

“I’M A DALIT, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO BE A HUMAN BEING FIRST AND FOREMOST”: RESERVATION, POLITICS AND SCHEDULED CASTE IDENTITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION



MA thesis in South Asia Studies (60 points)

**Asian and African Studies Program at the Department
of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at
University of Oslo**

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Fall semester 2009

Summary¹

In this thesis I explore the affect positive discrimination has on the Scheduled Caste (SC) students on University of Hyderabad (UoH) in India. The aim is to analyze how reservation policies on central and state level in India affect the students who benefit from this policy. I take a bottom- up perspective and start out by asking three questions: First, how has positive discrimination affected the SC students' sense of identity? Second, what is the role of the Dalit students' organizations? And finally, how is casteism reproduced in the university?

I have analyzed structures on government level and on local level, childhood memories, political participation, discrimination and conflicts. And I found that since the reservation policy is based on caste identity, caste becomes an imperative identity for the SC students' everyday life. SC identity can in many situations decide if a low caste person will be accepted in higher education, get a particular job or receive scholarships. Caste identity becomes very relevant in smaller spheres like the university where the effects of reservation policies are manifested and where everyone is affected, one way or the other.

In the absence of the reservation system, many SC students would not be able to enter in to higher education. Education is a scarce resource and the competition for university seats and scholarships are fierce. As a result, resentment and stigma is generated among the students. Students who do not receive benefits experience that they are losing opportunities, due to the increase of reservation seats in the universities. The reservation policy allows SC students with less merit to enter the university. For the reserved category students, being enrolled in the university is perceived as a possibility which has been kept from them.

The SC students come to the university as individuals, with different economical, religious, social status and language backgrounds. But when they enrolled at the university they are treated as one group, stigmatized as low performing and incompetent students who were able to enter the university because of their caste identity.

Based on my findings, my argument is that, both government structures and the university structures highlight the importance of caste and contributes to the production of casteism in the university context.

¹ The front page picture shows a poster which was pasted at Jawaharlal Nehru University by Dalit Student Union.

Acknowledgments

This thesis would have not been possible without the help and patience of my informants who spent their time telling me about their experiences and their hopes for the future. Special thanks go to those of you who suggested me literature, people to speak with and which showed special interest in my project.

Without my supervisor Arild Engelsen Ruud, I would have had a difficult time finishing this project. So my thanks go to Arildji, both for your careful reading of my drafts and for your encouragement and invaluable suggestions.

I also want to thank Dag Erik Berg, for your suggestions and for your hospitality, on my visits to Bergen.

My husband Malleswara Rao Nanda without your support, help and constant belief in my research I would not have managed to complete this task. I also want to thank you for being with me 24 hours a day, in the hospital and the weeks in our flat when I was sick. The rest of my family also deserves recognition for their encouragements and support.

Coco Armstrong Valset, Inga Therese Becker and Maren Natalie Sigfridstad, I am very grateful to you for taking time to proofread my text. In addition I want to thank my fellow students who have commented on my drafts in our seminar group.

Last but not least, I want to thank all my friends in Hyderabad for making my stay enjoyable, and for the countless discussions. A special thanks to Ganesh who helped me out with everything from furniture to gas. Vijay Bhaskar Reddy for your personality and help both when I was in India and when I returned to Norway. Vijay Anand, for your friendship and help with practical difficulties, and not least your suggestion for my field work. Vinod Sri Ram and his family, for always keeping their door open for my visits, and for teaching me how to cook Indian food.

All the opinions in this thesis are my own.

Acronyms

ABVP- Akhila Bharathiya Vidyarthi Parishad

AP-Andhra Pradesh

APMC- Andhra Pradesh Madiga Congress

ASA- Ambedkar Students' Association

BC- Backward Classes

BJP- Bharatiya Janata Party

BSP- Bahujan Samaj Party

DSU- Dalit Students' Union

FC- Forward Caste

JNTU-Jawaharal Nehru Technological University

JNU- Jawaharal Nehru University

JRF- Junior Research Fellowship

MNCs- Multi National Companies

MRPS- Madiga Reservation Porata Samithi

NESF- North East Students' Forum

NET- All- India National Eligibility Test

NSUI- National Students' Union

OBC- Other Backward Class

OC- Other Castes

PH- Physical handicapped

PRP- Praja Rajyam Party

RGNF- Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship

SC-Scheduled Caste

SFI- Students' Federation of India

ST-Scheduled Tribes

TDP- Telugu Desam Party

UGC- University Grant Commission

UoH- University of Hyderabad

UP- Upper Caste

VC- Vice- Chancellor

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1. Introduction

This thesis focuses on Scheduled Caste (SC) students' identity at the University of Hyderabad (UoH). The focal point is to explore the effect which positive discrimination policies have on Scheduled Caste students' identity in higher education. Which possibilities and restrictions have 60 years of a central reservation policy given to the SC students in higher education? And how is this strategy affecting the SC students' identity.

Positive discrimination can be seen as one of the government of India's most important development schemes. This policy is directed towards approximately 150 million of poor low caste people, earlier referred to as "untouchables". The philosophy behind positive discrimination, also called reservation policy, is to give a certain number of SCs education, this will make them equipped for holding a good job. The benefits the job holder gets will trickle down, first and foremost to his/her family. With a good job comes economical capital and with economical capital caste identity should become less relevant. In some cases this has happened, but the majority has still not been able to benefit. The importance of caste has not vanished and caste is as important today as earlier, if not more. Caste significance might have changed its importance from one arena to another, but in education the question of caste is highly relevant. This is due to the fact that policies implemented by the government are made on the basis of caste. The students' caste background determines whether or not the students have the right for reserved seats with lower entrance demands, pay lower admission fees and pay less for the mess bill. Caste also decides if you are entitled to certain scholarships.

My main argument in this thesis is that the political debates and decisions on the state and central government level have consequences for the SC students' identity because their development is dependent on the Indian state's mercy. Since there are fierce competition over resources in India, in this case university seats and scholarships, the SC identity becomes very important for the SC students' career. On the university the Scheduled Caste students are claiming their rights and demands to be treated with respect on equal basis as the other students. The resistance which SC students experience in the campus contributes to shape their identity and self consciousness.

The last decades have seen a growing tendency of caste- based and identity- based groups entering in politics, the ideal of justice and equality for all seems to be overshadowed. Due to the unequal distribution of material benefits in India the citizens are feeling the need to fend for themselves by fighting for a piece of the democratic state,

or as Kothari points out; “over time people are losing faith and are coming to the conclusion that they might have to fend for themselves” (1997, pp. 440). He further argues that it is against this backdrop that we need to look at the “new caste identity and consciousness” (1997, pp. 440). The reservation policy has taken on a political life where it is pulled and pushed in different directions and where the consequences are in some cases underestimated. This topic will be discussed with the Andhra Pradesh (AP) experience as a backdrop and the University of Hyderabad (UoH) as the focal departure.

Research questions and the topic’s relevance

My interest for this topic started when I was an exchange student at UoH. During this period, the discussions and protests concerning implementation of Other Backward Classes² (OBC) reservation in government higher education institutions was racing. Almost every day this topic was discussed in the newspapers. In addition to hearing many comments like “he is a SC professor; he is not good”, “ he is only here because he is a SC”, triggered my curiosity and I decided to write a small exam paper on the issue in one course at UoH. Starting this project I initially wanted to write about OBCs and the introduction of the 27 percent reservation quota in higher education, but since it was very uncertain when this policy would be operational, I decided to focus on SC reservation. Going through literature written about reservation politics, identity politics and caste, I decided to look at reservation in connection with SC identity and the role of students’ organizations. My interest for production of casteism came from reading A.R.Vasavi’s article “Caste Indignities and Subjected Personhoods”. In this article, the author based on a report done by a Dalit organization on the UoH, argues that the discrimination and violence faced by the SC students makes the university into “new sites for the production of casteism” (2006, pp. 3769). I wanted to see in more details how casteism was reproduced, and how this system of reservation policy was experienced on the ground level. In this thesis I am discussing three questions:

- 1) How has positive discrimination affected the SC students’ sense of identity?
- 2) What is the role of the Dalit students’ organizations?
- 3) How is casteism reproduced in the university?

² OBC is a government category used to determine socially and educationally backward communities (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 9).

The relevance of this study is to understand how the implementation of the policy of reservation affects Scheduled Caste students' identity formation on the university. Sixty years after positive discrimination was embedded in the constitution, I think it is important to evaluate the policy on several levels. This study looks at the effect reservation policy has on the individual benefiter of the strategy.

This topic is not only relevant in India but also applicable for other countries which deal with social stratification based on gender, color, class or caste. Thus, this study is also relevant for other countries for example South-Africa and the United States.

In order to discuss my research questions we first need to take a look at the socio-political background which is important for how the reservation policy is working.

The socio-political backdrop

In 1947 the dream of a self-rule came true with the establishment of the democratic nation India. Visions for the new nation were many. How should the Indian state move forward? And what should the state do to improve the situation for the huge masses of low caste people in India? The government decided, among other things, to implement reservation seats in legislative bodies as part of the constitution and introduces the law of elimination of untouchability (Brass 1994, pp. 5).

Three topics are relevant in the analysis of this thesis caste, reservation policy and Identity politics. In this section I will give a brief general introduction in to caste and highlight some research done on this topic, before I take a closer look at caste and its distinctive feature in Andhra Pradesh. Thereafter, I will look at positive discrimination in general and how it is manifested in AP. Then I will try to make connections between identity politics and positive discrimination. Finally, ending the chapter with this thesis exit point, and laying out the structure of the thesis.

Caste

The English term caste derived from the Portuguese word *casta*, the use of the term caste was used by both Indians and British people (Kolenda 1978, pp. 10-11). When the British's used the term caste they used it to describe a community in the Indian society (Bayly 1999, pp.8). In order to be more precise Indians and scholars distinguish between

varna and *jati*. *Varna* refers to the four level divided order of *Brahman*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra*. Brahmins identifies those who are priests. Kshatriyas were the warriors and rulers. Vaishyas were business people and the Shudras were the servants. Under the Shudras, or those who are excluded from the hierarchy the tribal and the “untouchables”, who are also called *Panchmas*. Within these categories there are thousands of smaller caste communities which are called *jati*. The *varna* system is based on an ideal society which is found in some Hindu scripts, for example *Manusmṛiti* (cf. Bayly 1999, pp. 8-10).

Jati defines a smaller unit of a community and can be described as a birth group and is by R.S. Khare called the, ‘concrete and factual’ experience of caste (quoted in Bayly 1999, pp.9). There are thousands of *jatis* in India and these are found within all *varnas* (Kolenda 1978, pp.11).

How did caste originate? This question has been discussed by scholars for decades. Louis Dumont’s *Homo Hierarchicus* is an important and highly debated book where he argues that hierarchies are fundamental to the Indian society (1980). These hierarchies are based on purity and pollution norm, where the Brahmin is on top and the untouchable is at the bottom, the rest is ordered hierarchical in-between these two groups (1980). Dumont sees caste as something fundamental and unchangeable, while his critics argue that caste is historically created and not fundamental to the Indian society (Bayly 1999, pp.373). Michael Moffatt followed in Dumont’s footsteps with his famous village study in Tamil Nadu, where he analyzed replication of the hierarchical system by the untouchables as a form of consensus of their low position in the Indian society (1979). He argues “ It thus implies among the lowest castes of Endavur a deep cultural consensus on the cognitive and evaluative assumptions of the system as a whole” (1979 pp. 98). According to Moffatt the low castes have accepted the system in itself even if they might not have accepted their place in the system. This argument also makes caste into something unchangeable and inherent in the Indian society. Dipankar Gupta criticizes Dumont: “He failed to see that each caste valued itself very highly and had deep pockets of ideological inheritance from which it could draw continuous symbolic energy for both political activism and economic competition” (Gupta 2004, pp. x-xi). So while Dumont and Moffatt sees the caste system as something which is unchangeable and a system which people have accepted, Gupta emphasizes the individual actor, and sees that there

are not consent and acceptance of their low social status and that there is a fight and a wish to better their position in the society.³*Caste composition in Andhra Pradesh*

In AP the dispersion between the jatis are uneven. In this way, AP fits in to the general caste structure we find in South India where there are a smaller number of Brahmins and a larger number of OBCs than in north. In AP we find several dominant castes, but Reddys and Kammas are the two jatis which are numerically the strongest. The Reddy caste has traditionally been farmers and land owner community. By controlling land they have also been able to control the people through patron/client relations. The Kammas emerged as a caste from the anti-Brahmin movement in the 1887-1943 (Ilaiah 2004, pp. 239). Their niches are in business and industry in AP, and they are for example running the Telugu movie industry, Tollywood. Both castes also control much of the political power in AP. The Congress party in AP is controlled by the Reddys while the big opposition party Telugu Desam Party (TDP) is controlled by the Kammas. In 1921 the spread between the jatis was as follows; Brahmins were 3 percent of the total AP population, Kapus/ Reddys were 15 percent, while the Kammas were only 4.8 percent. The biggest group was Backward Classes (BC)⁴ 46 percent. The SC jati Mala were 4.2 percent while Madiga were 7.3 percent and Muslims/Christians were 7 percent (Reddy 1989, pp. 269). From 1931 till 2001 there has been no census which counted the jatis in all castes, so there are no fresh numbers with percent wise diffusion between the castes in AP (Bhagath 2007, 1902).

In Andhra Pradesh there is totally 59 jatis belonging to the SC community. Both historically and contemporary, two jatis have been dominating; the Malas and the Madigas. Today there are 6 million Madiga and 5.1 million Mala.⁵ The Madigas traditional occupation was cobblery, while the Malas were weavers. Between the two of them, Madigas' occupation is seen as the most polluted. Even if the Madigas are the numerical stronger group, the Malas have been able to use the reservation benefits better than the Madigas, and are in many cases better off than the Madiga community. Uma Ramaswamy saw this trend emerging all ready in 1974 when she wrote an article about Scheduled Castes in Andhra Pradesh (1974a). She argues that this inequality is due to geographical differences, the British's preferential treatments, occupational differences

³ This debate is described in detail by many scholars, so I will not elaborate further; see for example (Fuller 1996, Introduction; Kolenda 1978).

⁴ According to the constitution are the backward classes those who belong to the Shudra varna who are socially and educationally backward (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 9).

⁵ http://censusindia.gov.in/Tables_Published/SCST/SCCRC_28.pdf visited 30.11.09.

and Madigas' jajmani⁶ relation with the upper caste land owners (Ramaswamy 1974a, pp. 1158).

Malas are greater in number in the coastal areas of AP, where the general situation for the inhabitants is better. The productivity of the land is better in the coastal areas than inland. The British colonial government ruled the coastal part of Andhra and left good irrigation systems which the people living there have since benefitted from (Reddy 1989, pp. 273). Occupational differences have also facilitated the differences between the two castes. Malas were landless laborers and did not have one main occupation. They were often in competition with other castes for jobs. Madigas on the other hand, in addition to working as landless laborers were the only caste in leather business. The Madigas had more stable working conditions than the Malas, hence, Malas were often more open to education. The Madigas, were in a jajmani relation with upper castes (UP) landlords which secured their jobs (Ramaswamy 1974a, pp. 1158). Several reasons can explain the difference between the Madigas and Malas' unequal position in the society; one of them is positive discrimination.

Positive discrimination

Positive discrimination is also known as affirmative action or compensatory discrimination in the literature. In India it is often referred to as reservation policy. In South India reservation was first introduced in Kolhapur in 1902 (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 129), and then in the Princely State of Mysore, in 1919 (Bandyopadhyay 2004, pp. 345).

The discussions of reservation of seats for low caste communities have been continuing for the last century. The two most illustrative debates have been the long ongoing dispute between Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and in more recent time the debates relating to implementation of Mandal commission's recommendations. The first one, concerning the rights of SCs and STs, the second debate centered on reservation for OBCs.

Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had different views about what was the right way to better the situation for the untouchables, at that time known as depressed classes. Ambedkar, coming from an untouchable community, spent his life fighting to improve the situation for his people. Given that Ambedkar was educated a lawyer, he

⁶ Jajman meaning patron, jajmani system is the system of patron and clients (Bayly 1999. pp. 190-192).

believed that the only way to help his people was through laws. While Gandhi wanted to reform the traditional Hindu culture, Ambedkar wanted to improve the situation through modern means like; "education and exercise of legal and political rights" (Zelliot 1996, pp. 158). At the second Round Table Conference, Ambedkar launched his request for separate electoral for the Depressed Classes (Bayly 1999, pp. 262). Gandhi and Congress strongly opposed this. This debate peaked in 1932 when the Communal Award was announced, by the British Prime Minister MacDonald, as an attempt to resolve conflicts between the different communities in India. This award was in favor of special provision of reserved seats for former untouchables. When Gandhi realized that the British's were in favor for separate electorate, responded he with a "fast unto death". Ambedkar had to back down from his demand, instead he requested an increase in reserved seats quota for untouchables in the provincial assemblies, known as the Poona Pact (Medelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 104-106). This was followed by the British's who in 1936 embarked on the great job of creating a list of all the deprived communities in India, 400 communities were listed and this became the origin of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the country (Bayly 1999, pp. 262-263). Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Indian Prime Minister, employed Ambedkar as the first Minister of law (Bayly 1999, pp. 270). With Ambedkar as the minister of law the reservation policy was secured in the constitution in 1950.

Prime Minister V. P Singh announced August 7th 1990 that the government would implement the Mandal Commission's recommendations of extending the reservation to 27 percent for OBCs in government institutions, in states which did not already fulfill this quota. This announcement sparked of huge demonstrations and riots. Shortly after the coalition, called National Front, governing the country dissolved when BJP withdrew their support to the coalition. Due to massive opposition, the implementation of the policy was stalled. Even though the implementation of Mandal report those not directly affect the SC students, this debate is interesting because its implementation lead to 49 percent reservations in central universities, which means that the competition for other castes (OC) students to enter the university became even more difficult.

What is the intention of positive discrimination? The intention is to give the lower castes SC, ST and OBC the possibilities to receive education and get a job in public administration.

Practically it is done by allotting a number of university seats and public administration seats for a certain communities. Scheduled Caste community has 15

percent, Scheduled Tribe community has 7.5 percent and the OBCs have 27 percent. How many percent of reservation that each community was given were decided on the basis of the censuses in India. The percentage of reservation for OBCs can differ in some states.

The idea behind these policies is to give benefits to the people that have been deprived of possibilities in order to enhance their living condition and possibilities. Many pros and cons have been heard. Arguing on utilitarian grounds positive discrimination is justified by that it does more good than bad (Edmonds 2006, pp. 70). Obtaining a university degree can give opportunities for a good reserved job. Holding a job can secure a person and his/her families' income. But this policy alone does not change the social realities of why these people need reservation. Deshpande and Newman notes that unemployment is a big problem for highly educated SCs, getting jobs in the private market seems difficult so they are depended on reserved jobs (2007). In the private market there exists no reservation and the non-reserved categories hesitate to let reservation into the private market because that means fewer job opportunities for OCs. As a result they might have to take up a teaching job in the village with a salary between 3000-5000 rupees as opposed to 8000-12000 rupees for a teaching job in corporate school.⁷

Myron Weiner sees that education and possibility to buy things are not the solution to the problems of the SCs. Weiner argues that caste-based organizations are not merely interested in material things but respect from others (Weiner 2001, pp. 210). Upliftment is needed economically, socially and morally.

The term "positive discrimination" reflects the debate which has followed the Indian politics in the 20th and 21st century; is positive discrimination positive? Should there be any forms of discrimination when the Constitution clearly states that there shall not? Who should be the receivers of positive discrimination? On which criteria should one be given benefits? In this thesis I am not discussing whether or not positive discrimination is the best solution, but I will explore the result of the introduction of the policy's implication on identity formation among the SC students.

⁷ The salary varies between which subject the teacher is teaching, if it is an urban or rural school and which school level it is.

Positive discrimination; the case of Andhra Pradesh

South India is in general seen as the developed part of India and is leading the way when it comes to reservation, education and development. Hyderabad state, which is now under Andhra Pradesh, was relatively slow introducing reservations if we compare with Mysore.⁸ Former agricultural minister and Chief Minister in Andhra Pradesh,⁹ Channa Reddy, was one of the front figures when it came to introducing and expanding reservation quotas.¹⁰ He became a Member of Parliament at the age of thirty- one in 1952, and started an arrangement where farmers who got certification from the village office could get fertilizers on credit. In addition to several other reservations, he also introduced reservation for SC, ST and women in Municipal Councils and Panchayat Raj (Luther 2006, pp. 356). Thus, AP has had reservation system since the day that the state was created.

Andhra Pradesh is a coalition of districts which have been controlled by the Nizam of Hyderabad, and the British's in Madras Presidency. Since the Nina and Madras Presidency had different ways of organizing and developing the society, the different areas in Andhra Pradesh are today are very different from each other when it comes to education and prosperity. There are also differences in the ecological landscape in the different regions.

In South India the quotas for OBC were implemented already from the 60's and onwards (Inkinen 2003; Narayan 2006; Jaffrelot 2003, pp. 237). Jaffrelot sees the non-Brahmin movement as one important difference between North India and South- and West India where the focus on caste early had changed to focus on ethnic groups which worked together in order to push for reservations (Jaffrelot 2003, chapter 5). Due to the early implementation of reserved categories, the picture changed in South India compared with North India. In North India implementation of reservation happened much later and in a more hesitating way, for example in Uttar Pradesh the first Backward Classes Commission was appointed in October 1975 (Jaffrelot 2003, chapter 7). In Jaffrelot's view the early implementation of reservation in South India made the castes more unified in their fight for reservation. This was also the case in Andhra Pradesh, but as Mendelsohn and Vicziany points out, a unity built on multi caste identity often falls apart (1998, pp. 99). We can see an example of this in Andhra Pradesh were the benefits of

⁸ Mysore is currently in the state of Karnataka.

⁹ Andhra state was created in 1953 reorganized according to linguistic lines to Andhra Pradesh in 1956.

¹⁰ Channa Reddy served under B. Ramakrishna Rao in 1952; in 1980 he was replaced due to conflict within the party and with Indira Gandhi (Luther 2006, pp. 357).

reservation issue has led to a big political cleavage between the two biggest SC jatis in the state Malas and Madigas.

From being a subordinate group before the 20th century, SCs have in the meeting with politics become “ a category of political relevance”(Medelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp, 2). Both groups are trying to pressure the Andhra Pradesh government to implement the reservation politics that benefits their group the most.

The nexus between identity politics and reservation

Political parties are always dependent on attracting a large group of voters in order to win seats in Lok Sabha, on central level as well as in Legislative Assembly on state level. Identities which have the possibility to attract large number of voters are regional identities, language, religion and caste. In this thesis I am only interested in caste identity. Due to the limitation of this thesis I will not account for the other identities here.

A political party basing itself on only one jati would find it difficult to come to power, even if they have support from one broad varna it will most likely not be enough to secure the victory. In addition it is almost impossible to unite one whole varna. Political parties must therefore be able to woo two groups or more at one time. This can be difficult so the politicians must know how to play the game in order to find logical and benefitting reasons for uniting these groups. We can see an example of success in Uttar Pradesh (UP) where Mayawati is a Dalit Chief Minister and leader of the biggest party in the state Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). BSP and Mayawati had to change their anti- Brahmin campaign to a general anti- Manu Samhita campaign, in order to obtain enough votes to win power in UP. With this move she managed to get both SC voters and Brahmin voters (Narayan 2006, pp. 172). The Scheduled Caste is a large group in India and their political support can, if a party manages to unite them as a vote bank, help to shift the power balance in many state and central governments in India. One way to win votes is to promise more reserved seats.

In connection with the implementation of the Mandal recommendations students acted as one group and arranged big protest and riots even though it was at that time not aimed directly toward university and higher education institutions. These demonstrations got out of control and escalated into violent protest in 1990. The massive opposition in India led to that the issue of reservation became top priority for all political parties.

Politicians have to relate to the issue of reservation to secure their supporters' votes (Mohanty 2004, pp. 15). For SCs and STs the reservation debate does not centre on whether they should have reservation or not, it is more concerned with which Dalits and tribes should benefit and come into the SC/ST quota.

Contrary to the SC and ST population there is no up to date statistics on the number of OBCs and their economical and social situation. Given the fact that there has not been a census which has counted the different jatis in the OBC category since 1931, the implementations of a 27 percent quota, without knowing the current condition for the OBC community, gives room for discussions and negotiations (Bhagat 2007). Should India have a census based on caste or not? This question was again discussed before the 2001 census. The pro-argument was that there was a need for a census with caste affiliation since there was an interest to introduce OBC reservations in higher education. The opposition argued that census based on caste would lead to more caste feelings and bring back to life castes which almost had vanished. But the counting of SC and ST is still going on without much debate. The pro-argument for doing a census based on caste for the OBCs cannot be used about the SC or ST quota since it is already written in the constitution and the oppositions argument are not coming forward when it concerns the two marginalized groups STs and SCs.

Thus, based on historical and current injustices, reservation quotas are one way of trying to make up for and change the social system in India. The reservation debates in India have often revolved around four important questions: 1) Which criteria should reservation be based on? 2) Should reserved students be accepted with inferior grades or merit than non-reserved students?¹¹ 3) Is reservation benefitting? 4) And who benefits?

The main criteria for SC and ST reservation is caste, at present time, this reservation is not so much questioned as the implementation of OBC category and its criteria, where caste is one of eleven criteria.¹² Today the debates on the SC quota are centered on which religious groups can take advantage of SC reservation and how to distribute this quota among SCs.¹³

It is in the discussion of access into high prestige universities, private universities and jobs that the question about merit is especially crucial. In the university there are three spheres where reservation question is important that is among the teaching staff,

¹¹ Merit relates to achieved educational achievements, the qualifications of the student.

¹² To see all eleven indicators go to the following webpage; <http://www.pucl.org/from-archives/Dalit-tribal/mandal-2.htm> visited 13.05.09.

¹³ This topic is discussed in chapter three.

non-teaching staff and students. The University Grant Commission (UGC) has kept pushing universities to fill their quotas for SCs and STs (Xaxa 2002, pp. 2839). Rajni Kothari argues that abolishing of the caste system can be done by providing more reservation.¹⁴ One of the typical arguments against reservation is one that I heard on a train journey in South India talking to a Vaishya family; “how a person with low marks can be a doctor, he will end up killing someone”. It is presumed that all SC students have low merit and has been accepted in the university based on lower entrance criteria than others. Without knowing anything about the SC doctor’s qualification his/her skills are questioned because the doctor belongs to the SC community. This kind of attitude continues to uphold the opposition towards the reservation policy and the SC students are stigmatized as unqualified.

How can development be measured? K. S. Chalam noticed that in the 1990s there was a shift in what was considered as development measures from accumulation of wealth to well-being (2007, pp. 146). Education is one way to measure human development, K.S. Chalam notes that;

“enrolment of Dalits in higher education came nearer to other castes by 2002-2003. This, he argues, is because of the maintenance of social welfare hostels, residential schools at the high school and intermediate levels. There are around 2.500 hostels where 2 lakhs¹⁵ boys and girls are studying in Andhra Pradesh, making AP one of the most successful states in India in promoting education among the SCs and STs” (2007, pp. 161-162).

Based on this, AP should be a good context to analyze the importance of reservation among SC students.

This thesis’ point of departure

To adequately capture the impact of the government’s policy of positive discrimination, I will use an eclectic theoretical framework. I will look at identity as something which is produced through interaction between the state and the civil society,

¹⁴ Rajni Kothari “Caste and Secular Upsurge”, Times of India September 28, 1990.

