



Quality Improvement of Education of the Scheduled Caste Children Socio-cultural Issues and Problems

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1 Abstract:

After 68 years of Independence, too many of India's Citizens are shackled by the lack of quality education that enables them to be free and Independent. Our earlier generations taught to end the injustice impaired by the British Raj. We now need a second freedom movement that ensures equality of rights and opportunity by all citizens of India particularly for scheduled caste children who look for the access of getting education. In this context has been constructed a module on quality improvement of education of scheduled caste children which discusses socio-cultural issues and problems. Therefore, this module deals with the Educational policies, Education and society, Curriculum development, School and reproduction of inequality, Cultural capital and learning. Education should not be seen in a static model. Like society, education also must follow the model of dynamic equilibrium. There are pressures from new subjects.

Key words ; objectives, reasons for educational backwardness, and polices.

2. Introduction Once we look back and review the progress of our country in various areas, we find that we have made substantial progress since independence but we still have not been able to achieve all our targets. In the field of education, various Committees and Commissions were constituted which did wider consultations and made recommendations. On the basis of these recommendations, a National Policy of Education was formulated in 1986 and a Program me of Action was developed in 1992 which spelt out short term, medium term and long term measures to achieve the targets as spelt out in National Policy of Education. and new areas to find place in curriculum for general education. Five year plans of the country have taken care of various achievements to set up further targets and allocate resources for the same. However, even today, the system has several challenges which need to be met though the enrolment of children in schools has gone up. Even though, the population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are represented in appropriate proportion, substantial number of children drop-out at upper primarily level.

3. Objectives

The basic objective of this module is to create awareness and knowledge in its users (teachers, teacher-educators) about the rationale of the specific efforts made by NCERT to equip teachers with required competencies through self-learning material so that teachers become aware about their responsibilities to adopt proper strategies to teach all children in an appropriate environment and develop skills and knowledge to educate/teach children from scheduled castes in a more respectable, justified and dignified manner. After going through this module, teachers/users will be able to:

1 acquire knowledge about various provisions made in the Constitution of India and National Policy of Education about provisions, directions for education of children from scheduled castes

2 policy, programmes and Schemes for education of scheduled castes.

3 understand and appreciate present educational scenario vis-a-vis education of children from scheduled castes.

4 Education of Scheduled castes After independence, three major commissions were set up. While Radha Krishnan Education Commission (1948) dealt with the whole school education system, Kothari Commission has also given a comprehensive vision of equalization of educational opportunity in Chapter VI (p.108, Para 6.01). It says, one of the important social objectives of Education to equalize opportunity enabling the backward or under-privileged classes and individuals to use education as a level for the improvement of their condition. Every society that values social justice and is anxious to improve the lot of the common man and cultivate all available talent must ensure progressive equality of opportunity to all sections. Besides various Commissions and National Policy of Education, five year plans developed by the country also made several provisions and programmes and schemes to facilitate and promote education of The working group for Eleventh five year plan made several specific provisions for free uniforms, footwear, funds for remedial teaching of SC/ST, opening of more adult literacy centers for predominating SC/ST inhabited areas, inclusive education to take care of SC/ST, to regulate fee structure of disadvantaged groups including fee for higher education, implementation of reservation policy, provision for special coaching for reserved category candidate for clearing SET or NET examination

5 Reasons for Educational Backwardness of Scheduled Castes Children The continuance of educational backwardness of scheduled castes is due to many factors. Certain factors are mentioned below:

1 poverty; A large section of SC families, especially in rural areas, depend upon agriculture and other wage labour as major household occupation (Nambissan and Sedwal; 2002). Census 2001 shows that 45.6 per cent of SC population is agricultural labour as against 26.5 in case of general population. Even their level of economic development has been uneven in different states. Muralidharan (1997) found inability of parents to meet educational needs of their children in terms of books, notebooks, stationeries and so on is an important reason for discontinuation of children from schools. Opportunities to help SC families to increase their income and bringing greater stability is important for increasing participation of their children in schooling.

