

STATUS OF SCHEDULED CASTES AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION

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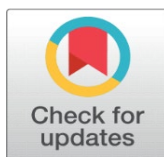
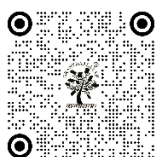
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ABSTRACT

Lack of Education among the scheduled castes (SC) population in India may be the main reason for remaining at the lower end of the social structure. The main aim of this study was to examine the participation of scheduled caste undergraduate students based on their location, within the category of SCs, parental education, income, and distance from home. This paper is based on primary qualitative data collected from undergraduate college students. The results were analyzed using SPSS 22.0 and are presented through tables and graphs. The results revealed A comparison of parental qualifications reveals that students with illiterate parents are less likely to pursue higher education than their peers.

Keywords: Scheduled Caste, Participation, Higher Education

1. INTRODUCTION

"It is not unusual for people to go up or down the social ladder in various societies. When this occurs, the society is described as having "open" classes (Mondal, 2016). Individuals who are born into the class into which "they have a chance to be born" remain in that class for the rest of their lives. Such classes are "closed and, if extremely distinct, form a caste system, as Ogburn and Nimkoff observed." Castes are supposed to be a unique social class that exists in every civilization, at least in theory. Mondal Vikram (2010, Mondal Vikram). "When rank is completely fixed, and men are born

into their lot with little possibility of changing it," writes MacIver, "class takes the extreme form of caste." According to Sangeetha Rao, castes are separated from religion; the class may run parallel to castes (Singh, 2017). There were four classes in Hindu society: (1) Brahmin, or priestly class, (2) Kshatriya, or military class, (3) Vaishya, or commercial class, and (4) Sudra, or artisan. This was thought to be a class system. BR Ambedkar, according to him. Hindus' priestly caste preserves social distance from others through a closed policy, effectively making it a separate caste (Mondal, 2016).

The remaining classes are subdivided, with some being divided into huge groups and others into very small groupings. These sub-divisions have naturally lost the open-door nature of the class system and have evolved into self-contained units known as castes (ibid). He goes on to say that because Brahmins maintain their separation from others by endogamy, other non-Brahmin sub-divisions or classes that became endogamous castes followed suit (Mondal, 2016). The phrase "Scheduled Caste" has a long history dating back to the Government of India Act of 1935. (ibid). In 1936, the British government issued the Government of India (Scheduled Caste) order, which designated certain castes as SCs in particular provinces for the first time. The SCs was known as the "Depressed Classes" (Teltumbde, 2012; Waughray, 2010; Vundru, 2013). Dr. Hutton, India's then-Census Commissioner, had systematically classified the depressed classes, and the list of SCs issued under the Government Order of 1936 was a continuation of Dr. Hutton's earlier list. Furthermore, the Constitution's "Scheduled Caste" order of 1950 was an updated version of the 1936 order. The classification of STs was established after the Constitution went into effect. Even in the case of tribes, the 1931 census is credited with being the first genuine attempt to classify them. The Government of India Act, 1935, does, however, refer to the 'Backward Tribes' (Teltumbde, 2012; Waughray, 2010; Vundru, 2013).

