

Beyond The Classroom: The Parents and Community Members Influence on SC Girls' Secondary Education

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ABSTRACT

Education is the key to future success. Education fosters the growth of a person's personality, ideas, and social abilities. The process of gaining knowledge and information that paves the way for a prosperous future is called education. However, the education of females is essential to a society's overall growth. Education is essential to human existence and progress. Education changes people's attitudes, knowledge, and consciousness for the good of society. Education is essential to a person's existence. It aids in a person's recognition of their natural qualities and promotes the development of their entire personality. In India, females from Scheduled Castes (SC) frequently encounter numerous obstacles when pursuing their secondary education. Due to gender inequality, caste prejudice, and poverty, they are among the most illiterate communities (Nambissan, 2009). Due to lack of support, early marriage, home duties, and social pressure, many SC girls drop out of school after basic school. Community members and parents have a significant role in supporting girls' further education. Girls are more likely to continue their education when their parents encourage and support them. Teachers and local leaders are examples of community people that can assist shift unfavorable attitudes and promote the importance of education. Together, they provide a secure and encouraging atmosphere for girls to develop. This paper looks at how parents and community members can help SC girls continue their education beyond the classroom. The findings shows that majority of parents and community members motivates and encourage the SC girls to continue their secondary education.

KEYWORDS: Parents ,Prominent community members, SC Girls

INTRODUCTION

After clothing, food, and shelter, education ranks fourth among fundamental human rights. A high-quality education improves life quality and life skills while promoting socioeconomic growth. One of the most important tools for fostering a society's overall social development and a gauge of a country's progress is education. Everyone should have access to education, according to any civilized society. Secondary school is necessary for all pupils since it prepares them for further education.

The development of any civilization depends on the education of girls because it empowers its women. In order to help Scheduled Caste (SC) girls overcome systemic and sociocultural barriers, parents play a critical role in improving their secondary education by offering them emotional, financial, and educational support. By actively supporting their daughters' academic lives by fostering a positive study

atmosphere at home, encouraging school attendance, and advocating for the importance of education they greatly increase the motivation and academic success of girls. Additionally, parents that reject conventional gender roles and encourage goals beyond early marriage or household responsibilities help SC girls succeed academically and maintain their enrollment throughout time (**Kumar & Jha, 2021**). These days, parents play a critical role in fostering learning. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, like providing homework assistance or generating valuable learning opportunities through engaging activities at home. Teachers also help children develop important life skills, moral values, and emotional well-being. Their influence extends beyond the classroom as they assist students in developing into responsible, well-rounded people by preparing them for the challenges of adulthood. Parental participation is essential and has many facets in improving girls' secondary education, particularly in developing nations where social, economic, and cultural barriers sometimes impede girls' academic advancement (**Singh & Mahajan, 2021**). In order to improve secondary education access and retention for SC girls, community stakeholders such as local leaders, peer educators, grassroots volunteers, and school management committees transform social norms, offer localized support, and foster ongoing awareness (**Bhagavatheeswaran et al., 2016**). **Nadeem(2020)** found that community support is essential and necessary for the continuation of high-quality secondary education. The PTC community members of the concerned schools are eager to support school improvement programs, but they are not making the kind of contribution that is expected of them. Raising awareness at the grassroots level is necessary to inspire them, and the 2009 Educational Policy's public-private partnership policy may be effectively implemented to streamline all issues pertaining to high-quality secondary education. **Aliyu (2022)** found that a child's academic success is significantly influenced by parental involvement. Students' academic success is also accelerated by the socioeconomic status of their parents. It is found that, among the three aspects of parental socioeconomic background education, occupation, and social class that were first conceived in this study, parental education significantly predicts the academic achievement of the student in fundamental science. The results clearly show that there is no difference in the success scores of males and girls based on parental participation. Parental participation and socioeconomic status have a greater impact on a child's academic achievement. Parents and community members have a critical role in helping SC girls receive better secondary education. Many SC girls are prevented from pursuing their education by issues like poverty, a lack of direction, and unfavorable home settings. Parents can help and encourage their daughters to continue their education if they are knowledgeable and conscious. Teachers, municipal authorities, and social workers are examples of community members that can assist by raising awareness of the value of education for girls and the government programs that are available. Together, the community and parents can establish a secure and supportive atmosphere that motivates SC girls to finish their secondary schooling and prepare for a better future.

