

## **7. The Socio-Economic Background of Dalit Cottage-Scale Entrepreneurs: A Case Study**

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### **Abstract**

*The current research paper is focused on social, economic and educational background of the Dalit cottage scale entrepreneurs. This paper explained and mapped the historical perspective about the socio-economic and educational condition of the Dalit cottage scale entrepreneurs of Delhi. This paper also deals with the various variables such as religions, gender, age, family background, nature and types of their house, marital status, income from entrepreneurship, original languages spoken and their educational background experiences etc. The researcher used research tool to collect the data for the current research paper. After than researcher used the mixed statistical techniques to analyses the collected data. Finally, findings and conclusion of the present research paper were mixed.*

**Keywords:** Socio-economic, Entrepreneurs, Dalit, Educational Background.

### **Introduction**

India is the largest economy with the nature of a socialistic, democratic as well as a republic country, and has a federal structure which comprises of the parliamentary system. In the past four decades the representation of Dalit entrepreneurs was very low in India due to the lower caste system and unt (Indurkar: 2015:23). Veda's, Arthasastra, and Manusmriti are the main pillars of Hinduism and Brahmanism (Shastri: 2020; Mishra: 2018). Now at present, the representation of Dalit entrepreneurs is increasing and playing an important role in the Indian economy since 1991 due to Globalization and improvement in the educational background on Dalit community. But these entrepreneurs faced major problems due to the factors of the deprived caste and untouchability (Indurkar: 2015; Parihar: 2017; Lokhande: 2016; Zelliot: 1996; Mendelsohn and Vicziany: 2000). National Education Policy, 2020 states that "Education is the single greatest tool for achieving social justice and equality. Inclusive and equitable education - while indeed an essential goal in its own right - is also critical to achieving an inclusive and equitable society in which every citizen has the opportunity to dream, thrive, and contribute to the nation. The education system must aim to benefit India's children so that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of circumstances of birth or background. This Policy reaffirms that bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes in school education will continue to be one of the major

goals of all education sector development programs (NEP 2020: 24).” According to Kumar, Arun, “The execution of India's New Economic Policy, 1991 has generated a new position where the Dalits are once again being thrust into a state of apprehension. He also pinpointed that Indian society, even after sixty years of independence, is still not free from the caste politics and other heritage which isolate the Dalits from the mainstream and stated that India's New Economic Policy, 1991 failed to examine the social, political, economic, and educational problems of the Dalits. (Kumar, Arun: 2010)”.

### **Review of Literature**

Lerche, Jens (2008) discussed the social, cultural, and economic oppression of Dalits. He outlined the various issues of Dalits and compared them to the time of independence. While direct economic dependency on the local landed classes, and exploitation by them have lessened significantly, other areas such as implementation of legal and statutory rights, access to state resources, and access to political influence are still highly skewed against Dalits.

Kumar, Arun. (2010) stated about painful history of neglect, deprivation, and exploitation of the Dalits, a marginalized group in Indian society. He also discussed about the past social reformers and movements which changed the social fairness in Indian society. These measures also pinpointed the miserable conditions of the Dalits. After independence such as socio-economic equality, liberty, and social justice and so any provisions were introduced in the Constitution of India and welfare schemes were initiated to lift the Dalit people.

Devakumar (2007) examined that the economic status and violations against Dalit entrepreneurs have not regularly increased over the past years. Tamil Nādu is one of the states that have recorded high incidences of violence against Dalit entrepreneurs. The state has witnessed some of the worst incidents of caste-related oppression and deviations. Invariably, the people are at the lowest level of the society.

Jean Luc Racine and Josiane Racine (1998) stated that the socio-economic condition of most of the Dalits is still very miserable. 72 per cent of Dalits are landless agricultural labourers. The rural population of Dalits in Tamil Nādu are 23%, of which only seven cents have landed in the form of very small plots. The ratio of literacy among the rural Dalit and Non-Dalit is 1:9.

