Chapter-2

Review of Literature

This chapter deals with review of relevant literature on the issue of discrimination and its impact on health as well as on mental health. Discrimination is the universal phenomenon that has been studied from various perspectives at international and national levels. Although, discrimination based on race, gender and disability has been studied thoroughly with several empirical evidences in the western world and plethora of literature is available on this issue. Whereas at the national level; discrimination due to caste has been addressed to a limited extent by sociologists yet discrimination based on caste and its consequences on the health and mental health has been thoroughly neglected. This review of literature provides platform to build up scientific conceptualisation of discrimination because of caste / community in Indian context and supports argument for association of discrimination with consequences on health and mental health. Review of literature puts forth endeavours to sneak out the gaps in literature especially caste-based discrimination in educational settings and affinity with experienced mental health problems.

2.1. Theoretical Background

2.1.1. Discrimination:

To know the existence and extent of discrimination of a particular kind in a particular social or economic domain, it is necessary to have a theory (or concept or model) of how such discrimination might occur and what its effects might be. Here in this context the typology discussed by Blank et al (2004) and Gordon Allport (1954) model of the sequential steps by which an individual behaves negatively towards members of another group will be appropriate. Blank et al (2004) discusses four types of discrimination and the various mechanisms that may lead to discrimination. The first three types involve behaviour of individuals and organizations: intentional discrimination, subtle discrimination and statistical profiling. The fourth type involves discriminatory practices embedded in an organizational culture. Intentional discrimination is an explicit and direct unfavourable treatment. Subtle discrimination is a set of often-unconscious beliefs and association that affect the attitudes and behaviours of members. It is indirect, automatic, ambiguous and ambivalent. Statistical discrimination or profiling is kind of discrimination in which perceived
group characteristics are assumed to apply to the individual. The last type of discrimination is an embedded institutional process- which can occur formally and informally within a society and leads to differential treatment or produces differential outcomes.

Gordon Allport (1954) an early leader in comprehensive social science analysis of prejudice and discrimination, articulated the sequential steps by which an individual behaves negatively towards members of another racial group. These are verbal antagonism, avoidance, segregation, physical attack, and extermination. According to him, verbal antagonism includes casual racial slurs and disparaging racial comments, either in or out of the target’s presence. Avoidance entails choosing the comfort of one’s own racial group. Segregation occurs when people actively exclude members of a disadvantaged racial group from the allocation of resources and from access to institutions. The most common examples include denial of equal education, housing, employment and health care on the basis of race. Physical attack is overt form of discrimination and extermination or mass killing based on racial or ethnic animus do occur. Thus in western culture the race is the base for discrimination whereas in Indian society the caste is base for discrimination but the model mentioned here will be applicable because based on caste there is higher probability for the verbal antagonism, caste based derogatory comments and physical segregation based on caste in Indian society. Therefore this model would be instrumental to know the extent and existence of caste based discrimination in the context of Indian society.

From the other perspective, the ‘social dominance theory’ (approach) would also put forth insights for the discrimination. According to this theory the traditional class conflict is not the basis rather the central form of conflict in human society is derivates of much more general tendency for human to establish relatively arbitrary in-group, out-group boundaries and to subsequently engage in various act of in-group favouritism and out-group denigration on the basis of these distinctions. It is propounded by this theory that socially constructed groups are almost always hierarchically organised, such that certain dominant or hegemonic group can be indentified that enjoy disproportionate allocation of positive social values (e.g. wealth, power, privilege, good nutrition and good health) whereas a number of subordinate groups are burden with a disproportionate share of negative social values (e.g. low status, poor health, poor nutrition etc.). This approach is appropriate to
conceptualise the understanding of caste based discrimination where in-group favours and inheritance of privileges are the basis for the discrimination.

Lizabeth, Barclay (1982) insisted that discrimination is learned and proved by providing evidences from the original theory of ‘Social Learning’, articulated by Bandura (Bandura 1977). In a study on the gender discrimination in an organization, Lizabeth argued that the prejudice and discrimination behaviour can be acquired through direct experiences or through observation of others which is called observational learning or modelling. Differential reinforcement of behaviour can lead to the development of successful (adaptive mode of behaviour for individual) behaviour. This is highly applicable in the context of caste based discrimination because higher caste people observe the behaviour of their significant others and learn to behave (discriminate lower caste) similarly. On the other hand, same learning processes occur in the new generation of lower castes people and learn to be subjugated by others. Bandura accepted that reciprocal determinism is ‘a basic principle for analyzing psychological phenomenon at varying levels of complexity, ranging from intrapersonal development to interpersonal behaviour’ (Bandura, A. 1977, 1978). Through learning and reinforcement the person develops expectancies about his or her behaviour and its outcomes. For example both direct and observational learning could be used to account for the acquisition for the perception of discrimination.

In academic discourse, Jason W. Osberne (1999) attempted to conceptualize, as to why African American students continue to lag behind their white counterparts with the review of ‘Steele’s Stereotype Threat Model’, Ogbu’s ‘Cultural Ecological Perspective’ and Majors and Billison’s “Cool Pose” Theory. Osberne revealed that according to Stereotype Threat Model, although all students experience anxiety in school situation but more the students from minority group, because for them wrong answer is not only personally damaging but also confirms the negative group stereotype. The cultural – ecological perspective insisted on the perception of minorities that they view education as a system controlled by the group that subjugates and oppressed them and their ancestors. The essence of ‘cool pose’ theory is that African American males learn early to project, emotionless, fearlessness and aloofness to counter the inner pain caused by the discrimination which damaged pride, poor self confidence and fragile social competence that results from their
existence as a member of a subjugated group. All the above three conceptualizations of Osberne’s are true for the caste base discrimination too, and students belonging to the lower caste and their socio-cultural and attitudinal factors are the prominent inhibitors of academic excellence among the lower caste youth. Bernard (1976) rightly pointed out that the subtle forms of discrimination which would affect the efficacy expectations of person through more potent sources of induction of self-efficacy.

In the international context, since 1948, the United Nations (U.N.) has been promoting and codifying human rights through the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’, which is common standard of achievement for all people’s and Nations. The U.N. human rights framework received wide acceptability.

