

A Study of Academic Achievement of Scheduled Caste Secondary School Students in Relation To Study Habits, Home Environment and School Environment



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Abstract

The Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) wherever they live, are faced with many diverse problems, which are of Social, economic, political and educational in nature. It is common knowledge how the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes suffer from times immemorial for no fault of theirs. These problems have aggravated the situation over years and ushered the SC/ST masses to total subjugation and exploitation. One thing is certain, that in a caste-ridden society like ours, social and economic status are the necessary prerequisites for any individual to progress. These variables buttress each other in development of a community or caste. Any analysis of Indian society without taking caste into consideration is not complete. Almost all activities-economic, political, educational and socio-cultural-revolve around the notions of caste. The structural form and relationships in rural areas have continued almost in tact in post-independence India, although some changes have come about in urban setting. The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, throughout the country occupy the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy. In a hierarchy of unequal relationships, the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are at the bottom and hence socially inferior to all others in the community. Further among themselves also there is further stratification and ranking.

Keywords: Academic Achievements, Habit, Environment.

Introduction

The Simon Commission (1928), which was boycotted in India and became responsible for the death of Lala Lajpat Rai on account of 'Lathi Charge' coined the term Scheduled Caste. There after, it was used in Government of India Act, 1935. After independence, it found expression in the various provision of the Constitution. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

"The terms 'Scheduled Caste' and 'Scheduled Tribe' are only legal fictions and constitutional myth." Nowhere in the Indian Constitution are they defined even though it is the lengthiest legal document of nations in contemporary world. This has actually led to confusion and with the result the Constitution is amended rather frequently.

The historical background of the term 'Scheduled Caste' could be traced to the Government of India Act, 1935. For the first time the British government issued the Government of India (Scheduled Caste) order in 1936 specifying certain castes as SCs in some of the provinces. Prior to that the SCs were generally known as 'the Depressed Classes'. Dr. Hutton, the then Census Commissioner of India, had categorized the depressed classes systematically and the list of SCs issued under the Government Order of 1936 was continuation of the earlier list prepared by Dr. Hutton. Further, the list drawn in 1950- the Constitution 'Scheduled Caste' order- was a revised version of the 1936 order.

After the Constitution came into force the classification of STs was made. Even in the case of Tribes the first ever serious attempt to classify them is attributable to 1931 census. However, a reference has been made in Government of India Act, 1935 to the 'Backward Tribes'. According to the thirteenth schedule of the Government of India (Provincial Legislative

Assemblies) Order, 1936, certain tribes were specified as backward in some provinces.

Education of the Scheduled Castes

Population of Scheduled Castes

In 2001, the population of Scheduled Castes was 179.7 million, which accounted for 17.5 percent of the total population (projected on the basis of the trend of their decadal growth rates).

Almost half of the total population of SC is concentrated in the states of Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and U.P. popularly known as Hindi belt in the North.

In the South, SCs are concentrated mainly in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. In the East, they are in Bengal and in the West in Maharashtra.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of the study is to enhance the ability of depressed class in society. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had play an important part in the independence of India. No nation can developed till equality and brotherhoodness in society. So the main and important role of the study is to established equality among all castes.

Constitutional Provisions of Education for Scheduled Castes

There are some constitutional provisions for the education of scheduled castes students such as : Commitment in National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP); District Primary Education Programme (DPEP); Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) (6 to 14 2010); Janshala; National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level *(NPEGEL); Shiksha Karmi Project (SDKP); Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV); Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS); Central Institute of Indian Language (CIIL); Kendriya Vidyalaya (KVs); Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVs); National Institute of Open Schooling (NIO); National Council for Education, Research and Training (NCERT); National Institute of Educational Planning and Administrations (NIEPA) and University Grants Commission (UGC).

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement has always been a crucial point and main centre of educational research despite varied statement about the aim of education. Academic development of the pupil is the primary concern and the most important goal of education. Not that other aspect of educational objectives are to be ignored but the fact remains that academic achievement is the unique responsibility of all educational institutions established by the society to promote a wholesome scholastic development of pupil. Academic achievement of an individual is so far considered to be influential partly by his ability to adjust to his environment, partly by his special abilities, intelligence and aptitude which are an integral part of his personality and partly by the intensity of drives and motives which serve as the impelling force for his activities.

Thus, academic achievement refers to the degree of level of success and that of proficiency attained in some specific area concerning scholastic and academic work. In view of other authors such as Goods (1955) Biswal and Aggarwal (1971) there

seems to be considerable similarities in as much as all of them place emphasis on knowledge attained or skill developed in academic subjects and usually originated by test scores. It is different from proficiency in the area of different age accomplishment quotient or achievement quotient are the most commonly used meant to interpret the level of academic achievement of pupils in general or in a specific given subject matter in particular.