Krishna, et, al. (2009) highlighted the socio-economic conditions of the Dalits. They also stated the various components such as human development index, lower access to capital assets, land and livestock, wage labour and economic, market and labour, labour market factor discriminations against Dalits. Division of labour is discriminatory against Dalits and empowerment is one of the most important concepts.

**Objective:** To study the Socio-Economic and Educational Background of Dalit Cottage-Scale Entrepreneurs.

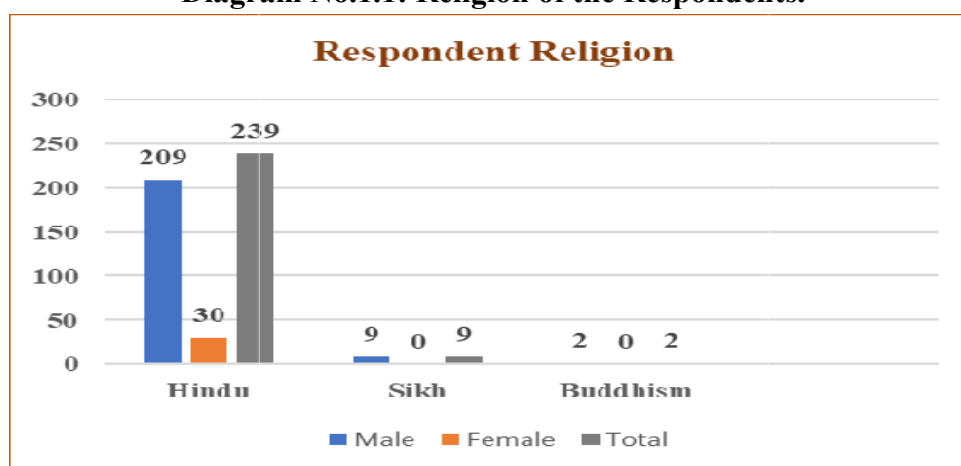
### Research Methodology

The present research paper is based on a survey design and is quantitative in nature. For the data analysis, the researcher has used mixed method techniques. For the analysis of qualitative data, the investigator has used thematic formation techniques. For quantitative analysis of data, the researcher has used statistical techniques in which data has been presented in tabular form, bar diagrams and pie diagrams. The researcher used the Cochran's sample size calculator to calculate the sample size in case of an unknown population.

### Socio- Economic Background

Socio-economics is a branch of economics that studies the relationship between social behaviour of people and economics. The major objective of this field is to understand that the economic trends of a nation is designed and mapped by the societal changes. It is also considered as social economics. Socio means related to society; economic, means related to the economy and status means position or prestige. Social status is the degree of respect accorded to an individual or group. According to the American Psychological Association , "Socioeconomic status is the position of an individual or group on the socioeconomic scale, which is determined by a combination of social and economic factors such as income, amount and kind of education, type and prestige of occupation, place of residence, and—in some societies or parts of society—ethnic origin or religious background." According to Kumari, Vandana, "The socio-economic and educational status of scheduled castes is very low. In India, problems among scheduled castes are more than those of other castes, due to poverty and other causes. These people cannot help living amidst squalor and dirt. Their houses are generally small and hardly with any proper ventilation (Kumari, Vandana. 2011:20-21)".

