



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF DALIT STUDIES

Devoted to Studies on Social Exclusion, Marginalised Groups and Inclusive Policies

# Diversity, Academic Performance, and Discrimination: A Case Study of a Higher Educational Institution

NIDHI SADANA SABHARWAL  
SUKHADEO THORAT  
T. BALASUBRAHMANYAM  
DILIP DIWAKAR G

WORKING PAPER SERIES

Volume VIII Number 02, 2014



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**Nidhi S Sabharwal  
Sukhadeo Thorat  
T. Balasubrahmanyam  
Dilip Diwakar G**

**Working Paper  
Indian Institute of Dalit Studies  
New Delhi  
2014**



## Foreword

The Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS) is among the pioneer research institutions in India to focus exclusively on development concerns of the marginalized groups and socially excluded communities. Over the last 14 years, IIDS has carried out several studies on different aspects of social exclusion and discrimination of the historically marginalized social groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Religious Minorities in India and other parts of the sub-continent. The Working Paper series disseminates empirical findings of on-going research and conceptual development on issues pertaining to the forms and nature of social exclusion and discrimination. Some of our papers also critically examine inclusive policies for the marginalized social groups.

The working paper 'Diversity, Academic Performance, and Discrimination: A Case Study of a Higher Educational Institutions' draws insights into how the nature of diversity in the higher educational institutions' campuses influences social life, harmony and academic attainment irrespective of gender, region, ethnicity, religion, caste, rural-urban background and economic status of its students. The paper also draws attention to the underlying causes of discrimination and social exclusion faced by students belonging to marginalised communities within the socially diversified milieu of these academic institutions. Based on their empirical observations, authors have suggested various policies and recommendations to deal with the issues of discrimination associated with caste and other social backgrounds in institutional campuses. This study is based on both secondary and primary data (2002 to 2011), which have been collected from various higher educational institutions. Apart from data, the study incorporates detailed case studies of students, faculties and student organisations, who shared their experiences.

The findings reveal that SC/ST students in higher educational institutions face resentment of upper caste students due to caste based reservations and scholarships. This is reflected in recruitments, allotment of PhD guides and even hostels. Officials deliberately delay

disbursing scholarships of students from such marginalised sections. During written examinations they are asked to sit separately citing administrative convenience. Students of some central universities have complained that they often face physical and emotional violence as they are often chastised for misusing hostel rooms, inability to pay bills and fees on time and condemned for lack of etiquettes. In the classrooms they are often ignored and their “marks never improve”. First generation learners from dalit families are more vulnerable due to lack of family guidance and social networking

The paper offers several useful suggestions to strengthen inclusive educational system in India. We hope it will be helpful to academics, students, activists, civil society organisations and policymakers.

**Nidhi S. Sabharwal**

Director

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# **Diversity, Academic Performance and Discrimination: A Case Study of a Higher Educational Institution**

**Nidhi S Sabharwal\***  
**Sukhadeo Thorat\*\***  
**T. Balasubrahmanyam\*\*\***  
**Dilip Diwakar G\*\*\*\***

## **Introduction: Emerging Issue of Diversity and Exclusion**

Indian universities and colleges have moved from being homogeneous to more diverse ones. Some data will bring out the growing diverse character of Indian higher education system. According to National Sample Survey on higher education, in 2008, of the total students in higher education in the country, about 45% comes from rural backgrounds and the rest urban; and among them 42% were women and 58% men. Social composition comprises 4% STs, 13.5% SCs, 35% OBCs, and 48% the rest. Hindus account about 85% followed by 8% Muslims, 3% Christians, and others. Although majority of the students are relatively better off, but there are poor students as well. About one fourth is from private and the rest from government and private-aided institutions. About half of them had regional languages as medium of instruction and other half, English. In this widening diversity, student from low castes, poor, women, and those from different religious, regional, rural, and linguistic backgrounds live in the company of high caste, urban, and better-off men that have dominated the higher education campuses for long.

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\* Nidhi Sadana Sabharwal, Director, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies  
Email: nidhi@dalitstudies.org.in

\*\* Sukhadeo Thorat, Indian Council for Social Science Research, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg,  
New Delhi, India ( hairman@icssr.org)

\*\*\* T. Balasubrahmanyam, Research Associate, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies  
Email: balu@dalitstudies.org.in

\*\*\*\* Dilip Diwakar G, Associate Fellow, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies  
Email: dilip@dalitstudies.org.in



Growing diversity, students bring with them ideologies, values, and different ways of dealing with others. While diversity provides a unique opportunity to students to experience its richness under one shed, it also poses challenges of living in a socially inclusive way. Diversity tends to induce social and peers groups around 'identities' and develop fissures in social relations on caste, ethnic, class, linguistic, regional, and religious lines. Exclusionary behaviours also bring discrimination and psychological and physical violence for low castes and women. The nation's long-standing legacies of caste, gender, and class antagonism replicate on campuses as well. Thus, as higher education moves forward, it does so on social platforms of caste, gender, and class cleavages. A study by Thornton and others of three higher education institutions observed in 2010 'that separation of groups on the higher education campus studied is pervasive and ubiquitous. While some such separation may be for supportive reasons, convenience or inertia, at other times it is due to overt discrimination on the grounds of race, region, nationality, caste, class, religion, or gender'. Ovihegan in 2013 observed 'this university is yet another arena in which the practice of caste division continues to exist. The university environment reinforces and maintains a divide between Dalits and non-Dalits. Dalit students do, indeed, experience overt and covert discrimination based on caste at this premier university'.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. To study the nature of diversity in the higher educational campuses in terms of rural, urban, gender, regional, caste, ethnic, religious, economic, occupational, academic performance and type of institution.
2. To study the implications of diversity for the social life, harmony, and for academic attainment.
3. To study the nature of discrimination and exclusionary life between diverse groups and its consequences.
4. To suggest policies and practices to deal with diversity and discrimination associated with caste background and other identities,

## **Database and Methodology**

In order to study the issues of diversity in a higher educational institution, the administration data on composition of students, academic performance of students, regional pattern, occupation background of the student's parents,

higher secondary marks secured by students and linguistic background were collected. This data from 2002 to 2011 have been collected from the higher educational institution, which is the case study for this report. Secondary data were collected on admission and entrance marks. The analysis is done by caste and ethnic background of the students, by gender—male, female, and by social groupings. The data on number of students is available for three social groups namely SCs, STs, and others from 2002 to 2011, and for four groups namely SCs, STs, OBCs, and others from 2009 to 2011, as reservation for OBC had begun after 2009. So, for social groups, we undertake an analysis for SCs, STs, and others (non SCs/STs) for 2002–2011 and SCs, STs, OBCs, and others for 2009–2011. The study also employs qualitative method to study the nature and forms of caste-based discrimination and held group discussions with students union, group of students and faculty members.

### **Structure of the Report**

The report is organised into three parts. The first part of the report describes the findings of the pilot study on issues of diversity and the second part of the report highlights forms of caste-based discrimination in a higher educational institution. The report ends with policy recommendations to address issues of access, diversity and discrimination in higher education institutions in India.

### **Diversity of Students in the Sample Higher-Educational Institution**

The HEI understudy study has undergraduate, postgraduate and postdoctoral educational programs in Medical Sciences. Hence it has students doing the undergraduate program (MBBS), residency program (junior residency and senior residency) and post-doctoral (Ph D and DM and M Ch.).

The MBBS course is five and half year duration, including one year compulsory internship. The First Professional term is for one calendar year. The Second Professional term is for one and half calendar years. The Final Professional term is for a period of 2 calendar years and is devoted to clinical subjects with more in depth application.

The course is rigorous, and involves considerable self-learning guided by teachers. Since language of learning and communication is English, poor

language skills are a great disadvantage. A batch of undergraduate students has just 50 students and it was kept this way to give special attention to individual students and the, faculty are expected to nurture students and bring out the best in them.

The HEI is expected to follow the Reservation Policy of the Government of India. The seats for the reserved category of students are filled by holding an All India Competitive Entrance Examination. The advertised seats are filled from the meritorious among the listed candidates. The percentage of seats reserved is 15 per cent for the SC candidates and 7.5 per cent for the Schedule Tribes.

In this section, we examine some of the diversity features of the students in the 'sample' higher educational institution:

- a) Composition of Students: Number of the students admitted during 2002 to 2012 by gender, by caste and ethnic background, that is, SCs, STs, OBCs, and others;
- b) The occupation background of the parents of the students;
- c) The background of the students in terms of their higher secondary marks and the medium of instruction;
- d) The academic performance of the students in terms of ( i ) marks in theory and practices ( i ) marks in practices by the marks in theory ( ii ) marks by the language background, and ( v ) number of attempts.

This analysis is done for by caste and ethnic background of the students, number of students – male, female, and by social grouping.

The data on number of students is available for three social groups namely SCs, STs, and others from 2002 to 2011 and for four groups namely SCs, STs, OBCs, and others from 2009 to 2011, as reservation for OBC had begun after 2009. So for social groups, we undertake an analysis for SCs, STs, and others (non SC/ST) for 2002–2011 and SCs, STs, OBCs, and others for 2009–2011.

