

Problems Of Education Among Scheduled Castes In Rural Area: A Sociological Analysis

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Education is the most important element for growth and prosperity of a nation. The term 'education' is derived from the Latin word 'educare' which means bringing up a child, both physically and mentally. In a broader sense, education is conceived as a group process by which culture of the knowledge storehouse is transmitted from one generation to another. The higher castes with greater economic power had the sole monopoly in the field of education during pre-independence days and lower castes, especially the scheduled castes were denied the educational facilities. However after independence especial measures were proposed in our constitution for the education of the scheduled castes and liberal plan allocations were made under different five year plans to improve a lot of scheduled castes. Besides this, a number of schemes and programmes were launched by government for the education of scheduled castes.

The present study is an attempt to explore the problem of education among scheduled castes in rural area. The study has been conducted in Mandi Dhanaura block of district Jyoti Ba Phoolle Nagar (Amroha) of western Uttar Pradesh. This study is mainly empirical in nature and based on primary data. Respondents were selected through the purposive sampling. The information was supplemented by the respondents through some specific technique i.e. observation, interview, scheduled and case study method. The findings inferred that the respondents face several problems for getting education. Due to the lack of money their children are dropout from the school. Being a girl child they did not send their daughter for getting education in to the school. The children are also engaged in daily wage labor having little education.

Education is important for the transformation of society as well as for the development of the individual. It is an instrument of change. As a matter of fact, social transformation is done through educational

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transformation. All socio-economic and cultural innovations are possible through it. If we see education in historical perspective, we find that the man could reach the percentage of technological development and modernization because of education. Many movement and social revolutions could only be possible due to the epistemic function of education.

Education is also considered to be an important instrument for the development of personality. But in a caste ridden and hierarchical society like India access to educational opportunities is unequal and unjust. The higher castes with greater economic power had the sole monopoly in the field of education during pre-independence days and lower castes, especially the scheduled castes were denied the educational facilities. However after independence especial measures were proposed in our constitution for the education of the scheduled castes and liberal plan allocations were made under different five year plans to improve the lot of scheduled castes. Besides this, a large number of facilities and benefits were providing to them with a view to promote education among these people.

A number of schemes and programmes were launched by government for the education of scheduled castes. Sociologists have studied several kinds of educational development of scheduled castes, e.g., *A.B. Bose* (1970) investigated the programmes and plans for the educational development of scheduled castes at pre-metric and post-metric stages and has described certain suggestions made so as to accelerate the pace of their educational development. *Suma Chitnis* (1975) has studied the poor enrolment in professional and technical courses, poor performance in institute of scheduled castes. *Malvika Karlekar* (1983) has found out the issues relating the education of scheduled castes, the main problem affecting to scheduled castes children is that retention in the educational system. *S. Radhakrishanan and Ranjana Kumari* (1989) have studied the impact of education on scheduled castes youth and their socio-economic background and its influence on their educational careers.

All the above and many other social science researchers have studied the various programmes and schemes in order to know their

impact on the education of scheduled castes. On the basis of the above we find that everywhere in India education is increasing among the scheduled castes but there are several places where education among the scheduled castes is not coming up. Therefore, such peculiar instances need to be studied where education is not coming up among the scheduled castes and *what problems are coming to the members of scheduled castes for getting education?*

An Overview Of Literature

Meaning And Definition Of Education:

Education is one of the basic activities in all human society. The term 'Education' is derived from the Latin word 'educare' which means bringing up a child, both physically and mentally. In a broader sense, education is conceived as a group process by which culture of the knowledge storehouse is transmitted from one generation to another.

"Education is the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life...education is the socialization of the younger generation....It is the means by which society perhaps within the children, the essential conditions for its very existence...Education creates a new being."(Durkheim, E. 1925)

Thus education has been variously defined by different thinkers and therefore, it has acquired various meanings. But there is a general agreement that "Education is by all means an attempt to mould and shape behavior the pupil".

Characteristics Of Education:

Every phenomenon has some specific features on the basis of which it may be distinguished from other. Education has the following characteristics:

1. Education is a process of transmission of social heritage.
2. Education is the process of unfolding of innate qualities.
3. Education is also an instrument of social cohesion and control.
4. Education is a dynamic process.
5. Education is a process of socialization.

Some general aims of education:

1. To socialize the individual.
2. To transmit the cultural heritage.
3. To reform the attitudes.
4. Occupational placement.
5. To modify the behavior.
6. To instill the sense of competition. (www.google.com)

Castes In The Indian Social System:

The English word 'caste' rather correspondence more or less closely to what is locally referred to as 'Jati' or 'Kulam'. Besides jati or kulam is familiar with concept of 'varna', which refers to one the four main categories into which the Hindu society is traditionally divided; jati refers generally to a much a smaller group. The English word caste is used to denote both, not only by foreigners but also by others who are familiar with English. 'Caste' and 'sub-caste' are the other terms, which refers to primary division and sub-division this is not altogether satisfactory because the caste system is characterized by segmentation of several orders.