**Diagram No.1.1: Religion of the Respondents.**



**Diagram No. 1.1(a): Sex of the Respondents**

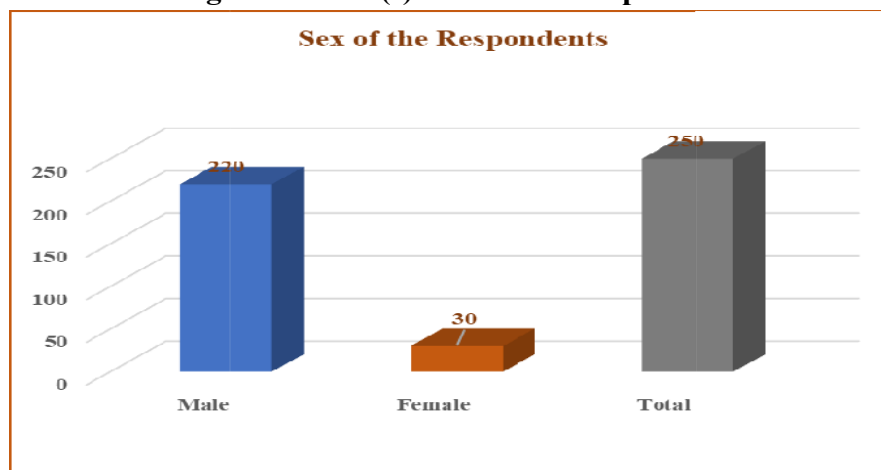


Diagram No. 1.1 and Diagram No.1.1(a) represent the status of religion and sex of the participants. This table reveals that many respondents (239 / 250) are Hindus. Their representation is 95.6% and the rest 4.4% of respondents (11/250) are from other religions such as Sikh (9/250) which means their representation is 3.6%. Buddhist representation was equal to 0.8%. It is clear from the data of the present diagram 1.1 which states that most of the respondents (220/250) are male and only (30/250) are female.

**Gender Wise Representation:** If we discuss gender representation, then the majority of the participants in small-scale business ownership were male, and only 30/250 (12%) business entrepreneurs were women. So, the present table reveals that women's representation is under-representation in the present research. It is very clear that the nature of feudal and patriarchal society still exists in the business sector. Only a handful of females are surviving in this sector.

**Diagram No. 1.2: Age Group of the Respondents.**

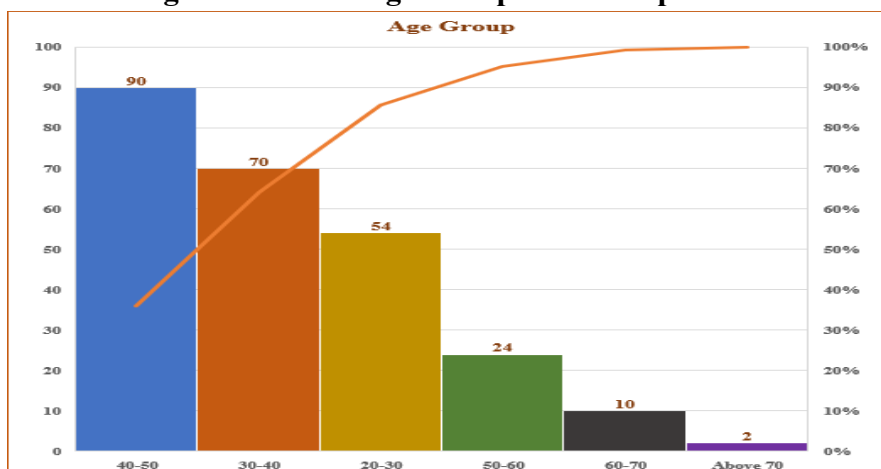


Diagram No. 1.2 represents the pattern of the age of the respondents. The age distribution of



the respondents is relevant to knowing the experiences and practices about their real life, cultural and social values & practices and the business environment. This diagram represents that greater than 85% of respondents are below of 50 years. 9.6% of respondents are in the group of 50-60 years. The remaining 4.8% of respondents are above the age of 60 years. Young people may be very active & energetic and accept the new technology while the senior people have more experience in life and trade. However, the respondents over 50 years old are not aware of the hi-tech environment essential for the success of their business. Another aspect of this study is that more than 80% of respondents were married and less than 20% were unmarried.

