



IMPACT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SCHOOL IN DISTRICT POONCH (J&K)

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Abstract: This study has been taken to investigate the impact of socioeconomic status of parents on the academic achievement of students of government and private schools. Primary data is used for the analysis purpose. The recent studies show there is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and students' academic achievement. The study has taken sample size of 100 respondents from district Poonch (J&K), to understand the socioeconomic status of parents. The results in this study suggest there is significant relation between socio-economic status and students' academic achievement. This study also found significant disparity in terms of educational attainment economic status of parents and its impact on students' academic achievement across the social categories in government and private schools.

Keywords: socioeconomic status, academic achievement, quality education.

INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial in influencing a country's socio-economic progress, and the caliber of education has a major effect on personal intellectual and emotional advancement. In India, the education system is generally split between the public and private sectors, each having its unique advantages and drawbacks. Although government schools are considered necessary for ensuring education is accessible to everyone, especially those in disadvantaged communities, private schools are often linked to better quality teaching, facilities, and academic results. Despite this, the variability in quality across regions and contexts means that this differentiation is not consistent. The region of Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), as a border area facing distinct socio-political and geographical obstacles, offers an interesting opportunity to explore disparities in educational standards between public and private schools. The unique setting of the region, characterized by its secluded nature and lack of resources, shapes the environment in which educational institutions function. Public schools in this area are commonly viewed as lacking sufficient funding and resources, while private schools, even though they are fewer in number, usually serve families with greater financial resources.

This research examines the educational quality in district Poonch by comparing government and private schools based on the socioeconomic status of parents and its impact on the academic achievement of students. Few studies have been conducted on the academic achievement and quality provided in the government and private schools. These studies show that students from different socioeconomic background are not appreciated from home. They have been facing many problems in their school environment, which results into their low academic achievement. Education has a direct impact on a person's possibilities in life, financial security, and general well-being (Battle, 2002).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute valuable insights into the ongoing debate over the quality of education in government versus private schools, with a focus on the unique socio-political context of District Poonch (J&K). In a region that faces challenges such as economic disparity, conflict, and limited access to educational resources, this study provides a much-needed comparative analysis of how these factors affect educational quality in different types of schools.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review involves evaluating current research and academic articles that pertain to a specific topic or field of study. In present chapter the researcher has taken great interest in prior studies related to Quality Education in private and government schools, and got important information from their methodologies and findings, which will be very helpful in developing the present study.

1. (Islam, 2017) studied how students in higher secondary schools' socioeconomic status affected their academic performance. The researchers selected a sample of 170 senior high school students using simple random sampling and a descriptive survey method. The results of this study revealed a significant relationship between academic achievement and socioeconomic position among senior secondary school pupils.

2. (Baro, 2017) Investigated the relationship between the socioeconomic background and the academic performance of female students attending secondary schools in the Rangia subdivision of the Kamrup (Rural) district of Assam. The study made it clear that there is a substantial correlation between female students' academic achievement and socioeconomic position.
3. (Andrabi, 2016) They have studied the relation between socio-economic status and academic achievement of higher secondary school students. In this study 564 tribal and non-tribal students from two districts in Kashmir were chosen as a sample using a stratified random sampling technique. The results of this study showed a substantial correlation between the socioeconomic status and academic achievement of tribal and non-tribal students.
4. (Altschul, 2012) Conducted research on how Mexican American youth's academic performance was affected by socioeconomic conditions. Socioeconomic status consists of several factors (such as parental education, parental occupation, and family income). The findings indicated that children's academic achievement in Mexican American families was predicted by socioeconomic characteristics. The findings indicate that maternal occupation had a significant direct correlation with youth test scores, followed by family wealth. Academic achievement in youth was also predicted by the educational attainment of mothers, while fathers' occupation and level of schooling had little bearing on academic achievement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a systematic approach to solving research problems. It is a science of different tools and methods to be used in gathering and examining data, information, and materials to solve issues that have been chosen for further study. For this study, the researcher selected the descriptive approach of research. The description of the data and features of the study population that has been chosen is the focus of the descriptive research approach. The objective is to collect actual, precise, and organised data that may be interpreted in a variety of ways, including averages, frequencies, and other statistical analyses. The descriptive approach is more focused on existing conditions or naturally occurring events. The two main techniques of the descriptive method are the survey and the case study. We shall now carry out quantitative analytical techniques like descriptive statistics analysis. The factors being examined are socioeconomic status of parents and the academic achievement of students. With a total sample size of 100 respondents, the study will apply a method of stratified sampling to ensure a varied representation of students and Parents.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