¹⁵ Lakh equals to hundred thousand.

between the laws and the social norms. This paper can be understood as supporting the post modernist school by looking at identity as something which is constructed and made relevant through political strategies. If one only look at caste as a primordial identity we will not be able to see the changes happening through daily interaction, and it leaves the possibilities for negotiating one's identity slim. I do not mean to say that the role of caste identity is exclusively due to the government's policy, or that one person can change his/hers identity by own means. But that caste identity must be seen as one factor which creates the dynamic of casteism in the university. There is in other words room for agency.

Caste has become one of the important ethnic identities used in Indian politics. This same trend can be seen inside the university. The university itself has not only become a battleground for the fight over benefits, it is also the arena where the unjust done towards the SCs can be reversed.

Structure of the thesis

The Second chapter starts with background information on Andhra Pradesh and the University of Hyderabad. Subsequently, I am discussing my sample of informants and method used in this thesis. At the end of the chapter short comings and ethics relevant to this thesis are explored.

Chapter three seeks to discuss the Dalit identity by emphasizing the distinction between Dalits and SCs. Here I look at several of my informants' understanding of the differences between SC and Dalit identity. I also discuss different variables which are important for the experience of being a Dalit student.

Subsequently, chapter four will explore the connection between reservation and identity politics with focus on the AP experience. I will try to show why the Mala and Madiga identities have become politicized. Here I look at how regional politics revolve around the reservation issue has contributed to making it difficult to unite the SC in AP against the dominant castes. On the ground level I am discussing reservation, classification and the creamy layer debate, based on the students' experiences.

The fifth chapter shows the role of the student politics in the campus, and how it affects the SC students. I discuss the representation of SC students in the student organization their failure both to enter formal party politics and to secure seats in the

University. I also look at which possibilities are there and which are not there, for the SC students.

In chapter six I try to show why the university is a place where casteism is a reality and what contributes to creating this atmosphere. Indirect discrimination and violence are two elements which are discussed. Looking at both national level and local level, I try to see which underlying structures are implemented which helps to keep casteism alive.

2. The Field, Sample and Method

I arrived in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, in August 2008 to conduct my field work. Andhra Pradesh is situated in South-India and has a total population of 76 million people. Out of this, 12 million belong to the SC community.¹⁶ The capital of Andhra Pradesh is Hyderabad and it has a total population of 3.9 million citizens, 307, 248 people belong to the SC category (Bhaskar 2004, pp. 3). In Hyderabad, there are three main languages: Telugu, English and Urdu. For the rich middle class, English is the preferred language. The linguistic differences correspond to the differences in religion; Muslims prefer Urdu while the rest, except for the upper middle class, speaks Telugu. What characterize Hyderabad is its large Muslim population and the influence that Islam has had on the city, which has made Hyderabad into a melting pot for diversity of religions, traditions and culture. Apart from that, Hyderabad is known as one of the most successful IT-cities in South India housing Microsoft and other big multinational companies (MNCs). In addition, Hyderabad is known to be the hub for “Tollywood” film industry.

This chapter will first describe the geographical field of this thesis. Thereafter, I will discuss my selection of informants and look at the representation of gender. Before discuss the pros and cons of the different tools used to collect data, I will clarify how I will use the data in this thesis. After that, I will examine the ethical side concerning this research and discuss the limitations of this thesis.

The field

My fieldwork was carried out on the University of Hyderabad (UoH) campus. UoH is the only Central University¹⁷ in South-India and attracts students from all over the country, however, the majority of students come from the south and the North-Eastern states, the seven sisters.¹⁸ The University of Hyderabad was established as a central university in 1974 and was financed by the University Grants Commission.¹⁹ The university is located in the Serlingampally district in Hyderabad, a thirty minutes bus drive from the city center Medhapatnam, a ten minutes drive the opposite direction brings

¹⁶ <http://www.portal.ap.gov.in/State%20Profile/Pages/StateProfile.aspx> visited 29.11.09

¹⁷ Central university means that it follows the central governments educational policies and not the individual state policies.

¹⁸ Refers to North East India states; Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam, Arunchal Pradesh and Manipur.

¹⁹ http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/aboutuoh/vission_mission.html visited 19.05.09

you to a suburb called Lingampally where you can buy anything you need, from hair oil to furniture. The university has a good reputation in India and is described as an institution with potential for excellence, in other words one of the best universities in India. At the university there are currently around 3000 students²⁰ spread across an area of 2000 acres. With lots of greenery and two lakes, the campus is a fresh and clean center compared to the big city's heavy pollution. The area is surrounded with fences and has a high number of security people working to secure the premises. The campus is therefore fairly safe from outside intruders. The forest and greenery also gives room for a number of snakes, scorpions, peacocks, buffalos and boars to watch out for.

The UoH campus is a campus in constant change. The university has mainly offered study programs for master studies and higher studies but in the last couple of years a few integrated courses have also been added.²¹ It has therefore become necessary to build out the south end of the campus to accommodate the newly integrated students. This has increased the number of students in the university, extended the activity of the campus and given the campus a different age profile. The campus is becoming more and more divided between the south campus where the integrated boys are accommodated and the north side of the campus where most of the faculties and hostels for both women and men are located. The main centre of activity is still on the north side of the campus, so I chose to conduct my field work there.

In the central universities in India, English is the language of teaching. To gain admission to the university you first have to pass a written entry exam and then an oral test.²² The Central Universities are government institutions and are therefore obliged to fill the 22.5 percentage SC/ST quota in institutions. The SC/ST students can be enrolled in the university with less merit than Other Caste students. There is also a reduction in the prices of admission, food, and hostel rooms. However, even if there are reduced prices for some students, any expenses can be a burden. Application forms cost 50 rupees and the admission fee differs between the different faculties.

²⁰ http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/academic/specialized_centres/integrated_studies/integrated_studies.html visited 19.05.09

²¹ Integrated courses are five year programs, covering both bachelor and master degree.

²² This varies for some of the courses, post graduate students do not have an interview.

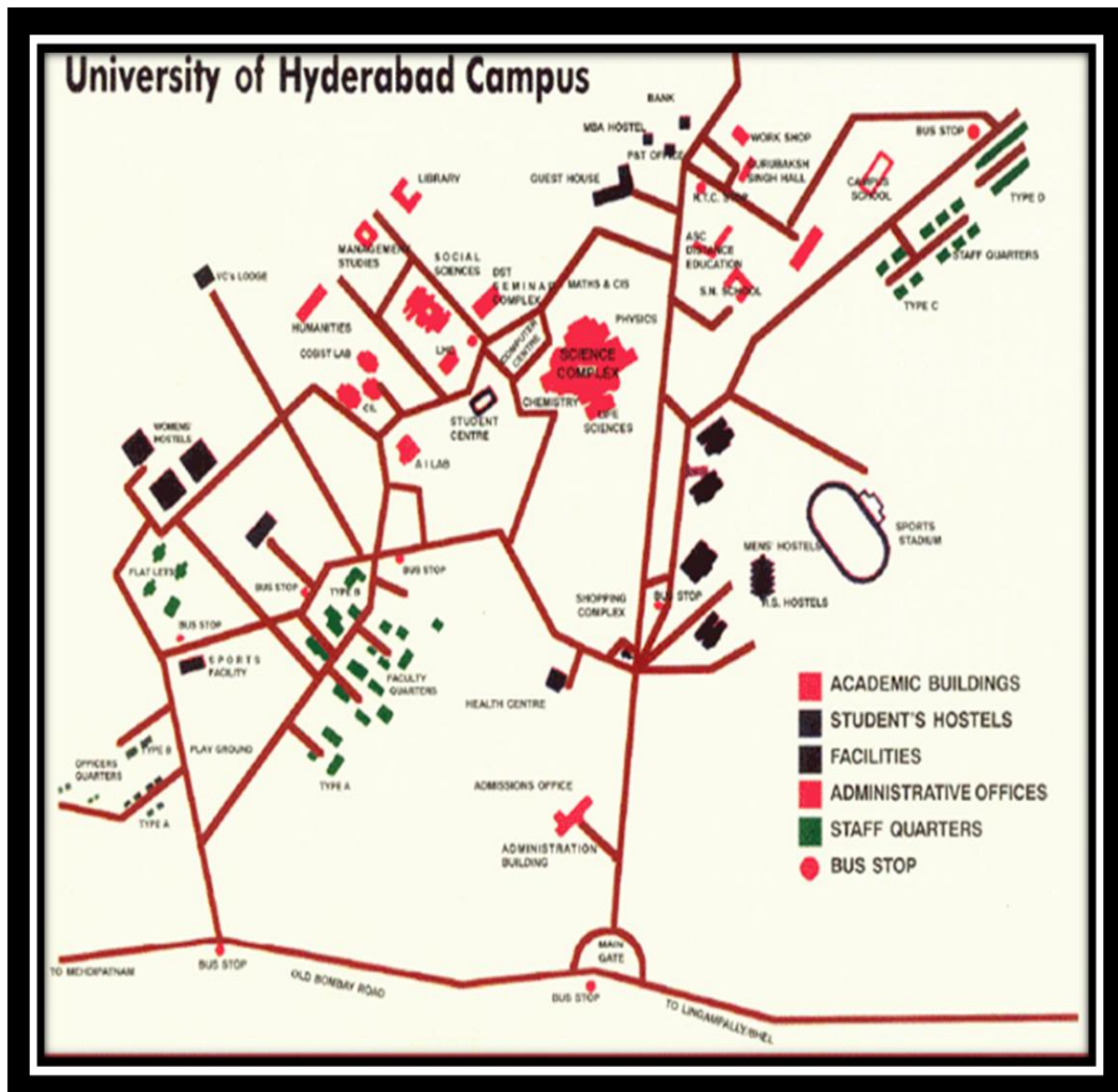


Figure 1; down loaded 26.05.09 from <http://www.uohd.ernet.in/aboutuoh/maps.html>

Sample

Before starting my fieldwork I had decided on a set of criteria that would help me choose my informants. They had to be students at UoH, belong to the SC community, they had to be or have been either affiliated with student politics or keen observers of student politics.

To approach these people, I used both the snowball method and strategic sample. So I started the snowball with approaching some students with the specific criteria and then asked them if they knew anyone I could talk to. In addition to this, I also interview SC students outside of this network if they satisfied the specific criteria that I was

looking for. I also interviewed some students which met the criteria and that I randomly was introduced to. Since both my husband and I have been former students at the UoH we had some contacts that I initially could approach.²³ I chose to use the snowball method because it enabled me to establish many contacts within the specific network that I was interested in. After a while, I realized that I had to interview people outside of these networks to make sure that I did not only speak to Malas or Madigas.

The snowball method has been criticized for giving access only into one network, in my case that would be into one of the Dalit student parties (Thagaard 2002, pp. 54). I avoided this problem by also including people that I randomly met if they fit the criteria. In this way I came in contact with politically active students representing both of the Dalit student organizations and some who were in different organizations. Altogether I interviewed thirteen Madigas, eleven Malas and one student who belongs to neither of these two jatis. In addition to this, I had informal conversations with people from other castes and one journalist. I avoided ending up with informants from only one of the Dalit student organizations. I also did participant observation, especially during the student election. I was initially hoping to do more observation than what I ended up with, but due to the big size of the campus, my restricted access to the men's hostel and the fact that I became ill, I had difficulties in keeping persistent observation of my key informants.²⁴

The advantaged of the snowball method was that I could easily get in contact with a person that had the qualities I was looking for. Since it is difficult for me as an outsider to determine which caste a student belongs to without asking them, the snowball method saved both parties from scenes where I had to ask all the students I met which caste they belonged to. That could have been awkward for both parties.

Most of my informants are students with a social science or humanities background. I think this sample can be justified since my impression is that there is a high number of SC students in social science and humanities. Out of 170 enrolled SC in Post Graduates courses, both in reserved and non-reserved category during the admission in 2007/2008 at UoH, 103 were in social science, while 47 were in science and remaining 20 joined in different performing art programs.²⁵ This trend was also seen by Thomas Weisskoppe in his article "Impact of Reservation on Admissions to Higher Education in India", where

²³ I was an exchange student fall semester 2006 at this university, while my husband did his Master Degree in 2003-2005.

²⁴ I spent four months in India for 1.5 month I could not continue with my field work. Two weeks were I was on and off going to the campus

²⁵ See appendix number 4.

he writes that 40 percent of all students in higher education are enrolled in low-prestigious arts programs,²⁶ and out of these, over 60 percent belongs to SC and 75 percent to ST (2004, pp. 4339). This reflects the SC and ST students position both economically and socially. I see two reasons for this: the first is an economic one, since there is a big difference in tuition fee between studies in social science and humanities on one hand and science, IT and engineering on the other hand. The second reason is social one because in many cases the SC and ST children do not have educated advisors or family members to guide them into disciplines and schools which are perceived as important in India today, like science, engineering and IT.

Gender inequality

Only four out of the 25 students I spoke to were girls. My blue-eyed idea was that I should try to interview equal numbers of boys and girls, but as the time went by, I realized it would not be possible. Only a few girls were active in politics and it became more difficult to get in touch with girls than I had imagined before I started my field work. They were more nervous and self-conscious about their identity and English skills. Often it is stated that no one is more discriminated than SC women (Seenarine 2004, pp. 38), by both being untouchable according to the caste system and being impure in the sense of being a woman. During my interviews I asked the informants if they knew any girls who would be interesting to talk to, their answers were that the girls are shy and that many of them do not want their identity to be known. Whether this is the main reason is difficult to say. Another reason could be that they were more reserved when it came to speaking English with a foreigner. For me it was much easier to get in contact with boys, since they wanted to speak to foreign girls and seemed less reserved than the girls. My gender clearly influenced who I spoke to and what kind of information I got. Thagaard also writes that being an outsider and a girl interviewing a boy can be beneficial since it is accepted by the informant that the interviewer asks detailed questions about subjects that the informant take for granted (2003, pp. 103).

My informants and I are roughly in the same age group, so we had many things in common. For example we were all students, we were all unmarried but in a phase of life where we were thinking about marriage. Not only gender impacted the relationship between my informants and me, but also my economic and social platform. In India,

²⁶ Weisskoppe uses the term arts in the meaning of social sciences, philosophy, history and similar subjects.

where light complexion is regarded as beautiful, the fact that I have fair skin and am of the opposite sex made it a little bit interesting to talk to me. Economically, I was perceived as coming from a better economic background than many of my informants. But even if we were different in many ways we also had many common interests which made it easy to interact with each other.

Interview

Interviews were one of the most important tools I used during my field work. Much time was spent on finding the right person to interview, doing the interview and transcribing interviews. I carried out interviews both with and without a voice recorder. In the beginning when I arrived at campus I thought I would give it a try and interview students without recording. This exercise proved to be very demanding because I had to focus both on the questions, on writing down the right key words and on making sure that I was taking enough notes to later transcribe the interviews. This consumed so much of my attention that I felt it was difficult to really concentrate on the meaning of the information I got. This was probably due to my lack of experience with field work. After a while, I decided to try a voice recorder and went looking for one. To find a voice recorder with a certain standard, but not out of my budget range proved difficult, but after two weeks of walking around and calling different shops, I found one. During the time of my search I continued interviewing, so altogether I have fifteen interviews with voice recorder and ten interviews without. The quality of the information I got increased with the voice recorder. The main difficulty with the interviews conducted without a voice recorder was that daily power cuts made it difficult to transcribe the interviews directly after the session so by the time I could sit down it was not as fresh in my mind as it could have been. The interviews I taped provided me with a large amount of information, more than I am capable of using in this thesis. In addition, this method gave me the freedom to be fully present and to react spontaneously to what my interviewee said. I could also do several interviews at one day. The transcribing of the taped interviews was much more time consuming than conducting interviews without a recorder. Tove Thagaard considers the information coming from interviews taped by a voice recorder as information saturated with meaning. When doing an interview without a voice recorder, the interviewer has already analyzed which information is important and not before it is noted down (2002, pp. 97). By using a voice recorder the interviewer has more time to

observe body language and ask good questions; at the same time the amount of work of transcribing the interviews is the inconvenience.

Thagaard writes, that interviews taped by a voice recorder can seem more formal and make the interview situation more tense than without (2002, pp. 97). In my experience, the interviews with voice recorder were not perceived as more formal than without. Both with and without the voice recorder, the informants felt a bit awkward in the beginning, this usually became less apparent after the first introduction round of questions was finished.

I felt it was an advantaged to use the voice recorder since I had more time during the interview session to participate, observe and come up with relevant follow up question. Having the interviews on tape, I can listen to them over and over again. Listening to the recordings takes me back to the interview and I can remember the situation better than through only reading the notes I took. If I have any doubts about a term or a meaning of what the person is saying I can get a second opinion from someone who knows the linguistic context better than me. This is maybe even more important when both the interviewer and the people interviewed are all speaking in a second language which is not a mother tongue for any of them.

All my interviews were conducted in English. During a couple of interviews I had a second person with me who could help out if the informant felt that the language was a barrier for giving the interview. This person was someone that the informant knew or approved of before we started. In most of the interviews the English itself was not a problem, since the students study in English. Had I spoken to first semester master students this would be more difficult, since many SC students who enter the university do not know English well, the language is a struggle for them during the first semester.

The interview location was the same for almost all of the interviews I did. The place is known by the name Gops, short for Gopal's shop, which has been there for many years. This place has several stalls where students can buy food, chai²⁷, fruits and vegetables, in addition there is a small kiosk and a beauty parlor for girls. I choose to use this place because it is accessible for all students no matter which hostel they live in. Everybody knows where it is, and it is a public place where it is normal for boys and girls to interact. Another reason was that this place had benches and tables so it was

²⁷ Chai means tea.

practically possible to go through with the interviews. This place is crowded in the evenings and during lunch hour, so I did all my interviews before and after lunch.

Observation

During my field work, the method of observation was prioritized during the student election. This has several reasons, one of them is that as a woman I was not allowed into certain areas on the campus for example the men's hostel and I did not participate in their classes, thus I met my informants in their spare time. Every day I was at the university to conduct interviews or to drink chai and catch up on the latest gossip; this is of course also observation but in a less systematic way. Through observation I could see how people act instead of just hearing what they say (Öhlander 1999, pp. 76). By using observation I got a lot of data which I later used during interviews and informal talks with the students. It gave me a good insight into how the election was run and I got information which had not already been analyzed by the informant.

This thesis is therefore based on a combination of interview material, observation data and secondary literature. The observation gives clues to which questions to ask and the interviews give information on how the person wants to represent himself to an outsider (Thagaard 2002, chapter 5). Often a person wants to appear in a way that is appropriately adjusted to the culture, society and the person he/she speaks to, but action can sometimes show that there is discrepancy between what the informant says and how the informant acts.

The problem of representation

The post colonialist researchers criticized the colonialists or orientalist for not letting the subaltern speak. As a result of this criticism Subaltern Studies emerged, led by highly educated Indian researchers, often with education and positions in the western world. This school wants to focus on the history of the subaltern people, who had previously been passed in silence.

The Subaltern studies were also citizen: could the Subaltern School claim to speak for the truly subaltern people, when they themselves were not among the truly subaltern? Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, belongs to the Subaltern school, and wrote the controversial article "Can Subaltern Speak?"(1988). In this article she argues that subalterns cannot

speak because they either are talked about as the other or they are defended by people who are not themselves subalterns, in other word they are represented by the colonialist or is re-represented by the leftist intellectuals, in way were the writer is transparent (1988). She argues that translation of languages reduces the essence in the meaning of the language and that misunderstanding leads to that conclusion are made on incorrect data (1988).

My informant's level of English is not up to what we can call Standard English, but is English which is heavily infused with local language. While writing this thesis, a conflict arose about whether I should use direct quotes from my interviews, or whether I should re-write their statements in to correct English.

Trying to avoid the problem of translation and representation which Spivak point at, I have chosen to let the interviews be quoted directly from the tape recorder in order to let students/informants/subalterns speak. This not only gives the reader a chance to analyze what the informant is saying, but the reader can also see how I build my arguments. Another important point of keeping the words as they were uttered is to show the reader the gap between the expectation of the university to study in English and the practical reality of the English level for my informants. Reading the different quotes, you can find big differences in the students' level of English. While a few of my informants are used to English medium education, most of them are not.

Critics can argue that giving their citations as they where uttered without a "makeover" is to ridicule the students. This is not at all my intention when printing the quotations. The reader might have to read the quote twice in order to understand what is being said, but this seems less important than to filter the voice of the informants.

The researcher

In this thesis I have based my work on different methods which is also reflected in the writing styles of the chapters. Chapters mostly based on observation will have the presence of the writer in the text. Anthropological reflectionism, was a big debate in the field of anthropological studies from the 1960 and onwards, and was highlighted with the publication *Writing Culture* in 1986 edited by Clifford and Marcus. This debate led to a trend in postmodernist schooling where the researcher includes his or her role in the process of gathering information and how they influenced it. Within anthropology, where

the researcher is seen as a tool to gather and process information, it is important to visualize how they gained their information. In chapter 5, this style will be more prominent than in other chapters. This is due to the fact that chapter five is based on information gathered through participant observation.

Ethics

As important as research is, it should not in any way harm the informant or be a liability for them. Per Nerdrum has developed three “ethical guidance principles” for field work;²⁸ the first one is: Right to self-determination and autonomy, second, respect for the persons private life and third avoid harming others (Nerdrum is cited in Tufte & Johannessen 2002, pp. 67). The right to self- determination was something I had to be careful with during my field work, in one instance I was trying to arrange an interview with one SC girl which earlier had been my classmate. I had asked a common friend of us to ask her if she was interested. She told my friend that she was not. When I later ran into the girl on campus and asked her again, she replied “please, I don’t want to”. I respected that and did not ask her anymore. She started to avoid me, and I hardly spoke to her the rest of the time I was there. Maybe she was afraid that I would ask her again. This example shows the fine line of being sensitive to your informants and to let them choose. The right to privacy is important, and I felt it was very difficult with the friends that I already knew before I came there. I did not take notes of everything that we shared when I was outside the university. Even if I still learned many new things in these situations also, it was more important to achieve a general understanding than to critically analyze their statements. In the end it is up to the researcher to make sure that the data used is handled in the right way.

In my thesis I have anonymized the names of the informants, and I have also in some parts changed some personal information of the informants were I felt that the person can easily be recognized. Professors which are mentioned are referred to as professor W, or doctor W.

²⁸ Translated from Norwegian; etiske retningslinjer: 1,Retten til selvbestemmelse og autonomi.2, respekt for privatlivet and 3, Unngå skade.

My informants freely agreed to the interviews after I had given them an introduction of my research and how the information will be used and stored. They gave an oral consent and could at any time choose to back out of the interview.

The limitation of this thesis

Since field work has a tendency to take on a different “life” than what the researcher had planned in advance, this data is a result of the methods that I chose to use. The topics discussed in this thesis are those topics that were highlighted during my interviews and observation of the SC students. During my interviews I used one questionnaire to guide me through topics that I wanted to talk about. After I had done some interviews, I realized that it was necessary to re-evaluate my questionnaire so I included some topics that had come to my attention during the first interviews but which I felt that I needed more information about. Had I only followed the first questionnaire consequently, could I probably have gained stronger statistical data, but on the other hand would I not have understood what the informants valued as important points and I would not have been able to go beyond what I initially thought was important.

Since I interviewed four girls out of twenty five students the gender imbalance is a definite draw back and cannot show the difference in how identity politics and especially reservation has molded the difference between genders when it comes to sense of identity. But this very fact also reflects the reality of Indian politics, not only student politics but the general gender imbalance in Indian politics despite the fact that India has a history of powerful female political leaders.

My personal relations affected my role as a researcher, being (at that time) engaged with a former Indian student from the university made many students curious about our relationship. During the time of field work we were living together just outside the campus and I think living outside of campus had both advantages and a disadvantages. The advantage was that I had more contacts I could initially approach; I had someone who spoke the local language and who could support me. My fiancé’s social status also affected the way people were looking at me. He comes from a poor family. The students were aware that I was not judging them by caste or money and it made it easy to enter conversations. Since many of the female exchange students on UoH are looked upon as “American party girls”, my presence and interest was legitimized by my relation. The negative aspect of my situation was that I did not live in the ladies hostel where I easier

could have come in touch with more girls. Another thing was that the students several times answered my questions with the suggestion that I could ask my fiancé since he would also know the answer. Had I come to the university alone, I think, some of my informants would have felt a bigger responsibility to “take care” of me and this would have given me different data than what I ended up with.

Since the findings in this thesis are based on data from one university it could be interesting to compare them with findings from another university in Hyderabad or elsewhere in India.

3. The Dalit Identity

The low castes have historically been poor, landless, uneducated and dependent on their patron in order to secure a job and food for the family. This picture has changed in the last decades, though not all low castes have felt that change. Through education, financial improvement and, less dependence on the dominant caste many low castes have moved into a new sphere, where their identity is vital in order to continue their upward mobilization. This mobilization Christophe Jaffrelot has called “India’s silent revolution” or “The rise of the lower castes” as Magdalena Inkinen termed it (Jaffrelot 2003; Inkinen 2003). This rise has been possible because of the formation of one broad identity for a very heterogeneous group of people.

The term “low caste identity” has become more and more important. Since the late 60s, beginning of 70s, there has been an increasing interest in identity politics and the mobilization of low caste in academia. Low caste is a broad term which encompasses STs, SCs and also OBCs. Dalit, meaning down-trodden, is another word used to describe the same group. These categories have become political significant, and important for the growing trend of identity politics that has become so evident in Indian politics from 1977 and till this day.

The Dalit Panthers, formed in 1972, helped to put the Dalit case on the political agenda. The Panthers originated from Mumbai and were followers of Ambedkar. The Dalit Panthers was a movement of young educated Buddhists who used a militant approach. The Dalit Panthers themselves did not manage to attract the big number of voters and did not manage to bridge the gap between educated urban Dalits and illiterates in the villages (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 214). But they did manage help spread the Dalit *Sahitiya*, Dalit literature, meaning literature of the oppressed (Zelliot 1996, pp. 180). In 1981 the first Indian Journal by Dalits was established, *Dalit Voice*. In Andhra Pradesh this movement took the face of the Naxalites, they wanted to improve the economic and social position the Dalits faced due to caste and gender inequalities (Omvedt 2001, pp. 152). In the same line as the Dalit Panthers, the naxalites were also inclined to use violence. Parallel with the rise of the Dalit Panthers, more and more Dalits were educated and numerous organizations were established to improve Dalits’ situation. Though there is still no political party in AP which has managed to overcome the internal differences and become the political voice for the Dalits.

Through the “rise of the lower caste” their identity has undergone a remarkable change, they have gained enough self-confidence to fight for political space, legal and humanitarian rights, and no longer sees themselves as inferior to other (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp.1).

In this chapter I argue that the Dalit identity is an identity which the students will become aware of after entering into the university, the university being a place where political consciousness is learned by the SC students’ organizations. This is unlike the SC identity which is known and used among the Scheduled Castes in the villages. Fredrik Barth argues that identity is relevant as long as it is made socially relevant (Barth 1969, introduction). In India, SC identity is significant because it is socially, economically and politically relevant. I will also argue that identity becomes more relevant when the SC students are moving upward in the Indian society.

