

Impact of Educational Reforms in India on the Marginalised Students



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Abstract

In addition to the limitless store of the materialistic culture, the present century has several endowments to the members of all the castes in India. Education being one of them is leading the members of all the Indian castes to the several vistas of career both in the public and the private sectors. The most blessed group of the students in the present era is the one constituted by the marginalized students belonging to numerous so-called lower castes in terms of social hierarchy. With the ongoing educational reforms, they are having a new dawn bringing to them rays of new hopes, ambitions, aspirations, social dignity, cultural upliftment and unbound vistas of careers. Unlike in past, they are now constantly on move towards progress, prosperity, social welfare through education. The endowments are not limited only to the males, but they equally allow the female students to reshape their personality and to analyze and reanalyze themselves in the modern context which allows them to seek a raised status in the society through education. The past of the marginalized may be said to be all dark which deprived them of their rights and kept them detached from the standards of education that might have equaled them to the members of the upper castes in hierarchy. Talent is not confined only to few persons or castes, rather found in all irrespective of castes and creeds. The same applies to the marginalized.

The Indian independence on the 15th August, 1947, and then the implementation of the Constitution of India on the 26th January, 1950 which guarantees the right to equality to all the citizens of India, changed the destiny of the marginalized and made education accessible to them. The contemporary Indian educational and sector-wise-working scenario confirms that the educational reforms in India are soon going to change the entire picture of the marginalized. The paper discusses the issues of educational reforms in India in the context of their impact on the marginalizes students.

Keywords: Impact, Educational Reforms, Marginalized, Educational Dilemma, Competitions, Chaos, Dawn, Aspirations, Unbound Vistas, Upliftment, Endowments, Reanalyze, Raised Standards

Introduction

With the changed times and circumstances, several distinguished educational reforms are taking place in India making education accessible to all. Everyone in the country seems to have been gifted with the endowments of the educational reforms, but the most spottedly gifted group of students is the group of the marginalized students whose forefathers found themselves detached from the blesses of education simply because of being born in some marginalized caste. Despite having remarkable potential to serve the society with, they remained downtrodden and backward living on the mercy of the members of the so-called upper classes.

A marginalized community is a group that is confined to the lower or peripheral edge of the society. Such a group is denied involvement in mainstream economic, political, cultural and social activities. Interpreted from this angle, in India the marginalized community refers to the community constituted by the members of the castes that fall in the Shudra Varna. The social history of India witnesses that the Indian society was stratified into four sections called Varnas in the ancient India, namely, the Brahma, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra which are said to have been created by Lord Brahma from his mouth, arms, thighs and feet respectively. It formed the basis of the Indian social system for a long time, keeping the members of the Shudra castes away from the mainstream.

26th January, 1950 proved to be a Gala Day to the marginalized, as it not only guaranteed them a right to equality, but also brought a new ray of hope in their life which made them foresee their safe future through education. The education which was a privileged tool in the hands of the members of the upper castes, was now within the reach of every one including the marginalized. At first, while getting education along with the students of the higher castes, the students of the marginalized communities felt uncomfortable for many reasons, as in the classroom and in the school and college campus, it was only the higher caste students who would be given importance, and the marginalized students would be neglected both by the students and the teachers. As change is inevitable, the Indian social system including the education-scene saw a tremendous change during the years that followed.

The post-independent India saw the following changes and reforms in education-

1. The independence of India on the 15th August, 1947 gave the people of the country first fullest opportunity to mould their educational policy according to the needs of the nation in the fast changing times. It was as a result of this amendment that according to the census of 2001, the total literacy rate in India grew to 65.38%. However, the female literacy rate 54.16% was still low which needed to be increased. Not only this, only 59.4% of rural population was literate as against 80.3% urban population.
2. Expansion of facilities for mass compulsory elementary education was made through the 86th constitutional amendment which made elementary education a fundamental right for the children between the age group 6 to 14.
3. Reforms in the secondary and university education were made. The appointment of the

Secondary Education Commission on 23rd September, 1952 made the secondary education within the reach of all solving several existing problems in the path of education.

