

Inter-Generational Change among Scheduled Caste People in Bihar (in Reference to Education)

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Abstract: *This study was conducted to evaluate the intergenerational change came in the scheduled caste people of Bihar due to educational development. Education is also a serious concern for the government to study and frame some policies for their well-being. For this purpose, 200 sample from rural Nawada e. g. Hisua and Nardiganj block were taken to complete this study. All the respondents were selected through Purposive cum random sampling technique. In this study it was found that first generation of scheduled caste community is almost illiterate or literate only. After implementing the government schemes in schools like mid-day meal, poshak-yojna and scholarship the enrollment of second generation has come up to middle class (8th class only). Dropout was also seen in the second-generation people. No motivation and economical constraints are the main reason for dropout in schools. Aspiration for taking education was found more in the third generation than second generation people. So, we can say there came educational change after a long time in this community but even not at significant level.*

Keywords: Intergenerational change, education, dropout, aspiration, illiterate

1. Introduction

Education is seen as the main shaper of all other adulthood opportunities (Stiglitz, 2012)¹.

Article 46 of our Constitution describes that "the State shall promote with special care, the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation". Education was considered as one of the substantial instruments to get away with the practices of caste and to promote opportunities and freedoms for better life chances of weaker sections. Discriminative practices along with poorer economic condition leading to deprivation of these weaker section of the society in accessing education since ages. However, to improve the socioeconomic status of this deprived community and with wider social reforms new reforms were brought out in education sector. The new reform initiatives and increasing plan allocations to the education sector is also seen along with new policies and programs for weaker sections in education. Education has a central role and responsibility in social transformation. It helps to transform the initial capabilities into those that will allow people to reach their full potential. Education consists both transformative and reproducing elements where it reproduces good element and transform the bad element (Desjardins, 2015)².

In the light of these massive changes and developments of education, the guiding motivation of this chapter is to know how the educational status of SC's changes overtime and how the transformative values the second generation carried out that was leading overall development of SC's. Further, education play an important role in bringing occupational change among them and an indicator of economic status has many advantages. First, education is identified as an important driver of labor market participation and, hence, income, more years of schooling is usually associated with higher income (see Chevalier et al., 2003; Blanden et al., 2005; Black and Devereux, 2011)³ Understanding the trends,

levels and patterns of the persistence of the education attainment across generations therefore sheds light on overall change in economic status in a family. In this chapter we are trying to show how intergenerational change persistence across generations by analyzing the changes in educational performance across generations. This section establishes patterns of social change in India, and subsequently, to establish the role played by education with regard to this change. In particular, it attempts to examine the extent of change among SC's over generation and analyse does caste identity and discrimination has declined among Sc's.

Intergenerational Change

This type of change means that one generation changes its social status in contrast to preceding generation. However, this change may be upward or downward e. g. people of lower caste or class may provide facilities to their children to get higher education, training and skills. With the help of these skills the younger generation may get employment in higher position. If the father is a shoemaker but his son after acquiring education becomes a clerk or a doctor or an engineer, this would be called upward inter-generational change. Similarly, a family of Brahmins may be engaged on traditional occupation of teaching and performing rituals but its younger generation is neither intelligent nor follows the family occupation. They become daily wagers then the younger generation has downward inter-generational change. With the improvement in economic position, people start changing their style of living by discarding the old practices and adopting the practices of those who are high in social ladder. After two or three generations their new position may be recognized. This process of social change, according to Srinivas is a process of Sanskritization.

Aspiration for school education across generations

One of the major indicators to understand the behavioural change and socioeconomic development among SC's is to capture their aspiration towards mobilization that can be accessed through indicators like education and occupation. Despite serious efforts undertaken by government in promoting the backward community in terms of education,

Volume 8 Issue 11, November 2019

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income and taking them out of poverty, still SC's are deprived more in socioeconomic development. Lack of aspiration to progress could be one of the constrain that keeps them in the poverty trap and low level of social development. However, with the progress of the society through modernization, globalization and state intervention, attitudes of this community towards their own development is changing and that may lead to upward change among them. This can be understood through their aspiration towards attaining education. In this paper thus we have try to assess how far aspirations for better education is changing and bringing positive transformation in their life.

