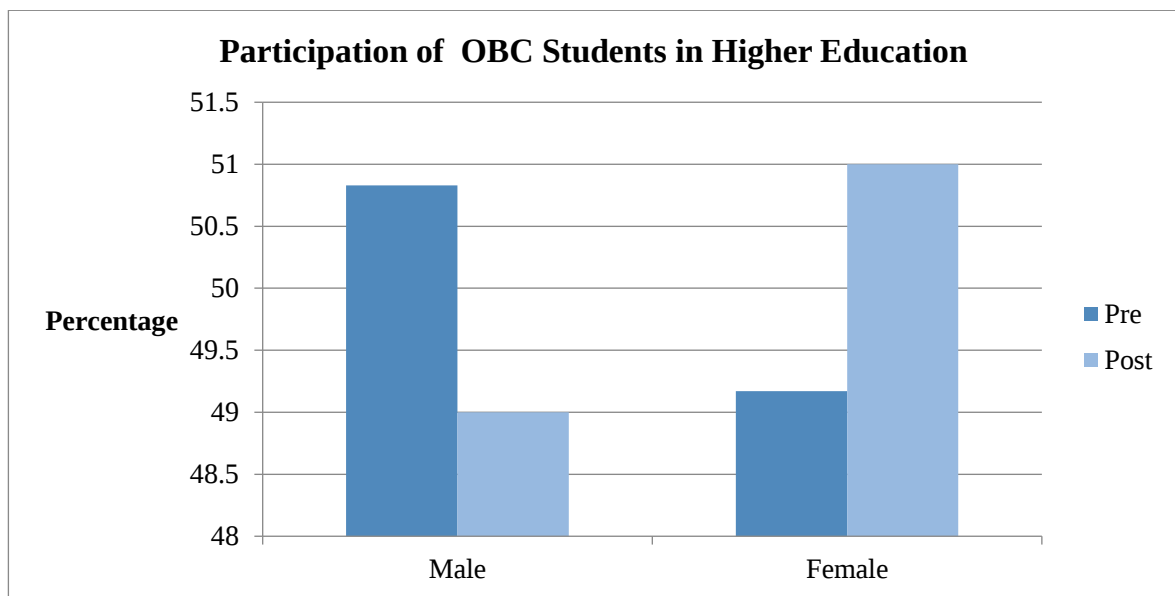


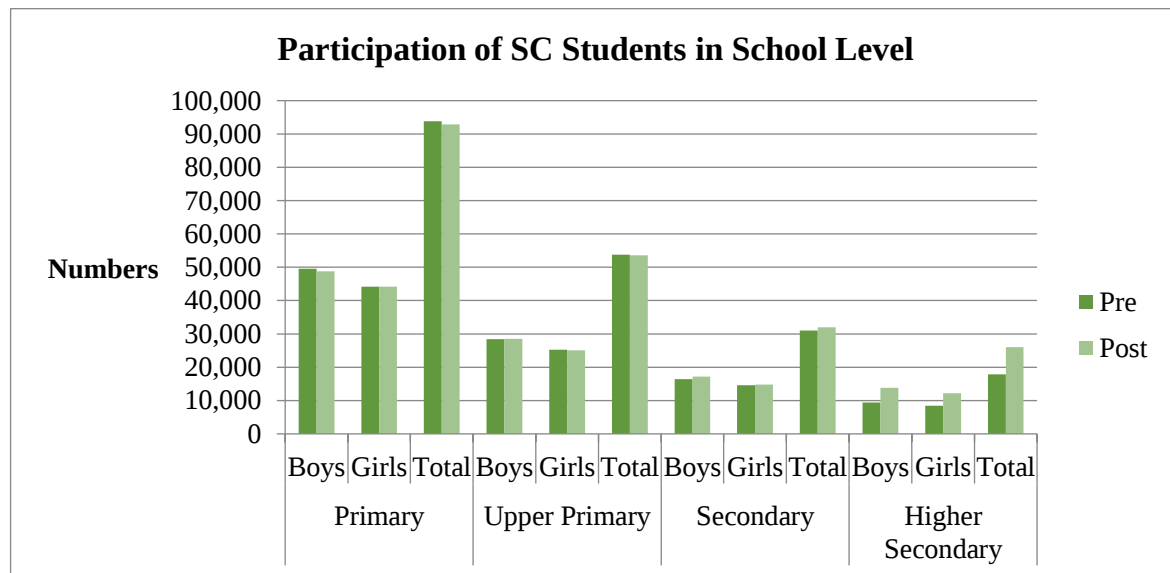
Table 8 and Fig.8 depict that female student enrollment increased in higher education, i.e., 51% after the abrogation of Article 370; earlier, it was 49.17%. However, the male student rate has slightly declined from 50.83% to 49%.

