

**A STUDY OF SCHEDULED CASTE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN DELHI UNIVERSITY COLLEGES****Purshottam**

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ABSTRACT

The Scheduled Caste population in India has benefited from the advances that modern education has brought about in both their social and economic lives. However, those who are considered to be of Scheduled Caste status, as well as women of Scheduled Caste status, are not included in the general population of students attending higher education institutions. The current research focuses on the relationship between the Scheduled Caste and higher education. In India, contemporary education is regarded as a vital instrument for bringing about justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity among the country's residents, who speak a variety of languages, practice a variety of religions, and come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. In this sense, education is viewed of as a tool for bringing about social and economic change in the future democratic society.

KEYWORDS :- *Scheduled, Caste, education*

INTRODUCTION

According to Harvey (1995b), quality in terms of fulfilling the requirements, needs, or desires of a customer is the definition of quality when it comes to quality as fitness for purpose. In theory, the customer is the one who lays out the requirements. In the field of education, fitness for purpose typically refers to the degree to which an educational establishment is able to accomplish its goals or the degree to which a particular course of study achieves its objectives. McNealy (1993) provided support for this definition by stating that quality is a dynamic state and that one definition of quality is meeting or exceeding the needs and expectations of the customer, with the stipulation that these needs and expectations are determined through communication with the customer. In addition to this, Oakland (1995) stated that quality is simply satisfying the requirements that the customer has outlined for it. In addition, according to Goetsch and Davis (1994), quality is defined as meeting or exceeding the expectations of the customer, and it can be applied to products, services, people, processes, and the environment (Dejager & Nieuwenhuis, 2005).

In this day and age, "quality of education" has become a widely discussed topic despite being something of a buzzword. The concept of quality is all-encompassing, and different people have unique ways of understanding it. The combination of a successful educational process and high levels of customer satisfaction with the services rendered produces quality (Hanaysha, Abdullah, & Warokka, 2011). One way to define educational quality is as follows:

1. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished, and actively participating, and whose families and communities are providing them with support.

2. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective, and sensitive in addition to having sufficient resources and facilities.
3. Content designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for everyday life
4. Methods that improve education and eliminate inequalities in access to it
5. Outcomes (KSA) linked to National Goals for positive participation in society and education (UNICEF, 2000)

The definition of quality that can be found in the Oxford Dictionary states that it is "the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something." The phrase "how good or bad something is" is how the Cambridge Dictionary describes the meaning of the term. In spite of the fact that, at first glance, the dictionary definition appears to be quite straightforward, in order to understand it in its entirety, the word "quality" has a subjective meaning that varies from person to person. Higher education gives students an advantage over their peers, just as primary and secondary schooling are essential to the development of a solid foundation.

Education for all: The Global Monitoring Report places an emphasis on two aspects in order to guarantee a high-quality education

- Learner's cognitive development.
- The encouragement of morals and attitudes befitting responsible citizens, as well as the promotion of intellectual and emotional growth in children (UNESCO, 2004)

There is, however, a new school of thought developing in the academic world that describes quality as culture (Harvey and Stensaker, 2008) With this point of view, the organisational view of quality is given significance, and quality is seen as a process of transformation. During this process, each entity that makes up the organisation is concerned with, and weighs quality as being of the utmost importance. This conceptualization is concerned with the fundamental aspects of higher education, in which quality is regarded as the primary impetus behind the activities of all individuals working within an organisation. In a similar fashion, quality culture is understood to be an aspect of an organization's culture that involves: (1) a psychological component of shared values, beliefs, expectations, and commitments towards quality, and (2) a structural or managerial aspect with well-defined processes that enhance quality and coordinate efforts. In this way, quality culture is viewed as an organisational culture that involves: (1) a psychological component of shared values, beliefs, expectations, and commitment (EUA, 2006). Others consider quality culture to be synonymous with organisational culture, which fosters the growth of methods that are both effective and efficient in providing quality care (Berings et al., 2011). The fact that a culture of high quality is unlikely to be constructed regardless of the context in which it is situated only serves to further complicate the concept of culture. Therefore, quality is determined by the chronological, situational, and spatial context, all of which are further defined by the evaluator. Based on what has been said, it is possible to deduce that the concept of quality is vague and subject to context. The perception of quality is one that is always shifting and evolving. It is a journey that never ends, stretching from the beginning of time to an infinite number of years in the future (Harvey and Stensaker, 2008).