**Diagram No.1.3: Family Structure of the Respondents**

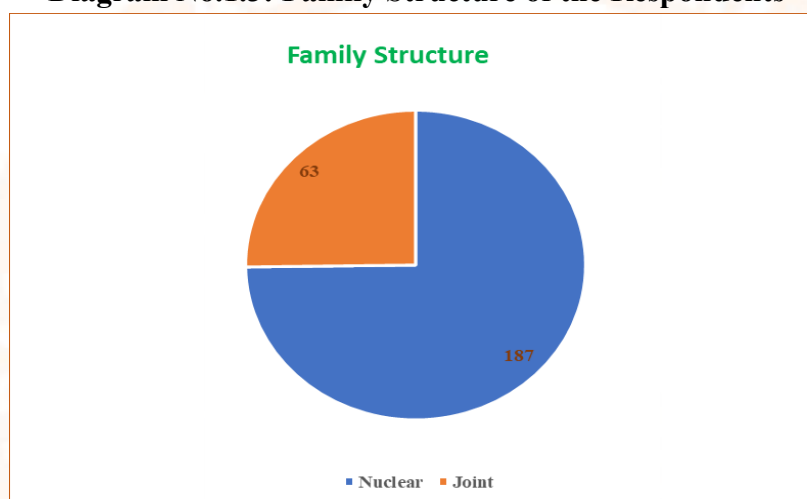


Diagram no. 1.3 states the structure of the family of the respondents in which they are living. The present diagram states that 187 respondents (74.8%) belonged to the nuclear family. The remaining 63 respondents (25.2%) belonged to a joint family. The present diagram represents a view that most respondents have nuclear families as against joint families. In Indian societies, joint families have been shifted into nuclear families due to the pressure of the modernization dimensions. Both nuclear and joint families have some merits and demerits.

**Diagram No. 1.4: Educational Background of the Respondents**

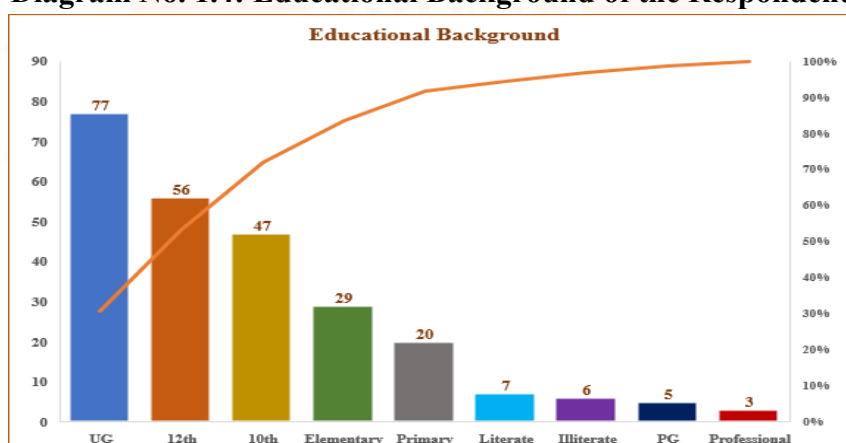
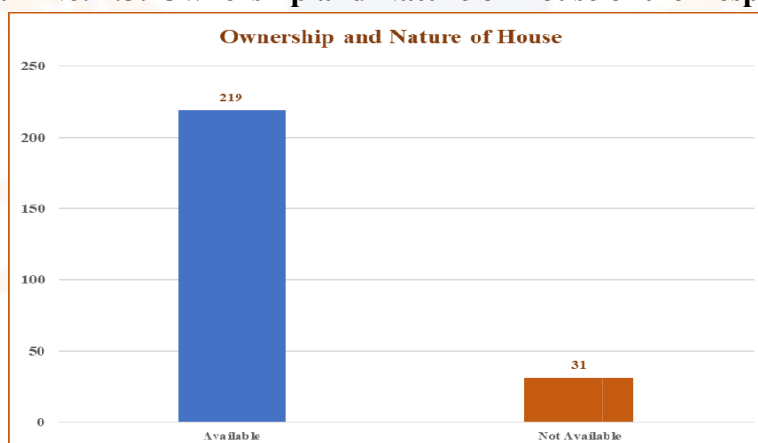


