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## An Overview Of Status Of Higher Education In Respect To Caste Composition In West Bengal, India

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**Abstract:** Higher education plays an important role in the social, economic and scientific development of a nation. Higher education in India has increased tremendously regarding enrolment of students and in the number of institutions in recent years. There is considerable inequality and diversity in the field of higher education throughout India. The State of West Bengal has had a great legacy of higher education; it was the mine of education in post-independence India. The present study try to highlight the disparities in higher education in terms of gross enrolment, caste-wise gross enrolment in various programme and number of colleges and universities etc. in the state West Bengal and at the same time, this discussion will be judged by the Indian national standard.

**Key Words:** Higher Education, inequality, diversity, disparities, gross enrolment

### Introduction:

"The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence." - Rabindranath Tagore

According to the National Policy on Education (1986), "Higher education provides people with an opportunity to reflect on the critical, social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing humanity." Higher education in India has increased over the years both in terms of number of higher educational institutions and enrolment of students. According to AISHE report of 2019-2020, there are total 1043 Universities and 42343 Colleges in India. It is observed that total 396 Universities are privately managed and 420 Universities are located in rural areas. There are wide variations in the number of higher educational institutions among the states. In India (as per AISHE report 2019-2020) there were 30 colleges per one lakh population (18-23 years) while in West Bengal only 13 colleges per one lakh population (18-23 years). Majority (60.56%) of the Colleges are located in rural areas. Colleges also differ in terms of the number of courses/programmes they offer. 32.6% Colleges are having only one course/programme. Higher educational institutions are broadly two types in terms of their funding - Government run and privately run. 84.1% are privately run. According to

AISHE report (2019-2020), total estimated student enrolment is 3,85,36,359 in the year 2019-2020 out of which nearly 51% were male and 49% were female. Among the total students' enrolment of Scheduled Caste (SC) was 14.7%. Students belonging to Scheduled Tribe (ST) accounted for 5.6% of the total student enrolment and 37% of the total enrolled students belonged to Other Backward Castes (OBC). State-wise and Social Group wise estimated enrolment is given in the following table.

**Table 1: State-wise estimated enrolment for different social groups in India**

Sl	State/Uts	All	SC	ST	OBC
1	Andaman and Nicobar Island	10131	53	437	2661
2	Andhra Pradesh	1897149	316573	88231	837454
3	Arunachal Pradesh	55816	1479	38342	1913
4	Assam	650601	54161	105360	176980
5	Bihar	1738432	198215	30522	814645
6	Chandigarh	106667	12864	1790	6210
7	Chhattisgarh	586395	77630	108887	258595
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	6393	205	1322	588
9	Daman and Diu	3932	229	397	1306
10	Delhi	1132856	162286	15629	189927
11	Goa	52782	1095	4502	9588
12	Gujarat	1544840	141579	160859	486696
13	Haryana	933541	129975	3035	208456
14	Himachal Pradesh	289488	55272	16734	38806
15	Jammu and Kashmir	395416	21005	22342	26000
16	Jharkhand	817560	72902	153526	331632
17	Karnataka	2187892	290162	105761	1100154
18	Kerala	1137853	72272	11237	489448
19	Ladakh	2897	-	2815	14
20	Lakshadweep	560	-	326	-
21	Madhya Pradesh	2182154	331219	215399	875043
22	Maharashtra	4265472	503614	188742	1266417
23	Manipur	124538	6612	35933	40128
24	Meghalaya	87541	1948	68621	3963
25	Mizoram	33236	222	31571	561
26	Nagaland	44561	336	40955	843
27	Odisha	994929	160128	134863	212739
28	Puducherry	80124	10057	1023	48646
29	Punjab	869463	198870	5017	111250

30	Rajasthan	2206517	351441	254029	899999
31	Sikkim	58071	1302	9009	7461
32	Tamilnadu	3520311	613884	32766	2144987
33	Telangana	1389608	209517	108637	627242
34	Tripura	86247	14116	18286	15292
35	Uttar Pradesh	6388214	1178798	49535	2589520
36	Uttarakhand	493279	70771	17436	85177
37	West Bengal	2160893	396880	72233	338773
<b>38</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>3853635</b> <b>9</b>	<b>5657672</b>	<b>2156109</b>	<b>1424911</b> <b>4</b>

Source: AISHE Report, 2019 -20, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

### Programme-wise enrolment for different social groups in India:

According to AISHE report (2020), social group wise enrolment of various programmes in higher educational institutions in India is presented in the following table:

