

# Perceived discrimination and Mental Health of the students of Marginalized Section of Society in the institutions of Higher Learning

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## Abstract

Student population on campuses of higher education has become increasingly diverse. According to All India Survey of Higher Education MHRD (2013) Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward castes students respectively constitute 12.5, 4.2 and 31.6 per cent of the total enrolment. It is a well researched fact that Dalit bias runs deeper and deeper even in 21<sup>st</sup> century, not only among the uneducated people but also even among *educated* modern people. In view of pre-conceived notion about *academic caliber* of the SC/STs students, they are labeled 'academically backward'. A number of cases are reported wherein biased treatment was meted out to scheduled caste students in schools. The present study sought to delineate the discrimination perceived by marginalized section of the students of higher institutions and its relationship with mental health of the students. For achieving the objectives a total of 180 students of UG and PG were selected from three universities of eastern U.P. To know the degree of perceived discrimination Kushwaha & Wankhede (2012) scale was used and to ascertain the mental health Beck Anxiety Inventory Depression Inventory (1988, 1961) were administered. Results revealed that there was no significant relationship between perceived discrimination and mental health. But it is also found that students perceived that they are discriminated on the basis of their caste and identity. Results revealed that four percent of scheduled caste students were suffering with extreme depression and 69 percent of students of SC, ST, and OBC were suffering moderate to severe level of depression. It was found that 64 percent of marginalized section of the students suffered high to moderate level anxiety. It may be concluded that there is significant association between Types of Caste and Levels of Depression.

## 1.0 Conceptual Framework of the Study

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