

A Comparative Study of Socio-Economic Status of Regular and Distance Mode Students at Undergraduate Level

Rahed Razzak Sk¹ and Syed Azeem Akhtar Alvi²

^{1,2}(Research Scholar, Department of Education, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, UP, India)

Abstract: The study aimed to compare the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode students at the undergraduate level. Descriptive type of research design was used and Simple random sampling technique was used to collect the data. The statistic used is t-test. 200 regular and 200 distance mode undergraduate students from colleges of Aligarh were randomly selected. Out of 200 students in regular mode, 100 were male and 100 were female. Similarly, out of 200 distance mode students, 100 were male and 100 were females. The study found a significant difference between the regular and distance mode students as far as their socio-economic status is concerned.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education in India is well developed since ancient times. Nalanda, Vikramshila, and Takshashila were some of the famous universities of ancient India. Learners of all castes and creed were enrolled there (Sharma, R.N., 2000). Similarly, during the medieval period, traditional learning and religion were taught in the Madarsas (Sharma, R.N., 2000). Wood's despatch of 1854 during the British period laid the foundation of modern higher education (Chauhan, C.P.S., 2004). Raja Rammohun Roy established the Hindu college at Calcutta in 1817 which gave modern kind of higher education (Rao, 1991).

After independence, the UGC was established upon the recommendations of the university education commission 1948-49 (Chauhan, C.P.S., 2004). The Calcutta university commission proposed the 10+2+3 type of system which was accepted by the commission of 1948-49 and recommended by the Kothari commission of 1964-66 which was adopted for undergraduate studies in the country (Sharma, K., Yogendra, 2006). After independence, the expansion of higher education has been substantial but it was found to be still inadequate to fulfill the higher education need of huge population. So, these circumstances led the government policymakers to think of distance education system, as was being practiced in other countries (Chauhan, C.P.S., 2004). For an experimental basis, the School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education was set up at the University of Delhi in 1962. The Education Commission (1964-66) favoured distance education. National Policy on Education 1968 clarified that full-time courses as well as distance courses will be given same status (Chauhan, C.P.S., 2004). Professor Noorul Hasan who was then also the Minister of Education supported correspondence education (Chauhan, C.P.S., 2004). Thus, during the 1960s, the correspondence or distance education mode spread largely in India (Datta, 1986). The Andhra Pradesh government in 1982 went to appoint a committee under Dr. G. Ram Reddy who was the Vice Chancellor of Osmania University at Hyderabad then. On the recommendations of this committee, the first Open University was set up in India i.e. the Andhra Pradesh Open University. The President of India Giani Zail Singh inaugurated it and it began to function in 1983 with Dr. G. Ram Reddy as its Vice-Chancellor (Chauhan, C.P.S., 2004). Since then many other open universities have been established in various states.

Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic status is a very important variable for the teaching and learning process. Woolfolk (2007) describes socio-economic status as "the relative standing in society based on income, power, background, and prestige". It is relevant to almost all the fields of education like sociology, economics, education, science, etc. Social experts use socio-economic status to determine the relative standing of a person or a group in the class. Measures of socio-economic status comprise income, occupation, education, etc. Socio-economic status can have both good and bad effects on the life of an individual. Parental socio-economic status plays a significant role in determining an individual's educational mode. Parent's socio-economic status affects the conscience of children (Gaur, 2012). Pupils from varied socio-economic status levels, their aspiration, intelligence, etc. depend according to the socio-economic status (Gaur, 2012). However, Socio-economic status is very important to know about the background of the student. Students whose parents are highly educated and have a good personality are positively taken good care of on the aspect of child psychology. So, if one wants to study about the students, he or she should study their socio-economic status. Socio-economic status is important for all fields of social sciences like research, education etc.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Agarwal, Rashmi, Indrakumar (2014) studied the role of vocational education in the socio-economic background in India. The researcher followed the qualitative research. The researcher suggested that there was a need to totally restructure vocational education and make it feasible for the demands of the industry.

Garg, Mamta (2011). "Researching secondary teacher trainees in distance education and regular mode study of their background variables, personal characteristics and academic performance" found four background variables- age, sex, marital status, and SES and personal characteristics and academic performance. The researcher compared both these variables. The sample was of 200 on campus trainees and 200 distance trainees of PU, Chandigarh. Random sampling technique was used. Tools used were – SES scale, SOLAT tool, Deo-Mohan Achievement motivation scale, study habit Inventory, Styles of learning and thinking – SOLAT tool.