4. Successful efforts were made to develop vocational and technical education at various levels
5. Women were encouraged to join the main stream of education and structure of educational administration was restructured keeping in mind the needs of the students at various levels.
6. A strategy of education was implemented under the classes- elementary education which consisted of eight years of education; each of secondary and senior secondary education consisted of two years of education; higher education was developed under under-graduate, post-graduate and research courses.
7. The Setting up of the University Education Commission called the Radhakrishnan Commission in 1948, the establishment of the University Grants Commission in 1953, and the passing of the UGC Act in March 1956, and the establishment of several national laboratories and institutes paved a path for the higher education in India.
8. The introduction of Five Year Plans brought about a revolution in the field of education at all the levels.
9. With the objectives of vocalization of education at the secondary level in particular, to awaken the people about the various scientific and technological developments, and to encourage the governmental and non-governmental efforts for wiping out illiteracy, on April 20, 1986, a New Educational Policy was placed before the Indian Parliament.

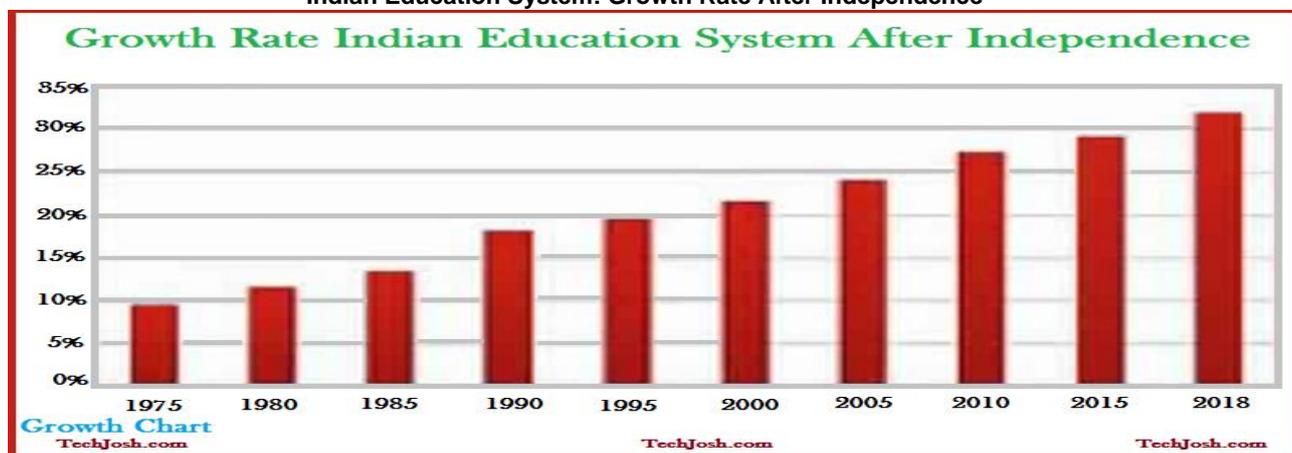
Literates in India

	1991	2001	2011	Difference	% Growth
Population	84,63,02,688	1,02,87,37,436	1,21,01,93,422	36,38,90,734	43
Persons	35,84,02,626	56,07,53,179	77,84,54,120	42,00,51,494	117
Male	228,983,134	33,65,71,822	44,42,03,762	21,52,20,628	94
Female	129,419,492	22,41,81,357	33,42,50,358	20,48,30,866	158

Year 1991 has been taken as the base year for calculation of difference and percentage of growth

Source: Census of India- 1001, 2001 and 2011

Indian Education System: Growth Rate After Independence



Source: TechJosh.com

Both the table displaying the number of male and female literates in India and the growth rate and the Growth rate chart of the Indian education system produced above sufficiently reflect the progressive trends in the field of educational reforms in India. However, it cannot be denied that the educational reforms in India, like the economic status of India, is still underdeveloped, and it still requires certain reforms in the field of education in order to ensure the linkage of everyone to education at all the levels.

