



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Economics

Socio-Economic Background and Aspirations of Scheduled Castes students in J&K

KEY WORDS: Socio-Economic Background, educational aspirations, occupational aspirations etc.

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ABSTRACT

India is known as one of the fastest developing economy in the world. But the most disturbing feature of the Indian economy is its lower record in human resource development.. It is noticed that due to poor socio-economic background, people have less opportunities in preparing their young children because they typically have less access to the resources to promote and support young children's development. Keeping in view this, we are ascertaining educational and occupational aspirations of Scheduled Caste students of different socio-economic backgrounds. It is found that there is significant effect of parental economic status and educational aspiration of the student on the level of further study. It means that with the increase in the economic status of the parents there is an increase in the percentage of those who aspire for higher education. Similarly, economic status and occupation aspiration seems to have a positive correlation. It shows that those who are economically well choose high profession for their future career.

Introduction

Education is considered as a potential instrument of individual development as social upliftment. Those who have remained backward and underprivileged over years can be empowered by education to assert their rights and to fulfil their rightful places in the society (Koundal, 2012). It is a fact that families where the parents are privileged educationally, socially and economically, promote a higher level of achievement and aspirations in their offspring. In general terms, the Socio-economic Status describes an individual's or a family's ranking on a hierarchy such as wealth, power and social status (Rouse and Barrow, 2006). Likewise socio-economic background of the students can be shown with the help of three main indicators such as parental income, parental education, and parental occupation (Sirin, 2005). Parental income as an indicator of Socio-economic Status reflects the potential for social and economic resources that are available to the student. The second traditional Socio-economic Status component, parental education, is considered one of the most stable aspects of Socio-economic Status because it is typically established at an early age and tends to remain the same over time. Moreover, parental education is an indicator of parent's income because income and education are highly correlated. The third traditional Socio-economic Status component, occupation, is ranked on the basis of the education and income required to have a particular occupation. It is generally believed that children from high and middle socio-economic status parents are better exposed to a learning environment at home because of provision and availability of extra learning facilities (Becker & Tomes, 1979). It means parents from sound socio-economic background ensure their children's future earning by providing them a favourable learning environment, better education, and good jobs. Whereas, children from low socio-economic background parents do not have access to extra learning facilities; hence, the opportunity to get to the top of their educational ladder may not be very easy (Fan, 2012). From all these considerations, the present study is investigating the influence of socio-economic status on the aspirations of Scheduled Castes college students in Jammu and Kashmir.

Objectives

Keeping these in view the present study is planned with following objectives like

1. To ascertain educational aspirations of Scheduled Caste students of different socio-economic backgrounds.
2. To find out occupational aspirations of Scheduled Caste students of different socio-economic backgrounds.

Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant difference between the educational aspirations of Scheduled Caste students of different socio-economic background groups
2. There will be no significant difference between the occupational aspirations of Scheduled Caste students of

different socio-economic background groups

Methodology

Keeping in view the basic objective of the study, the data have been collected through primary as well as secondary sources. Primary data is collected through field survey with the help of questionnaire from students. The procedure adopted in the selection of the sample is "stratified random sampling", which is done at four levels in the Jammu and Kashmir state i.e districts, tehsils, colleges and respondents. So in this way, we have derived 405 scheduled caste college students' from five districts (Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, Doda and Udhampur) of Jammu and Kashmir State.

For the verification of hypotheses, the following self developed scales are developed:

Parent's income is classified into three categories i.e. Upper Income (Parents whose monthly income is Rs.25,000 and above), Middle Income (Parents whose monthly income is between Rs.10,000 to 25,000) and Low Income (Parents whose monthly income is less than Rs.2500 to Rs.10,000)

The college students are classified into three categories i.e High Achievement (First Division), Normal Achievement (Second Division) and Low Achievement (Third Division) regarding last year first year exam conducted by the University.

Findings

A family's socioeconomic status is based on family income, parental education level and parental occupation. Families with high socioeconomic status often have more success in preparing their young children because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development.

Table-1, Parental income and educational aspirations of the college students2248

Level of educational Aspiration	Upper Income	Middle Income	Low Income	N
Liberal Education	25 (54.4%)	69 (60.0%)	159 (68.5%)	253 (64.4%)
Professional Education	14 (30.4%)	39 (34.0%)	48 (20.7%)	101 (25.7%)
Research	7 (15.2%)	7 (6.0%)	25 (10.8%)	39 (9.9%)
Total	46 (100%)	115 (100%)	232 (100%)	393 (100%)

This table indicates the educational aspirations of the scheduled caste students vary in term of economic status (except 12 students who have not shown their educational aspirations). There is significant effect of parental economic status and educational

aspiration of the student on the level of further study. It means that with the increase in the economic status of the parents there is an increase in the percentage of those who aspire for higher education with science subjects, professional courses and M.Phil/Ph.D. The study of the level of aspiration of the scheduled caste college students reveals that a majority of them has the desire to get post graduation. Overall, the data show that scheduled caste college students who are lower in term of economic status, are more inclined towards liberal education than towards the professional. Hence the hypothesis that there is significant effect of parental economic status and educational aspiration of the student is not rejected. It shows that parental economic status affects educational aspirations of the student.