TITLE OF THE STUDY

Beyond the classroom: The Parents and Community members influence on SC girls ' Secondary Education

RESEARCH QUESTION

What roles the parents, and prominent community members have been playing in promotion of secondary level education of SC girls of Dibrugarh district, Assam.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To study the roles of parents and prominent community members in promotion of secondary level education of SC girls of Dibrugarh district, Assam.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Girls' education is essential to our society's overall development. Education helps to empower women in society by removing obstacles to girls' education. The secondary school years are among the most important educational phases. Secondary education serves as the bridge between elementary and higher education. Secondary education is essential for everyone and thus important for SC girls' also. According to the 2011 census, the population of the Dibrugarh district in Assam is 1,326,335. In the Dibrugarh district of Assam, 4.4% of the total population is comprised of Scheduled Caste. According to the 2011 census, 18.4% of the district's total population resides in urban areas and 81.6% in rural ones in the Dibrugarh district. The literacy rate among Scheduled Caste (SC) students remains low, with only 12% enrolled in higher education, 63% in elementary school, and 45% in secondary school. One major problem that limits parents' ability to support their children's education is parental illiteracy. A lack of enthusiasm in their studies is another common trait among SC students, which further impedes their academic progress. In the classroom, students from Scheduled Castes (SC) encounter many difficulties (Das 2021). Although parents have a direct influence on their daughters' education through daily support, encouragement, and educational investment, the broader community environment either reinforces or challenges social norms that govern girls' access to and continuation in school. According to research, parental participation is significantly associated with better academic outcomes and a reduced dropout rate among adolescent girls. Keeping high standards, encouraging school attendance, and fostering a nurturing family environment are all part of this (Singh & Mahajan, 2021). Role of the parents in promoting secondary education also very important. Parents are more involved than just communicating with schools; they actively participate in their children's education. In today's world, parents play a critical role in supporting education.

Many SC girls drop out after basic schooling due to lack of support, early marriage, household duties, and social pressure. Parents and community members play a key role in encouraging girls to continue their education. When parents are supportive, girls are more likely to stay in school. Teachers and local leaders can also help change negative attitudes and highlight the value of education, creating a safer and more encouraging environment for girls to grow. Parents and community members have a critical role in helping SC girls receive better secondary education. Many SC girls are prevented from pursuing their education by issues like poverty, a lack of direction, and unfavorable home settings. Parents can help and encourage their daughters to continue their education if they are knowledgeable and conscious. Teachers, municipal authorities, and social workers are examples of community members that can assist by raising awareness of the value of education for girls and the government programs that are available. Together, the community and parents can establish a secure and supportive atmosphere that motivates SC girls to finish their secondary schooling and prepare for a better future. This study is significant because it examines how community members and parents impact SC girls' education outside of the classroom.

METHODOLOGY

Population

The population of the present study comprised of all the government and provincialized secondary level institutions of the Dibrugarh district, Assam. There are a total of 123 government and provincialised institutions offering secondary level education (Classes IX–X) in the district in the year 2022. (Source: IS office Dibrugarh). The population of the present study comprises all the Scheduled Caste (SC) girl students studying in Class X in government and provincialised secondary schools of Dibrugarh district, Assam in the year 2022 and their parents and the community members.

Sample

From the 123 secondary-level institutions in Dibrugarh district, the researcher selected only those schools where 5% or more SC girls were enrolled in Class X in the year 2022. There are 28 secondary level educational institutions having 5% or more SC girls students studying in the class X in Dibrugarh district, Assam in the year 2022. From these 28 secondary level institutions the researcher selected all 28 institutions for the present study by using purposive sampling method. The researcher selected 56 parents (2 parents from each sample institution) by using purposive sampling technique for the present study.

To conduct the present study the researcher selected 28 prominent community members living close to the each sample institutions by using purposive sampling.

Tools Of Data Collection

In the present qualitative study, interview schedule was used for parents, community members.

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Analysis of the responses given by the parents in the Interview Schedule prepared to study their role in promotion of secondary level education of SC girls students

The analysis of parents' responses revealed a highly positive attitude toward the secondary education of SC girls. All parents (100%) stated that they support and motivate their daughters to continue their education and take proper care of their studies. They also unanimously agreed that they prioritize their daughters' education over early marriage and encourage them to participate in school trips, co-curricular activities, and competitions. Furthermore, 100% of parents expressed a desire for their daughters to become good women in the future and affirmed that they try to understand their problems and pay attention to their health.