The distance trainees had higher SES than on-campus trainees; SES of distance trainees had a positive and significant relation with performance in teaching skills. Distance trainees were better than on-campus trainees in work methods. On campus trainees were better than distance trainees in child-centered practices.

Rhee, Ock, Stein (2011) explored family background relation with occupational aspirations. The sample consisted of 1320 junior and senior high school students in Korea, Seoul. Results showed that socio-economic status of the family was related to the vocational aspirations of girls.

Ahmar, Anwar (2013) examined the effects of gender and SES on academic achievement of higher secondary school students of Lucknow city. SES scale by R.L. Bharadwaj (2005) was used by the researcher for the purpose of data collection. Total marks in class X took an academic achievement. Mean (M), Standard Deviation (S.D.), Standard Error Mean (SEM), t-test were applied for data analysis. Gender did not influence the achievement in science at higher secondary SES influenced academic achievement. High SES students performed better.

Justification of the Study

It is a myth in our education society that the students of regular mode are better than the students of distance mode. On account of this assumption, it has been observed that regular mode students are preferred in getting employment than distance mode students. Therefore, the choice of mode of study has a significant bearing on the future life of the students. The researcher found that socio-economic status determines the choice for selectors' in-between distance mode education or regular course-based education. So, the investigator wants to see the effect of SES in the selection of the regular and distance mode education. Though the distance mode program is for improving qualification of those who want to improve in-service education program. Although many national and international researches show that regular and distance modes are equivalent to each other yet in our country regular mode is preferred and distance learners find it hard to get placement. Distance Education is used more as a means to enhance qualification by in-service professionals.

In this era of the world, students have become professional and do not want to waste their time and energy. Under the increase in population, we have a lot of youngsters in the society who complete high school education and want to take admission in higher studies, but our government has no sufficient infrastructural facilities to educate youngsters in regular mode. Till now we have infrastructure only for 17% of the total population. A number of students enrolling at high school level is 383,00000 out of which only 75% pass out and are absorbed in the regular mode of higher studies while the remaining are left out who reluctantly join the distance courses. The enrolment figures for regular and distance modes are 89% and 11% respectively which indicates that regular mode is preferred. The pass out percentage at high school level for regular and open schools are 75% and 52% respectively which indicates some sort of imbalance between regular and distance mode of study. The government expenditure on higher education is low (0.63% of GDP) and on adult and distance learning it is still lower (0.01% of GDP). This needs to increase in order to improve the condition of education.

The expenditure for distance courses is generally lower as compared to regular courses, so students from lower socio-economic status level can easily pursue higher education through distance mode. But the problem arises when they go for finding job and employment; students having regular education are preferred more than the students with the degree of distance education. The main purpose of this study is to compare the socio-economic status of regular distance students.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode undergraduate students.
2. To study the difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode male undergraduate students.
3. To study the difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode undergraduate students.
2. There is no significant difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode male undergraduate students.
3. There is no significant difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive type of research design was used.

Sample

Simple random sampling technique was used to collect the data. A sample of 400 undergraduate students from colleges of Aligarh was randomly selected. Half of these were from regular colleges and half from distance mode. Out of 200 students in regular mode, 100 were male and 100 were female. Similarly, out of 200 distance mode students, 100 were male and 100 were females respectively.

Statistical techniques used

Statistics used are t-test and correlation.

Tool Used

For the present study, the socio-economic status scale (SESS) was employed. This is the latest tool which is developed by Dr. Ashok K. Kalia and Dr. Sudhir Sahu in 2012. It has forty items containing information on five broad dimensions of SES. Item 1 to 15 relates to the socio-cultural component with one item pertaining to information about caste. Items 16 to 20 relate to economic component. Item 21 to 30 are about information regarding possession of goods and services. Items 31 to 35 measure the health component and items 36 to 40 measure the educational status and additional information on stream.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Objective 1- To study the difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode undergraduate students.

The above-mentioned objective is to estimate the mean difference in Socio-economic status among regular and distance mode undergraduate students. So, as to achieve this objective the investigator formulated the following null hypothesis for empirical verification.

