

## Science, Spirituality And Education Among Primitive Tribes Of Rajasthan

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**ABSTRACT:** - Science, Spirituality and Education have strong association with one another. Today our way of life is completely governed by science and its fruits surround us on all sides. The word science comes from the Latin *scientia* meaning knowledge. It refers to a system of acquiring knowledge. Spirituality is something that is not seen but is experienced supernaturally. It is having a personal relationship with God and living according his percepts. It can be something as simple as looking for a higher meaning to life, or something so complex that one can base their beliefs, religion and overall life around it. It plays a very sub sequential role in our personal life. It helps us to govern what is right and what is wrong in our everyday life. On other hands, Education is the natural, harmonious progressive development of man's innate powers. Inimitable communities of India are commonly known as tribal or Adivasi or Vanvasi or Girijan and are recognized as Scheduled Tribes under Article 342 of the Indian Constitution. At present, more than 533 tribes in India have been notified under Article 342 of the Constitution with the number of 12 tribes belonging to the State of Rajasthan. Saharia is only primitive tribal community which is more marginalized than the ST population of Rajasthan. But this community has depth knowledge about medicinal plants and their use in different diseases. The spiritual life of Saharia Primitive tribe is also the subject of research. Some NGOs' are trying to take benefit of their fundamental, scientific and spiritual knowledge. In this Research Paper, it is tried to discuss by the researcher to highlights of the "*Science, Spirituality and Education among Primitive tribes of Rajasthan.*"

**Keywords:** - *Science, Spirituality, Education, Primitive Tribe, Rajasthan.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Around seven percent of tribal population of India lives in Rajasthan. It has rich cultural diversity and biodiversity. The state of Rajasthan is situated between 23°3' and 30°12' N latitude and 69°30' and 78°17' E longitude. The total land area of the state is about 3, 24,239 km<sup>2</sup>. The physical features are characterized mainly by the Aravallis and to the some extent by the vindhyan formation, and the Deccan trap. Biodiversity of Rajasthan is related with the Aravalli hills. About 12.44% of the population belongs to tribes such as the Bhil, Bhil-Meena, Damor, Dhanka, Garasia, Kathodi, Kokna, Kolidhor, Naikara, Patelia, Meena, and Sahariya and reside in remote areas devoid of basic infra-structure facilities. Nomadic tribes (Banjara, Gadolia-Lohar, Kalbelia, Sikligar, Kanjar, Sansi, and Bagri) further enrich the ethnic heritage of Rajasthan. These ethnic groups are widely distributed throughout the state and have considerable communication with each other. Unique communities of India are commonly known as tribal or Adivasi or Vanvasi or Girijan communities and are recognized as Scheduled Tribes under Article 342 of the Indian Constitution.

At present, more than 573 tribal groups in India have been notified under Article 342 of the Constitution with the number of 12 tribal groups belonging to the State of Rajasthan. Sahariya is only primitive tribal community who are more marginalized than the ST population of Rajasthan. This only primitive of Rajasthan has fundamental skills and knowledge of natural science, spirituality and education in spite of highly illiteracy rate. They do not know how to read and write but know about medicinal plants, know about how to extract honey from bee hive. They know fundamental knowledge of performing and visual art, wall painting and terracotta art and so on. They are skilled but useless due to lack of degree in their particular skills.

**Rajasthan:** - Earlier to 1950, Rajasthan was well-known as 'Rajputana' the state of Rajputs to recognize that most of the princely states in that region were ruled by Rajputs kings. In 1950, several princely states were merged together to reform the state of Rajasthan (Johnson, 1996). Rajasthan is situated in the northern part of India. It is the largest State in India by area constituting 10.4 percent of the total geographical area of India and it accounts for 5.67 percent of population of India. Topographically, deserts in the State constitute a large chunk of the land mass, where the settlements are scattered and the density of population is quite low. It is administratively divided into 7 divisions, 33 districts, 244 Tehsils, 249 Panchayat Samities, 9,177 Gram Panchayats, inhabited villages and 184 urban local bodies as of Census 2011. The State has overall sex ratio with the tune of 928 females per 1,000 males according to the provisional totals of Census 2011. Rajasthan

ranks eighth amongst all the States in India with a population of 6.86 crore. The district of Baran located in South-East of Rajasthan has a geographical area of 6,992 square km with 'Sahariya' Primitive tribal population. Baran has eight tehsils while 'Sahariya' Primitive tribe concentrated in its Kishanganj and Shahabad blocks.

