

## The Importance of Education for the Upward Mobility of Scheduled Castes: A Study

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### Abstract

*The purpose of the study is to establish the condition of the Scheduled Castes and the factors that impact intergenerational mobility. Education for scheduled castes upliftment and expansion of higher education in context of favourable treatment & supportive measures for various socioeconomic classes, include scheduled castes and tribes are studied, the intergenerational educational mobility in India. The researcher talked about higher education for Scheduled Castes and Tribes, as well as displaying students from scheduled castes who are pursuing higher education and overcoming barriers. The research investigates the major impediments, as well as the social, personal, economic, and educational challenges of Scheduled Castes Students (SCS) in their social settings, with a focus on those who are pursuing and those who have not pursued higher education. The study will also show how some students from scheduled castes were able to overcome these obstacles while others were unable to. Data was gathered and analyzed through interviews. The survey found that scheduled caste students had a wide range of goals, including those who planned to pursue higher education as well as those who did not. the study's conclusion despite the reality that scheduled tribes' people have experienced associated with educational discrimination for years, today's lower caste college students have high vocational and academic ambitions.*

**Keywords:** Reservation, Caste Institutional habitus, Education experience, Professional education, Occupational mobility, Caste, Inequality, Generations, Education

### 1. Introduction

In India, social stratification is based on caste. In Indian society, caste is the most important component and trait. In Indian society, caste remains the most significant determinant of a man's dignity, vocation, and career. Every Hindu in India is born into the category of his/her parents, and he/she is destined to remain in that caste. Marriage beyond his/her caste is outlawed or harshly discouraged, and no amount of riches or talent may change his/her caste position. Every man's caste is nearly usually known to his/her neighbor's caste. In other circumstances, the implementation of the caste system appears to nearly dictate the members' means of subsistence. Moreover, the castes, which may have developed as a result of the preservation of ceremonial cleanliness in social relationships and laws aimed to minimize blood mingling, has evolved over time into an institution that gives each individual his or her function and status in orthodox Hinduism.

Caste is described as a system centres on endogamy, authority, and commercial constraints that includes a structure and organisations. It also establishes a pattern of group ties that might bond interacting individuals in everyday life. The caste system's groups are comprehensive, exclusive, and distinct, meaning that each individual is a member of just one of them. Members' responsibilities and actions are influenced by their in-group membership; there is some 'role summation.' The groupings are self-contained; each need the services or commodities of others.

The schedule caste is one of the castes in Indian Hindu civilization that has many castes. In general, the schedule caste is the caste that belongs to the inferior status in the context of India. The scheduled caste is the constitutional and legal designation given to the tradition known as the "untouchable" class. It is a social, cultural, educational, economic, and politically backward stratum in society. Because the

Scheduled Caste was exploited by the upper class due to their poor social position, the government took the initiative and created plans and reservation policies to help the scheduled caste grow and develop.

Despite the fact that education has shown to be the best method of development for scheduled caste kids, it has not reached the bulk of coastal states both structurally and functionally. Students who want to pursue higher education must overcome various barriers such as society, cultural, economic, personal, and educational and commit themselves to pursuing higher education. However, the majority of students do not complete their secondary education and drop out due to a variety of factors including social, cultural, economic, personal, and educational. Illiteracy, poverty, ignorance, and lack of supervision are the primary reasons why people do not want to pursue higher education (Kumar, 2021).

### **1.1 Educational Upward Mobility**

Advancement in education involves more than simply individual ability and effort; it also necessitates other factors, such as the system of education (Sophie Hahn, 2016). Tepecik (2011) research on ethnic minorities' socially aspirational children and found that their households had a good attitude toward schooling. Case studies of impoverished ethnically diverse family's minority groups were undertaken by Siraj-Blatchford (2010). She discusses that parents cultivate their children's social mobility. Blau and duncan understood that education is a cultural basis that establishes roles and professions. The relevance of resilience in underprivileged children' educational performance. Breen and Jonsson thought that the shift in recruiting habits was due to increased educational opportunities. The relevance of programmes that minimize social inequalities in education as a requirement for social mobility is highlighted by these outcomes (Antonia Kupfer, 2015).