2. EDUCATIONAL STATUS DISTRICT DODA

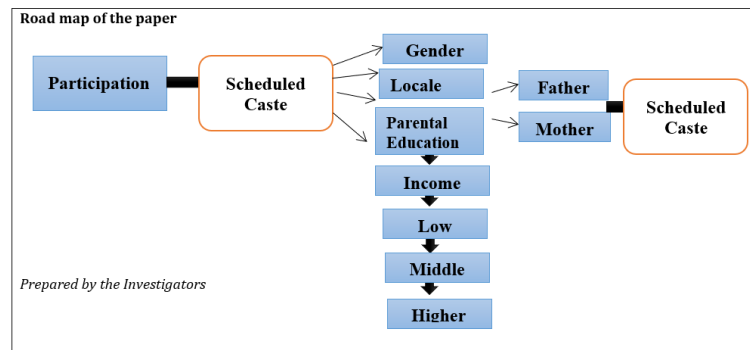
The state of Jammu and Kashmir is split into 22 districts. Doda District is one of them. With a population of 409936, Doda District is located in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Males make up 52.1 percent (213641) of the population, while females make up 47.9% (196295). Out of the total population, 92 percent (377247) reside in rural areas, with 195430 males and 181817 females. On the other side, 8 percent (32689) of the population lives in urban areas, with males accounting for 18211 and females accounting for 14478. According to a recent population census in India, the literacy rate in Doda District has improved. Out of the entire population of 409936 in Doda District, 29.9% (122467) are enrolled in educational institutions, 26.6 percent (109111) have previously attended, and 43.5 percent (178358) have never attended. Students from scheduled castes make up a sizable portion of the culturally and socially disadvantaged population, and they face all of the psychosocial and emotional challenges that come with education in general, and higher education in particular. Their cognitive development is slowed, their linguistic ability is severely hampered, and their conceptual development is of a different type as a result of their cultural deprivation. Their home environment is devoid of any intellectual or academic stimulation since they are socially disadvantaged. Because neither the children nor their parents aspire to a greater level of education or a higher salary. It's even more difficult to keep them for such a long time. Furthermore, the teachers who teach these children may not be sympathetic to them, and it is possible that a key decision-maker may be uninterested in raising their aspirations for a better education and higher income in the face of all of these challenges, planning to bring about equalization of educational opportunities for scheduled caste children.

3. REVIEW RELATED STUDIES

Malish and Ilavarasan (2016) conducted an ethnographic study on the topic of "Higher education, reservation, and scheduled castes: investigating institutional patterns of professional engineering institutions in Kerala." To investigate the institutional environment of scheduled caste engineering students' educational experiences in Kerala. Data gathering source The study discovered that admission to both the SGI and the CGI was based on an entrance examination administered at the state and national level, based on a sample of 14 SC students (out of 14, 8 are from the SGI and 6 are from the CGI). In his paper titled "Education Growth of SCs in Karnataka: A Statistical Analysis," Nagamurthi, S. (2016) set out to investigate the educational development of scheduled castes in Karnataka. The findings show that, notwithstanding fellowships and reservations, scheduled castes have a slower rate of educational advancement. Only 15.66 percent of the Scheduled Caste population has received primary education, 14.20 percent has received secondary education, 12.49 percent has received education up to the pre-degree level, and surprisingly, only 8.58 percent of the Scheduled Caste population has received higher education including graduation, post-graduation, and research degrees.

Despite the fact that the majority of the SC population receives a basic education, participation in higher education is extremely low. Furthermore, the study suggests that in order to obtain education, it is necessary to look into the difficulties of scheduled castes. It has been noticed that the scheduled castes, particularly in rural areas, are prone to carelessness and poverty. Many of these castes are denied access to amenities and services as a result of suppression, discrimination, alienation, and social isolation inequity. D. Sahab (2015) did a paper titled "Determinants of higher education for scheduled caste in entire pardesh: A socio-economic Analysis". The study's goal was to look at the social and economic status of scheduled caste people. It was discovered that social and economic relationships had an impact on higher education.

In his work titled "A study and analysis of the influence of internal marking in education of the caste SC and ST in Buldhana District," Vidhyadhar, S., and Ubale (2015). The study's goal is to look at the ratio of students from the castes of SC and ST in Buldhana District in terms of internal marks, which are given to pupils quite easily. According to the findings of the study, this is due to internal marking, which is done without much effort and results in all students receiving roughly the same grades without receiving a quality education. Kaur (2015). According to studies, one of the key objectives of his study was to investigate the nature of social mobility among scheduled castes (SCs). According to (Kaur, 2015), the majority of respondents, who are from the Ramdasia group, consider education and occupation to be one of the most important factors in their social mobility. "Educational Development of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe," Meshram and V.J. Nandapurkar (2012), education is the key to development. The availability and accessibility of educational opportunities, particularly for Dalits and the poorer parts of our society, are fast changing in the current period of globalisation, liberalisation, and privatisation (GLP).