School Drop-outs across generations

School dropout is an indicator of assessing the socioeconomic situation and the constraints children faced in attaining education. Further, it also reflects the motivation to be educated. It is evident from various studies that the school drop-out rate is higher among the poor and vulnerable group. Access to public school was limited for SC's due to inability to bear educational cost followed by time allocation to other work, hence, forces them to discontinue school education. To understand how far intergenerational change occurs among SC's, school drop out across generations have analyzed that reflect the socioeconomic development of the family over time.

Objectives

- To measure the extent of Intergenerational change due to educational among scheduled castes.
- To examine the association of intergenerational change due to education with the declining impact of alienation of scheduled caste from the mainstream society

2. Methodology Sample

This study was carried out in the Nawada district of Bihar. Two blocks from rural Nawada were selected e. g. Hisua and Nardiganj. From every block 5 villages, from every village 10 household and from every household 2 individuals were selected purposively. Thus, total $2 \times 5 \times 10 \times 2 = 200$ samples were selected to complete this study. Samples were taken from two successive generations viz. first generation (age ranging from 40-60 years) and the second generation (age ranging from 16 to 40 years). All the samples were taken through random cum purposive sampling.

Tests and Tools

The study tools were developed according to the objectives of the study. The study tools were mainly according to the types of respondents as follows:

- In-depth Interview schedule for the respondents
- Observation Check list
- structured interview schedule for the Key Informants of the household
- Interview schedule for govt officials and gram panchyat members

Analysis of Data

The collected data were analyzed through statistical software like STATA and SPSS. To fill the objectives appropriate econometric techniques were used.

3. Result and discussion

Table 1: Distribution of Sample by level of education across generations

Level of Education	1st Generation (40-60)	2nd Generation		
		16-25	26-39	Total
Illiterate	58.8	8.8	25.8	18.7
Primary	12.3	21.9	23.2	12.9
Upper primary	7.9	9.8	8.8	9.3
Secondary	11.5	20.6	21.6	21.1
Higher secondary	4.0	15.7	8.0	11.5
Graduate & above	5.5	24.6	9.6	14.5
Total	100	50	50	100

Source: Estimated from field survey

Table 1 presents the educational level of schedule caste people across generations. Data presented in the table clearly shows that educational attainment was lower among 1st generation SC's and it was higher in the younger cohort of second-generation SC's. While around 59% first generation SC's were illiterate, it was 19% for second generation. Within second generation while 25.8% were illiterate, it was 8.8% for younger cohort of second generation. Distribution of 1st generation and 2nd generation SC's by thier level of education shows that while only 5.5% people of 1st generation attained higher education of graduation and above, it increases almost six fold for the younger cohort of second generation (25%). From this table it is clear that with the passage of time level of education increases among SC's. Around 1/10th of SC's of recent cohorts remain illiterate which was early 3/4th of total SC population of Nawada district. From this table one can infer that the second generation SC's are educationally more mobile as compared to their father's generation. Perhaps intervention of state through various programmes and policies play very effectively in enhancing the level of education of this deprived social group. Besides, their own aspiration to increase their socioeconomic status through educational attainment which may not present in older generations make them educationally more mobile.

Graph 2: Aspiration for higher education across generation among SC people

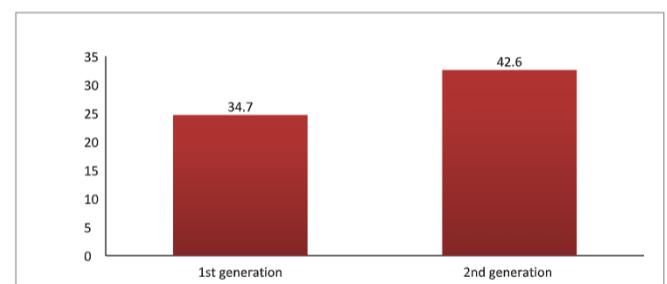


Figure 2: Aspiration for higher studies

Fig-2 presents the aspirations for higher study among SC's across generation. As we go from first generation to the second generation; aspiration for higher studies is increasing. Aspiration for higher studies found more in the second-generation people (42.6%) whereas it was found less in the first generation people (34.7) only. Low level of income of the family (in the first generation only) and poverty, discrimination and low social development might

