

## **Educational Attainment and Analysis of Persisting Psycho-Social Discrimination during Higher Education: Evidences from Survey**

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**Abstract:** In the modern global changes the issue of discrimination demand for the review of principles of social justice and human rights. Therefore with the purpose of unravelling the nexus of persisting discrimination in higher education the current study is undertaken. In this study 720 students have been surveyed about their educational attainment. The sample was taken from the four universities of Uttar Pradesh by adopting multi-stage stratified sampling technique. The sample represents the students from diverse socio-economic background. The Educational Profile Performa was designed to collect information about the Medium of Instructions, Types of Schools/College, Location of School/College and Obtained Percentage of Marks in respective educational degree ranging from 10<sup>th</sup> to Graduation level. From the analysis of data numerous patterns emerged of which prominent are- marks obtained by lower category at every level of education are lower and they have completed their education from government managed rural based school/colleges than to their counterparts from upper caste. English language and migration from rural to urban based educational institutions for pursuing higher education emerged significant determinants of discrimination experienced by the students. Continuous disparities in marks at every level of education and inaccessibility to quality education imparted at privately managed schools/colleges indicate the persisting psycho-social discrimination in Indian society mediated through socio-demographic factors.

**Keyword:** Educational Attainment, Discrimination, Higher Education, Caste

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Discrimination is the subjective perception of unfair treatment' based on their caste, class and racial group membership. The feeling and experience of prejudiced behaviour because of caste is the caste based discrimination. In this research, the felt and experienced discrimination on the basis of caste among the graduate students is proposed to be probed and analysed.

Basically the discrimination is categorized in two types- **Negative Discrimination-** often based on stereotype, includes anti-semitism, caste, racism, sexism, and slavery, and **Positive Discrimination-** or The Affirmative Action sometimes practiced in attempt to counteract the impact of previous long term negative discrimination. Positive/ Protective discrimination are ameliorative, measures and strategies (policies, programmes, laws and rules) for removing the cumulative disadvantage of socially, educationally, economically disadvantaged groups of population and bringing them at par with the rest of the population.

Higher education forms the stage after matriculation and /or higher secondary including (both technical and non-technical) general and professional under-graduation including post-graduation. Education is necessary for the uplift as well as development of a nation along with constructive improvement of social status of poor, deprived and marginalised people. Through proper education insurance of vertical social mobility is assured especially of those who have been downtrodden in the social structure of any particular society. Therefore education is important tool for achieving equality in any society. Educational attainment refers to the achievement of individual by enrolling oneself in the existing education system and obtaining the grade /marks prescribed in the evaluation system to the optimal level to be declared successful completion of course/degree. Higher education in India has evolved in distinct and divergent streams with each monitored by an aped body, indirectly controlled by the 'Ministry of Human Resource Development'. India's higher education system is the second largest in the world after the 'United States'. The main governing body at the 'tertiary level' (higher education) is the 'University Grant Commission(UGC) India, which enforces the standards, advise the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and state. Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by twelve autonomous institutions established by the UGC.

### **Perception and Experiences of Discrimination in Higher Education: A Multi-phasic Analysis**

In this context it is necessary to announce again that the prevalence of perception of discrimination is higher than experiences of discrimination. Both, experiences as well as perception of discrimination have almost similar impact and consequences on the individual well-being. In a study, Kessler, Mickelson and Williams (1999) have proved that the prevalence of perception of discrimination is high in general population and equally responsible for the mental upheaval as is done by the experiences of discrimination. In Indian context, discrimination based on caste is prevalent at large scale in the society and its repercussions exist in higher educational institutions. During higher education, there are various situations, occasions, activities behaviours of other people and behaviour of fellow students which pave the path for discrimination along with one's root cause of belonging to particular caste / community. In an empirical exploration by Kushwaha (2010) it has been revealed that discrimination is experienced as well as perceived because of several factors during higher education. Of those factors, some factors are poor socio-economic conditions, personality factors, rustic mannerism, cultural audacity, caste identity and previous educational attainments with poor English language. In addition to these the domination of peers, lack of awareness about facilities provided by government and experiences of untouchability add extra probabilities for the perception of discrimination in higher education. Further, it is noticed that the behaviour of administrative staff / officers and partiality done in extra-curricular activities also induce good amount of discriminatory experiences among the students of higher education.