In this chapter, I first want to define what identity is, before I explore the terminology Dalit and Scheduled Caste. Thereafter, I will use my informants experience to discuss when a Dalit student realizes his/her place in the caste hierarchy. Since this is a large heterogeneous group it is difficult to generalize about their self-identity. Subsequently, it is necessary to look at variables which affect the students’ self-identity. I will look at two variables in this chapter; one is urban/ rural background and the second is religion. Religious explanations are often discussed in literature about Scheduled Castes to explain their low position, but I want to reflect on how religion has become politically significant for certain groups in order to be entitled to government benefits. I also want to look at how some Dalits try to embrace a new religion in order to fight the caste system. The SCs are demanding their share of public space and public benefits and therefore, they are perceived as a threat by the OCs.

Identity

Identity, Jean- Marie Benoist writes, is “being the same as oneself as well as being different” (Eriksen 2002, pp. 60). In other words, a person can have certain features in common even if they do not share the same identity. One distinctive feature can make a person’s identity different from others for example language, religion or regional belonging. What makes the low castes different from others is their caste. Anthropological research focusing on identity often refers to identity as ethnicity, Eriksen writes “[E]thnic classifications are also social and cultural products related to

the requirements of the classifiers. They serve to order the social world and to create standardised cognitive maps over categories of relevant others” (2002, pp. 61). The classifiers are the ones with power to order the society in a certain way. The classifier in India, relevant for the Dalits, is the government. The government establishes which categories are relevant in the society. In other words, ethnicity or identity is constructed and is a result of our need to order our social world into comprehensible and meaningful categories. Identity often becomes more crucial in societies with competition for scarce resources (Cohen, referred to by Eriksen 1998, pp. 370). If one analyzes identity as something constructed, it gives room for manipulation of identity. Badri Narayan sees identity as something which easily can be manipulated for personal gains for example by politicians. This he shows in his book *Women heroes and Dalit Assertion in North India*, the book discusses the construction of Bahujan Samaj Party, Mayawati’s vote bank and success in Uttar Pradesh (2006). Narayan shows how Mayawati and her party workers manipulate the Dalit identity. They managed to create a myth of descendents which highlight the Dalits common origin and their importance in the fight for the independence of the nation. These myths of female heroes and their origin were spread by giving speeches, the distribution of booklets and by organizing street plays. BSP managed to create a group feeling around an identity which they could be proud of. Reaching both literates and illiterates, the BSP managed to secure the Dalit vote bank. Some of the success of BSP can be explained by how they managed to mobilize both educated and uneducated Dalits, where earlier attempts had not succeeded.

Scheduled Caste or Dalit?

My informants have been, and still are described with many different terms, for example untouchable, Harijan, lower caste, Scheduled Caste or Dalit. These different generic names are used to describe groups that have faced religiously justified untouchability in the Indian society (Yagati 2003, pp. 2). This group of people has been described with different names depending on the person speaking and his outlook. The term used has also changed concurrent with political fights and development. Based on the different interest- groups’ ambition, they are described with different terms coinciding with the actor’s interest. There are three main genres of terms; terms ascribed by the government, terms which gives the untouchables a religious explanation and terms used by this group of people to describe themselves. Jotirao Phule and bigger movements

of suppressed people like Dalit Panthers, highlight other qualities in the term they prefer to use than for example Mahatma Gandhi.²⁹

One category of terms came from the government. While the British administration was trying to organize and understand the complexity of the Indian society they started to use the term “Depressed Classes” in censuses from the end of nineteenth century till 1930s (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 4). Depressed Classes described those at the lowest level in the caste system. In 1936 the term was replaced with Scheduled Caste, in connection with the British’s creating the list of SCs. This term did not become widely used until after independence (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 4). This list was used to locate those who should benefit from the implementation of preferential treatment, like reserved seats in administration and education. The term Scheduled Caste, is in Telugu called *scheduled kulamu* or *scheduled tegalu*, is thus an ascribed identity, which is often used today. I will mainly be using this term in my thesis because I’m interested in how the government’s implementation of reservation schemes affects the SC students.

The term untouchable, or in Telugu called *antaraani vaadu*, focuses on the religious explanation of the Dalits, and refers to the hierarchical caste systems based on pollution and purity. This theory can be traced back to the *manusmriti*, where it is explained that “...untouchability is the punishment for miscegenation between a member of a high caste and that of a low caste or an outcaste. The children of such an unequal pair become Untouchables, and the greater the social gap between the two parents, the lower the status of their children” (Michael 1999, pp. 3). Those at the top of the hierarchy are presumed as pure and the further down on the ladder you are the more polluted you are. There should, for that reason be no physical contact between a high caste and a low caste and especially not between high caste and untouchables (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 7).

Mahatma Gandhi also recognized that something had to change in order to increase the welfare of the untouchables. Mahatma Gandhi saw caste as a sin: “As I have repeatedly said there is no such thing as untouchability by birth in the Shastras. I hold the present practice to be a sin and the greatest blot on Hinduism. I feel more than ever that if untouchability lives, Hinduism dies” (Gandhi 2004 [1933], pp. 57). In order to change this he saw religious reforms as the right tool. Gandhi started to use the word Harijan, children of God. Gandhi’s intention was to give the people a name which did not bind

²⁹ Jotirao Phule was a social reformist who criticized among other the caste system; he was from Maharashtra and lived from 1827 until 1890.

them to a particular inferior status (Medelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 3). My informants saw this word as offensive. Thomas, one of the students I interviewed, explained it like this:

..., Hari means God, how God will give birth to the people? That means he will have many wives.... Why should I be called Harijan? I'm not a Harijan, I'm a Dalit. Even Ambedkar does not want to use the word Harijan in front of people. Because Harijan, [means] birth of the God. We are not birth of the God. That means he had many wives and also we don't have legal property that is why we were treated into that type of category. So that is why Dalit is our royal word for the SC people and BC and ST. Because this Dalit word gives some royalty and indication to other people.

In Thomas' explanation Harijan indirectly points toward unmoral behavior, since this implies that God would have had sexual relation with their mothers and because being born outside of marriage will give them no right to inherit property. If you analyze the word Harijan in Thomas' way, it is not a name that gives pride and self-esteem to this group of people. But it was a term widely used during the time of Gandhi and the fight for independence, used both by SCs themselves and others (Mendelsohn & Vicziani 1998, pp. 3). Narsi Metha, a medieval saint, was the first to use the word Harijan (Satyanarayana 1994, referred to in Yagathi 2003, pp. 16). The word was used to describe *devadasis'* children, devadasis were the temple dancers and their role as servant to God also included myths about sexual relations. In the beginning of the twentieth century this group grew in number to the extent that they formed a new caste group, which later was recognized in the British censuses (Ramakrishna 1983;1993, referred to in Yagati 2003, pp. 16). Mendelsohn & Vicziani argues that the term is seen now as a "symbol of the non-radical integrationist politics of Gandhi and his followers" (1998, pp. 3). Harijan was also used by militant activists to describe those who had "accepted" their place at the bottom of the hierarchy (Mendelsohn & Vicziani 1998, pp. 3). Thus, the word was used both by Gandhi in his fight for the betterment of Harijans and by militant SC condemning their own people who accepted their inferior position.

Jotirao Phule was the first one to use the word Dalit. The Dalit word is often described as coming from Marathi and originating from Sanskrit, meaning the down-trodden. Now it is closely connected to Dr. Ambedkar and his teachings. Dr. Ambedkar

came from Maharashtra and was very influential among the Mahars and untouchables in his state, but he was also well thought of in other states (Medelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 3-4). In the 70s' the Dalit Panthers started using the word Dalit. The Dalit word was popularized by Ambedkar. In the last decades politicians like Kanshi Ram and Mayawati have used this term, within academics Gopal Guru and Professor Kancha Ilaiah, have contributed in making the Dalit term known.³⁰ In AP the word Dalit seems to be used by highly educated people or activists.

Three categories are discussed so far; ascribed terms introduced by the British rulers, the second category emphasizes the religious aspect of the group, while the term in the third category originated among the lower castes. For my thesis the most interesting terms to use is Dalit or Scheduled Caste. So what is the difference between Dalit and Scheduled caste?

Here I will look at two aspects, one is the difference in the meaning of the generic terms and the second aspect is how entrenched the terms are in North and South India.

The main difference between the terms SC and Dalit is that the term Scheduled Caste was a word that the government made and was ascribed to those who they thought belonged within that folder. Still today the term SC is used in censuses and refers to the group that is entitled to preferential treatments, according to the constitution. To be included in the preferential treatment also depends on the person's religion. Only Hindus, Buddhist and Sikhs are officially accepted as SC.³¹

The term Dalit has by many, including Gopal Guru, been accepted as a more accurate word since it originated from the Dalits themselves, in contrast to an ascribed identity (Guru 2001, pp. 104-105). Most of my informants identified themselves as Dalits but they had different opinion about what the term Dalit means. Most of them pointed out that many SCs in villages do not know the term Dalit. Naveen, a Mala student, explains: "Dalit word reflects awareness and it means broken, and includes those who were called untouchables and Harijans. In the constitution the word SC is used. Many people don't know the word Dalit". Which groups are included in the term Dalit and how it differs from SC is for many of the students I spoke to not clear. Thomas my informant, sited earlier in this chapter, sees Dalit as the "royal" word for both SC, BC and STs while my informant Manosh explains the difference in the meaning of the word Dalit "SCs is a

³⁰ Kanshi Ram is known for developing the lower-caste party Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and for developing Mayawati into a political leader, she is the party's current leader.

³¹ This will be discussed later in this chapter.

British terminology, it is different. Using the word royal to describe the Dalit term, Thomas sees that term as the main term to use, a term which gives honor and respect. “The Dalit word comes from Sanskrit. STs are not Dalits but they are in the deprived sector, there is no difference, SC is a popular term”. There is a difference between the way Thomas understand the term Dalit and they way Manosh does. Also in literature can we see a disagreement in which groups are identified as Dalits. Kancha Ilaiah sees Dalits as only people from the SC communities, in contrary to Dalits as including SC, ST and some OBCs as Badri Narayan defines Dalit (Ilaiah 2007, pp. viii; Narayan 2006, pp. 33). Ilaiah himself uses the word DalitBahujan to include both SC, and OBC. The word Bahujan became popular with the establishment of Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh by Kanshi Ram. Since the word Bahujan means majority, Ilaiah finds it necessary to use both Dalit and Bahujan to highlight which majority that is being described (Ilaiah 2007, pp. viii-ix).

I see the Dalit word as an academic term popularized by identity politics and educated SCs, however it is still the SC identity which has become internalized for the average SC in AP.³² SC as Manosh says, is a popular term, meaning that it is widely used by the people themselves but also by others both in the villages and the cities. The Dalit identity connects with a certain pride and a level of consciousness. Since there is a difference in the way that the word Dalit is used, I want to make it clear that when I use the word I am including ST, SC and some section of the OBCs under the term.

Mendelsohn and Vicziany argue that the Dalit term has spread from Maharashtra to Karnataka and more and more through the whole of India (1998, pp. 4). Basing their field work in North India it is likely that the word has become more entrenched in the society there than it seem to be among the students I interviewed in Andhra Pradesh. One organization called Dalit Maha Sabha of Andhra Pradesh tried to spread the word Dalit to mean SC, ST and OBC, but it did not manage to popularize the term (Ilaiah 2007, pp. viii). Several of my informants said that they had learned the word after they started university, one of my informants did not know the meaning of the word Dalit. My informant had heard about the term Dalit but when I asked what the difference between Dalit and SC is, she replied that she did not know the meaning of the word Dalit, the interpreter, which also is one of my informants, explained what the word meant, and then she replayed:

³² This assumption is based on my interviews of SC-students.

Only after I came to this university, I didn't know what is caste and who are who, I didn't hear this before I came here... In admission to this university I saw the organization, I didn't pay much attention but my friends later told me we should only keep to our people because others will create some problems for you. I didn't experience but my friend did... I don't know what is Dalit and SC I don't know... I'm telling that I'm SC to everybody but most of the people [students] use Dalit. I didn't know till now the difference, so for me it is a habit. Harijana Mala, is my sub-caste.

All of my informants have academic background, and because of their education, most of them have come to know the word Dalit. One student explained to me that his professor had lectured on this topic and from there he had learned the meaning of the word Dalit. "The Dalit term is not only SC and ST, it is everyone who is oppressed, [a person] oppressed by someone is a Dalit. Professor W told, even women from upper caste [are Dalits] since they are not allowed to come out".

Thus, through higher education the students learn about the term Dalit, and the historical setting that shaped their position in the society. Naveen also highlighted that the use of the word Dalit shows a certain level of awareness about this issue.³³

No matter which word one uses to define this group of people it is a stigmatizing identity which a person cannot change, except in rare cases of *sanskritizing*.³⁴ My informant Shiva identified with the Dalit identity: "I'm a Dalit, but I would like to be a human being first and foremost". Some people do not want to be recognized either as Dalit or SC, and will hide their identity and will relate other identities as language, religion or region. Shiva explains that many people do not want to be recognized as Dalit "Tribes are Dalits but doesn't want to be Dalit, some OBC also. But also many don't want to tell their identity". Reasons for this can be many, some can be afraid of being stigmatized, "Some people can't say that they are Dalits because of their problems. If you ask educated people they can say that they are Dalit".³⁵ While others feel there is no common ground between them and other people who are in the same category. For example most of the STs in UoH come from Nagaland, they see themselves as very

³³ Sited earlier in this chapter

³⁴ This term is used to describe a jati which manages to move upwards in the hierarchy by embracing Hindu practice of higher jatis than themselves.

³⁵ From an interview with a Mala student.

different from the SC in the university, with different physical features, region, religion, language and culture. Some successful Dalits for example do not want to be related to poor Dalits.

From this I will argue that the SC term is a term used among the majority of untouchable in Andhra Pradesh, while the term Dalit is a term they have heard of, but often did not know the meaning of before they entered the University. The SC term has been used by the government for many decades, and is an institutionalized term which the SC will need to use when they are in contact with the government on all levels. The SC identity is connected with benefits, while the Dalit identity is connected with political consciousness.

In the next part, I will explore my informants' realization of their identity and its implications. The people identified as SCs come from a very heterogeneous background, which makes it difficult generalize for the entire group.

Being different than others

One untouchable kid who was five years old, his name is Kaliyan, he doesn't know that he is a Dalit and that he is not allowed to enter the village. One day something was going on in the village and the boy and the mother was watching from a far distance. Then the boy asked if they could go closer. The mother said no. When his mother was not watching he went there anyway, people who saw him asked him who he was, then he said his name and that he was son of these [SC] people. The villagers beat him severely and the boy fled to the forest. After this the boy will start thinking I'm a Dalit, and what it means to be a Dalit. This experience leads to inferior complex. And it gives a notion that we are less worth and many people feel like to hide their identity if they can because of this.

Naveen, a PhD student, narrates how a SC child in the village can experience what it means to belong to SC community. Belonging to a socially constructed stigmatized identity, the SC children will have to learn their place in the society. Sukhadeo Thorat has written about SC children:

Although [the untouchable child] would have been identified even earlier as a child of an untouchable father, this would not have affected his thinking process directly. It is when he begins to walk independently, and when the play of his own will take him to other people and things, that he experience a stigmatized identity personally; and this makes an impression, subtle and indirect, upon his thinking process (Thorat 1979, pp. 67, cited in Raman 2003, pp. 95-96).

Thorat's observation seems to coincide with the stories the students told me. The first example shows that it is when the child is out of his parents' protection, the SC child learns about their stigmatized identity. For some SC children it will be learned through verbal confrontations, some during play with other OC kids, or some through the experience of physical violence.

One UoH student Prasad, who belongs to the Madiga caste, said that from the 10th standard he had come to know of caste issues. By playing with other kids he had learned that he was not welcome in certain houses, his first experience was when he had asked his friend (Brahmin) if he could come to his house: "He said that they did not have space for Dalit people in his house". This episode repeated itself with a Mala friend, the friend had answered that Madigas did not have "culture and cleanliness" so his parents did not allow his Madiga friends in the house. Prasad experiences show that the parents are the one teaching their children about the different position people have in the society. Another point here is that it is okay for the kids to play together and interact as long as it is outside the household. John also experienced the confinements of the home: "In my village we have friends from all over but interaction will be less. We don't go to their home. We will meet out. In my village the SC lives separately". The village setup is usually that the Dalits live separated from OCs.

An interesting point highlighted in Prasad's episode is that Prasad was treated in the same way by both a Brahmin and a Mala child. Prasad elaborates:

I have mainly SC friends in the village. Caste discrimination happens in stages, in 7th class we don't know, in 10th we will know a little bit, because parents will teach, so from degree onwards it becomes very important. Here in the university, I have friends mainly from upper caste only. In the class many different, different people. In 10th

[class] a little bit different. But in M. Phil and PhD it will only be with close friends of same caste. They are the people that help me, and some people and unions are discriminating against me. Some go to the different unions and this will only increase as things go on.

Vinod also confirms "In my school level I didn't face problems. But we know that we should not touch other people". He continues "actually I learned and faced in my childhood. But I realized in my graduation".

Vinod's statement summarized the data from my informants. They learned gradually, from when they were children and through their teenage years, about what the implications of being SC are. When they reach the University they will "realize", or they will become conscious of the Dalit reality.

Previous examples illustrate how things were in the villages and small towns when my informants were young. SC children living in urban places might have different experiences with discrimination or at least to a different extent. The students from cities and towns, in many cases, come from better economic backgrounds and have better social and economic capital than those coming from rural areas.

Urban/ Rural variable

The experience of being a Scheduled Caste person differs for SC students coming from the villages and towns or cities. In towns or cities the importance of caste has a different position than what we usually think about when we talk about the caste system. Andre Bétille sees many changes that have happened in the urban setting, and argues that caste is no longer a complete system but as "a truncated system" (1996, pp. 161). He argues that caste is still very important in the Indian society but that some changes have taken place. When it comes to the issue of marriage patterns and endogamy, which has been one of the corner stone's of the caste system, a growing number of inter- caste marriages are reported (Kannan 1963; referred to by Bétille 1996, pp. 164). Bétille acknowledges that there are some inter-caste marriages but mainly with close sub-castes. He argues that there are few changes relating to the endogamous criteria but he acknowledges that caste is outspoken in different ways than earlier for example "good family background" or "status family" (1996). How dramatic the changes are is difficult to say, but changes are clearly happening on some levels.

The caste system is currently changing both in the urban and rural setting, the new shape of the caste system is different in villages and city. In the cities where the population density is very high and competition over resources is extremely high, it is more difficult to manage a hierarchical system based on pollution and purity, for example it is not possible to have areas where only SC people live or areas where only Reddys live. Living in an apartment in for example Hyderabad, tenants have to expect that people with different caste identities are living in one block. Even if the house owner is doing his best to make sure that there are a certain group of people living there. When I was looking for an apartment to live in during my field work, the landlords I was in contact with had different requirements from the tenants. For example in one house you were not allowed to cook meat, in another house you have to be Hindu, and so on. So still there are ways to include or exclude people in the cities also, but not in the same scale as in the villages.

In the rural areas the hierarchical system based on pollution and purity is still found in some villages but in other villages the importance of hierarchical system has diminished. Still the difference between village and an urban setting is vast. Thus, the experience for SC children growing up in the cities and the SC children growing up in villages is very different. And it also differs from village to village, town to town and city to city. For my research this means that the SC students coming from the villages and the SC students from urban places differ from each other in many ways. Florence one of my SC informants who come from an urban background explains why she did not experience problems of discrimination: “We stay in main city and because of that we didn’t face all the caste problems, if we were in a village we would definitely face it. I did not face and I have many upper caste friends... I will go to their home”.

The students with a background from towns or cities have in many cases better economical position than the ones from villages, a common thread among the students I spoke to is that the students with a father who is a wage earner (or retired wage earner), seemed to be better off than the others whose parents were agricultural laborers. Having one wage earner in the family has led to a stable and better economical position. This divide coincided with their rural/ urban background (see table 1).

In villages SCs are still working as agricultural laborers, cobblers or in other traditional occupations and those who have land are in addition maintaining their land. Working as agricultural labor is an unstable, seasonal job which payees very less. While

most of the students living in cities, have a father who was a wage earner and in one cases also a mother that was employed.

Table number 1 My informants' socio-economic background

S.No	Background	Father's work	Mother's work	Special Notes
1	Village (Mandal ³⁶ head quarter)	Unemployed	Housewife	Live on pension
2	City	Employed	Housewife	Retired
3	Village	Agriculture	Housewife	
4	Village	Agriculture	Agriculture	
5	Town	Employed	Housewife	
6	Town	Employed	Housewife	
7	City	Employed	Housewife	Retired
8	Town	Employed	Housewife	
9	City	Employed	Housewife	
10	Metro city	Employed	Employed	
11	Village	Agriculture	Housewife	
12	Village	Cobbler	Housewife	
13	Village	Agriculture	Agriculture	
14	Village	Agriculture/Mines	Housewife	Own 3 acres of land/retired
15	City	Employed	Housewife	
16	City	Employed	Housewife	
17	City	Employed	Housewife	
18	Village	Agriculture	Housewife	
19	Village	Employed	Housewife	Father retired
20	City	Employed	Housewife	Father died so the family is living of pension.
21	Village	Agriculture	Housewife	
22	City	Employed	Housewife	
23	Village	Agriculture	Agriculture	Own 1 acres of land
24	Village	Agriculture	Agriculture	Father retired
25	Village	Agriculture	Housewife	

³⁶ Mandal is a basic administrative unit which consists of a group of villages.

Religious variable

In India religious belonging is a sensitive and important dividing line in the society. Since the caste system and untouchability was seen as a Hindu problem, Muslim-Dalits and Christian- Dalits do not benefit from the reservation (Narayan 2006, pp. 35). After continuous pressure from Dalits with different religious background both Dalit-Sikhs and in 1990 Dalit-Buddhists were included in the SC group. Neither Dalit- Muslim communities nor Dalit- Christian communities have till today managed to get the same rights. Since I have only spoken to students belonging to either Christianity or Hinduism the focus will be on these two religions.³⁷ The Church itself has been accused by the Dalit- Christians of not pushing the government on this issue of reservation. From mid-90s the church started to get involved in the Dalit- Christians quest for reservation (Lobo 2001, pp. 250). The argument of the government has been that within Christianity and Islam there is no purity/ pollution idea, there is therefore no need for them to receive reservations (Lobo 2001, pp. 244).

The missionaries in AP have played an important role in making the complex identity picture we find amongst SC students in AP. According to Uma Ramaswamy, missionaries in AP could be traced back to the fifteenth century, when two Jesuit Fathers and a Brother came to Chandragiri in Chittoor District preaching catholic Christianity (1974b, pp. 1959). In South India, Lobo traces conversions in three eras, the first 400 years ago, then a new face 200 years ago and the last 100 years ago (2001, pp. 242). After a serious famine in 1876-79, mass conversions were taking place, the missionaries offered help to the lower castes. This created a feeling of attachment towards the missionaries for many of AP's impoverished citizens. Ramaswamy argues that "tangible benefits" were available, through education and work opportunities. The second benefit of Christianity was that the religion was based on equality values (1974b, pp. 1959). Chinna Rao Yagathi sees three changes that happened to the Christian- lower caste people after conversion, first he argues; the converts got a new social standing. Second, those that had not converted became aware that it was not the missionaries or the British's influence which was the reason for their poor situation. Third, it also stimulated the Hindu reformers to work for education among the lower castes (cf. Yagathi 2003, pp. 66-71).

³⁷ In this chapter I focus on Dalit- Christians and not on Dalit- Muslims because none of my informants were Muslims.

Lancy Lobo is more critical to the conversion into Christianity and the role of the church. Even if the church preached for equality, equality was not a result of conversion. Lobo argues that the church has kept the same hierarchic relations as we find in Hinduism within the church and has not treated the Dalits well. Even if they have given educational opportunities to many people they have foremost given higher education and recruited higher caste persons within the church itself. What the church has achieved is that they have managed to keep the Dalit-Christians down by making them less militant and by telling them that the only way to a better life is through prayer (Lobo 2001).

Lobo, sees a predicament for many SC students since they have to play on two identities, one belonging to the Scheduled Caste and one identity with religious affiliation, either Muslim or Christian (2001). Many of my informants claimed they were Christians, but as one of my informants pointed out to me, if you are Christian you are not entitled to reservation. It does not mean that SCs cannot have more than one identity, but according to the law they have to be SC, Christian, or Muslim. Today there is still an ongoing case trying to implement the recommendations of Rangnath Mishra Commission of including Dalit- Christians and Dalit-Muslims into the SC quota. This case is currently pending between the court system and politicians. The outcome can have a big effect on the Dalit- community, and might spark off the fourth era of Christian conversion in the country. The Supreme Court has been reluctant to include Muslim and Christian Dalit into the SC category. The decision for the mentioned case has been delayed several times. In 1985 a cobbler by the name Soosai filed a case in the Supreme Court, where he challenged the court on this issue. He himself a Dalit- Christian, had not benefitted from the governments hands out when they gave bunks to keep tools in to SC cobblers. To his disappointment he was not given anything because his name was not written on the list of those Cobblers who belong to SC and who should receive the gift from the government. He found out that to his religious affiliation. The case was denied in the Supreme Court because Dalit- Christians were not under the SC quota, and that there was not sufficient evidence to show that Soosai still faced the same caste discrimination after conversion as Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist- Dalits faced.³⁸

Being both Christian and SC, can for an agent be used in several ways, for example a person can proclaim his/hers Christian identity in order to get accommodated in a Christian School and later he/she can claim SC identity and apply for a reserved seat in a

³⁸ <http://www.dalitchristians.com/Html/soosai.htm> visited 27.06.09

government job (Lobo 2001, pp. 253). The students have the possibilities to negotiate between different identities.

Among my 25 informants 16 students identified their religious affiliation; all of my informants have or are currently benefitting from preferential treatments. These 16 have expressed their religious affiliation in interviews or in conversations.³⁹

Table number 2

Religious affiliation	Number
Christians	12
Hindus	4

75 percent of my informants, who answered this question, consider themselves as Christians. During conversations with my informants they expressed a general idea that most SCs in Andhra Pradesh are Christians, especially in Coastal areas. From the census in 2001 there are only 1.2 million people who identify themselves as Christians in AP and 68 millions Hindus.⁴⁰ If you compare this with the total nr of SCs in AP in 2001, 12.3 millions, it shows that there is a big difference between the number of people who claim themselves as Christians and the number of SCs who claim themselves as Hindus, Buddhist or Sikh. Of course, not all the SCs see themselves as Christians, and not all Christians are SCs, but there might be reasons to assume that the number of Christians and Muslims would increase if the Court accepts Dalit-Christians and Dalit-Muslims into the SC fold.

One of my Hindu informants, Vinod, from Nellore told me that he was still a Hindu but that his family is trying to convert to Christianity. His brothers wanted to marry Christian girls. But there was one important element which made it difficult; if they openly converted to Christianity they would lose their right to preferential treatment and that would make it very difficult for the family, so they were waiting for the rulings of the Supreme Court.

My family is Hindu but they are trying to shift into Christianity. They are getting more knowledge about Christianity, so they are changing.

³⁹ I did not ask this question to all of my informants since I did not realize in the beginning of my field work that this was an important question.

⁴⁰ http://www.crusadewatch.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=580&Itemid=27 Visited 13.03.09

Within 10 years I think they will convert. My brothers are also going into Christian marriages. One problem is there. If people convert from Hindu into Christianity, they can lose the reservation. This question is in the Supreme Court. If the Supreme Court says yes I think nearly 30 lakhs of people will convert to Christianity. In my place there were no Christian missionary, in village level,... [In my place] They have awareness [about Christianity] but not as much as they have in the coastal area. No one will say I'm a Christian, I'm not because it is a very sensitive issue and if they tell they might lose their opportunities also.