The value of a higher education is subjectively evaluated by individuals in a variety of ways. Learners can move closer to the new frontiers of knowledge in a variety of domains or fields of study by taking advantage

of the in-depth knowledge and comprehension that is made available through higher education. In essence, it boils down to knowing more and more about less and less as time goes on. The production of qualified human resources, training for research careers, effective management of teaching provision, and the matter of extending life chances are the four per-dominant conceptions about higher education. (Barnett, 1992)

The higher education system in India is currently ranked as the world's second largest. There are two major types of educational establishments that make up the Indian Higher Education System: universities and colleges.

Universities are granted the authority to bestow degrees, and they can be broken down into the following categories: –

1. Unitary Universities, which are limited to conducting instruction and research within their respective departments and have a compact campus
2. Universities that are affiliated with the organisation and that have a main campus as well as departments and schools that teach students and carry out research. These universities each have colleges that are affiliated with them and are responsible for teaching in accordance with the jurisdiction of the university that they are affiliated with. The affiliated university also awards degrees to students who attend the affiliated colleges.
3. Institutions that have been given the status of "Deemed Universities" because of their long history of involvement in education or their outstanding performance in a particular field.
4. Institutions of National Importance, such as the IITs, which were founded by Acts of Parliament and have the authority to confer their own degrees.

The administration of colleges is handled by their respective governing bodies, which are made up of representatives from the state government and universities, as well as the college's promoters, principal, and teaching staff. The university exerts a significant amount of influence over the colleges. Educational Institutions of Higher Learning

1. The state government is in charge of managing public colleges, and these colleges are required to follow the curriculum of the university with which they are affiliated.
2. Trusts or societies are responsible for the management of private colleges, and each college's operations are overseen by the university with which it is affiliated.
3. Colleges may be categorised as Arts and Science Colleges or Professional Colleges according to the types of programmes that they offer their students.
4. Colleges may be categorised as grant-in-aid schools if they are private schools that receive significant funding from the government. This designation is determined by the source of the college's funding. The second type of college is known as a self-financing institution. These schools do not receive significant funding from the federal or state governments, so the money that students pay in tuition serves as their primary source of revenue.

5. When it comes to academic matters, curricular aspects, the administration of examinations, the publication of results, and the bestowing of degrees, affiliated colleges operate under the direction of a university. (Stella, 2003)
6. Autonomous colleges, as the system of affiliated colleges does not provide any right to the college to frame curricula, course of studies, and system of assessment, the need for autonomous colleges was clearly felt. (GOI, 1992). The parent university will be responsible for providing general guidelines and awarding degrees to successful candidates for the colleges that operate independently. Students are given the freedom to design and plan the curriculum, as well as determine the standards for admission and evaluation of students. The college's evaluation is recognised by the university, and the college's name is included on the degrees that are granted. (UGC, 2017)

The Indian higher education system suffers from a lack of culture and competition (Agarwal, 2015). The legitimacy of the problem with higher education in India is reflected in the remarks of Pavan Agrawal, who serves as Secretary of India's Higher Education Department. After acknowledging this reality and before delving into a discussion of the challenges posed by the educational system in terms of raising the bar for the quality of higher education, it would be useful to first provide a concise overview of the development of higher education in India.

OBJECTIVE

1. To know various consequences and coping mechanism adopted by the students.
2. To examine financial assistance of the SC students and their awareness about accessibility.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

- Extremely bureaucratic system with multiple controls and regulations enforced by the Central and State Governments, statutory bodies (including the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), as well as others), university administration, and local management.
- The system receives a significant amount of financial support from the government. The state is responsible for paying up to ninety percent of the total operational expenses. As a result of internal rigidities, the efficiency with which funds are utilised is very poor.
- Due to the low salaries and benefits offered to teaching employees, higher education institutions are unable to recruit and keep qualified and trained instructors on staff. In addition to providing unappealing salary packages, the recruitment process is drawn out, and the working environment is not one that encourages employee retention. As a direct consequence of this, a significant number of high-achieving students who are capable of fulfilling such roles would rather find employment elsewhere or travel elsewhere. As a result of a recent move by the UGC, the income and promotion prospects of college professors have been severely hurt. In addition, promotional grades have been reduced, which has led to additional stagnation and frustration among college teachers.
- The majority of educational establishments offer antiquated courses with rigid course formats and subject matter. While the curriculums of the world's most prestigious educational institutions have

been continually modernised and reorganised throughout time, those of Indian universities have fallen significantly behind.