**What is Tribe and Primitive Tribe:-**The term tribe is derived from the Latin word '*tribes*' meaning the '*poor or the masses*'. In English language the word '*tribe*' appeared in the sixteenth century and denoted a community of persons claiming descent from a common ancestor. The Indian tribal society is a unique society with diversity of nature and people. In our country, known for the extreme poverty of the masses, the tribes constitute the core of the poor. Poverty, poor health and sanitation, illiteracy and other social problems among the tribes are exerting a dragging effect on the Indian economy. A new trend in ethno methodology which came during the British period was a theory propounded by **Vemer Elwin (1943)** who suggested that tribes should be kept isolated in their hills and forests. Elwin's theory is known in social anthropology as '**public park theory**'. He suggested that ordinarily the non-tribal people should not be allowed to enter into tribal pockets without permission of the state government. This system would guarantee the isolation of the tribes. There is no doubt that tribes are backward and exploited more when compared to other ethnic groups of our country. There is less means of communication in tribal areas, lack of proper drinking water, illiteracy; inadequate medical facilities are some of the major problems. Primitive Tribal Groups Based on a 4-Points criteria viz –

- i) Smallness in size and diminishing in number.
- ii) Backwardness and isolation.
- iii) Pre-agricultural technology.
- iv) Very low literacy

The Government of India identified more than 72 tribal communities as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) spread over 18 States/UTs. There is a marked difference between the relatively advanced tribal groups and the primitive tribal groups. The cultural gap between the primitive tribal groups and the nontribal societies is wide. The socio-economic conditions of PTGs are much worse than other tribal groups. India has the largest concentration of tribal people anywhere in the world except perhaps in Africa. The tribes are children of nature and their lifestyle is conditioned by the eco-system. India with a variety of ecosystems, presents a varied tribal population throughout its length and breadth. The areas inhabited by the tribal constitute a significant part of the under developed areas of the country. The tribes live mostly in isolated villages or hamlets.

**Primitive Tribes of Rajasthan:** - Among twelve major ethnic groups, Sahariya is the only primitive tribe inhabiting 'Baran' district of Rajasthan. It is also residing in part of Kota, Dungarpur and Sawai Madhopur districts in small proportion. This tribal group is the major and the most backward dweller of the forest of this area. The total population of Sahariya primitive community is 79,312 with sex ratio of 951 females per 1000 males, as per the census 2001. According to census 2011, the total population of Sahariya primitive community is 94,975 with 933 females and 1000 males' sex ratio while the final data is not available. Female sex ratio is decreased due to negative impact of information technology as compare to census 2001. The People of Primitive tribes Saharia in Rajasthan are trapped in an intergenerational vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy, deprivation of positive attitude and starvation. The word Sahariya is said to be originated from the Arabian language Sehera or wilderness. Mugals gave their present name Sahar that means jungle and accordingly the came to be called Sahariya or the people who residing in dense forest. Sahariya are believed to be the first settlers in Rajasthan. That is why the Rajasthan Government has declared this area as the Sahariya region. They practice Hinduism as their religion and speak a dialect influenced by Hadoti. Sahariya primitive tribe is the fourth largest tribal community of Rajasthan.

**Primitive Tribes and Science:** - Let's consider some examples about scientific study. A biologist observing the territorial behaviors of animals, a geologist examining the distribution of fossils in an outcrop and a chemist observing the rates of one chemical reaction at a variety of temperatures all the examples are observational and experimental science in order to find patterns in natural phenomena. Societies support science because of simple curiosity and because of the satisfaction and enlightenment that come from knowledge of the world around us. Science is the concerted human effort to understand, or to understand better, the history of the natural world and how the natural world works, with observable physical evidence as the basis of that understanding. In its broadest meaning of '*knowledge*', science enters the life of even the most primitive human being, who knows the safe from the poisonous berry, who has stored up some rudimentary ideas about building a hut, sharpening a spear, and fishing in the river. Science gives us safe food, free from harmful bacteria, in clean containers or hygienic tins. It also teaches us to eat properly, indicating a diet balanced in protein and carbohydrate and containing vitamins. Since ancient time animals, their parts and their products have constituted part of the inventory of medicinal substances used in various cultures. Additionally immense knowledge has come down to

modern times through folklore as various practices became a part of tradition among various groups such as Sahariya ethnic group of Rajasthan which has its great tradition. Plants species are reported along with plants parts like raw fruits, leaves, bark, seeds and roots and some local formulations used medicinally for the treatment of various ailments by Sahariya community of Rajasthan. About 610 species of medicinal plants have been used by tribal population of Rajasthan (Singh and Pandey, 1998).