### **Impact of Discrimination on Academic Performance and Achievement**

Due to felt or experienced discrimination one may go into the hands of social stress, depression, emotional upheaval, race based traumatic stress, lower level of memory recall and poor concentration on work and personal life. It is also true that discrimination induces stress, and both have greater impact on mental as well as physical health. The impact of discrimination could be manifold and may overlap from physical level to psychological level. There are number of impacts and consequences of discrimination such as- mental block, stress and tension, frustration and behavioural problems, lower self-esteem, lower creativity, feelings of humiliation, inferiority complex, escapism, 'we' and 'they' feeling, poor performance, crisis and conflict and distortions of self perceptions (Wankhede 2003). Studies reported that discrimination of any kind can distort one's self concept, weakens the self-esteem, lowers down the self confidence, lowers down the productivity and impair the overall well being of human being in general (Berkowitz 1989; William et al. 1997; Harrell 2000; Taylor & Turner 2002; Forman T. A. 2003; Carter 2007). Massey and Denton (1993) hold the view that discrimination leads to segregation, but segregation by restricting economic opportunities for Blacks, produces inter-racial economic disparities that incite further discrimination and more segregation. Human resource is a prominent asset among all other kinds of resources of a nation to determine the overall economy of that nation. Within the human resource of a nation, the energy, potential power, capability, enthusiasm and endurance of youth are highly important. The youth energy or youth power can bring any change in any field, which is required for the development of a nation. Youth are the assets of future for the development of nations. To channelize youth energy to the right direction for the right cause and welfare of the society by protecting the same from the existing social discrimination and other traditional dogmatic practices, the leaders of the nation are fully responsible to safeguard it. Social practices like discrimination based on race or colour in international context and practices of discrimination based on caste / community in Indian context are very harmful for the well-being and mental health of youth in particular and human being in general.

### **Population-wise Representation at Higher Education in India: An Analysis**

India is populous country where the population share is categorised according to the caste and community. Table-1 gives the population of various social groups by two rounds (61<sup>st</sup> and 62<sup>nd</sup>) of National Sample Survey (NSS), National Family Health Survey- III (NFHS III) and Census 2001 (TISS Report 2009)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table-1** Comparison of Population of Social Groups in NSS, NFHS and Census

Data Source	ST	SC	OBC	Others
NSS 61 <sup>st</sup> round (2004-05)	8.61	19.75	40.23	31.4
NSS 62 <sup>nd</sup> round (2005-06)	9.16	20.02	40.17	30.63
NFHS III (2005-06)	8.64	19.73	40.64	30.51
Census of India (2001)	8.2	16.2	-	75.6*

<sup>1</sup>The Unit level data from N.S.S. and N.F.H.S. has been computed by T.I.S.S. team for the project on 'Impact of OBC Reservation Policy in Higher Education in India' in 2009. The population statistics of SC and STs estimated by N.S.S. 61<sup>st</sup> (2004-05), N.S.S. 62<sup>nd</sup> (2005-06) rounds and N.F.H.S.-III (2005-06) was compared with the estimated Population of SCs, STs by the Census of India (2001). This statistics was found quite similar among them. So it was proposed that estimation of OBC population from these surveys will be valid. The statistics of census 2001 is similar to both survey but not for state level analysis.

\* Mean general population including OBCs as Census does not enumerate OBC population. Source: TISS Report (Unit records of NSS 61<sup>st</sup> round, NSS 62<sup>nd</sup> round, NFHS III Survey and Census of India 2001).