4. OBJECTIVE

The main aims of this study were to examine the participation of scheduled caste undergraduate students with reference to their locale, within category, parental education, income and distance from home.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is a systematic attempt to find answer to meaningful questions through the application of scientific procedures" (Nadaf et al., 2025, p. 161). It refers to the systematic and theoretical analysis of the concepts, methods and techniques, and tools used to gather, analyse, and test hypothesis (Nadaf et al., 2024).

6. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Nadaf & Khan, 2017). Research design stands for advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used for their analysis (Nadaf & Nazir, 2026). The methodological architecture of this study is descriptive in nature.

7. POPULATION

Population is a group of individuals, objects, or events that are the focus of a study, have one or more than one characteristic in common and to whom the research results can be generalized. Population is the universe of the

researcher (Nadaf, 2018). The target population comprised full-time undergraduate schedule caste students enrolled at various Higher educational Institutions.

8. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

This study aims to explore how scheduled caste undergraduate students in Jammu and Kashmir participate in education. A questionnaire has been developed to collect data on scheduled caste students and to better understand the variables known as enablers that allowed other students to succeed in higher education. This study aims to describe, investigate, and interpret the participation of scheduled caste students in higher education.

9. SAMPLE, SAMPLING APPROACH AND PROCEDURE

The process of drawing out the sample from the population is known as Sampling (Nadaf & Basu, 2021). It is a practice of electing a representative portion from the population. The sample represents a smaller, manageable group that researchers use to make inferences and draw conclusions about the entire population.

The sampling for the said sample was carried through Purposive sampling and a total of 200 scheduled caste undergraduate students were selected.

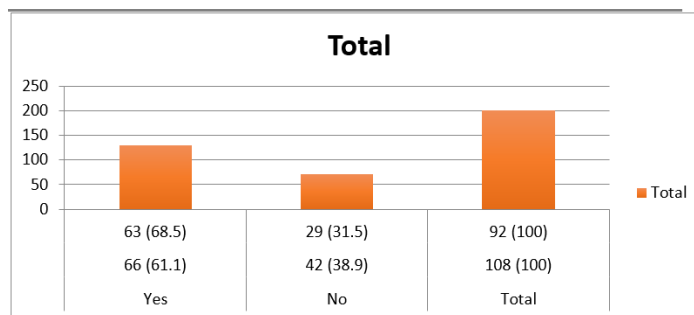
10. TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

In the present study, the semi-structured interview and questionnaire were used to examine the participation of scheduled caste students and their journey towards higher education.

The investigators begin their investigation by determining the extent to which there are differences in pursuing higher education among scheduled caste students based on gender, location, income, parental education, stream of higher education pursued, distance from home to institution, and mode of transportation.

Table 1

Table 1 Intention of going for higher education among scheduled caste students across the location.			
Going for higher education	Yes	No	Total
Male	66 (61.1)	42 (38.9)	108 (100)
Female	63 (68.5)	29 (31.5)	92 (100)
Total	129	71	200

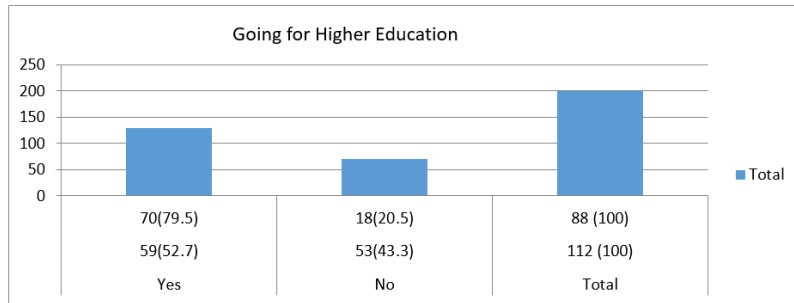


The table 1.0 depicts that the 61.1 percent of male students says yes and 38.9 percent says no, 68.5 percent females say yes and 31.5 percent say no. Furthermore; table 1.0 illustrated that majority of scheduled caste male students are agree to pursue their higher education and majority of females students also shown the interest for pursuing their higher education.