The concept of progress in terms of people's basic freedoms has far-reaching implication for how we conceive about development processes and policies. On the evaluating side, this entails assessing the development needs in terms of reducing the potential for unfreedom among society's members. Post-independent, the constitution of India, which acknowledged the democratic demands of a pluralistic society, became the government's framework for promoting everyone's individual rights and equality. Advancement in the lower castes was seen as an essential first step toward the development of individual rights. 'Not via an open competitive industry, but by a education governed by the government and labour market that assures an acceptable position for each group,' says weiner (1989). According to this viewpoint, social justice necessitates a public policy to ensure individual mobility through group allocation.' As a result, equality of opportunities policy via reservation is being considered as an assertive strategy of integration for socially excluded communities in India, placing underprivileged populations against their previous mistreatment (Saxena, A., (2017).

### **1.2 Educational Status of the Scheduled Castes**

The position of the schedule tribes in terms of education is described education is a key factor in upward mobility and has enormous potential as a tool for social transformation. Education develops skills, interests, attitudes, goals, and values in addition to imparting information. Through education, societal growth is fostered, and people's social and cultural levels are enhanced. It is self-evident that educational attainment and employment standing are linked. Education and employment have a good relationship. This link becomes much more important in India, where a huge portion of the population is attempting to pursue upward social mobility.

### **1.3 Higher Education for Scheduled Castes and Tribes**

The fulfilment of constitutional obligations and the designation of groups eligible for state-sponsored benefits have been important concerns of educational policy. The establishment of reservation in higher education, as well as its execution has been a primary focus in order to eliminate imbalances between Scheduled and non-Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Rural man, female from the rural, man from the city, and female in the city are the four dimensions identified by NPE 1986 as requiring equalization. The

Committee for National Policy evaluation in education 1986 Report, issued in December 1990, advocates for a richer tribal areas' environment.

The Committee for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes' 28th Report states:

In absolute terms, the greatest remarkable achievement has been in the realm of education. During the decade 1971-81, the literacy level among scheduled tribes and scheduled castes improved by around 45.7 percent & 32.2 percent, respectively, despite the fact that the gap between their level of literacy and that of the remainder widened. At all levels, the number of youngsters enrolled has been increasing. Over a million post-matriculants students from Scheduled Castes and Tribes were enrolled in 1986-87. It cautions that the decrease begins in middle school, continues, and becomes more pronounced as one progresses via higher learning, until it is rendered irrelevant in the end (Chanana, K. ,1993).

## **2. Educational Disabilities**

For generations, the Scheduled Castes were likewise denied access to education. They were historically the most ignorant and illiterate group. The Scheduled Castes' widespread illiteracy was caused by the religious and social penalties imposed on them. The sacred texts Brihaspati and Manusmriti forbade any effort on the part of the 16 Sudras, much alone Scheduled Tribes, to recite traditional Hindu slokas, and if they did, the smriti commanded that their tongue be cut off. Apart from religious and societal prohibitions against Scheduled Castes enrolling in formal education, poverty is the greatest barrier to enrollment in formal education for Scheduled Castes. Other reasons for educational backwardness between Scheduled Castes included ignorance of how to use education, the belief that education is useless, adverse economic conditions, the lack of educational facilities in rural areas, an insufficient knowledge of educational facilities, and traditional apathy toward education, as well as the home environment.

## **3. Socio Cultural and Religious Disabilities**

Untouchability was the Scheduled Castes' most serious social handicap. Untouchables were segregated in Hindu culture, and they were not allowed to reside in their own territories. The outward look and behaviour of caste Hindus contradicts their actual intents and feelings. The Hindu caste system discriminates against the untouchables. The fact that Scheduled Castes were often compelled to dwell outside of the main village population emphasized their social identity. Residential segregation was enforced to a degree. As a result, the majority of people lived in Kutcha huts built of mud with thatched roofs on the edges of villages or slums in towns. These people's lives have been unhappy and unsanitary for a long time. The milieu in which these folks lived was not favourable to raising their standards.

