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Vocational Education of Vocational Education of Disadvantaged Groups and The Facilities in China and India

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ABSTRACT:
Vocational education is a necessity for anyone who wishes to succeed in today's society. Whether the student learns through formal or informal teaching methods, it is essential that he/she acquires the basic skills of literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving (i.e. the process of critically thinking through a problem to reach the best possible solution). As well as an understanding of the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that individuals should acquire in order to participate actively within their society. Without such educational attainments an individual's ability to improve their quality of life and make informed decisions will be negatively influenced. This paper attempts to compare the vocational education systems of China and India from the viewpoint of two Vocational Education of Disadvantaged populations. Specifically, Vocational students from migrant populations in China and the Shudras populations within India's Hindu caste system will be discussed, and also facilities in their vocational school.

Keywords: *Vocational Education, Facilities, China, India*

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "silently excluded" to describe students who are enrolled and attending school, but learning little [1], [2]. When you put this term into context, it's easy to envision students who sit in classrooms and make a conscious decision not to learn. Within my own personal experience as a teacher, I can vividly recall students staring into space or engrossed in their cell phones as I competed for their attention within a segmented two-hour course period. Within that circumstance, those 'silently excluded' students can include themselves by simply paying attention and participating in class. However, what can be said to explain the silent exclusion of students who are denied an education through the subtle methods of gentle discrimination?

It seems Lewin is pointing to a much deeper problem in his description of the 'silently excluded' and he is not alone in his observation. Elizabeth King, the Director of Education in the Human Development Network of The World Bank, stated although millions more children go to school, young people are leaving school without having learned much at all [3]. The significant increase in enrollments experienced within the last two decades has suddenly swung open the doorof education to millions of students. Yet this unprecedented expansion in enrollments is calling attention to a much bigger challenge – how to prevent the 'silent exclusion' of students from Vocational Education of Disadvantaged populations. For these students, their exclusion from education may be intentional and structured by factors beyond their control.

1.1 Comparative Education Research: Units of Comparison

The units of comparison are the cultures and primary education systems of China and India. [4], [5] framework for comparative education analyses will also be utilized in the comparison of 'other groups' (i.e., Migrants and Shudras) at levels 5 – 7 (schools, classrooms, and individuals).

1.2 Comparability

The primary education of Migrant and Dalit populations share comparability within cultural equivalence, (i.e. the exclusionary and discriminatory practices received by both groups are perceived or judged in the same way and have the same meaning [hindering both populations access to their basic learning needs] within these different cultures [6]–[8]. Both countries are similarly situated in terms of population density, and recent economic advancements within their economies. Both countries agreed to meet the Education for All 2015 deadline, and have made significant improvements within their education systems within the last twenty years. Together China and India have the first and second largest education systems in the world.

As the rapid advancements of these developing countries continue to move forward, challenges of inclusion remain within their respective societies. The countries attempt to provide education to the marginalized is shining a light on the hidden biases still lurking within the larger society. A brief historical review of China's Migrant population and India's Shudras population may be helpful in explaining the author's decision to label these two groups as Vocational Education of Disadvantaged, and is provided in the following sections [8]–[10].

1.3 Limitations

Limitations within this paper concerning research detailing the establishment of separate schools for Shudra primary students proved difficult for the author. Consequently, references to separate schools in India are vaguely discussed within the paper, and an in-depth comparison of separate schools for Migrants and Shudra students was intentionally omitted from this paper. Though sections of this study will make general references to the existence of these schools. It should also be noted, the author's relatively a novice in this field of study and this is her first attempt at writing a comparative research paper. Therefore, formatting errors may occur and are apologized for in advance.

2. THE HISTORY OF CHINA'S MIGRANT POPULATION

During the 1950's, China established a special household registration system (known as hukou) in order to deter the rural population from moving to urban areas and to keep the price of grain low enough to support a high rate of industrialization in cities.

There are several theories tied to the origins of India's caste system, however further discussion into those theories is beyond the scope of this paper. What can be said with a modicum of academic certainty is the earliest textual representation of the caste system was found in the Purusha Sukta, a hymn in the Rigveda, a

According to [11] citizens born under the hukou system in urban areas are officially registered as 'residents' and those in rural areas are registered as 'peasants'.

The influence of these classifications created a 'caste-like system of social stratification' between urban citizens and their rural counterparts [12]-[14]. 'Residents' and peasants are therefore two distinct categories of social status that confer different rights to Chinese citizens. One's classification as resident or peasant determined not only one's place of residence, but also the benefits one could receive from the state. Residents had access to state-subsidized benefits such as food, life employment, medical insurance, housing, social security, and pensions [15]. Peasants were barred from these entitlements.