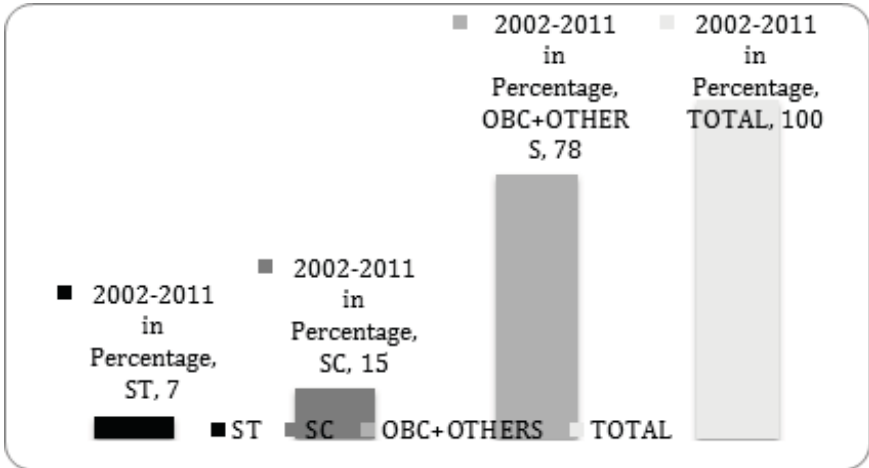
**Table 1: Total number of students during 2002– 2011**

Year of Admission	Male	Female	Total
2002– 2011	446	109	555
2009– 2011	167	49	216

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

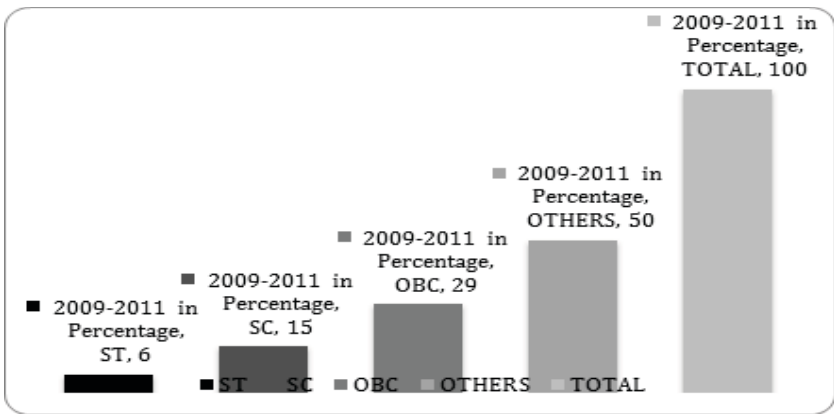
During the nine-year period, the sample higher educational institution admitted a total of 555 students, of these 80 per cent (446) were boys and the remaining 20 per cent (109) girls (Table 1).

**Figure 1: Students by social group 2002-2011 (\*including OBCs in others)**



Source: Data collected from AIIMS

**Figure 2: Students by social group 2009- 2011 (\*excluding OBCs in others)**



Source: Data collected from AIIMS

Breakup of the 555 students by social belonging indicate that for a period of 9 years the STs accounted for about 7 per cent (39), SCs 15 per cent (83),

and the rest 78 per cent (433). Thus the share of STs and SCs was fairly close to their population share (Figure 1). We have data for three sub groups for 2009–2011. During 2009–2011, the percentage share of STs, SCs, OBCs, and the rest comes to 6.48, 15.28, 28.70, and 49.45 per cent. The share of OBCs was little more than their population share of 27 per cent (Figure 2).

### Regional Pattern

The admission shows a pattern with a concentration of students from few states. For nine year period, between 2009 and 2011, of the total students about 70 per cent comes from five states of Kerala (14.77%), Rajasthan (12.79%), Haryana (12.25%), UP (11.71%), Punjab (11.35%), and Gujarat (7%). Addition of the two states of Delhi and Gujarat increases the share of seven states to almost 80 per cent. The state of Kerala accounts for the highest share of students in AIIMS (Table 2).

**Table 2: Percentage distribution of students taken admission by state in each year from 2002– 2011**

State	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total	Per cent
Total	45	45	45	45	45	45	69	72	72	72	555	100
Kerala	2	2		3	5	3	12	16	14	25	82	14.77
Rajasthan	6	7	5	4	7	9	10	9	6	8	71	12.79
Haryana	4	6	5	9	7	6	4	10	10	7	68	12.25
Uttar Pradesh	4	6	4	5	5	6	8	5	11	11	65	11.71
Punjab	13	2	12	3	4	2	8	9	6	4	63	11.35
Delhi	6	11	10	10	5	1			3	2	48	8.65
Gujarat					1	10	10	12	4	2	39	7.03
Madhya Pradesh			6	2	3	1	5	1	5	4	27	4.86
Bihar	4	3		2	2	3	2	1	6		23	4.14
Himachal Pradesh	1	1		1			2	1	3	2	11	1.98
Jharkhand	1		1		1	1	5			1	10	1.80
West Bengal	1	3		1	1		1	2		1	10	1.80
Chhattisgarh		1		1		1		1	1	2	7	1.26
Uttarakhand				1	1	1	2		1		6	1.08
Orissa				1		1		2		1	5	0.90
Andhra Pradesh		1						1	1	1	4	0.72
Chandigarh	1	1	1		1						4	0.72
Tamil Nadu	2			1	1						4	0.72
Maharashtra			1					2			3	0.54
Assam		1		1							2	0.36
Arunachal Pradesh										1	1	0.18
Jammu & Kashmir									1		1	0.18
Karnataka					1						1	0.18

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

The regional pattern for most recent years, 2009–2011, is more concentrated in few states. For an average of three years 2009–11, the State of Kerala alone account about one-fourth of the total students. If we add UP (12.5%), Haryana, (12.5%) (Rajasthan, (10.6%), Punjab (8.8%), and Gujarat (8.3%), the six states alone account for about 78 per cent (Table 2).

### Regional Pattern and Social Group

We now look at the regional concentration in students by social groups for the 2002–2011 periods. In case of STs, it is astonishing that of the total ST students admitted during 2002–11, **about 56 per cent were from the state of Rajasthan alone**, followed by HP, (10.26%), Uttarakhand (UK), Gujarat, Haryana, and AP—5 per cent each. Together, these six states account for 77 per cent of the total ST students (Table 3).

**Table 3: Percentage distribution of ST students taken admission by state in each year 2002–2011**

State	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total in Percentage
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Rajasthan	75	75	100	75	75	25	33.3	66.7	40		56.4
Himachal Pradesh	25			25					20	33.3	10.3
Andhra Pradesh								16.7	20		5.1
Gujarat							33.3			33.3	5.1
Haryana							33.3	16.7			5.1
Uttarakhand						25			20		5.1
Delhi					25						2.6
Jharkhand						25					2.6
Madhya Pradesh						25					2.6
Uttar Pradesh										33.3	2.6
Assam		25									2.6

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

By comparison of the regional pattern, it was more widespread regionally for SCs. **The State of Punjab, Rajasthan, and UP contributing 14 per**

cent each in the student composition, Delhi contributing 11 per cent and MP Haryana, and Gujarat with about 7 per cent, these seven states account 75 per cent of the total students admitted during 2002- 11 (table 4).

**Table 4: Percentage distribution of SC students taken admission by state in each year 2002- 2011**

State	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total Percentage
Total	8	7	9	7	7	7	5	11	11	11	<b>100</b>
Punjab	2		3		1		1	2	2	1	<b>14</b>
Rajasthan		1	1			3	2	1	2	2	<b>14</b>
Uttar Pradesh	1	1	1	1	2		1		2	3	<b>14</b>
Delhi	2	2	1	1	1	1				1	<b>11</b>
Haryana		1		1	1			2		1	<b>7</b>
Madhya Pradesh			2	1				1		2	<b>7</b>
Gujarat					1	2		1	1		<b>6</b>
Bihar	2				1				1		<b>5</b>
Himachal Pradesh		1						1	1		<b>4</b>
Kerala								1	1	1	<b>4</b>
Maharashtra			1					2			<b>4</b>
Orissa				1		1					<b>2</b>
Andhra Pradesh		1									<b>1</b>
Jammu & Kashmir									1		<b>1</b>
Jharkhand	1										<b>1</b>
Uttarakhand				1							<b>1</b>
West Bengal							1				<b>1</b>
Assam				1							<b>1</b>

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

In case of other category, Kerala accounts for the maximum with 18.24%, followed by Haryana (14%), and UP (12%). Next comes Delhi, Gujarat, and Rajasthan with 7 to 8 per cent each. Together these five states comprise about 80 per cent of the total other students.

Taking the average for 2009–11, the regional pattern shows a particular pattern, during the recent period, namely 2002–11 about 43 per cent of ST students comes from Rajasthan, followed by HP and AP with 14 per cent, and another four states (Gujarat, Haryana, UP, and UK) with 7 per cent each. Rest of the states have none from STs. In case of SCs, Rajasthan, Punjab, UK with 15 per cent account for about 45 per cent of the total SC students. The state of Haryana, HP, UP, UK with 7 per cent each comes next in the order. In case of 'OBCs', it is significant that almost 53 per cent of total OBCs comes from Kerala alone, with 14.5 per cent from UP. Thus Kerala and UP together account for about 86 per cent of the total OBC students in AIIMS. In case of 'other' students, the admission is more regionally widespread than OBC students. However Kerala remained the state with the highest share of students (18%) followed by Haryana (19%), Punjab (13%), Gujarat (12%), UP (11%), and Rajasthan (8.5%).

### **Occupation background of the Students parents**

Table 5 gives the parents occupation of the students as average for 2002–2011. At aggregate level the Doctors account about 27% of the total parents. The Government employees of various kinds including teachers and bank employees account about 46%. Next comes the Business families with 8.8% and farmers with 4%. There is, however social group wise variations.

In case of others, doctors account for 39.6%, followed by about 18.8% government employees, and 8.4% business persons, 1.5% farmers. For OBCs, government employees account for 24.2% followed by 16% business persons and 12.9% teachers in non-higher education, and 9.7% farmers.