Educational Reforms & the Marginalized Students

The educational reforms in India have brought about a revolutionary change in the status of the marginalized students. With the varied educational reforms at the various levels, they are able to-

1. Get free elementary education
2. Manage food, books and other required things easily
3. Can continue education with various types of scholarships
4. Can easily get admissions in colleges and universities under the reservation policy
5. Can be financially self depend
6. Can easily get government jobs in accordance with their eligibility standards

Objectives of the Study

1. To make a review of the related literature and to analyze the contents
2. To study the various educational reforms in the post-independent India
3. To have a peep into the history of the marginalized communities in India
4. To observe and study the changing educational status of the marginalized students
5. To observe the current status of the marginalized students
6. To compare and contrast the growth of education as per the census of 1991, 2001 and 2011
7. To study the causes of the awareness of the marginalized students with education
8. To find out the impact of the educational reforms on the marginalized communities in India
9. To have an idea of the changing approach of the fundamentalists to the marginalized in the post-independent India
10. To interpret the cause and effect relationship of the issue

Review of Literature

Raman, S. A. (2006) in *Woman's Education* informs that women's participation in education was minimal at the beginning, but by 2001, with government support, more than 50% of all women could read and write, which can be seen as a formidable step forward in comparison to 15% in the 1960s.

The Report of NCERT (2011) under the title 'Leading the Change' observes that the most important government body that exercises oversight over public education is the Council for Education, Research, and Technical Training. Among others, it oversees the implementation of education policy in the country; furthermore, it determines teaching materials and the curriculum, while it also provides financial support to institutions. India boasts serious

accomplishments in elementary education development.

Sonalde Desai and Amit Thorat (2012) in *Social Inequalities in Education* finds that reduction in educational inequality at the primary education stage can have a long-lasting impact and could be the most leveraged investment a society can make. However, Indian public policies are excessively focused on reducing inequalities in college education, possibly because interventions at younger ages are harder to identify and implement. Nonetheless, for a substantial reduction in educational inequality, we must focus on primary education.

ICEF Report (2013) entitled 'India Moving Forward with Education Reforms' says that Manmohan Singh's government drafted the 12th strategic plan, which, in addition to supporting engineering training and research, wished to emphasize infrastructural development, modifying teaching materials and distance education. It is not unimportant that under the tenure of Singh's government technical training receive priority with the purpose that by 2022 India may have at its disposal a trained labor force numbering nearly 500 million.

Basu, Sreedha (2015) in India makes debut in *World University Rankings* observes that India's education policy privileges modern scientific and engineering trainings. Therefore, primarily universities and colleges specializing in these subjects have gained greater prestige over the years. Mumbai University and Jawaharlal Nehru University have gained global recognition for their world-class programs. Nevertheless, amongst the 2015 global rankings two other Indian universities can be found among the top 200. The Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore was ranked 147th, Delhi Technological University 179th according to the survey.

Kumar, Sasi V. (2016) in 'The Education System in India' observes that according to Article 45 of the Constitution of the Republic of India, education is compulsory for children aged 6-14, but the government encountered difficulties in attempting to enforce the article in certain areas even at the end of the 20th century. At the outset, overseeing education was considered each state's home affair. Thus, India's government had little influence over questions concerning education. This situation only changed in 1976, when, after an amendment to the Constitution, education came under the national government's purview.

Report of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2016) observes that as a result, by 2011 the literacy rate among children aged 7-10 reached 75%. This had a positive effect on economic development as well. 80% of elementary schools are state-financed. Accordingly, in 1994 a new program was started to unify elementary education, which also contributed to the development of elementary education. The newest program that aims to provide unified education for all is Sarva Shiksha Abhidjan, which is currently one of the greatest educational initiatives in the world.

Roshan John (2017) in Education Reforms in India, Why is implementation such a challenge? discusses that the policy designers ask the teachers, students and parents, the local implementing agents to do a thing in a particular order, which requires a change in behaviour. But a change in behaviour can only come through knowledge, experience and sense-making. Transforming the education system is a value-driven and emotional process, which needs to be implemented strategically through a behavioural change process. The best way could be following similar strategies as that of the Swachh Bharat Mission—the largest behaviour change programme and transplanting it to the education sector.