As Vinod says, no one will say that they are Christians, I was probably not seen as a threat to their rights since many were willing to share their Christian affiliation with me, and maybe it also helped that I was perceived as Christian myself.

In other words, there is ambivalence regarding religious identity for the SC students in AP, apparently one of the important reasons for this is positive discrimination. The state has the power to give and take benefits. Accordingly the states decisions clearly effect the SCs identity formation. Lobo argues that the government is the reason behind why the Dalit- Christians or the SC Christian students I interviewed were using a dual identity, one identity for economical betterment, and one for social status (Lobo 2001, pp. 246). This mixed identity picture is not something that only exists within the university, but is also an issue in the Indian society, and influences all Dalits living in India. The Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist Dalits are reluctant to support their fellow Dalits, because this will give fewer benefits for themselves (Lobo 2001, pp. 249-250).

Crossing boundaries

SC students are asserting themselves in a sphere were they historically have been excluded. The university for example has historically been dominated by Brahmins. With the introduction of reservation for OBCs in higher education, the dominant castes as Reddys and Brahmins are now in danger of being outnumbered by SC, ST and OBC. This is due to reservation and not because the OC have welcomed these students to the university. The SC students are not accepting their low place in the society and are therefore considered by OC as a threat. Many OC people regard SC students moving in to

their sphere as crossing a limit. The SC students, on the other hand, see themselves as receiving their share of economic and social possibilities in the Indian society, which they are entitled to though intentionally withhold from. The SCs can be seen as disordering the otherwise hierarchical and ordered society. Of course, many OC people also see that there is a need for education and improvement for many of the SC in India, but few are willing to give their university seat or job to a SC person.

The SC communities' participation in Indian politics has changed dramatically from the 70s till now. Even though there are many poor SCs, living under constant discrimination in villages, there are now also many SCs who have the possibility for education and can thus secure their economical future. Second generations of educated SCs are slowly rising.

Several of the students attending higher education will not accept being treated in a low manner, and will resist forms of discrimination. This, of course creates space for conflicts. As long as there is a need for reservation, the SC identity will be relevant in order to be included in reservation quotas. As mentioned earlier, the students are now using two contradicting identities in order to achieve economical and social upliftment. With higher education one can better their economical capital but it is more difficult to achieve a better social status. Students coming to their homes in the villages experiences a position where they are more educated than most of the villagers, no matter caste, but socially low. However many highly educated and successful SCs are still facing discrimination by OCs. Especially when going back to their villages, their role will shift from a highly educated student, to a low person which gets very little respect in the villages. Discrimination can be there even if the students do not experience it directly. But, because they are only there for short time, their family can.

I: In my village the circumstances for SC are difficult. Till this day, they are still not allowed to drink from OCs cups, thus the OC will pour water into your hand. Most SCs works as wage laborers. Like my father he owns 3 acre of land next to him is one upper caste who owns 10 acre, but still he has occupied 1.5 acre of my father's land. I argued with him, then he slapped my father with a stick in the face. We filled and SC/ST atrocity case and we won. He had to go to jail for 4 years. And he had to pay my father 25 000 rupee.... Still he is in jail.

Education also informs the SC and their families about which rights they have and how to use them. In the previous case it is likely that the family would not have made an argument with the upper caste neighbor if it was not for the educated son in the family. Likewise for filing a SC/ST atrocity case, knowledge is needed to know how to go about an atrocity case, how to file the papers and knowing which cases will be accepted. Education gives self-esteem and knowledge which can make it more difficult for the upper caste who is expecting a certain kind of attitude from the SCs. The SC students have gained access to education, work and a good economical situation, but are still not socially accepted and respected.

For many educated SCs their self-esteem is improving. This makes the SCs more difficult to control for the other castes. Srinivas, coming from a poor, village background told me about his transformation after entering the university:

Up until my degree I was afraid to tell people of my identity. But now I don't fear to say that I'm a Madiga. Now I don't fear beef eating. But now I have also stopped going to church. I believe in myself now. And my mind has changed into a more rational thinking. While in crisis people need the mental help of God

For Srinivas entering the University has helped his self-esteem and his general position in the society. This does not include all SC students, some will go through their education and without any remarkable changes in self-esteem or political consciousness.

Many of the SCs today are no longer passive receivers but active in control of their own person. The Dalit awakening together with reservation has given the upper caste strong competition, and this makes the situation between the SC and upper caste more tense. The upper caste is not willing to give up any of the benefits that the SCs are struggling to get.

Not all the students come in this position when they are back in their villages. Thomas went from being called with a single non-respectful word to sir;

Earlier they called me single word without respect in my college. But now I have finished MA and I'm the first person that got seat in this campus, so now they are calling me with name and babu, and asking if I'm son of... and they are calling me sir.

Being the first one, no matter caste, in his village to get a Master Degree in a reputable university, earned him respect in his village.

One incident that was referred to by many of my informants was the Chundur massacre. This incident shows that educated Dalit men are behaving in a way which is not accepted by dominant caste. Chundur massacre that took place in July 1991, in a large village which was a Mandal headquarter. In Chundur half of the population was Reddys, they were largest and dominating caste in the village. Malas constituted approximately one fourth of the village population. The Dalits in that village were highly educated compared to surrounding villages. The happening started in a movie theater where one Dalit post-graduate student, Ravi, relaxed his foot on the seat in front of him where there was sitting a young Reddy man. This led to bickering between the two, with casteist argument. Ravi went into hiding in a nearby village but was found and severely beaten before he was accused of stealing some jewelry and taken to the police (Human Right Watch/ Asia 1992, pp. 20). This episode, still continued in the following days, and when it ended at least eight Dalits were killed.

‘On July 9, Reddys and Telagas formed into a committee and decided to enforce asocial boycott of the Dalits (Malas). The committee was again headed by the village Sarpanch.⁴¹ Since then, the Dalits were not allowed to work in the fields of upper castes nor were they permitted to enter the upper caste locality. Land tenancies of the Dalits were cancelled. The social boycott of the Dalits led to tension and at this stage section 144⁴² was promulgated in the village. While the upper castes engaged outside labour to work in their fields, the Dalits left to places like Tenali and Ponnur in search of work. A 50 strong police picket headed by Tenali Rural Circle Inspector... was posted in the village since then.’(Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee, 1991, pp. 8–9 quoted in K. Srinivasulu 2002, pp. 41).

When the police security was relaxed in the end of July the conflict again surfaced, and two Dalits were assaulted on the 4th and 5th of August. This was a response after a few young Dalit men had assaulted some Reddys, a rumor was spread that three Reddy men had been killed by Dalits. The Reddys’ with support from the neighbor villages took the

⁴¹ Sarpanch is the headman of the village.

⁴² Section 144 is to impose curfew in a certain area.

law into their own hands and came after the Dalits which were fleeing. At least eight Dalit men were killed and put in bags and thrown in canals and drains. Therefore there is no certain number of how many that was actually killed (cf. Srinivasulu 2002, pp. 42).

The small action of a young educated Dalit man led to a reaction which killed eight Dalit men, would most likely not have happened if Ravi was uneducated and submissive to the Reddy man. Most likely Ravi would not put his foot on the elbow of the chair in front of him, and if he still did, he most likely would not stand up against the Reddy man and start an argument.

Education gives knowledge of rights and a certain wish for respect. Some students' experiences that they get respect, like Thomas quoted earlier in this chapter. Assertiveness among the educated SC can, in some situations, put them on a collision path with what the dominant caste and this can easily lead to conflicts.

Concluding remarks

As we have clearly seen in this chapter, the experience of being SC is changing during their lives from early age when they have no or very little experience of being different from other castes to, they reach the university. In their upbringing they have experienced the meaning of being a SC, through play and interaction with kids, classmates and adults. The students coming to the university have certain ideas of what it means to belong to a stigmatized identity, but during their time on the Campus they are taught by Dalit professors and Dalit students that they are Dalits. The Dalit word reflects the political emancipation that this group of people has seen since the 70s. Here it is important to remember that the experience of being low caste differs from person to person, depending on many variables like urban or rural background and religious affiliation.

The Dalit term is widely used in India, but it seems to be a word used among highly educated, politically active and academia in Andhra Pradesh. The term symbolizes political consciousness and is used by highly educated and politically active Dalits and in academic writings. While Scheduled Caste is an ascribed identity restricted to only a certain group of former untouchables who belongs to religions which originated in India, Hindus, Buddhist and Sikhs. Christian and Muslim-Dalits have converted to "new" religions, and according to the government they are no longer experiencing

discrimination based on being a former untouchable. For that reason, the government sees no reason to include them in the SC category. In contradiction to what the government argues discrimination is also faced by Christian- and Muslim- Dalits.⁴³

Most of the students I spoke to claimed to be Christians even if they were benefiting from reservation, so there is a contradiction between the law and practice, and within the Student himself if he/she is Christian or SC.

Identity in India is not only relevant because it is socially relevant, as Barth highlights (1969), it is also economically and politically relevant in the fight for scarce resources. The university is one sphere where the SC has entered, which historically was not open for them. Through the SC identity they are entitled to reserved seats, and reduced prices for admission, accommodation and food. The Dalit identity has become political viable and are important in order to secure their rights.

⁴³ Discrimination faced by the SC students is discussed in chapter 6.

4. Identity Politics and Reservations

The Congress party has dominated Indian politics from 1947 and until 1977 on central level and till 1983 in AP. Indira Gandhi and the Congress Party did not manage to keep their promises of improving conditions for the low caste people and as a consequence, Congress had difficulties keeping the low caste poor under their fold (Kohli 2001, pp. 14-15). From 1967 a new trend with regional parties emerged and slowly Congress domination started to wither. The regional parties had a tendency to focus on identity, and use identity issue as one argument to shift sides in political alliances. With identity being increasingly politicized Telegu Desam Party (TDP) emphasized the Telugu identity and came to power in 1983. TDP was established by the famous actor Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao, popularly known as NTR, and has since been one of the main parties in AP. NTR belonged to Kammas community, and could depend on the Kammas support but the Kammas are too few in numbers so in order to win the election they were dependent on other communities' support, for example women and BCs. In 1989 TDP lost its power and were followed by Congress rule. In 1994 NTR came back into office but was replaced by his son in-law Chandrababu Naidu, who became the new leader of TDP, in 1995.

The SC had historically been connected with politics through patron/client relation to the Congress Party. In the 90s this changed when Madiga Reservation Porata Samiti (MRPS) was established. MRPS emerged due to the dissatisfaction over the distribution of reservation seats among the SC community. An alliance was made between TDP and MRPS, where MRPS supported TDP in return TDP was in support of changing the reservation system. TDP depended on *accommodation* as a tool, to split the low caste vote (Gundimeda 2009). By accommodating, the parties try to include some leader figures from the opposition by giving them a symbolic good position in the party, so that his/hers follower will vote for the party which accommodated their leader (Reddy 1989, pp. 264). MRPS leader Manda Krishna Madiga became an important partner for TDP and the issue of classification entered the political agenda.

In AP the discussion around reservation does not only concern the big official identities like SC, ST and OBC but also raises the question about classification within the official categories. Naidu and his government introduced classification within the reservation categories in 1997. Talking about classification in this thesis relates to

dividing the SC reservation quota equally on the different jatis in the SC category.⁴⁴

When Rajasekhar Reddy and the Congress Party came to power in 2004, they ended this policy. The fight for classification is still going on and reservation has become an issue which all political parties have to relate to.

Reservation is also an important issue on the campus. The political pattern and trends that are seen on the national and the state scene are also seen in smaller scale at the university. Identity politics has found its way to student politics. In 1993 the first student organization for Dalits was started named Ambedkar Student Association (ASA). A few years later at the same time as when the Madiga movement was strong in AP, the Dalit Student Union (DSU) was established as a party for the Madigas. The reason for the split was the disagreement over the classification issue. Even today they still do not see eye to eye in this case but can sometimes unite over other matters.

This chapter is divided into two levels, the first part discussing identity politics and reservation in general, while the second part looks at how reservation is experienced by the students at UoH. I will first try to give an insight into the relation between identity politics and reservation on the state level in Andhra Pradesh. I will emphasize that the politization of caste has created such a gap between Malas and Madigas that it will be difficult to unite the Dalits both at the state level and on campus. This gap has occurred due to the conflict over classification issue in AP. The university is one of the places where this difference is easily observable with approximately 200 Madiga students and roughly 400 Mala students.⁴⁵

Thereafter, I want to look at the university, and the attitude of the students concerning the topics of reservation, creamy layer and classification. Based on this there are two arguments I would like to make, the first one is, the affect of the reservation and classification has made the students political conscious. This influences their everyday life and how they relate to each other, so instead of being merely SC they are also Madiga or Mala. It is political relevant which of these jatis the person belong to, therefore it becomes relevant for the students. The second argument is that by keeping SC students with good merit in the reserved quota the trickling down affect of the reservation system is hampered, because the reservation quota is filled up with students that already are capable of entering the university on its own means.

⁴⁴ Classification will be discussed later in this chapter.

⁴⁵ These numbers are retrieved form an interview with a SC student.

Reservations

The reservations policy in India is one of the biggest of its sort (Kumar 1992, pp. 290). This policy affects most people in India one way or another. So it is safe to say that there are many arguments in favor of and many arguments against the policy. The implementation of Mandal Commissions report brought the issue of reservation to the forefront. The pro- Mandalist argues that caste reservation is needed to destroy caste, they see reservation as the only way to eradicate caste. This should be done through allocating jobs historically held by dominate upper castes, since SCs, STs and OBCs are not able to get these jobs on their own (Kumar 1992, pp. 298). The opposition claims that reservation only deepens the division between castes (Edmonds 2006, pp. 65). In David Edmonds philosophical discussion about reservation, or affirmative action as he calls it, he discusses the divide between the utilitarian argument and the critics. The utilitarian argument claims that what is more good than bad should be followed, and sees the reservation policy as something which gives more benefits than disadvantages. While the critics argue that it leads to greater division between race and gender, in those societies where the policy is targeting those groups. The other negative side is stigma, a person belonging to the reserved community will not be judged on whether or not he/she is fit to hold a particular job or to get enrolled in higher studies. There is a stigmatizing consent among people from non-reserved communities that as long as a person belong to the reserved category that person is not qualified, the person is judged on his or hers caste, class or gender (2006, pp. 70-71). This can be experienced as unfair for the SC candidates which are highly qualified and that are not given jobs or possibilities due to social stigma.

The state governments have the possibility to give guiding principles for how the reservation policy should be carried out.⁴⁶ Due to this there are possibilities for change through political power. In the next part will I take a closer how the demand for classification has taken place in AP politics.

The issue of classification in AP politics

The reservation debate in AP has the last twenty years been preoccupied with the question of classification. There is already a social accept for reservation for the SCs, thus he question on whether or not SC should have reservations is not debated, but the

⁴⁶ There are some differences in how the reservation policy is carried out in the different states.

debate centers on how to divide the reservation quota among the SCs. The Malas started to benefit from the reservation system soon after its implementation in AP while the Madigas were lagging behind. This was reported already in 1974 by Uma Ramaswamy (1974a). A growing discontent among the Madigas led to that the Madiga Dandora Movement was started by Manda Krishna Madiga in 1982. At that time the movement was known as Andhra Pradesh Madiga Congress (APMC). This organization started in protest against what the Madigas experienced as unfair distributions of positions among the SC in government seats, education seats and scholarships (Jacob & Bandhu 2002, pp. 296). More than ten years later the discontent, especially among the urban and educated sections of society, led to the start of the MRPS in 1995. This organization wanted the government to implement classification within the reservation quota by dividing the 15 percent reserved seats among the SC jatis in AP (cf. Jacob & Bandhu 2002, pp. 296). Thus, the reservation posts would be distributed evenly, determined by the jatis size. This led to a strong divide between the Madigas and Malas. To protect their own interest the Malas started Mala Mahanadu.

Both TDP and MRPS were in need of alliance partners and K.C. Suri argues that the TDP saw the MRPS as a good collaboration partner in order to secure the Madiga votes (2002, pp.43). At the same time as MRPS needed a way to influence state level politics. Malas continued supporting Congress Party, who was opposing the demand of classification. When TDP was re-elected in the mid-nineties a one man commission concluded that there was a need for categorizations, in 1997 the government order was issued. Malas protested the categorization and took the case to Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled that the implementation of categorization is unconstitutional. When Congress came to power classification was removed (Jacob & Bandhu 2002, pp. 297). Since then has classification been a controversial issue in AP which has politicized the Mala and Madiga identities. This conflict has created a gap between the Malas and Madigas which has been difficult for any political party to close.

In the 2009 election, the popular actor Chiranjeevi tried to woo his own jati *Kapu* community, the OBCs, Malas and Madigas.⁴⁷ His tactic was to accuse both Congress and TDP of being corrupt and claim that his party would work against corruption and improve the situation for the poor. He tried to give a picture of himself as a person that will work for the poor people by claiming that Mother Theresa was his role model and

⁴⁷ Popular actors turning politicians is a typical trait of South Indian politics (Dickey 1993). Many have tried but only a few have made it.

stating that he would work for the people “I am your servant and not your leader”.⁴⁸ Chiranjeevi tried to accommodate the Dalits by requesting Katti Padma Rao⁴⁹ and Manda Krishna Madiga, both are influential politician representing Malas and Madigas, to join his party. But only Katti Padama Rao joined, while Manda Krishna Madiga accused Praja Rajyam Party (PRP) of being “Kapu Raj” (Gundimeda 2009).

Chiranjeevi supported reservation for OBCs but when it came to the issue of classification he was reluctant to take a clear stand. The election result proved that PRP did not manage to bring the low castes together and lost the election. Gundimeda writes; “...the PRP is simply following: the age-old strategy of division and accommodation” (2009, pp. 57). He tried to accommodate but failed. Instead Manda Krishna Madiga and MPRS continued to support Telugu Desam Party and the “grand alliance”.⁵⁰ The SC voters are not simply following a leader who promises good things for the poor. They are strategically choosing a strategy which will benefit their jati and not necessarily the whole SC category.

The politicization of reservation politics and especially the classification issue in AP, seems to make other important issues less significant. PRP’s hesitation to take a firm stand in the classification issue can be one reason why PRP did not manage to secure the Madiga vote. None of the parties managed to unite the fragile Dalit identity in the 2009 election. Shah sees the Andhra example as a face of new identity production where multiple identities, old and new identities, are contesting each other. If this is not sorted out by the Dalit intellectuals this may hurt the Dalit identity and unity (2001, pp. 25). The outlook for one political party to represent the Dalits, like BSP in Uttar Pradesh, is bleak even if Mayawati⁵¹ tried to improve BSP’s position in AP before 2009 election.

Politics on state level and central level influences people which are affected by the introduction of new policies. In the following section I will look at how reservation and identity politics is experienced by the students at UoH.

⁴⁸ The Hindu 27th August 2008, pp. 1

⁴⁹ Katti Padma Rao is a Mala politician and poet.

⁵⁰ <http://www.thehindu.com/2009/03/09/stories/2009030952210100.htm> visited 25.03.09

⁵¹ Chief Minister and leader of the Dalit party Bahujan Samaj Party.

The matter of reservation in UoH

The university is a place where the reservation policy's effect is manifested; the students are therefore very politically conscious and have strong opinions and feelings regarding this topic. I asked my informants; is positive discrimination important? And what is negative about reservation? The first question gave a quick response: "Yes it is very important, without I would not be able to get a seat in the university, and many other students would also not get seats if it was only based on merit. Then no SC would be able to come". While Devayya, former leader in one of the Dalit student organization, explained it like this;

Yes reservation is important in two ways: One is underdevelopment, through education and jobs people are marginalized. Focus on Dalit education to emancipate human beings is important and it is a need special focus and accessibility. Second is discrimination, the Dalit community only started reading since reservation in the 50s. That is very late. After reservation SC people have started competing with other people. The top students are also under reservations. If no reservation, I would not be here.

"If not for reservation, I would not be here" was an answer I got from most of the students since all of them had used reservation at one point in their education. Devayya's comment that the SCs only learned to read in the 1950s is not entirely true, a small number of SCs also learned to read before that, some due to missionaries, or that their family had work in places where there was possible for SC children to get some kind of education.

"What is negative with reservation?", this question was more difficult to answer, some of the informants felt a bit offended while others saw possibilities for improvement. Viroop one of the Madiga students I spoke to, felt a bit offended and replayed:

Nothing else is negative, 200 crores⁵² of SCs are dominated by 5% upper caste, if the reservation was working properly there should be

⁵² Crores is a term used for 10 millions in India.

representatives of SC in all kind of public institution. In Assembly for example, 50-60 % of AP population is BC, but they only have 30 seats. Reddys and Kammas together is 6-7% of the population but have 130 seats, this example we can see many places and it shows that the representation of communities is not good. You know that there is a rumor among the SC communities that says that globalization and privatization is just to keep SCs down, since there is no caste based reservation in private sector.

Many of the students I talked to did not see any negative implications of reservation. I do not think that they did not reflect over the negative implications of reservation, but I think they saw it in a utilitarian view that it does more good than bad. I also think that since this issue is so politicized, making negative remarks about the policy which is responsible for the level of education the students have reached is seen, by some of the students, as criticizing their own right to higher education and government jobs. While other students mentioned that some people are misusing the reservation by using it when their families already are in good positions. “Some time people are misusing it. Those who are getting better position are still misusing. That is why most people says that creamy layer should not be using”. Some people also thought that reservation should be based more on economical criteria than caste.

Reservation and the Creamy Layer

The term creamy layer term;” refers to the few comparatively well-off families who are generally said to be found among all but the lowliest Scheduled ‘communities’, usually as a result of previous generation’s educational and economical advances” (Bayly 1999, pp. 277). Creamy layer is a term that was first used by the Indian government in 1993 to distinguish who in the OBC category should be termed socially and economical backward.⁵³ It is only used as government criteria in connection with the OBC category but is also used to describe the wealthiest families of the SC and ST categories.⁵⁴ According to the critics of reservation schemes the creamy layer are the ones who manage to use the benefits of, and are misusing, reservations. And the creamy layer is the proof that the distribution of reservation quota is not benefitting those who really need it

⁵³ <http://ncbc.nic.in/html/OfficeMemorandum.pdf> visited 26.11.09

⁵⁴ <http://ncbc.nic.in/html/faq4.html> visited 26.11.09

(Bayly 1999, pp. 277). Determining who belong to the Creamy layer is based on many criteria, for example sons and daughters of a person who earns more than 2.5 lakh rupees per year and are doctor, dentist, engineer, or high ranked military personal.⁵⁵

The critics of reservation often use the creamy layer as one reason why reservation should not be used. The critic is heard in connection with reservation for OBC, SC and ST and goes as follow, first; by using the reserved seats the creamy layer is contributing to making a gap in the SC category. And second; the creamy layer occupies educational seats both from SC and OC students who are worse off than themselves (Weisskopf 2004, pp. 4341). Sacchidananda is one of the critics. In his work *Harijan Elite*, he argues that reservation policies have created a creamy layer of Dalits who are only interested in benefits for themselves and their families (Weisskopf 2004, pp.4342). “Their major preoccupation appears to be that of meeting the needs of immediate family and kin. Some of the elite who have risen high in the social hierarchy have snapped their ties with their bleak past. They are largely out of tune from the mass of the community and seek a realignment with status and power groups in the wider society” (Sacchidananda 1977, quoted in Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 238).

Medelsohn and Vicziany, who have interviewed twenty Dalit Members of Parliament (MP) and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA) in Bihar, disagree with Sacchidananda and argue that the groups of SC who have benefitted, instead of being a burden to the SC community, actually become resources for the community (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 255).

Among the students I spoke to, most of them did not come from a creamy layer family. 13 out of the 25 students came from villages. One of the students from the village had a father who was a teacher in their village. Another student’s father worked with cobbling, while the rest of the parents worked as agricultural laborers. Several of the other 13 came from a better economical background but were still not what you can define as belonging to the creamy layer.⁵⁶ Their families were for example working as servants in the railway station, health assistant and non-teaching staff in colleges.

Since they were benefitting from reservation they obviously saw the need for reservation but were very clear that, if they got a good job, their children should not use reservation. The reason was that they had already reached the next level and that there were so many poor uneducated people in the villages who have not benefitted from

⁵⁵ <http://ncbc.nic.in/html/creamylayer.htm> visited 30.09.09

⁵⁶ See table nr 1, for overview of the informant’s background.

reservation policies. Thomas a second generation student does not want his children to use it:

After my PhD suppose I get a faculty post, why should I use SC reservation? It would instead give help to other people. Even my family, my father [is] first generation, I'm second generation after it [there] should not be [reservation]. Otherwise what will happen; my family, my sisters, brothers and children will get. Most of the real people will not reach that boundary. My opinion is that after getting a good position, those who are benefitted from reservation should not be using. And it will give help to other people, those who are lacking reservation and knowledge about how to get reservation facilities.

Most of the students I spoke to seemed to be willing to support students from their own community, either through guidance, teaching or financial means. Shiva explained:

If I get a good job then I can do good for the people. If not, I can at least help to explain them the laws and which rights they are entitled to. I also want to help other students and families. More education will lead to less discrimination.

Among the informants, several students had been back to their old colleges or village schools to tell about what they were doing and how they got there. They also took on other roles like teaching the children in their villages that needed help.

Ideally, reservation as a development idea should lead to more and more SC benefiting from reservation. Thus, for the SCs who have managed to get higher education and good jobs, the aim of the reservation policy is successful. What is important is to make sure that the effect of reservation benefits more than just those who are receiving.

The creamy layer is something which has come into being through reservation and where those who have benefitted have helped their own children and family. This is and has been happening intentionally and unintentionally. The creamy layer seems to be not only a direct result of the rich SCs interest to look after their own, there are also other factors involved. The University is one factor which contributes to this by putting many of the SC students with good merit in reservation categories. In that way, the SC students which have good grades do not get accepted in the general category. This does not

happen in all cases, I also spoke to students that had been accepted in general category, but there was a general consensus among the students that this was a normal practice from the University's side. If a student with good merit is kept in the reserved category then the whole point of the reservation system will stop. Because the reserved quotas will be filled with students who have good merit the outcome is that there will be no place for students who have less merit.

The Indian Supreme Court has several times discussed this issue, and has ruled on the basis of article 355 in the Indian Constitution which states that;

The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State:
[Provided that nothing in this article shall prevent in making of any provision in favour of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of services or posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.]⁵⁷

The constitution clearly states that there should be special criteria for qualifying marks for entrance in the connection with the *affairs of the Union or of a State* for SCs and STs, there should, in other words be different merit requirement for SC and STs to enter university. What it does not say is that SCs and STs should be accepted only in this quota. Thus based on this article, the Supreme Court has made its ruling that as long as a student has the merit he/she should be accepted in general category. “Court order says

⁵⁷ <http://lawmin.nic.in/coi/coiason29july08.pdf> visited 18.05.09

SC, ST students who secure seat on merit should not be considered as under quota⁵⁸. Hence SC and ST students with good merit have a legal right to be accepted in the general quota, it is against the guidelines from the Supreme Court to put them in reserved categories.

According to the law UoH is required to provide 22.5 percent reservation for SCs and STs and 3 percent for Physical Handicapped (PH). In UoH there are now 33.5 percent reserved students.

