



Socio-Economic Status of Dalit Students in Arts and Science Colleges

KEYWORDS

Socio-economic status, Dalits students, caste, untouchables, downtrodden, oppressed, and suppressed.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. The sample consists of seven hundred arts and science college students from Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli districts of Tamilnadu. Socio economic status scale developed and standardized by Raibir Singh, Radhey Shyam and Satish Kumar (2006) and was used for collecting the data. Normative survey method was adopted for the present study. The data was analysed using percentage analysis, mean, median, standard deviation and 't'- test. The study reveals that there is a significant difference between socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of religion, locality of institution, status of institution.

Introduction

The word "dalit" comes from the Sanskrit root dal- and means "broken, ground-down, downtrodden, or oppressed." The word "dalit" also comes from the Marathi language, and it means "ground", "suppressed", "crushed", or "broken to pieces". It was first used by Jyotirao Phule in the nineteenth century in the context of the oppression faced by the erstwhile "untouchable" castes of the twice-born Hindus. Those previously known as untouchables, depressed classes, and Harijans are today increasingly adopting the term "dalit" as a name for themselves. "Dalit" refers to one's caste rather than class; it applies to members of those menial castes which have borne the stigma of "untouchability", because of the extreme impurity and pollution connected with their traditional occupations. Dalits a 'outcastes' falling outside the traditional four-fold caste system they were therefore physically and socially excluded and isolated from the rest of society.

Social and economic freedom for the dalits

Ambedkar did yeoman service for the up-lift of the dalits by carrying out a life-long struggle against the evils of Hinduism. His dream was to lead them to a life of dignity, meaning and self-respect. From the very beginning, he devoted much of his time to bring about a radical social democracy. He fought valiantly to get equal rights for his fellow dalits. For him political freedom was meaningless unless it was accompanied by social and economic freedom. Political freedom without social and economic freedom could only create contradictions for the Indian nation. His mission to bring about a radical transformation in the living conditions of the dalits, who were condemned for centuries to live a most dehumanized life in the society. Ambedkar was not in favour of having just the political transformation of India. But he wanted a total change, especially in the field of social life of the dalits. According to him without changing the social marginalization of the dalits, pursuing political and economic goals would not bring about the desired results. He encouraged dalits to get involved in the politics so that social and economic freedom may be achieved gradually.

Economic status of dalit students

The aspirations and expectations of the dalit students are much oriented towards their development. Due to their

poor economic background they have very few opportunity channels for their development, due to the availability of limited resources. In India the constant growth of aspirations coupled with obviously limited resources of a developing country may be expected to result in severe frustration leading to different levels of unrest. Perhaps, it may be because of some psychological factors in the background. The upper caste groups having a good socio-economic status may be in a position to get peace with them comparatively. The lower caste students are getting more and more weightage on account of their growing competence despite their lower status. The dalit students who have been subjected to a great deal of exploitation from the dawn of independence have now become aware of their rights and privileges guaranteed by the Indian constitution. Hence, they are enthusiastic to develop and gain everything in life. The expression and dehumanization have stood in way of their aspirations. As a result, they are prone to more frustration in scaling newer heights in life. Besides, they feel that it is very difficult to realize their growing aspiration through the normal conventional channels like education and employment because of their submissiveness to the superiors. Obedience to the village upper castes under the four folds Varnasrama Dharma and Karma and so on. They feel that the upper caste are not allowing them to achieve their aspirations and get the benefit of the constitutional assurances on account of their poor socio-economic and educational background one way to uplift them would be by ignoring the past and giving support to their goal of Egalitarianism. But unfortunately the privileged groups who have been employing their status and power are not prepared for that. Hence, the oppression of the dalit students is a continuous process in the present day society and the students instead of going to higher levels are sinking within and looking for a new society which should be free of casteism. Dalit students spend most of their time either in the family or in the concerned educational institutes. Thus, the students are being influenced by both the institutions almost simultaneously. It is quiet natural that the family will play or influences on the personal behavior and the academic achievement of the students in the college. Dalit parent are always anxious of their children's future and they do not like them living in bad conditions while under education. In fact the dal-

its are generally neglected during their childhood and this early stage of negligence and deprivation sometimes affects their personality and sometimes results in their sheer ignorance and passivity. The parents also teach them the prevailing influence of casteism and instruct their children to be submissive to the upper classes in the village and make them feel and behave like the depressed Dalits in their routine social life.

Review of related literature

Kumari Shiv (2000) highlighted the differences between the means of the four sub areas of modernity of under-graduate boys (UGB) and under-graduate girls (UGG). UGB and UGG belonging to the high SES were significantly more modern than their counterparts from the lower SES. **Santhosh ravdeep kaur 2009** found out the socio economic status of secondary school students. **Farkhanda Ahmar& Ehtesham 2013** ascertained academic achievement among high socio-economic status male and female students at higher secondary school level.