From the table-1, as it is seen that estimated share of population in every source of survey is somewhat equal to one or other sources. But as census does not enumerate OBC population, the little disparity exists in the population share of SC than to other sources of data. It is noted that other sources revealed that overall population share of SC is around 20 percent of total population; however census reveals that SC population share is 16.2 percent of total population. This is a substantial difference and could be attributed to many factors. Education is necessary for the uplift as well as development of a nation along with constructive improvement of social status of poor, deprived and marginalised people. Through proper education, insurance of vertical social mobility is assured especially of those who have been downtrodden in the social structure of the society. Therefore education is important means for achieving equality in the society.

**Table-2** Representation of Socio-Religious groups at Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and Higher Education levels (age: 7+)

Socio-religious group / Education	Primary	Middle and Secondary	Higher Secondary	Above Higher Secondary	Population share
Hindu ST	6.88	4.51	3.41	1.83	7.86
Hindu Sc	18.37	14.50	10.57	8.46	18.18
Hindu OBC	34.56	34.58	31.85	24.61	34.68
Hindu Others	21.59	29.72	39.61	49.86	21.83
Muslim ST & SC	0.19	0.13	0.09	0.03	0.19
Muslim OBC	4.65	4.11	2.58	2.08	4.96
Muslim Others	7.96	5.91	4.79	4.08	7.07
Christian ST & SC	1.15	0.87	0.76	0.79	0.85
Christian OBC & Others	1.35	2.14	2.20	3.54	1.13
Sikhs	2.08	2.10	2.46	2.23	1.87
Jains & Zoroastrians	0.21	0.36	0.83	1.63	0.27
Others & Buddhist	1.00	1.08	0.85	0.87	0.93

Source: TISS Report (Computed from NSS 62<sup>nd</sup> round unit level data)

Table-2 represents the educational comparison between the socio-religious groups of Indian society. In Indian context the education up to higher secondary level is the stepping stone for higher education. However the ability to reach the higher secondary education level depends upon a lot of social, economic and cultural factors. A community is said to be under-represented if its share of the population pursuing higher education is less than its share in the overall population. From the computed data of N.S.S. 62<sup>nd</sup> round, it is revealed that ST, SC and OBC of Hindu origin as well as from Muslim religion is underrepresented at the Higher Secondary and above (Table-2). Similar pattern is seen at the higher level of education (Graduation and Post-Graduation) in the population which have attained 20 years and more of their life (Table-3).

**Table-3** Representation of Graduates and Post Graduates among Socio-Religious Groups (Age 20 +) (Year 2005-2006)

Socio-religious group / Education	Graduate	Post-Graduate and above	Population Share
Hindu ST	1.77	1.11	7.64
Hindu Sc	8.34	8.11	17.77
Hindu OBC	23.59	23.11	34.90
Hindu Others	51.38	52.94	23.16
Muslim ST & SC	0.03	0.01	0.17
Muslim OBC	1.92	2.69	4.35
Muslim Others	4.47	3.43	6.54
Christian ST & SC	0.89	0.72	0.84
Christian OBC & Others	2.96	2.98	1.48
Sikhs	2.21	2.21	1.92
Jains & Zoroastrians	1.59	1.78	0.31
Others & Buddhist	0.86	0.90	0.93

Source: TISS Report (Computed from NSS 62<sup>nd</sup> round unit level data)

From the tables it is found that Hindu-others are over represented in higher education however other socio-religious group like Hindu SC & OBC and Muslim SC & OBC are underrepresented because their

population share is higher than their representation in higher education. Surely this analysis provides the insights that overrepresented and under-represented groups are definitely different and unequal in terms of their access to higher education. From 62<sup>nd</sup> round NSS, it is also noticed that of the total population at **Uttar Pradesh**, 37.5 percent of population above age 7 is illiterate. Socio-religious group-wise it is assessed that of their corresponding population share, 43.88 percent Hindu SC, 56.52 percent ST Hindu, 39.64 percent OBC Hindu, 48.38 percent Non Hindu OBC and 38.40 percent Non Hindu SC & ST are illiterate. Thus illiteracy is higher among the ST, SC and OBC communities regardless of their religion (TISS Report, 2009 pp 57-58)