Caste is a very complex social institution deeply entrenched in Indian society from immemorial past. The earliest Vedas do not reveal the existence of caste. A careful analysis of the sacred books of India indicates that the caste system developed in the latest phase of Aryan invasion and conquest of the original inhabitants. Castes become a complete system encompassing every aspect of the life of the Hindus.

Hutton (1946) laid down the following criteria for castes:

- i. Caste is endogamous.
- ii. There are restrictions on mobility between members of different castes.
- iii. There is hierarchical grading of caste.
- iv. In various kinds of contact especially those concerned with food, sex and ritual a member of a higher caste is liable to be polluted by either direct or indirect contact with a member of lower caste.
- v. Caste is very commonly associated with a traditional occupation.
- vi. A man status is determined by the circumstances of his birth (i.e. the caste in which he is born) unless he is expelled from his caste for some ritual offence.

Several writers who worked on the caste and the caste like groups are of the opinion that the caste or the castes like groups are found even outside India, in areas such as Arabia, Polynesia, Africa, Japan and United States particularly in the south. (Naidu, R. Vijaya Krishna, 2004)

To conclude the discussion on caste system it can be said that birth is the only criterion of the membership in the caste occupational attributes of the caste system are clearly pronounced and carried values of rank and status. Occupation enjoys social position commensurate with caste occupation with caste occupation. (Naidu, R. Vijaya Krishna, 2004)

History Of Scheduled Castes:

The term “Scheduled Castes” is an expression standardized in the constitution of India though nowhere defined therein. Article 341 of the Indian constitution declares that the president of India – “May with respect to any state or union territory, and where it is a state after consultation with the governor there of, by public notification, specific the castes races or tribes or part of, or groups within castes races or tribes which shall for the purpose of this constitution be deemed to be scheduled castes in relation to that state or union territory as the case may be”. It is further stated in Article 36 (24) that “parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of scheduled castes specified in a notification any caste, race or tribe”. Thus scheduled castes may be defined as those groups which are named in the scheduled castes order of the government of India, in force from time to time. The scheduled castes order is an order containing a schedule of castes entitled to benefit from the various special arrangements exclusively earmarked for them. In accordance with the provision of the constitution, the scheduled castes order was promulgated in August 1950. It was amended in 1956. (Santhakumari, R. 1976). The government of India Act 1935 placed the ex-untouchables in a scheduled and they were for the first time called scheduled castes. In 1936 British government of India ordered in specifying certain castes in the list of depressed classes as scheduled castes. The scheduled castes throughout the country occupy the lowest rank in the castes hierarchy. In the hierarchy of unequal relationship, the

scheduled castes at the bottom hence socially inferior to all other in the community.

Scheduled castes were one of the groups which were most backward. The basic determinants of scheduled castes status were untouchability and impure occupations, other determinants were their low economic, political and educational conditions. After independence, the scheduled castes (SCs) receive special mention in the constitution of India with special provision in educations employment and political representation.

The Scheduled Castes And Education:

The scheduled castes suffered not only economic dispossession and geographical segregation, but were also denied access to education. The closed system of stratification received religious sanction and social inequality was accepted as a religious value. In line with the factors of religion and values, education too in traditional India was towards of the closed system of stratification in which Brahmins were trained to be as priests and scholars, Kshatrias as rules and warriors, vysyas as businessmen, under the pretext of the services to the above castes the sudras and the scheduled castes were denied access to education. Scheduled castes absolutely had no access to education in traditional India. Early efforts towards the education of the untouchables were usually associated with British rule and the efforts of Christian missionaries in India. Under the British rule, the introduction of western secular education opened new vistas for varied forms of mobility only two those castes, which has access to education.

Education of scheduled castes received attention in a more precise manner only after independence. After independence, realizing the importance of education, uplifting the scheduled castes the following measures has been taken.

Article 15 of constitution of India prohibits any discrimination on the ground of religion, caste, race, and sex place of birth or any one of them. The clause (4) of article 15 states nothing in this article in clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the state from making special provisions

for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizen or for the scheduled castes.

Area Of Study: Mandi Dhanaura block was selected for the study. Mandi Dhanaura is situated in district Jyoti Ba Phoole Nagar (Amroha) of western Uttar Pradesh, located between Ganga and Yamuna rivers. Mandi Dhanaura is located at 28.97°N and 78.25°E. It has an average elevation of 212 meter. According to 2001 census the total population of district J. P. Nagar is 1,499,193 in which 795,439 are male and 703,754 are female. The total population of Mandi Dhanaura block is 24,465 in which 12,967 are male and 11,498 are female. The total literacy rate of this block is 58% in which male literacy rate is 67% and the female literacy rate is 49%.

Methodology: Present study is mainly empirical in nature and based on primary data. Besides, collection and analysis of primary data, secondary data pertinent literature has been compiled, analyzed and reviewed accordingly. Respondents were selected through the purposive sampling and the data have been collected by interview, observation and case study methods. The main sources of secondary data and pertinent literature include published and documented sources. The academic institutes such as universities, colleges, research institutions and various departments of government and non-government have been consulted for collection of secondary data and literature.