Discrimination, especially caste and race based, is the globalized phenomena. Dalits\(^1\) of South Asia, Burakumin of Japan, Osu of Nigeria, and Caste communities in Senegal, Niger, Somalia and Kenya are the victims of social discrimination based on race and caste. U.N. conducted a World Conference on Racism, Xenophobia and related Intolerance, at Durban, South Africa in August-September 2001. This conference was held to bring under the scrutiny of the U.N., once and for all the discrimination around the world and to ease of 260 million untouchables and tribes of South Asia, 3 million Burakumin of Japan, Osu of Nigeria, low castes in Senegal, Somalia, Niger and Kenya (Pinto, A. 2002).

U.N. had taken several measures to combat discrimination, for that it formed a Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). CERD while concluding its discussion on the descent based discrimination, strongly condemned the caste practice. The general recommendation of CERD addresses discrimination based on caste and other form of inherited status in the areas of employment, education, housing, and the administration of justice, as well as from the perspective of women and children and the use of media.

\(^1\) Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchables. The government of India recognises and protects them as Scheduled Castes. The term Dalit has been interchangeably used with term Scheduled Castes, and these terms include all historically discriminated communities of India out-caste and Untouchables.
In the Indian context, discrimination originated from one’s belongingness to particular lower caste. Caste hierarchy is the prime factor for the creation of social, economic and political disparities within the Indian society. Because of caste, one’s occupation, income and social status is decided and it is hereditary in nature. Thus it is the caste which underlies all types of discriminations whether it is economic distribution, political position and educational attainments. Therefore in Indian society the ‘caste’ is the prominent base for discrimination.

The injustice and inequality in India exist in the worst form by the way of social stratification and hierarchy that are directly associated with religion and caste. Following are some forms of discrimination based on caste-

1. Caste Intensified Discrimination- refers to lesser command over assets and resources by the men and women of lower caste within a given class. The suffering of lower caste men and women of the same class but in intensified form.

2. Caste Specific Discrimination- refers to the discrimination based on the cultural norms, beliefs, practice and customs, behaviour and manners, deriving its legitimacy from the principles of caste system and religion.

3. Caste-Imposed Discrimination- refers to the fact that Upper Castes groups try to dictate and are successful to an extent in imposing their own world view, their own norms, beliefs and cultural practices on other depressed social groups.

4. Self-Imposed Discrimination- refers to the fact that caste inequality, practice of untouchability etc. may have been socially constructed but the members of the lower castes have internalized it and consider this position divinely given in the human order. (Wankhede 2003)

For welfare of the poor, depressed and oppressed sections of the Indian society, during drafting of Indian Constitution in late 1947-48 coincided with the UN declaration on Human Rights in 1948. The section of the constitution on the ‘Fundamental Rights’ and ‘Directive Principles of State Policy’ emulate UN declaration. The provision in the constitution resolves “to secure to all citizens, justice, social, economic, and political, liberty of thoughts, expression, beliefs, faiths
and worship, equality of status and of opportunity and to promote among them all fraternity, assuring the dignity of individual and unity”.

The constitution also states that “the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, place and birth or any forms”. In the directive principles it adds that “The state shall promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the Scheduled Castes / Tribes and shall protect them from injustice and all forms of exploitations”. Besides these, Indian constitution has provisions and made several constitutional amendments to combat all forms of discrimination grounded on Sex, Religion, Caste and Disability. The Factories Act 1948 (amended up to 1976), the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 (amended in 1976), the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 and for women, the Equal Remuneration act of 1976, have been passed to protect women from social discrimination. For children, the Child Marriage Act of 1929, the Employment of Children Act-1938, the Factories Act 1948 and Compulsory Primary Education Act have been passed in order to provide equality and justice to the apartheid children of marginalized class. Constitution of India has given the fundamental rights to its citizens to protect them from any kind of discrimination. In 1989 the government enacted Act namely the Scheduled Caste /Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act (Article-17 Anti-untouchability Act) in order to prevent atrocities against the members of SC / ST. Article-15 of the Indian constitutions vouch for ‘prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth’ and Article-14 ensures the ‘ equality before law- the state shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the law within the territory of India.

Provisions have been made through reservations and representations in the educational, economic, employment, and political spheres to improve the accessibility of resources and participation in the social as well as decision making process. It must be noticed that the provisions of political reservation in various bodies, reservation in government services, admission to educational institutions and in several other areas are the some of the promotional measures, however in these situations; the subtle forms of discriminations are prevalent and hampering the purpose. It is also worthy to note that reservations in private sectors are not applicable by this legislations which in turn further increases the probability of discrimination.
2.1.2. Stress:

In this research exploration, the significant term is ‘stress’ which reflects the connotation as a motive force to overcome obstacles and to solve problems. Stress is the state where an individual well being is threatened and one undergoes certain physiological and psychological changes which prepare one to handle threat through sustained activity. Therefore stress is a complex psycho-physiological response to a situation in which a person perceives to be beyond one’s coping capacity. Cognitively it is experienced as a state of tension or turmoil and is often accompanied by anxiety. Physiologically it is a state of preparedness to tackle the danger inherent in the situation.

In order to understand stress in terms of physiological responses, the three stage model of ‘The Physiology of Stress Response’ has been proposed in 1956 by Hans Selye and the model popularly known as the GAS (General Adaptation Syndrome). Selye demonstrated that it is a three stage response. The three phases of stress response are: The Alarm Stage, The Stage of Resistance and The Stage of Exhaustions. In the alarm stage organism recollect all the necessary resources to fight bravely with stressors or the demand of the situation. In this stage, prompt response of the body prepares us to cope with the stressor here and now. During the second stage, the resources mobilised during the first stage, are utilised to adapt to the stressors situation. At this stage efficiency is high and the organism is able to resist the stressors. Constantly resisting stressors, the available energy gradually gets depleted, leading to the third stage of stress response which is the stage of exhaustion. In this last stage the resources are completely depleted, the organism is not able to fight the stressor anymore and various kinds of illnesses take place.