Table number 3 Enrollment of students under reserved categories.

Year	Total enrolment	SC NO %	ST NO %	PH NO %	Total reserved candidates
1975-76	47				
1980-81	537	17 (3,17)	3 (0,59)	3 (0,59)	23 (4,28)
1985-86	928	98 (10,56)	13 (1,40)	16 (1,72)	127 (13,69)
1990-91	1720	238 (13,84)	37 (2,15)	29 (1,69)	304 (17,67)
1995-96	2048	316 (15,43)	70 (3,42)	45 (2,20)	418 (21,04)
2000-01	2193	458 (20,88)	99 (4,51)	54 (2,46)	611 (27,86)
2005-06	2641	538 (20,37)	228 (8,63)	67 (2,54)	832 (31,50)
2007-08	3067	655 (21,36)	278 (8,39)	94 (3,06)	1027 (33,49)

Source: This table is made on the basis of information given in table nr 11, in University of Hyderabad's 33rd annual report, pp. 34.

<http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admin/uploads/annualreport/Final%20Annual%20Report%2007-08.pdf> visited 03.10.09

Based on this statistic we can see that there are 7.93 percent more SC/ST students than the 22.5 percent quota. Since 1995/1996 we can see that the SC quota has increasingly been exceeded.⁵⁹ Does this contradict the statements from the students I spoke to? How can this be explained? One explanation is that the students experience is exceptions instead of the rule and that the University most of the time allows SC/ST students in under general quotas, another explanation is that the UoH has preferred to

⁵⁸ <http://www.hindu.com/2007/06/04/stories/2007060404750500.htm> visited 18.05.09

⁵⁹ This has not happened in the same extent in the ST quota.

increase these quotas after pressure from student organizations thus instead of being accepted in general categories they have increased the seats in reserved categories. It is difficult to know exactly how this discrepancy can be explained. From this table we should also note that there are more “extra” SCs than STs and PH. Paul, who was at the time of the interview a dedicated ASA-member, told that his party had been working hard to secure and increase the seats in the university for SCs;

... in the last 5 years they have managed to get 70 new SC students that have been on the top of waiting list, by taking extra students in the classes. 5 years back: 5 extra students. 4 years: 10 extra, 3 years 14 students. 2 years back 28 students and this year 18 extra students. So in this campus there are 34% Dalits instead of 22% around 160 girls and 260 boys. Together there are 1100 ST and SC students in all subjects.

In the academic year 2006/2007 there was 783 or 28.92 % students in the reserved quota at the university. 2007/2008 this rose to 933 or 30.5 % reserved students in the university. Out of this 655 belongs to SC and 278 to ST.⁶⁰ The interviews with the informants were done in the fall semester 2008, the official numbers from the UoH (table nr.4) shows that in the university there are 34 percent reserved candidates, this number includes Physical Handicapped students.

Table number 4 Admission of SC candidates at UoH the school years 2007/2008

Courses	Total intake	Seats reserved SCs (15% in each course)	Total seats filled	No. of SCs admitted under quota	SC% of filled Seats
PG degree Courses	856	133	797	129	16,18
M. Phil	165	25	154	30	19,48
M. Tech	154	24	117	18	15,38
Ph.D.	245	41	186	35	18,81
Total	1420	223	1254	212	16,9

Source: University of Hyderabad’s 33rd annual report, pp. 20.

<http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admin/uploads/annualreport/Final%20Annual%20Report%2007-08.pdf>.

⁶⁰ University of Hyderabad’s 33rd annual report, pp. 20.

<http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admin/uploads/annualreport/Final%20Annual%20Report%2007-08.pdf> visited 03.10.09

In the 33rd annual report, where this table is taken from, it made a note that states that sixty SC students were enrolled under open merit.⁶¹ The report shows that the university increased in 2007/2008 six reserved seats extra in M. Phil programs and six extra seats in the SC quota for PhD programs.⁶² In 2006/2007 five new seats were created in M. Phil programs and five in PhD programs for SCs.⁶³ It does not seem to be a coherent politics from the university's side on when they increase seats in the reserved categories and not. The report says nothing about the grades the students in the reserved category had either, so it is difficult to state exactly how the university manages the admission process. What we can see is that two hundred and seventy two SC students were enrolled in 2007/2008, out of two hundred and seventy two, sixty got seats in general category. Forty-one of them in Post Graduate programs, nine students in M. Phil programs, two students in M. Tech programs and seven students in PhD programs.⁶⁴ The university does allow SC students in general category. Thus they follow no clear policy of not letting SC students in general category. Fifty out of sixty SC students enrolled in the general category were enrolled in low prestige programs in social science and humanities.

Chandayya, a PhD student enrolled under the general category, told me during an interview how he had experienced admission during his five years in campus:

... When I was applying for this university [Master degree] my father said; this is a big university and maybe at least you can get in reserved category. So I applied but fortunately I got in to general category,...

⁶¹ University of Hyderabad 33rd annual report, pp. 20.
<http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admin/uploads/annualreport/Final%20Annual%20Report%2007-08.pdf> visited 03.10.09.

⁶² University of Hyderabad 33rd annual report
<http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admin/uploads/annualreport/Final%20Annual%20Report%2007-08.pdf>. visited 03.10.09

⁶³ University of Hyderabad 32nd annual report
<http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admin/uploads/annualreport/AnnualReport%202006-07.pdf> visited 03.10.09

⁶⁴ See appendix number 4,5,6,7 and 8.

M:⁶⁵ What is the difference between having a seat in general category and reserved category?

The difference between open category and reserved category, see... If we both are students here, you general category and me reserved category even if I got good marks 55% [and you] 40 % they will still keep me in reserved category so even if I had good marks they kept me on waiting list in reserved category. Now this has become a tradition, if we [look at] two years of statistic all SC are only kept in reserved category maybe one or two are kept in general category. Maybe 6-7 people used to be in general category, but now it is reduced. I have gone through all the result, now only two or three people are kept in general... They are knowingly doing this. Because open category people should not be kept in reserve so they are knowingly giving open to open and reserved to reserved people. What happens then is; if open category candidates from SC community come to general one more seat is available from the waiting list. This happens because this campus is totally brahminized and [there are] some SC faculty but they do not want to speak anything because they are in minority. When [I joined] my PhD, I joined in December... I wrote the entrance exam, there was eight persons. I was the only people who got through only one open category seat, so in written exam I got good marks, in interview everybody used to get between 12-13 marks, so I got the seat. So after that there was a big debate in the faculty why he [I] should get the seat. So they had to have a meeting, 'how you can give this boy the seat'? So they increased 4-5 seats in general category so that they could include general category students. If that was an OC boy they would never keep a meeting and make extra seats. I was shocked.

Chandayya sees it as important to get a seat in general category and not reserved category because it frees more seats for other SCs on the waiting list. He talks about his experience of been given a seat in PhD in general category as an exemption which

⁶⁵ M: referrers to Malin, the interviewer.

created such strong dismay among the staff that they decided to expand the general quota seats. And he points out that this would not have happened if he belonged to OC. In his knowledge, the last couple of years, the university has accepted SCs in SC quota and general students in general quota without considering their merits. The discussion which led to the decision of increasing more seats would maybe not have happened if he belonged to OC, but increasing the number of seats in the quotas is a practice which the university uses.

The practice of keeping SC in SC category was confirmed by the other informants. But the statistics' shows that SC students are also kept in general quota. But if this happens in all cases, where it should, cannot be answered based on the information released by the university. The consequence of keeping SC students in SC category is that the creamy layer will increase, since the students who have merit are not taken out of the reservations system. Thus, there will be increased competition in the reserved category among the students who already have enough marks to be accepted in general category. This will make it even more difficult for students coming from the villages to get a seat in Central Universities. Virginius Xaxa found the tendency of keeping SC students in SC category in Delhi University (2002, pp. 2850).

The students I spoke to have the same concern when it came to their thoughts about getting jobs after studies:

M: Do you think you will need to use reservation in order to get a good job?

I think I could manage to get in general category but they are not willing to give me.

This seems to be a tendency in both universities and in the job market. Difficulties for the Dalit students to enter the job market are also reported by Ashwini Deshpande and Kathrine Newman. They are doing a project where they are following both students from reserved quota and non-quota students on their path from the university to secure a job. They report that reserved students face more problems in getting a job because of their background, and lack of social network and money to bribe their way into jobs (2007). Thus in one way we can see that the reservation system is giving possibilities, but only in a limited way. By not letting the development continue in a natural process, which would be to accept the SC students with good merit in to general category or considered them

for jobs, the trickledown effect will much likely stop. This way of handling the growing merit of the SC only makes them into a creamy layer and makes the creamy layer creamier than the rest of their community. This method does not give space for the people who truly need it.

Classifications

One common feature that Thomas Sowell sees as an effect of the reservation policy is that after the policy is introduced, more and more groups of people want reservation and in new arenas which reservation was not intended for (Sowell, cited in Kumar, D 1992, pp. 295). In India this has manifested itself through demand of reservations in the private sector and reservation for Muslim- SC and Christian- SC. In Andhra the demand has taken a new form, here there is a demand by one jati within the SC for classification among the SC jatis in order to even out the differences between the jatis in the SC category.

During TDPs' period in office, the SC quota was divided into A, B, C and D. Hence, Madiga belonged to category B and Mala to category C, during the time of classification the different groups got a certain percentages of reservation depending on their numerical size. The idea was that all the categories had a certain percentage of seats, if reserved seats within category A were not filled, it should be filled by persons from category B. Then if category B was not filled it should be filled by category C, and if there were any free position in category C, they should be filled with people from category D. Even if the classification system is currently not implemented, the hope and demand for it is still there.

The discussion about classification in Andhra Pradesh is very sensitive, Suresh framed it like this:

Reservation is very sensitive. If you want categorization, if I want or not someone will be angry at me. We have one proverb in Telugu about the snake and the frog. If I tell to snake to leave that frog, the snake will be angry with me and if the snake eats the frog the frog will be angry with me. So it is difficult to manage.

The idea of classification was seen by the Mala students as purely a political game, which the TDP started by introducing classification in order to win the Madiga vote

bank. The topic of reservation in general and classification specifically, is highly politicized and is splitting the SC identity. Suresh being a Mala student hoped classification would not be introduced again:

I hope it will not be introduced. If introduced, the same thing will happen again. I think it is a political issue for political development they divide the people. The TDP categorized the people. The Congress came and gave to Supreme Court, the Supreme Court denied it.

Even if the Supreme Court denied the use of classification, the MRPS and the TDP are still trying to push through classification. Florence another Mala student also saw it a political game:

I think there should be no classification. The politician are just playing politics and fooling the people. If they [SCs] stay together you can get anything but no politician will tell that. Politics are irritating.

Since Malas are those who would lose benefits if classification was introduced again, it was not surprising that they did not want it. Rajendra a Madiga student, saw the need for classification:

Manda Krishna Madiga is fighting for classification. He is an activist, he is a very long [distant] relative of my aunty. Classification has [to] come back. This government don't know what they are doing, they are just doing something to pass the time.

Suresh himself being a Malas sees the issue in this way:

They want to make separation within the caste Mala, Madiga. We need reservation but not categorization. If categorizations happen it will only help Mala and Madiga the other categories will not get... Madiga [are] more in Telangana and Mala [are] more in

Andhra⁶⁶...Madiga gets benefits in one region and Mala in one region. Without the classification it will go smooth. Madigas are also getting benefit not only Malas. They are getting the same positions as us.

Classification is a topic which all the SC students have an opinion about, and it is like the Telegu proverb showed, an issue where there are only two sides, either you are in favor for or against. Uma Ramaswamy saw the differences between the Mala and Madiga's ability to benefit from reservation emerging already back in 1974 (1974a). So the differences between Malas and Madigas have been there for a long time, but it was only when the issue of classification became an object for political conflict, that the separation between the Malas and Madigas became entrenched among themselves.

Mohanty argues that "Reservation has turned out to be a ruling class strategy to handle the caste contradiction and subdue the challenges which occasionally arise from the oppressed caste" (Mohanty 2004, pp. 38). If Mohanty is right we can say that the politicization of reservation overshadows other important issues, and by giving SCs a few benefits they will be satisfied and not demand more. But reservation has also become a tool to demand more benefits for particular groups, for example Sikh- SC and the demand for Christian-SC to get reservation. Reservation has a tendency to classify people into certain groups, and collaboration across these groups seems difficult. In AP, the demand by the Madigas to ensure more benefits has been aimed at through the reservation system. The classification has lead to that smaller communities based on jati identities becomes important. Even if the students are very aware of that politics have highlighted the difference between Malas and Madigas, they are still affected by the classification policy even though it is currently not viable. The ongoing political debates and the fact that local politician can change some of the guidelines of this policy makes reservation into an all consuming issue where other important issues are over looked.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have tried to show how the nexus between identity politics and reservation has developed in Andhra Pradesh. Identity politics and reservation policy has a clear connection since it is the politicians who decide the premises for reservation. In

⁶⁶ Andhra is divide into three regions; Telangana, Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra. Andhra is often used colloquially as describing the whole state except the Telangana area.

AP this connection has manifested itself in the fight over classification within the SC category. Spearheaded by the MRPS leader, Manda Krishna Madiga and his alliance partner TDP, the question of classification is still a political sensitive issue, despite Supreme Court's verdict against. The SC category is extremely politicized and the issue of classification has led to tensions which are felt by the students. The issue of classification is not only a state level debate, but it has tangible effect on SC students, who on a daily basis experience the consequences of politicians' implementations. The Mala students saw the implementation of classification as a political game trying to split the SC vote bank. The Madigas, on the other hand, argued for the need of classification since they are less developed than the Malas. Among the students at UoH the importance of being SC and either Mala or Madiga is experienced on a daily basis.

Reservation has both positive and negative effects for the receivers, following a utilitarian argument that reservation does more good than bad. One argument used by my informants is that, without reservation none of them would have come to their current level of education. This argument was due to that all my informants had benefitted from reservation at some point in their education. Access to university education is in itself a strong argument for the importance of reservation. The first reaction by the informant on the question, what is the negative side of reservation, was that there were no negative sides. A few of the students said that the creamy layer should not be able to benefit from reservation. Even if the students appeared as if they had not reflected on the negative implications of reservation, I do not think that is the case. Living in a sphere where reservation and identity is highly politicized openly stating negative sides of a controversial policy which the student has gained from might seem difficult.

The common argument among OC Indians and scholars is that only the creamy layer benefits from reservation, this did not coincide with my empirical findings. Among my informants four students stood out coming from big cities with good social and economical background. The students felt that they were stigmatized by the university by being put in reserved category even if they had good merit. The creation of creamy layer is not only an intentional act by the creamy layer. The universities and employers are contributing to this problem by accepting SC students with good merit in quotas and not in general category. By enrolling good merit SC and ST students in reserved categories, it contribute to making the creamy layer even more advanced, since first generation students from the villages will have difficulties being accepted in the SC quota when the quota is filled up with students with good merits.

5. Student Politics

The implication of the reservation policy is not only measured by how many students are enrolled at the university at any given time, but there is also a need to see how they play a part of student life. Partaking in students' organizations can be one way of participating in the student life.

Student politics has since 1990s and 2000s been connected with formal party politics in South-Asia (Jeffrey, forthcoming). Rajni Kothari defines politics as, " ... a competitive enterprise, its purpose is the acquisition of power for the realization of certain goals, and its process is one of identifying and manipulating existing and emerging allegiances in order to mobilize and consolidate positions" (Kothari 1970, pp. 4).

What role does Student politics play? And how much influence do they have on the formal politics in the society? These questions are debated among scholars. PhD student Satendra Kumar, from Delhi school of economics, states in his article about student politics and political culture in Meerut, that there is a clear connection between student politics and outside political culture (2009). Ruud, sees in Bangladesh a connection between student politics and social unrest in the country (2009, pp. 23-24). This Ruud argues is possible through the leaders of the student organizations, since the student leaders have connection to leaders and other powerful people in the society. The student leaders' task is to mobilize the students in support of political leaders. Many studies have showed that there is a connected between students politics and formal politics, not only can we recognize the same regional political trait in students politics, but students are often used by political parties as supporters in demonstrations and rallies (Jefferey, forthcoming).

Student politics are organized and thrives differently in diverse universities. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is one of the most prestigious universities in India, which are known for their student politics. The assumption is that if you manage to get a prestigious political position in JNU, you have a good chance of becoming involved in state politics. In JNU it is expected that student organizations have connections to "outside" political parties, which is also the case in other universities.

But at University of Hyderabad (UoH) the most important goal for the students' organizations is student welfare, the Student Union's task is to make sure that the university is a good place for "everybody" when it comes to both education and leisure time activity. This includes everything from the food served in the mess to scholarships.

On UoH very few student politicians, especially SC students, have chances to use the university as spring board into state politics. For SC students it is even more difficult since they are not able to secure the best positions at the university, so they do not have a platform to prove their skills. One exception I was told about was the Students' Federation of India's (SFI) president candidate, a SC student, he had worked very hard during the student election campaign, and the CPI [M] was impressed "...he is practically a politician", one of the ABVP members said to me. No one else could confirm that there was a probability for a political carrier for the SC students at UoH. On the other hand, at Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (JNTU) in Hyderabad, the situation is different. JNTU made headline in the newspaper "Politicians hold JNTU to ransom".⁶⁷ This article says that there has been heavy pressure from leaders, MPs and MLAs towards the administration at the university, as a result the administration finds it difficult to do their job. The politicians and leaders call the university to make sure that "their student" is getting attendance in class despite their absence and threatens to hold *dharnas*, processions to create problems for the university, if the administration does not apply.⁶⁸

In this chapter I will first give a short introduction of different student organizations on the campus, thereafter introduce some of the Lyngdoh commission's recommendations for student elections. Next I will give an ethnographical description of the student election which happened during my field work. Based on this I will discuss the SC students' role in student politics. I will argue that the students at UoH have very slim possibilities of becoming politicians, and even more so for the SC students. The main role for the student politicians are student welfare. For SC student politicians their role is to make the campus a place where the SC students have respect and can participate active both inside and outside of the class room. Identity is important on campus and due to the large number of SCs and STs at the university the Dalit students' organizations cannot be ignored. Further I will argue that the introduction of Lyngdoh recommendations makes it more difficult for many SC students to participate in student elections. The Lyngdoh commission's goal is among others to end the connections between student organizations and outside political parties. Even if the chances of

⁶⁷ The Hindu. South-India edition, 12.11.08, pp.4

⁶⁸ The Hindu. South-India edition, 12.11.08, pp.4

entering into formal politics are slim, the atmosphere and the tension of competition are still there, resulting in sporadic episodes of physical violence.

The student organizations on UoH campus

On UoH there are several political organizations, the main organizations are Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Students' Federation of India, Ambedkar Students' Association (ASA), Dalit Students' Union (DSU), National Students' Union of India (NSUI) and North East Students' Forum (NESF). The political organizations in the university can be divided into two groups: One group consist of SFI, ABVP and NSUI, these organizations have affiliation to a mother party outside the campus, and are based on ideology. In the second group we find ASA, DSU and NESF which have no officially connection to a mother party and are based on identity.⁶⁹

The ABVP is by the non-ABVP students referred to as the same as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). ABVP is a student organization which can be found throughout Indian universities. SFI has links to CPI [M] and follows Marxist ideology, NSUI is relatively new on campus and is still a small organization with connections to the Congress Party.

The second group centers on identity and organizations which primarily represents the reserved students. ASA has no direct link with any party organization but gets their funds from Dalit organizations and other Dalit individuals who are in good positions, and according to themselves they follow Ambedkar's ideology. Unofficially they have links with the Congress Party, this is not surprising since Malas traditionally have voted for Congress in state elections.⁷⁰ DSU also relies on individual persons and organizations with the same caste background. It is unclear whether or not they have any affiliation with Madiga Reservation Porata Samithi (MRPS). NESF represents students from the Seven Sisters,⁷¹ mainly ST students.

A set of rules are to be followed in student politics and elections, the Lyngdoh Commission have made a set of guiding principles for the students.

⁶⁹ Devayya, former leader of DSU, argued for this categorization during a seminar: *Mapping Social exclusion and Rights of Representation: A Study of Student Union Body in Central Universities of India*, 23.08.2008.

⁷⁰ See chapter 4 for discussion about Andhra Pradesh state politics

⁷¹ Refers to North East India, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur.

The Lyngdoh Commission

The Lyngdoh Commission is named after the commissions' chairman, former Chief-Election Commissioner J. M. Lyngdoh. The aim of the Lyngdoh commission was to frame guidelines for Student Union elections in universities and colleges in India. On May 26th 2006, Lyngdoh Commission handed in their recommendations to the UGC, on request from the Supreme Court.

A vast number of rules are included in the Lyngdoh commissions' recommendations, such as age regulation and restriction on how many times a candidate can run for each position as office barrier in the student union. If you have failed in a subject or have other backlogs⁷² you cannot run for election. The implementation of Lyngdoh commissions incentives, introduced new rules for whom and how to conduct student elections in India.⁷³ At first glance the rules seem fair and much needed. But with a closer look, they impose some restrictions on who can be nominated for election. Several of the new points create hindrance for many SC students in the future. Three points in particular; age, backlogs and 75 percentage of attendance.

The age limitation for undergraduates are 17-22 years old, graduates should not be older than 24-25 years old and postgraduates must be under 28 years old. Several of my informants are according to these rules, too old to run for election, the cause of this can be that they have failed in subjects during their schooling and have had to redo exams. Some have received coaching to prepare for civil service exams, or taken time off from studies to work in order to earn money to continue studies.

The economic position of many SC students also affects their attendance in class. Many SC students need some kind of job in order to complete. Prasad said; "SC students they were always doing the job... They just enter into PhD but they have to work". Attendance is another problem, if they have job or work on projects it is difficult for the students to make the required limit. In UoH's post graduate programs having a part time job is difficult since the professor keeps attendance lists, so if a student does not appear for one class the professor will make a note of it. An additional problem the students referred to was that the SC students often had to go home to their villages to help out their parents with different problems that had occurred, it could be due to anything from sickness to sisters' marriage.

⁷² Backlogs is referred to previously failed subjects.

⁷³ For more information on rules and regulations of the Lyngdoh Commission see <http://www.ugc.ac.in/notices/mhrd2712.pdf> visited 12.03.09.

Lyngdoh criteria of no backlogs can also make it more difficult for SCs to participate in elections since many SC students experience difficulties with the English language when they first enter the university that can result in failed subjects.

Student election 2008 at UoH

University elections at UoH are held every fall semester. The previous Student Union will arrange for a new election commission, the election commission has fifteen days to run the process of the university election. The candidates have to first register with the election commissions' temporary office where the candidate pays a fee of one hundred rupees. Next step in the process is three days of campaigning. The campaigning is allowed until thirty minutes before the Open Dias session. Open Dias is a venue where the candidates gets ten minutes to hold a speech about their election manifesto and argue for their eligibility for a particular post. Thereafter, the audience has five minutes to ask the candidate questions related to their election manifesto. In the end there is a debate among the president candidates. Two-three days later is the polling day and results will be declared the day after by the Election Commission.

The university election was first announced in the middle of October. After the banners were hung and posters were pasted, the Election Commission announced a re-nomination of the candidates. The reason given for this was that the Election Commission had decided to follow the Lyngdoh Commissions' recommendations for student election. The consequence was that two of the nominees from first round were able to run as candidate after the implementation of Lyngdoh Commission's rules.

There were three places on the campus where the election campaigning was important; the chai stalls, the hostels and the election commission's office. The chai stalls around campus became the place for political discussion and rumor making. Chai stalls were one place where votes could be won and tactics fine tuned. Issues were discussed but in a low voice in case of any third party listeners. A second important place for the election campaigning is in the hostels, since I was not allowed in the men hostels, I could not observe what was going on there. But I know from my school days at UoH, when a group of ten girls came to my room and wanted to know which party I was casting my

vote for and argued that I should vote for their favorite.⁷⁴ The importance of hostels and student halls as a place for political activities is also recognized by scholars as Ruud and S. Kumar (Ruud 2009; Kumar, S 2009). The third important place is the office of the Election Commission, there the students could register as candidates, hand in election manifestos and get an insight into how the election was progressing. The election manifesto had to be approved by the election commission to control that no discrimination and political affiliations was described. The election manifesto was first of all, given to potential voters and it was proclaimed at the Open Dias session. The Open Dias session was talked about as a debate for the politically active students, since it was late in the election campaign most people had already decided whom they would vote for. The Open Dias session was to me a political show, where the opponents would eagerly use their chance to question and shout at the person reading his/her election manifesto. And later the persons shouting highest could brag about their performance over the evening chai. Satendra Kumar discusses why student elections are seen as fairs and festivals, he concludes by explaining that elections are a part of modern cosmology, where "... caste, kinship, clan, region, gender and students are re-imagined and recorded in fairs and rituals of festivals in which get together parties are thrown and communal feast are organized" (2009: no page nr). Even if S. Kumar's description of elections sounds like a bigger arrangement and with more participation of people from outside of the university, I could still recognize the atmosphere of a festival at UoH.

I was looking forward to the Open Dias session and had no idea of what to expect. When I arrived at the venue there was a high presence of security guards, the area around and the venue was abound with security guards. Outside the auditorium I could count fifteen security guards. When I come to the registration desk, I showed my identity card and wrote my name in the registration list. Inside the auditorium I sat down next to one of the loudspeakers on the left side to make sure that I could record the happening. The auditorium slowly filled up while we were waiting for the election commission to start the debate. On the stage there were seven chairs and a rostrum. After approximately a one hour delay, the debate got started.

The election commission takes their seats on the podium, there are five boys and, to my big surprise, two girls in the election commission. I cannot recall seeing these girls in the election commission office or any other place in the campus. The Open Dias session

⁷⁴ Since I was a foreigner I was not allowed to vote.

starts with the small and insignificant posts, the candidates comes to the rostrum, one after the other.

The first candidates manage easily to get away with their presentations, but as the crowd gets exhilarated the tension increases. A girl running for a position in the Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH) starts talking and the crowd goes crazy, with whistling and shouting. Then in the question round, one of the audience asks “which religion is the most depressing towards women”? This question provokes the audience and the atmosphere in the auditorium changes, the tension is high as the audience are waiting for her answer, someone shouts at the guy who asked the question;”are you trying to make problems”? “What is wrong with you”? The narrator of the election commission comes to the girl’s rescue and tells the candidate not to answer the question, and the session goes on.

After a while it is time for the prestigious positions, the crowd is exhilarated and everyone in the audience wants to comment, shout and whistle on any argument made by the candidate.⁷⁵ One of ABVPs’ candidates enters the stage and starts speaking in Telugu, one person in the election committee asks him to speak in English, this makes the hole right side in the auditorium, both politically and physically, go totally out of control, and the ABVP supporters starts shouting “Vande Mataram”, bow to the mother, and tries to enter the stage to get a hold of the person in the election commission who asked the question. Around sixty people try to enter the stage. The guards moves in and manage to keep the crowd under control. While the election commission try to cool off the people. After forty five minutes the angry crowd takes their seats and the election commission warns the ABVP that if they shout slogans one more time and disrupt the program, they will be banned from the election. The middle and left side in the auditorium demands that the ABVP be disqualified from the election, since the rules were clear before the session started.