The justification of measuring academic achievement is based on the fundamental assumptions of psychology that there are differences within individual from time to time, place to place, situation to situation, one class to other class. Besides there are individual differences. Also individual of same age group, same grade, and of same potential ability, usually differ in their academic proficiency whether measured by Standardized Achievement Tests or by teacher's grading or by marks obtained in tests or examination.

Academic achievement is the students' performance on cognitive test at a level commensurate with his/her abilities and according to standard set for the class. Academic achievement refers to the degree of level of success and that of proficiency attained in some specific area concerning scholastic and academic work.

Academic achievement is a measure of what has been learnt in the academic year. Academic achievement is determined by a student-teacher on a particular specified area of instruction. In the present study, academic achievement of the student teachers is determined on the basis of the marks (total - theory and practical) obtained in the tenth class examination.

Home Environment

Human beings are always immersed in a social environment which not only changes the very structure of the individual or just compels him to recognize facts but also provides him with a ready-made system of signs. It imposes on him a series of obligations. Two environments namely, home and school environments, share an influential space in child's life. Family is the social-biological unit that exerts the greatest influence on the development and perpetuation of the individual's behaviour. The psychological atmosphere of a home may fall into any of the four quadrants, each of which represents one of the four general combinations: acceptance autonomy, acceptance control, Rejection- autonomy and rejection-control (Johnson & Medinnus, 1969), Grebow (1973) reported that 'nurturance-affection' and 'achievement expectations, demands and standards' constitute the two dimensions of parental behaviour that have been regarded as important by previous researchers. Various researchers have identified the following characteristics of home environment or parental child rearing practices permissiveness, willingness to devote time to the child, parental guidance, parental aspiration for achievement, provisions for the child's intellectual needs, affective rewards, instrumental companionship, prescription, physical punishment, principled discipline, neglect, deprivation of privileges, protectiveness, power, achievement

demands, indulgence, conformity, independence, emotional and verbal responsibility, involvement with the child, physical and temporal environment, avoidance of restriction and punishment, provision of appropriate play materials, etc. There exists a great overlapping in the kinds of behaviours which are in association with different characteristics.

School Environment

Human beings are always immersed in a social environment which not only changes the very structure of the individual or just compels him to recognize facts but also provides him with a readymade system of signs. It imposes on him a series of obligations. Two environments home and school share an influential space in child's life and there exists a unique juxtaposition between the two (Tucker & Bernstein, 1979). According to Sagar and Kaplan (1972), by its very nature, the family is the social-biological unit that exerts the greatest influence on the development and perpetuation of the individual's behaviour. Next to family, the school in the most important experience in the process of child development. When the child enters the school area, he or she is presented with new opportunities in terms of socialization and cognitive development. These opportunities are provided in different measures in different schools and may have a direct impact on the cognitive and affective behaviour of students. The nature of this impact can be understood if we devote our research energies to find out the environment variables that are most effective in promoting optimum development of each child's potentialities.

Need and Importance of The Study

The programme of equalization of educational opportunities for scheduled caste children to tackle some specific problems which may be considered the *sin qua non* of any educational improvement for them (Rath, 1976). They form a very big chunk of culturally deprived and socially disadvantaged. So they face all the difficulties inherent in a psychological phenomena of this type. As they are culturally deprived, their cognitive growth is retarded, their linguistic ability is very much depressed and the conceptual development is of a different type. As they are socially disadvantaged their home environment is devoid of any intellectual or scholastic stimulation. Since the children and their parents do not have any aspiration for better educational attainment and higher income. It is still more difficult to retain them therefore long. In addition, the teachers teaching these children may not be very sympathetic to them and it may not happen that an important selection of that policy maker may not be interested in raising their aspiration for better education and higher income in the face of all these difficulties, planning to bring about equalization of educational opportunities for scheduled caste children is an uphill task. Large family, scarcities of funds, meager means of living make it nearly impossible for scheduled caste children to look further their day-to-day problems. Their families are mostly illiterate and teachers also neglect scheduled caste students.