The emphasis has been laid on the role of social structure for the appraisal of stress and it is noticed by Pearlin (1989). Author believes that much of stressful experiences occur within the context of social structure or system of social stratification such as socio-economic status, race and gender are often related to a person’s place within that structure. In Indian situation and with regard to the caste system with discrimination based on the caste, the above conceptualisation is appropriately suitable for the argument that the poor socio-economic status is linked to the lower caste people who are often deprived of so many things and poverty and discrimination
work as stressors to them. The argument of author is completely supporting the stress due to caste system in Indian society and caste based discrimination.

In another research exploration, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) conceptualised stress as a particular interaction between person’s as being taxing or exceeding his or her personal resources and as a consequence disrupting his or her daily routine. According to Derogatis (1987), stress may be defined as a state of psychological pressure influenced by three main sources or domains. First is ‘Personality Mediators’ which includes the constructs of time pressure, driven behaviour, attitude posture, relaxation potential and role definition. These personality factors are responsible for the stress appraisal. The second domain is the ‘Environmental Factors’ which encompasses the construct of vocational satisfaction, domestic satisfaction and overall health posture. The third domain consists of ‘Emotional Response’ which include the construct of hostility, anxiety and depression. It has been proclaimed that these sources are completely and interactively responsible to develop a comprehensive account of psychological stress.

In a detailed review of the health and psychological research, Taylor (1999) outlined dimensions of stressors that increase the likelihood for the production of stress. According to Taylor, stress reaction occurs whether the stressors are Objective (e.g. sudden death or accident) or Subjective (e.g. Perception of discrimination). Studies have revealed that both subjective as well as objective stressors have independently psychological and negative health effect. It is important to highlight that some people exposed to stressful situations or events can adapt and cope effectively with them while other may not. Also under conditions of long term and chronic stress; people suffer negative psychological and physical consequences. However it is difficult for some people to adapt to highly stressful events. Even after psychological adaptation to long term strain from prolonged stress, physiological changes resulting from the long term stressful circumstances may continue and can impact psychological well being. In another way, when people seem to adapt to it; stress still makes one sick.

Stress has been the subject of many health investigations. Scholar and researcher have discussed and studied various models of stress and its consequences on human psychological and physical health (Cohen 2000, Schwarzer & Schultz 2003). The ‘Minority Status Stress Model’ describes the unique and excess stress as compared to
general stress, to which individuals in oppressed groups are exposed as a result of their belongingness to minority status in the society (Allison 1998, Meyer 2003). In the context, discrimination is closely linked to stress and mental health. Discrimination of any kind includes bias, stereotyping, fear, embarrassment, anger, and rejection or avoidance, violation of basic human rights and freedom, denial of opportunities for education and training, and denial of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights (Klonoff & Landrine 1995, 1996). Perceived discrimination or prejudices are recognised as stressors that are linked to lowered mental health for those who come across such kind of experiences (Clark, et al 1999). The impact of stress on health is mediated by number of important genetic, environmental, social and personality variables. Stress tolerance is strengthened by extending social support, sense of control, confidence level, attitude and outlook, strong capability to deal with emotions and knowledge.

Thus, from the above discussion, it is understood that discrimination either in perception or experience is itself a stressor. From the researches, it is established that due to persistent stressor, the immediate impact would be on behavioural, physiological, emotional and cognitive functioning of individual (Henckens et al. 2009). In behavioural problems it would be overeating, in physiological consequences it would be in terms of tensions, elevated blood pressure and rapid breathing. The emotional problems because of stress would be heightened anxiety, depression and anger and cognitive problems would be like increased distractibility with decreased concentration (Peavy, G. M.et al. 2009).

2.1.3. Mental Health:

Like physical health, mental health is not all or nothing deal but rather a continuum that runs from optimal mental wellness down to extreme mental illness. Most of us, however; fall into that great gray area somewhere between optimal mental wellness and mental illness. Without any doubt, all of us are striving to move towards the optimal mental health end of the continuum. Stressful events, a person’s interpretations of these stressors, perception of vulnerability and the ability to cope with the perceived stressor and social support variable interact with other psychological and physical variable which contribute to mental health and psychological disorder such as depression and anxiety.
The relationship between stress and mental health is a complex one that involves all components of environmental, social, economic, emotional and cognitive factors. There is no one point at which someone goes from being “stressed out” to “mentally ill”. Stress interacts with mental health and contributes to several psychological disorders. A psychological disorder is characterized by inappropriate or maladaptive cognitive (thinking), emotional and behavioural functioning (Brannon & Feist 1992). Depression and Anxiety are the two most common examples of psychological disorders and also both are the major determinants of one’s overall mental health status.

Discrimination and Mental Health are associated with each other. The sociology of mental health focuses on the epidemiology, etiology, correlates and consequences of mental health (i.e. Psychological Disorder and Symptoms, Psychological Distress and Subjective Well-Being) in an attempt to describe and explain how social structure influences individual’s psychological health. Delgado and Stefancis (2001) propounded the ‘Critical Race Theory’. It describes and explains same ways in which race is socially constructed across micro and macro levels and how it determines life chances implication, the mundane, and extraordinary in the continuance of racial stratification. On the basis of Critical Race Theory, Brown (2003) analyzed the approaches of this theory and came to the conclusion that there are at least three approaches that a critical race theorist might take to investigate the meaning of race in relationship to mental health and mental health problems-

a. A study of the social condition (e.g. Poverty, Joblessness and Crime) or risk factors (e.g. Perceived Experiences of Discrimination) associated with racial stratification that might be linked to poor mental health.

b. A critique of standard indicators of mental health status and the construction of psychiatric disorders.

c. An examination of unique manifestation of mental health problems produced by racial stratification.

It is revealed that an individual mental health status is related to stress factors such as unemployment, social movement, family structure, role of acquisition, stress, identity, marriage and urbanity, and to vary across statuses such as gender, race, age and class.
Brown also invoked ‘Critical Race Theory’ to inform the sociology of Mental Health’s approach to studying race and mental health by conceptualizing five hypothetical mental health problems that could exist because of racial stratification. These problems are-

1. Nihilistic Tendencies- intentionally get involved in shoot-out or knife fight, using much drug or alcohol; try something so dangerous she or he could have died.