Hypothesis 1- There is no significant difference between the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode undergraduate students.

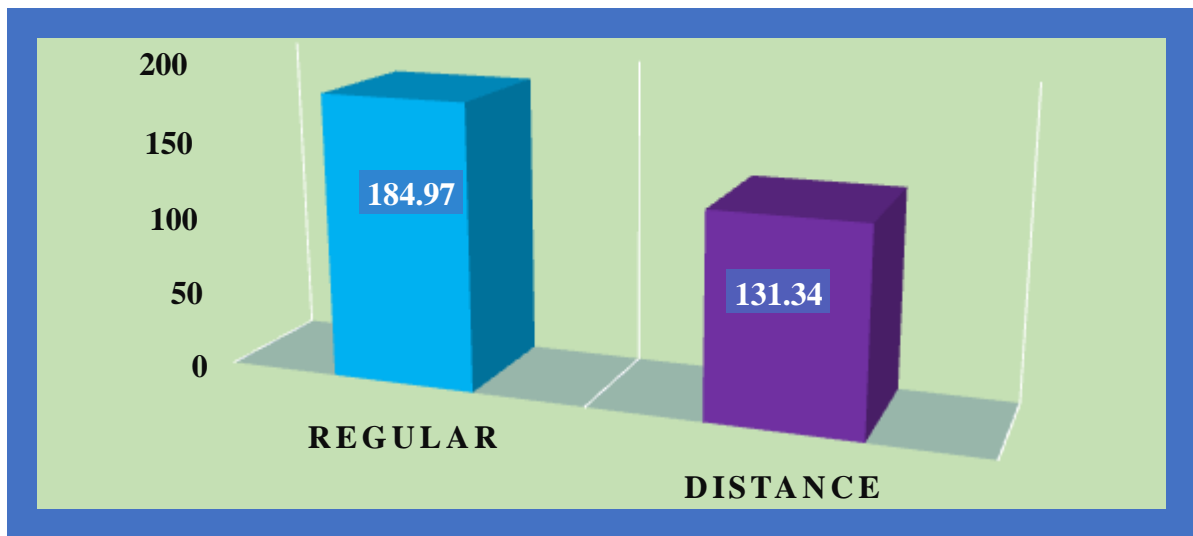
In order to compare the Socio-economic status of regular and distance mode undergraduate students' 't' test was applied. Therefore, the mean scores and SD's find out and t-values were calculated. Table 1 shows the calculated values of 't'

Table -1: Showing Mean difference in SES between Regular and Distance Mode Undergraduate Students

Mode	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (P)
Socio-economic Status (Regular)	200	184.97	38.81	15.542	.000
Socio-economic Status (Distance)	200	131.34	42.16		

Table -1 shows that the calculated 't' value is 15.542 ($P = .000$) which is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, there is a significant difference in Socio-economic Status (SES) of regular and distance mode undergraduate students. The mean for regular (184.97) is higher than the mean for distance students (131.34) which means that regular students have higher Socio-economic status than distance students. Thus, from the above representation, it is clear that there is a significant difference between regular and distance undergraduate students on SES and the regular undergraduate students have good socio-economic status as compared to distance undergraduate students. So, the null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode undergraduate students" is rejected at both levels (0.01 and 0.05) of confidence.

Figure-1: Showing difference in socio-economic status among regular and distance undergraduate students



Objective 2- To study the difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode for male undergraduate students.

The above mentioned objective is to estimate the mean difference in Socio-economic status among male regular and distance mode undergraduate students. So, as to achieve this objective, the investigator formulated the following null hypothesis for empirical verification.

Hypothesis 2- There is no significant difference between the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode male undergraduate students.