- The facilities for the infrastructure range from being inadequate to being pitiful. Classrooms are frequently unappealing, and laboratories have insufficient supplies, both of which contribute to subpar instruction. It is believed that just about 20 percent of the facilities have even the most fundamental pieces of laboratory equipment.
- There is not a reliable supply of electric power available. The laboratories are undersupplied, and the limited amount of computerization that is available is typically dependent on shoddy communication cables. (Kaul, 2006).

The success of a country's higher education system is critically crucial to the nation's overall economic growth and development. Higher education holds a significant place in the education system because it provides individuals with the appropriate information and abilities to be gainfully employed. In terms of its relevance and importance, higher education enjoys a substantial position in the education system. India's higher education system is one of the largest in the world, and it provides opportunities for education and training in almost all facets of human creativity and intellectual endeavour.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTES AND THEIR EDUCATION

Higher education in India is currently plagued by a number of issues, including but not limited to low enrollment rates of students from the SC Category at colleges affiliated with Delhi University, unequal access, poor quality infrastructure, and a lack of relevance. It is vital to identify tangible solutions and expand on efforts that have been made in the past given the new movements that are being planned on the policy front.

The current enrollment rate of 20 percent needs to be increased, and this will be the first obstacle that needs to be conquered. During the 11th Plan, there was an increase in the number of new institutions, as well as an increase in the intake capacity of existing institutions. This helped ensure this to some degree, and it was made possible by a two-pronged strategy that was in place. But despite this, the capacity of our institutions is still quite limited. In contrast to the advice of the National Knowledge Commission, which called for 1,500 universities, we only have 722. In order to properly plan a strategy for the next fifteen to twenty years, it is important to have an accurate count of the number of colleges and universities that provide undergraduate degrees.

There are also problems that are connected to this that need to be solved. Because of the low enrollment rate, there is a critical shortage of high-quality educational institutions at the undergraduate level. The importance of having good teaching institutions has been pushed to the background as a result of the dominance of academics on policymaking and the fixation on an inaccurate concept of quality, which holds that success can only be measured in terms of research output. It is crucial not to lose sight of the fact that information transfer is also very significant, despite the fact that nobody disputes the usefulness of research in the classroom.

India is faced with a number of challenges, one of which is the existence of gaps in access to education, particularly in regard to economic class, gender, caste, and the presence of ethnic and religious affiliation. In 2008, as compared to an enrollment rate of 17% across the entirety of India, the breakdown for these

categories was as follows: 7% for Scheduled Tribes (ST), 11% for Scheduled Castes (SC), 28% for Other Backward Classes (OBC), and 47% for higher castes. Higher castes had a higher percentage of enrollment than lower castes. In addition, the percentage was nine percent for Hindus, eighteen percent for Muslims, and thirty percent for Christians. In terms of income levels, the gap between the wealthy and the impoverished was 6 percent for the bottom 20 percent of society and 37 percent for the top 20 percent of society, according to a comparison of inequalities between the wealthy and the impoverished. One more factor that contributes to the widening of existing gaps is the growth of the privately owned and operated, self-financing education sector, which has as its primary objective the pursuit of financial gain.

When it comes to educational institutions like universities, there are 712 total, and approximately 360 of them have private, state, or considered status. The high cost of private school has made it more difficult for lower-income people to receive an education. In 2012, the top 20 percent of students (in terms of consumption expenditure) captured more than half of the available seats at private colleges, accounting for the overall percentage of students attending those institutions. The bottom twenty percent received only four percent of the total. The percentage of students who identified as ST or SC was only 4% and 10% respectively, whereas the percentage of students who identified as OBC was 45% and the percentage of students who identified as Others was 41%.

