



INEQUALITY IN ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION - A STUDY OF HYDERABAD KARNATAKA REGION IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

Though the nation has witnessed a tremendous expansion of educational facilities at all levels including higher education, the higher education doesn't seem to be equally accessible to all sections of society. Hyderabad Karnataka region in Karnataka is not an exception to this phenomenon. The data for the study is collected through the questionnaire from the sample of five percent of students from the five percent of randomly selected colleges. This study found that the scene of higher education in this region is exclusively dominated by general category while as OBCs, STs are underrepresented as to the actual proportions. The higher education in this region is accessible almost wholly to the children of well to do families across gender, categories and rural –urban residency.

Key Words: Access, Category , Gender, Higher Education and Per Capita Income

Inequality in access to higher education results inequality in access to prestigious occupations. The facilities of higher education seem to have equalised, the inequality in access to higher education continues to be conspicuous to all spheres of the society despite of enrolment at the higher education stages increased phenomenally in the post independence period. The Constitution of India also envisaged education as an instrument for the social transformation in the individual and the society. It compels that education must be accessible equally to all sections of Indian society at all stages.

From the literature the investigators in their studies found that most of the facilities of higher education at all stages are availed of by a few sections of the society viz., the urban, middle class, upper caste etc., even among these sections there is a domination of men over women in higher education. The rural, lower class, SCs, STs, other backward communities and women were remain took a back seat in availing the facilities of higher education and to enter into prestigious jobs available for graduates.

A few of the following studies reviewed are also stated that this education doesn't seem to be equally accessible to all the domains of the society. Miller (1960) in his study "Comparative social mobility", found that the Whites have greater chances of obtaining higher education than the Blacks in the United States. Boudon (1974) in his study, "Educational inequality of social opportunities", concluded that the probability of lower class youngsters attending a college and further of attending a prestigious institution of higher education would probably



remain much lower than that of upper class youngsters. Therefore, any lessening of the inequity of stratification such as reduction of economic inequality is more likely to reduce inequality of both educational and social opportunity.

Poornima Mohan (2000) in her study titled, “Inequality of opportunity - women education”, found that the educational opportunities for girls and women remain distinctly below boys and men. This is true in quantitative terms as well as qualitative terms.

Ishida Hiroshi (2003) in her paper titled, “Educational expansion and inequality in access to higher education in Japan”, found that gender inequality in access to higher education was reduced substantially in the post war period, although gender inequality in access to university rather than junior college persisted.

A study by Punam Arora (1987) in her study, “Equality of educational opportunity in Jammu Division”, has found that there are wide disparities in the literacy rate in rural and urban areas at all age groups in different districts.

R.K.Mujoo (1992) in his study, “Higher education and social mobility- An interdisciplinary study of the impact of university education on the careers and the attitudes of graduates in Jammu and Kashmir” reported that higher education was dominated by upper caste Hindu men of Urban Middle class origin. Women, the weaker sections (Muslims from Kashmir, Jammu, Gujjarrs and Bakarwals and SCs) had not utilized the facilities of higher education and the middle classes were increasingly participating in higher education to maintain the tradition of educational attainments in their families.

It is therefore pertinent to find out who are the beneficiaries of these expanding facilities of higher education. The present study, “Inequality in access to higher education: A study of Hyderabad Karnataka region in Karnataka is an attempt in this direction. The study is addressed to seeking answers to the following questions.

1. Do males and females have equal access to higher education in Hyderabad Karnataka region in Karnataka?
2. Do rural and urban residents have equal access to higher education in Hyderabad Karnataka region in Karnataka?
3. Do males and females from different categories have equal access to higher education in Hyderabad Karnataka region in Karnataka?
4. Do children of different Income groups have equal access to higher education in Hyderabad Karnataka region in Karnataka?



For this study the students on the rolls of first year degree courses (in both liberal arts and professional) in the six districts of Hyderabad Karnataka Region viz., Bellary , Bidar , Gulbarga, Koppal , Raichur and Yadgir form the universe. This includes those on the rolls of the under graduate studies of the integrated courses offered by the Universities also. Due to the limitations of time and resources only the students in second semester courses of five percent of randomly selected colleges were considered for data collection. From the sample colleges a random of five percent of these students was taken for the study. Data is collected through questionnaire. The collected data was classified and tabulated according to the socio-economic variables as per the requirements of the objectives and proportions of different categories under each variable were compared and inferences with regard to various objectives were drawn to find answers to the research questions.