To some extent, their occupational aspirations represent their need for achievement. The

studies conducted by Singh et al. (1986) show that scheduled caste students aspire for government position followed by high level professions. The research undertaken so far have largely concentrated in finding out the educational status of scheduled caste, the quality of schooling, the hostel life of children and the prospectus of success in examination etc. Certain other studies conducted by Paramjit et al. (1985) have attempted to find out the academic progress of scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and backward class students, who get admitted in various educational programmes on the basis of reservation vis-à-vis that of other candidates, who get admitted in the same institution on the basis of merit, secured in the qualifying examination. The scheduled caste population is scattered all over the country. The only thing which is common with other caste is poverty and social disabilities due to these, they have remained ignored and backward since ages. They are miserable in the society and are suffering for the last so many decades. They could not make progress despite various efforts made by the government and no government agencies, because the efforts were not in the right direction and could not make scientifically and systematically. Varieties of social, educational and occupational distance are kept by Hindu castes despite legal safeguard provided by our Constitution.

The scheduled castes which are treated as untouchables continue to remain at the bottom of India's castes hierarchy. They also remain at the bottom of economic hierarchy, having no land of their own and relegated to undertake only menial/dirty and ill paid jobs. The major cause that have kept the scheduled caste down in the society have been poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, fear and resultants inability to assert themselves. Keeping in view the above condition of the scheduled castes students, the researcher decided to study on this topic.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the relationship between study habits and academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school students.
2. To study the relationship between dimensions of home environment and academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school students, viz. Control, Protectiveness, Punishment, Conformity, Social Isolation, Reward, Deprivation of privileges, Nurturance, Rejection and Permissiveness.
3. To study the relationship between dimensions of school environment and academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school students viz., Creative Stimulation, Cognitive Encouragement, Acceptance, Rejection, Control and Permissiveness.
4. To study the relationship between study habits and academic achievement of scheduled caste secondary school boys.
5. To study the relationship between study habits and academic achievement of scheduled caste secondary school girls.
6. To study the relationship between dimensions of home environment and academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school boys viz.

- Control, Protectiveness, Punishment, Conformity, Social Isolation, Reward, Deprivation of privileges, Nurturance, Rejection and Permissiveness.
7. To study the relationship between dimensions of home environment and academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school girls viz. Control, Protectiveness, Punishment, Conformity, Social Isolation, Reward, Deprivation of privileges, Nurturance, Rejection and Permissiveness.
 8. To study the relationship between dimensions of school environment and academic achievement of scheduled caste secondary school boys viz. Creative Stimulation, Cognitive Encouragement, Acceptance, Rejection, Control and Permissiveness.
 9. To study the relationship between dimensions of school environment and academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school girls viz. Creative Stimulation, Cognitive Encouragement, Acceptance, Rejection, Control and Permissiveness.
 10. To study the significant difference in study habits of low and high academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school students.
 11. To study the significant difference among various home environment dimensions of low and high academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school students viz. Control, Protectiveness, Punishment, Conformity, Social Isolation, Reward, Deprivation of privileges, Nurturance, Rejection and Permissiveness.
 12. To study the significant difference among various school environment dimensions of low and high academic achievement of scheduled castes secondary school students viz. Creative Stimulation, Cognitive Encouragement, Acceptance, Rejection, Control and Permissiveness.
 13. To study the significant difference in mean of study habits of scheduled castes secondary school boys and girls.
 14. To study the significant difference in mean of various home environment dimensions of scheduled castes secondary school boys and girls viz. Control, Protectiveness, Punishment, Conformity, Social Isolation, Reward, Deprivation of privileges, Nurturance, Rejection and Permissiveness.
 15. To study the significant difference in mean of various school environment dimensions of scheduled castes secondary school boys and girls viz. Creative Stimulation, Cognitive Encouragement, Acceptance, Rejection, Control and Permissiveness.

Delimitations

The investigator has decided to observe the following limitations

1. The study has been delimited to secondary school scheduled caste students of Haryana.
2. Both rural and urban students have been considered.

3. It has been further delimited to three districts, Rohtak, Jind and Jhajjar.
4. A sample of 600 students has been selected from Secondary/Senior Secondary schools. It included the students of both sexes studying in X classes.
5. The data have been collected by administering Study Habit Inventory (Developed by M. Mukhopadhyay and D.N. Sansanwal); School and Home Environment Inventory (Developed by Dr. K.S. Mishra).

Conclusion

Any analysis of Indian society without taking caste into consideration is not complete. Almost all activities economic, political, educational & socio cultural revolves around the nations of caste. The structural form and relationships in rural areas have continued almost in tact in post independence India although some changes have come about in urban setting. The Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes through out the country occupy the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy. In a hierarchy of unequal relationship the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are at the bottom and hence socially inferior to all others in the community. Further among themselves also there is further satisfaction and ranking.

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