There were legal and ceremonial restrictions in old Hindu culture that prohibited the lower castes from copying the higher castes' lifestyles. Aside from that, there are several aspects of Hindu life that are probably placed even lower in the Hindu Tradition hierarchy of priorities. The ones that concern their diet are the most important. Different types of food & drink are rigorously graded in Sanskritic Hindus, and a caste's social position is strongly tied to its members' eating habits in any particular locale. In general, meat consumption is frowned upon; nevertheless, Harijans not only consume meat, but only certain types of meat that are seen to be particularly pure. Those who consume beef are ascribed the lowest social status.

## **4. Study on Intergenerational Educational Mobility in India**

Only a few research on intergenerational schooling mobility have been conducted in India, and the majority of them are new. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) (1998–1999) was used to compile this report. Jalan and Murgai investigated intergenerational transmission of schooling in India, point out, NFHS is not well-suited to studying intergenerational mobility, particularly among women. Only child-parent couples who lived in the same home at the time of survey had their schooling acknowledged, the education of respondents' parents is not directly questioned. Given that the typical marriage age in India is 16.4 year, the majority of girls aged 15 and up are either the wife or daughter of household heads who

have no formal education. V. Hnatkovska, (2012) have used National Sample Surveys (NSS) (several rounds) to explore intergenerational educational, occupational, and economic mobility, unfortunately, they only look at men (male family leaders, as well as their male children and grandchildren). Majumder used NSS data to investigate intergenerational educational mobility and found constraints comparable to those stated above. For example, the specimen of female participants (20 years old or older) out of a total of 264,800 people (20 years), there were 19,884 women in 1993 and 15,229 women in 2004. and older) (nearly half of them being females) in 1993 and 222,683 individuals (20 years old or older) (approximately half of them being females) in 2004. As a result, significant selection bias is likely to be present in the study. The research warns that "the results for girls/daughters must be taken with a grain of salt" (Majumder 2010). Another thing worth mentioning is that the study did not include any married women. Singh (2012) also discusses the inadequacy data from the National Survey of student Engagement (NSSE) may be used to investigate intergenerational academic and occupational mobility.

## 5. Barriers Faced by Scheduled Castes Students in Pursuing Education

**Table 1: Barriers faced by schedule caste's students in pursuing education**

| Economic Barrier  | Social Barrier             | Personal Barrier                     | Educational Barrier                       |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Financial constraints   | Early marriage             | Lack of interest                     | Lack of positive attitude towards teacher |
| Lack of family support  | Peer group influence       | Due to the poor academic performance | Institutional capacity is lacking.        |
| Lack of funds for entrance fees, transportation fees, examination fees, room rents, and other expenses. | Unawareness and illiteracy | Lack of motivation                   | Access to government scheme               |

Table 1 shows a variety of difficulties that both boys & girls from scheduled caste students who wanted to go to college and those who didn't want to go to college face. Almost every teenager, both boys and girls, who dropped out of school or college had more than one reason for dropping out, with lack of interest in school or college and family support being common. In school, on the other hand, a top-cited the cause. The findings may be categorized into macro-societal, educational, interpersonal, & individual components.

## 6. Accessing Higher Education: Problems, Issues, Strategies

Women, Muslims, and Scheduled Caste scribes are all ineligible for higher education, according to this report. This has been proven by their attendance in higher education, albeit there are various additional aspects that may have been used to demonstrate their educational backwardness. Each of these groups is not one-size-fits-all, and educational disadvantage vary both within and across them. Despite constitutional safeguards in favors of Muslims, as well as Scheduled Castes and Tribes, the issue persists. Since independence, official records such as the findings of numerous commissions and ad hoc groups created by the Indian government have shown a continuous view of education as the most important tool for social mobility and progress for the poor. The most recent document of policy, National Policy on Education 1986, included a section on education's role in achieving equality.