Hypothesis

1. Much has been written about the Indian marginalized communities
2. In the post-independent India, several educational reforms are taking place with a view to making education within the reach of every one
3. The history of the marginalized in India is the story of their depravity and exploitation
4. The Constitution of India through the right to equality has changed the destiny of the marginalized in India
5. Since 1991 there have been revolutionary changes in the educational status of the students, particularly in the status of the marginalized students
6. With the change in times and situations, there is an apparent change in the educational status of the marginalized students in India
7. At present the marginalized students are aware of the benefits of education
8. They are education and career oriented
9. The marginalized students in India are aware that only through education they can change their destiny and can become financially independent
10. As a result of the impact of educational reforms the marginalized students are able to join the main stream of education and career
11. The fundamentalists have a changed approach to them and to their getting education

Methodology

The study is based on secondary data found available in the various traditional and modern sources, such as, books, journals and internet sites. The approach adopted for the study was historical-analytical approach which helped the author develop an understanding of the educational reforms in India through the census of the years like 1991, 2001 and 2011. The approach also helped him understand and analyze the past of the marginalized communities in India. The steps undertaken for the study include- Selection of the problem to be studied, exploring sources of the secondary data, study of the secondary data, content analysis, hypothesis formulation, observation of the changing status of the marginalized students through education at various levels, application of observation to the contents of the secondary data, analysis and interpretation of the causes and effects of the problem in question, arrival at findings and conclusion.

Findings

1. There is sufficient literature to reflect the constant growth and reforms in the field of education at all levels in the post-independent India
2. The educational reforms in the post-independent India include- elementary education as the fundamental right for the children between the age group 6 to 14, the appointment of the Secondary Education Commission, developing vocational and technical education, encouragement of the women to education through various schemes and policies, restructuring of the educational administration, strategic education policy aiming at linking the students with elementary, secondary, senior secondary, college and university education, setting up of the University Education Commission and establishment of the University Grants Commission, passing of the UGC Act, and establishment of various national laboratories and institutions.
3. The educational reforms in the post-independent India are being made through the five year plans under which a certain amount is allotted to every level of education
4. The black and shocking past of the marginalized is pursuing them to change their destiny through education
5. The marginalized students in India have a tremendous awareness to education, career and financial self-dependence
6. The period from 1991 onwards is the period of educational reform which reflects the progressive trends in the field of education at the various levels
7. The marginalized students are aware of the fact that only education can help them link up with career and raised status, and so they are inclined to education at the various levels
8. Under the impact of the educational reforms the marginalized communities are meeting new horizons of development and welfare day by day
9. With the exception of very few, most of the fundamentalists approve their linkage with education and career
10. At present there is no field of career where the marginalized are not working

Conclusion

It will not be wrong to say that the educational reforms in the post-independent India are enthusiastic. However, there is much to be reformed in the education sector. Today everybody is eager to join education for the sake of personality development and career, but it is the marginalized students who have shown a distinguished interest in education because they are sure that only education can bring them to the main stream of social development. With the equal constitutional treatment to all irrespective of gender and caste, and with the introduction of certain schemes and policies meant for the marginalized, the educational reforms are specifically dimensional. The impact of the educational reforms on the marginalized students is conspicuous, as through educational development they have several job opportunities and

a raised social status. Each of them is willing to be educated enough to survive successfully in the society.

The Directive Principles of the State Policy provide to promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the target groups. To achieve the objectives of "Equality" with many facets, Govt. of India as well as State Govt. has been striving for socio-economic development of the people of these communities through administrative orders and through schemes / projects plan process. No doubt, there has been perceptible changes in the social and economic condition of the target group but unfortunately the measures taken so far have not been able to fully eradicate illiteracy, poverty and above all the social stigma attached, because the approach so far has been in the shape of few schemes of ameliorative nature which could not make sufficient transformational impact and, therefore, much still remains to be done. A survey by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) put the OBC population in the country at 40.94%, the SC population at 19.59%, ST population at 8.63% and the rest at 30.80%. The Educational Statistics, produced by Govt. of India, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Deptt. of School Education and Literacy, Statistics Division, New Delhi, 2018, in 2016, the number of SC students (in thousands) at elementary, secondary, senior secondary and higher education level was respectively-36078, 8569, 7543 and 24164, while the number of ST students was

respectively-19728, 4459, 7543 and 24164. The trend reveals that more and more marginalized students are joining education at various levels in order to come closer to the main stream of social development.

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