Table 2

Table 2 Intention of going for higher education among scheduled caste students across the location			
Going for Higher Education	Yes	No	Total

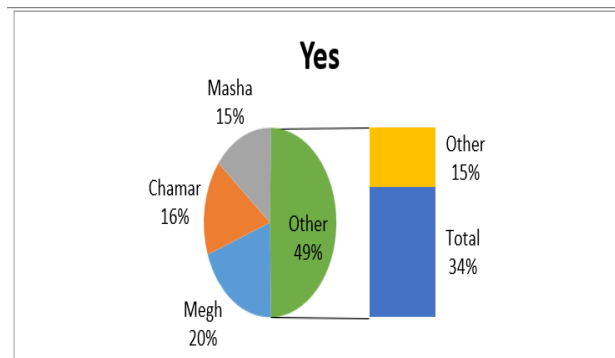
Rural	59(52.7)	53(43.3)	112 (100)
Urban	70(79.5)	18(20.5)	88 (100)
Total	129	71	200



The distribution of scheduled caste students intending to pursue higher education across locations is seen in Table 1.1. According to the data, 52.7 percent of students in rural areas planned to pursue higher education, whereas 79.5 percent of students in urban areas planned to pursue higher education. Students from rural areas (43.3%) and urban areas (20.5%) did not want to pursue higher education.

Table 3

Category	Yes	No	Total
Megh	53(74.6)	17(24.2)	70
Chamar	40(61.5)	25(38.5)	66
Masha	18(54.5)	15(45.5)	33
Other	18(58.1)	13(41.1)	31
Total	129	71	200(100)



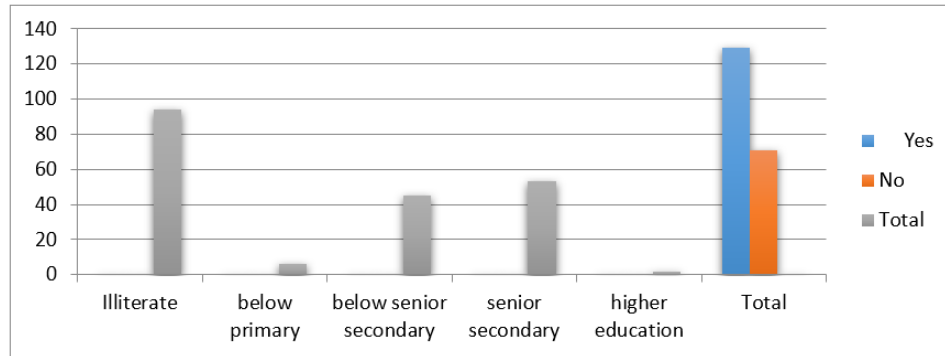
The distribution of Scheduled Caste students intending to pursue higher education across sub-categories is highlighted in Table 1.2. Megh's data reveals that according to Chamar, 74.6 percent of pupils planned to pursue higher education, while 24.2 percent did not. 61.5 percent of students planned to continue their studies, while 38.5 percent did not. 54.5 percent of pupils planned to pursue higher education, while 45.5 percent did not. Students intended to pursue higher education in 58.1 percent of cases. Across all sub-categories, 41.1 percent of students had no plans to pursue higher education.

Table 4

	Illiterate	below primary	below senior secondary	senior secondary	higher education	Total
Yes	50(38.75)	4(3.10)	37(28.68)	37(28.68)	1(0.77)	129

Status of Scheduled Castes Among Higher Education

No	44(61.97)	2(2.88)	8(11.26)	16(22.53)	1(1.40)	71
Total	94	6	45	53	2	200(100)



The distribution of scheduled caste students intending to pursue higher education throughout the father's academic qualification is highlighted in Table 1.3. The students whose fathers are illiterate are more likely to be illiterate themselves, according to the data. Students whose fathers are below primary school level expected to go to higher Education 38.75 percent of the time and 61.97 percent of the time did not. Students whose fathers are below senior secondary school level expected to go to higher Education 3.10 percent and 2.88 percent did not intend to go to higher education. Students whose fathers are senior secondary school teachers expected to go to higher Education 28.68 percent of the time and 11.26 percent did not intend to go to higher education. There were 28.68 students who planned to continue their education after high school. Students who didn't aim to go to college, students whose fathers are college graduates, and students who didn't intend to go to college all made up 22.53 percent of the total. 0.77 percent of pupils planned to continue their education beyond high school, while 1.40 percent did not.