It is accepted that there are several factors responsible for accessing higher education. Of that gender disparities, economic deprivation and rural / urban disparities are significant and altogether, all of them are known to play an important role in defining access to and attainment in higher education. The poor students from villages are bound to move towards urban areas for higher education from rural and poor backgrounds. They are and forced to migrate to town or city for education and hence find education more expensive and inaccessible. The analysis has been done for the assessment of extent of such differentials that exist specially in higher education in various socio-religious groups. Thus the relationship between caste and higher education is mediated through a number of social, cultural, psychological and economic factors. Therefore to capture a comprehensive analysis of perception as well as experiences of discrimination, one has to focus different lenses from different direction with different dimension of discrimination in higher education. In our society, only the multi-phasic analysis will provide the whole picture of discrimination in higher education.

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the educational attainment of students studying at higher education
2. To identifying the underlying patterns of systematic discrimination existing in higher education through the analysis of educational attainments

### **Variables**

Dependent- Persisting Systematic Discrimination

Independent- Determinant of Educational Attainment

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

**Sample Size and Sampling Method:**In the present study, region-wise four universities from Lucknow, Jhansi, Bareilly and Varanasi of Uttar Pradesh are included because Lucknow is the capital city of U.P. and University-I attracts students from Purvanchal and eastern U.P. University-II is in the Bundelkhand region which is a bigger region of U.P. and it attracts students from this region. University-III attracts students from the Northern part of U.P. The University-IV is the central university and was the educational hub of U.P. with its glorious long history of education. These four universities have been covered to get good representative sample where discrimination issues and students number is relatively high. Method for selection of sample is **Multi-stage Stratified-Systematic sampling** because regional specific four universities have been chosen, then within each university Undergraduate (U.G.) and Post-graduate (P.G.) students from final year of study are selected. Again course-wise undergraduate category was stratified into three groups that are-B.A., B.Sc. and B.Com, similarly post-graduate category stratified into M.A., M.Sc. and M.Com. Within each course to get statistical representative number, 30 students (without any biasness towards their health) are selected systematically. Thus the proposed total sample was- **4 [Universities] x 6 [Courses] x 30 [students from each course] = 720 students**. Hence from each university systematically 180 students have been surveyed and studied about their stress and related mental health problems. Therefore the sample size is n=720. Due care was taken so that the students from each community that is – SC, OBC and General have been included in the sample. Thus again the total number of students from each course have been sub-divided into 10 from SC, 10 from OBC and 10 from General category. Hence, 10 students from each category, each course and from each university have been selected systematically. Therefore the total sample according to proposed plan was- **4 [Universities] x 3 [community] x 6 [Courses] x 10 [Students from each community and each course] = 720 students**.

## **III. METHODS AND TOOLS**

The study is broadly based on the quantitative approach because several students have been surveyed about their Educational Attainment studying in to different universities located in U.P. It would be appropriate to call it survey study because information regarding their education attainment was sought face to face. For seeking information about their educational attainment, a well-defined **Educational Profile Performa** was designed which was soliciting information about the Medium of Instructions, Place of School/College, Type of School Colleges and Obtained Percentage of Marks in the respective examinations ranging from 10<sup>th</sup> (Matriculations) to Graduation level.

**Data Analysis:**

The collected information based on the 720 students of three state universities and one central university is edited, coded and fed into the computer for further statistical analysis. With the help of S.P.S.S. (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software the cross-tabulation and simple frequencies tables is done.

**IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Educational Profile**

Educational profile covers the educational background of respondents starting from High School to Under-Graduation level. The educational structure in Uttar Pradesh is common. It begins with primary level (1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> standard) then junior secondary level (6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> standard) then High School (9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>) and then after 'Intermediate' (11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Standard). After intermediate the next step is Under-Graduation (3 years) in specific field of education and then after the Post-Graduation (2 years) and then to Ph.D. level. Primary to intermediate level education is imparted in the schools and recognised intermediate colleges. These schools and colleges are affiliated to 'Uttar Pradesh MadhyamikShikshaParishad also known as U.P. Board besides being private or public. However several schools and colleges are affiliated to CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education Board), ISC (Indian School Certificate Board), and ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education Board) board and providing primary to intermediate education in English medium. Under-Graduation to Post-Graduation and PhD. level of education is imparted at the State Universities, Central Universities; Degree Colleges affiliated to the state universities, Research Institutes funded by the central governments and at the Private universities. All the universities, private as well as public, should be recognised by the UGC (University Grant Commission). Recently, several international schools and universities are functioning in the state and promising to provide quality education.

**High-School Level**

High School level education is first step towards higher education. Performance at high school always determines one's aspiration and endurance for studies till higher education. It is found (Table-4) that of the total, 64.2 percent (462) completed high-school education from urban based schools whereas 35.8 percent (258) from rural based school. Similarly 53.3 percent (384) studied government schools and 46.7 percent (336) in private schools. Interestingly most of them (73.6 percent) studied in Hindi Medium and only 26.4 percent (190) did in English Medium. Their academic performance was- 30.3 percent (218) students scored 50 to 60 % marks and 31.8 percent (229) students scored 60 to 70% marks during high school education. It is also to be noted that 6 students scored between 30 to 40 % and another 6 students scored more than 90% in their high school education.

**Table-4** School Settings, Type, Medium and Marks obtained by Caste at High-School

Settings of School	Caste			Total
	SC	OBC	General	
Rural	98 (38.0)	93 (36.0)	67 (26.0)	258 (35.8)
Urban	135 (29.2)	142 (30.7)	185 (40.0)	462 (64.2)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
<b>Type of School</b>				
Private	83 (24.7)	111 (33.0)	142 (42.3)	336 (46.7)
Government	150 (39.1)	124 (32.3)	110 (28.6)	384 (53.3)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>				
Hindi	182 (34.3)	182 (34.3)	166 (31.3)	530 (73.6)
English	51 (26.8)	53 (27.9)	86 (45.3)	190 (26.4)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
<b>Obtained Marks Percentage</b>				
30 to 40 %	1 (16.7)	5 (83.3)	-	6

				(0.8)
40.1 to 50 %	37 (40.2)	29 (31.5)	26 (28.3)	92 (12.8)
50.1 to 60 %	75 (34.4)	79 (36.2)	64 (29.4)	218 (30.3)
60.1 to 70 %	72 (31.4)	76 (33.2)	81 (35.4)	229 (31.8)
70.1 to 80 %	36 (26.3)	37 (27.0)	64 (46.7)	137 (19.0)
80.1 to 90%	11 (34.4)	8 (25.0)	13 (40.6)	32 (4.4)
90.1 to 100 %	1 (16.7)	1 (16.7)	4 (66.7)	6 (0.8)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)

With respect to caste, it is found that proportion of SC and OBC students is high among those who completed from rural based schools whereas proportion of general is high among those who completed from urban schools (Table-4). Similarly, the proportion of general category is high among those who studied from privately managed schools. However SC and OBC proportion is high among those who studied in government schools. It is true that private schools are good in infrastructure and impart quality education whereas government schools are poorly equipped with compromising quality education. This disparity itself is detrimental for discrimination in education.

Majority of students completed high-school through Hindi medium and their caste-wise distribution is almost equally proportionate (Table-4). However, some students completed through English medium and of them, the proportion of general caste is high. Similar kind of pattern is noticed in achievement of marks percentage also. It is found that those scored 40 to 50% and 50 to 60% of marks among them proportion of SC and OBC students is high whereas who scored 70 to 80% and 80 to 90 % of marks among them the proportion of general category students is high. It is interesting to note that six students who scored below 40%, all are SC and OBC whereas six students, who scored more than 90%, all belong to general category. Thus high-school level profile reveals that majority of SC and OBC students studied at rural based government schools in Hindi medium and scored lower percentage of marks whereas most of the general category students studied at urban based private schools in English medium and scored higher percentage of marks.