For the STs, employees—government and others—account for almost 38%, 9.5% Doctor, 9.5% farmers, and another 5% business persons. So the proportion of government employees for STs which was 38% higher than for others that was average 41%, but much less of doctors.

For SCs also, about 44% of the parents were government employees, followed by doctors (15.6%), farmers (4.4%), and in business people (2.2%). Thus in case of STs and SCs, the proportion of employees was similar with about 40% but more than others. But the share of doctors was much less for STs and SCs compared to others. Thus a relatively high proportion of other students



come from the families whose parents are doctors, which give them advantage over others. In case of STs and SCs, a relatively high proportion comes from employees of various kinds (Table 5).

**Table 5: Number and percentage of students taken admission between 2007 and 2012 and their fathers' occupation**

OCCUPATION	Absolute number of students					Percentage distribution of students				
	Social group					ST	SC	OBC	General	Total
	ST	SC	OBC	General	Total					
Doctor	2	7	2	80	91	9.5	15.6	3.2	39.6	27.6
Engineer		3	3	5	11	0.0	6.7	4.8	2.5	3.3
Teacher in Higher Education	1	2	3	8	14	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.0	4.2
Teacher in non-Higher Education		2	8	10	20	0.0	4.4	12.9	5.0	6.1
Bank employee	5	3	4	14	26	23.8	6.7	6.5	6.9	7.9
Businessman	1	1	10	17	29	4.8	2.2	16.1	8.4	8.8
Govt. Employee	8	20	15	38	81	38.1	44.4	24.2	18.8	24.5
Pvt. sect			2	5	7	0.0	0.0	3.2	2.5	2.1
Farmer	2	2	6	3	13	9.5	4.4	9.7	1.5	3.9
Others	2	5	9	22	38	9.5	11.1	14.5	10.9	11.5
Total	21	45	62	202	330	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

### Higher Secondary Marks of Admitted Students

Table 6 provides the percentage of marks obtained by the students in the higher secondary level (HSC). The marks are arranged into four levels and are given both for 2002–2011 and 2009–2011. At overall level during 2002–11 about 43% of students with 90% above marks in HSC, and another 40 per cent fall in 80–90% marks category. About 13% falls into 70–80% range and about 4% in below 70% range.

During latest years of 2002–11, about 53% fall in above 90% range followed by 36% with 80–90% range. The proportion of students with 70–80% and below 70% range was 7.41% and 3.70% respectively.

We observed variation across the social group for a period 2002-2011. The proportion of the students in range of 90% and above was relatively high for

‘others’ with 43% and lower for SC and ST with 27% and 15% respectively. The difference in the HSC marks between the ST/SC and the rest was significant, particularly for the ST students. In case of 80–90% range, however the differences were not so significant. It varies in a range of 36% for STs, 39% for others to 43% for SCs, although the share of SCs was relatively higher than STs and others. So SCs and STs did not lag too much behind in 80–90% range. However visible disparities emerged in 70–80% and less than 70% range. A relatively high proportion of student from STs and SCs falls into these two lower-end ranges. In case of STs, about 28% and 20% falls in the 70–8% and less than 70% range respectively, compared to 9.7% for others. In case SCs, the ratio for 70–80% range was 22% compared with 9.7% for others. The ratio in less than 70% range was 7% compared with 2.5% for others. It was, however, much lower compared to 20% for STs. Thus disparities were significant at the highest range of more than 90% and lowest range of 70–80% and less than 70% particularly for the STs. In the medium range of 80 to 90%, the difference was relatively less.

**Table 6: Total students by their HSC marks 2002- 11**

HSC marks	2002- 11	
	No. of Students	Percentage
0- 70	25	5
70- 80	71	13
80- 90	219	40
90- 100	238	43
Total	553	100

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

There are other interesting features which need to be mentioned. Of the students in the range of 90% and above, almost 88 % were from others group, distinctly followed by 9% and 2.5% for SCs and STs respectively. In case of 80–90% range, the others account for about 77% of the total in that range, followed by 16% for SCs and 6% for STs. Thus both in the range of 90% and above and 80–90% the others’ share was significantly higher than SCs and STs in that order. In case of 70–80% range also, the ratio for other was higher than SCs (25%) and STs (15%). Similarly, in the range 70% and less the proportion of STs (32% and SC (24%) relative high, but it was less than others. So it is clear that the proportion of students in two low-end categories was also higher for others, gap between the others and SCs/STs relatively less

compared with top two categories. Thus the students in two low-end ranges of HSC come from all social groups.

**Table 7: Total students by their HSC marks, 2009- 11**

HSC marks	2009- 11	
	No. of Students	Percentage
0- 70	8	4
70- 80	16	7
80- 90	78	36
90- 100	114	53
Total	216	100

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

Table 7 presents the picture for recent three years, 2009- 11. It indicates that at overall level about 53% of the students had marks in HSC which falls above 90% range, followed by 36% in 80- 90% range, 7.4% in 70- 80% range and 3.7% in less than 70% range. Thus almost 89% of students fall in the range of 80% and above.

The pattern varies across the social groups. For the ‘other group’ the proportion of those falling in 90% and above range is 59%. This proportion reduces as we go down from OBCs (56.5%), to SCs (39%), and STs (21.4%). In case 80- 90 % range, the ratio was the highest for SCs (2%), and for other three groups, that is, others, STs and OBCs, the ratio was more or less similar: about 35%. In case of 70 to 80% range, the proportion was higher for SCs and STs compared with OBCs and others. In less than 70% range the ratio was high for STs (29%), followed by 6.5% for OBCs. It was nil in case of SCs and others (Table 8).

**Table 8: Total students by their HSC marks by social group, 2009- 11**

HSC marks	ST		SC		OBC		Others		Total	
	No. of Students	%age	No. of Students	%age	No. of Students	%age	No. of Students	%age	No. of Students	%age
0-70	4	28.6	0	0.0	4	6.5	0	0.0	8	4
70-80	2	14.3	6	18.2	2	3.2	6	5.6	16	7
80-90	5	35.7	14	42.4	21	33.9	38	35.5	78	36
90-100	3	21.4	13	39.4	35	56.5	63	58.9	114	53
Total	14	100.0	33	100.0	62	100.0	107	100.0	216	100

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

Thus from the recent years it emerged that the proportion of students in highest grade (more than 90%) in HSC was higher for others/OBCs, and lower for SCs/STs. The opposite was true for two low-end grades. While in the middle range of 80– 90%, all social groups had more or less similar share, except, an edge for SCs over other three social groups. This has an implication for remedial and academic assistance to the SC/ST students.

Beside the student with 90% and above from other group account 55% of the total in this group, and reduces to 31% for OBCs, 11% for SCs, and only 2.6% for STs. Similarly, the share of others was higher in 80– 90% range accounting 49%, which reduced to 27% for OBCs, 18% for SCs, and 6.4% STs.

In case of 70– 80% range the share of SCs and others was similar, 37% each, making almost 75% of the total in this range. The remaining was shared by STs and OBCs, with 12% each. In the less than 70% range, it was shared equally by STs and OBCs.

### Language Background of the Students

Finally we look in to the language background of the students. Table 3.9 presents the distribution of children in to English and Hindi/regional languages.

**Table 9: Percentage distribution of student by medium of language in HSC by social group in each year, 2009– 11**

Medium	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
<b>ST</b>											
English	50.0	75.0	50.0	75.0	50.0	100.0	66.7	33.3	100.0	100.0	69.2
Hindi	50.0	25.0	50.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	30.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>SC</b>											
English	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	80.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.8
Hindi	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>OBC</b>											
English								100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Hindi								0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total								100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>General</b>											
English	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Hindi	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>All Group</b>											
English	95.6	97.8	97.8	97.8	95.6	100.0	97.1	94.4	100.0	100.0	97.7
Hindi	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	4.4	0.0	2.9	5.6	0.0	0.0	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

Table 9 shows that of the total students, 98% came with English as medium of instruction and only 2% had Hindi as medium of instruction at HSC level. The 2% with Hindi medium were from STs only. Out of 14 ST students, 4 came from Hindi background.

### **Issues for Academic Consideration**

We now look at the academic performance of the students and the difference in their performance by their social belonging. We study the following indicators:

- 1) Number of students passed and failed 2002–2007, total for 6 years (and year wise)
- 2) Number of Students passed and failed by the
  - (a) background of parents
  - (b) by ranges of marks and
  - (c) language
- (1) Number attempts taken to clear MBBS by subject:
  - (a) 2002–2007 for SC, STs, Others (O BC plus 'others')
  - (b) 2009–2011 for SCs, STs, OBCs, and others
- (2) Number of marks in theory and practice subject-wise by social groups,
  - (a) 2002–2011 for SCs, STs, Others (with OBC)
  - (b) 2002–2011 for SCs, STs, OBCs and Others
- (3) Number of marks in practical by ranges of marks in theory subjects
  - (a) 2002–2011
  - (b) 2009–2011
- (4) Numbers of marks by language backgrounds.
- (5) Number of students passed and failed in 2002 - 2007 by language background, SCs, STs, others.
- (6) Number of students passed and failed by language background, SC, ST, OTHERS -2009-2011.
- (7) Total marks by language background cross-classified by ranges of

marks, SCs, STs, OBCs, others, and also by 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> examinations 2002–2009, year-wise.

- (8) Number of students passed and failed 2002–2007, total for 6 years 2002–2007 (and year-wise) and by background of parents, and by ranges of marks and language.

We now present the situation with respect to social group variations in proportion of students passed and failed. Table 10 shows the percentage of students passed and failed in first year exam during the period 2002–2010.

