Scholastic Achievement of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University, Assam in relation to Socio-Economic Status

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an important factor of human resource development. Along with economic development and empowerment, it forms the hub of every social and human development doctrines. Scholastic Achievement is the core of entire educational growth. It is considered as an important goal of education. In the present competitive age, each and every individual is aware about the value of education. They stress on good scholastic performance as the key factor for personal progress. But Scholastic Achievement of the students may not be according to the expectations due to some factors. Review of related literature proved that achievement of students was related with some individual, social, psychological and economic variables namely intelligence, anxiety, socio economic status, Attitude towards Higher education, Settlement, achievement motivation, study habits, parental encouragement etc. All these influencing factors of scholastic achievement are known as associated variables or correlates of achievement which influence scholastic achievement of the students in different degrees.

As no much work has been carried out on these correlates of achievement especially in the field of higher education in Assam, therefore, an attempt was made in this direction to find out the relationship between socio-economic status and scholastic

achievement of the post graduate students of Dibrugarh University in the form of the present study.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

Dibrugarh University, the easternmost University of India was set up in 1965 under the provisions of the Dibrugarh University Act, 1965 enacted by the Assam Legislative Assembly. It is a teaching-cum-affiliating University involved in imparting higher education in various branches of learning in Arts, Commerce, Engineering, Medical, Pharmaceutical sciences, Law, Science and Technology, Computer Sciences, Management and Teachers' Training. There is a continuous effort to upgrade its status and quality to meet the global challenges effectively with different reforms and innovations in education.

There is a great competition to get admission into different post-graduate courses offered in the university and the students with very high percentage at graduation level only get opportunity to study in various courses of the university. But gradually it is found that there is a high rate of failure among postgraduate students each year. The dropouts may be due to factors related to the inability of the students to perform well in Post-graduate courses. If proper correlates of Post-Graduate achievement could be found out it would help students to take the courses according to their abilities in terms of those correlates.

Poor socio-economic background tend to act as a reason of poor scholastic performance signify that the children belonging to economically poor families are not able to perform well. This may be due to deprived educational facilities available to them. But it is not same with the child of better socio-economic status group. They certainly get more educational facilities needed to improve their educational performance like books, adequate learning materials of better quality and quantity as compared to poor socio-economic group. Thus, socio-economic status of the students may influence the scholastic achievement of the students.

The study may be beneficial for teachers, parents, students etc. in creating a beneficial atmosphere which may contribute to the better scholastic achievement of the student.

Though many researchers conducted different study on associated variables of scholastic performance of students however, a comprehensive research work focusing the closely related psycho-social, intellectual variables in academic achievement of the post-graduate students could not be located. So, much works needs to be done with reference to each variable and its relations with each other. Thus, the present study aims at a new standpoint, with an earnest attempt to throw light on the relationship between socio-economic status and scholastic achievement of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the present study are-

1.   To study the level of scholastic achievement of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University.
2.   To study the level of socio-economic status of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University.
3.   To study the relationship between scholastic achievement and socio-economic status of the post- graduate students of Dibrugarh University.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the findings of different related studies, following research questions and hypotheses were formulated for testing in the present study:

1.   What is the level of scholastic achievement of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University?
2.   What is the level of socio-economic status of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University?
3.   There is a significant positive correlation between scholastic achievement and socio-economic status of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University.

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS USED

The conceptual and operational definitions of the key terms used in the present study are as follows:

Scholastic Achievement: Scholastic Achievement refers to the extent up to which a student is able to acquire the content at the completion of prescribed course or instruction. It is generally expressed in terms of percentage, marks, division, class, grade etc. In the present study, scholastic achievement refers to the marks obtained by the post-graduate students in their in and end semester examinations.

Socio-economic status: Status denotes the designation or rank of an individual in the society. Socio-economic status is the combination of two terms namely social status and economic status of the individual. It is generally judged on the basis of parent's education, occupation, monthly income, caste, neighbour's perspective, material capital, cultural living, standard of living, social services and participation etc. In this study, socio-economic status refers to the socio-economic background of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University and is interpreted as the score obtained in the Socio-economic status scale developed by R. L. Bharadwaj.

METHODOLOGY

1. **Method**: Considering the nature of data collection Descriptive method was adopted in the present study.

2. **Population:** The population of the study comprised of all the post-graduate students enrolled in the 15 general post-graduate departments of Dibrugarh University in the academic sessions 2007-08, 2008-2009 and 2009-10.

3. **Sample:** For the study, the researcher had selected 9 general post-graduate Departments of Dibrugarh University using non-probability sampling technique (purposive sampling). Then a sample of 550 students was selected using incidental sampling technique. The sample of the study is represented in the following table –

Table 1

Sample of the Study

Sl.No	Name of the Departments	No. of students selected
1	Education	76
2	English	96
3	Political Science	11
4	Sociology	109
5	Anthropology	28
6	Life Sciences	81
7	Mathematics	40
8	Physics	24
9	Commerce	85

Total=550

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

In the present study**,** following tools were used to collect data-

1. **Socio-economic status scale:** The scale was developed by R. L. Bharadwaj and adapted by the investigator is a questionnaire designed to elicit information regarding socio-economic status of the individuals. The scale consists the areas of social, family, education, profession, caste, total assets and monthly income perspectives and the testees are asked to give responses for father, mother and himself (testee) separately in the scale. It is a self administering scale and suitable for both individual and group testing. Scoring of this socio-economic scale is easy and of a quantitative type. Scoring key provides the weightage score for each and every item.

