

Chapter -I

Introduction

1.0.0 Introduction

A population group at risk of education exclusion as result of sex, location, poverty, disability, ethnicity, language, migration, displacement or other characteristics.

- *Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO)*

1.1.0 Disadvantaged Groups

As per National Education Policy 2020 - Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) can be broadly categorized based on gender identities (particularly female and transgender individuals), socio-cultural identities (such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and minorities), geographical identities (such as students from villages, small towns, and aspirational districts), disabilities (including learning disabilities), and socio-economic conditions (such as migrant communities, low income households, learners in vulnerable situations, victims of or learners of victims of trafficking, orphans including child beggars in urban areas, and the urban poor).

Learners of Disadvantage groups face a myriad of issues and challenges that hinder their development and integration into mainstream society. One of the primary concerns is the lack of access to quality education, leading to limited opportunities for skill development and employment. This is exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, insufficient resources, and a shortage of trained teachers in schools catering to these groups. Furthermore, these communities face significant health challenges, including limited access to healthcare facilities, inadequate sanitation, and poor nutrition. This results in higher mortality rates, malnutrition, and a range of health problems that further entrench their disadvantage. The absence of social security measures and lack of access to government schemes and programs also leaves them vulnerable to economic shocks and exploitation.

Discrimination and social exclusion are pervasive, with these groups facing bias and prejudice in various aspects of life, including education, employment, and social interactions. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and disadvantage, making it challenging for individuals to break free from their socio-economic circumstances. The lack of representation and participation in decision-making processes further marginalizes these groups, denying them a voice in shaping policies and programs that affect their lives. In addition, socio-economic disadvantage groups in India face significant barriers in accessing credit, technology, and markets, hindering their ability

to engage in productive economic activities. The absence of social and economic safety nets means that they are often forced to rely on informal and exploitative mechanisms, perpetuating their disadvantage. Climate change and environmental degradation also disproportionately affect these communities, threatening their livelihoods and well-being.

1.2.0 About Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya

The National Policy on Education-1986 envisaged setting up of residential schools, to be called Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, that would bring out the best of rural talent. It was felt that learners with special talent or aptitude should be provided opportunities to progress at a faster pace by making good quality education available to them irrespective of their capacity to pay for it. Such education would enable students from rural areas to compete with their urban counterparts on an equal footing; seamlessly assimilating and integrating them into the mainstream of the society. Navodaya Vidyalaya System which began as a unique experiment, is today unparalleled in the annals of school education in India and elsewhere. Its significance lies in the selection of talented rural learners as the target group and the attempt to provide them quality education comparable to the best in a residential school system.

1.2.1 Objectives of Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti

To establish, endow, maintain, control and manage Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (hereafter called the 'JNVs') and to do all acts and things necessary for or conducive to the promotion of such schools which will have the following objectives:

- to provide good quality modern education-including a strong component of culture inculcation of values, awareness of the environment, adventure activities and physical education- to the talented learners predominantly from the rural areas without regard to their family's socio-economic condition,
- to provide facilities, at a suitable stage, for instruction through a common medium, viz., Hindi and English, all over the country,
- offer a common core-curriculum to ensure comparability in standards and to facilitate and understand the common and composite heritage of our people,
- to progressively bring students from one part of the country to another in each school to promote national integration and enrich the social content,

- to serve as a focal point for improvement in quality of school education through training of teachers in live situations and sharing of experiences and facilities,
- to establish, develop, maintain and manage hostels for the residence of students of JNVs,
- to aid, establish and conduct other institutions as may be required for the furtherance of the Society's objects in any part of India, and
- to do all such things as may be considered necessary, incidental or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the objects of the society.

Admission in JNVs is primarily for learners from the rural areas, with provision of at least 75% seats for rural learners. Seats are reserved for learners from SC& ST communities in proportion to their population in the district but not less than the national average. 27% reservation is provided to the OBC students over and above reservation of SCs& STs. 1/3 of the seats are filled by girl students. 3% of the seats are reserved for PH categories. JNVs aim at inculcating values of national integration through migration scheme. Migration is an inter-regional exchange of students between Hindi and Non-Hindi speaking districts, which takes place for one academic year in Class-IX. Efforts are made to promote better understanding of the unity in diversity and to develop and promote understanding of the rich cultural heritage through various activities.

1.3.0 Historical Background of Addressing Issues and Challenges of Disadvantaged Groups

Post-independent India has witnessed a plethora of policies, commissions, 5-Year Plans, and committees aimed at addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by disadvantaged groups. The Constitution of India itself provides safeguards for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) through reservations in education, employment, and political representation. The Kaka Kalelkar Commission (1955) and Mandal Commission (1980) recommended reservations for OBCs, while the Sachar Committee (2006) identified socio-economic disparities faced by Minorities, leading to the Ranganath Misra Commission's (2007) recommendation of reservations for Minorities. The National Advisory Council (2010) focused on inclusive growth and social protection, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. Successive governments have implemented various programs and schemes to address the socio-economic challenges faced by disadvantaged groups.

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Bharat Nirman aimed at urban and rural infrastructure development, while the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) focused on promoting livelihoods for rural poor. The Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) and Stand-up India initiatives aimed at financial inclusion and entrepreneurship development.

The 5-Year Plans have consistently emphasized the need for inclusive growth, social justice, and equality. The 11th Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) focused on "Inclusive Growth," while the 12th Plan (2012-2017) emphasized "Faster, More Inclusive and Sustainable Growth." The 13th Plan (2017-2022) prioritized "Transforming India" through inclusive growth, social protection, and targeted interventions.