2. Anti-self issues- wish that he or she was white, hate being black, pray that she or he could be reborn white.

3. Suppressed Anger Expression- very angry about a racial issue but have to hold anger, boil inside because of something racial but smile on the outside, get mad in racial situation, pretend to like a white person to get ahead in life.

4. Delusional denial tendencies are like, blacks to repress unpleasant or painful ideas from reaching the conscious level, ultimately generating disability, try to pretend that race does not matter, tell others that race had nothing to do with his or her success or failure in life, think that blacks exaggerate about discrimination that they face, wish that people would never talk about the race again.

5. Extreme Racial Paranoia- a white person suffering from extreme racial paranoia might – feel physically sick after being around black people, wish that all blacks would go back to Africa, hope that a disease would wipe out black people, try to hurt or kill black (Brown 2003).

From the above discourse it is clear that race based discrimination is responsible for all above mental health problems. In Indian society caste based discrimination is some extent similar to race based discrimination in terms of segregation, socio-economic status and hierarchical system of society, therefore this Critical Race Theory is very much applicable to investigate the mental Health Problems among those who had been the victims of Caste based discrimination.

The studies have found that the Racial Identity, Racial Socialization and Ethnic Identity are the protective instruments for victims of racial discrimination, which
protect and prevent them from the racial discrimination and strengthen their coping strategies in order to ensure better mental health (Scott, L.D. 2003, Mossakowski, K. N. 2003). In a study by Kessler et al (1999) found that 33.5 percent of respondents reported exposure to major lifetime discrimination and 60.9 percent reported exposure to day to day discrimination. It is also reported that exposure to perceived discrimination was found to be strongly related to mental health problems. In this study, it is also found that discrimination is more strongly related to the mental health among women than of men.

2.2. Genesis of Stress: Multi-dynamic Approach:

There are several responsible factors for inducing stress among people. The events which induce stress called stressor. Responsible stressor might be from physical environment such as high temperature, humidity, intermittent noise and unexpected vibration. Some of the chemical injurious to health are prevalent in the environment and these chemicals are also responsible for the genesis of stress or demand to make an appropriate adjustment. Pathogen and virus attack on the body itself is the source of stress and demanding body to do necessary adjustment. There are stressors which are psychological in nature which means psychological stressors cause stress through the cognitive interpretation of the situation as a source of threat. The perception of threat to well-being could emanate from anticipation of harm, losses, frustration and through unusual body sensation. In case of frustration, there are external source of frustration- refers to a situation in which some important need is thwarted from being satisfied. The internal sources of frustration are unrealistic goal setting, rigid moral values, conflicts and personal inadequacy to deal with situation. Situations of both types overload and under-load are responsible for the stress generation.

Our lives comprise of complex events which upset smooth flow of life because they put demand for adjustment in almost every aspect of life. Thus these events are responsible to induce stress among the people. It is also proclaimed that natural calamities like floods, cyclones, earthquakes, riots and manmade disaster also cause severe physical, psychological and social trauma. Thus natural as well as manmade disasters are also putting demand and work as stressors (Desai, Gupta & Srivastava 2004; Kar & Bastia 2006).
Personal stressors are commonly known as life events. Life events like- death of dear one, accidents of near one, births, marriage, moves and loss of jobs etc; put demand for major adjustment and are therefore sources of stress (Holmes & Rahe 1967; Rahe, & Arthur 1978). Daily hassles also work as stressors, like shortage of resources, sudden strike, traffic jams, family fights and hot conversation with colleagues are the examples of daily hassles which in turn increase the level of stress among the people (DeLongis, A., Folkman, S. & Lazarus, R.S. 1988).

Thus, from the above discussion it can be concluded that stress could be induced from the various sources of stressors such as family stressors, physical stressors, environmental stressors, social stressors, work stressors, pain stressors, decision stressors and change stressors. Altogether persistence of stressors for a long period of time would lead to decreased productivity, decreased enjoyment and decrease intimacy. With regards to the present research, where discrimination emerges as a socio-psychological stressor, would have negative impact on the students by accompanying other stressors of life.

2.3. Discrimination in Education: An Overview

Education being a subsystem of particular society is always influenced of its culture, traditions and customs which are essential elements of fully functioning society. Issues like discrimination based on caste, race and gender are threats to social upheaval and injustice incurred to people. Hence; it is relevant to address the issue of discrimination in education which may hamper academic ambience and personal growth of students especially coming from disadvantaged and deprived backgrounds. In this section, the overview of discrimination in education is discussed with more emphasis on its causes and consequences which lowers down academic performance and well being. In general, studies based on discrimination in education, in international context; are referred and particularly the attempt is made to understand the phenomena of discrimination in education so that it could be easily associated with Indian context as an academic witness.

The study by Cecile Wright, Debbie Weekes and Alex Mc Glaughlin (2000) addressed the issue of ‘race’, class and gender in exclusion from school. It examined the events to which, class and gender variables are responsible for school exclusion among pupils from different ethnic / racial groups, socio-economic classes and
genders. The study was an attempt to explore the school processes, which led to the exclusion of black children from secondary school. The analysis established the nature and pattern of secondary school exclusion of pupils from ethnic groups in general and identified the school processes, which may lead to the exclusion of African Caribbean pupils in particular. The values and school ethos are responsible factors for school exclusion and targeting the racial group students. Such findings are examples of school discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

In another study conducted by Chavous, Drake, Small and Cogburn (2008) intended to examine relationship between ‘racial identities’, school based discrimination experiences and academic engagement outcomes for adolescent boys and girls in grades 8 and 11. The findings of this study reveal that students had been discriminated in earlier schooling have poor academic performance in later education. Responsible factors were poor socio-economic background, race, and ethnicity, which played a vital role in the experiences of discrimination in educational setting.

Almost every country has provision to ensure the justice and equality of its citizen. India also has the constitutional provisions to overcome the injustice and inequalities. In order to present a comparative analysis of positive discrimination known as Affirmative Actions in the US and Reservation Policies in India, Weisskopf (2004) has analysed the cost and benefits of affirmative action policies, which are made and meant for the protection and enhancement of lower sections of society.