2. **Scholastic Achievement:** The percentage of marks obtained by the sampled post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University in different semester examinations is considered to be the scholastic achievement of the students. The marks were collected from the Departmental record books.

COLLECTION OF DATA

In order to collect data the investigator had visited the concerned Departments. After getting prior permission from the Head of the Departments the researchers spent few minutes with the students for friendly talk and to provide a tension free atmosphere. Proper seating arrangement was made for the students after establishing the rapport and copying was strictly prohibited by the investigator. The test was then distributed and the students were requested to read the instructions carefully. Necessary oral instructions were given for their proper understanding about the tests as well as their role. When all the students finished answering, the filled-in forms were collected. Later on after announcement of post-graduate end semester examinations results, the investigator had collected the obtained marks of the sample from the record books of the departments.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis were used to study the levels of scholastic achievement and socio-economic status of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University. Percentage was used to convert the marks obtained in different semester examinations.

Product moment co-efficient of correlation was calculated to establish the relationship between scholastic achievement and socio-economic status.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study according to the objectives are as below-

1. **Levels of scholastic achievement:**

Table 2 shows the Department wise levels of scholastic achievement of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University.

TABLE: 2

Showing the Levels of Scholastic Achievement of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University-

Serial No	Departments	Sampled Students (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation(SD)	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Anthropology	28	61.39	5.043	0.576	-0.721
2	Education	76	57.77	4.844	-0.184	0.572
3	English	96	52.32	3.103	0.254	-0.321
4	Political Science	11	57.89	3.989	-0.851	-0.430
5	Sociology	109	55.85	2.850	0.277	-0.116
6	Life Sciences	82	70.87	4.320	-0.003	-0.275
7	Mathematics	40	67.93	6.498	0.355	-1.06
8	Physics	24	64.92	5.261	0.329	-0.814
9	Commerce	84	64.36	5.978	-0.319	-0.390

From the above table it is clear that the scholastic achievement of the post-graduate students of Life Sciences, Mathematics, physics Departments is high in comparison to commerce, Anthropology, Political Science, Education, Sociology and English Departments.

The positively skewed indexes indicate that the distribution of the scholastic achievement scores is skewed positively or to the right. Hence, the scholastic achievement scores are massed at the low end of the scale .

The negatively skewed index indicates that the distributions of the scholastic achievement scores is skewed negatively or to the left .Therefore, scholastic achievement scores are massed at the high end of the scale.

The positive and greater than .263 kurtosis indexes indicates that the distribution of scholastic achievement scores is platykurtic.

The negative kurtosis indexes of the distribution of the scholastic achievement scores means the distribution is leptokurtic.

2. **Levels of Socio-economic status:** Table-3 shows the level of socio-economic status of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University-

TABLE: 3

Level of Socio-Economic Status of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University-

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Socio-Economic Status	705.24	91.41	-0.301	0.406

It is observed from the **Table-3** that the computed value of Mean and standard deviation of the socio-economic status scores of the post -graduate students of Dibrugarh University were 705.24   and 91.41   accordingly.

The computed value of skewness of the distribution was -0.301 which indicates that the distribution of the socio-economic status scores was skewed negatively or to the left .So, scores were massed at the higher end of the scale. Therefore, the socio-economic status of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University was slightly deviate from normality.

The kurtosis value of the distribution was 0.406. So, the distribution of socio-economic status scores is flatter than the normal and platykurtic in nature.

3: Relationship between Scholastic Achievement of the Post- Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University and Socio-Economic Status:

In order to study the interrelationship between Socio-Economic Status and Scholastic Achievement of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University product

moment coefficient of correlation was used. In this context, hypothesis and corresponding null hypothesis were as below-

Hypothesis: There is a significant positive correlation between Scholastic Achievement and Socio-Economic Status of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant positive correlation between Scholastic Achievement and Socio-Economic Status of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University.

Table 4 shows the relationship between Socio-Economic Status and Scholastic Achievement of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University -

TABLE: 4

Relationship between Socio-Economic Status and Scholastic Achievement of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University

Variables	Correlation (r)	Significance
Scholastic Achievement And Socio-Economic Status	0.025	Not significant at .05 level

The product-moment coefficient of correlation (r) between Socio-Economic Status and Scholastic Achievement of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University was 0.025.The 'r' is not significant at .05 level . Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and the research hypothesis - There is a significant positive correlation between Scholastic Achievement and Socio-Economic Status of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University may be rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that socio-economic status has no significant and positive correlation with scholastic achievement of the post-graduate students of Dibrugarh University.

CONCLUSION: Dibrugarh University is in constant search of maintaining and increasing quality in higher education. Though socio-economic status of the student does not play any significant role in scholastic performance of the students according to the present study but the combined effort of institution, teachers and parents are necessary to improve the scholastic performance of the students and help the institution to produce quality output.

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