Diagram no. 1.4 represents the blanket view of the educational background of the respondents. Most entrepreneurs in the 21st century require certain types of skills, knowledge, ethics codes and conduct, degrees /diplomas etc. In this above-mentioned concern, the educational background of the respondents' states that 6 respondents (2.4%) were totally illiterate, and 7 respondents (2.8%) were literate. It is clear from the trend of current diagram which states that 20 respondents (8.0%) were educated the up to primary level and 29 respondents (11.6%) were educated up to the elementary level. 47 respondents (18.8%) were educated up to 10th standard and 56 respondents (22.4%) were educated up to 12th standard. It (Diagram no. 4.4) states that 77 (30.8%) graduated, 5 respondents were post-graduated, and 3 respondents (1.2%) were professionally trained. In conclusion, 159 respondents (63.6%) were educated up to school level. Only 85 respondents (34%) were graduates as well as post-graduates with some professionally trained. In this line, Davis and Moore (1967) described modern education's role in the business field. Yagati (2003:59) said," Modern education during the early phase was the exclusive concern of the dominant caste and reinforced their traditional identity entrepreneurship.". According to the National Census of India 2011 literacy rate in Delhi is 86.21%. The gender wise literacy rate ratio (male and female) was 90.94% and 80.76%. respectively (National Census of India, 2011). However, the economic background and social background of people depends on their level of education, as education is a crucial component for their radical change in the social and economic structure. It is also a determining factor to break the vicious circle and improve their status in society. So as per the trend of the present diagram, the educational background of the respondents was scattered. Delhi is the capital of India and receives lots of migrants who are in the way of settling themselves.

**Diagram No. 1.5: Ownership and Nature of House of the Respondents**



The present diagram states that 219 respondents (87.6%) have their own house and the remaining 31 respondents (12.4%) have no ownership of a house. Delhi is a Metropolitan city like Bombay, Kolkata and Chennai, where living standard is too high. Besides this, almost

88% of respondents have their own houses. It means in financial capital asset terms they are not in substandard conditions.

### Kinds of the House:

The data gathered from the respondents reveals that 183 (73.2%) respondents have a normal house and the rest 39 (15.6%) live in the flats system. The remaining, 28 respondents (11.2%) lie in the other category. The majority of the respondents have their own house. No respondents have a villa or bungalow.

**Diagram No. 1.6: Language Spoken by the Respondents**

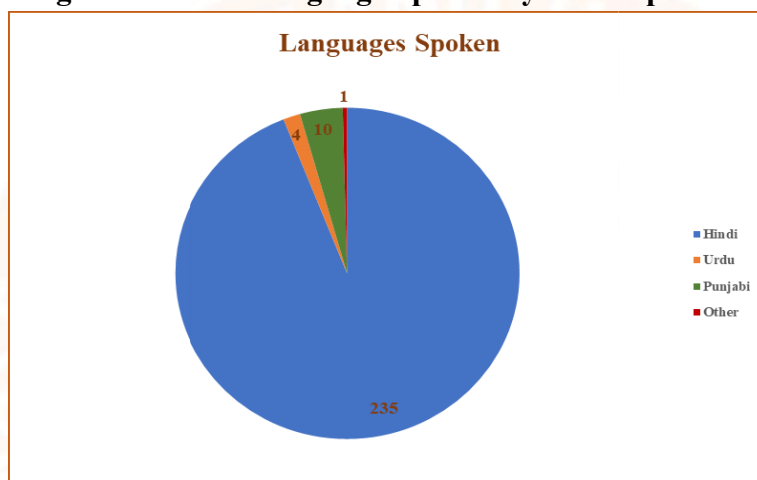


Diagram No. 1.6 represents the position of languages spoken by the respondents. It is clarified from the data shown in this table explains that 235 respondents (94%) speak only the Hindi language and 4 respondents (1.6%) know the Urdu language Also 10 respondents (4%) spoke the Punjabi language. Only one respondent spoke the other language. In general, the larger part of respondents spoke the Hindi language. None of the respondents give a response in the English language. English speaking skills have a great key in business to represent the entrepreneurship project in a better way. However, all the respondents were not able to speak English fluently.