So Science refers to a system of acquiring knowledge. This system uses observation and experimentation to describe and explain natural phenomena. The term science also refers to the organized body of knowledge people have gained using that system. Less formally, the word science often describes any systematic field of study or the knowledge gained from it. Science is also a process of discovery that allows us to link isolated facts into coherent and comprehensive understandings of the natural world. People of Sahariya primitive tribe participate in the process of science directly or indirectly. They know the science of animals, medicinal plants and trees to whom with they build their residences and try to protect natural treasure like flora and fauna. Several plants species belong to different families are commonly used as medicine by Sahariya primitive tribe of Rajasthan. The plants species are commonly accessible in the region and play special role in folk medicine.

**Primitive Tribes and Spirituality:** - Spirituality plays a very sub sequential role in our personal life. First of all, spirituality helps us to govern what is right and what is wrong in our life. Many of the decisions that we make every day, we believe are a direct result of our spirituality. For as long as we can remember we have been raised to believe that we should live our life the way God would want us to live it. Therefore, whenever we have a decision to make, we have to consider, what is right? And what is wrong? Second of all, it also helps us to feel more secure about what will happen to our spirit once our life here on earth is over. We believe that there is a better place for our spirits once we leave this earth. Spirituality is having a personal relationship with God and living according His percepts. Since God created the world, He wanted us to have a relationship. Many of our spiritual beliefs have changed over time. When we were younger we believed that in order to go to haven a person had to loyally attend and be actively involved in Temples, Masques, Church and Gurudwa etc. But, as we grew older we were taught that the places which constructed by men are just the building in which we praise the lord. We were taught that the lord could be praised without the building. As a child we also had this image and belief that God was white. This white image that we had of God came from pictures that we saw as a child. These images and beliefs changed, as we got older because we were exposed to new information and a new way of thinking and we were able to investigate these things on our own.

Let us consider about past time of our life, we spend our whole life to think about our family, profession, struggles for job etc. Then suddenly we realize one day that there is more to life than the mere pursuit of things that do not last for long. It is an awakening or enlightenment. When our mind comes to now new reality of life, a new chapter or a new realization, it is an opening of the door of Spiritual life. Each day our life brings us new and innovative revelations about the world and people. Sometimes we notice them and sometimes we do not do so. Sometime we not only notice them but also learn new and valuable lessons from them. Spiritual people tell us that true enlighten is waking up to the reality one's own nature and knowing the distinction between reality and delusion. With an insight into the nature of our own existence and consciousness, a spiritual person can pierce through the veil of ignorance and see the reality that generally eludes ordinary groups of people. Following are some of the distinguishing features of a spiritually enlightened person.

- ❖ Enlightened person is awake when other is asleep.
- ❖ He has control over his senses, physical desires and needs.
- ❖ He is equal in all situations such as pain and pleasures.
- ❖ Mostly, he passes his time in meditation, concentration and in devotional services.
- ❖ He performs his duties without expectations and selfishness.

True Enlighten means developing right thinking, right view and right actions. It knows truth without the inference of the impurities of our mind like selfishness, egoism, desires, prejudice or kam, krodh lobh and moh. An enlighten person need not to be a religious person or a believer in Almighty God. An enlighten may happen in several ways like mental or physical. We can enlighten to a new truth or anew realization. We may obtain a new insight into the nature of relationship. We enlighten to a new reality when we grow through adverse situations like death of our closed relative or friend. An accident may open our eyes to the value of life. It has the potential to transform us and change our whole attitude towards life and relationships. Several events and circumstances in our life can trigger such experience. It may happen with regard to our self. When it happens we know that it happened with us. On the way of spiritual, we have discerning wisdom and intuitive ability as we obtain profound knowledge and insight into the nature of things through our mindfulness attention, whereby we can discern truth select wisely. Sometime, we spend our lives in a state of ignorance; unmindful of what is going on in our lives and what will happen in coming time. We have no idea why we do what we do

and why we live. Without goals and interests, we live rather mechanically and habitually. We go by our surface impressions, yielding to our weakness and impulses without making any effort to transform ourselves. We can overcome our limitations and see life with great vision and understanding. With practice, we perceive the realty hidden behind the material world. There are several different ways to express one's spirituality; rituals, songs, dances, stories, and writings are all common methods of expression. Spirituality can be found in almost anything. Finding spirituality in something can make someone feel enlightened and bring strong emotion and deep feeling. In some cases, people would be willing to sacrifice nearly anything to help maintain the integrity of what they find to be spiritual. The earth is found in many cultures to be regarded as highly spiritual. There are countless numbers of people willing to sacrifice money, material goods, jobs and several other things that most people take for granted, only to help keep what they find spiritual in its natural, beautiful, and wholesome state: nature.