The main source of concern for Scheduled Castes/Tribes and minorities is the implementation of provisions of the constitution. Women have never had the same level of concern or legal protection. As a result of the previous 15 years' women's liberation movement, there has been a much greater definition of the goals of education for women. While minorities have been allowed to build colleges and give minority students precedence, Scheduled Tribes and Castes have benefited from reservations. Recently,

it has been suggested that women and minorities in general, as well as women within the protected quota, in particular, be given reservations. The major causes of educational illiteracy are related to school education.

Some of the elements are shared by all of them, while others are unique to each of them. For example, the lack of schools in places accessible to females, Muslims, Scheduled Castes, and Tribes is the single most critical problem at the school level. As a result, the most recent focus has been on providing more effective coverage of places with high concentrations of Muslim, Scheduled Castes and Tribes, and those that pose additional challenges for women (such as mountainous areas, rural locations, and so on), in order to ensure equitable access to everyone (Chanana, K. ,1993).

## 7. Literature Reviews

**Amithy Jasrotia (2021)** stated that the consigns of India, while the possibility of upward mobility through education has been mentioned, the varied and intertwined structure of limitations and space of possibilities for the future examples were chosen for interviews and extensive case studied. Throughout the research, 4 main superordinate themes emerged: (a) obstacles faced by diverse generation learners, (b) a shortage of various types of capital, (c) a lack of self-awareness and a desire to mimic others, and (d) a proliferation of hybrid and mimic generation. The participants had personal experiences with change and continuity as a result of their schooling. Education appears to have aided in the conversion of the morphological of their current structure.

**Mr. Bushan Kumar, (2021)** investigated that education in India's higher education system was seen as a public good, hence it unavoidably falls under the social sector. For years, it had been doing everything it could to help the weaker members of our Indian community. The study looked into the barriers and enablers, as well as the social, personal, economic, and educational issues that SC students face, both those who are pursuing and those who have not pursued university education in their social circumstances. Higher education & scheduled caste in India and Jammu & Kashmir contexts, as well as the significance of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in affirmative action in India, will be the emphasis of the research.

**Mei-ling Lin, (2020)** stated that the ownership of all types of economic, cultural, and social capital, which collectively influenced the sorts of experienced and lives, was used to define social class. Pierre Bourdieu used the term "symbolic violence" to describe this process. Education was inextricably related to possessions like as income, job status, and social standing. Upward educational mobility necessitated more than just individual effort and intellect; it also need other factors, such as certain social circumstances. Income, unemployment, social exclusion, education, and social mobility are all linked facets of inequality. Bourdieu's ideas on symbolic dominance, capitals, and lifestyles influenced the research.

**Ashish Saxena, (2017)** analyzed the importance of marginalized groups' social growth and empowerment necessitated a real deconstruction of the subordination structure imposed on them and a sharing of power with the powerless. With a thorough understanding of the J&K, the researcher explored the effects of the state's various development on the Scheduled Caste (SC) people. The study identified potential agents for improving the quality of life of SCs and backs it up with empirical evidenced. Multiple elements, like as land reform measures, the Arya Samaj movement, and voluntary organisations activities, were notably exposed as contributing to the shifting situation of SCs in the Jammu area.

**C. M. Malish (2016)** examined that the institutional setting of scheduled tribe engineering students' educational experienced in Kerala, India's federal state. When much had been said about equality of access in the realm of reservation rules in higher learning while researching the caste issue and educational equity, the process and result dimensions have remained understudied. The article explained how diverse institution cultures result in varied experienced for students with comparable educational and familial circumstances by offering ethnographic descriptions of the academic opportunity of fourteen scheduled tribe engineering students.

**Azam (2013)** examined that intergenerational occupational mobility of males born between 1945 and 1985. White collar workers, skilled/semi-skilled workers, farmers, & unskilled labour (which includes

agriculture labourers) were classified into four categories by the researcher, who used multiple statistical approaches to quantify intergenerational mobility.