During data collection a set of questionnaire was distributed among the population group, in this study the targeted population include, the Parents, whose children are studying in both government and private schools. The targeted population of study was given questionnaire for collecting the information to answer the research questions.

There are 24 government higher secondary schools and 8 private higher secondary schools in district Poonch of Jammu and Kashmir. In this study, 8 private higher secondary and 8 government higher secondary schools are selected for data collection.

DATA COLLECTION

This study is based on primary data the primary collection of data involves gathering original data firsthand by techniques of surveys, interviews, experimentation, or any other techniques.

PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Primary data in this research is important for obtaining original information firsthand and directly relevant to the set objectives. Structured methods include those in which researchers directly approach participant— Parents through duly structured surveys, interviews, and observations within the context of district Poonch (J&K) state of India. In this study 100 respondent are taken for analysis purpose.

VARIABLES

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Parent's socioeconomic status:

The independent variable SES (socioeconomic status) of parents, which in simple words means the ability of family to support their children's educational activities. SES is measured by parents level of income (BPL/APL), level of parents education, type of their occupation, type of house, as well as well many other factors, SES has an impact on the accessibility of resources such as quality education, healthcare, and living conditions, all of which may significantly influence students' abilities to work academically. It is usually believed that higher SES is related with better access to educational support, extracurricular activities, and enrichment programs that may have a positive impact on academic achievement.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Academic Performance of students:

Academic Performance, which reflects the observable outcomes of students achievement in school, is the dependent variable. It typically consists of indicators like grades, test scores, and academic progress made in a subject or the outcomes of achievement tests. This often serves as a signal to students about their level of knowledge retention and application in a learning environment, as well as their learning ability. Many factors, including teaching effectiveness, curriculum efficacy, socioeconomic background, and school resources, to name a few, have an impact on student performance in the classroom. Researcher typically look into academic performance in order to analyse the relationship between students' educational attainment and overall success in their academic activities as well as various interventions, educational policies, and demographic characteristics. In this study, the grades of class 10th students of both private and government schools is taken as dependent variable.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

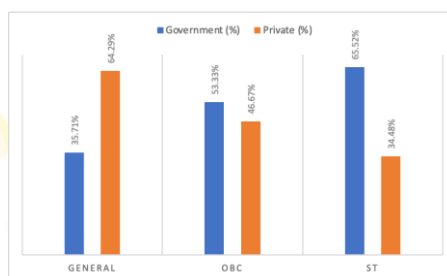
In this section, a detailed analysis of the socio-economic status of parents and school selection for their children in both private and government schools is conducted. Some of the factors under socioeconomic status discussed for analysis are parents' level of education, occupation of parents, size of household, number of family members, total earning members, type of house, and its relation with the type of school they prefer for their children, and its impact on students academic achievement.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND EDUCATIONAL PROFILE OF PARENTS :

Social-category and school selection:

In India, social categories such as caste, religion, ethnicity, and gender significantly influence school preferences and choices. These categories intersect with socio-economic status to shape educational opportunities and outcomes for children. Here is an overview of how different social categories impact school preference.