Sahariya Primitive tribe also has strong trust in Spirituality. This community has its own local God Teja ji who is the God of snakes. They celebrate several fairs and festivals to enjoy divine life.

## II. PRIMITIVE TRIBES AND EDUCATION

Education is one of the most important factors influencing the development of a nation. It is an effort of the senior people to transfer their knowledge to the younger members of society. It is the key to all round human development. A nation's economic, social and cultural progress is determined by the education development of its citizens. Emile Durkheim defines education as *“The influence exercised by the adult generation upon those who are not yet ready for adult life”*. It enables us to know the world beyond our own surroundings and transforms us to become rationalist and humanist in outlook and world view. It is the process of facilitating learning. Knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits of a group of people are transferred to other people, through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training or research. The modern education lays emphasis on the subjects like freedom, nationality, law, human rights, democracy and scientific world view. The other parts of education are the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, which are often organized for total personality development of a student. Education plays a vital role in the development & progress of country. Today education is very important for success. The success of our country is based on education. Only educated leaders and nation builders take the nation and community to the heights of success and progress. Education develops our noblesse oblige sense. Due to education, we can make difference between right and wrong. Through education we also understand our religious value and standards well. A well-educated system helps us to remove the major problems of our society.

Education is in fact, an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for innate strength of the tribal communities which supports them in meeting the new challenges of life. It is the single crucial important ways by which human beings and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity level and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. Any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational. An illiterate person may be educated though he does not know how to read and write. I met several illiterate people of different fields like agriculture, business services and so on. They have innovative ideas and plans for their fields to develop. An illiterate farmer may have more knowledge than the degree holder of his related field. In same way, Sahariya Primitive tribe is much illiterate while has a crucial important knowledge about plants which can be used as medicines. Sahra' is being used as a synonym for the word 'forest'. One of the scheduled tribe has been named as 'Sahariyas' only because it was totally dependent upon forests for its very existence in terms of its society, family, livelihood and everything else. The people of 'Sahariyas' tribe never used to bother about their future, because they were confident that forests, which they respect and protect, would never leave them hungry. This primitive tribal group is residing in part of Baran, Kota, Dungarpur and Sawai Madhopur districts. It is the most backward tribal group of Rajasthan which has very low literacy rate.

T1.0: Literacy Rate of Sahariya Population in Rajasthan

Year	Sahariya Population Literacy (Figure in percentage)		
	Male	Female	Total
1961	2.3	0.2	2.5
1981	10.27	1.20	11.47
2001	35.27	5.0	40.27

Sources: Registrar General of India

There has been an increase in the dropout rate after the primary education. The proportion of matriculates is one fourth of those educated up to primary level. Sahariya concentrated mostly in Baran district where limited government colleges for higher education. The main reasons for this are the limited educational infrastructure available in tribal areas because of their remoteness, tribal hamlets being cut off from main

villages or well-populated rural areas by geographic features, the difficulties faced by children living in smaller habitations in accessing existing formal schools and so on. Other reasons for low school enrolment among Sahariya community children include the unwillingness of families to educate their children - in addition to the high illiteracy among Primitive Tribe parents; they may not value the education available, particularly in relation to its opportunity costs. None of the family members ensures whether the child is regular at school, attendance, home work, class work, and learning at home. The parents seldom meet the teachers or go to the school in order to interact with the school staff in order to understand the performance of their child. The parents remain excluded and generally avoid interacting with the teachers as majority of them do not have minimum literacy to understand what is being taught in the school.

We can observe the Following table which is showing the higher education status of the only Primitive tribe of district Baran (Rajasthan), Sahariya.