Scheduled Caste (SC)

TABLE 9
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN J&K (IN NUMBERS)

Abrogation of Article 370 (Academic Year)	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Higher Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pre (2018-19)	49,561	44,220	93,781	28,432	25,304	53,736	16,444	14,552	30,996	9,388	8,479	17,867
Post (2020-21)	48,764	44,130	92,894	28,503	25,090	53,593	17,177	14,775	31,952	13,785	12,208	25,993

FIGURE 9
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN J&K

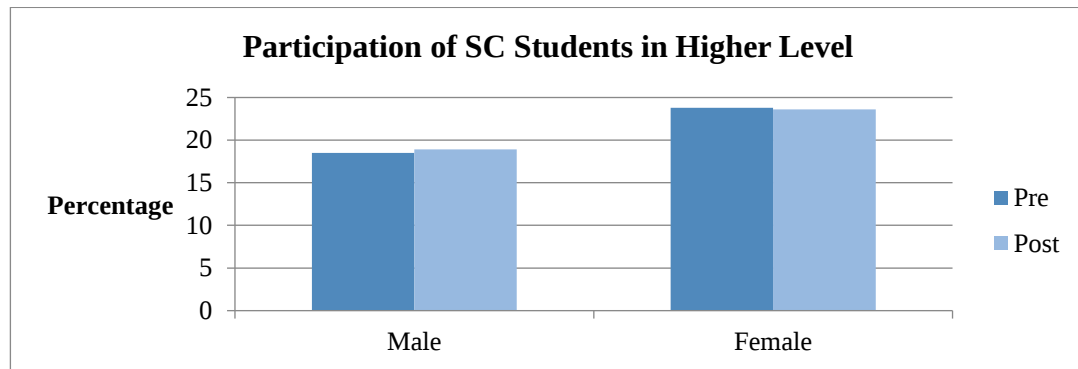


From Table 9 and Fig. 9, it is clear that the enrollment of students decreased to 92,894 after the abrogation of Article 370 at the primary level; earlier, it was 93,781. However, there is a slight difference in the number of students before and after the abrogation of Article 370 at the upper primary level. At the same time, the number of students increased from 30,996 to 31,952 at the secondary level after the abrogation of Article 370. Similarly, it is observed that many students' enrollment rose from 17,867 to 25,993 after the abrogation of Article 370 at the higher secondary level.

TABLE 10
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL IN J&K (IN PERCENTAGE)

Abrogation of Article 370 (Academic Year)	Male	Female
Pre (2018-2019)	18.5	23.8
Post (2020-2021)	18.9	23.6

FIGURE 10
PARTICIPATION OF SC STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL IN J&K



Scheduled Tribe (ST)

TABLE 11
PARTICIPATION OF ST STUDENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL IN J&K (IN NUMBERS)

Abrogation of Article 370 (Article Year)	Primary			Upper Primary			Secondary			Higher Secondary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pre (2018-2019)	99,030	90,905	1,89,935	28,432	25,304	53,736	16,444	14,552	30,996	9,388	8,479	17,867
Post (2020-2021)	92,549	84,215	1,76,764	44,403	39,563	83,966	21,077	17,190	38,267	10,265	8,465	18,730

FIGURE 11
PARTICIPATION OF ST STUDENTS AT SCHOOL EDUCATION

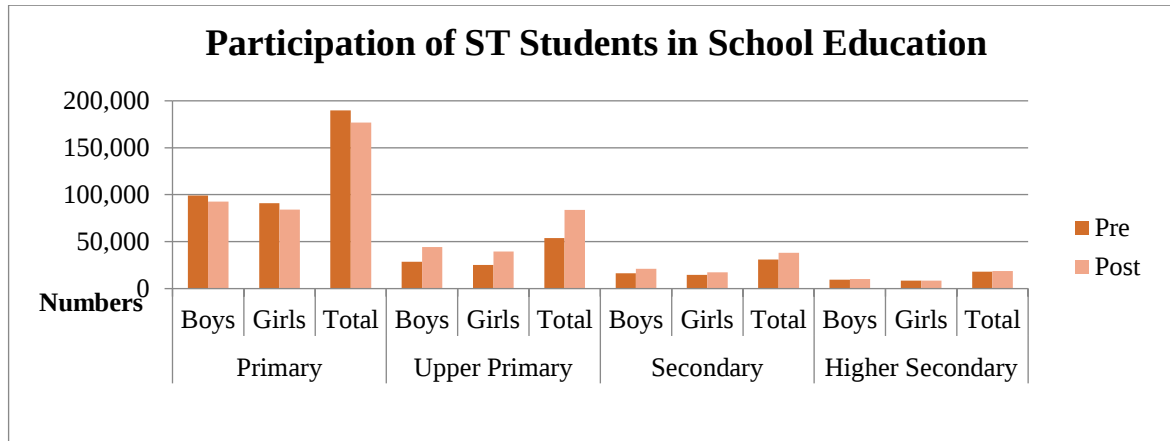


Table 11 and Fig. 11 depict that ST students' enrollment decreased at the primary level of school education after the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir from 1,89,935 to 1,76,764. However, there was an increment in the total number of students at upper primary (from 53,736 to 83,966), secondary (from 30,996 to 38,267), and higher secondary level (from 17,867 to 18,730) after the abrogation of Article 370.

