

A Sociological Analysis Of Rural Scheduled Caste Female Students In Higher Education**Dr. S J Mahesha S/o Javaraiah**Seeagurvillege
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Hassan taluk Hassan District**Abstract**

The present study is concerned with Scheduled Caste (SC) female students in higher education and its major focus is on socio-economic background. It is indeed difficult to point the social and educational status of women including untouchability throughout Indian history till the dawn of the independence on the canvas of a limited space. To analyze the socio-economic background of the SC female students in higher education. The area of the study has been confined to Koppal City. The sample size of 250 students was drawn on the basis of simple random technique. The sample size was fixed in view of time and the availability of other resources. The major tool of collection of primary data has been the interview schedule. The primary data collected from the students have been supplemented by relevant secondary data. Majority (98.80) of students are distributed in the younger or middle age group only a small 1.20 percent is in the older age group. Out of 250 respondents, the overwhelming majority (97.20) is unmarried and only a negligible 2.80 percent are married. 234 (93.60%) respondents out of 250 belong to nuclear type families and a small 6.40 percent to extended families. Majority (60.40%) preferred Kannada as the medium of instructions for the present course. While more than one third (39.60%) preferred English. This study is basically exploratory in nature. As such it cannot make tall claims about the relevance of its findings. But the prime motive of the study is to study the institutional problems of the SCs including how to remodel or redesign our institutional arrangements.

Keywords: Scheduled Caste, Female Students, Higher education, Socio-economic status, Educational benefits.

I. Introduction

The present study is concerned with rural scheduled caste female students in higher Education and its major focus is on socio-economic background. It is indeed difficult to point the social and educational status of women including untouchable throughout Indian history till the dawn of the independence on the canvas of a limited space. Female is half the world's population. They perform two-thirds of the world's work. They earn one-tenth of the world's income. They own one hundredth of the world's property. The world female is derived from the old French word 'female' and Latin word 'female' meaning a girl and its diminutive of female means women.

More distressing and dismal was the picture of the educational status of untouchable women. In general, neither they had access to indigenous schooling nor modern schooling introduced by the British of the three important agencies which spread modern education in India the British government especially made no efforts till the end of 19th century make a provision for the education of the untouchables in fact, it strictly followed the policy of

neutrality in respect of social and religious matter. Least they incur the wrath of the Hindu orthodoxy that strongly resisted all progressive social measures including the promotion of education among untouchables.

II. Statement Of The Research Problem:

Basically rural scheduled caste female students suffer from two great disadvantages, namely stigmatized caste status and subordinated and dependent sex status. Apart from these, they also suffer from innumerable socio-economic and cultural disabilities imposed upon them by the institutional arrangements like their family, the caste, the religion etc., Overcoming all these adds, a small section of SC female students has entered into the domain of higher education. In fact, their educational problems and prospects constitute the major core of the present study.

III. Review Of Literature:

Brij Raj Chauhan (1975) in his study "Scheduled Caste and Education" examined the literacy rate of SC community. He also stated various problems by them for getting access to education. However, scientific methodology was focused but it

could not give easy access to SC students to gain higher education.

C.Parvathamma (1982) conducted study on “Housing in Rural Karnataka”, which stated the condition of SC community in rural parts of Karnataka. She gave a detailed discussion about the depressed class and its condition as “untouchables” referring to the study of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. The study further suggested useful information to SC community gain superiority in the higher education easily.

Haroobhai Mehta and Hasmukh Patel (1991) in the study “Dynamics of Reservation Policy” discussed the background of SC community in Gujarat during the year 1984-85. The authors highlighted different issues of reservation system for SC, ST and OBC. Further the urgent need of proper implementation of reservation system by Central and State Government was discussed so that the reserved categories can also get empowered. The study also analyzed the Mandal Commission report scientifically and proposed a sociological treatment for the existing problem.

IV. Higher Education Scenario Among Sc In India

In the context of educational development Article 46 and its clauses, Article 15 (4), Article 29 (2) of the Indian Constitution are the important articles. Article 46 states that, “The State shall promote, with special care, the education and economic interests of the weaker sections people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of social exploitation.” This article gives protection to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and weaker sections from social injustice and exploitation. The important clauses of the Article 46 are discussed here. The clauses mainly discuss the issue of financial responsibility of state and union government for the higher education of Scheduled Castes as stated below:

“Governments both Union and State shall be required to assume financial responsibility for the higher education of the Scheduled Castes and shall be required to make adequate provisions in their budgets. Such provisions shall form the first charge on the Education Budget of the Union and State Governments.