T1.2: Enrolment by Stages of College Education of Primitive Tribe Students in district Baran (Rajasthan)

Colleges	Year	Enrolment of Sahariya Students
Govt. Girls Degree College, Baran	2013-14	2 (UG), 0 (PG)
Govt. Degree College, Baran	2013-14	39(UG), 2(PG)
Govt. Girls Degree College, Mangrol	2013-14	Nil
Govt. Girls Degree College, Kelwada	2013-14	242(UG), 0 (PG)

Sources: Saharia Samaj Evam Sanskriti by Dr. Vivek Shankar

Formal education is the key to all-round human development and success. Despite several campaigns to promote formal education ever since independence by central and state governments, the literacy rate among Sahariya community has remained low and the female literacy rate still lower compared to the national female literacy rate. There was no enrolment of Sahariya Female student in Post Graduate class in Government College Baran in session 2013-14. Sahariyas, the jungle dwellers, who are believed to be of Bhil origin, inhabit the areas of Baran, Kota, Dungarpur and Sawai Madhopur in the southeast of Rajasthan, lag behind as they have less than half of the total students in the corresponding age group attend college.

### III. DISCUSSION

Science, Spirituality and Education are process to acquire new knowledge about material and non-material world. These are called process because all they obtain by us through step by step. Without science, we are illiterate while we have a lot of knowledge in the field of spirituality and education. In the same way, if we are well educated and expert in science and technology and do not know about spirituality. It may be destructive for the humanity. So a technocrat and educate person must be spiritual to have sense to use his knowledge in constructive way of mankind.

Instead, primitive tribal group is made to put up with an offensive and insulting climate that continuously discriminates and alienates. For such historically deprived communities, providing access to Science, Spirituality and Education is simply not enough, the Central and State governments have to take a proactive role in creating overall conditions and opportunities that will facilitate their transition and breaking of the intergenerational cycle of poverty and illiteracy. A sensitive cadre of teachers and bureaucracy is definitely required to make the difference. The knowledge generated by science, Spirituality and Education is powerful and reliable. It can be used to develop new deal with many other sorts of problems. It is a way of discovering what's in the universe and how those things work today, how they worked in the past, and how they are likely to work in the future.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Lastly, we support science, Spirituality and Education because of simple curiosity and because of the satisfaction and enlightenment that come from knowledge of the world around us. Science keeps our body fit and provides us safe and hygienic food for physical development and makes our life comfortable. Spirituality offers us to become mentally fit, while Education modifies our behavior and personality through all round development. Without them, life would be no more balanced.

In a broad sense, the socio-economic and cultural factors among Sahariya community can be outlined as poverty and poor economic conditions, social customs, cultural ethos, lack of awareness and understanding of the value of formal education, conflict and gap between the home and school, etc Studies on educational deprivation of this community has inevitably linked it to its poor economic condition and poverty. Education of

this community cannot be left to short-term Plan strategies. It is important that planners take a long-term view which is embedded in a meaningful policy framework. Following are some important suggestions on primitive tribe community education for policy framework.

- ❖ Central and state governments should promote the skills of primitive tribe's community. They are expert to extract honey from honey bees hives. They are skilled to know the use of herbs and shrubs to treat of different diseases.
- ❖ All the developmental activities such as education, adult education, health, food and employment should be interlinked.
- ❖ The prime focus should be on provision of quality education that makes tribal communities economically effective and independent.
- ❖ In the tribal context, it is essential that the college schedule be prepared as per local requirement rather than following a directive from the state.
- ❖ Availability of locally relevant materials will not only facilitate faster learning but also help students to develop a sense of affiliation to schools, colleges and Institutions.
- ❖ Motivation classes, awareness programmes, special incentives, more number of schools and colleges in tribal areas, more flexible teachers and so on has to be included in the educational streams.
- ❖ Community awareness and community mobilization, which are its core elements, should received equate importance and attention.
- ❖ At the social and political level, leadership of this tribe does not allow to be encouraged, as a result of which the youth of this tribe can't fight for their social, educational, economical and political rights. It has to be clearly admitted that education is not a voluntarily chosen alternative for Sahariya tribe for securing their future. Another aspect is that these days, the process of education is shackled in the clutches of bureaucracy, who are neither responsible to any educational institution nor are interested in their development. For Sahariya Primitive Tribe, the right to education is of prime importance, but in the rules, regulations and process made there under, any serious contradictions are not visible.

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### Internet Resources:-

- [www.icbse.com/right-to-education-act5.22PM5/2/2015](http://www.icbse.com/right-to-education-act5.22PM5/2/2015)
- [www.hinduwebsite.com6.37PM21/08/2015](http://www.hinduwebsite.com6.37PM21/08/2015)
- [www.mhrd.gov.inHigherEducation3.39PM19/9/2015](http://www.mhrd.gov.inHigherEducation3.39PM19/9/2015)
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