**Table 10: First examination remarks by medium of language and social group (2002– 2010)**

Medium	Absolute number of student					Percentage distribution of student						
	Passed in 1st exam	Failed in 1st passed in Supp	Failed in both	Not elig-ble	Dis-continued	Total	Passed in 1st exam	Failed in 1st passed in Supp	Failed in both	Not elig-ble	Dis-continued	Total
<b>ST</b>												
English	21	2	1			24	87.5	8.3	4.2	0.0	0.0	100.0
Hindi	9	3				12	75.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	30	5	1			36	83.3	13.9	2.8	0.0	0.0	100.0
<b>SC</b>												
English	65	5			1	71	91.5	7.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	100.0
Hindi	1					1	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	66	5			1	72	91.7	6.9	0.0	0.0	1.4	100.0
<b>OBC</b>												
English	36	5				41	87.8	12.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Hindi												
Total	36	5				41	87.8	12.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
<b>General</b>												
English	324	7		1	2	334	97.0	2.1	0.0	0.3	0.6	100.0
Hindi												
Total	324	7		1	2	334	97.0	2.1	0.0	0.3	0.6	100.0
<b>All group</b>												
English	446	19	1	1	3	470	94.9	4.0	0.2	0.2	0.6	100.0
Hindi	10	3	0	0	0	13	76.9	23.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	456	22	1	1	3	483	94.4	4.6	0.2	0.2	0.6	100.0

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

We also take a look at the percentage of passed and failed for 2002–2010. During 2002–10, 483 students were admitted in this particular institution. Of the total 4.6% failed in first examination, of these 0.2% failed in both.

In case of STs, the proportion of those who failed was 14%, (2.8% being failed in both), this rate was 7% for SC, 12% for OBCs, and 2% for others. If we take OBCs and other together the ratio comes to 3.3%. This shows that the proportion of failure was higher for STs, followed by SCs. The percentage failed in both main and supplementary was high for STs (Table 10).

In case of second examination at overall level, those who failed in main and passed in supplementary was 6.3% (and of these 1.9% failed in both attempts). This ratio was 22.6% for STs, 14.7% for SCs (1.6% failed in both), and 6% for others. (1.66% failed in both) (Table 11).

**Table 11: Second examination remarks by medium of language and social groups (2002–2009)**

Medium	Absolute number of student						Percentage distribution of student					
	Passed in 1st exam	Failed in 1st exam in Supp	Failed in both	Not eligible	Discontinued	Total	Passed in 1st exam	Failed in 1st exam in Supp	Failed in both	Not eligible	Discontinued	Total
<b>ST</b>												
English	16	3				19	84.2	15.8	0.0			100.0
Hindi	8	2	2			12	66.7	16.7	16.7			100.0
Total	24	5	2			31	77.4	16.1	6.5			100.0
<b>SC</b>												
English	50	8	1		1	60	83.3	13.3	1.7		1.7	100.0
Hindi	1					1	100.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	100.0
Total	51	8	1		1	61	83.6	13.1	1.6		1.6	100.0
<b>OBC</b>												
English	12	4	3			19	63.2	21.1	15.8		0.0	100.0
Hindi												
Total	12	4	3			19	63.2	21.1	15.8		0.0	100.0
<b>General</b>												
English	288	9	2		1	300	96.0	3.0	0.7		0.3	100.0
Hindi												
Total	288	9	2		1	300	96.0	3.0	0.7		0.3	100.0
<b>All group</b>												
English	366	24	6		2	398	92.0	6.0	1.5		0.5	100.0
Hindi	9	2	2		0	13	69.2	15.4	15.4		0.0	100.0
Total	375	26	8		2	411	91.2	6.3	1.9		0.5	100.0

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

In case of third examination about 11% failed, the rate was 36% for STs, 22% for SCs, and 11% for others.

Table 11 also shows that the failure rate in first, second, and third year examination year was relatively high for ST, followed by SC and lowest for others.

### **Does Language Matter in Failure?**

Of the total students of 483, only 13 students came from Hindi language background and 12 of them were from STs and 1 from SCs, and none from others. In first year, among the STs the failure rate was 25.5 compared with 8% for those with English background in HSC (passed in supplementary). In the second year the STs the failure rate was similar for students with English and Hindi backgrounds. In third year, the failure rate in first attempt was quite high for ST students with Hindi language background, 57% compared with 27% for those with English background, although all of them passed in the supplementary.

### **Number of Attempts Taken to Clear MBBS Subject-wise, 2002- 2007**

Table 12 provides the number of attempts taken by the students in completing the degree, first, second, and third professional courses. It emerged that in the first professional MBBS examination in anatomy, physiology, and bio-chemistry, the proportion of students who cleared the examination in first is lower for STs, followed by SCs, and others. The proportion of students who cleared examination in anatomy in first attempts was 82% for STs, 88% for SCs, and 96 % for others, while overall average was 94%. Similarly, the ratio was 77%, 88% and 95% for physiology and 79%, 94%, and 97% for STs, SCs, and others respectively. Conversely, the ratio of those with 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>d</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> attempts was higher for STs, followed by SCs. Similar trend is observed in the case of second and third attempts in various courses. The proportion in 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> attempts was relatively higher for STs (Table 12).



**Table 12: Number of attempts taken to clear MBBS subject-wise**

No. of time appeared and pass	No. of Students				Percentage Distribution			
	ST	SC	Others	Total	ST	SC	Others	Total
<b>Anatomy ( 002-2011)</b>								
1 time	32	73	414	519	82.1	88.0	95.6	93.5
2 times	4	9	15	28	10.3	10.8	3.5	5.0
3 times	1	1	1	3	2.6	1.2	0.2	0.5
4 times	1		2	3	2.6	0.0	0.5	0.5
Not passed	1		1	2	2.6	0.0	0.2	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Physiology ( 002-2011)</b>								
1 time	30	73	412	515	76.9	88.0	95.2	92.8
2 times	5	8	17	30	12.8	9.6	3.9	5.4
3 times	2	2	1	5	5.1	2.4	0.2	0.9
4 times	1		2	3	2.6	0.0	0.5	0.5
Not passed	1		1	2	2.6	0.0	0.2	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Bio-chemistry ( 002-2011)</b>								
1 time	31	78	419	528	79.5	94.0	96.8	95.1
2 times	5	4	11	20	12.8	4.8	2.5	3.6
3 times		1		1	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.2
4 times	2		1	3	5.1	0.0	0.2	0.5
Not passed	1		2	3	2.6	0.0	0.5	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Microbiology ( 002-2009)</b>								
1 time	22	51	301	374	71.0	83.6	94.4	91.0
2 times	5	9	13	27	16.1	14.8	4.1	6.6
3 times	1			1	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
4 times	1			1	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
Not in list	1		3	4	3.2	0.0	0.9	1.0
Not passed	1	1	2	4	3.2	1.6	0.6	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Pathology ( 002-09)</b>								
1 time	23	51	300	374	74.2	83.6	94.0	91.0
2 times	7	8	16	31	22.6	13.1	5.0	7.5
4 times		2	1	3	0.0	3.3	0.3	0.7
Not in list	1		2	3	3.2	0.0	0.6	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Forensic ( 002-09)</b>								
1 time	27	56	304	387	87.1	91.8	95.3	94.2
2 times	3	5	13	21	9.7	8.2	4.1	5.1
Not in list	1		2	3	3.2	0.0	0.6	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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<b>Pharmacology</b> (002-09)								
1 time	23	54	304	381	74.2	88.5	95.3	92.7
2 times	7	7	13	27	22.6	11.5	4.1	6.6
Not in list	1		2	3	3.2	0.0	0.6	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Medicine</b> (002-07)								
1 time	14	29	189	232	63.6	64.4	93.1	85.9
2 times	5	10	9	24	22.7	22.2	4.4	8.9
3 times	1	1	3	5	4.5	2.2	1.5	1.9
4 times		1		1	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.4
5 times	2			2	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.7
Not in list		3	2	5	0.0	6.7	1.0	1.9
Not passed		1		1	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Paediatrics</b> (002-2007)								
1 time	18	37	195	250	81.8	82.2	96.1	92.6
2 times	3	3	5	11	13.6	6.7	2.5	4.1
3 times	1	1	1	3	4.5	2.2	0.5	1.1
Not in list		2	2	4	0.0	4.4	1.0	1.5
Not passed		2		2	0.0	4.4	0.0	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Surgery</b> (002-2007)								
1 time	16	38	197	251	72.7	84.4	97.0	93.0
2 times	3	1	3	7	13.6	2.2	1.5	2.6
3 times	3	1	1	5	13.6	2.2	0.5	1.9
4 times		1		1	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.4
Not in list		1	2	3	0.0	2.2	1.0	1.1
Not passed		3		3	0.0	6.7	0.0	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Obs. &amp; gynae</b> (2002-2007)								
1 time	15	36	191	242	68	80	94	90
2 times	5	4	7	16	23	9	3	6
3 times			2	2	0	0	1	1
4 times	2	1	1	4	9	2	0	1
Not in list		1	2	3	0	2	1	1
Not passed		3		3	0	7	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Common Medicine</b> (002-2007)								
1 time	13	32	192	237	59.1	71.1	94.6	87.8
2 times	8	7	7	22	36.4	15.6	3.4	8.1
3 times	1		2	3	4.5	0.0	1.0	1.1
4 times		1		1	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.4
Not in list		1	2	3	0.0	2.2	1.0	1.1
Not passed		4		4	0.0	8.9	0.0	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

## Marked Secured in Theory and Practical

Table 13 provides the marks secured by students: overall, and in theory and practical for SCs, STs, OBCs, and others in first, second, and third examinations as an average for three years period 2009–2011. It emerged quite clearly that the total marks secured by STs were the lowest, followed by SCs, OBCs, and others, in that order. Thus the marks obtained by the social groups follow a hierarchical order where STs get the lowest, and then the marks increases as one moves from SCs to OBCs and then others. With exception the **others**, generally have higher marks than other three groups. With the exception, this is also true for marks in theory and practical.