TABLE 12
PARTICIPATION OF ST STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL IN J&K (INPERCENTAGE)

Abrogation of Article 370 (Academic Year)	Male	Female
Pre (2018-2019)	18	17.2
Post (2020-2021)	23	19.2

FIGURE 12
PARTICIPATION OF ST STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL IN J&K

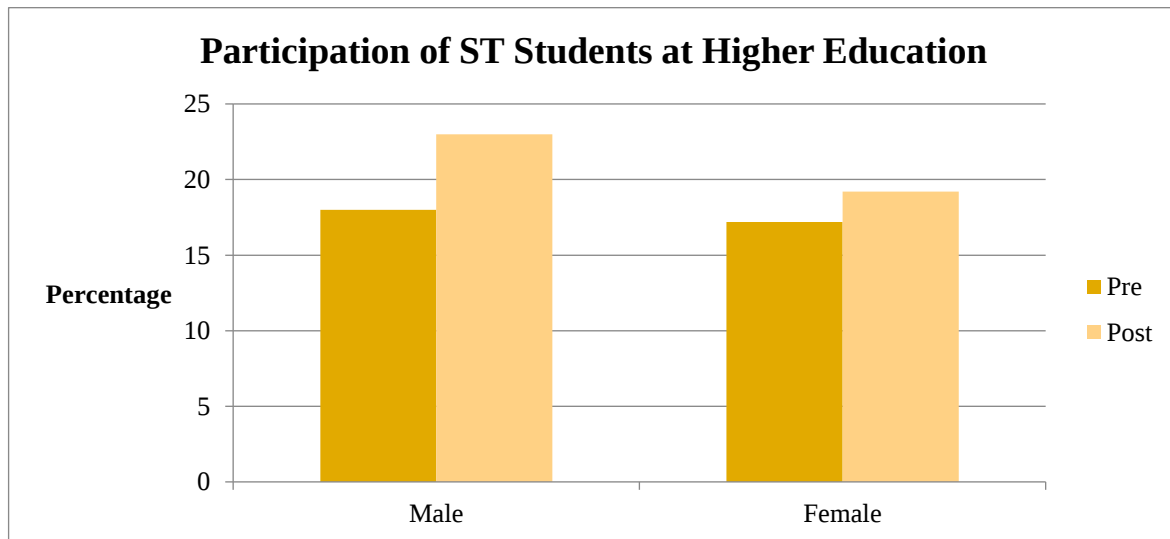


Table 12 and Fig. 12 clearly show that the enrollment of ST male and female students arises after the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. Earlier, 18% of the male students were enrolled in higher education. Still, after the abrogation of Article 370, their enrollment was up to 23%. Similarly, female enrollment also rose from 17.2% to 19.2%.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

From the above statistical data, which has been collected from the various government websites of India, OBC constitutes 44% of the total population (NBCB, 2022). The educational status of this class or community is also around 44% at the school level and nearly 50% at the higher education level in the recent academic years. The data signifies that OBC classes have raised their educational status at the national level in recent years. However, the educational status of the same class is low in J&K. Further, a slight decline has been observed in the enrollment rate of OBC students at school after the abrogation of Article 370. Moreover, an increment is observed in the student ratio in higher education. Further, the enrollment of students who belong to the SC and ST categories is still lower than that of other classes at the national level. However, it has been observed that the enrollment rate of SC students has been raised in J&K after the abrogation of Article 370 at secondary and higher secondary levels of education. Similarly, the enrollment of ST students has also been enhanced in J&K after abrogation at the upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels. Moreover, the ratio of male and female students at higher levels also increased.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that the abrogation of Article 370 may be one factor that enhances the enrollment of SC/ST students in education. Earlier, people who migrated from any part of India to J&K never got permanent residency status in this region. The children of the migrated communities could not access quality education and government jobs in the state. It results in the deprivation of these communities, both socially and educationally (Kawale, 2024). Furthermore, communities like Gorkha and Balmiki were not eligible to pursue various professional courses in Jammu and Kashmir (Aggarwal, 2024; Venkatesan, 2020). The Balmiki community from Punjab migrated to J&K in 1957 to help with sanitation crises. However, it could not benefit from government schemes and policies for the Scheduled Caste due to state-subject regulations. Further, the Gorkha community that migrated from Nepal got citizenship in all parts of India except J&K. This community contributed its services to the Indian armed forces. However, it has been given no recognition in Jammu and Kashmir (Aggarwal, 2024).

In a nutshell, it can be said that only after a few years of the abrogation of Article 370 has been observed that the educational status of SC and ST has improved. Further, it can be predicted that the academic status of these underprivileged classes will improve further.

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