**Table2: Programme-wise estimated enrolment for different social groups in India**

SL	Programme	SC	ST	OBC	Total
1	B.A. (Hons)- Bachelor of Arts	227819	210189	619628	1770520
2	B.SC. (Hons) Bachelor of Science	70466	42460	226565	640183
3	B.Com. Bachelor of Commerce	488218	145084	1584164	4162555
4	B.A. - Bachelor of Arts	1756481	736189	3557266	9655586
5	B.SC. - Bachelor of Science	661863	225245	2138586	4706869
6	B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education)	257738	90567	468319	1371134
7	B.P.Ed. (Bachelor of Physical Education)	6705	2124	11250	35825
8	M.A. (Master of Arts)	79759	39296	188840	656154
9	M.SC.- (Master of Science)	10626	3601	43712	109459
10	M.Com.- (Master of Commerce)	10626	3207	40653	144284

Source: AISHE Report, 2019 -20, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

### Glimpses of the higher education in West Bengal:

The literacy rate of West Bengal is 77.08% as per the census report in the year of 2011. According to this report, out of the total population (91, 276,115), 61,538,281 people are literate. The male literacy rate is 81.69% while female literacy is 70.54%. There are approximately 500 degree colleges and 33 universities in this state for higher education. The following table presents the number of higher educational institutes /universities /colleges in West Bengal.

**Table 3: List of universities and number of affiliated colleges in West Bengal**

<b>Central University and Institutes</b>			
<b>Sl.</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Established</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Visva-Bharati University	1921	Santiniketan
2	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta	1961	Joka
3	IISER, Kolkata	2006	Haringhata
4	IIT, Kharagpur	1951	Kharagpur
5	IIST, Shibpur	1856	Howrah
6	IIIT, Kalyani	2014	Kalyani
7	National Institute of Technology, Durgapur	1960	Durgapur
8	NIPER, Kolkata	2007	Kolkata
9	All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Kalyani	2019	Kalyani

<b>State Public University</b>				
<b>Sl.</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Established</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Affiliated Colleges</b>
1	Aliah University	2008	Kolkata	Autonomous
2	Bankura University	2014	Bankura	25
3	Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya	1974	Nadia	Autonomous
4	University of Burdwan	1960	Burdwan	237
5	University of Calcutta	1857	Kolkata	148
6	Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University	2012	Cooch Behar	18
7	Diamond Harbour Women's University	2013	Diamond Harbour	-
8	University of Gour Banga	2008	Malda	23
9	Jadavpur University	1955	Jadavpur	
10	University of Kalyani	1960	Kalyani	63
11	Kazi Nazrul University	2012	Asansol	21

12	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology	2000	Kolkata	196
13	Netaji Subhas Open University	1998	Kolkata	100StudyCentre
14	University of North Bengal	1962	Siliguri	62
15	Presidency University	1817	Kolkata	-
16	Rabindra Bharati University	1962	Kolkata	-
17	Raiganj University	2015	Raiganj	3
18	Senate of Serampore College (University)	1818	Serampore	59
19	Sidho Kanho Birsha University	2010	Purulia	31
20	The Sanskrit College and University	2015	Kolkata	-
21	Uttar Banga Krishi Vishwavidyalaya	2001	Cooch Behar	-
22	Vidyasagar University	1981	Midnapur	75
23	West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences	1999	Kolkata	-
24	West Bengal State University	2008	Barasat	53
25	West Bengal University of Animal and Fishery Sciences	1995	Kolkata	-
26	West Bengal University of Health Sciences	2003	Kolkata	124
27	West Bengal University of Teachers' Training, Education Planning and Administration	2015	Kolkata	462

Deemed to be University			
Sl.	University	Established	Location
1	Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science	1876	Kolkata
2	Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute	2005	Belur Math

Source: AISHE2015-16 & Department of Higher Education, Govt. of West Bengal.

### Caste-wise enrolment in higher education in West Bengal:

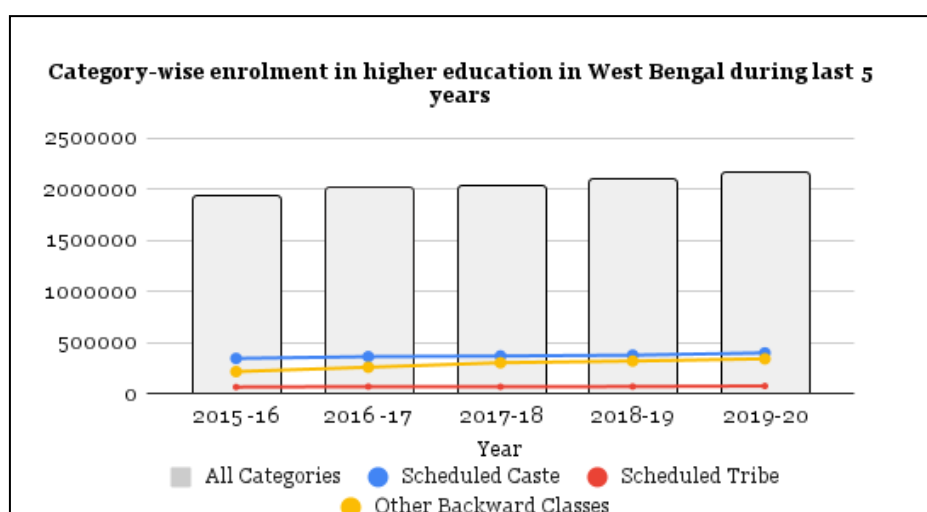
According to AISHE report (2019-2020), social groups wise enrolment of higher education in West Bengal in last 5 years presented in the following table (Table 4). It is noticed that there is large gap in numbers of enrolment from 2015-16 year to 2019-2020 year. In the year of 2015-2016, the enrolment of scheduled Caste (SC) students