The responsibility for finding money for secondary and college education of the Scheduled Castes in India shall be upon the State Governments and the different States shall make provisions in their budgets for the said purpose in proportion to the population of the Scheduled Castes to the total budget of the States.

The responsibility for finding money for foreign education of the Scheduled Castes shall be the responsibility of the Union Government and the Union Government shall make a provision of rupees ten lakhs per year in its annual budget in that behalf. These special grants shall be without prejudice to the right of the Scheduled Castes to share in the expenditure incurred by the State Government for the advancement of primary education for the people of the state”.

Table No. 1

Population of Scheduled Castes in India (Figures in %)

Sr.	Census year	India (% to total population of India)
1	1991	16.48
2	2001	16.2
3	2011	16.6

Source: Census of India

Table No. 2

Gross Enrolment Ratio of Scheduled Caste and General Category students in Higher Educational in India (18 to 23 years age group)

Year	General category			Scheduled Caste		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2001-02	9.28	6.71	8.07	7.67	3.64	5.76
2002-03	10.3	7.47	8.97	8	3.73	5.97
2003-04	10.59	7.65	9.21	8.34	4.34	6.44
2004-05	11.58	8.17	9.97	8.1	5.2	6.72
2005-06	13.54	9.35	11.35	10.14	6.4	8.37
2006-07	14.53	10.2	12.39	11.52	6.96	9.35
2007-08	15.87	11.05	13.58	13.79	9.08	11.62
2008-09	16.1	11.3	13.8	13.2	8.6	11
2009-10	17.1	12.7	15	13	9	11.1
2010-11	---	---	21.44	---	---	13.5

2011-12	---	---	23.27	---	---	14.9
2012-13	---	---	23.59	---	---	15.12

Source: Compiled from various reports of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, India

The gross enrolment ratio among scheduled caste students demonstrated increasing trends during the period of 2001-02 to 2007-08. Thereafter, it has declined. For the general category students' enrolment in this period always increased. The gross enrolment ratio of female students has been increasing for both the categories. The gender gap has also increased during these years. The gap in the gross enrolment ratio of general category female and scheduled castes female students remained constant, that is between 2% to 3%. It can be concluded that, though gross enrolment ratio at higher education level for general category students and scheduled caste students has increased, the increase is not significant and it requires more efforts for improvement in the ratio. From the above data on education it can be concluded that there is lowest enrolment at higher levels of education. Compared to primary education level and other levels of education also enrolment in higher education is lower.

Thus, lower enrolment in school and in higher education and higher dropout are the major causes of educational deprivation of SCs and marginal increase in enrolment is the result of efforts of government of India. Despite policy interventions qualitative and quantitative attainment among SCs not taking place due to following factors, which are influencing on the education status i.e. enrolment, dropout and academic achievements of SCs.

V. Scope Of The Study:

The present study is concerned with rural scheduled caste female students in higher Education and its major focus is on their problems and prospects. By the terms, higher Education is meant university education imparted through university of its colleges or colleges affiliated to it. The female students in the present study have been drawn from diversified course of higher education such as B.A., B.Sc., B.Com., B.Ed., M.Ed., B.E., M.M., B.S., M.A., M.Sc., L.L.B., B.B.M and B.B.A. In fact the SC female students constitute a minority as compared to their male counterparts in

higher education. Nevertheless, they constitute a select stratum or elite stratum of the SC student's population in general. To explore their educational problems, prospects and possibilities has been the major objective of the present study.

VI. Objectives Of The Study

1. To analyzed the Socio-Economic background of the rural scheduled caste female students in higher education with special reference to demographic and status characteristics such as age, marital status, caste, education, parental education, occupation and income
2. To study of the whole environment of the students in terms of type their house, facilities available in them and material possessions including paraphernalia and gadgets etc., size and type of family, native place, mother tongue, etc. such an analysis, indeed, is very helpful in building the socio-economic background of the students.

VII. Research Methodology:

The present study consists of rural scheduled caste female students studying in graduate and post-graduate courses of liberal Arts, Science and Commerce, management courses like B.B.M and M.B.A, engineering courses like B.E, Educational courses like B.Ed and M.Ed and professional courses like L.L.B and M.B.B.S. The area of the study has been confined to Koppal City. This sample size of 250 students was drawn on the basis of simple random technique. The sample size was fixed in view of time and the availability of other resources. The major tool of collection of primary data has been the interview. Scheduled. The primary data collected from the students have been supplemented by relevant secondary data.