Table-2, Parental education and educational aspiration of college students

Level of educational Aspiration	Illiterate	Secondary & Below	Higher Secondary	Graduate and Above	N
Liberal Education	54 (72.97%)	152 (64.68%)	14 (29.79%)	14 (29.79%)	234 (58.06%)
Professional Education	12 (16.23%)	64 (27.23%)	27 (57.45%)	27 (57.45%)	130 (32.26%)
Research	8 (10.80%)	19 (8.09%)	6 (12.77%)	6 (12.77%)	39 (9.68%)
Total	74 (100%)	235 (100%)	47 (100%)	47 (100%)	403 (100%)

There is significant effect of parental education level on the educational aspirations of college students (2 students who have not shown their aspirations). Parental educational level has revealed the clearest patterns of variation in the educational aspiration of students. Firstly, students showed higher educational aspirations whose parents are more educated as compared those students whose parents are not educated or less educated. Secondly, selection of the subjects also effected from the parental education level. Table-2 shows that scheduled caste college students whose parents are less educated, are more inclined towards liberal education than towards the professional. Hence the hypothesis that there is significant effect of parental education on the educational aspirations is not rejected, it is accepted. It shows that parental educational background affects students' educational aspirations and selection of the subjects.

Table-3, Parental income on the occupational aspiration of college students

Occupational Aspiration	Upper Income	Middle Income	Low Income	N
Administrator	7 (15.21%)	10 (8.70%)	19 (8.19%)	36 (9.16%)
Defence/Police Services	4 (8.70%)	8 (6.95%)	13 (5.60%)	25 (6.36%)
Teaching	19 (41.30%)	62 (53.91%)	152 (65.52%)	233 (59.29%)
Professional	8 (17.40%)	13 (11.30%)	15 (6.46%)	36 (9.16%)
Business	1 (2.17%)	-	2 (0.86%)	3 (0.76%)
Others	5 (10.87%)	9 (7.83%)	12 (5.17%)	26 (6.62%)
Do Not Know	2 (4.35%)	13 (11.30%)	19 (8.20%)	34 (8.65%)
Total	46 (100%)	115 (100%)	232 (100%)	393 (100%)

Table-3 shows an economic status and occupation aspiration seems to have a positive correlation (except 12 students who have not shown their educational aspirations). Those who are economically well (upper income) choose high profession for their future career like civil services, banking job, software engineers etc. On the other hand whose parental income is low, they set low goals for themselves. It shows that parental income level affects the occupational aspirations of the scheduled caste college students. But despite all these results, majority of the students

want to be government teachers irrespective of their economic status. It shows that economic status affects students' occupational aspirations. Hence hypothesis is accepted.

Table-4, Parental education and occupational aspiration of college students

Occupational Aspiration	Illiterate	Secondary & Below	Higher Secondary	Graduate & Above	N
Administrator	7 (9.46%)	18 (7.66%)	1 (2.12%)	10 (22.73%)	36 (9%)
Defence/Police Services	1 (1.35%)	18 (7.66%)	6 (12.76%)	1 (2.27%)	26 (6.5%)
Teaching	59 (79.73%)	140 (59.57%)	19 (40.42%)	20 (45.46%)	238 (59.5%)
Professional	-	18 (7.66%)	5 (10.64%)	10 (22.73%)	33 (8.25%)
Business	1 (1.35%)	1 (0.42%)	1 (2.12%)	-	3 (0.75%)
Others	1 (1.35%)	17 (7.23%)	10 (21.28%)	1 (2.27%)	29 (7.25%)
Do Not Know	5 (6.76%)	23 (9.79%)	5 (10.64%)	2 (4.45%)	35 (8.75%)
Total	74 (100%)	235 (100%)	47 (100%)	44 (100%)	400 (100%)

Table-4 indicates educational status of head of the family and occupation aspirations (5 students have not revealed their aspiration). Those whose parents are educated choose high profession for their future career like civil services, banking job, software engineers etc. On the other hand whose parental education is low, they set low goals for themselves. It shows that parental education level affects the occupational aspirations of the scheduled caste college students. It seems, there is a positive correlation. Hence the hypothesis that there is a significant effect of parental education on the occupational aspirations is not rejected. It shows that parental's educational level affects students' occupational aspirations. But again, majority of the students want to be government teachers irrespective of their parental education level.

Conclusion

Parental socioeconomic status, ownership of the institution and gender of the students are very important factors that have an effect on educational and occupational aspirations of students significantly. It has come to the notice that educational and occupational aspirations of students are directly proportional to the parental income and education. That is why it is right to say that high socioeconomic background of the parents play a crucial role in the shaping of their children's aspirations.

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