was 17.78%, Scheduled Tribe (ST) students was 3.24% and Other Backward Classes (OBC) students was 11.08% of total enrolment. In the year of 2019-2020, it remains change in percentages of students for enrolment in various categories such as 18.37% SC students, 3.34% ST students and 15.68% OBC students have enrolled in higher education.

**Table 4: Category-wise enrolment in higher education in West Bengal during last 5 years:**

West Bengal	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Other Backward Classes	All Categories
2015 -16	342625	62403	213599	1926500
2016 -17	359975	66767	256154	2015996
2017-18	366813	64960	300460	2035981
2018-19	374855	67170	316965	2097410
2019-20	396880	72233	338773	2160893

Source: AISHE Report, 2019 -20, Ministry of Human Resource Development



### Programme wise enrolment for different social groups in West Bengal:

The large disparities can be noticed in enrolment of different social groups in programmes such as undergraduate (UG) and Post Graduate (PG) in higher education in West Bengal. The number of enrolments is very low in ST groups, while SCs are still remain most disadvantaged groups in the field of higher education in West Bengal. To remove these disparities, the state government has started few welfare schemes along with provision scholarship and other educational incentives for the socially backward sections of the society for the betterment of the people of the state.

**Table 5: Programme wise estimated enrolment for different social groups in West Bengal**

Level	Actual Admitted	Unreserved	SC	ST	OBC	Total
UG	432998	270325	101472	12342	77810	4,59,813
PG	35744	19434	7978	1142	7899	36383
UG + PG	468742	289759	109450	13484	85709	4,96,196
<b>Total Percentage</b>	-	58.39608	22.058	2.7175	17.2732	100

Source: Department of Higher Education, Govt. of West Bengal, Annual Report.

**The number of universities in West Bengal and in India:**

The following table is indicated the number of different types of universities in West Bengal along with India. There are only 01 central university and 26 state public universities in West Bengal. Government should take initiatives to establish more universities in West Bengal so that more students can do their higher study in their state.

**Table 6: Type wise number of universities in West Bengal and in India**

Sl.	Type of Universities	West Bengal	India
1	Central University	1	46
2	Central open University	0	1
2	Institute of National Importance	7	127
4	State Public University	26	371
5	Institute under State Legislature Act	0	5
6	State Open University	1	14
7	State Private University	12	304
8	State Private Open University	0	1
9	Deemed University Government	0	34
10	Deemed University Government Aided	0	10
11	Deemed University Private	2	80
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>993</b>

Source: AISHE Report, 2019 -20, Ministry of Human Resource Development

**Growth of number of colleges in India and West Bengal:**

As per AISHE report of various years, expansion of colleges is thoroughly observed in India and West Bengal. The following table presents the year wise growth of colleges in

India and West Bengal. The teacher training colleges are also included in list of West Bengal. The rapidly growth of private education sector is one of the causes to increase in higher educational institutions in West Bengal from the year of 2017 to 2018.

**Table 7: Growth of number of colleges in India and West Bengal**

Year	In India	West Bengal
2010-2011	32974	857
2011-2012	34852	901
2012-2013	35525	955
2013-2014	36634	985
2014-2015	38498	1051
2015-2016	39071	1082
2016-2017	40026	1208
2017-2018	39050	1341
2018-2019	39931	1371
2019-2020	42343	1411

Source: AISHE Report, Ministry of Human Resource Development

### Conclusion:

It is revealed from the entire analysis that the state of West Bengal has playing a crucial part in the development of higher education in India. It expanded with the number of establishments of new HIEs in the recent years. It is true that some positive initiatives have been taken in some respects. There is only one university which operated through central Govt. and need more such type of universities in the state especially in the remote areas. It is also noticed that private educational institutions have been increased rapidly during 2016 to 2018 year. It promotes educational opportunities but not among disadvantages groups in our society. It has been the same time concern for the quality of higher education and raises question about equity.

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