**Intermediate Level**

Intermediate education (10+2) is gateway to higher education and subsequently to various fields of education such as medical, engineering, fine arts, arts, commerce, natural sciences and contemporary courses like management and fashion designing. Performance at intermediate education is influenced by the performance at high school level. Good performance at high school predicts better performance at intermediate. Therefore intermediate education profile is analysed below.

**Table-5** School Settings, Type, Medium and Marks obtained by Caste at Intermediate level

Settings of School	Community			Total
	SC	OBC	General	
Rural	80 (38.3)	73 (34.9)	56 (26.8)	209 (29.0)
Urban	153 (29.9)	162 (31.7)	196 (38.4)	511 (71.0)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
<b>Type of School</b>				
Private	69 (24.1)	92 (32.2)	125 (43.7)	286 (39.7)
Government	164 (37.8)	143 (32.9)	127 (29.3)	434 (60.3)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>				

Hindi	171 (33.6)	177 (34.8)	161 (31.6)	509 (70.7)
English	62 (29.4)	58 (27.5)	91 (43.1)	211 (29.3)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
<b>Obtained Marks Percentage</b>				
30 to 40 %	2 (100.0)	-	-	2 (0.3)
40.1 to 50 %	12 (60.0)	7 (35.0)	1 (5.0)	20 (2.8)
50.1 to 60 %	55 (32.9)	54 (32.3)	58 (34.7)	167 (23.2)
60.1 to 70 %	111 (36.3)	106 (34.6)	89 (29.1)	306 (42.5)
70.1 to 80 %	44 (24.9)	59 (33.3)	74 (41.8)	177 (24.6)
80.1 to 90%	9 (19.6)	9 (19.6)	28 (60.9)	46 (6.4)
90.1 to 100 %	-	-	2 (100.0)	2 (0.3)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)

It is found (Table-5) that 71 percent (511) completed intermediate from urban based colleges /schools<sup>2</sup>. Comparatively this time students migrated from rural based schools to urban based intermediate colleges, yet 29 percent (209) studied at rural based schools. 60.3 percent (434) studied at government colleges which are comparatively higher than that of high school education. This little shift took place because of migration to cities and taking admissions at government schools. However, 39.7 percent (286) studied at private schools. Again majority (70.7 percent) of them pursued their studies in Hindi medium but the proportion of English medium (29.3 percent) has risen slightly than to high-school education. It is again revealed that 42.5 percent (306) scored between 60 to 70%. Consecutively it also seen that 23.2 percent (167) scored between 50 to 60% and 24.6 percent (177) scored between 70 to 80 % at intermediate level.

Caste-wise distribution reveals that proportion of SC and OBC students is high among the students from rural based schools, studied at government schools and pursued education in Hindi medium (Table-5). On the other side, proportion of general students is high among those who studied at urban based private schools and in English medium. These patterns are completely akin with the high school. In addition to caste-wise comparison, it is also found that those who scored between 50 to 60 % and 60 to 70 % among them caste-wise proportion is almost equal. However those who scored between 40 to 50% among them highest proportion is constituted by SC. In contrast, those who scored between 70 to 80 % and 80 to 90% among them highest proportion is constituted by general students.

Even More interesting is that two students scored lowest (30 to 40 % marks) and both are SC whereas two students scored highest marks (above than 90%) and both are general. So here again it is revealed that lower percentage of marks are largely scored by SC and OBC students whereas higher percentage of marks are scored by general category at intermediate level.