One's hukou status was passed through the maternal line. So if a peasant woman married a resident man, their child was still tied to her peasant status and could potentially be denied access to urban benefits for the duration of his or her life.

Prior to the 1980s, the hukou system was maintained by two methods. The first method was a strict rationing system, which only provided basic goods to citizens with an urban hukou. The second method, were neighborhood watch committees or jumin weiyuanhu [16]. These committees reported newcomers to the authorities, and effectively reinforced an 'us-and-them' mentality within the society by further solidifying the notion that urban status was superior to rural status and should be protected.

In the mid-1980s, large scale rural-to-urban migration became possible and the strict implementation of hukou laws was relaxed. Millions of peasants moved to urban areas seeking employment and the rapidly growing private sector was able to benefit from the influx of low-paid laborers. The large income gap between cities and countryside, and the increasing availability of work in construction, manufacturing, and service sectors in China's urban areas has only grown larger since then.

Today, migrants still pour into urban cities with dreams of making their fortunes and improving their positions in life, but those dreams are seldom realized. In actuality, [12], [17] reports show that most migrants still find it hard to integrate into urban life and be treated fairly.

2.1 The Ati Shudras of India's Hindu Caste System

foundational Sanskrit text of the Hindu tradition [18]. However, attempts to discover how long India's caste system has been practiced resulted in numbers ranging from 3,000 years to 30,000 years.

The Hindu caste system divides society into four broad categories of Brahmins (preists), Kshatriyas

(warriors), Vaishyas (traders), and Shudras (menial workers). The castes of Ati Shudras (performing the most menial tasks) were designated as outside the four–fold caste system. Today, these 'outcastes' are referred to as Scheduled Castes.

[19] noted the term Scheduled Castes is listed within India's Constitution and is now used to refer to communities listed within Government documents as 'outcastes'(i.e. Shudras). The term 'Dalit' (meaning oppressed) emerged from within the Shurdas community to highlight their troubled status and establish their unique identity within Hindu society. For the duration of this paper, the term Dalit will be used to refer to the Shudras population.

Historically, Dalit communities were systematically segregated from the rest of the village and were denied access to education, housing and land. Public places such as wells for drinking water, restaurants, toilets, and many other civic facilities were also out of bounds for them [18].

Today, caste is no longer the definitive mode of organizing economic and social relations in India, but it continues to have a lasting impact on the economic, political and social life of communities. Nonetheless, infringements on Dalit populations civil rights continues, and instances of violent reprisals against groups who demand equal social status are not uncommon, despite legal prohibitions against caste-based discrimination.

One reason for civil rights protest from the Dalit community is the caste-based ideology of hereditary occupations. This system prescribes the most menial and lowly of occupations to Dalit groups, such as cleaning out latrines and sewage removal, and has determined the socio-economic life of these communities for generations. The majority of Dalit populations work as landless agricultural laborers. Traditionally Dalit members were denied access to education, and those with education still experienced limited social mobility due to their caste.

3. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

According to [5], [20] state how a student learns depends on presage factors related both to the person and to the learning environment. The creation of academic self-confidence in students motivates them toaccept a greater level of responsibility for their own learning. Such approaches inspire students to move pastgeneral surface level learning and transition into deep and achieving approaches to learning. In doing so students begin to feel more comfortable in their own intelligence and rely more on their own understanding and less on the text-book and teacher.

Societies with populations as vast as China and India use educational access and attainment as the primary mechanism to sort and select subsequent generations into different social and economic roles within the labor market [21]. As a result, students with more education, and the credentials that validate what has been learned, enjoy higher living standards and greater incomes. Who goes to school and has their basic learning needs met is a major determinant of future life chances and mobility out of poverty.

One of the main purposes of education for Dalit and Migrant students is to transform their capabilities so that they may improve their life. If a student's education does not enable them to think, feel and act indifferent ways than it would seem to have little value.

The transformations of Dalit and Migrant capabilities can span many levels. Individuals may be transformed to learn basic skills which have utility or they may acquire new values, aspiration and desires that provide the motivation to transition out of poverty entirely. For this reason, the notion of silent exclusion and discrimination has far reached consequences. Migrant and Dalit students who need education the most are being denied access to an equal education due to the larger society's reluctance to change their ingrained notions of superiority to these populations.

While Dalit and Migrant children have access to primary education, the expansion of education systems which intensify existing disparities is unlikely to contribute to higher rates of inter-generational mobility out of poverty. Education systems are one arena in which China and India can seek to limit inherited disadvantages and promote equal access to opportunity.