GENDER AND RESIDENCE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table -1 gives the distribution of respondents by their gender and rural-urban-residence. This table shows that out of 577 respondents 316 (54.77%) were male and 261(45.23%) were female. Again 375 (64.99%) respondents were urban residents and only 202 (35.01%) were rural. The table also shows that out of 202 rural respondents, 123 (60.89%) were male and 79 (39.11%) were female forming 38.92% of all the male and 30.27 % of all the female respectively. Among the 375 (64.99%) urban respondents, 193(51.47%) were male and 182(48.53%) were female forming 61.08% of all male and 69.73% of all female respectively.

From these figures it can be inferred that there is a predominance of urbanites in college rolls and the ruralites who form the bulk of population are grossly under-represented in both gender. While in urban areas the proportions of male and female college students are almost equal and in the rural areas there is phenomenal predominance of males over females. Thus the rural females have the least access to higher education.

Table-1. Distribution of Respondents by Gender and Rural-Urban Residence

Residence	Male	Female	Total
Rural	123 (38.92%)	79 (30.27%)	202 (35.01%)
Urban	193 (61.08%)	182 (69.73%)	375 (64.99%)
Total	316 (100.00%)	261 (100.00%)	577 (100.00%)

Source: Primary data.

Category and Residence of The Respondents

Table - 2 gives the distribution of respondents by their category and residence which they belong. This table shows that out of 577 respondents – 316 male and 261 female, 269 (46.62%) – 152 (48.10%) of the male and 117(44.83%) of the female - were belonged to general category ; 151(26.17%) – 80 (25.32%) of



the male and 71 (27.20%) of the female - were belonged to OBC category; 117(20.28%) – 64 (20.25%) of the male and 53 (20.31%) of the female - were belonged to SC category ; 40(6.93%) – 20(6.33%) of the male and 20 (7.66%) of the female were belonged to ST category.

Among the 202 (35.01%) rural respondents – 123 male and 79 female, 94 (46.54%) – 61 (49.59%) of the male and 33 (41.77%) of the female - were belonged to general category ; 53 (26.24%) – 30 (24.39%) of the male and 23 (29.11%) of the female - were belonged to OBC category; 38 (18.81%) – 23 (18.70%) of the male and 15 (18.99%) of the female - were belonged to SC category ; 17 (8.42%) – 9 (7.32%) of the male and 8 (10.13%) of the female were belonged to ST category.

Among the 375 (64.99%) urban respondents – 193 male and 182 female, 175 (46.67%) – 91 (47.15%) of the male and 84 (46.15%) of the female - were belonged to general category ; 98 (26.13%) – 50 (25.91%) of the male and 48 (26.37%) of the female - were belonged to OBC category; 79 (21.07%) – 41 (21.24%) of the male and 38 (20.88%) of the female - were belonged to SC category ; 23 (6.13%) – 11 (5.70%) of the male and 12 (6.60%) of the female were belonged to ST category.

Table-2: Distribution of Respondents by Category and Rural-Urban Residence

Category	Rural			Urban			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
General	61 (49.59%)	33 (41.77%)	94 (46.54%)	91 (47.15%)	84 (46.15%)	175 (46.67%)	152 (48.10%)	117 (44.83%)	269 (46.62%)
OBC	30 (24.39%)	23 (29.11%)	53 (26.24%)	50 (25.91%)	48 (26.37%)	98 (26.13%)	80 (25.32%)	71 (27.20%)	151 (26.17%)
SC	23 (18.70%)	15 (18.99%)	38 (18.81%)	41 (21.24%)	38 (20.88%)	79 (21.07%)	64 (20.25%)	53 (20.31%)	117 (20.28%)
ST	9 (7.32%)	8 (10.13%)	17 (8.42%)	11 (5.70%)	12 (6.60%)	23 (6.13%)	20 (6.33%)	20 (7.66%)	40 (6.93%)
Total	123 (100%)	79 (100)	202 (100%)	193 (100%)	182 (100%)	375 (100%)	316 (100%)	261 (100%)	577 (100%)

Thus out of 577 respondents, there was a majority of general category 269 (46.62%) while as OBCs were 151 (26.17%), SCs were 117 (20.28%) and STs were only 40 (6.93%).

Comparing these proportions to the actual proportions of the groups in the general population and of Hyderabad Karnataka region 33%, OBCs 40% , SCs 18 % and STs 9%, it is clear that while the scene of higher education is excessively dominated by general category and OBCs are highly underrepresented and SCs and STs are almost represented as to the actual proportions . It is noticed that among STs urban males are grossly underrepresented in higher education enrolment and females in all categories have an edge over males in the domain of higher education.