**Table 13: Marked secured in theory and practical**

Subject	ST	SC	Others	Total
Anatomy ( 002- 2011)				
Theory	120	122	135	132
Practical	124	126	136	134
Theory+Practical	244	248	272	266
Physiology ( 002- 11)				
Theory	83	85	91	89
Practical	94	96	103	102
Theory+Practical	177	181	194	191
Biochemistry ( 002- 11)				
Theory	88	89	99	96
Practical	95	98	106	104
Theory+Practical	182	187	205	201
Microbiology ( 002- 09)				
Theory	57	59	64	62
Practical	67	68	71	70
Theory+Practical	124	127	133	132
Pathology ( 002- 09)				
Theory	89	89	97	96
Practical	98	99	106	105
Theory+Practical	187	190	204	200
Forensic ( 002- 09)				
Theory	43	44	46	46
Practical	46	47	48	48
Theory+Practical	88	91	95	94

Pharmacology ( 002-09)				
Theory	56	58	61	60
Practical	59	59	63	62
Theory+Practical	115	118	124	123
Medicine ( 002-07)				
Theory	124	126	134	132
Practical	124	123	133	131
Theory+Practical	248	250	268	263
Pediatrics ( 002-07)				
Theory	58	58	63	62
Practical	61	61	66	65
Theory+Practical	119	119	129	127
Surgery ( 002-07)				
Theory	175	182	192	189
Practical	179	181	193	190
Theory+Practical	355	363	385	379
Obs.& Gynae(2002-07)				
Theory	83	84	88	87
Practical	87	88	93	92
Theory+Practical	170	171	181	179
Common Medicine ( 002-07)				
Theory	166	168	174	172
Practical	174	180	186	184
Theory+Practical	340	347	360	357

Source: Data collected from AIIMS

### Marks Secured in Practical by the Range of Marks in Theory

We have tried look at the marks obtained in the practical by the ranges of marks obtained in theory paper. We have prepared ranges in a manner such that difference is small, so that we could capture the performance in practical of the students who have performed similarly in theory. We expect that their performance should be close the one in theory. We have taken the average for 2002- 2007.

### Aggregate Level Scenario

Let us look at the aggregate level picture.

First points that emerged quite clearly: that in all courses, that is first semester courses of anatomy, physiology, bio-chemistry; second semester courses of

microbiology, pathology, and third semester courses of medicine, paediatrics, surgery, obst&gynae, community medicine, the marks are hierarchical nature, that is, STs scored less than SCs, SCs scored less than others (including OBCs). This also means that STs and SCs scored marks which are entirely less than others.

There are only exceptional cases such as paediatrics, pharmacology, forensic medicine, pathology microbiology where the difference between the marks scored by STs are little less or similar, interest of the courses SCs scored more than STs.

Between the STs and others, the latter have higher marks enviously in all courses with good margin.

Between SCs and others except forensic med where SCs scored nearly the same as others; in rest of the subjects the SCs have fewer marks compared with others.

### **Variations in Practical Marks by Ranges of Marks in Theory**

**First Term (one year):** Three courses are offered in the first year, which include anatomy, physiology, and bio-chemistry. The marks in theory are grouped into six ranges, the lowest range begin with 100– 104 and end with 140 and above. In all ranges of marks in theory for anatomy (except SCs having more than others in range 110– 114), physiology and Bio-Chemistry, the marks scored by STs and SCs were lower than others. The gap was particularly more in higher ranges and less in lower ranges. The gap between STs and others was particularly wide, compared with the gap between SCs and others.

**Second Term (one and half year):** In the second term (which is of one year duration), in case of microbiology and pathology, the STs secured less marks than others and SCs in four/three ranges, although the gap is relatively less. In case of forensic med except one or two ranges, there is less difference between STs/SCs and others, and between STs and SCs. In the case of pharmacology in three ranges, the STs lag behind the others and in only one range in the case of SCs. In case of SCs, their marks were less compared with others in about four ranges, although with relatively less gap in microbiology,

pathology, and forensic med.

**Third Term (two years):**In the case of STs for medicine, paediatrics, surgery, obst.&gynae, comm. medicine out of five/six ranges ST students scored less than others in four to five ranges. In the case of SCs, the marks scored by them in practicals are less than others in three to six ranges in five courses.

From this analysis, it emerged that for an identical range or level of marks in theory, the ST and SC students scored less marks in many ranges, if not all, particularly in high marks ranges of theory papers. This is an issue which this particular HEI needs to address, as to why students from ST/SC communities with similar marks in theory perform poorly as compared with their counterpart from others. It is necessary to understand the reasons for relatively less performance of SC/ST students. This also calls for reforms in practical examination and assessment methods.

### **Summary**

Based on the data from 2002–2011, (for nine years) we have tried to understand the characteristics of students in the sample HEI to develop an understanding on a few aspects and suggest measures for improvement.

### **Gender, Social Groups, and Regional Features**

During the nine years periods, the sample HEI admitted a total of 555 students, of which 80 per cent were boys and the remaining 20 per cent girls.

The share of the ST and SC was fairly close to their population share. The share of OBC was also a little more than their population share of 27 per cent.

About 70 per cent came from five states of Kerala, Rajasthan, HaryanaUP, Punjab, and Gujarat. Kerala accounted for the highest share of students in AIIMS. During 2009–2011, Kerala alone accounted for about one fourth of the total students.

In the case of STs about 56 per cent were from Rajasthan alone, followed by HP, UK, Gujarat, Haryana, and AP. The regional pattern was more widespread for SCs. For others category, Kerala accounted for the maximum

followed by Haryana and UP. Five states account about 80 per cent of the total other students.

### **Occupation, Academic, and Language Background**

The employees and doctors accounted for bulk of the parents, followed by business and farmer families. The proportion of employees was more for SC/ST followed by others. But the share of doctors was high for others, as compared with SC/ST.

The proportion of students in highest grade in HSC was higher for others/OBCs, and lower for SCs/STs and lower in low-end grades. While in the middle ranges, all social groups had more or less similar share. Beside the student with 90% and above marks range are from other group - they account 55% of the total in this group, and this reduces to 31% for OBCs, 11% for SCs and only 2.6% for STs. Similarly the share of others was higher in 80–90% range accounting 49%, which was reduced to 27% for OBCs, 18% for SCs, and 6.4% for STs.

About 98% of students came with English as medium and only 2% had Hindi and all of them were from ST communities.

### **Academic Performance**

During 2002/11, in first, second, and third professional examinations, the proportion of failure was higher for STs, followed by SCs, and lowest for others.

During 2002/11 about 3% came with Hindi language background, and all of them were from STs. The failure rate for ST students with Hindi language background was high compared to those with English background.

For a period 2002–2007 the proportion of students that cleared examination in first attempts was low for STs, followed by SCs, and others in that order. Conversely, the ratio of those with 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>d</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> attempts was higher for STs, followed by SCs, and Others.

As regards marks, STs scored the lowest, followed by SCs, OBCs, and others in three professional examinations. Thus with some exception the others

generally have higher marks than other three groups. With the exception, this is also true for marks in theory and practical.

In an exercise of where we look at the marks obtained in the practical examination by the ranges of marks in theory, it emerged that for an identical range or level of marks in theory, the ST and SC students scored less marks in many ranges, if not all, particularly in high marks ranges of theory. This is an issue which the sample HEI needs to address, as to why students from ST/SC with similar marks in theory perform poorly as compared with their counterpart from others. It is necessary to understand the reasons for relatively less performance of SC/ST students. This also calls for reforms in practical examinations and assessment methods.

### **Issues for Consideration and Policy**

The analysis has brought out some issues of concern which this particular higher educational institution needs to address.

#### **Regional Concentration**

First issues relates to regional concentration. It emerged that most of the students comes from five to six states and Kerala almost account for more than one fourth of the total students in this higher educational institution. In case of STs more than 50%of the ST students come from Rajasthan alone. The institution may look in the admission policy and procedure to reduce the regional concentration and make it regionally more diverse.

#### **Diversity**

The students in this higher educational institution comes with diverse background in terms of social belonging (that is caste, ethnic, gender, and region). They are with different caste, ethnic, cultural, regional, gender, parents occupation and, language backgrounds. It is necessary that this diversity should not bring exclusiveness and formation of peer group around these identities. It is necessary to bring students with diverse background together in some form. In various functional bodies of students efforts should be made to form the groups of the students coming from diverse background. Steps may be taken to improve the understanding and respect towards each other and build the culture of togetherness. It is necessary to develop methods



and practices of social mixing and working where by diverse persons work together.

### **Disparity in Academic Performance**

More than 90% of the students perform better and complete degree. The failure rate is low. However in term of number of attempts and the marks secured there are variations across social groups. The students come from diverse academic and economic and social background which also affects their performance. The students vary in language background, academic performance level and social skill and standing. Therefore it is necessary that those who lack necessary skill and capabilities the program of capacity enhancement and of academic assistance are develop, so that they are able to cope up and catch up with the program and perform to their potential.