The book by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE 2003) analyzed the issue of discrimination based on sex, caste, religion and disability. It is attempted to capture the contexts of discrimination, which are prevalent in educational settings and familiarity with rules, and regulations of constitutional provisions in order to reduce the extent of discrimination. It is argued that discrimination is learned through the process of socialization in school situations, teaching style, curriculum, and the personalities of the significant others at home. Giving emphasis on caste based discrimination, the role of poverty and ignorance, language and vocabulary, accent and expression, communication skills and social skills, behaviour and mannerism, names and surnames, locality and residence, dress and looks and body language have been discussed as bases of caste based discrimination in educational settings. Any kind of discrimination may endanger our psychological and physical health. The
impact of caste based discrimination among students will be in the forms of deprivation, mental block, humiliation, inferiority complex, communication gap, escapism, “we” and “they” feelings, suspicion, poor performance, crisis and conflict which in turn have greater impact on the educational attainment of students (Wankhede 2003).

The point by N. Jayram (1987) that the privileged class in Indian society remains dominant caste in academic world, majority of students in higher education hail from the families where fathers are in high occupations and they have been imparted English medium education in privately managed schools. This is the exact example of indirect indication of discrimination in terms of accessibility and quality of education and becoming the dominant group in higher education. Largely this privilege provides space to victimize the lower castes students who have somehow managed to reach higher education level. This discrimination manifests in terms of quality of education, economic status, communication skills, and their participation in higher education.

The report, based on the harassment faced by the reserved category students in AIIMS (All India Institutes of Medical Sciences), which was inquired and investigated by the Thorat Committee (2007), reveals the negative attitude of teachers and examiners against the reserved category students. The ranging, unwelcoming behaviours, refusal of notes and books by the upper caste students and improper solution of their language problem have central focus in this report which is nothing but the caste based discrimination, which in turn leave the students of reserve category to realize that they have stigma attached to lower caste or belonging to reserved category.

The view of S. Srinivasa Rao (2002) that privatization of educational institutions is creating a class of potential elite, drawn from the highest strata of society. Therefore, by adopting such way of educational system, the private educational institutes create exclusion for the students of lower caste/ class of the society from admission and if anybody gets in, will not be able to cope with the studies in these institutions as it is believed that their standards are too high. Thus, such kinds of feelings are nothing but the perceptions of caste based discrimination. Discrimination may exist while availing the facilities provided by the government for reserved category students (SCs, STs & OBCs) because of lack awareness and lower self-confidence, which has been encapsulated in the idea of Wankhede (2008). He emphasized that to avail
opportunities and to take benefits of government policies require some degree of awareness and educational background, which is a major drawback of the category students. These students are deprived from the benefits of the government schemes and later this lack of knowledge and awareness make them responsible for being discriminated in society.

2.4. Discrimination and Socio-demographic Factors: The Sources of Stress in Higher Education:

Socio-economic background would be indirectly responsible factor for discrimination in academic situation that has been established by various studies at national and international levels. In a study, it is noted that Arabs are poor than Jews in the educational attainments because of historical differences among groups and discriminatory practices towards Arabs. Research analysis has determined that educational attainment depends on social, economical, demographic and community level factors which are strongly associated with poor educational attainment of Arabs (Okun & Friedlander 2005). Further, the study revealed that allocation of resources on educational sector is more among Jewish than that of Arabs which is notified case of discrimination. The Study by McLoyd (1990) established that poverty and economic loss diminish the capacity of supportive, consistent involved parenting and render parents more vulnerable to the debilitating effect on the socio-emotional development of child. Therefore, the economical hardship affects the children’s socio-emotional development and this hardship hinders attendance to schools. In turn, this poor level of socio-emotional development creates problem in the academic situations.

Coleman’s (1966) landmark study on ‘Equality of Educational Opportunity’ in the United States of America has shown that Socio-Economic Status (SES) is a strong predictor of students’ achievement. He asserted that the influence of students’ background was greater than anything that goes on within schools. A survey of high school students in Greece revealed that the educational level of their parents and their family income (Dimaki et al, 2005) influence the students’ choices of educational disciplines as well as occupational preferences.

Sewell & Shah (1967) studied the association between socio-economic background and intelligence in the attainment of higher education. The study was based on students of secondary school where it is found that both higher socioeconomic status
and high intelligence have direct effect on planning on college, college attendance and college graduation and considerable indirect effect on the level of educational attainment. The identified factors for this kind of discrimination were the level and quality of education available in the country, region or community in which they live, differential access to educational facilities according to their social class, status, religion, race, and ethnic origins.

It is reported that discrimination in India go so deep that social and economic disparities are deeply intertwined (Ghosh 2006). In this research paper, it is argued that reservations do not address the most fundamental problems of economic inequality or access to opportunities in India. Further it is emphasized that the lack of asset ownership among deprived communities is critical in determining other forms of discrimination. Deprivation in terms of early access to quality education is increasingly becoming the most crucial determinant of subsequent life achievement for many socially and economically marginalised groups (ibid).

Sharma and Chandra (2009) identified some factors such as Rural-Urban location and socio-economic status of the family serve as ‘gateway’ and ‘barriers’ in higher educational attainment. Rich socio-economic status of family and urban background of family is gateway, whereas the rural setting with poor socio-economic status of family works as the barriers in the higher educational attainments. This research shows that Management education continues to be dominated by the elite section of the Indian society, particularly those who are from the urban background. Yet another studies found that children of lower income and lower occupations families are underrepresented in higher education in relation to their proportion of total population (Sharma & Warrier 1977, Chalam 2007). This has shown that students from higher income groups, particularly those from the urban areas, have better opportunities of getting admitted to institutes of professional education than from rural background.

A number of studies have revealed that many students with high intelligence are unlikely to aspire to a college education or to go to college; especially if they come from families of low socio-economic status, are female and are members of disadvantaged racial / caste communities or come from rural background. The point is supported by the sociological and psychological studies that those groups occupying multiple disadvantaged categories (e.g. race, caste, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic
status) particularly stigmatised minority groups, are exposed to multiple risk factor and stressful social environment that may increase their vulnerability to the effects of stress and compromise their health (Allison 1998, Meyer 2003, Williams et al. 1994). Thus, it is clear that socio-demographic factors and especially the socio-economic background of family / community are strong factors that contribute significantly for the promotion of discrimination and these practices of discrimination lead to stress with its deleterious consequences in higher education.