### **Under-Graduation level**

Managing and surviving up to graduation level requires lot of personal, governmental and familial support with consistent encouragements. Graduate education is the advancement and precision in the fields of specialisations. The profile of graduate level education is analysed here. As it is already mentioned that sample is inclusive of both undergraduate and post-graduate level students. Respondents, those are at under-graduation have completed two years of their course and currently are in final year of their course, however those who are at post-graduation level, have already completed their under graduation. Therefore, to assess academic performance at graduation level, the aggregate percentages of marks till second year are taken for under-graduation students whereas for the post-graduation students, the final year aggregate percentage of marks of

<sup>2</sup>In U.P. Intermediate Education is imparted at Intermediate colleges which are affiliated to U.P. or other boards like CBSE, ISC and ICSE.

under-graduation are taken into consideration. From the Table-6 It is found that most of the students completed under-graduation from university / colleges which are fully funded by government. Those completed in English medium are 62.6 percent (451). This is the sudden and huge shift of medium from intermediate level where there were only 29.3 percent in English medium. This shift is because at under-graduation, the Science, Commerce and some Arts courses are taught in English and books are available in English only. Therefore, those who are from Hindi medium they have to shift their medium of instruction at this level of education. However, 37.4 percent (269) studied in Hindi medium and most of them are B.A. Students. Academic performance at under-graduation reveals that 45.6 percent (328) scored between 60 to 70% and 33.2 percent (239) scored between 50 to 60 % marks. In fact no one scored below 40 % and neither anyone scored more than 90 % in under-graduation. It is to be noted that majority (93 percent) lies between the ranges of 50 to 80% marks at under-graduation level.

Caste-wise comparison reveals that proportion of each caste on both medium of instruction is almost equal (Table-6). It means general students who are from Hindi medium they remained in Hindi medium. However shift to English medium equated the proportions of each caste during graduation. It is noticed that those who scored 40 to 50 % marks and 50 to 60 % marks among them the proportion of SC and OBC students constitute a larger share whereas who scored 60 to 70% marks and 70 to 80% of them the larger proportion is constituted by general. Even it is more interesting to note that 1.5 percent(11) students scored more than 80% of them 63.6 percent (7) are general. Here it is again revealed that lower percentages of marks are associated with the SC and OBC students whereas higher percentages of marks are linked with general students.

**Table-6** Medium and Marks by Caste at Graduation

Medium of Instruction	Caste			Total
	SC	OBC	General	
Hindi	93 (34.6)	92 (34.2)	84 (31.2)	269 (37.4)
English	140 (31.0)	143 (31.7)	168 (37.3)	451 (62.6)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)
Achieved Marks Percentage				
40.1 to 50 %	12 (31.6)	18 (47.4)	8 (21.1)	38 (5.3)
50.1 to 60 %	97 (40.6)	78 (32.6)	64 (26.8)	239 (33.2)
60.1 to 70 %	96 (29.3)	102 (31.1)	130 (39.6)	328 (45.6)
70.1 to 80 %	27 (26.0)	34 (32.7)	43 (41.3)	104 (14.4)
80.1 to 90%	1 (9.1)	3 (27.3)	7 (63.6)	11 (1.5)
Total	233 (32.4)	235 (32.6)	252 (35.0)	720 (100.0)

However, English language has emerged as all-pervading source of experienced as well as perceived discrimination despite of caste affiliation. English language problem is pervasive which is reported by almost all students except those who were educated from convent schools. However, their performance at higher education level seems to be average. Till the intermediate level most of them received education in Hindi medium both from privately managed as well as government schools / colleges. On the other hand it is worthwhile to note that at graduation level all of them are studying in government colleges or universities with English as a medium of instruction which may have affected their performance. It is found that the migration towards the urban areas was increased as the progression of education was growing towards the higher level. Therefore all of them have taken their graduation and post-graduation education from the colleges or universities which are located in the cities and urban areas. From their educational profile it is clear that SC and OBC students began their education from rural based schools and slowly moved to the urban areas for higher education whereas for general category students it is not true. It has also been noticed that in scoring 'percentage of marks', caste-wise differences occurred at every level of education. Particularly students from rural background are bound to migrate to the urban areas. They are also compelled to shift from Hindi to English medium for attaining higher education. These factors are responsible for discrimination and migration from Hindi to English medium result into acute perception of discrimination among students during higher education.