A significant number (96.43%) reported that they provide a convenient study environment at home, and the same percentage believe that their friendly behavior helps their daughters study better. However, only 7.14% help with academic matters such as clearing doubts, and only 35.71% regularly attend school guardian meetings. While 17.86% have taken extra steps to improve their daughters' academic performance through private tuition, just 21.43% showed willingness to spend more on their daughters' education, and only 26.79% provide extra books or tuition. A little over half (53.57%) of the parents felt capable of providing all necessary facilities for education. Few parents (17.86%) reward good academic performance, and an even smaller percentage (3.57%) admitted to punishing poor performance. Only 8.93% reported actively seeking feedback from schools regarding their daughters' weaknesses. Lastly, 35.71% expressed dissatisfaction with their daughters' academic performance, mainly because they do not study properly at home.

Analysis of the responses given by the prominent community members regarding their roles in promotion of secondary level education of SC girls students

The responses from prominent community members reflect a generally supportive attitude toward the education of Scheduled Caste (SC) girls. All community members (100%) agreed that society should give equal importance to both boys' and girls' education, as both are essential for the future. They unanimously believed that community members should actively encourage and support the upliftment of SC girls' education. While 35.71% stated that they personally help SC girls in improving their education, a larger share (71.43%) reported that they have taken steps to promote secondary education, including motivating girls to study seriously. However, only 17.86% said they had organized felicitation programs for SC girl students.

A significant 82.14% of the respondents felt that current government plans and policies are not enough for the development of SC girls' secondary education, and 50% believed that existing government schemes are not being properly implemented in the district. Half of the community members acknowledged the support provided by the Scheduled Caste Board, which includes items like shoes, water bottles, notebooks, and tracksuits. Furthermore, 71.43% of the members suggested that the community should not only encourage SC girls to continue their education but also help those from economically weaker families by offering financial support and organizing awareness programs about the importance of education.

Interestingly, 71.43% also expressed dissatisfaction with the current status of SC girls' secondary education, mainly due to low performance in the HSLC examination. Only 10.71% of community members reported providing direct financial and educational support to SC students, including collecting donations from SC individuals in other districts to supply books, stationery, and funds to help families continue their children's education. These findings highlight the positive mindset within the community, while also pointing to the gaps in implementation and need for stronger, more structured support systems.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research show that parents and community members have a significant impact on Scheduled Caste (SC) girls' secondary education. Despite 100% of parents saying that they place a high priority on their daughters' education and are dedicated to assisting them in becoming successful adults, the data unequivocally shows that parents are emotionally supportive and encouraging. In addition, the majority of parents maintain a healthy home environment and allow involvement in school activities. But even with their optimistic outlooks, their financial and academic engagement is still quite low. Just a small portion attend school functions, help with their studies, or spend money on academic resources and private tuition. This demonstrates a disconnect between academic engagement and emotional support, which is probably caused by socioeconomic constraints and low parental educational attainment.

From the perspective of the community, the answers also demonstrate a hopeful and forward-thinking attitude. Every member of the community acknowledges the importance of educating girls just as much as boys, and many of them see the need to help SC girls, particularly those from low-income families. Although many (71.43%) stated that they were working to advance education, very few really did anything like set up financial help or felicitation programs. The majority of the community also believes

that government programs are inadequate or badly run, and some people are unhappy with how SC girls are doing academically, especially on the HSLC examination.

While parents and community people are generally interested and concerned, more organized participation, awareness-raising, and resource distribution are obviously needed. Important obstacles include inadequate home-based academic support, a dearth of community-level programs, and poor implementation of governmental directives. In order to establish a more supportive environment for SC girls to successfully finish secondary school, cooperation between schools, parents, and local communities is crucial.

EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS

1. It will focus the role of parents and prominent community members in promotion of secondary level education
2. It will support educators and schools in realizing how crucial it is to include parents and community people in the academic growth of SC girls.
3. It will motivate educational establishments to plan parent education and future opportunity awareness activities.
4. It will assist legislators in bolstering the execution of government programs aimed at the education of SC girls.

CONCLUSION

Majority of parents opined that they motivate them, encourage them, give preference on daughters' education, provide convenient environment to study properly, take care of their daughters, take steps to uplift the daughters' education and pay attention to them. Majority of parents encourage their daughters to take education. Majority of community people encourage SC girls to uplift their secondary education. Majority of community people opined that government should help the students whose economic condition is not very good and try to understand their problems and provide more facilities to continue their secondary education.

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