VIII. Results And Discussion:

The present study is devoted to the analysis of socio-economic background of the study. The word 'background' used in the present study consists of three settings, namely the demographic, the social and the economic. The demographic setting refers to such characteristics as age and marital status while caste, religion type and size of family, number of sibling's education of the

respondents, their parents and grandparents and their siblings etc., and come under social settings. Further occupation and income status of parents, siblings, their housing conditions and material possession etc., come into the domain of the economic setting. Apart from these, we shall make attempts to study the nativity, mother tongue, present stay of the respondents and their religion in this study.

Table: 3.

Course wise distribution of the respondents

S.No	Name of Courses	Respondents	Percentage
1	B.A	93	37.2
2	B.Sc	12	4.8
3	B.Com	11	4.4
4	B.Ed	34	13.6
5	M.Ed	3	1.2
6	B.E	46	18.4
7	M.B.B.S	10	4
8	M.A/M.Sc	18	7.2
9	L.L.B	12	4.2
10	B.B.M	10	4
11	M.B.A	1	0.4
	Total	250	100

For analytical purpose of the study, the above courses are classified into two categories namely 1) general and liberal courses and 2) professional courses. General and liberal courses include B.A., B.Sc., B.Com., M.A., M.Sc., and M.Com. While professional courses are B.E., M.B.B.S., B.Ed., M.Ed., L.L.B., B.B.M., and M.B.A (Table, 3).

Table: 4

Age composition of the respondents

S. No	Age Composition	Respondents	Percent age
1	Younger age group (18-21 years)	180	72
2	Middle age group (22-25 years)	67	26.8
3	Oder age group (26-29 years and above)	3	1.2
	Total	250	100

It can be seen from table, 4 that the preponderant majority (98.80) of students are distributed in the younger or middle age group

only a small 1.20 percent is in the older age group the mean age of the sample is 20.67 years in the total sample, the proportion of younger age group of students (72.00) is relatively higher followed by middle age (26.80) and older age (1.20%) groups.

Table: 5

Marital status of the respondents

S.No	Marital Status	Respondents	Percentage
1	Married	7	2.8
2	Unmarried	143	97.2
	Total	250	100

Though the age of marriage has been fixed at 18 years for a female, pre pubertal and child marriages are not uncommon which seriously affect the participation of women in education. Out of about five million marriages which take place every year in India, in about two million cases, the brides are below 18 years of age. As against this backdrop, let us examine the marital status of our sample respondents presented.

It can be seen from diagram that out of 250 respondents, the overwhelming majority (97.20) is unmarried and only a negligible 2.80 percent are married. This analysis indeed reflects the fact that the social practice of early marriage which was rampant among the SCs is slowly on the wane among the educated SCs.

IX. Findings Of The Present Study

1. A small number of respondents expressed their desire to become self employed. It is from this point of view the government should create more structure of opportunity for the self employment of SC women for their development and employment.
2. The study reconfirms the inter caste disparity in the utilization of educational benefits. It is therefore, necessary to identify the course for extreme backwardness among certain scheduled castes in education and initiate action to induce them so as to utilize educational benefits.
3. The practice of endogamy as one of the feature the caste system has seriously affected the selection of mates. It is evident from the fact that the preponderant majority in our study preferred marry within their

sub-castes. Hence the government should take steps to mitigate this problem.

4. The scheduled caste female students facing ill treatment based on gender bias is found in the study to a small extent. This problem has to be tackled by bringing about suitable change in the attitudinal frame of teachers administrators and other involved the spread of education for the benefit of disadvantaged children at different levels of learning.
5. The urban bias inherent in our educational system is seriously affecting the education of the disadvantage children, particularly girls in rural areas. Thus there is an imperative need on the part of government to get this bias removed through concrete action.

X. Conclusion

This study is basically exploratory in nature. As such it cannot make tall claims about the relevance of its findings. But the prime motive of the study is to SC women are institutional problems of the SCs including how to remodel or redesign our institutional arrangements through a radical structural change with emphasis on equity and equality of women as par with men in all spheres of social life. Moreover, the insights emerging from the study point to the need for further research in the area. They could also be useful to the planners and policy makers to evolve new strategies for the educational development of SC women.

XI. References

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