2.5. Discrimination and Stress: The Relationship

In the international context there are various studies which have revealed that discrimination of any kind may lead to the stress appraisal. Discrimination itself has been proved as social stressors. With reference to the racial discrimination; Smith (1985) and Slavin et al (1991) have observed that racial and minority statuses are sources of stress. One of the most important classes of stressors from these perspectives is types of unfair treatment associated with discrimination. It has been known that exposure to discriminatory behaviour is an important feature of life, for socially disadvantaged groups including women (Gardner 1995), racial minorities (Sigelman & Welch 1991), and the poor (Sennett & Cobb 1973). Several studies have suggested that discrimination has powerful adverse effect on the emotional well-being (Dion, Dion & Pak 1992, Meyer 1995, Thompson 1996).

Clark et al. (1999) presented a psycho-physiological model of racism as a stressor. They argued that environmental stimuli rooted in either personal or structural aspects of racism exert a deleterious effect on opportunities and accessibility to the resources. Moreover these scholars argued while the stress process associated with racism is influenced by contextual factors such as socio-economic status and individual psychological make-up, it ultimately influences physical and mental health. Likewise the discrimination based on caste in Indian society has influence on the individual’s life events along with other stressors of life. The argument is completely applicable in the Indian context where casteism is associated with stress process and influenced by the contextual factors such as socio-economic status, poverty, belonging to particular community, untouchability, inaccessibility with lack of awareness and poor individual psychological make-up.
The study conducted by Flores E. Et al. (2008) on the population of 215 Mexican origin adults, revealed that discrimination is the source of chronic stress above and beyond perceived stress and the accumulation of all sources of stress. It is detrimental to mental and physical health. The findings of this research reflected that mental health and health practitioner need to assess for the effect of discrimination as stressor along with perceived stress. Thus it is suggested that the multiple stressors experienced among the members of oppressed group may enhance vulnerability to stress such that individual lives in a state of heightened vigilance or high level of stress that affect overall health.

2.6. Stress and Mental Health: A Perspective

Social behaviour of an individual is the expression of his basic psychological need for affiliation. One may fallout of cognitive changes and negative emotional experiences because of stress. Stress can damage the social relationship. Many problems like social insecurity, selfishness and aggression can be traced back to prolonged stress. The manner in which stress is perceived and experienced can affect physical as well as mental health. When emotional stress response is negative, one may feel fear, anger, hostility or alienation. One may also feel helpless and hopeless. These feelings increase risk of stress related disorder and poor mental health (Powell et al. 1993, Williams R.B. 1994).

Taylor and Turner (2002) explored the relationship between discrimination, social stressors and depression among White and Black Youth and found that discrimination was related to depression more among African Americans than Whites. Romero and Roberts (2003) found that discrimination is positively related to distress and depression among Mexican Youth as well. Murry et al. (2001) explored as to how chronic stress and racism influenced relationship quality in hundred of African Americans. They noticed that mothers who were subjected to high level of discrimination and general life stress; had more symptoms of depression and anxiety which in turn was related to problematic and less effective parental relationship.

In another approach it has been noted that due to stress, attention and memory of individual could be affected. Stress can impair the decision making and engender the anxiety or fear. Frankenhauser (1991) has shown that individuals under stress, when trying to maintain their performance level, incur increased cost both at psychological
and physiological levels. The most common reactions to stress are anxiety, anger and agitation when the emotions are not allowed to be expressed and person may experience helpless and depression. Thus the mental health of individual is threatened.

Therefore, one can say that due to stress sometimes the demand really seem to pile up or become very difficult to meet. Because of stress, one may experience tension, headaches, nervous stomach or sleeplessness with heightened anxiety and depression.

2.7. Stress and related Health Problems:
In higher education sometimes the educational demands really seem to pile up or become very difficult to meet. Students may experience tension, headaches, nervous stomachs or sleeplessness. Student may feel anxious and depressed. Stress certainly has strong psychological and physical effects, and persistence of these can interfere with the health. Illness itself is form of stress and can exacerbate other stress (Cox. 1988). Because of stress, Hypothalamus activates the sympathetic nervous system response; it also stimulates the adrenal and thyroid glands through either direct intervention or stimulation of the pituitary gland to secrete epinephrine, nor-epinephrine, cortisol, aldosterone and the thyroid hormones. Continuous physiological arousal unbalanced by the relaxation response can lead to negative health consequences (Wood 1987, Dienstbier 1991). Stress contribute to the development of atherosclerosis, increased in cholesterol level and blood becomes more concentrated and thus to develop hemo-concentration and clotting in the arteries (Muldoon et al. 1992, Patterson et al. 1993). Due to stress the problems of increased blood pressure, hypertension (Markovitz et al. 1993), arterial injury and spasm, irregular heartbeat or heart attack (Monagan. 1986), gum disease (gingivitis), esophageal spasm, ulcers (Selye. 1976, Turkkan et al. 1982), nervous stomach and nausea, irritable bowel syndrome, chronic constipation, chronic diarrhoea, and inflammatory bowel syndrome may occur and deteriorate the overall well being of human being. Stress also causes musculoskeletal problems such as headache, temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) syndrome (Tansner. 1986), back, neck and shoulder pain with more prone to accidents and injury (Williams et al. 1993). Stress can lower down immune system functioning and causes respiratory infection, Herpes, allergies and autoimmune disorders with some vulnerability of cancer and HIV-AIDS (Brannon & Feist. 1992). Stress can deteriorate the mental health by increasing depression; dejection, guilt
(Revicki & May 1985), anxiety, phobias, and anxiety disorder also include panic disorders, generalised anxiety, post-traumatic stress and obsessive-compulsive disorders (Brannon & Feist. 1992), and Behavioural disorders (Silvestrini. 1990). Stress can induce distractions, uneasiness, confusion, forgetfulness, indecision, self criticism, self doubts, hopelessness, helplessness, loss of appetite, insomnia, lack of interest in things that were previously enjoyable, withdrawal from social contacts, difficulty on concentrating and making decisions, low self-esteem and focus on negative thoughts (Edlin & Golanty. 1996).