### **Exclusionary Behaviour and Discrimination in College Campuses**

Thus, the earlier sections indicate that the Indian higher education campuses have moved from relatively homogeneous to more diverse. In this widening diversity, student from low castes, poor, women, and those from different religious, regional, rural, and languages backgrounds live in the company of high caste, urban, and better-off men that have dominated the higher education campuses for long. With widening diversity, students bring with them ideologies, values, and differing ways of dealing with others. While diversity provides a unique opportunity to students to experience its richness of diversity under one shed, it also poses challenges of living in a socially inclusive way. A study by Thornton and others of three higher education institutions observed in 2010 'that separation of groups on the higher education campus studied is pervasive and ubiquitous'. While some such separation may be for supportive reasons, convenience or inertia, at other times it is due to overt discrimination on the grounds of race, region, nationality, caste, class, religion, or gender'.

Ovichegan in 2013 observed 'this university is yet another arena in which the practice of caste division continues to exist. The university environment reinforces and maintains a divide between Dalit and non-Dalit. Dalit students do, indeed, experience overt and covert discrimination based on caste at this premier university'. We present the observations and findings on the forms

of caste-based discrimination from the survey in a higher education college campus below:

### **Undergraduate Students: Discrimination in Academic Activities**

#### **a) Lack of Consultation and Interaction**

About 69 per cent of the SC/ST students reported that they do not receive adequate support from teachers about half of them give inaccessibility and indifference as reason for less contact with teachers. About one third give caste background as reason for avoidance by the teachers. Thus it emerged that the SC/ST students do not receive the kind of support that the other students received from their teachers. Given the dependence of students on teachers for learning and skill, the lack of adequate support to the SC/ST reflects in performance and psychological problems.

#### **i) Special Programmes: Absence of such Programmes in the sample HEI**

HEI has not taken any initiative to arrange remedial coaching in English language, basic courses or any other spheres for SC/ST students as is required by the educational institutions. About 84 per cent of SC/ST students mentioned the need for remedial coaching in English language and basic courses.

#### **ii) Assessment and Examination and Teachers' Support to SC/ST Students**

HEI examination system involves both internal and external assessment. A large component of the examination has a high subjective element. The examination system with 50% internal assessment and with significant role of individual faculty, gives scope for faculty to misuse this privilege, if he/she wishes to do so.

The internal assessment and the training are linked so that through a mentoring and hand holding process the teacher gets the best out of the student while imparting skills and knowledge. The following are the responses of the students to the questions about discrimination in teaching sessions, laboratories and clinical.

#### **iii) Discrimination in Teaching**

Of the total responses about 72 per cent of them mentioned some kind of discrimination being faced in teaching session.

iv) **Evaluation of Theory Paper**

About 76 per cent of students mentioned that their papers were not examined properly. **About 88 per cent** mentioned that they got fewer marks than they expected. Only 20 per cent mentioned that they got feedback on their answers papers.

v) **Discrimination in Practical and Viva**

About 84 per cent of respondents mentioned that evaluation in practical and viva was unfair. About 85 per cent of them mentioned that the SC students don't receive enough time with the examiners, as compared with the higher caste students. About 40 per cent of the students also mentioned that more difficult questions are generally put to them. About 76 per cent of the respondents reported that the examiner had asked the caste background; about 84 per cent mentioned that their grades were affected because of their caste background.

The self reported experiences of SC/ST students indicate that discrimination take the form of avoidance, contempt, non-cooperation, and discouragement and differential treatment by teachers towards these students.

- vi) **Class representatives** A representative of the class has a role in facilitating academics and even his/her role has been discriminatory. Only on a few occasions the SC/ST students are elected as class representatives. About 80 per cent of the student respondents reported differential treatment being faced, in distribution of instructions, in informing schedules of examination or rescheduling of classes, class trips, and cultural activities.

**Problem in the Hostel**

- i) **Segregation in Hostel:** Over a period of time and particularly in the wake of the anti-quota agitations, several students belonging to the SC/ST categories have shifted to the two top floors of hostels 4 and 5, leading some sort of segregation on caste lines. The SC/ST students are forced to shift to these hostels by a sustained pressure in the form of humiliation, abuse and even violence by the higher caste students. About **half** of the respondent students indicated caste harassment by higher caste students as reasons for shifting from other hostels to hostel 4 and 5.

## ii) Inter-personal Relation in Hostels, Messes, and Dining

- a. **Social Isolation:** Students living in hostel where a majority students are from higher caste complained of social isolation in inter-personal relation. About 88 per cent of the students reported experiences of social isolation in various ways, and 84 per cent of the student respondent reported violence in various forms.
- b. **Discrimination in Mess:** While the general messes are open to the reserved categories, about 76 per cent of SC/ST respondent students mentioned that they faced restrictions on the joining the private messes. There is a caste divide in formation of private mess.

## Social Segregation in Games and Sports and Cultural Events

- i) **Participation in Game:** The SC/ST students faced discrimination in participation various games. About 88 per cent faced discrimination in access to basketball game followed by 60 per cent in cricket.
- ii) **Participation in the Cultural Event:** The sample HEI organise a big cultural event. About, 32 per cent of the SC/ST students have not participated in the event all together. About 68 per cent participated in various capacities. Of these about 80 per cent participated as observers and volunteers and only 11 per cent as competitors, and 7 per cent as representatives in any committee. The SC/ST students feel that the organising committee for the cultural event works in a biased manner such that the SC/ST students are not give due participation.

## Ragging and Caste Overtones

Even though ragging is officially banned, there appears to be a month-long period of unofficial ragging. Students of SC/ST categories have stated that ragging has serious caste overtones and several forms of humiliation are meted out to them.

## Problems of SC/ST Senior and Junior Residents

There is sufficient reason and evidence including Supreme Court observations that the sample HEI followed a reservation policy which is not in conformity with the directives of the Central Government while selecting junior residents

(postgraduate students). These mechanisms effectively denied a good number of opportunities to the SC/ST communities. This should be quickly corrected. Discrimination of residents of the SC/ST categories is evident in a subtle as well as in a direct manner.

The residents who did not cooperate with the administration in the anti-quota agitation had harrowing experiences as repercussions. The case of Dr. Ajitha Gill is a unique example.

### **Circumstances of the SC/ST Faculty**

Post-based roster system of selection and appointment was never followed by the sample HEI for the faculty even though it is a requirement under central government rules and directives. This has been to the disadvantage of the SC/ST categories of faculty. A recent Supreme Court order has exposed several wrongdoings on the part of the sample HEI administration' faculty appointments and promotions. The SC/ST group was adversely affected by these methods of appointment. Faculties are discriminated by the head of the department (HoD) in allotting thesis guidance for post-graduate residents. This reduces their research opportunities and has to compete with their colleagues with lesser publications. Clinical opportunities are also reduced so that they do not get full exposure to clinical problem solving. Conferences/workshops and external academic participation are selectively blocked in many ways.

#### **A. Anti-quota Agitation**

The anti-quota agitation was planned by a group of people who had strong views against the reservation bill to be passed soon in the parliament. Various people have given evidence to support the view that the administration of the sample HEI played a proactive role in the organisation of the agitation. The institution became the venue for this so-called national agitation because it could paralyse health-care services to thousands and thereby attract public attention. Paralyzing of the health-care services including emergency services would put pressure on the government. The administrative support which was widely covered in the media went to the extent of penalising and punishing several students and staff that did not support the agitation.

### **Other Studies: A Literature Review**

We have also undertaken a review of literature that shows that discrimination

takes place in two spheres. In each spheres there are different forms of discrimination take place at both overt as well as at subtle level. Broadly discrimination happens at two levels: I) inside the classroom and II) outside the classroom. Classroom discrimination mainly takes place i) among students, ii) among students and teacher. Spheres of discrimination outside classroom: i) behaviour of administration towards SC students; ii) provision of services to SC students (hostel, mess, room allocation); iii) participation of students in extra/co-curricular activities.

### **Inside Classroom**

Classroom discrimination mainly takes place between students and the teachers. Classmates are the main source of motivation and support in every educational institution. Even in higher education, classmates play a major role in motivating and supporting. Secondly, the seniors and other students in the institution also play a vital role in providing basic information about the institution to guide them and to provide directions. If there is no support, it will be difficult for them to sustain in the institution. In this scenario, if there is differential treatment and discriminatory behaviour practices against SC students, then this will become double burden for them and have to face lot of difficulties in completing their education.

#### **i) *Discrimination Practised by Fellow Students***

Fellow students are ever-present and extremely disabling sources of discriminatory prejudices in higher education. Exposure to higher education does nothing to change discriminatory attitudes of the people, especially in rural areas. This does not mean that in urban areas it does not exist, even in premier institutes discriminatory practices are at quite a high level (Anoop, 2013). In premier institutes Dalit students have to carry SC/ST category tag throughout their academic career which results in open hostility towards students of general category. The strong anti-reservation protest from the students of AIIMS could have created realisation of belonging to separate category for Dalit students (EPW, 2006). Social interaction with non-Dalit students is limited and issues of poverty, attire, English language, and so on make Dalit life difficult (Sukumar, 2008). In the process of getting admission and gathering

information regarding fee structure, courses, hostel facilities, etc., both the students union and the authorities show apathy. Ragging of Dalit students can take specially humiliating forms, for example, ridicule based on the name of caste, colour or complexion, habits, culture, etc. (EPW, 2006).

Attire, language skills, and general 'etiquette' influence the relationship between genders. Dalit students are at a disadvantage with respect to such markers of social status, and find it difficult to interact with the opposite sex. The upper caste boys' and girls' attitude towards the Dalit students is non-supportive with very little sharing of study materials. Apart from routine interactions, all social and academic gatherings are very exclusive (Sukumar, 2008).