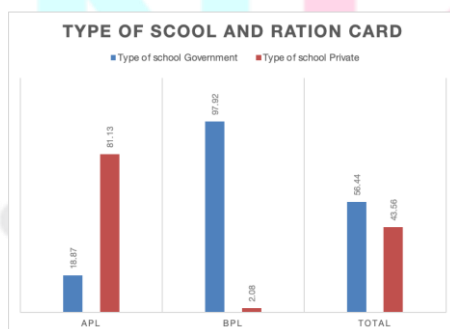
Social-category and school selection



Source: Based on field survey

Figure, 1 shows that a significant majority (64.29%) of the General category prefers sending their children to private schools, which indicates a higher likelihood of affording or prioritizing private education. In the General category, 35.71% of parents choose government schools, which may indicate reliance on public education for those who may not prioritize or afford private schooling. In the case of the OBC category, 53.33% of families prefer government schools, which may reflect financial constraints or reliance on public education. The highest percentage of enrolment in government schools is 65.52% of ST families, it shows the greater dependence on public education, which is possibly due to economic barriers or limited access to private schools in their areas. Only 34.48% of ST (scheduled tribe) parents send their children to private schools, which is the lowest among the three categories. The data suggest that greater dependence on government schools by the ST (scheduled tribe) category may be due to the socio-economic gap between the different categories.

Type of Ration Card and School Preference:

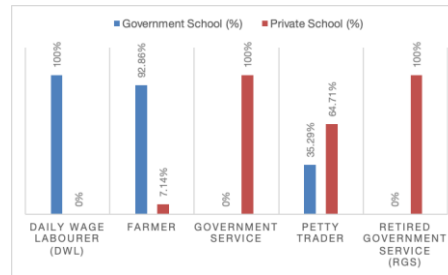


Source: Based on field survey

The figure shows that majority 97.92 % of BPL families send their children to government schools, while majority of APL families prefer to send their children to private schools. This high percentage of BPL families is expected as they cannot afford private schools and rely mainly on government schools, which are free or provide scholarships to needy students such as pre and post-metric scholarships. This gap is possibly due to disparity in income distribution and accessibility of resources.

Type of Occupation and School Preference

Type of Occupation and School Preference

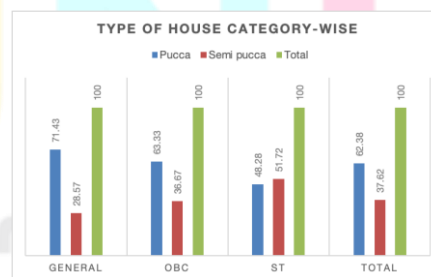


Source: Based on field survey

In this occupation group, almost 100 percent of parents send their children to government schools. That is likely due to low income and lack of affordability of private schools. During the data collection, it was found that there is no household belonging to the DWL group that sends its children to private schools. Similarly, in farmer group 92.8 percent of farmers send their children to government schools. This high percentage shows limited access to financial resources, especially in the case of the farming community, which limits to access private schools. While in case of preference for private schools there is around 7.14 percent of the household in farmer community, who send their children to the private schools, which is probably more affluent within this occupation group. In case of parents with government services nearly 100 percent of families send their children to private schools. This indicates that people in government jobs, who generally have stable incomes and benefits, prefer private schooling for their children, while majority of petty traders send their children to private schools.

Type of House Category-wise:

As the figure shows only 48.28% of ST families live in Pucca houses, the lowest among the three categories, which indicates the challenges in accessing permanent housing. A majority (51.72%) of ST families live in Semi-Pucca houses, indicating that more than half of the ST population lives in housing that may be less secure or durable. In the case of OBCs, 63.33% of families live in Pucca houses, which indicate that a majority have access to relatively durable housing, though slightly lower than the General category. On the other side, 36.67% live in Semi-Pucca houses, which shows that a significant portion of OBC families still live in houses that may not be fully permanent. In the General category, 71.43% of families live in Pucca houses, which are made of durable materials such as brick, cement, or concrete. Within the same category, 28.57% of families live in Semi-Pucca houses, which are partly made of permanent materials but may have temporary components such as mud to thatched roofs.