Table 5

Going higher education	Lower	Middle	Higher	Total
Yes	17 (13.28)	71(55.46)	40(31.25)	128
No	14(19.44)	41(56.94)	27(37.5)	72
Total	31	102	67	200(100)

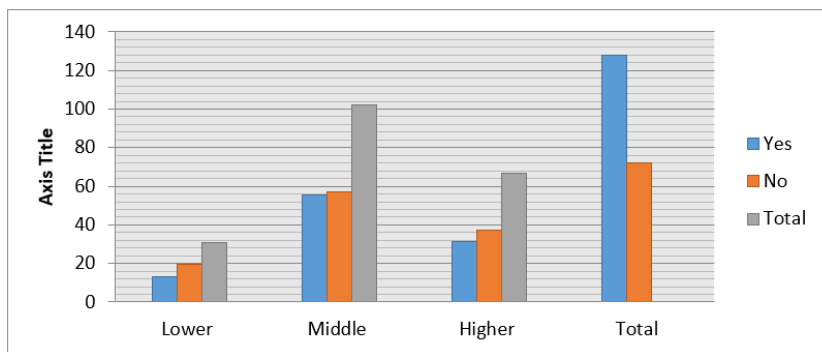


Table 1.4 shows that the intention to pursue higher education among scheduled caste students varies according to family income. The interesting fact that emerges from this table is that scheduled caste students from the lower class intended to go for higher Education 13.28 percent and didn't intend to go for higher Education 19.44 percent, students from the middle class intended to go for higher Education 55.46 percent and didn't intend to go for higher Education 56.94 percent, and scheduled caste students from the upper class intended to go for higher Education 55.46 percent and didn't intend to go for higher Education 56.94 percent, and scheduled caste students.

11. RESULTS

There is a disparity in views among male and female SCs students regarding the decision to study. In the survey, it was discovered that females are more likely than males to pursue higher education. (2) When compared to urban areas, Scheduled Caste pupils are more likely to be found in rural areas. In this study, students from metropolitan areas are more likely to pursue higher education, whereas students from rural areas are less likely to pursue higher education. (3) When compared to the other scheduled castes, the Megh sub-category is more likely to pursue higher education, while the Masha caste is less likely to pursue higher education. (4) A comparison of parental qualifications reveals that students with illiterate parents are less likely to pursue higher education than their peers. (5) There is a significant disparity in family income. Students from the middle and upper-income groups are more likely to pursue higher education than students from the lower-income groups.

12. DISCUSSION

When compared to urban areas, scheduled caste students are more likely to be found in rural areas. The literature (Bhagavatheeswaran, 2016) backs up the findings of the current investigation. The decision to pursue higher education is also influenced by one's geographic location. Because the majority of scheduled caste students live in rural areas, access to higher education is limited. Male and female students from the scheduled caste society have opposing views about obtaining higher education. In the context of this study, an interesting conclusion is that female student are more likely to pursue further education. The current study's findings are strongly supported by the literature (Bahri, 2016, Basant, 2017, Mondal, 2016). In comparison to the other scheduled caste sub-categories, the Megh caste is more likely to pursue higher education, while the Masha caste is less likely to pursue higher education. The current study's findings are strongly supported by the literature (Kumar, 2012). When looking at parental qualifications, it's clear that students with illiterate parents are less likely to pursue higher education than their peers. The current study's findings are strongly supported by the literature (Abuya et al., 2014, Bhagavatheeswaran et al., 2016). Limited resources, time, confidence, and language skills hinder family involvement in the education of impoverished students (Agenda, 2004).

13. CONCLUSION

This study included scheduling caste students who intended to go to higher education and those who did not meant to go to higher education. There is a significant discrepancy between the male and female members of the scheduled caste. In comparison to male students, female members are more interested in pursuing higher education. However, other factors influence family, social, economic, educational, and personal life. The scheduled castes that wish to pursue higher education encounter challenges such as a lack of facilities, such as hostels and transportation, as well as social, economic, educational, and personal issues in pursuing higher education.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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