force the first generation people not to think for higher studies. However, aspiration for higher studies is relatively higher indicating the chance for positive and upward change among SC's as it will spill over to the future generations.

Implementation of different programmes and policies of education create awareness among them to realise the potentials of higher education despite benefiting them intemrs of free cost education and other facilities.

Table 3: School dropout across generations

Dropout Rate	1st Generation (40-60)	2nd Generation		
		26-39	16-25	Total
Class from drop out				
Primary	38.9	60.9	66.7	63.2
Upper primary	25.0	10.9	16.7	13.2
Secondary	36.1	28.3	16.7	23.7
% of drop out from school	80.9	52.3	34.5	43.4
Reason for drop out				
Not interested in education	12.5	28.3	36.7	31.6
Financial crisis	55.1	54.3	43.3	45.0
Engaged in economic activities	18.1	13.0	10.0	11.8
School away from home Marriage	--	2.2	6.7	3.9
	2.2	2.2	3.3	2.0
Discrimination by teachers	3.6	--	--	--
Total	100	50	50	100

Among (100) second generation respondents, 43.4% (43) had dropped from school.

It is clear from table 3 that retention is more at the upper primary stage of education in the scheduled caste community. This indicates compared to earlier time, now education is more inclusive the reason being dropout declines among SC's and they realise the potential of educational benefit which was lacking earlier generations. Distribution of the Sample by reasons for drop out reveals that financial crisis was found to be the most important reason for the drop out for both the generations. While for the first generation people it was 55.1%, in the second generation people almost half (45.0%) of them reported. Not interest in school was at the second position in both the generation. Marriage was also found as one of the important reasons in the case of female respondents in the first-generation people (2.2%) and in the second generation people (2.0%). This percentage is showing less because of the less number of female respondents participated in the survey. Discrimination by teachers was only found in the first-generation people (3.6%). Drop out was found more at the primary as well as secondary stage of education. It was believed that social disparity is the reason behind dropout among SC's. The negative mindset of teachers towards the SC children discourages them to attend school. However, in our study economic compulsion found to be the dominant reason for school dropout for both the generations. Though discrimination was there to some extent in the 1st generation, for the second-generation SC's it was not present. Interestingly, children were not motivated to attend school was found to be one of the significant reasons for drop out and it is much higher among younger cohorts in second generation. One needs to look into the reasons for discouragement towards school education among younger cohorts. Perhaps less parental control due to migration of male from the family and engagement of female in both domestic and farm activities leading to less attention to the younger cohort. Further, perception of less benefits of public school education and migration of younger people for income earning activities probably influencing them not to attend school. Further, discrimination in peer group also could be one among the reason for not showing interest to school education and leading to drop out from the school.

4. Conclusion

On the basis of the study, it can be concluded that literacy among first generation was less. Most of them were illiterate. Aspiration to get higher education was less in this generation. In case of a male respondent it can be said that due to economic constrain they had to go for work in early childhood which act as a hindrance in getting educated. Lack of incentives and harsh behaviour of teacher also kept them away from education. In second generation educational mobility has definitely raised due to various government schemes like mid-day meal, scholarship, cycle posak but still in maximum cases second generation has also availed education till middle school only. So, we can say there is educational change but not at significant level. It was also noted that if a women was educated it was more likely that her children got better educated as it was in the case of a female respondent who was middle school pass and was JEEVIKA worker. However aspiration to get better education for third generation was very much therein all the cases. In terms of education attainment, we found that the largest changes for SC were in movements out of illiteracy into middle and primary schools.

References

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