Source: Based on field survey

Category-wise Earning Members:

Table 1-1

Category	1 Earning Member (%)	2 Earning Members (%)	Total (%)
General	61.9%	38.1%	100%
OBC	66.67%	33.33%	100%
ST	72.41%	27.59%	100%
Total	66.34%	33.66%	100%

Source: Based on field survey

The above table shows In the General category, 61.9% of families have only one earning member, indicating that a significant portion of families depend on a single source of income. Whereas, in the case of two earning members, the general category has 38.1% of families, showing a relatively higher percentage of dual-income households compared to the other categories.

In the OBC category, 66.67% of families have one earning member, which is slightly higher than the General category. In the case of two earning members, the OBC category has 33% of families. Under the ST(Scheduled Tribe a significant 72.41% of families have only one earning member, the highest among all categories. This suggests that a large majority of families in the ST category rely on a single-income earner. In the case of two earning members ST category has 27% of families, indicating a lower prevalence of dual-income households compared to the General and OBC categories.

Category-wise level of Education:

Table 1-2

Category	Graduate (%)	HSC (%)	Illiterate (%)	Literate (%)	Primary (%)	Total (%)
General	26.19%	26.19%	2.38%	2.38%	42.86%	100%
OBC	23.33%	16.67%	5.3%	6.67%	53.33%	100%
ST	10.34%	10.34%	6.9%	31.03%	41.38%	100%
Total	20.79%	18.81%	2.97%	11.88%	45.54%	100%

Source: Based on field survey

The above table reveals significant disparities in educational attainment across different social categories in district Poonch. The General category is more likely to have higher levels of education with 26.19% Graduate, while OBC and ST categories show lower levels of educational attainment, particularly in secondary and higher education. The ST category, in particular, faces challenges in accessing formal education beyond the primary level. The educational disparities reflect broader socio-economic inequalities and underscore the need for targeted policies to improve access to education, especially for marginalized communities.

Comparison of Students Marks in Private and Government Schools:

The data shows that private schools have a higher concentration of students in the 70-80% and 80-90% range, with an average mark of 74.45. This indicates that private school students perform better as compared to government school students. Government schools have a

Table 1-3

Marks Range (%)	No. of Students (Private School)	No. of Students (Government School)
50-60%	0	21
60-70%	17	24
70-80%	27	5
80-90%	6	0
Average Score	74.4%	62.58%

Source: Based on field survey

large proportion of students in the 50-60% and 60-70% range, with an average mark of 62.58%, which is lower than that of private schools. There is a clear performance gap between private and government school students. Private school students outperform their government school counterparts both in terms of average marks and concentration of students in higher performance categories.

This performance gap may be due to several factors, such as differences in resource accessibility such income of their parents, size of their household, educational level of their parents, teachers quality, school infrastructure and the overall school environment between private and government schools.

Conclusion:

The present study found that 97.92 percent of BPL families prefer government schools for their children. This high percentage is expected, as these families generally cannot afford the private schools due to high fee charges. Similarly, such household have large family size and less earning members and dependency ratio is high, mostly ST (scheduled tribe) and OBC (other backward categories) falls in this group. Similarly, in a study by Islam (2017), revealed a significant relationship between academic achievement and socioeconomic position among senior secondary school pupils. In the present study it has been found that private school students have better academic outcomes, as more students are found in the 70-80% and 80-90% range, whereas government school students are primarily clustered in the 50-60% range. This performance gap may be due to several factors such as the economic and educational level of the parents, and the overall school environment between private and government schools.

Suggestions:

The following steps can be taken to overcome the performance gap in the academic achievement of students in government and private schools:

1. Reduction in the economic and educational disparities among the different social categories.
2. Providing the quality teachers, improvement in infrastructure in government schools.
3. By giving incentives to parents to who are economically poor.
4. Improvement in student-teacher ratio, and reduction in dropout rate among students.

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