A problem of similar gravity is the limited availability of high-quality educational opportunities in Delhi. Within the context of this sector, the 11th Plan identified three potential areas for intervention: physical infrastructure, academic reform, and the provision of sufficient faculty. An increase in the cash allocation can help bring about improvements in the infrastructure. Academic reform is a process that should only be progressed once the pre-requisites have been satisfied. This reform can include changes to the semester and credit systems, the ability to choose one's own courses, and test reform. Several measures were implemented as part of the 11th Plan to address the situation with the faculty, which is an issue that has grown to acquire significant proportions. Despite this, it continues to be a problem. The federal government and the states need to collaborate on finding a solution to this problem. A single-time effort may be made to enforce the University Grant Commission's (UGC) teacher-student ratio for each state and make sure that the financial requirement of additional professors is split equally between the Center and the States. This would be one option to address the problem.

Availability of access to The standard of education offered in Delhi is not something that can be mass-produced on demand or exported to other continents. It is inextricably linked to both the land and the culture in which it was cultivated. It is connected to the passing of time and the surrounding environment, as well as the process of nation-building. It develops more on its own over time. The concept of manufacturing quality through universities in other countries or Indian imitations of those universities is a shortcut that disregards the significance of originality. Research is a laborious activity that is necessary for the acquisition of new knowledge. Interdisciplinarity is considered by many academics to be the defining characteristic of modern research. Interdisciplinarity benefits from the incorporation of knowledge gained from a wide variety of sources, whereas it deteriorates when it is based on the transplantation or imitation of external models.

Another problem consists in making it possible to receive an education that is pertinent to the economy and society. Education at the tertiary, postsecondary, and vocational levels has been crucial in putting the cultivation of human resources for the economy into practise. The previous administration took the initiative by establishing a National Skill Development Corporation (which brought the government and corporate sector together to frame a demand-based curriculum). The current administration has taken this initiative to greater heights by establishing a Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. On the other hand,

social education suffers from a lack of comparable initiatives. The policy from 1986 mandated that the following statement be made: "In our culturally diverse society, education should nurture universal and everlasting ideals, geared towards the unity and integration of our people." Obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition, and fatalism should all be eradicated with the help of such value education. In order to accomplish this goal, young people and children need to be educated about the issues of inequality, poverty, and practises that undermine democracy, and a commitment must be restated to preserving equality, justice, freedom, and brotherhood. Professor James A. Banks, an American educationist, is quoted as saying that "the job of education in the 21st Century is to equip students to know, to care, and to act in ways that will build and promote the knowledge and skill needed to participate in effective action."

The formulation of effective policies requires accurate data, and that facts must cover a variety of topics. It has been fifty years since the last evaluation of higher education, which was conducted by the D.S. Kothari Commission in 1965, and we currently find ourselves in a predicament in which we not only lack trustworthy data but also have not conducted any such reviews. Over the course of the past half-century, there have been significant shifts in the landscape of higher education. A review is very necessary in this case. We need to adopt the system used in the United Kingdom, which makes use of an institute for education statistics, as a model for ourselves since it has a proven track record of producing effective public policy when supported by accurate data.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed the fact that the majority of SC students admitted in technical higher education possess urban background, good family income, and good percentage at high school and intermediate levels. Similarly, majority of them have taken coaching to clear their entrance exam. Therefore, these have emerged as objective indicators essential for making entry into engineering course. However getting success after admission mandates more academic and social cohesion inside the institution apart from cultural capital from the family. The importance of cultural capital was seen in more than one way when participation of SC students in engineering courses were investigated albeit the impact of various aspects of cultural capital is not seen in linear terms. Both objective as well as subjective outcomes of the study placed a major onus on generational learning of engineering course. It implies majority of SC students had found themselves as a first generational learner for technical higher education. This has impacted retrogressively for their participation. Other forms of cultural capitals of the family like newspaper reading, science-related magazine reading, watching science-related programmes, etc. were however available to majority of SC students by virtue of belonging to urban areas.

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