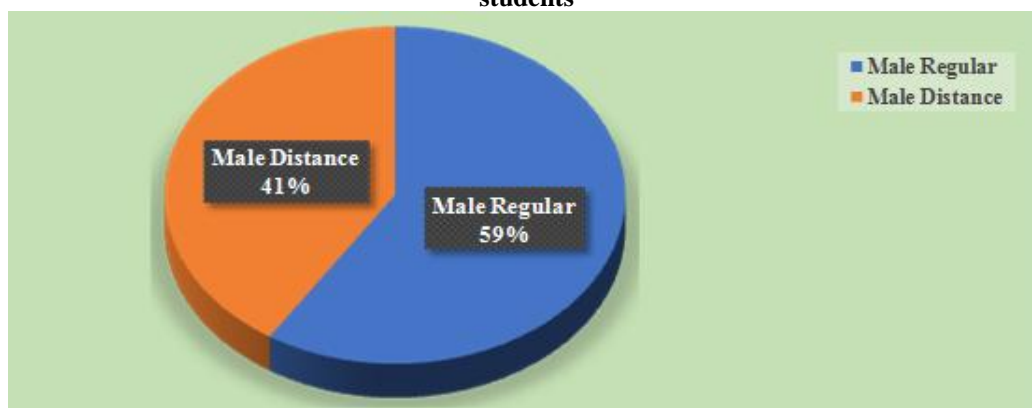
In order to compare the Socio-economic status of regular and distance mode male undergraduate students' 't' test was applied. Therefore, the mean scores and SD's find out and t-values were calculated. Table 2 shows the calculated values of 't':

Table -2: Showing Mean difference in SES between Regular and Distance Mode Male Undergraduate Students

Male	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (P)
Socio-economic Status (Regular)	100	188.62	38.11	12.226	.000
Socio-economic Status (Distance)	100	130.23	40.70		

Table -2 shows that the calculated 't' value is 12.226 (P = .000) which is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, there is a significant difference in Socio-economic Status (SES) of regular and distance mode male undergraduate students. The mean for male regular (188.62) is higher than the mean for male distance (130.23) students which means that male regular students have higher Socio-economic status than distance students. Thus, from the above discussion, it is clear that there is a significant difference between regular and distance male undergraduate students on SES and the regular male undergraduate students have higher socio-economic status in comparison of distance male undergraduate students. So, the null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode male undergraduate students" is rejected at both levels (0.01 and 0.05) of confidence.

Figure-2: Showing difference in socio-economic status among regular and distance male undergraduate students



Objective 3- To study the difference between socio-economic status of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students.

The above-mentioned objective is to determine the mean difference in Socio-economic status among female regular and distance mode undergraduate students. So, as to achieve this objective the investigator formulated the following null hypothesis for empirical verification.

Hypothesis 3- There is no significant difference between the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students.

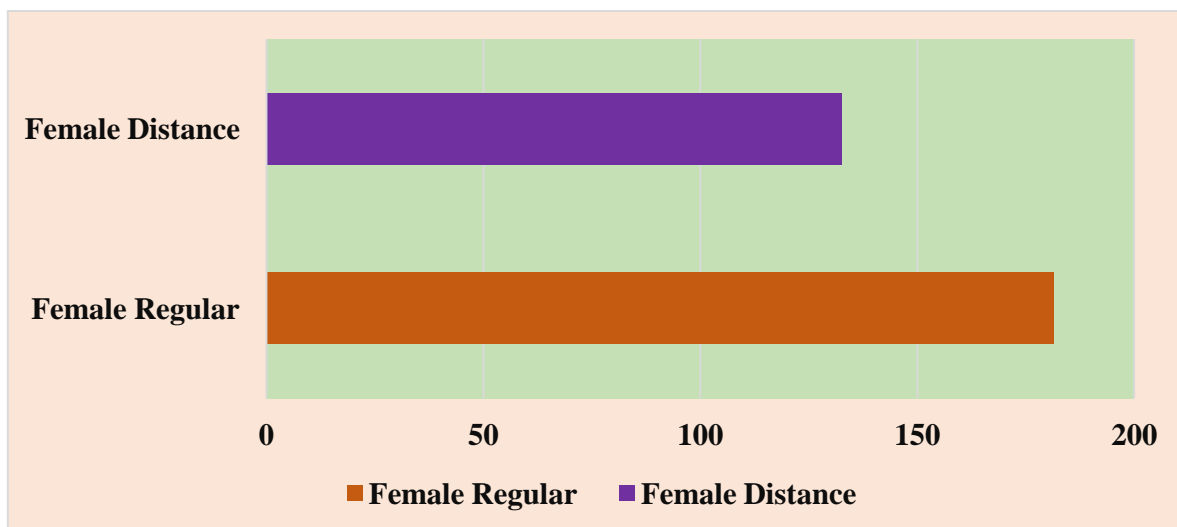
In order to compare the Socio-economic status of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students 't' test was applied. Therefore, the mean scores and SD's find out and t-values were calculated. Table 2 shows the calculated values of 't':