Per Capita Income and Residence of The Respondents

Table - 3 gives the distribution of respondents by their monthly per-capita income of the families and residence which they belong to. This table shows that out of 577 respondents - 316 male and 261 female – 550 (95.32%) respondents – 297 (93.99%) of the male and 253 (96.94%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income above Rs.1000 ; 27(4.68%) – 19 (6.01%) of the male and 8 (3.07%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income below Rs1000.

Among the 202 rural respondents – 13 (6.44%) - 10(8.13%) of the male and 3 (3.80%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income of less than Rs.1000; 90 (44.55%) – 65 (52.85%) of the male and 25 (31.65%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income between Rs.1000 and Rs.3000; 67 (33.17%) – 36 (29.27%) of the male and 31 (39.24%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income between Rs.3000 and Rs.5000; 32 (15.84%) – 12 (9.75%) of the male and 20 (25.32%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income more than Rs.5000.

Among the 375 urban respondents – 14 (3.73%) – 9 (4.66%) of the male and 5 (2.75%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income of less than Rs.1000; 59 (15.74%) – 38 (19.69%) of the male and 21 (11.54%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income between Rs.1000 and Rs.3000; 150 (40.00%) – 83 (43.01%) of the male and 67 (36.81%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income between Rs.3000 and Rs.5000; 152 (40.53%) – 63 (32.64%) of the male and 89(48.9%) of the female - came from families with a monthly per-capita income more than Rs.5000.

Table -3: Distribution of Respondents by Per Capita income and Rural-Urban Residence

Per capita income per month	Rural			Urban			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Less than Rs.1000	10 (8.13%)	3 (3.80%)	13 (6.44%)	9 (4.66%)	5 (2.75%)	14 (3.73%)	19 (6.01%)	8 (3.07%)	27 (4.68%)
Between Rs.1000 and Rs.3000	65 (52.85%)	25 (31.65%)	90 (44.55%)	38 (19.69%)	21 (11.54%)	59 (15.74%)	103 (32.60%)	46 (17.62%)	149 (25.82%)
Between Rs.3000 and Rs.5000	36 (29.27%)	31 (39.24%)	67 (33.17%)	83 (43.01%)	67 (36.81%)	150 (40.00%)	119 (37.66%)	98 (37.55%)	217 (37.61%)
Above Rs.5000	12 (9.75%)	20 (25.32%)	32 (15.84%)	63 (32.64%)	89 (48.90%)	152 (40.53%)	75 (23.73%)	109 (41.76%)	184 (31.89%)
Total	123 (100%)	79 (100%)	202 (100%)	193 (100%)	182 (100%)	375 (100%)	316 (100%)	261 (100%)	577 (100%)

Source: Primary data.



These figures indicate that in Hyderabad Karnataka region, higher education is accessible almost wholly to the children of well to do families across gender, categories and Rural-urban residency. The children of families with a per capita income of less than Rs.1000 income have almost no chances of getting into higher education even among this group rural males have little edge over females. In all domains, males enrolment is phenomenally higher than their counter parts except whose families having the per capita income of more than Rs.5000, while as in this group females dominated over the males.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Rural residents have lower access to college education. The reasons for such a situation are not far to seek. The reasons may be number of colleges in rural areas is fewer and poorly equipped compared to the urban areas. Again, the rural population on an average being poorer compared to the urban population cannot afford the cost of transport and / or boarding and lodging for their children outside home. Adding the tradition of preference for the education of male child to that of the female prevalent among the rural residents, the rural females remain the most disadvantaged in this regard.

The scene of higher education in Hyderabad Karnataka region is excessively dominated by general category and OBCs are highly underrepresented, STs are underrepresented and SCs are almost represented as to the actual proportions. It is noticed that urban OBCs, STs are also grossly underrepresented in higher education enrolment while as males in all categories have an edge over females in the domain of higher education except ST category in urban.

In this region, higher education is accessible almost wholly to the children of well to do families across gender, categories and Rural-urban residency. The children of families with a per-capita income of less than Rs.1000 income have almost no chances of getting into higher education even among this group rural males have a little edge over females.

These kinds of situation have serious consequences for both individuals and the nation as whole. The young males and females from the weaker sections without higher education have almost no chances of entering lucrative jobs and as such no chance of getting integrated to knowledge society in turn for the progress of the country.

Therefore researcher suggests that to make an equitable system of higher education government has to take viable steps for weaker sections viz.. rural students in general and rural female in particular, financially weaker sections, OBCs in this region by providing needy grants , establishing colleges , diluting regular attendance to the classes , freeships, unemployment allowances after attaining the age of 18 years etc., to increase their number in the rolls of higher education.



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