When it was time for the president candidates enter the stage the show was at its peak, and the election commission barely manages to complete the session. Among the students there are roughly two sides, pro- ABVP and the opposition. The opposition did not manage make an alliance for the election, but shared the same view of ABVP which had held the president post in the previous term. The ABVP were accused of not taking

⁷⁵ According to the Lyngdoh commission this kind of behavior is not allowed and shouting slogans’ with party affiliation is strictly forbidden.

care of the security in the campus and instead of including all the different people, they were stirring up communal feelings in the campus. The president candidate from ABVP had written in his election manifesto that he wanted the campus to be secure. He was questioned by the audience, on what he would do to improve the security. The candidate did not have a good answer and said that it was not his responsibility to make the campus secure, but the administration and security guards. This answer created more commotion and again there was a half an hour stop in the program.

On the Election Day every faculty had their own voting box. Inside the voting room, a person from the election commission and a faculty were present to make sure that things went according to the book. Outside the faculties, people were gathering before and after voting, to chat about the outcome of the election over chai. People gathered in groups depending on which party they belonged to. By midday the rumor was that ABVP and ASA were in the lead. But SFI did not give up, there were four main students in the SFI which were working very hard to mobilize votes until the end. They were coming and going to the social science block and continually calling to check how things were going in other faculties. In the afternoon when the polling was closed the political engaged students gathered at Student Centre Canteen. The respective groups had a printout with all the names which belong to each faculty, so by carefully going through the list they could count how many secure votes they had. Later in the evening when ASA realized that their candidate was not among the top two, they vanished from the canteen, while the SFI and ABVP, spent the whole evening there. According to the unofficial counting the ABVP, looked like they were going to win, but it was a close race. People started to shake hands and congratulate the nervous ABVP president candidate with the victory, but he did not celebrate the victory in advanced and said that they still had to wait and see. During the past year the university had expanded and four hundred⁷⁶ new students had been enrolled in integrated courses. The SFI believed that many of the new votes would be won by them, and thereby they could defeat ABVP.

The day of the announcement of the election results was characterized by waiting. The official counting of the votes did not start until the afternoon. Again the security was high and a white line was drawn to separate the Lecture Hall Complex, where the Election Commission members were counting the votes, and where the students were allowed to wait. If anyone crossed the line, the guards would use their whistle until they

⁷⁶ This number is based on one of my informant's calculation of the election outcome.

moved. The students were waiting in a nearby canteen. In the morning hours I could also see some of the ASA members waiting but as the day went on and the unofficial counting of votes within the party was reaffirmed, they knew they did not have any chance to win. Everybody I spoke to was sure that it was only SFI and ABVP that still were in the run for the president position. As the results were announced the suspension grew, both ABVP and SFI were confident about their victory.⁷⁷ At midnight the winners were clear, ABVP won the president post with 37 votes to runner- up SFI.⁷⁸

Around thirty minutes before the official nomination, one of the ABVP members told me, that they got a message from inside the Lecture Hall Complex and that they had won the election. While the result was announced for the position in the student union there was a competition between the two parties of who could celebrate most and shout slogans. These two parties won all the posts apart from sports secretary which went to the NSUI. When the new president was announced the celebrations started. ABVP was prepared with fireworks and crackers, flags with party affiliations and the shouting of slogans “jai hind”, long live India. The celebration lasted the whole night and the day after.

Behind the scene and in the period before the Election Day many tricks and maneuvers were tried in order to secure their candidates and party’s chances for winning the election.

Violence and dirty politics

From the end of the 1960s we can see a trend where student politics have become more violent; one important movement was the JP movement. The JP movement is named after its leader Jayaprakash Narayan, and became a wide spread movement in Gujarat and Bihar, 1973-1975. This movement showed a more violent side of social movements, it was also a movement based on students. After the announcement of implementing Mandal commission report in 1990, violent protest broke out, many of the protesters were students. In south India episodes of violent actions reported are fewer than in North India, specially the Hindi-Belt (Mendelsohn & Vicziany 1998, pp. 75).⁷⁹ But that does not mean that violence do not happen at all, on November 12th 2008, the

⁷⁷ For every hundred votes that were counted, the election commission announced it on the speaker system.

⁷⁸ In the campus there were 2200 students that were allowed to vote.

⁷⁹ Hindi belt refers to the six states Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Gujarat.

Indian news channels were constantly showing visuals from Dr. Ambedkar Government Law College in Chennai, where the Dalit students and upper caste students were beating each other with a baseball bats, allegedly due to the improper use of the name of the college. A series of handbills had been printed where the college's name was referred to as "Government Law College" and the name of Ambedkar had been left out, this was seen as a strong provocation against the Dalits.⁸⁰ In UoH there have not been any big riots. But still tricks are played in a smaller scale and episodes of violence do occur.

I want to show how smaller incidents of violence and tricks are used by the student politicians in UoH. Threats and dirty tricks are well-known tools to get rid of competition and unwanted candidates, in Indian politics. Even the previous Chief Minister in Andhra Pradesh, Y S Rajasekhara Reddy has been accused of using illegal methods in order to come into formal politics (Balagopal 2004).

Here I will describe two incidences which happened on campus, one episode happened before I came and one during my fieldwork. First example shows how my informant Shiva was indicted with sexual harassment charges three days after he won a position in the Student Union.⁸¹ My second example shows an incident of violence due to unwanted competition. First I will describe the incidents after that I will discuss how the other students explained the incidents, I referred to.

Shiva was one of my informants that I had met when I was a student at the university. When I met him this time, I told him about my project and why I was back. After a while he told me that he had been accused of sexual harassing a girl, and that this happened because he was a SC trying to get a position in the campus. The following day I interviewed him. The interview took place at the campus in an area where there was seating arrangement for food, and tea. He had brought me all the documentation he had about the case. We started our interview, but after a while, Shiva said we should move to a different place because some people involved in his case had entered the same place as we were. We moved to a different place, where no people usually come during the day. Shiva said the background for this incident had started a long time back when he had been to a meeting in his community's organization. During the meeting he had questioned why the PhD students were not participating in the meeting to plan the organization of the annual festival Diwali.⁸² Shiva explains the sequences of events:

⁸⁰ The Hindu, 15th November 2008, pp. 10.

⁸¹ The complaint had been given the day he won his post.

⁸² Hindu festival of light, celebrates the good beating the bad.

This led to some people being unhappy with me and told me that I should not ask such question. After this, some people saw me as troublemaker. Some friends told me that I should try to get a position in the university so that I could have some respect. So I contested for a seat. I got support from the ABVP and I won the election. This is when my problems started. After three days I came to know that a case was filed against me for sexual harassment. It was a friend of me that had complained.

During the election campaigning Shiva told that he had been harassed several times and threatened by upper caste people from his regional community. They told him that a “rascal” like him had nothing to do in politics, and that they would make sure that he would not get this position. According to Shiva the boys that had harassed him during the campaigning had made this girl to report him for sexual harassment because they knew that the consequences would be that he lost his seat.

Two things had provoked the people around him. First of all he is a SC trying to raise his voice on the campus and secondly he was supported by the ABVP. Shiva explained only SCs will be charged with sexual harassment. Since I do not know who this girl is, I cannot confirm or disprove the legitimacy in the claim. The other students I spoke to about this case, both SC and non-SCs, did not believe that the sexual harassment claims were genuine. Non- SC students would say that if he was not an SC he would never have won the case in the first round.⁸³

My next example shows that violence between SC groups is also occurring, not only between Malas and Madigas but also within the jati coinciding with one of the Dalit student organizations. During my formal interview with Paul he was an experienced and an eager ASA member, he had been active in ASA for four years. Few weeks before the announcement of the election, he wanted to start his own Dalit organization. I accidentally met Paul outside one of the chai stalls in the university campus, where he told me about his plan to start a new organization for SCs. While explaining it to me he focused on that it should be a democratic group, with an elected board with both Professors and students whose main tasks would be conducting seminars and workshops. Paul showed me his notebook where he had collected around thirty e-mail ids, of interested people.

⁸³ This case was later re-opened and was still not resolved when I left campus.

At that time, I did not have enough insight into the campus political life to understand what implications this act had. I went away for a trip, and when I returned, the first news I heard was that Paul had been severely beaten. While Paul was watching TV at night in the TV-room in his hostel, two people turned off the light and started beating him with the chairs in the room. Paul had to go to the hospital and dentist.

Why did this happen? Senior fellow and former director of Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, D.L. Sheth argues that the SCs, STs and OBCs become targets of violence when they start to improve their economical position. Seth points out that there is “abundant empirical evidence” which shows this point, he adds in brackets “especially in villages” (Sheth 1996, pp. 332). My findings also confirms Sheth’s claim that there is clear evidence of violence occurring when historically low status groups are moving upward, but in UoH it seemed to take the shape of more non- physical violence than physical despite this example.⁸⁴

When I was asking people why Paul had been beaten, it seemed that I was the only one that was shocked. Everyone seemed to know that his idea to start a new organization would cause problems. All my informants knew about the incident and who were behind it. The two boys beating Paul were expelled from the university for one semester. Paul told me that he was not interested in filing a case with the police as long as they got their punishment from the university. He said he did not want to destroy their lives. My informants had some kind of sympathy for these boys, and explained that it was not really the boys fault, they were juniors and had been misled by a senior, the ex-president in ASA.⁸⁵

In both of my cases the SC students are crossing silent boundaries. When this happens someone will punish them. In Shiva’s case it was the upper caste students, in Paul’s case it was within his own group. This happens not only when you cross the caste boundaries but when you break social conventions.

⁸⁴ Physical and non-physical violence will be further discussed in chapter six.

⁸⁵ When this incident happened he was still the President of ASA, but due to this episode he was replaced.

The Scheduled Caste students role in the election

The SC students at the university were very active both during election time and after the election. As mentioned above, several of the parties in the university had a SC candidate in a leading role of the party. This seemed to be a relatively new phenomenon, in a university which used to be run by Reddys and Brahmins. Two years earlier one of my informants Ramu wanted to run as president candidate for SFI:

I was in SFI that is a Marxist group. And I said that I wanted to run as president but they didn't allow me. They said it was because of that they tried last year with a Dalit student and they didn't win that election. But the real reason was that the SFI co-operated with other parties so that they didn't win. They kept me excluded and didn't invite me to the meetings. They think Dalits are not suitable for that position. I asked them why are you excluding me? They didn't have any answer.

The cause for not letting Ramu become a president candidate can be a numbers of reasons, but in general it follows in a pattern of how SFI was perceived by other students. Even the left side in politics, the Marxist organization, is not open for SCs to participate to their fullest. During the election in 2008 they had a SC candidate. So there is not a uniform exclusion of SCs either but their previous loss is explained by that they had supported a SC candidate, while all the other times they had lost non-SC candidates were not considered as due to their candidates' identities.

When the message of re-nomination was announced, many rumors were spreading about the reason behind the decision of the election commission and why they did not use Lyngdoh commission rules from the beginning. Since the Election Commission was mainly composed of SC students who belonged to one of the SC groups in the campus, this led to speculation. Paul belongs to the Mala community and was a former member of ASA, but due to that he was beaten up by his own people he choose to join SFI, he explained the re-nomination as follows;

they [Election Commission] are doing this because their group didn't manage to get any coalition so their chance was slim,... some of the candidates can't run for election with the new rules, so this gives ASA the chance to get a new alliance.

The election commission denied this and they referred to the student election in JNU, where some students had gone to the Supreme Court because the election commission was not following Lyngdoh Commission rules and the Supreme Court cancelled the election. So in order to avoid this they had a second round with all the right regulations. My informant Paul had many reasons to say this, and overall it did not help the ASA in getting a new alliance or winning any posts. Thomas

I don't know why the re-nomination happened. Exactly I don't know. But the rumor from the other people is that the election commission was only ASA members and they were forced by the election commission member because they belong to The ASA. According to chief election commission they gave notification that they had to change to the Lyngdoh commission that they did not follow. But no one is forced to join. Some said that they were ready to go to court.

The Election Commission was how I see it, following a trend for high participation among SC students in student politics. The leader of NSUI is a SC student, the SFI also has a SC candidate for their president post, DSU and ASA are both mainly based on SCs, as far as I could see it was only in ABVP and NESF were there was no SC students with a prominent place in the organization. So it was not unexpected that the election commission consisted of only SCs, but that all were ASA members was more doubtful. ABVPs' President Candidate, the only non-SC, belonged to the BC community. He was characterized by both fellow organization members and opposition's members as a nice guy.

Several of my informants saw SFIs move to have an SC candidate for the President post as pure manipulation, since none of the SC parties had wanted an alliance with them. According to my informants this was done to split the SC voters into several parties. The ASA pasted a poster saying "Any lay man having basic awareness of the campus' political history can easily understand that, only in order to counter ASA, our secularist [SFI] have come down to put up a Dalit candidate in the presidential fray".⁸⁶

Even the Dalit students' organizations are manipulating the Dalit identity in order to secure their votes. The main goal for the Dalit students' organizations is not to have any SC president. This problem can make it more difficult for SC candidates to run as

⁸⁶ See appendix number 1.

candidate for other parties, or have other parties to support a SC candidate when they know that the Dalit students will not support any SC candidate. In other words, it is not enough for a candidate to be SC to secure the SCs votes, the candidate also have to be representing the right organization to be able to get the support from its community.

The SFI had previous to the election tried to arrange a coalition with ASA in order to get their numerical support. The ASA, which saw themselves as the only party that had done good things for the students in the previous year in the campus, thought that they should have the president candidate.⁸⁷ In return for their efforts ASA expected that the students they had helped would return their favor and vote for them. ASA, on the other hand, expected DSU to support them. But the DSU were not willing to support ASA and their president candidate. Instead they stood independent and had only one candidate in the election and that was for the President post. Since DSU is based only on the Madiga jati, which is numerical weak in the university, they had a very slim chance of getting elected. The DSU members were fully aware of that, and instead of making an alliance and support ASAs president candidate, they saw it as a moral victory that DSU stood alone. DSU pasted a poster in the campus were they wrote “We, DSU strongly send the statement that we are not going to be merely “voters” and also “dummy members” in the students’ union elections”.⁸⁸ This statement referred to ASA. In the previous year there was an alliance between ASA and DSU, at that time the president candidate was a Mala from ASA, and the agreement was that this year ASA would support a DSU candidate, the ASA had a new leader since then and he refused to support a Madiga candidate, the collaboration ended.

Unlike formal politics, the campus patrons do not have any benefits which the lower castes depends on, and for that reason they can depend on anyone else except their own organization.

Formal political culture is clearly being tried out in the university, with political moves that split a numerically strong vote bank, the use of muscles to intimidate possible competitors and trying to mobilize vote banks based on patron/client relation. Thus why are not the students in the University of Hyderabad up and coming politicians?

UoH has clear rules that student politics should not be intermingle with formal politics. The politicians can only enter the university if they have an invitation from the

⁸⁷ It should be noted that SFI and ASA previously have had an alliance where they were working to secure the victory for an ASA president candidate.

⁸⁸ See appendix number 2.

administration or the students' organizations. Another factor is the location of the campus, the campus is situated in the outskirts of the city, and it will take at least one and a half hour in rush hour traffic to reach the campus from the legislative assembly, all these factors makes it less attractive for the politicians to come to UoH. For the SC students it is even less likely that they will become politicians because there are three things that a potential candidate must have in order to become successful and they are; a good family background, money and connections. Most of the SC students I spoke to did not have any of these requirements. Coming from a SC background few of them had families with important positions in the society. Four of the informants came from a family background which was upper middle class, they would probably also have some connections but still, they were not preferred candidates in student politics, so most likely they will not be in formal politics either. Of course some of them might not be interested, but a couple of them were.

Entering in to formal politics for SC students at UoH seems very unlikely, the SC students not only lacked money, connections and the right family background but they also faced obstacles at the university to get any important position in the university except from being one of the masses which comes to protest or holding a small position in one of the students' organizations.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have tried to explore the participation of SC students in student politics at UoH and show which possibilities they have. Student politics is for many aspiring politician in India a springboard to formal party politics. The participation of SC students in student politics in UoH is high. Three out of four President Candidates were SCs but still none of them managed to win the President Post or any other seats in the Student Union. Their lack of ability to unite behind one candidate made it very difficult for the SCs to win any posts. Going from student politics to formal party politics is very difficult for the SC students in UOH. The holder of the President Post at UoH is the connection between administration and students. This position gives some influence but mostly respect.

The 2008 election on UoH was barely influenced by outside politics. The university's rule and the implementation of the Lyngdoh commission's regulations put restrictions to this relation. Even if the connections between the student politics and

formal politics were held to a minimum, the same political traits as we see in the state politics in Andhra Pradesh were also present in student politics at UoH. The division between the Malas and Madigas was one of the reasons why the Dalit students' organizations did not manage to put forward and support one candidate. Since the reserved students on the campus are 30 percent of the students on UoH they could have had a good chance to secure some positions. The conflict between the SCs can make it more difficult for other organizations to support a SC candidate since they know that the SC vote bank is split.

In order to become a politician the informants told me that an up and coming politician must have money, good family background and the right connections. Most of my informants had neither. They had problems securing positions in the Student Union and did not have an arena to show or impress outside politicians with their skills.

Further, I have discussed three of Lyngdoh Commission's criteria, age, attendance and backlogs, to see which structures the university implements for student politics. All these three problems are all related to each other and one is the consequence of the other and the consequence of the SCs situation in the Indian society. These rules can make it more difficult for some SC students to stand as a candidate in the Student Union elections in the future.

6. Productions of Casteism at the University

The university is a closed sphere where many different micro communities live together. Traditionally this was a more homogenous institution where the Brahmins and Reddys dominated the classrooms and the social sphere on campus. Due to the reservations, the university campus today is a heterogeneous sphere where the Brahmins and Reddys are a minority in some faculties like social science, while in science they are still a majority.

This environment affects, of course, all the students in their everyday life. While the dominant castes are losing their stronghold, the reserved categories like SC, ST and OBC are gaining ground. In this current scenario, the notion of caste is not decreasing but increasing.

At University of Hyderabad caste and especially the SC identity is important on several levels. To gain admission to a good university in India is difficult, the huge number of people in the country makes the competition for places and positions stiff, whether it is in education or in the job market. For that reason, the issue of reservation has become very important. Many OC students feel that they or some family members are rejected seats in schools or jobs because SC/ST people are taking “their place” they believe they are entitled to. The OC students may have better merit than a SC/ST student but may not be admitted because of reservation. Resentment and frustration generated among the OC over the reservation policy is often articulated as a loss of something which in fact belongs to them, for example the right to education, and will consequently be expressed towards SC and ST students or workers. The intense competition of seats and scholarships makes the university a place where the importance of caste is reproduced. This is due to the fact that caste is a crucial aspect in the reservation policy. By emphasizing the production of caste, I will show how caste identity is made the relevant criterion for access to the university, scholarship, participation in student politics and social life on the campus.

The discrimination the students face occurs on two levels. There is both “positive” and “negative” discrimination. The SC students experience “positive” discrimination in form of reserved seats and scholarships while the “negative” or what we usually understand as discrimination is also an important aspect of their experience at the university.

Casteism is a word with a negative connotation and has been used in many settings (Bayly 1999, pp. 308). Rajni Kothari writes; “in politics [casteism] is no more and no

less than politization of caste” (Kothari 1997, pp. 444). By choosing to use the word casteism I want to focus on the different structures which contribute to keeping caste the relevant identity marker for university students.

UoH, being a central university, has to follow the guidelines of the central government and Andhra Pradesh’s policy for higher education. That means that they are obliged to accept a certain number of SC/ST students. In a short article, published in Economic and Political Weekly, A.R. Vasavi wrote that the university has become the new site for reproducing casteism. She bases this argument on the neglect by fellow students and teachers to recognize the SC students’ skills, for example their knowledge about leather, drum playing or agriculture knowledge. The SC students have to face direct and indirect discrimination and violence on campus. Since there is lack of recognition by fellow students for the position SC and ST students experiences, OC students form their opinion based on “...competition, resentment and apathy towards them” (Vasavi 2006, pp. 3769). Since the competition for seats in educational institutions is based on caste, caste is reproduced in the university. This seems concurrent to what I experienced in my field work. It is therefore necessary to highlight different structures that make this possible. In this chapter, I will explore key official and unofficial, structures of variable size and levels of implementation which all play a part in the daily shaping of the self-identity among the SC students. I will look at two levels; firstly, focusing on the national level, I will discuss the educational policies implemented by the government that contribute to the importance of casteism. Secondly, by looking at the local level, I will analyze the structures we find on the university level.

National level

The complex nature of Indian society and politics is not only found on the campus, but the campus is a small highlighted puzzle piece of the everyday life in India. The introduction of reservation for SC and ST in higher education made it important for the university to be able to know who belongs to which caste. In order to execute the constitution, the government designed a particular scheme for the institutions which accept SC and ST students through reservation. A box indicating which category the student belongs to is placed on the registration sheet for schools and application forms

for scholarships.⁸⁹ In addition to this, the students applying for a reserved seat needs to show his or her caste certificate.

The box and caste certificate.

“Statistics are to bodies and social types what maps are to territories: they flatten and enclose” (Appadurai 1993, pp. 333-334). Appadurai’s argument follows the post modernist school that sees identity as something that is constructed through power structures. This line of argument can also be found in the post modernist discussion of caste.⁹⁰ Was caste produced by the British colonial rulers or was caste something which has always been predominant in Indian culture? The post modernist argues that the British’s presence in India generated caste consciousness by introducing census where people should identify which group they belong to. The intention of this census was different from its outcome, the need for organizing knowledge about India, made caste identity stronger. Nicholas Dirks writes that ”colonialism seems to have created much of what is now accepted as Indian ’tradition’, including an autonomous caste structure with the Brahman clearly and unambiguously at the head” (quoted in William R. Pinch 1999, pp. 390). Kertzer and Arel argue in their article “Census, identity formation and political power” that the government has the power to categorize people, and that this categorization affects the identity formation among the citizens in a nation (2002). Positive discrimination in India is based on the census. Based on the census, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes reservations were developed. Kertzer and Arel claim that” ...census does much more than simply reflect social reality; rather, it plays a key role in the construction of reality” (Kertzer & Arel 2002, pp. 2). Censuses alone do not contribute to production of casteism, but when benefits are given to certain groups which are defined through censuses, identity markers used by the government become politicized. The Indian government has used the SC and ST categories for sixty years approximately, and these identities have become institutionalized and a part of the SC students identity.

In order to benefit from reservation, the student has to be able to prove that he or she belongs to the right category. The caste one belongs to is documented by a caste certificate which is given out by the state. In theory, this leaves no room for maneuvering

⁸⁹ This box has also been implemented in other official forms outside of University.

⁹⁰ Discussion of caste is found in the introduction to the thesis.

between castes. But in reality it is possible to buy caste certificates or bribe the government officer writing your certificate.⁹¹ With a caste certificate, the student can apply for university. In the university's application form the students ticks off a box indicating which category they belong to: SC, ST, OBC or PH. There is however the possibility to be PH and SC, PH and ST or PH and OBC. Together with the application form the students also hand in the caste certificate. This process is important for the university since they need information in order to know how many SC, ST students they have enrolled in one particular year. Is there a predicament whether or not the university should record the caste background of students? Without any possibilities to recognize which community the students belong to, the administration would not be able to enroll the right number of SC, ST students. For that reason, there is a need for some sort of registration of caste background. In this way however the government's use of the box and caste certificate keeps on highlighting the importance of caste in the university.

Fellowship

On the government's path to uplift the SC it seems that the main concern is the reserved seats in government education and jobs. Education is one very important vehicle to move from poverty to a better economic situation. The first step to uplift the SC was to grant reservation seats, but reservations alone cannot improve the situation of this big group of poor people. Even if reservations are in place and the state gives free boarding, the students still are left with paying for the reduced tuition fee and for food and necessary hygienic products. In order for SC students to complete their education, most of them need economic help. Many of the students I spoke to had earlier been students in Christian boarding schools that offered low price education and covered basic needs. The economic situation for many SCs makes it difficult to obtain higher education. Srinivas told me how he had tackled his economic problems in the first semester;

I got the seat in the university, but had no money. I got 50 rupees from my uncle who is a cobbler. I spent that money and went to my old Christian college, when I arrived I had 13 rupees. My relatives were praying for me. My teacher and his wife gave me

⁹¹ This was reported to me by informants.

1800 rupees. With that money I got to Hyderabad. From there I met my brothers who are working in Hyderabad, so they gave me 4800 rupees, so with help from God I made it. The entrance fee was 1800 rupees, so I had money for food also that semester.

Economic troubles are a big problem for students coming from poor families. Many SC students spend their free time going to the city for work. This results in less time to study which leads to inferior grades. The students do not have enough money to do proper research. They do not have money to copy the material they need, they do not have money to take the bus or go anywhere to collect information on their topic. This can lead to poorer research than that of their fellow students. Therefore, scholarships are essential.

Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) is a fellowship for students based on merit and has very high competition. There is a quota for SC and ST within the JRF. None of the students I spoke to received money from JRF. In 2006/ 2007 a new fellowship was introduced for SC and ST students. The fellowship is called Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) and is given to SC and ST students pursuing higher university education, M. Phil and PHD. In order to receive RGNF, no test is needed but you need to send your project proposal. Evaluated on the basis of your project the RGNF is granted. The two first years the receiver of RGNF will get around 8000-10000 rupees per month, after two years they will receive 12000-14000 per month.⁹² This is more or less the same amount as other students receive from the JRF. This fellowship has eased many of the SC and ST students' experience in the university. Chandayya tells about his economic situation before receiving RGNF "I faced so many problems, I also worked on some projects. I used to borrow from friends and later I had to return the money, so in holidays I went to project. I was in so much economic problem at that time".

RGNF gives the SC students the possibility to buy Xeroxes, books, laptops, motorbikes, and send money home to their families. Some of the RGNF receivers save their money in order to build houses or buy land. On the campus there is envy towards the SC and ST students receiving this fellowship. The argument is that they only use it to buy motorbike, telephones and things. In this context, I want to look at what my informants benefitting from RGNF say they are using their money on. The first thing that Thomas bought when he received the fellowship was a laptop;

⁹² RGNF was often paid in bulk amount.

Myself I bought laptop. Actually it is my dream to buy a laptop. When I got fellowship immediately I bought laptop and some buy mobile so a little bit luxury. Some people use more on them self. It also gives dignity. Earlier we used to get 500-600 rupee, it is very difficult to even spend for mess bill. Now we don't have that problem we can pay our mess bill. If we are not happy with the food one day we can go outside, and even buying fruits. And education purposes also, now a days we can [buy] new books. Even some students even have printers so now we don't have to go anywhere. Nowadays some students are learning computers and to use internet facilities.

Rajendra did not receive RGNF but received an almost equal amount of money from his internship placement:

I didn't by any clothes from 2004-2007, this year only I bought clothes, so this is managing. Here I'm getting 13500 and [pay] 500 for lunch, and now for every month I can buy clothes but I'm not doing because I know how much we are suffering. I send 10 000 home. In my household my father, mother and sister is living and her child. He is doing his pre-standard and we also have loans. My educational loan I pay 4000 per month. It is 98 000, after M. Tech, I did one year teaching I paid that salary only for interest.

Since I mainly interviewed male students the need to support their family financially was a common concern for all of them. The money they receive is therefore a way to secure not only their research, but also their families' future. Prasad for example used his money on making their land productive;

... now we get sufficient money. With that they are enjoying life with money. And also parents life also increasing, in my situation, the whole of my family I saw a really good change. In my parents' village we have 5 acres land, but there is no bore water, we don't have water. I have spent 25000 on that and the whole 5 acre is now cultivating. Thus, this is my land, I built one building,... Thus, I spent 1 lakh on my building and it is one of the best buildings in my

village. And my brother is studying with my money. My sister has some money but I still give her more.