Kessler, Mickelson and Williams (1999) argued that discrimination ranks in significance with major stressful life events such as divorce, job loss and death of a loved one. Experiences of discrimination have been positively associated with a range of physical health outcomes including hypertension (Jackson et al. 1996), self reported poor health (Schulz et al. 2000) and cardiovascular diseases (Troxel et al. 2003). Experiences of discrimination, works as stressor and have been associated with numbers of negative psychological outcome and mental health problems including depression (Seller 2001, Gee 2002) and decrease self esteem (Diaz et al. 2001).

Thus the intricacy among the educational stress arises from academic as well as family expectations, discrimination perception and experiences of caste based discrimination would be probable causes of poor mental health. In addition, the partiality and discriminatory behaviours by teachers and poor-treatment from fellow students will also be resulting into mental health problems among the students of poor socio-economic background and belonging to deprived communities / castes.

2.8. Discrimination and Mental Health: An Exploration

The effect of discrimination on the health of adult men may begin in early childhood, from their first exposure to discrimination through systematic barriers to quality education during adolescence (Jackson & Seller 1997) and attenuated attainment in adulthood (Williams 2003). In the researches it has been reported that racism related stress is associated with psychological distress (Kwate NOA, et al 2003), somatisation, depression, anxiety, psychotism (Bowen-Reid T.L. & Harell, 2002) and smoking (Landrine & Klonoff, 2000) which have serious impact on the mental health. In addition to this, Geronimus (1996) had proposed the ‘weathering hypotheses’ to explain health disparities. She argued that the health status of African American
begins to deprive in detectable ways in young adulthood in response to continuous social and environmental insults as well as ongoing active coping with stressful circumstances. The cumulative impacts of these kinds of discrimination hamper mental health status of those belong to minority communities or poor communities in Indian context.

In a systematic review of 138 empirical quantitative population-based studies of self reported racism and health is done by Paradies, Y. (2006) wherein it has been reported that the most consistent association between self reported racism and health was found for negative mental health outcomes. It is noticed that 72 percent of examined outcomes were significantly associated with self-reported racism and mental health up to all in the expected direction. It has provided insight that more self reported race based discrimination was associated with worse mental health outcomes. The similarity of the argument is true and completely agreeable for the consequences of caste based discrimination and negative mental health outcomes. In an another study done by Flore et al. (2008), where it has been examined whether perceived discrimination would directly affect health outcomes even when perceived stress was taken into account, among 215 Mexican origin adults. It is reported that perceived discrimination predicted depression and poorer general health and marginally predicted health symptoms. When perceived stress was taken into account perceived stress predicted depression and poor general health while controlling for the effects of perceived discrimination.

Dimas et al. (1999) reported that perceived discrimination, psychiatric disorders are above and beyond the effects of acculturation and acculturative stress. In several studies it is vouched that perceived discrimination has been found directly and indirectly related to depressive symptoms or depression (Alderete et al. 1999, Finch et al. 2000, Steffen & Bowden 2006) as well as psychological distress (Moradi & Risco 2006) and lower level of psychological well being (Ryff, Keyes & Hughes 2003). Therefore, one can say that perceived discrimination along with experiences of discrimination are additional stressors to life and that affects health and mental health.

Several researches have revealed that Asians in particular, experience racial discrimination in the western socio-cultural settings. However some researchers have found that Asian American adolescents experience significantly higher level of peer
discrimination when compared to their African American and Latinos Counterparts (Greene, Way & Pahl 2006, Jaung & Cookston 2009). The meta-analysis of Asian mental health and discrimination is carried out by Lee & Ahn (2011). This study is based on the meta-analysis of several empirical researches done in advance and hypothesized that discrimination would be linked to indicators of mental health. It is also assumed that resources which individual poses (e.g. self esteem, coping strategies and cultural identity) will cater out the impact of discrimination experiences and its mental health consequences. The study explores the question of how Asians in particular, deal with discrimination and how this relates to Asian mental health. The results are reported that out of 23 independent studies, 99 correlations show relationship between racial discrimination and mental health which are statistically significant (r = .23). Individual resources (i.e. personal construct and strength, social support, cultural identity and coping strategies) were also found to be negatively related to discrimination. This suggests that higher level of discrimination affects personal strength, social support and coping mechanism in order to weaken the mental health of individuals.

Researchers have examined various consequences of discrimination on mental health. Discrimination is found to be significantly related to greater level of anxiety (Cassidy et al. 2004) high level of depression (Becker & Grilo 2007, Rivas-Drake, Hughes & Way 2008) suicidal ideation (Hwang & Goto 2008) and overall psychological distress (Clement et. Al. 2001) in Asian population. Higher scores in racial discrimination were found to correlate with lower ratings of psychological well-being (Lee 2003) and positive affects (Yoo & Lee 2005, 2008). Thus it is established that discrimination definitely leads to mental upheaval and consequently mental health problems.

2.9. Mental Health Problems due to Discrimination in Higher Education: A Perspective

In the western context, based on racial discrimination, researchers have investigated the frequency of relation between racial discrimination and psychological symptoms for college students (Biasco, Goodwing & Vitale 2001). Contrada et al. (2001) reported the association between discrimination and mental health problems because of ethnicity relation and heightened level of stress in the higher education. The ethnicity related stress lowers down the psychological well-being of students and thus the negative correlation has been found between ethnicity related stress, ethnic group
differences and association with poor psychological well being. In the another study by Schneider et al. (2000) examined the ethnic harassment experiences that are demanding and frustrating in nature and are responsible for the overall poor well being of students.