When comparing the disadvantages of primary students from Migrants and Dalit populations, Migrant students in China may deal with difficulties, but they stand a far better chance of improving their status in life through education than members of the Dalit population. The exclusionary practices of China's hukou system have only existed for 53 years.

The caste system of India is firmly imbedded within the foundation of Hindu religion, and penetrates a deeper level of psyche within Indian society that traces back thousands of years. Yet despite these differences, discrimination and 'silent exclusion' within primary education systems have the same negative impact on the compulsory educations of Chinese and Indian students. Students from both groups have high dropout rates and those who remain in school, may not learn the basic skills needed to become productive members of their societies.

4. DROPOUTS

Dalit and Migrant children who are in school but at risk of dropping out, typically have low class attendance and are low-achievers academically. Children from these communities who remain in school may be silently excluded if their attendance is sporadic, they cannot follow the curriculum, or if they are discriminated against for socio-cultural reasons [22], [23].

One way of identifying such children is through patterns of attendance and of low academic achievement. The former is readily observable. The latter is more complex. Low achievement in one school may be judged high in another. Making it nearly impossible to reach a definite consensus of how severely Migrant's and Dalit populations are affected by poor learning environments while still enrolled in school.

A Migrant or Dalit student's decision to dropout may be more influenced by relative rather than absolute levels of performance since their decision to leave school is also partly motivated by peers, family, and various outside factors. Note not all Dalit or Migrant students who drop out of school are low achievers. Nevertheless, low achievement leading to slow progression, failure on promotion tests and repetition does seem likely to be exclusionary. Migrant and Dalit children who are at risk of dropping out at levels that show they will not complete primary school successfully, should be viewed as silently excluded. Their access to education is unlikely to be very meaningful if they learn little and then leave.

5. CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGICALISSUES

The marginalization of Dalit and Migrant communities is closely related to their low occupational status, which is predetermined by different caste ideologies (i.e., hukou and Hinduism.) In the agricultural sector, both populations are mostly farmers,while in the non-farm sector they work in jobs that are seen as demeaning and 'inferior' by general society.

The school curriculum of both nations is heavily biased in favour of middle-class professional households and the jobs of Dalit and Migrant populations are rarely, if ever, celebrated or acknowledged for the valuable contributions they havemade to the larger urban societies of China and India. Textbooks represent middle class lifestyles and preferences, and often portray them as models to emulate[18], [24].

The explicit discrimination faced by Dalit and Migrant students from higher caste teachers and students is therefore subtly reinforced through the curriculum used in schools. Dalit and Migrant students are not taught to view the jobs of their parents as valuable to society, and may feel ashamed of their lack of connection to the jobs of the middle class and the lifestyle it affords them.

The absence of any positive representation of the labor of the working poor, and especially of the Dalit communities, alienates these children from their own communities and families and negatively affects their self-esteem. At the primary school level, the curriculum for Dalit students does not teach about their struggles for equity, or the oppressive nature of the caste system. Further, the governments of both nations should provide public schools a curriculum that celebrates the accomplishments of the marginalized classes of Dialet and Migrant students.

6. DALIT STUDENTS AND PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

From pre-colonial times, the system of socially sanctioned discrimination and prejudice against Dalit communities has had far-reaching impacts on the self-worth, dignity and economic life of the Dalit populationin general. The poor educational achievements of Dalit populations can be best understood in the deeply embedded caste and social hierarchies that are translated into everyday social interactions ofcommunity, school, and economic life [16], [25]. Issues of self-worth, dignity and livelihoods that school education has failed to address or even acknowledge are further compounded in the case of Dalit communities.

The demand for schooling by Dalit populations has not been matched by supply of quality education options. On the contrary the quality of education and environment in government schools has declined over the years and today not just the rich, but those with middle incomes prefer to send their children to privateschools. Parents who can access private schools opt forthem, and the majority of Dalit populations remain in poorly equipped government facilities.

Poor facilities and failure to provide basic amenitiesin government schools is part of the hidden curriculumof silent exclusion and gentle discrimination, a hidden curriculum that Dalit students are forced to endure and teachers of higher caste endorse. The poor treatment Dalit primary students receive from their education systems results in poor performance in examinations, thus undermining Dalit students' opportunities to progress to higher levels of education, despite the student's willingness or desire to learn.