**Pradip Chouhan (2012)** investigated that literacy and educational achievement are important indices of a society's progress. Despite the fact that the constitution and the government give many socioeconomic benefits to scheduled castes, they remain illiterate and undereducated in comparison to the general population. This might be due to a multitude of factors such as early marriage, greater female illiteracy due to the focus placed on the male offspring, child labour, superstition, upper caste domination, and socioeconomic status deprivation, among others.

**Jhilmam Ray, (2012)** analyzed that discrimination against certain ethnic groups extends beyond current generations and would continue to do so in the future. In emerging countries as a whole, and inside certain nations among specific ethnic groupings in particular, this expressed itself as limited international migration both in terms of education and profession. To understand the inertia of the current prejudice in India, the researcher looked at the level of mobility among generations including both academic and occupational attainment for various ethnic groups. The findings show that the Scheduled Castes (SCs) & Scheduled Tribes have considerable intergenerational stickiness in educational attainment and occupational distribution (STs).

**Majumder (2010)** investigated that in India, there is considerable upward educational mobility between generations but substantially lower upward occupational mobility. The status of the prohibited castes was far worse. The study looked into why educational mobility did not translate into employment mobility.

**Chandra Pal Singh Chauhan (2008)** analyzed India's policy of reservations for lower castes. Positive discrimination in the United States was comparable to this strategy. Based on data from official reports, the research gave a brief introduction of the lower castes and discussed the sorts of groups that are qualified for reservation. Due to contextual variables such as poor school attendance and completion rates, as well as high dropout and failure rates, the study concluded that affirmative action has not helped the lower castes. Furthermore, the ongoing inclusion of more and more tribes into the reserved categories has diluted the reservation policy's good influence.

## 8. Discussion

The establishment of concessions in higher education, as well as its execution has been a primary focus in order to eliminate imbalances between scheduled and non-scheduled castes and tribes. The topic of my study was education for the upward mobility of scheduled castes. The survey discovered a wide variety of intentions among scheduled caste students, including those who expected to pursue higher education and those who did not. The study attempted to prove that the circumstances surrounding higher education is extremely complicated. According to the study, among the different castes in Indian Hindu society, the schedule caste is one of them. In general, the schedule caste is the caste that belongs to the lowest position in the Indian perspective. The study discussed Scheduled Castes & Tribes in Higher Education, and the study tries to illustrate women, Muslims, and people from Scheduled Castes face discrimination in higher education. The Table 2 is showing the literacy rate of scheduled castes as per 2011 census.

**Table 2: Literacy Rate of Scheduled Castes as Per 2011 Census**

| Effective Literacy Rate |      |                    |      |                    |
|-------------------------|------|--------------------|------|--------------------|
|                         |      | 2001               |      | 2011               |
| Indicator               | SCs  | Overall population | SCs  | Overall population |
| <b>Total</b>            | 54.7 | 64.8               | 66.1 | 73.0               |
| <b>Rural</b>            | 51.2 | 58.7               | 62.8 | 67.8               |
| <b>Urban</b>            | 68.1 | 79.9               | 76.2 | 84.1               |

**Source:** Primary census abstract for total population, Scheduled Castes, 2011: Census (2011).

## 9. Conclusion

The study made a serious effort to comprehend the educational issues and career goals of scheduled tribes' students. Today's lower caste university students have high academic and vocational goals, despite the fact that scheduled tribe's people have faced occupational and educational discrimination for generations. They are attempting to improve their social position with the assistance and support provided by the government. The scheduled castes' current socioeconomic situation is the outcome of higher caste Hindus' historically discriminatory treatment. After independence, the undesirables were subjected to multiple forms of humiliation before being granted the same economic and social privileges as the rest of India's castes. The varna system was designed to keep untouchables out. The study makes an honest endeavour to comprehend educational issues among reserved castes. Scheduled caste students nowadays have considerably higher educational goals, despite the fact that they have been subjected to educational discrimination. The current socioeconomic conditions of scheduled castes are the result of historical discrimination by higher caste Hindus. After Independence, the untouchables were exposed to different forms of humiliation before being granted the same economic and social benefits as the other castes in India. The parents' educational level is equally significant in improving their children's educational success.

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