Case Studies : The data have been collected from the case studies are as follows:

Case Study-1 Brijpal singh, (name changed) belong to Jatav caste. He is 40 years old. His father is dead but he was illiterate and mother is also illiterate. He lives in joint family with his mother, wife and two children. He has two sons. His wife is illiterate. He is also illiterate. He owns no land. His economic condition is very poor. He is a meson. He earns near about 120 rupees per day. He has a kachha house. His both sons are 8th class pass. They were not studying yet now. They were both earned the work of carpentry because they want to earn the money.

From the above, it may be inferred that he is illiterate and his wife is also illiterate. His parents are illiterate. He has two sons and they

are 8th class passed. His both sons are not studying now because they were learning the work of carpentry. His economic condition is very poor so they are not studying now.

Case Study-2 : Ajay Kumar (name changed) is 38 years old. His father is 65 years old. He belongs to Hindu religion and Jatav by caste. He lives in joint family with his father, mother, his wife and six children. He has four sons and two daughters. His father is illiterate and mother was also illiterate. He is 1st class pass. His wife is illiterate. He owns no land. His economic condition is very poor. He is a labor. He earns near about 150 rupees per day. He has a kachha house. Out of six children, four are 8th class pass but His sons are not studying now because his sons are engaged in the work of Brick field. They want to earn money for the livelihood of their family. His daughters were not studying due to the lack of money. Being a girl child their father did not send them in to the school.

It can be inferred from this case study that he is only 1st class pass. His mother and father are illiterate. His wife is also illiterate. His economic condition is very poor. His sons are not studying now because they are engaged in the work. His daughters were not studying due to the lack of money. Being a girl child their father did not send them in to the school.

Case Study-3: Premchand (name changed), is 42 years old. His father is no more, but his father was illiterate. He belongs to Jatav caste. He lives in joint family, with his mother, wife and his six children. He has four sons and two daughters. His mother is illiterate. He is 7th class passed and his wife is illiterate. He owns no land and his economic condition is poor. He is a meson. He earns near about 100 rupees per day. He has a kachha house. Out of six children one daughter is enrolled in junior high school in town. She is in 9th class. His elder son is 12th pass. His four children one daughter and three sons are 8th class pass. They were not studying now because there family condition is not good. They are very poor. His family education is not good. His all children are studying in government school he cannot afford the fee of any private school. He has no knowledge of educational programmes and schemes. Now his elder son is working on brick field.

It can be inferred from this case study that he has a joint family and his economic condition is poor. His family education is not good and his children are studying in government school because he cannot afford the fee of any private school. He has no knowledge of educational programmes and schemes because he is illiterate.

Case Study-4: Santram (name changed), is 35 years old. His father is 52 years old. He belongs to Jatav caste. He lives in joint family with his parents, wife and three children. He has two sons and one daughter. His father and mother are illiterate. He is illiterate also. He owns no land. His economic condition is very poor. He is a labor man. He earns near about 150 rupees per day. He has a kachha house. Out of three children two sons are enrolled in primary school in the town in 2nd class. His daughter is 3rd class pass. She is not studying now because her family condition is not good. They are very poor. His family education is very poor. He is sending his two sons in primary school due to Mid-Day meal programme. He is satisfied with the Mid-Day meal programme. He is no aware about any scheduled castes education schemes. He says that no one programmes and schemes do not work in the correct way. He is not satisfied the quality of education.

From the above case study, it may be inferred that he is illiterate and he owned no land. He is too poor so he is sending his sons in primary school for Mid-Day meal. He has no knowledge about scheduled castes education schemes and he is not satisfied with the quality of education.

Case Study-5 : Nathu Singh is 40 years old. His father is 62 years old. He belongs to Jatav caste and lives in joint family. He lives with his parents, wife and his two children. He has two sons. His father and mother are illiterate. He and his wife are illiterate also. He owns no land. His economic condition is poor. He is labor by profession. He earns above 150 rupees per day. He has a kachha house. His elder son is 8th class pass and another son is in 6th class in junior high school. His elder son is not studying now because he is working on a shop of Kirana store. He has no interest in study and he is week in education.

From the above, it may be inferred that he and his wife are illiterate and lives in joint family. His economic condition is not well. His

elder son is not studying now because he is working on a shop of Kirana store. He has no interest in study so he is not studying.

Major Findings:

A look at the case studies undertaken by us revealed that the respondents belong to the joint family. All the respondents are landless and largely daily wage labor. The children are also engaged in daily wage labor having little education. Their economic condition is very poor and the whole family is depend on them. They cannot afford the fee of private education so their children are studying in the government school and more due to attraction of Mid-Day meal but they are not satisfied with the mid day meal scheme because their children are going only for food. They say that any one programme and scheme does not work in the correct way. They are not concentrating on their study. Due to the lack of money their children are dropout from the school. Most of the respondents are illiterate and they are not aware about the value and quality of education. Mostly the children dropout from the school because they find out in the work of labor and supplement in family income. There is no awareness about the educational programmes of scheduled castes education. Being a girl child they did not send their daughters for getting education in to the school. They are in the depth of superstitions.

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