Rational for the study

It is true that, because of all the steps taken by the government and the social reformers to uplift the dalit people certain amount of change and mobility among dalit over the span of time have taken place. But still these people are living in quit poverty. They have not been able to get the minimum food, shelter and clothing. The reserved seats for scheduled castes are not fully filled up in the field of education and other fields. The percentage of people who are benefited by these schemes is negligible. Therefore, it may be said that deprivation is still a characteristic feature of the scheduled castes people. In recent years, communal riots are unusual occurrence in certain parts of Tamilnadu between the scheduled castes and other castes. In most of the cases, both the parties were victims. Kodyankulam of Tuticorin district is such an important place which was disturbed due to communal riots, and their properties were exploited. Whatever may be the cause behind such incidents, the after effects of these incidents are crucial. These people are mostly daily wages and so they suffer until normal situation regains. It is not uncommon these days to witness unrest among the dalit students at higher education level. Many reasons could be furnished for this state of affairs. One of the reasons, is their socio economic status. In this critical context, they are trying to send their children to schools and colleges. So in this study the investigator try to find out the SES of dalit students studying arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of the background variables such as religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution. So in order to find the socio – economic status of the dalit students studying in MSU affiliated colleges, the investigator worked out a design to find out the socio economic status of these people in general and that of the college students in particular.

Statement of the problem

The problem has been stated as "A study on socio-economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges affiliated Manonmaniam Sundaranar University "

Objectives

1. To find the level of socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to MSU in terms of background variables such as religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution.
2. To find the significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and sci-

ence colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of religion.

3. To find the significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of branch of study.
4. To find the significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of locality of the institution.
5. To find the significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of status of institution.

Hypotheses

1. The level of socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of background variables such as religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution low.
2. There is no significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of religion, locality of the institution, status of institution.
3. There is no significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of branch of study.

Method used for the study

The investigator has adopted the normative survey method to study the socio economic status of dalit students.

Population and Sample

The population for the study comprised of dalit students studying in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. The investigator has selected 700 students from the arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. The investigator has adopted simple random sampling technique for the selection of sample.

Tool

As the study aims at the socio economic status of the dalit students, the investigator has used socio economics status, (SES) scale prepared by Rajbir singh, Radhey, Radhey Shyam, & Satish Kumar Department of Psychology, MD University, Rohtak, Haryana. There are 25 statements in the scale. The items in the scale, are related to caste/class, occupation, family education, income, housing, relational network and material and livestock possessions. The sum of the ratings against all the 25 items constitutes the score on socio economic status of the student being observed. The maximum score is 199 and the minimum is 23.

Statistical Techniques

Percentage analysis, Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test have been employed for present study to analyse the data.

Analyses and Interpretation

Hypothesis No.1

The level of socio economic status of arts and science colleges dalit students with respect to religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution is moderate.

Table 1: showing the level of socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges

Sl. No.	Variables	Category	No.	Low		Medium		High	
				No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Religion	Hindu	597	70	11.23	448	75.04	79	13.23
		Non Hindu	103	6	5.83	23	70.87	24	23.30
2	Branch of study	Arts	434	38	8.76	330	76.04	66	15.21
		Science	266	38	14.29	191	71.80	37	13.91
3	Locality of the institution	Rural	201	30	14.93	157	78.11	14	6.97
		Urban	499	46	9.22	364	72.95	89	17.84
4	Status of institution	Autonomous	151	26	11.22	109	72.19	16	10.60
		Non Autonomous	549	50	9.11	412	75.05	87	15.85

Table 1 shows that religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution in terms of socio economic status of arts and science colleges students is moderate.

**Hypotheses No. 2
Null Hypothesis**

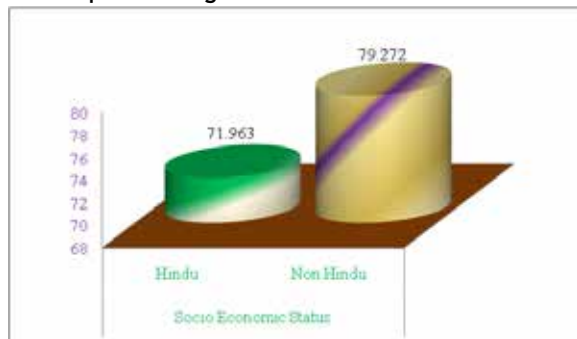
There is significant difference between Hindu and Non Hindu arts and science college dalit students in the socio economic status.

Table 2: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges with respect to religion

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Category	No.	Mean	SD	CR Value	Table Value	Remarks (5% level)
1.	Socio economic status	Hindu	597	71.963	29.343	2.318	1.96	S
		Non Hindu	103	79.272	29.585			

As seen in Table 2't' value is inferred from the above 1.96. This't' value is significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is significant difference between Hindu and Non Hindu of arts and science college dalit students in their socio economic status with respect to religion.

Figure 2: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges with respect to religion



**Hypothesis No. 3
Null Hypothesis**

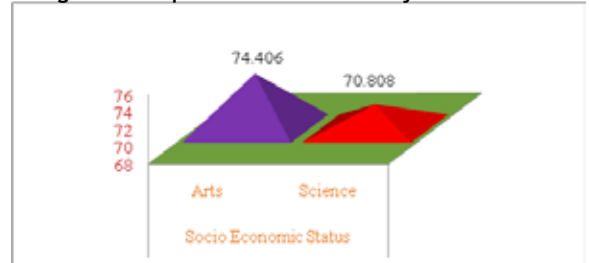
There is no significant difference between arts and science college dalit students in the socio economic status in terms of branch of study.