The most significant deficit of SC students vis-à-vis 'general' students is in their 'cultural capital'. The cultural capital deprivation of SC students is evidenced by lower levels of education among family members, lower levels of participation in edifying cultural activities, and in general a home environment less conducive to learning. Most critically, SC students typically lack the most important source of cultural capital in modern India: good command of the English language. The General-category students who are at the same socio-economic level as SC students are much more likely to have greater cultural capital, including significantly better English language comprehensibility. The importance of a strong socio-cultural background, as distinct from high socio-economic status per se, is suggested also by the over-representation of Brahmins among general-category students (Velaskar, 1986)

Students found very difficult to be part of the different peer-group formation and hence the social interaction with general category students are less. The consequence of this is the total absence of SC/ST groups on the campus in their everyday social and academic life (Rao, 2013).

Each of the 25 students interviewed said that despite a ragging ban, they were humiliated when they had taken admission. "They would call us to their rooms and order us..tell us 10 reasons why you should get reservation..if you don't we'll beat you," one of them said. "These incidents

happen every year. Whenever a new batch joins they are treated like this,' a general category student confirmed (Telegraph, 2007).

Dalit students at one of elite universities are forced to deal with casteism on a daily basis, as upper-caste non-Dalit students often discriminate against their Dalit colleagues on the basis of caste (D'Souza, 2009; quoted in Ovichegan, 2013).

Ovichegan 2013 in her study found Deepak, a Dalit student in the department of history, called attention to the nature of caste discrimination and its influence on his life at university: discrimination, even at the educational level, remains strongly seeded. The caste system is very much part of our culture. Its long history of discrimination continues. One may think that in a good university like this one people wouldn't bother much about whose background is what. But in reality that is not the case.

Ovichegan 2013 in her study quotes of caste-based discrimination of students by fellow students. Vijaya, a Dalit female in the department of psychology recalled:

I remember one day during lunch break I went to the common room where students usually go to chat or eat their packed lunches. I went there with my friend to have lunch [ . . . ] and noticed after a minute or two the other non-Dalit students (men and women) left the room [ . . . ] and it was only the two of us in the room having lunch [ . . . ] I found that weird [ . . . ] my class colleagues acting this way. This attitude makes it very clear to me that caste-bias [ . . . ] whether in this university or outside [ . . . ] it's the same. (p. 9)

Discriminatory attitudes may be taken to the extremes of refusing to share food or drinking cups with the Dalit, or not ever talking to them or making eye contact. It can be as if the Dalits are invisible or 'polluted'.

Vinod, a Dalit in the department of law emphasised the fact that caste affiliation remains central even in today's world:

Non-Dalit try to maintain caste differences in a variety of ways. Caste affiliation [ . . . ] like [ . . . ] who belongs to which caste matters.



In which area of the city one resides; who one's room-mate is in the university hostel; which caste one's friends are [ . . . ] all of these matter, even today. In all of this the Dalit are the victims [ . . . ] because a Dalit individual does not fit with anyone except other Dalits. Believe me [ . . . ] what caste one belongs to matters in this society because everyone wants to know what family background you come from [ . . . ] and based upon that a Dalit knows where they stand'. (p 8)

## ii) ***Discrimination Practised by Teachers***

Demoralise and de-motivate them, provide low grades, poor labs make sarcastic remarks and not treated equally. Poor marks in practical examinations (Anoop, 2013). The non-transparency of the department and confusion in allotting supervisors resulted in dropping out of students and fear among SC/ST students in Central University of Hyderabad. Students were allotted an advisor for the initial stage of research and whether he/she will be supervisor was no clear among Dalit students. Dalit students told that that the advisors had made it 'amply clear' to them 'that they should not assume that they would be their eventual supervisors'. Whereas their colleagues from general categories were treated as full-time research scholars and permitted to use the labs of their faculty advisers (EPW, 2008).

In almost all these institutions there are hardly any faculty members who also belong to SCs/STs who can sympathise with Dalit students or act as role models to them (EPW, 2006). Even the body language and mannerisms of faculty members and students belonging to the dominant community can seem threatening to Dalit students. The authorities generally remain mute spectators and are reluctant to take strong action against ragging offenders (Sukumar, 2008).

Most of the SC and ST doctors found their medical programme of study very tough (especially the viva voce exams); and felt that their academic performance was often aggravated by non-academic factors such as teacher aloofness and sometimes even contempt (Patwardhan, and Palshikar, 1992).

The first interaction with students and faculty members reveals their identity whether they are from PC or JEE . The first thing that is asked is the rank in JEE along with name and place of origin. SC and ST students

are called PC or CATA<sup>1</sup> and from the director to the deans to faculty to non-teaching staff and fellow students, they are refereed as such. The moment the reference to these nomenclatures arises, the talk will be in intonation, or gestural. This tag of PC and CATA does not leave a student till he leaves IIT; it continues afterwards. This labelling describe their academic profiling which impinges on every aspect of their encounters in the pedagogic contexts class room as well as laboratory settings(Rao, 2013).

The attitudes of teachers are discriminatory and their comments make students feel inferior and embarrassed. One experience of student explains how in his first class of physics when he asked a question, the teacher responded saying since you are from PC you don't know even this! He felt humiliated and start hating physics class and physics and he doesn't want to be an engineer (ibid).

S.S. Rao also cites many cases how SC/ST students were discriminated in IITs by the teachers. He also describes the selection of teachers and pairing of students by teachers and students also excludes disadvantaged groups, which affects their academic performance. He proposes that it is not sufficient to locate the academic under-performance of these groups to social adjustment, pre-schooling, financial constraints, inferiority complex; but it is utmost important to understand the process of exclusion, the contestants, situations, and rituals which leads to helplessness, inferiority complex, segregation, self-exclusion, and humiliation of SC and ST students. It is through this labelling and stigmatisation the notion of merit and structural dominance are reproduced.

A committee of experts belonging to the AllIndia Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and LokNayakJaiprakash Narayan Hospital (LNJP), headed by Dr. L. R.Murmu, looked into on-going discrimination at the college and found out that in the previous five years all the students who had failed the physiology paper belonged to the backward/scheduled castes. Dr.Murmu noted in his report how a student had failed three years consecutively only by one mark. Other members of the committee also noted how all the students who had failed the physiology paper had performed well in other subjects and had got admission in the college

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1 PC and 'Cata student' is caste-hindu IIT lingo for those who make it using affirmative action

because of their high marks (SubhashGatade, 2012).

Reserved category doctors applying for jobs at the AIIMS have alleged they were deliberately failed in the entrance exams. A minimum qualification mark of 50 per cent was set for the departmental assessment—a viva voce conducted by the AIIMS faculty. SC/ST postgraduate students, fearing that the subjective assessment would be used to deny them jobs. The June 20 written examinations for 107 posts this year were cleared by 84 students belonging to SC or ST categories. Only 24 of them managed to clear the 50 per cent qualification in the viva that followed (Charu Sudan Kasturi, 2007).

People are concerned about whom they are with. Speaking of their experiences on the university campus, the Dalit students are being 'side-lined' or neglected in classrooms by tutors, for example, not being asked questions by the tutors even when they have put their hands up to respond to a direct question, experiencing marginalisation (Ovichegan, 2013).

## **Outside Classroom**

### ***Discrimination Practised by Administration***

The scholarship and other funds by the government for SCs/STs are greatly resented by the upper castes, and these are subjected to go-slow tactics by officials. Sometimes these funds were diverted or just embezzled. Caste determines recruitments, allotment of PhD guides, your field research trials, your labs, marks scored, everything (Anoop, 2013).

Central University of Hyderabad, department of physics violated the norms/guidelines of the university which mentions that coursework performance is not linked with fellowship. According to new university guidelines, the fellowships for PhD students are not linked to 'performance' in coursework. However, the school of physics acted in contravention to this, and Senthil's fellowship was stopped, his name was put up on the noticeboard, citing his failure in coursework as the reason. This put immense pressure on Senthil which led to his suicide (EPW, 2008). While writing the entrance exam, the SC and ST candidates are made to sit separately for reasons of 'administrative convenience'; this also happens in University of Delhi (Sukumar, 2008). Many Dalit students are not given any levy in depositing fees or documents and they are often only given conditional admission. Senior Dalit students

are the only source of help to overcome such obstacles, and to negotiate with the authorities. First-generation learners from Dalit families are rendered more vulnerable as they lack any family guidance to deal with such matters (ibid).

Discrimination begins with the filling of forms that SC and ST students have to fill—coloured forms for the SCs/STs and white for general categories. This happens in IIMs too. The identification of the SC/ST students begins to involve in the institutions and takes a distinct nomenclature and stereotype once they enter IITs (Rao, 2013).

In the case of the Dalit people, some behaviours work to exclude Dalits both physically and socially from university activities. At times, they are prevented from participating meaningfully within the university environment (Ovichagan, 2013).

A reserved category student from an elite institute told *The Hindu*, 'discrimination in higher education was invisible, polite, but absolute'. There was a need to 'study caste where there is no caste and the normality of violence'. In urban areas, mutated forms of caste atrocities or discrimination have not even been identified. In institutions like the IITs, SC/ST students are looked at and treated differently. He cited the case of a PhD student at an IIT who was not given his degree for nine years as he was vocal about Dalit issues (Gaikwad, 2012).

The students of Central University of Hyderabad complained that they were ignored in the classroom, invisible in the curriculum. Try as they might, their grades never improve. They are regarded as 'untouchable'. They are watched while they eat, mocked at by teachers, and students, suspected for their corruption, hounded for their misuse of hostel rooms for guests from the village, chastised for their inability to pay bills on time, condemned for their violence (Anveshi Report, 2002).