Table -3: Showing Mean difference in SES between Regular and Distance Mode Female Undergraduate Students

Female	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (P)
Socio-economic status (Regular)	100	181.48	39.28	9.765	.000
Socio-economic status (Distance)	100	132.57	43.93		

Table -3 explores that the calculated 't' value is 9.765 (P = .000) which is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, there is a significant difference in Socio-economic Status (SES) of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students. The mean for female regular (181.48) is higher than the mean for female distance (132.57) students which mean that female regular students have higher Socio-economic status than female distance students. Thus, from the above discussion, it is clear that there is a significant difference between regular and distance female undergraduate students on SES and the regular female undergraduate students have higher socio-economic status in comparison of distance female undergraduate students. So, the null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode female undergraduate students" is rejected at both levels (0.01 and 0.05) of confidence.

Figure-3: Showing difference in socio-economic status among regular and distance female undergraduate students



V. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

1. A significant difference was found among the socio-economic status of regular and distance mode students at undergraduate level. Regular students had higher socio-economic status than distance mode students.
2. A significant difference was found among the socio-economic status of male regular and distance mode students at undergraduate level. Male regular students had higher socio-economic status than male distance mode students.
3. A significant difference was found among the socio-economic status of female regular and distance mode students at undergraduate level. Female regular students had higher socio-economic status than female distance mode students.

Implications

1. Socio-economic status of the students should be taken care of, especially the vocational concerns of low socio-economic status students of distance mode should be addressed. The conventional education

system doesn't have a career-focused approach. The formal educational organizations should provide technical education at affordable fees.

2. Guidance and counselling services should be provided to undergraduate students to help in their vocational interests in accordance with their social and economic needs.
3. Skill upgradation courses should be introduced. Skill-based education will help the students who belong to the lower class of society. Previously a student had to complete his higher studies to get a good job. If skill-based education can be introduced at a basic level, the student can collect fund to continue with his studies.
4. Students in far-flung and remote areas can be taught through the distance mode but there should be an effective and economical system of communication and the education provided should take care of their vocational needs.

VI. REFERENCES

- [1] Moore, M.G. (ed.). (2013): *handbook of distance education*. Routledge.
- [2] Chauhan, C. P. S. (2004). *Modern Indian education: Policies, progress and problems*. Kanishka Publishers.
- [3] ignou.ac.in/aboutignou
- [4] Pathak & Rahman (2013) A study on the career preferences of undergraduate students in relation to their sex, rural, urban inhabitation and level of media exposure. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*.
- [5] Kalita Utpal (2013) "Academic Performance in relation to Institutional Facilities and Career Expectations of Mishing students: A study" Ph.D. Thesis.
- [6] Daing, S. Ahmad (2012), "Career preference at higher secondary level in relation to gender, academic streams and academic level – A study.
- [7] Dunne et al. (2011). "Sex Differences in the Educational and occupational Aspirations of Rural Youth." *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 18(1): 56-66.
- [8] Edwards, K. & Quinter, M. (2011). "Factors influencing students career choice among secondary school students in Kisumu Municipality, Kenya." *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* (2012): 81-87.
- [9] Gaikwad, et al. (2012) "Career preferences and attitude towards the rural health services among the graduating interns of a medical college in Bangalore." *International Journal of Biological & Media Research*, 3(2), 2012, pp. 1577-1580
- [10] Sharma, Y.K. (2001): *History and problems of education* (vol. 1). Kanishka publishers and distributors, New Delhi.
- [11] Garg, Mamta (2011). "Researching secondary teacher trainees in distance education and regular mode study of their background variables, personal characteristics and academic performance." Ph.D. Thesis
- [12] Farkhanda Ahmar, Ehtesham Anwar (2013) "Socio Economic status and its relation to academic achievement of Higher Secondary School Students. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, Volume 13, Issue 3 (Jul-Aug. 2013), pp. 13-20.
- [13] Rhee, Ock, Stein (2011). "Family Background variables of Korean Female adolescent related to traditional vs. Non-traditional occupational aspirations." *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 50(6): 91.