Table 4: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and college with respect to branch of study

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Category	No.	Mean	SD	CR Value	Table Value	Remarks (5% level)
1.	Socio economic status	Arts	434	74.406	79.672	1.577	1.96	NS
		Science	266	70.808	29.060			

As seen in Table 3't' value is inferred from the above 1.96. This't' value is no significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It indicates that there is no significant difference between arts and sciences dalit students in their socio economic status with respect to branch of study.

Figure 4: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and college with respect to branch of study



**Hypotheses No.4
Null Hypothesis**

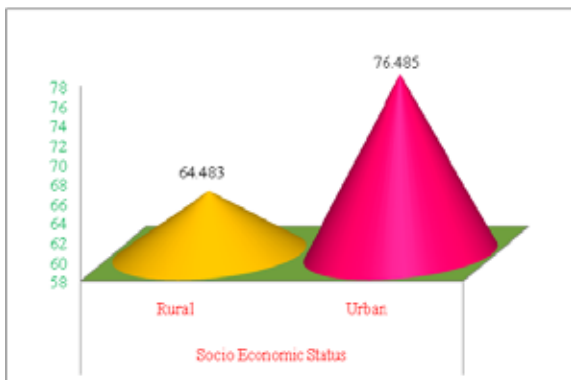
There is significant difference between rural and urban of arts and science college dalit students in the socio economic status.

Table 4: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges with respect to locality of the institution

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Category	No.	Mean	SD	CR Value	Table Value	Remarks (5% level)
1.	Socio economic status	Rural	201	64.483	25.475	5.332	1.96	S
		Urban	449	76.485	30.289			

As seen in Table 4't' value is inferred from the above 1.96. This't' value is significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is significant difference between rural and urban of arts and science college dalit students in their socio economic status with respect to locality of the institution.

Figure4: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges with respect to locality of the institution



Hypothesis No.5

Null Hypothesis

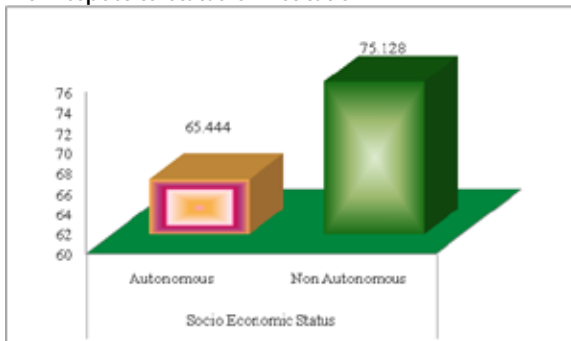
There is significant difference between autonomous and non autonomous of arts and science college dalit students in the socio economic status.

Table 5: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges with respect to status of institution

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Cat-egory	No.	Mean	SD	CR Value	Table Value	Remarks (5% level)
1.	Socio economic status	Autonom-ous	151	65.444	24.125	4.112	1.96	S
		Non Autono-mous	549	75.128	30.475			
		Autonom-ous						

As seen in Table 5't' value is inferred from the above 1.96. This't' value is significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is significant difference between Autonomous and Non Autonomous of arts and science college dalit students in their socio economic status with respect to status of institution.

Figure 5: test showing the mean difference in socio economic status of dalit students in arts and colleges with respect to status of institution



Major Findings of the study

1. The level of socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to MSU in terms of background variables such as religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution is moderate.
2. There is significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of religion, locality of the institution, status of institution.
3. There is no significant difference, if any, between the socio economic status of dalit students in arts and science colleges affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in terms of branch of study.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- i. It is an important responsibility of education institutions to make necessary arrangements to provide the government schemes and implement the policies to the educational upliftment of dalit students.
- ii. Adequate facilities must be provided by the institution for the vocational and skill development programmes.
- iii. Value based education must be given by the educational institutions to inculcate the values among the dalit students.
- iv. Competitive spirit should be instilled among the dalit students.
- v. Activities oriented towards confidence building, personality development need to be chosen.
- vi. Loan facilities needs to be made available.
- vii. Proper hostel facilities for dalit students at all levels of education should be provided.
- viii. Reservation policy for dalit students should be make available in both admission from primary levels onwards and employment even in the private institution.
- ix. Government has to be increased awareness among dalit students about their rights and privileges.

Conclusion

This study shows that the level of dalit students studying in arts and science colleges affiliated Manonmaniam Sundaranar University is moderate in terms of their religion, branch of study, locality of the institution, status of institution. There is significant difference in socio economic status of dalit students in terms of religion, locality of institution, status of institution. Socio economic status of non Hindu students are having high score than their counterparts. It may be due to their socio, economic, political, and educational awareness in almost at all the levels. Socio economic status of urban student's is high compare with rural dalit students. This may be due to the availability of all the instructional and infrastructural resources and their exposure in all fields. Dalit students studying in non autonomous are having high score than autonomous, because of autonomous colleges are admitting almost poor dalit students.

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