Committees like the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), and National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) monitor and evaluate progress, making recommendations for improvement. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and Ministry of Minority Affairs have been established to specifically address the concerns of disadvantaged groups.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 was a landmark policy aimed at addressing the socio-economic disparities in education. The policy recognized the need to address the educational needs of disadvantaged groups, including Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), minorities, and women. To address these challenges, the NPE 1986 made several recommendations. The policy emphasized the need for equalization of educational opportunities, ensuring that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality education. The policy also recommended the recruitment of teachers from these communities to serve as role models and to ensure cultural sensitivity. The NPE 1986 recognized the importance of vocational education and training in enabling disadvantaged groups to acquire employable skills. The policy recommended the establishment of vocational training centers, especially in rural areas, to provide training in traditional crafts, agriculture, and other skills relevant to the local economy.

The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, (2012) is a landmark legislation aimed at ensuring that all learners in India, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality education. The Act makes several recommendations to address the issues and challenges faced

by learners from socio-economic disadvantage groups. The RTE Act emphasizes the importance of free and compulsory education for all learners between the ages of 6 and 14, regardless of their socio-economic background. This ensures that learners from disadvantaged groups have access to education without any financial burden. The Act recommends the establishment of neighborhood schools, ensuring that learners from disadvantaged areas have access to schools within their vicinity. The Act emphasizes the need for inclusive education, ensuring that learners from disadvantaged groups, including those with disabilities, have access to quality education. The RTE Act provides for a grievance redressal mechanism, ensuring that learners from disadvantaged groups have a platform to voice their concerns and seek redressal.

Samagra Shiksha 2018-19 is a flagship program of the Government of India aimed at addressing the educational needs of learners from socio-economic disadvantage groups. The program recommends several measures to address the issues and challenges faced by these learners. Samagra Shiksha emphasizes the need for inclusive education, ensuring that all learners, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality education. The program recommends the establishment of special schools, hostels, and scholarships for disadvantaged groups, including Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), and minorities.

Despite these efforts, issues and challenges in education persist, and new initiatives are needed to address emerging issues. The post-independent policies, commissions, 5-Year Plans, committees, RTE ACT -2009 and Samagra Shiksha have laid a foundation for addressing socio-economic disadvantage, but sustained commitment and innovative solutions are required to ensure inclusive growth and social justice for all.

1.4.0 A Brief Status of Overview of ‘SEDGs’ in NEP-2020

6.2.1. According to U-DISE 2016-17 data, about 19.6% of students belong to Scheduled Castes at the primary level, but this fraction falls to 17.3% at the higher secondary level. These enrolment drop-offs are more severe for Scheduled Tribes students (10.6% to 6.8%), and differently-abled children (1.1% to 0.25%), with even greater declines for female students within each of these categories. The decline in enrolment in higher education is even steeper.

6.2.2. A multiplicity of factors, including lack of access to quality schools, poverty, social mores & customs, and language have had a detrimental effect on rates of enrolment and retention among the Scheduled Castes. Bridging these gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes of children belonging to Scheduled Castes will continue to be one of the major goals. Also, the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) which have been identified on the basis of historically being socially and educationally backward also need special focus.

6.2.3. Tribal communities and children from Scheduled Tribes also face disadvantages at multiple levels due to various historical and geographical factors. children from tribal communities often find their school education irrelevant and foreign to their lives, both culturally and academically. While several programmatic interventions to uplift learners from tribal communities are currently in place, and will continue to be pursued, special mechanisms need to be made to ensure that children belonging to tribal communities receive the benefits of these interventions.

6.2.4. Minorities are also relatively underrepresented in school and higher education. The Policy acknowledges the importance of interventions to promote education of learners belonging to all minority communities, and particularly those communities that are educationally underrepresented.

6.2.5. The Policy also recognizes the importance of creating enabling mechanisms for providing Children With Special Needs (CWSN) or Divyang, the same opportunities of obtaining quality education as any other child.

6.2.6. Separate strategies will be formulated for focused attention on reducing the social category gaps in school education as outlined in the following sub-sections.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 makes several provisions to address the issues and challenges in education faced by learners from socio-economic disadvantage groups in India. Some of the basic provisions include emphasis on inclusive education, targeted interventions for disadvantaged groups, to address their unique challenges, establishment of Special Education Zones in disadvantaged areas, emphasis on vocational education, increased scholarships, teacher training, community engagement, technology-enabled learning, robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks, increased allocation, collaboration and partnerships.

1.5.0 Need of The Study

Despite these efforts, issues and challenges of the learners of disadvantaged groups persist, thus purpose of this study is to identify the issues and challenges faced in education of learners of disadvantaged groups in JNVs.

1.6.0 Statement of The Problem

The problem is stated as follow, **“A Study of Issues and Challenges in Education of Learners of Disadvantaged Groups of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas”**.

1.7.0 Objectives of The Study

This study will be carried out in PM Shri Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Lalmatia, Godda, Jharkhand. The objectives of this study are: -

- I. To study the issues and challenges in education faced by female students.
- II. To study the issues and challenges in education faced by students of Socio- Cultural groups.
- III. To study the issues and challenges in education faced by rural and urban students.
- IV. To study the issues and challenges in education faced by Children With Special Needs (CWSN).
- V. To study the issues and challenges in educating learners of Disadvantaged groups faced by teachers.