### **Provision of Services to SC Students (Hostel, Mess, Room allocation)**

Not allow the Dalit to stay along with them and beat if they come to the hostel in night, hostels only provided for the dominant caste. Hostel and students organization run on caste lines. Open display of prejudice in the mess and play grounds (Anoop, 2013).

SCs/STs were not allowed to dine or play cricket with upper caste students. Some of the upper caste students would just get up and walk away when SCs/STs would sit at the table (in the mess). SC/ST students said that they were 'not to play basketball or cricket by the upper caste students'. 'Football and volleyball (the upper castes don't fancy) were the only sports we were allowed to play'. The panel confirmed the findings that reserved category students were bullied into vacating their hostel rooms, leading to an SC/ST ghetto being formed on two floors of Hostels 4 and 5 (Telegraph, 2007).

Exclusionary attitudes perpetuate group divisions, especially Dalits versus non-Dalits, by preventing Dalit students from participating fully in university life.

Ovichagan, 2013 in her study mentioned, Chetan, a Dalit in the psychology department, explained what it means to be a member of the Dalit caste in terms of how he is treated:

The fact is we are Dalit [ . . . ] one cannot overlook that part of us. We have to confront our Dalitness' [ . . . ] and this means being prepared to confront the cultural hurdles around Hindu traditions of caste hierarchy [ . . . ] at times not being included in a non-Dalit group [ . . . ] or even share a seat, meal or university accommodation with high-caste Hindus [ . . . ] and even much more which come our way.

The students resist and fight against discrimination to continue their education and their lives. They mention usually the family members, father is mentioned very often, as the source of inspiration and encouragement. They also directly support and inspire in enabling education and indirectly in terms of providing moral support for developing a confident personality and pride in the community identity (Anoop, 2013).

A committee has recommended legal action under the SC/ST Atrocities Act against faculty of the Vardhman Medical College for caste-based harassment of 35 students. Dr. Mungekar discovered to his dismay that not only were the 35 SC students failed repeatedly in one particular subject—physiology—but the authorities had not even bothered to meet them to look into their complaints. Twenty-five scheduled caste students who had taken admission in 2004 and 2005 approached the court when it was discovered that they

were deliberately being failed in physiology. Under instructions from the high court, the college was forced to conduct fresh examinations; 24 students out of the 25 passed (Subhash Gatade, 2012).

Most of those the committee interviewed alleged the teachers ignored Dalit students in class and deliberately failed them in examinations, especially the practical tests. 'Even in internship, they are harassing (us)... now they are threatening us about the examinations that are coming,' a medico complained against teachers. 'Last year, out of seven students... six were failed—nearly by one or two marks'. (Telegraph, 2007)

Thus, the survey findings indicate that diversity tends to induce social and peers groups around 'identities' and develop divide in social relations on caste lines. Exclusionary behaviours also bring discrimination and psychological and physical violence for low castes and women. The nation's long-standing legacies of caste, gender, and class antagonism replicate on campuses as well. Thus as higher education moves forward, it does so on social platforms of caste, gender, and class cleavages. The survey observed separation and exclusionary behaviour associated with caste and university is yet another arena in which the practice of caste division continues to exist.

### **Conclusion and Policy Recommendations**

The Government of India have developed policies to improve access of poor, women, scheduled castes and tribes and religious minorities to higher education. For the scheduled castes and tribes Article 15(4) empowers the state to make special provision for the advancement of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Under this provision the state has reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes students in educational institutions that include colleges (technical, engineering and medical colleges) and universities run by the central and state governments, and the government-aided educational institutions. These provisions are supported by a number of financial schemes. Among the educational schemes that are for the poor, women, SCs, STs, and OBCs are scholarships, special hostels, concession in fees, grants for books, remedial coaching

Similarly, policies for the educational development of the Muslims include pre-matric and post matric scholarships, scholarship for students pursuing

technical and professional courses at the undergraduate and post graduate levels, fellowship to pursue MPhil and PhD degrees in the universities, grant-in-aid to the Maulana Azad Education Foundation for infrastructure development of institutes/colleges/schools and scholarships to meritorious girl students. Moreover, free coaching and an allied scheme for minorities has been also launched to assist students through coaching institutions to enhance their skills and capabilities to make them employable in different sectors.

The University Grants Commission has, at the higher-education level, taken steps to safeguard students from discrimination. They have enacted regulation for this purpose, which is called 'The Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions Regulation', 2012.

At the heart of this regulation is the objective:

- To prohibit discrimination on the basis of caste, ethnicity, gender, and disability; and
- To provide a level playing field by creating equal opportunity cells and by appointing anti-discrimination officers in institutions across the country.

At the school-level, the government has made education a Fundamental Right guaranteed by the Constitution. This has been done through the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

The RTE Act not only makes education free and compulsory, but also promotes non-discriminatory school environment, including participation inside classrooms. These impact a wide range of discriminatory practices, such as:

- it prohibits teachers from announcing students' affiliation to a particular community, caste or tribe;
- and it prohibits teachers from discriminating among students, especially at mid-day meals and sports facilities.

Administrative guidelines have been issued to states to establish systems to address discrimination complaints within 60 days of their being filed. Further, the SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA) framework with norms for planning

interventions has been revised to correspond with the provisions of the RTE Act. Moreover, to sensitise school teachers on issues of discrimination, the NCERT has also recently developed a Teachers Training Module. This module persuades teachers to promote equality and progressive attitudes within their classrooms and beyond.

### **Policy Recommendations: Learning for Democratic Engagement and Practice**

Though there have been considerable efforts on the part of the state to improve access of the excluded groups to higher education, the educational gap still continues between women and men, between SCs, STs and Others and between poor and non-poor. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the gap be reduced by strengthening and expanding the present policy of empowerment and equal opportunity. Similarly, several legal methods have been used to address discriminatory behaviour.

However, discriminatory behaviour is an outcome of socialisation of children, which leads to discrimination where law can hardly affect the behaviour in the family and the society. Traditional values contradictory to democratic norms and practices continue to shape behaviours of our children and adults in their formative stages through socialisation in the family and society. Public policies can do little to influence this informal learning which is at variance with the constitutional principles of equality, fraternity, democratic behaviour, and respect for differences.

However, education can be an instrument of change. Commenting on the role of education, Jawaharlal Nehru observed, '*No subject is of great importance than that of education. It is the men and women in a country that make and build a nation and it is education that is supposed to build those men and women.*' Nehru set the goal of nation-building before the education system of the country, but it would require reform in education; unlearning of undemocratic values is as important as learning democratic ones.

The education policy does talk of national integration, equality, and development of a common culture as goals. Selectively, some civic learning also takes place through courses on human rights and gender. Though, civic learning and democratic engagement have not become the core component



of our teaching Banks, an Afro-American academician observed that the role of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to prepare students 'to know, to care, and to act in ways that will develop and foster a democratic and just society' and to 'develop a commitment to personal, social, and civic action, as well as the knowledge and skill needed to participate'.

For civic learning and democratic engagement both in school and higher education, we require reforms in the higher education. Civic learning is particularly crucial to deal with diversity in societies that are highly diverse. USA is one such country. It developed education policy to deal with diversity by bringing about reforms in curriculum and pedagogy for civic learning and engagement in colleges and universities since 1995. The education for diversity has four elements: knowledge, values, skills, and actions. Reform in knowledge includes new curriculum with themes that deal with diversity, inequalities, racism, sexism, religious oppression, classism, anti-Semitism, and hetero-sexism. To develop individual capabilities and skills, it introduced new pedagogical methods, such as inter-group dialogue and mixed peer group, where students from diverse groups come together and interact and learn to respect differences. Through new knowledge and skills, students unlearn many things that they learn in family and society and also develop skills and capacities to deal with diversity and differences democratically. The third component is to motivate the students for action. These reforms expected to enhance the 'civic capital' among the youth for enhanced citizenship. Sixteen years later in 2011, a review of reforms indicated positive outcomes not only in civic learning and engagement but also on academic performance of students.

Higher education in India today needs to design mechanisms to promote cognitive knowledge, social skills, values, and actions for civic learning and democratic engagement so essential to build citizenship. US report on Education, 'The Crucial Movement: College Learning and Democratic Future' 2013, observed that 'unlike liberty, civic knowledge, and capability are not bestowed at birth. They are hard won, though education at all levels. Democratic insights and competence are always in the making, always incomplete. Therefore, civic learning needs to be an integral component at every level of education, from school to all fields of study'. It goes on to add that 'we dare not be passive about revitalising civic capacity any more'. Campuses can be critical sites for honing students' civic knowledge, skill, values, and actions, and preparing them for lives of public purpose as well

as employment. This is a crucial moment to use higher education and the pathways to it as 'carrier of democratic values, ideals, and processes', and narrow the gap between ideals of constitution and reality of our daily lives of people. If it is crucial movement for education in USA, it is critical movement for India, when we have hardly made beginning in education to deal with diversity, discrimination, and sexism.

The goal of higher education of imparting knowledge and career preparation needs to be combined with a third national goal of fostering informed and engaged citizenship, and reduce 'national deficit in civic capital'. The education for democracy and civic responsibility has to be pervasive, not partial; central and not peripheral, and should form the core of higher education teaching'. This requires reform in our education system to develop a generation which will be more sensitive and engaged in the promotion of gender and caste equity, freedom, and fraternity, and reduce dependence on legal safeguards.

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**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF DALIT STUDIES**

D-II/I, Road No. 4, Andrews Ganj, New Delhi 110 049

T: +91-11-26252082 [editor@dalitstudies.org.in](mailto:editor@dalitstudies.org.in)

[www.dalitstudies.org.in](http://www.dalitstudies.org.in)