The receivers of RGNFs are securing their families' life at the same time as they are studying. This might not correspond to the actual idea behind the introduction of RGNF but it shows that since the government has been unable to cover people's basic need, this is the result.

One other student, Rama Krishna, saw the importance of education and helped seven students from his village; "Now I'm PhD scholar I'm getting Rajiv Gandhi fellowship, right now I'm serving seven students in my village. I brought them to Hyderabad and got them into schools paid their fees and books and all those things". The RGNF is not only benefitting the receivers but also their families and relatives.

The SC student Devayya comments; "People are very jealous now, since we don't have to do the test. So they try to make more problems for us". The introduction of RGNF in the university created jealousy between the receivers and the non-receivers. So, what is the effect of receiving the scholarship? Chandayya reflects on the impacts of scholarships:

Even RGF changed the Dalit boys attitude, earlier they used to go to the city and not department. But this time they started seriously working. Some students are wasting money but not all, maybe they are rich people. Most of the students bought bikes. It is a rumor in the campus that only RGF people are buying bikes but it is not so. Many are helping their family, sending money at home, constructing a home or spending for their sisters' wedding.

John told me how he felt about the local "hang out place" called Gops (Gopal's shop), which is the place for social gathering on the university, before and after he received RGNF; "I used to hate the new construction of Gops,⁹³ I told this is only for students with money, but since my people got money at least we will come here for tea". The introduction of RGNF has therefore helped the receivers' of fellowships confidence. Recipients of RGNF have the possibility to change their future and finish their education

⁹³ Gops used to be a tea stall under a big tree, now they have constructed a big place with different shops, and seating arrangement.

without the economic burden. Did this change the students' position at the university? Has the scholarship made any changes to their social status? The SC students who are receiving RGNF have money to participate together with other students in their spare time. I asked the students if they noticed any social changes on the campus for the SC student. Florence answered that there is not much change but the non-Dalits are jealous and are questioning what the SC students will do with that much money. Changes in the self confidence were reported but greater social change in the relationship between the SC students and OC students were not seen.

The amount that the RGNF students receive is a big amount of money for most students in India. A teacher in a village will get paid between 3500 and 5000 rupees per month, a research assistant with a master degree or higher education working in research institutions in the city can receive between 7000-15000 rupees. Between 8000 to 14000 rupees as the RGNF receivers get is enough to live a good life for the student. Some people will argue that the amount is too high for a SC/ST person and are questioning how they are spending their money. There seems to be a general conception that since most of the SC students are used to not having much money, they are also free from expensive habits so there is no need for them to get so much money. Rhetorically we can ask: Why should SC and ST students receive less fellowship than OC students that benefit from fellowship? One argument is that JRF is based on merit and that the SC/ST students are not getting RGNF based on merit so that they do not deserve such a big amount of money. A second argument is that there are so many poor OC students, so why are they not receiving fellowships? A third argument is that RGNF should only go to poor SC and ST students. Lastly, why not only give half the fellowship so that twice as many SC and ST students can benefit? The debate is controversial, and good solutions that satisfy every layer in the society seem difficult to find.

The University Grant Commission demands little from the students that receive fellowships, and the students themselves were not sure about the selection criteria for RGNF. The university took therefore upon itself to introduce stricter rules for those who receive RGNF than those who receive JRF. The university made it mandatory for the RGNF students to sign in for classes and seminars and give the university a yearly report on their research, if they fail to meet the university's demand they were no longer eligible to receive scholarship. Chandayya explains the situation:

The academic section and the VC⁹⁴ made some rules of 75% attendance and submit your monthly report every month and for one semester you have to complete a doctoral committee[...] Students will be there, your supervisor and two faculty. You have to tell what you have done the last six months period, then they will guide you and give some suggestions. Then they will sign, and for one year you have to submit your annual seminar. If you have not submitted your doctoral committee they will not sign registration in the department and will not give signature. The same thing for the annual report. Now they have become very strict... When I joined it was very liberal [...]. To get fellowship you have to work, it is a rule that if you get a fellowship you should not work outside [...]

According to Chandayya, UGC would next year change the rules, so in order to receive RGNF the students need to pass one exam at the UGC as well as the All-India National eligibility test (NET). To get the fellowship, the students must have a supervisor, if the supervisor for some reason does not sign your papers you cannot get fellowship. Thus the SC and ST students face new forms of discrimination, but at the same time their own situation is improving. This again enhances the tense situation that the SC students face on the campus.

Local level

What happens within the university? On the local level, I will highlight the interaction between the employed staff and SC students, and the interaction between the students, and discuss how these relations are played out and how they contribute to the production of casteism. The length of stay in the university differs for each student. Some students stay for one year, while others stay for ten years. The university's regulation and social structure is therefore important for the student. The longer you stay, the more affected you will be from the university's environment. The campus helps to shape both the students' knowledge and the students' adulthood and identity.

⁹⁴ Vice- Chancellor

The administration and teaching staff

Caste is deeply entrenched in the Indian culture and the administration and teaching staff are not exempt from this. Discrimination on the campus is also experienced from the administration and teaching staff, and affects the SC students' everyday life. Many of the professors are Brahmins and some of them give the SC students a hard time. However this does not include all professors. A general perception among the students was that the professors only will help the students which belong to their own community. However, in central universities there are also quotas for SC professors. The SC students complain that SC professors are not standing up for the SC students' rights and are not helping them out. The reason for this, the SC students argue, is that the SC professors are few in numbers and they too will face more problems if they try to help the students. Ramu tells about his department: "In the department there is one SC person working, but the head of the department is a forward caste (FC) and he is working against him. So if this SC employee tries to help a SC student then it will be taken the wrong way". Discrimination is found on every level in the university, between the professors, between the teaching staff and students, between the non-teaching staff and the teaching staff, between the Madiga and Mala students, and between the OC and SC students.

One tool which has been institutionalized in UoH is the "star system". The star system is a system where SC, ST, OBC and physically handicapped are singled out in the class list, one star in front of your name indicates that you belong to SC category and two stars that you belong to ST category, if you have three stars next to your name you are registered as physically handicapped and if you have the hash mark in front of your name you belong to the OBC community. On the university's homepage, the enrollment list can be found with the respective sign put in front of the student's name.⁹⁵ Thus, from the day the student is enrolled in the university system, he or she is marked according to the category they "belong". The professors with caste feelings can easily identify who belongs to which group. The discrimination of students by the professors can be very damaging for the students'. Drop out can be one result, in rare cases suicide.

In UoH, the suicide of Senthil Kumar in February 2008 has by some people been connected with discrimination from teaching staff. Senthil Kumar was a Scheduled Caste student doing his PhD in physics. No suicide letter was found to make sense of the incident, the narrative among the students however was that he had taken his life due to

⁹⁵ See appendix number 3.

the harassment he had experienced during his studies. For the first time in his studies he had failed one subject and this failure would make it difficult for him to receive further scholarship. Another problem he faced was that he had not found a supervisor for his PhD. The university first tried to ignore what had happened and announced the reason of death as cardiac arrest. The SC and ST Professors, the SC and ST students and a well known politician filed a “right to information” complaint in order to find out what the post-mortem report showed as the reason for death. The autopsy showed that poison had been the cause of death (The Senthilkumar Solidarity Committee 2008).

Whether the sole reason for Kumar’s death was discrimination from the staff, or if there were other reasons is not clear, but it shows that caste is a sensitive issue on a highly politicized campus. After first denying that his death was a suicide, UoH agreed to give Kumar’s family five lakhs rupees in compensation. The university’s way of handling this case gave the SC students reasons to think that he took his life due to harassment from the staff. Whether they believed it or not, the incident could be used to highlight atrocities towards Dalits. This incident has been addressed by the Senthilkumar solidarity committee, which has published one article in Economic and Political Weekly. The committee refers to themselves as ”a group of intellectuals and activists based in Hyderabad” (2008, pp. 10).

One of the questions I asked the students during the interviews was whether or not they had faced any discrimination in the university. Viroop tells one story;

M: Have you experienced any discrimination in the campus from other students or professors?

V: For example professor W, who is a Kashmir Brahmin, one time failed a bright SC student. This student sent his papers to JNU and had someone else to look at it. From JNU he got good marks around 68-70 %. Later in the classroom this student hit the professor. The student was expelled for a while.

M: What happened to the Professor?

V: nothing, there is nothing else to expect. If the professor don’t like you they will give less mark. They will give minimum grad. And

probably you heard about the death of Senthil Kumar, people say it happened because of harassment from the professors.

M: Do you also think that is the reason?

V: eh..., I'm not sure, but it can be.

I also discussed this issue about Senthil Kumar with other students, and none of them were convinced that he had taken his life due to harassment from the professors. But nobody denied it either. It is a fact that caste discrimination can take on this form, and it is therefore used by the Dalit interest groups to highlight injustice against Dalits. Harassment from professors is nothing new and was reported by several of the students I talked to:

M: Have you experienced any discrimination in the campus from other students or professors?

I: Yes[...] a faculty in Hindi was my teacher, some mistake happened, and he cut me down to a c-grade. One other student was told to come to his house when his wife was away, to prepare food for him[...] I was also told by some in the department not to greet a SC professor, because he was low caste.

Ramu, who comes from a well-off family, talks about his experience with discrimination at the university:

I have done Bachelor of Science, when I started I liked it. Now I feel there is a lot of discrimination going on. Like for example DR. W, who is a Brahmin. He only gives project work for higher caste students. He will never give to SC.

One other student did not experience any problems in his studies:

No, my professor suggested me to write about Dalit literature for my thesis. My professor is a Muslim and in M. Phil I had a Dalit professor.

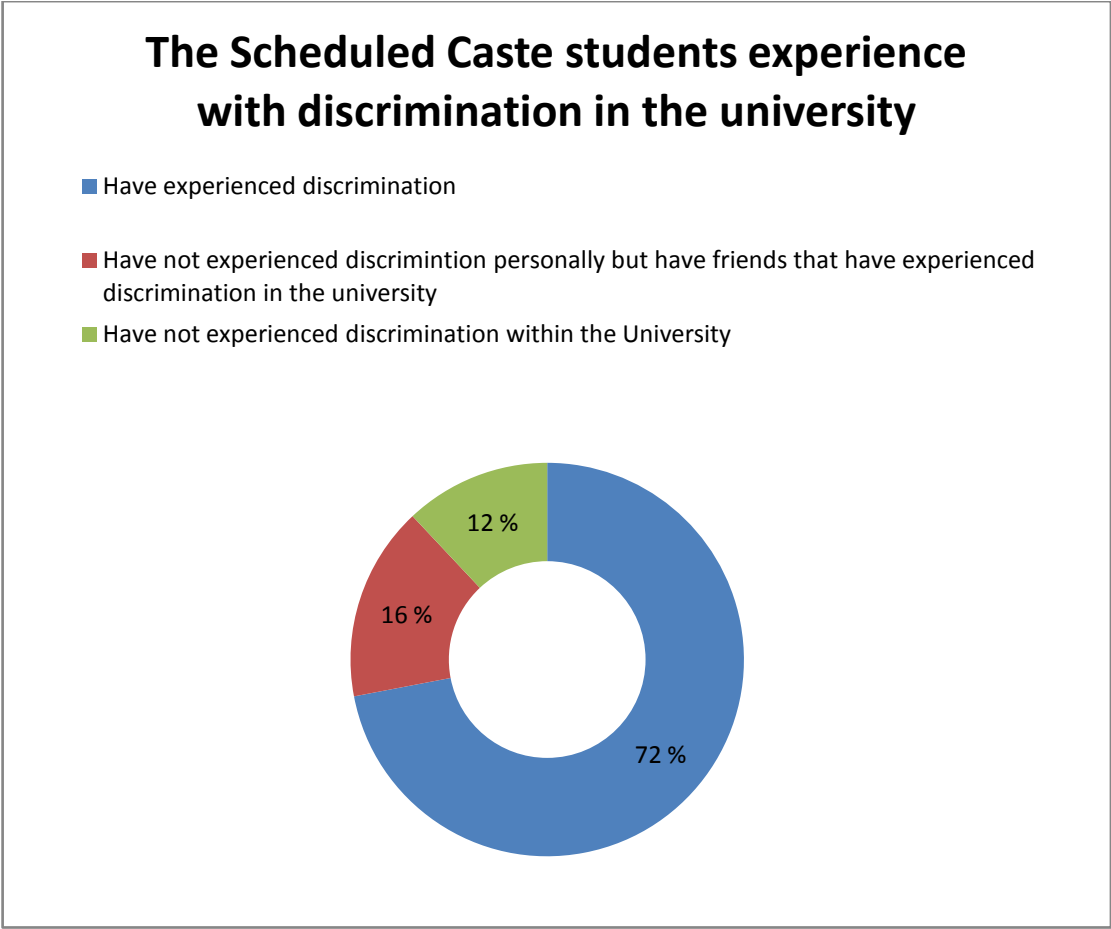
Thomas, on the other hand, experienced some trouble with another SC professor from a different jati:

But I did face with my mam [madam], she is a Madiga and myself a Mala. But some students are provoking her, the people who are from the community they have the same people. Some people are saying madam he is a Mala, why he is opposing your idea, and she little bit problem she created for me. We [have] made [an] agreement, some time she is ok I felt. Some people are creating problems, and I openly told to my guide; You are Madiga and I'm Mala but only our ambition is you have to guide me and I have to do. Now we are ok. But some people will try to create problems. Some friends face [discrimination] in the class room by people are saying you are Mala you only beat people, why your friends are beating people. And also some faculty are not giving marks. We in ASA are trying to turn in softness to the hardness.

Not everyone has experienced discrimination themselves but share other's stories, like Prasad:

I have no experience of discrimination from professors but some people are there, he is head of [a] department [...] he is a Brahmin. Since birth and so on I have been doing pujas, so I keep the puja mark, that usually only Brahmins keep. So he thinks I'm a Brahmin, so he keeps his hands on my shoulder and try to find out if I have a thread under my shirt or not...

Table number 5 The following table is based on information gained during interviews with my informants. The question was: Have you, or do you have friends who have experienced discrimination on the campus?



Source: This figure is based on information received during formal interviews. 25 students were asked.

This table shows that 88% of the students either have firsthand experience or their friends have experienced discrimination at the university. Since my interviews were not fully structured, the question itself was not asked in the same way in every interview. 12 % have reported no experience with discrimination. Looking at the numbers, it shows that not everyone experiences discrimination at university but the majority does. 12% of the interviewed students have not experienced discrimination, nor have their friends. This answer could be different if the question was asked in a different way. It seems unlikely that these 12% do not have friends who have experienced discrimination. But it also shows that what is perceived and experienced as discrimination is different from person to person. So what one person experiences as discrimination, can be understood as something else by other people.

And as Prasad also tells when entering the M. Phil and PhD programs the SC students tends to keep to their community

The role of student organizations

The student politics is an arena where the Scheduled Caste students try to secure their rights. Here they educate their fellow students about their rights, regarding the topic of being a Scheduled Caste student, and about Ambedkar and his philosophy and politics. If one of the Dalit organizations on the campus won the president post in the student union, they would have a certain influence on the social life on campus. Since it is the student union's role to arrange the festival and arrangements on the campus, they can for example invite significant leaders to hold seminars. Winning the student union president post is important, first and foremost, because it earns respect.

One symbolic conflict which has occurred between the Akhila Bharathiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and the Dalit organizations is the rights to have a beef stall on the university campus during festivals. The Dalit student organizations had their beef stall during the university's biggest festival Sukoon. Through this action they are creating their space claiming that they have a right to eat beef on the campus. This act is seen as provocative and is rejected by a section of the Hindu students, who identify with the ABVP ideology which considers cows as sacred. Selling beef on the campus would not be possible with only a small group of supporters. Both of the Dalit student organizations are working together on this issue and have the support of several hundred people. In this way they are able to keep their beef stall going.

The student politics highlight caste importance because several of the students' organizations are divided by caste. The most important task for the Dalit student organization is to "organize, educate and agitate". Only through this approach is it possible for them to argue for their case in a systematic way, which will help them achieve a constructive response to their concerns.

In order to mobilize the students, the organizations are dependent on including the new students coming to the campus. Every year during admission to the campus, different student organizations will have stands in the administrative building. Many of the lower caste students do not know much about Ambedkar's philosophy but will recognize his name and picture and know that he was fighting for the rights of their people. The registration desk is the first step in becoming a member of the student organizations. The next step for the leaders in the two Dalit Student organizations is to

educate the new members about the fight for their rights in society. This is very important, it includes both teaching Ambedkar's ideas and helping their fellow students to be more outgoing and train them to speak in front of a group explaining why it is important that their people demand the rights that they are entitled to. Chandayya who comes from a better off family with an employed father did not know much about the Dalit situation;

But I didn't experience [discrimination] and even my father didn't tell me. In my home there is a picture, I only knew his name [Ambedkar], but nothing more before I came here. When I came here I went to a lecture with Kancha Ilaiah and Katti Padma Rao, ..., they impressed me. So then I came to know about Ambedkar and then I read.

Both village and city based students can have little knowledge about Ambedkar's philosophy and the importance of caste-based organization. The villagers might lack awareness of the Dalit situation because of their parents' illiteracy, and the city based students because they have few experiences of caste discrimination and little education around Dalit issues. When entering the university, their fellow students will educate them on different issues, for example discrimination, Kanshi Ram and Ambedkar's philosophy. Through seminars with Dalit scholars and discussions in the organizations, they become conscious about the Dalit situation. Thomas, a SC student coming from a small town, explains:

When I joined in master degree in a different district, I already knew of Dalits and so. But my family is a little bit ok, so I never faced so much. But at that time we were thinking they are the SC and so on. Through the TV and newspaper we came to know how people were treated. And after getting seat in Master I was aware of how people were treated, that was through the discussion, after then we slowly mingles. After I came here I felt I also want to be part of this. This is also my community... And we got knowledge through the organization. Even before we didn't even speak, not even in front of our juniors, this we have learned from the organization. We learned how to lead people and help people. Since childhood onward we are

saying who is Ambedkar? Clearly we don't know about Ambedkar. We are in a learning process of Ambedkar knowledge. So we are conducting seminars on who is Ambedkar, what he said and so on.

Based on the unity that is created through the awareness of the Dalit situation, the SC students come together to fight for their rights. The students become spokespersons for their cause. For example, in the case of Senthil Kumar, the Dalit student organizations worked as a pressure group against the university to disclose the cause of death.

For both the Ambedkar Student Association and the Dalit Student Union the pivotal task is to make the SC students conscious about their community's situation and teach them how to fight for their rights. Through the organizations they are united and work as a pressure group in the university to make sure the students are given their rights. In this way, they also contribute to making caste relevant in situations in which it actually might not be of particular importance.

Violence

Several articles point out that SC and ST students find themselves at risk of being harassed throughout Indian campuses (Weisskopf 2004; Vasavi 2006). The Anveshi report examined caste-related violence at the University of Hyderabad, and reported ongoing discrimination on several layers (quoted in Vasavi 2006, pp. 3769).

Violence is one way to uphold the importance of caste, since it entrenches an inferiority and dominancy principle in a tangible way. Most of the discrimination faced by the students I spoke to came in a verbal form, and was not physical but psychological. Psychological violence can be just as harming as physical violence and physical violence has an impact on the psyche. Violence is often reported between SC and OC, and particularly SC and BC. But the picture is more complex than that. Violence is not only taking place between SC and OC, but is cutting across all caste boundaries.⁹⁶

Here, I will look at two types of violence: physical violence inflicted upon a person with intention and verbal violence, threats, name callings, talking pejoratively to a person or intentionally making accusations in the interest of harming a person or group. In the last chapter I described two big incidents of violence, one with physical violence, within

⁹⁶ See chapter 5.

one of the political parties on the campus. The other episode included verbal violence, such as threats, name calling and filing a strategic sexual harassment case against a student. These episodes have two very different trajectories, so that one can argue that they are not possible to compare, however, what is more important is to look at the impact that physical and verbal violence has on the students and how it increases their sense of belonging to one group.

Incidents of physical violence are not uncommon at the university, but when I was doing my field work, Paul's incident was the one on everybody's lips.⁹⁷ That incident happened in the run up to the student election. He was beaten by his own organization members because he was trying to breakaway.

Threats are one common way to harass other students, for example by making a false complaint against someone on the basis of sexual harassment. Shiva, as I have discussed earlier, was accused of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment cases were not unusual on the campus but seemed to harm other students to a great extent, without physically hurting the accused person. Sexual harassment cases are taken very seriously on the campus, which often is referred to, by the boys, as a feminist campus. The consequences of sexual harassment are either to be expelled from the campus or banned from all government universities. These accusations were reported not only among the SC students but also other male students. This kind of violence, affect the students body, mind and spirit. As a consequence of this experience, Shiva became very apprehensive of the people around him, he tried to stick with his SC friends who supported him. When his case was re-opened, being a student in the same university became difficult for him. He therefore changed to another college.

His attitude had changed from wanting to be active in student politics to more or less trying to be invisible. As he told me repeatedly "politics had ruined my life", still he was determined to go on with his studies but saw it as necessary to move out from UoH.

Verbal violence in the form of name calling is the most common form of violence experienced by the SC students. The administration is not at all interested or able to sort out problems before an incident happens, but once something has happened, they are forced to do something, since everybody's eyes are following. The student organizations therefore become important, because the university remains inactive, unless there is a loud protest.

⁹⁷ See page 78-79 for description of the incident.

Violence between castes seems to reaffirm the caste feelings in the university in that the SC students are depended on their SC friends to support them in times of trouble. In Paul's case, the incident of violence was explained by his fellow jati friends' as the result of one person's brutal nature. By students not belonging to that particular community, it was explained as an act typical of that jati. It was a common stereotype that Malas in ASA were rough people, which were inclined to participate in violence.

When the aftermath of Paul's incident was over, he decided to move out of campus for awhile, he felt it was necessary in order to concentrate on his studies. Violence can be seen as a result of someone moving into some else's sphere, Shiva was moving towards a position which usually was not held by a Scheduled Caste, this provoked many OC students. Paul, on the other hand, had crossed the leader of his primary student organization by trying to start his own organization, which could have cost his first organization many votes.

Concluding remarks

Structures, both on national and local level, make the university a place where casteism is reproduced. In this chapter, I have shown that the government's policy of caste certificate and making caste an important identity marker for entrance into the university is reproducing the importance of caste. Through this process, the SC identity is being locked and it is therefore very difficult for SC and ST students to be considered on the grounds of their persona or their achievements.

Discrimination is found on every level in the university and between different castes. It is not only between the Brahmin and the SC, as it has often been recorded, or between the BCs and SC. The discrimination can also be found between the smaller jatis within the SC category and even within the jati. The competition for rights, benefits and power makes the university environment into a very competitive arena where there are shortages of resources.

Within the university, casteism is institutionalized and we see how this shines through in personal interaction between administration, academic teaching staff, the OC students and the SC students. The dynamics between the state, the university and the students make the university into a sphere where casteism is produced.

The SC students' organization raises the students' awareness about the Dalit situation and work as a pressure group to enforce the university to give the SC students' their rights. This is done through Ambedkar's philosophy; organize, educate and agitate.

Violence in the university seems to be a chain reaction provoked by the SC student's moving up in society. This can be seen as a natural reaction since few people are interested in losing something for the benefit of another group. The university is a sphere where the competition of resources plays a major role. With an increase of reserved seats at the University for the OBC, 49% of the seats are reserved. An increasing number of groups are fighting for extended reservation quotas. The remaining seats for OC at the university are few, and the OC students fear that further political moves can make their situation even worse.

7. Final Reflections

In this thesis I have discussed reservation policy's impact on SC students in higher education. My intention was not to discuss whether or not reservation policy should continue, be removed, or to evaluate any alternative strategies to replace reservation. I have based this thesis on the fact that reservation is a part of Indian society and that it most likely will continue to be so for a stretch of time. What I have tried to do is to explore the effects of the reservation policy on the SC students who are benefitting from positive discrimination. I have presented structures on the government level and the local level. I have discussed the students' political participation, political conflicts, and looked at violence and discrimination, all to see how the SC identity is manipulated into the pivotal role it has today and to answer three research questions which were my point of departure in this thesis. The main characters in this research have been the politically active SC students at University of Hyderabad.

My empirical findings support that the SC identity is very relevant at the university since the university has become an arena for contesting scarce resources. Everyone in the university are, in one way or the other, influenced by reservation policy, some are benefitting while others are losing. The university has become a place where the reservation policy is manifested, this makes the university a politicized sphere where both sides, reserved students and non- reserved students, experience the consequences of reservation. The non- reserved students are protecting their remaining seats while the reserved students and other minorities are trying to expand the quotas.

Positive discrimination's affect on SC identity

Positive discrimination's affect on the SC students are many and intricate. In my research I found six points which can be seen as a result of the reservation policy on the SC students self consciousness.

First we can see that even though the experience of being SC is first learned through interaction with other children at a young age, it is when entering the university that SC students first come in contact with a diverse spectrum of people from their community and through them become aware of the politically conscious identity of

Dalits. Secondly, the political active students learn through their organizations in many cases how to become spokesmen for their communities. Many studies have showed the connections between political active students and formal party politics. But in UoH there are small chances of moving from student politics till formal party. In addition there is also reported of difficulties for educated SCs to find jobs. Thus, it seems that the skills the politically active students learn in the university, are difficult to utilize to its full potential outside that specific sphere.

Thirdly, coming from rural or urban background in many cases give the students different entrance points when they reach the university. The parents' occupational background also seemed to effect how the SC students relate to their identity. Perhaps one of the reasons why some of my SC student informants did not face discrimination or problems due to their identity was because they come from the city and had families with stable economy. The life in the towns and cities are less dominated by patron/client relation than in the villages. Those of my informants who came from towns or cities seemed less affected by caste discrimination and therefore had less knowledge about the situation of Scheduled Castes in general. Coming to the university they come as individual persons, on the campus the SC students learn that they are one group of SCs, due to conflicts over the classification issue the SCs are divided into two Mala and Madiga. The SC students will benefit from supporting each other and when leaving the campus the students are still left with a network which can be helpful in the future. By the OC, administration and the non-Dalit professors they are treated as one group, they are SCs.

Fourth, positive discrimination affects the students' sense of identity by giving and withholding benefits and possibilities depending on their identity. Positive discrimination on one hand gives opportunities for the SCs to move upwards in society, but on the other hand, the government only gives benefits in certain spheres. On one side reservation gives possibilities, on the other sides, the policy excludes most SCs from jobs in the private market.

Fifthly, Resentment and stigma are consequences felt by students on both sides of the reservation debate. Bitterness is felt by OCs since they feel that they are losing benefits which historically have been theirs. They lose the privilege of education to students, who are admitted to the university with lower grades. The SC students are not looked upon as equal to OC students even if they have the same education. The SCs are often stigmatized as low performing students who only reached this position because they

belong to the SC community. The stronger the competition is, the more resentment is generated by OCs, which consequently leads to even more discrimination against SCs.

Sixth, the SC identity reflects their position as underprivileged and dependent on benefits from the government. This leaves the state and not the SC themselves responsible for their position in society. Paradoxically, this is in opposition to the Dalit identity which reflects agency and political consciousness among the reserved students.