### **The Actual Experiences of Discrimination:**

Some of the actual as well as observed experiences of discrimination are reproduced below which they have experienced while pursuing higher education. These experiences are the results of discriminatory behaviour shown by fellow students, teachers, administrative authority and staff or caused due to inevitable situations of educational and social settings.

The actual experiences of a few SC students are given below:

A SC student of M.Com has given a stronger view on prevalent caste based discrimination and its implications on mental health. He says: During my school education I never felt any kind of caste based discrimination neither had any caste related inferior feelings. But when I took admission at the University in 2008 from then I started realizing that casteism is strongly prevalent here. Therefore, many times I came across that invariably first of all anyone will ask your name and if you just tell him your first name then he will ask for the full name. If that full name will not satisfy his curiosity to know the caste then he will openly ask your caste-name and community affiliation. These are humiliating questions and create several doubts. Therefore asking of name itself is the process to know your caste and then formulation of negative attitudes. Everyone of this university is preoccupied with the caste issue. Anywhere you go, like coaching or renting room, the first question will be related to your caste. I also observed casteism feelings among the study circles of the students and in the approaches of student's leader. First of all, they will search who are from their regions and then they will come to your caste. If you belong to a lower caste then they will pretend to be more sympathetic to you. This fake sympathy itself outcasts you and discards you. These behaviours are discriminatory and torturing psychologically. Therefore, personal feelings of discrimination are detestable and abominable with full of disgust. Unlike the SC students, OBC students are also vulnerable to discrimination in higher education due to their caste-status as well as socio-economic status. It has been established that OBC students face significantly more discrimination than that of general category students and there is no significant difference between SC and OBC students on the perception of discrimination. Besides these affiliations, the economic and educational status of family determines the experiences of discrimination (Stuber et al. 2003) Therefore, actual and observed experiences of discrimination among OBC students are analysed here. The actual experiences of discrimination among OBC students are given below along with descriptions of incidents and involved emotional feelings to those situations. An OBC student pursuing B.A. has reported his personal experiences of discrimination in the class. He said: I feel discriminated because whenever I ask something in the class, other students mainly from upper castes and well off families intentionally laugh at me. They think I am asking stupid questions. Most of the time, purposefully they hoot at me for asking such a trivial thing. These behaviours of other students have created a stable fear in my mind. I tried to overcome this fear but efforts are in vain. This is further increasing and putting me into high risk of breakdown. This fear is recurring frequently. Hence, these fears are haunting me a lot and prevent me to satisfy my hunches in the class. Because of these fears, now I have obsessive thoughts, several worries, anxieties and depression with dismal courage to speak in the class.

### **Major Findings:**

- 1- In the process of attainment of high school and intermediate education certain insightful patterns have emerged that majority of SC and OBC students pursued their education from rural based schools, primarily managed by government and in Hindi medium whereas from the beginning the majority of general category students completed their education from urban based schools managed by private entrepreneurs and through English medium. This is a clear disparity of caste and accessibility to the quality education.
- 2- There is a specific pattern between academic performance and caste. It is found that in the academic performance from primary to graduation level, the students of SC and OBC community scored lower percentage of marks at every examination whereas general category students scored good and highermarks. Average academic performance is associated with majority of SC and OBC students while high and good performance is associated with general category students. Therefore this pattern suggests that in general, at every level, the poor performance in academic is associated with the lower caste students whereas higher performance is associated with the upper caste students.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Education being a subsystem of particular society is always influenced of its culture, traditions and customs which are essential elements of fully functioning society. Issues like discrimination based on caste, race and gender are threats to social upheaval and injustice incurred to people. Hence; it is relevant to address the issue of discrimination in education which may hamper academic ambience and personal growth of students especially coming from disadvantaged and deprived backgrounds. From the educational attainment and thereby existing systematic discrimination, it is revealed that higher education institute and students studying there- are vulnerable for the consequences of discrimination which would lower down academic performance and well-being.

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