**Diagram No.4.6: Annual Income from the Business**

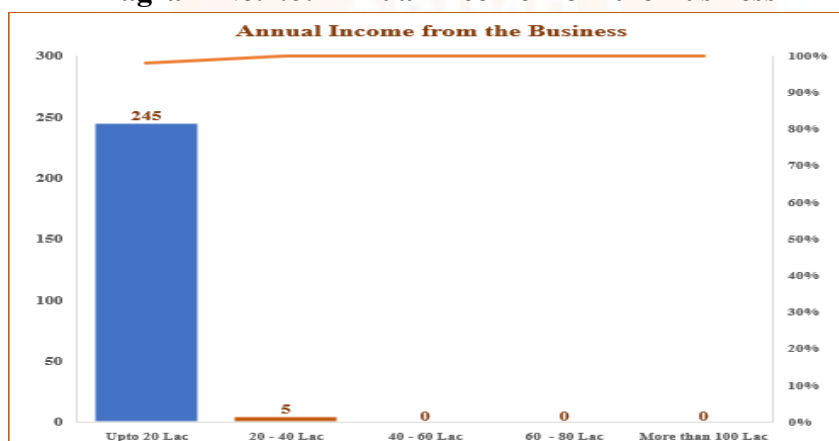


Table no. 4.6 explores the income of the respondents from their entrepreneurship. It provides data about the annual income of the respondents. All five class intervals reveal the size of the income of the respondents. It indicates that 245 respondents (98%) earn up-to 20 lakhs annually from their ongoing businesses. Only 5 respondents out of 250 respondents (2%) earned rupees 20-40 lakhs per annum from their ongoing entrepreneurship. After reading Table 4.6, the researcher finds the fact that almost the maximum respondents' annual income was up to Rs. 20 lakhs.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

Present research reveals that 87.6% of respondents have their own house and the remaining 12.4 % of respondents do not have their own house, which means they are living in rented accommodation. If we discuss about the nature of houses. The majority of respondents (73.2%) have a normal house. No respondents have any other type of house such as Villa or Bangla type's houses, other than flats and normal houses. Education plays a crucial role in determining many factors such as an improved social and economic status to get jobs, and succession of the business etc. In the selected research 2.4% (06) respondents were totally illiterate and 2.8% (07) were only literate. Only 38.4% of respondents (96) were educated up to class 10 standards. Besides these 22.4% (56) participants completed their schooling or class 12<sup>th</sup> passed. In this educational component, 30.8% (77) of respondents were graduated in different fields. Some respondents were highly educated with technical and professional degrees, but the number of such respondents was very few only 3.2% (08), but still, they were highly educated. In this concern, Ambedkar said to all the Dalits that they understand that it can only be eradicated if they educated themselves, agitated and organized themselves to get an education. Ambedkar raised the slogan "Educate! Agitate! Organize" (ed. Sontakke: 2016:289, W. & S.-Vol.-17(III)-P-275-76) also discussed Ambedkar's ideas and thoughts on education. Most entrepreneurs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century require certain types of skills, knowledge, ethics codes and conduct, degrees /diplomas etc. In line with this, Davis and Moore (1967) described modern education's role in entrepreneurship. Yagati (2003:59) said, "Modern education during the early phase was the exclusive concern of the dominant caste and reinforced their traditional identity" (%). According to Pimpley, P. N. (1980:110), "Since the spread of education is found to be related to the socio- economic status of the parents, there seems to be a need to tackle the problems of the parent's status. However, the socio-economic status depends upon education, nothing short of a radical change in the social structure can break this vicious circle and help improve these groups' status". S. Kamaraj et al. (2013), studied the educational qualification variable and its impact on entrepreneurship. "The Jatav community of Agra in the context of education and stated that the first generation thinks education does not play a role in the development of occupational skills but the second generation thinks that education plays a significant role in the improvement of occupational skills (Sharma:2013)".



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