2 Inadequacy of Teachers and Teacher Preparation A survey of teachers in low literacy districts noted the under-representation of SC/ST teachers and reported that the teachers come from more advantaged backgrounds than both the general population and their students (World Bank, 1997). Teacher-pupil ratios in schools attended by SC children have been much higher than those in other schools meant for upper caste villagers (NCERT, 2005). Scheduled Castes have historically suffered social disadvantages and educational and economic. Conclusion It may be summarized that educational progress of Scheduled Castes is inadequate. Millions of marginalized SCs are not provided the basic equality of education. There have been specific efforts by central, state governments and voluntary organizations for improving conditions of education of these sections to suffer inequalities in educational opportunities. Economic deprivation, cultural prejudices, social practices and lack of easy access to school, lack of provision of infrastructure, teachers and teaching-learning materials have contributed to the educational backwardness of SCs. Numerous schemes and programmes have been launched for their educational upliftment but the implementation aspect seems to be lacking. c deprivation arising out of the social context. Accordingly, special provisions have been enshrined in the Constitution for advancement of their interests.

6. Policies for Educational Development of Scheduled Caste India is a sovereign, secular and democratic republic. It is a country of many cultures, castes, religions, customs and traditions. Diversity is the way of life of Indian society. The colonial rule during the British period had impact upon equality of educational opportunities in India. One of the main features of the British Policy on education in India was its 'downward filtration theory'. McCauley's minutes (1835), the foundation of the British Policy on education in India, upheld the supremacy of English and concentrated on the education of the elite. The education of only the elite sections resulted in the denial of education of the poorer and lower sections including those from lower castes and thereby increasing the in egalitarianism in education. However, the educational institutions were open to all without any restrictions.

As has been mentioned earlier, the Constitution of India has made several provisions and amendments which are helpful for ensuring social equality and human rights. After Independence, three major Commissions were set up. While Radha Krishnan Education Commission (1948) dealt with the whole school education systems

7 Schemes for Educational Development of Scheduled Castes Besides the constitutional provisions, the role of various five year plans has been underlined for the Nation's all round development of disadvantaged groups, in which special provisions for SCs have also been recommended. Some such provisions are: ●

- 1 Opening of residential schools/Ashram.
- 2 Free textbooks and uniforms
- 3 Hostels for girls and boys
- 4 Up gradation of merit of SC/ST students
- 5 Remedial coaching schemes
- 6 Grant-in-aid to voluntary organizations
- 7 Pre- and Post-metric scholarships
- 8 Social development programmes for SC girls belonging to low literacy areas.

Some of the important measures taken under these programmes are as follows:

- 1 Mid-day meal scheme
- 2 Educational Guarantee Schemes and Alternative and Innovative Education
- 3 Community Based Monitoring
- 4 In service Teacher Training,
- 5 services Teacher Training, Orientation Programmes and Workshops will be constituted
- 6 Grant-in-aids
- 7 Vocational education and training for skills development

The Schemes and programmes for the welfare of Scheduled Castes of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of Government of India include Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric scholarships, Central scheme of Rajiv Gandhi Fellowship to pursue programmes of higher education, Centrally sponsored pilot scheme of Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana, Post-matric scholarship, Pre-matric scholarship for children of these engaged in unclean occupations, top class education for SC children, self employment scheme for rehabilitation of manual scavengers, Scheduled Castes sub plan, National overseas scholarships, special educational development programmes for Scheduled Castes girls belonging to low literacy areas, upgradation of merits of SC children, free coaching for SC students, National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC). National Safai karmacharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) etc.

8. **Conclusion** It may be summarized that educational progress of Scheduled Castes is inadequate. Millions of marginalized SCs are not provided the basic equality of education. There have been specific efforts by central, state governments and voluntary organizations for improving conditions of education of these sections to suffer inequalities in educational opportunities. Economic deprivation, cultural prejudices, social practices and lack of easy access to school, lack of provision of infrastructure, teachers and teaching-learning materials have contributed to the educational backwardness of SCs. Numerous schemes and programmes have been launched for their educational upliftment but the implementation aspect seems to be lacking.