Concerns about this problem has led sections of Dalit communities to advocate for separate schools fortheir

children in which they are taught by teachers whocan relate to their students and are able to develop a positive sense of self. Some separate schools have been established with support from non-government entities and, in rare cases, on the initiative of the government.

The use of values, such as equality and fairness in the classroom, are crucial to creating an affirmative and positive learning environment for excluded communities. As the prime authority in the classroom, teachers must promote such values. However, teachersdo not work in a vacuum and it is as important that the basic infrastructure in government schools attendedmostly by Dalit children, is radically altered to a comparable position with private schools or publicschools in higher caste areas.

6.1 Migrant Students in Public Primary Schools

Public schools (also referred to as State schools) inChina receive government support to assist with the school's funding needs. The perceived quality of a public school is directly linked to its physical location. Due to the economic reforms China has enjoyed, publicschools in urban areas typically have better education.
facilities, teaching staff, and teaching quality than schools in rural areas. Rural areas have not developed economically in a comparable rate with urban areas. Asa result, public schools in urban areas are viewed as attractive options to many migrant parents.

This perception with the added weight of internal migration has created tension between the urban and migrant classes as schools try to accommodate a growing number of students into schools with a limitednumber of seats. Most often, it is the children of migrantworkers who are denied access to public schoolingwhen admission criteria cannot be met by their parents.In the 27 years since education became compulsory, migrant children have faced challenges that have hindered their attempts to acquire a primary education that met their basic learning needs.

Migrant children were denied admission to urban school until 1996, when the Ministry of Education mandated that local governments provide migrant children access to compulsory education. However, access, did not translate into admission, and schools were able to evade this regulation by allowing urban students to enroll first. If there were still slots available for additional students, the school would then only admit migrant students whose parents could afford the additional fees taxed on them by the school [26].

In 2005, the Notice of Improving Education of Children of Rural Migrant Workers, affirmed, for the first time, that a migrant child should receive a free compulsory education. Despite a series of government policies that endorse fee waivers for migrant children, school administrators also circumvented these policies and charge admission fees (e.g., 'donations') to migrant parents. Fees usually total a few thousand yuan per year, but can be as high as￥30,000. Such fees are up to six times what resident urban families pay for educational expenses.

7. PROBLEM OF FEES FOR POOR MIGRANT AND DALIT PRIMARY STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Some Primary schools inboth China and India use fees as an effective method of preventing poor Migrant and Dalit students from entering their schools. For perspective, low-income migrants in China on average earned less than ￥1,000 per month in the late 1990s, around ￥1,500 by the mid-2000s, and close to ￥1,700 in 2010 [27].
With financial barriers such as additional costs for schooling, migrant parents who cannot afford to send for Dalit and Migrant populations will require significant reforms addressing the problems of silent exclusion and discrimination, discussed within this paper, in a comprehensive manner.

To bring about equity in education for excluded Dalits and Migrant students, some scholars advocate a framework of social justice that goes beyond concerns of equity in the context of access, participation, and outcomes and instead favor approaches which emphasize qualitative aspects of the educational experience and their impact on identity, self-worth andfuture life chances [7], [8], [25].

This, they argue, is needed to address the systematic effects discrimination has had on the psycheof students, and can only take place in schools that are set up exclusively for Dalit and Migrant students and taught by teachers that are invested in the success of these students [25]While other scholars view this option as discriminatory in and of itself and counterproductive to inclusions measures to assimilatethe marginalized into the larger society.

Educators remain divided on how best to provide quality education that will bring about substantial improvements in the lives of Dalit and Migrant communities, whether through Public or separate schools, there is consensus that education is a critical resource in addressing the needs of these Vocational Education of Disadvantaged groups.

China and India continue to make strong advances in providing Migrant and Dalit communities' access to primary education, however access has little meantunless it results in: regular attendance by teachers and students; meaningful progression through a socially inclusive curriculum; measured learning outcomes; andpathways to affordable access to post primary education.

8. CONCLUSION

China and India's government places great emphasis on the importance of education for economic development. However, the nation's policies cannot assist Dalit or Migrant children if the larger society continues to hinder their opportunities for education through discriminatory practices and silent exclusion. Across the globe, studies have repeatedly shown that lack of adequate education not only has negative consequences for children themselves, but also negative consequences for society as a whole.

There is a lack of research concerning the effects of discrimination and exclusion on primary students in Dalit and Migrant communities. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the Dalit and Migrant children in poorly funded public primary schools who struggle socially and academically, and especially the children currently not enrolled at all, face challenges in their educational pursuits that will only increase as they grow older. If these challenges are not addressed successfully, it may have a serious impact on the future development of China and India.

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