Dalit students' organizations

Student politics have in the last two decades been connected with formal party politics, but in UoH the connections between student politics and state party politics are few. UoH' student politics seemed to have high participation of SC students. The 2008 student election had four President candidates running in the election, three of them belonged to the SC community. The candidates were all representing different parties. 30 percent SC students in the university did not manage to unite and support one SC candidate, so they lost the election. This inability to unite behind one SC candidate can make it less likely for other political organizations to support SC candidates since they know that the SCs are fragmented and are therefore not guaranteed the numerical strength that the SC actually have in the university. Identity politics on the state level also affects the students in the university. State identity politics led to the importance of Madiga and Mala identity. This division is also manipulated by the Dalit students' organizations in the university. As a result, the reservation and classification debate dominant in Andhra Pradesh has made the students politically conscious of their jati identity. Being a Mala or Madiga has become an important and politicized identity marker.

In this thesis, I have claimed that SC is the preferred identity term used among the average SCs living in the villages with little or no education. I have argued that Dalit identity is a politically conscious identity which reflects a certain political awareness. This consciousness is taught by Dalit student organizations. Through organizations, the SC students become spokespersons for their community. They gain knowledge of how to access and benefit from the reserved seats and fellowships available to SC students. They are also helping people from their community to get accepted to the university and to receive scholarships. Another observation I did was that the Dalit student organizations are important as a pressure group pushing the administration in the university to implement the rights for the Dalit students. By being a relatively high number of students

they push the administration to fulfill their obligation to UGC of filling the SC quota. Since the students face problems with indirect discrimination from the administration and the teaching staff, the students' organizations are the ones that the students can turn to if they have problems.

Casteism

Discrimination is found on most levels of the Indian society, and SCs experience this throughout their lives, from their childhood playing with other children in the street, to entering the university and through political participation. The university sphere is no different, if not even more accountable in the growing importance of casteism. The government had hoped that reservation would eliminate caste by giving the underprivileged possibilities with reservation policies to achieve higher education and to get a job. This has not happened and the caste system is still entrenched in the Indian society.

Due to the stiff competition over benefits in the Indian society, caste is, for the SC, still the most important criteria in ensuring education, receiving scholarships, allowing for lower entrance fees at universities and securing future jobs with the help of reservation policies. In addition, structure both on government level and local level helping to emphasize caste as even more important. The government is on one hand trying to give benefits to the SC, but on the other hand they are still enforcing structures which contribute to highlighting the importance of caste. Casteism is reproduced on the university campus by both structures on the government level and on the local level. On the government level, the use of caste certificate and the enrollment papers to the university clearly distinguishes the caste backgrounds of the students. When entering the university the caste background is recorded in the administration system and from there anyone interested are able to obtain the information about a person's caste background.

On the local level, discrimination and violence are still problems faced by many SC in India. Even if UoH can be described as a high quality university, with good atmosphere, good security and few incidents of violence, the SC students still experience discrimination and obstacles during their time on campus. Indirect discrimination was reported as a problem by the majority of the students I interviewed whereas there were few incidents of physical violence. Discrimination was felt from all sections of the university, administration, teaching staff and the students alike. As I argue in my

discussion, the university has become a place where the political conflict of reservation is manifested. This creates an atmosphere characterized by resentment and jealousy and competition of scarce resource which leads to production of casteism.

To conclude, the Scheduled Caste identity's importance is itself a result of a socially constructed reality. Economical situation and urban settlement might make caste less relevant in some instances, but in settings like the university or in small closed environments, caste identity will still be viewed as one of the most important identity marker.

Reservation alone is not going to change the situation for the greater proportion of poor SCs in India. A vast number of SC students face economical problems and therefore have problems with committing to and complete higher education. With the introduction of RGNF students in M. Phil programs and PhD programs who are beneficiaries receives RGNF have enough money to concentrate on their studies and are in a position to help their families. Positive discrimination highlights the importance of SC, ST and OBC identities. This combined with benefits for certain groups based on their caste and an uneven distribution of resources has helped to make caste a resolute trait of the Indian society. Eriksen argues that the classifier in the society, in this case the government, has the power to create categories of relevance, in order to create order in the social world (2002, pp. 61). The relevancy of caste and identity are politicized and the government is the one who creates the categories of relevance.

There is a vast body of literature concerning the topic of reservation, caste and identity politics, from abstract discussions of theories to monographs. In this thesis I have tried to contribute to this collection by highlighting the political active SC students' experiences of being receivers of the government's reservation policy and how the government's reservation policy works on micro level.

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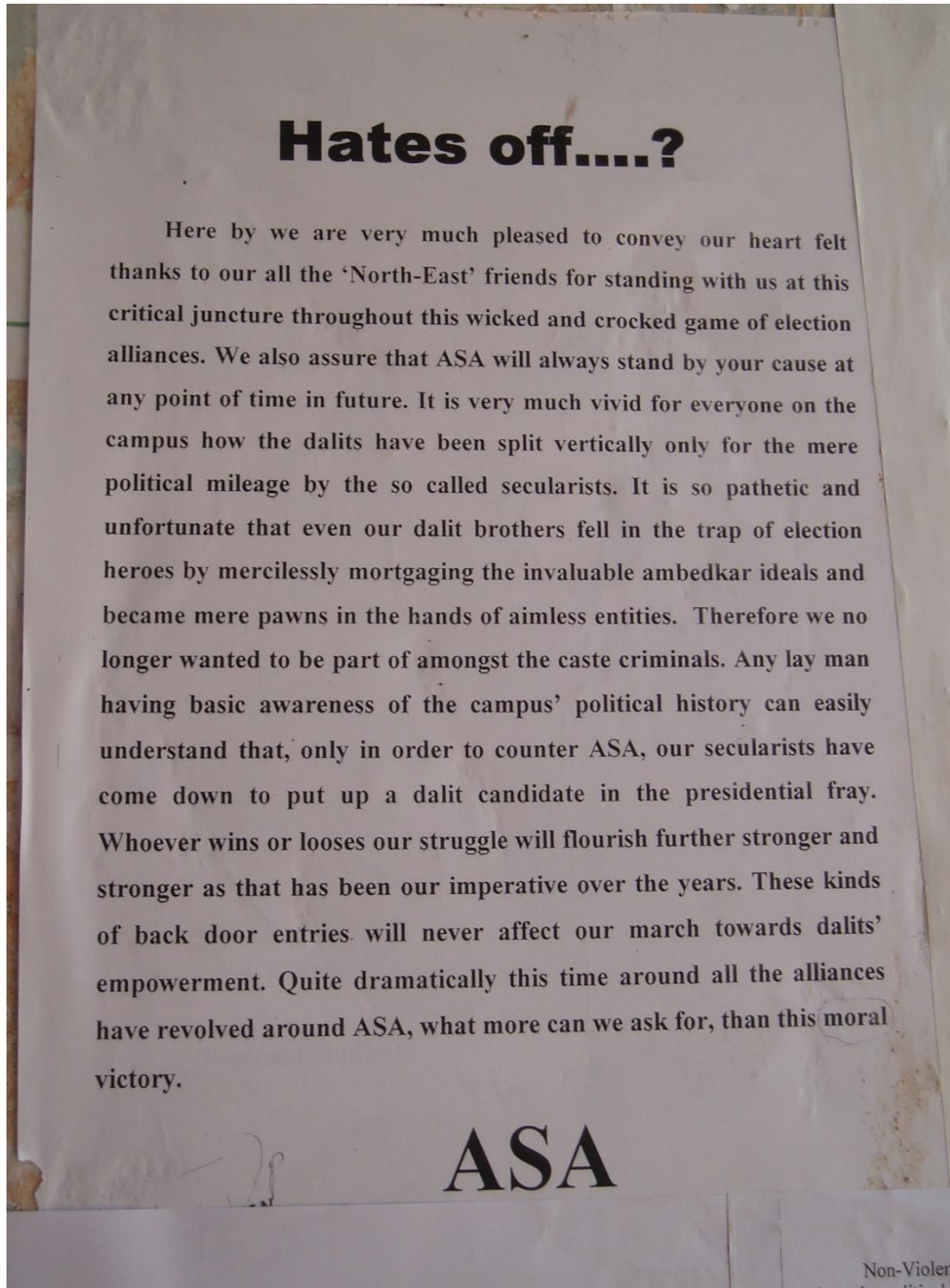
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9. Appendix

Appendix nr. 1. A poster pasted by ASA after the election.



Appendix nr. 3

An example of admission list UOH

UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

Central University P.O., Hyderabad - 500 046

No.UH/Acad/U1/2009/(ML) Dated: 06-04-2009

NOTIFICATION

Sub: Admissions 2009-2010 - List of Candidates provisionally selected for admission to M.B.A.

* * *

The following candidates have been selected provisionally, in order of merit, for admission to the first Semester of M.B.A. in the School of Management Studies during the Academic year 2009-2010 subject to their fulfilling the minimum qualifications for admission and other conditions given in the Prospectus for 2009-2010.

S.No. CatNo NAME

General Category

- 1 U SOUMYA
- 2 SOUMYA
- 3 C YAMINI
- 4 AASTHA
- 5 SRUJANA
- 6 SURBHI
- 7 B
- 8 B
- 9 PRACHI
- 10 MAHAVADI
- 11 P ASHISH
- 12 TANMAY
- 13 ISHITA
- 14 # D SRINIVASA
- 15 HARITHA
- 16 HIRANMAYAKAPARTHI

17 ALOK
18 # SADIQ
19 S VINAY
20 ROHAN
21 # VENKATA
22 SALMA
23 AMIT
24 SATISH
25 K NIKHIL
26 # AKHILA
27 # N UMA
28 UROOJ
29 K HARISH
30 U SWETHA
31 NEHA

Reserved Categories

1 # MURALI
2 # LANJEWAR
3 # SUSHMA
4 # AJAY
5 # ARUN
6 # ANOOP
7 # ABDUL
8 # ABHISHEK
9 # KARTHIKA
10 # MURALI
11 # RAHUL
12 # P SANKARA
13 # SANKHARA
14 # SANTHOSH
15 # TARIQ
16 # MANUPURI
1 *ASHISH

2 * RAJ
3 *SHUVAGATA
4 * CHINTHALA
5 * SHEELAM
6 * JETTI
7 * MEDIKONDA
8 * BHARGAVA
9 * SAI MOHAN
1 ** ASHOK
2 ** MAHESH
3 ** VAMSHIKRISHNA
4 ** G RAMESH
5 ** SAMIL
1 *** MOHD
2 *** ROUSHAN

Note: # = OBC; * = SC, ** = ST, *** = PH

The above candidates should report to the Dy.Registrar (Academic & Exams), office of the Controller of Exams, University of Hyderabad Campus, Gachi Bowli, Hyderabad - 500 046, on April 20, 2009 between 10.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. If the selected candidates fail to complete the admission by 1.00 p.m. on 20th April -2009, the provisional selection will automatically stands cancelled and the vacancies thus arising will be filled from among the wait-listed candidates immediately thereafter. At the time of admission, the candidates are required to submit all their original certificates and T.C. together with attested copies of the same and pay an amount of Rs. 37,200/- (including Rs. 1,950/- refundable deposit) for the winter semester. The candidates under SC/ST/OBC/PH category should produce the certificate in the prescribed format issued by a competent authority in support of their claim without which their claim will not be considered. (For the benefit of OBC candidates, the prescribed format for OBC certificate is enclosed.)

Controller of Examinations To All concerned.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ This is taken from the university's homepage. I have removed the last names and their student number. This is to show how the star system is working in the admission process.
http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/admissions/mba09/MBA_Main_List.pdf downloaded 08.09.09

Appendix nr. 4

ADMISSIONS 2007-08												
PG Courses (Table- 1A)												
S.No	Cours	Subject	Seats Offered (ML)					Joined Total				
			GE	SC	ST	PH	To	GE	SC	ST	PH	To
1	M.Sc.	MATHEMATICS	27	5	3	1	3	27	5	3	1	36
2	M.Sc.	STATISTICS-OR	17	4	2	1	2	17	4	2	1	24
3	M.C.A	COMPUTER SCIENCE	33	7	3	1	4	29	7	4	1	41
4	M.Sc.	PHYSICS	22	5	2	1	3	23	5	2	1	31
5	M.Sc.	CHEMISTRY	22	5	2	1	3	22	5	2	1	30
6	M.Sc.	BIOCHEMISTRY	14	3	2	1	2	14	3	2	1	20
7	M.Sc.	PLANT SCIENCES	8	2	1	1	1	8	2	1	1	12
8	M.Sc.	ANIMAL SCIENCES	10	2	1	1	1	10	2	1	1	14
9	M.A.	ENGLISH	22	5	2	1	3	22	5	2	1	30
10	M.A.	PHILOSOPHY	12	2	1	0	1	10	1	1	0	12
11	M.A.	HINDI	22	5	2	1	3	20	5	1	1	27
12	M.A.	FUNCTIONAL HINDI	6	1	1	0	8	4	1	1	0	6
13	M.A.	TELUGU	28	6	3	1	3	28	6	3	1	38
14	M.A.	URDU	25	0	0	0	2	24	0	0	0	24
15	M.A.	APPL.LINGUISTICS	12	2	1	0	1	13	1	1	0	15
16	M.A.	ECONOMICS	36	8	4	2	5	36	8	4	2	50
17	M.A.	HISTORY	30	6	3	1	4	31	6	3	1	41
18	M.A.	POLITICAL SCIENCE	30	6	3	1	4	28	6	3	1	38
19	M.A.	SOCIOLOGY	30	6	3	1	4	26	4	4	1	35
20	M.A.	ANTHROPOLOGY	19	4	2	0	2	19	4	1	0	24
21	M.A.	COMMUNICATION	14	3	2	1	2	14	3	2	1	20
22	MPA	DANCE	9	0	0	0	9	8	0	0	0	
23	MPA	THEATRE ARTS	10	4	1	0	1	9	4	0	0	13
24	MFA	PAINTING	6	3	0	1	1	6	3	0	1	10
25	MFA	PRINT MAKING	5	1	0	0	6	4	2	0	0	
26	MFA	SCULPTURE	5	1	0	0	6	5	1	0	0	
27	I.M.Sc	SCIENCES	30	6	3	1	4	28	6	3	1	38
28	I.M.A.	HUMANITIES	15	7	2	2	2	13	8	2	2	25
29	I.M.A.	SOCIAL SCIENCES	36	8	4	2	5	36	8	5	2	51
30	PG	Counseling Psychology	14	4	1	1	2	14	5	0	1	20
		Total	569	121	54	24	76	548	120	53	24	74
31	M.Sc.	Biotechnology	11	2	1	0	1	10	2	1	0	13
	MBA		30	6	3	1	4	30	7	1	1	39
		P.G. Total	610	129	58	25	82	588	129	55	25	79

ADMISSIONS 2007-08						
PG Courses (Table- 1B)						
S.No	Course	Subject	SC/ST/PHs in GE			
			SC	ST	PH	Total
1	M.Sc.	MATHEMATICS				0
2	M.Sc.	STATISTICS-OR		1		1
3	M.C.A	COMPUTER SCIENCE				0
4	M.Sc.	PHYSICS			1	1
5	M.Sc.	CHEMISTRY				0
6	M.Sc.	BIOCHEMISTRY			1	1
7	M.Sc.	PLANT SCIENCES				0
8	M.Sc.	ANIMAL SCIENCES				0
9	M.A.	ENGLISH				0
10	M.A.	PHILOSOPHY		6		6
11	M.A.	HINDI	2	2	1	5
12	M.A.	FUNCTIONAL HINDI	1			1
13	M.A.	TELUGU	3	2	1	6
14	M.A.	URDU				0
15	M.A.	APPL.LINGUISTICS	2			2
16	M.A.	ECONOMICS		1		1
17	M.A.	HISTORY	2	8		10
18	M.A.	POLITICAL SCIENCE	6	2	1	9
19	M.A.	SOCIOLOGY	4	1		5
20	M.A.	ANTHROPOLOGY	3	3	1	7
21	M.A.	COMMUNICATION	3			3
22	MPA	DANCE	1			1
23	MPA	THEATRE ARTS	1			1
24	MFA	PAINTING				0
25	MFA	PRINT MAKING	1			1
26	MFA	SCULPTURE				0
27	I.M.Sc.	SCIENCES				0
28	I.M.A.	HUMANITIES	6			6
29	I.M.A.	SOCIAL SCIENCES	4	1		5
30	PG Dip	Counseling Psychology				0
		Total	39	27	6	72
31	M.Sc.	Biotechnology				0
	MBA		2			2
		P.G. Total	41	27	6	74

Appendix nr. 5

ADMISSIONS 2007-08												
M.Phil. Courses (Table- 2A)												
S.	Cours	Subject	Seats Offered (ML)					Joined Total (M+W)				
			GE	SC	ST	P	Tot	GE	SC	ST	PH	Tot
1	M.Phil	ENGLISH	11	2	1	1	15	10	2	1	1	14
2	M.Phil	PHILOSOPHY	4	2	0	0	6	3	2	0	0	5
3	M.Phil	HINDI	11	2	1	1	15	11	3	0	1	15
4	M.Phil	TELUGU	11	2	1	1	15	10	3	2	2	17
5	M.Phil	URDU	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	0	20
6	M.Phil	APPL.LINGUISTICS	5	1	0	0	6	3	1	0	0	4
7	M.Phil	TRANS. STUDIES	5	1	0	0	6	2	2	0	0	4
8	M.Phil	COMP.LITT.	7	1	0	0	8	5	1	0	0	6
9	M.Phil	ECONOMICS	14	3	2	1	20	10	3	3	1	17
10	M.Phil	HISTORY	7	2	1	0	10	7	3	1	0	11
11	M.Phil	POLITICAL	11	2	1	1	15	9	4	2	1	16
12	M.Phil	SOCIOLOGY	6	2	1	1	10	7	2	1	0	10
13	M.Phil	ANTHROPOLOGY	4	1	0	0	5	4	1	0	0	5
14	M.Phil	REGIONAL	3	1	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	4
15	M.Phil	Social Inclusion & Exclusive Policy	5	1	1	0	7	2	2	2	0	6
		Total :	124	23	9	6	162	106	30	12	6	154

ADMISSIONS 2007-08						
M.Phil. Courses (Table- 2B)						
S.No.	Cours	Subject	SC	ST	PH	Total
1	M.Phil.	ENGLISH	1	1		2
2	M.Phil.	PHILOSOPHY		1		1
3	M.Phil.	HINDI	2		1	3
4	M.Phil.	TELUGU	3	1		4
5	M.Phil.	URDU				0
6	M.Phil.	APPL.LINGUISTICS		1		1
7	M.Phil.	TRANS. STUDIES		1		1
8	M.Phil.	COMP.LITT.				0
9	M.Phil.	ECONOMICS				0
10	M.Phil.	HISTORY	2	1		3
11	M.Phil.	POLITICAL		2		2
12	M.Phil.	SOCIOLOGY			1	1
13	M.Phil.	ANTHROPOLOGY	1	1		2
14	M.Phil.	REGIONAL		2	1	3
15	M.Phil.	Social Inclusion & Exclusive Policy				
		Total :	9	11	3	23

Appendix nr.6												
ADMISSIONS 2007-08												
M.Tech. Courses (Table- 3A)												
S.N	Course	Subject	Seats Offered (ML)					Joined Total (M+W)				
			GE	SC	ST	PH	Total	GE	SC	ST	PH	To
1	M.Tech.	COMPUTER SCIENCE	22	5	2	1	30	22	5	2	1	30
2	M.Tech.	ARTIFICIAL INT.	15	3	2	0	20	11	3	2	0	16
3	M.Tech.	INFORMATION TECH.	14	3	2	1	20	6	3	2	0	11
4	M.Tech.	COMP. TECHNIQUES	11	2	1	1	15	11	2	0	1	14
5	M.Tech.	I.C. TECHNOLOGY	7	1	1	0	9	4	1	1	0	6
6	M.Tech.	MEDICAL BIOTECH	6	2	1	1	10	7	2	1	1	11
7	M.Tech.	BIOINFORMATI	11	2	1	1	15	11	2	1	1	15
8	M.Tech.	MIN. EXPLORATION	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	5
9	A.PG Dip	Mineral Exploataion	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	5
10	APG DIP	FOLK CULTURE STUDIES	9	1	0	0	10	4	0	0	0	4
		Total	105	19	10	5	139	86	18	9	4	11

Admissions 2007-08						
M.Tech. Courses (Table-3B)						
S.No.	Course	Subject	SC/STs in GE			
			SC	ST	PH	Total
1	M.Tech.	COMPUTER SCIENCE	1	0	0	1
2	M.Tech.	ARTIFICIAL INT.				
3	M.Tech.	INFORMATION TECH.				
4	M.Tech.	COMP. TECHNIQUES				
5	M.Tech.	I.C. TECHNOLOGY	1	0	0	1
6	M.Tech.	MEDICAL BIOTECH				
7	M.Tech.	BIOINFORMATICS				
8	M.Tech.	MIN. EXPLORATION				
9	A.PG Dip	Mineral Exploataion				
10	APG DIP	FOLK CULTURE STUDIES	1	1	0	2
		Total	3	1	0	4

Admissions 2007-08		
M.Tech. Courses (Table-3C)		
Seats granted in Sponsored Quota		
M.Tech. Med. Biotech.	GE	1
M.Tech. Mineral Expl.	GE	5
Adv.Dip.in Mineral Expl.	GE	5

Appendix nr. 7

Admissions 2007-08												
Ph.D. Programmes (Table-4A)												
S.No.	Course	Subject	Seats Offered (ML)					Joined Total (M+W)				
			GE	SC	ST	PH	Total	GE	SC	ST	PH	Total
1	Ph.D	MATHEMATICS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Ph.D	APPLIED MATHS					0					0
3	Ph.D	STATISTICS-OR	0	0	0	0	0					0
4	Ph.D	COMPUTER	11	2	1	1	15	11	2	2	1	16
5	Ph.D	PHYSICS	12	3	2	1	18	9	3	1	1	14
6	Ph.D	ELECTRONICS SCIENCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Ph.D	CHEMISTRY	20	3	1	0	24	15	2	1	0	18
8	Ph.D	BIOCHEMISTRY	10	2	1	0	13	9	0	1	0	10
9	Ph.D	PLANT SCIENCES	9	3	1	2	15	7	3	1	2	13
10	Ph.D	ANIMAL	9	2	1	0	12	7	1	1	0	9
11	Ph.D	ENGLISH	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	2
12	Ph.D	PHILOSOPHY	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2
13	Ph.D	HINDI	6	1	1	0	8	6	3	2	0	11
14	Ph.D	TELUGU	7	2	1	1	11	7	4	2	1	14
15	Ph.D	URDU	14	0	0	0	14	14	0	0	0	14
16	Ph.D	APPL.LINGUISTICS	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	2
17	Ph.D	TRANS. STUDIES	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2
18	Ph.D	COMP.	3	2	0	0	5	3	2	0	0	5
19	Ph.D	ECONOMICS	4	2	1	1	8	4	2	1	1	8
20	Ph.D	HISTORY	2	2	0	0	4	2	2	0	0	4
21	Ph.D	POLITICAL	5	1	1	0	7	5	2	1	0	8
22	Ph.D	SOCIOLOGY	2	2	0	0	4	2	1	0	0	3
23	Ph.D	ANTHROPOLOGY	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2
24	Ph.D	REGIONAL	2	1	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	3
28	Ph.D	FOLK CULTURE STUDIES	3	1	0	0	4	2	1	0	0	3
25	Ph.D	COMMUNICATION	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
26	Ph.D	DANCE	3	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	3
27	Ph.D	THEATRE ARTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	Ph.D	MANAGEMENT STUDIES	7	1	1	0	9	7	1	1	0	9
30	Ph.D	SANSKRIT	4	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	3
31	Ph.D	ACRHEM	10	0	0	0	10	7	0	0	0	7
		Total :	149	34	12	6	201	131	35	14	6	186

Admissions 2007-08						
Ph.D. Programmes (Table-4B)						
S.No.	Course	Subject	SC/STs in GE			
			SC	ST	PH	Total
1	Ph.D	MATHEMATICS				
2	Ph.D	APPLIED MATHS				
3	Ph.D	STATISTICS-OR				
4	Ph.D	COMPUTER SCIENCE	2	1	0	3
5	Ph.D	PHYSICS				
6	Ph.D	ELECTRONICS SCIENCE				
7	Ph.D	CHEMISTRY	0	0	1	1
8	Ph.D	BIOCHEMISTRY				
9	Ph.D	PLANT SCIENCES				
10	Ph.D	ANIMAL SCIENCES				
11	Ph.D	ENGLISH				
12	Ph.D	PHILOSOPHY	0	1	0	1
13	Ph.D	HINDI				
14	Ph.D	TELUGU				
15	Ph.D	URDU			1	1
16	Ph.D	APPL.LINGUISTICS	0	0	1	1
17	Ph.D	TRANS. STUDIES				
18	Ph.D	COMP. LITERATURE				
19	Ph.D	ECONOMICS	1	0	0	1
20	Ph.D	HISTORY				
21	Ph.D	POLITICAL SCIENCE	1	0	0	1
22	Ph.D	SOCIOLOGY				
23	Ph.D	ANTHROPOLOGY				
24	Ph.D	REGIONAL STUDIES				
25	Ph.D	FOLK CULTURE STUDIES				
26	Ph.D	COMMUNICATION				
27	Ph.D	DANCE				
28	Ph.D	THEATRE ARTS				
29	Ph.D	MANAGEMENT STUDIES	2	0	0	2
30	Ph.D	SANSKRIT STUDIES				
31	Ph.D	ACRHEM	1	0	0	1
		Total :	7	2	3	12

Appendix nr. 8

Admissions 2007-08, At a Galance											
Table-5A											
S.No	Subject	No.of Applications Received					Seats Offered (ML)				
		GE	SC	ST	PH	Total	GE	SC	ST	PH	Total
1	P.G. Courses	20422	4379	1759	305	26865	610	129	58	25	822
2	M.Phil. Courses	1007	406	137	46	1596	124	23	9	6	162
3	M.Tech. Courses	2411	693	171	60	3335	105	19	10	5	139
4	Ph.D. Courses	2349	603	129	52	3133	149	34	12	6	201
	Total	26189	6081	2196	463	34929	988	205	89	42	1324

Admissions 2007-08, At a Galance											
Table-5B											
S.No	Subject	Joined Total (ML+WL)					SC/STs in GE				
		GE	SC	ST	PH	Total	SC	ST	PH	Total	
1	P.G. Courses	588	129	55	25	797	41	27	6	74	
2	M.Phil. Courses	106	30	12	6	154	9	11	3	23	
3	M.Tech. Courses	86	18	9	4	117	3	1	0	4	
4	Ph.D. Courses	131	35	14	6	186	7	2	3	12	
	Total	911	212	90	41	1254	60	41	12	113	

Table-5C		
SUMMARY		
S. No.	Total No. of sanctioned seats (including Addl.Seats)	
1	No. of seats offered	1324
2	No. of candidates joined	1254
3	No. of vacancies in relation to seats offered	70
4	No. of vacancies in relation to seats sanctioned	166
5	No. of SC/ST/PH candidates admitted under open	
6	SCs	60
7	STs	41
8	PH	12
9	Nominated candidates from:	
10	NE/UT/J&K	21
11	Foreign Nationals	22
12	Total No. of new admissions	1297
13	Readmissions (PG -4; M.Phil.- 2; M.Tech. - 3)	9
14	Late Admissions	8
15	I Year students including re-admissions	1314