Biasco et al. (2001) sampled participants from a southeast university, 80 percent of whom were Whites and 20 percent were Blacks, Hispanic and Asians. Participants were asked if students encountered discrimination in their lives, 53 percent thought they did not, whereas 44 percent thought they did sometimes. Majority of white students did not experience discrimination in society frequently. Participants were asked if minority students experienced discrimination, out of them 41 percent of White students and 66 percent of the students of Colour from each group said ‘yes’. Out of the population, 75 percent of the students thought that racial hostility was present, just not expressed openly. This is evidenced that even while denying the experiences of racism, both white and students of Colour acknowledge the subtle and hidden forms of racism. Blacks were thought to be the most frequent target of racial hostility. The study also highlighted the differences in both the experience of racial discrimination and the variation of perceptions between whites and non-white racial groups. It also showed that considerable hostility existing between the racial groups. With blacks taking the brunt of the hostility that is often frequent and subtle or hidden.

Landrine and Klonoff (1996) used a mixed sample of Black students, faculty and staff and a race-related events and stress measure along with the Hopkins Symptoms Checklist. Ninety-eight percent of the participants in their study experienced racial discrimination that was stressful in many places (Work, Schools, Public) during the past year. Sellers and Shelton’s (2003) study of African American found that more than 50 percent of their college sample reported more than a dozen (13) daily racial hassles with strangers. Schneider et al. (2000) investigated racial discrimination in a sample of students and adult employees who were mostly Hispanic. In general, they found that about 67 percent of the students and 40 percent of the employees experienced one racially harassing event that was associated with lower levels of psychological well being.
Pak et al. (1991) found those Chinese college students who experienced discrimination; felt stressed. Contrada et al. (2001) studied Asian, Latino, African American and White College students’ experiences of perceived racial discrimination, negative mood, and satisfaction with life. They reported that whites had the lowest level of perceived discrimination and blacks had the highest and that perceived discrimination was related to symptoms of depression. Researchers have reported direct relationship between experienced racial discrimination at educational settings and lower self-esteem among students (Fisher et al. 2000). Also it is found that more experience of discrimination lead to more psychological stress (Scott 2003), higher psychological distress and several health behavioural problems (Wong et al. 2003) and poor academic attitude along with poor performance at education. Thus studies have shown that discrimination is associated with high levels of stress, depression, less life satisfaction and negative moods for the students of higher education. Therefore there is high prevalence of mental health problems among students just because of discrimination perception and experiences.

In the Indian context studies explored the mental health of students with reference to other dimension of stressor than discrimination. The available literature in the areas of economics, political science, sociology and psychology provides little glimpse of discrimination with its consequences. Literature on discrimination provides insights and emphasis on the unequal accessibility, lack of awareness and hardship while achieving higher education along with systematic discrimination because of caste (Sundaram 2006, Deshpande 2006). Psychological studies reported that there is higher prevalence of poor mental health and experiences of deprivation because of poverty, although the association among them is quite complex (Kuruvilla & Jacob 2007). In another comparative study based on Medical, Sciences and Arts students have provided the insights that medical students have more psychological problems compared to science and arts students. Study also revealed that psychological morbidity was not significantly associated with residence and gender (Mahawar, P. et al. 2011). Another research exploration based on the students’ population reflected that academic stress lowers down academic performance, induces depression among students and creates unreliable level of self-efficacy. Altogether, various stressors of life with academic stressors are lowering down the mental health status of students (Khanehkeshi 2012). Depression, anxiety and stress have been reported high among
the students especially who belong to poor socio-economic background and coming from rural background (Ghaderi, Venkatesh & Kumar 2009).

From the above discussion, it is seen that in Indian context there is hardly any study that addresses the intricacy between caste based discrimination and mental health with its consequences on the students of higher education. Some online sources provided the reports on the students who have committed suicide after going through severe mental trauma of discrimination because of the caste they belonged to and coming from the rural and poor family background. This online source is called ‘Deaths of Merits’ provides the incidences of discrimination which have taken place at nationally reputed institution of higher education like IITs, IIMs and AIIMS etc. The online documentaries are available based on the issues of discrimination which put forth serious questions- Why meritorious students are taking such an extreme step? What are the agonies originating from the education system which is propelling them to extreme decisions? Which kinds of cultural shocks they are experiencing? And what are their mental health consequences? (http://thedeathofmeritinindia.wordpress.com/).

The reports based on the discriminatory experiences of SC, ST and OBCs students of AIIMS proclaimed that these experiences are potential threat to psychological consequences which in turn hampering their well being along with poor social and academic life (Thorat 2007). The online source also exposed the ongoing prevalence of caste discrimination in institutions like IIT Delhi, Delhi University, AIIMS and IIMS.

It is surprising to know that India is signatory to many international conventions and treaties which include Universal Declaration of Human Rights- 1948, International Convention on Civil and Political Rights- 1966, International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights 1966, and Convention on Child Rights 1989 but still the discrimination is prevalent and hampering the very basis of Human Rights. In addition, many bilateral and regional treaties are signed by India which obligates to form policy on Mental Health, Education etc. National Policy on Education has been revised in 1986 and 1992 and has not shown much impact. Though the policy on Mental Health was declared separately as a national programme but no development is seen although forms a part of Education policy in India.
Therefore, it is concluded that education imparted today by institutions of higher studies, with its prevalence of discrimination; creates highly competitive environment among students which leads to greater mental stress, psychological problems and poor mental health status. Therefore, measures for protecting mental health of students in higher education are highly needed.

2.10. Perception and Experiences of Discrimination in Higher Education: A Multi-Phasic Analysis

In this context it is necessary to announce again that the prevalence of perception of discrimination is higher than experiences of discrimination. Both, experiences as well as perception of discrimination have almost similar impact and consequences on the individual well-being. In a study, Kesseler, Mickelson and Williams (1999) have proved that the prevalence of perception of discrimination is high in general population and equally responsible for the mental upheaval as is done by the experiences of discrimination.

In Indian context, discrimination based on caste is prevalent at large scale in the society and its repercussions exist in higher educational institutions. During higher education, there are various situations, occasions, activities behaviours of other people and behaviour of fellow students which pave the path for discrimination along with one’s root cause of belonging to particular caste / community. In an empirical exploration by Kushwaha (2010) it has been revealed that discrimination is experienced as well as perceived because of several factors during higher education. Of those factors, some factors are poor socio-economic conditions, personality factors, rustic mannerism, cultural audacity, caste identity and previous educational attainments with poor English language. In addition to these the domination of peers, lack of awareness about facilities provided by government and experiences of untouchability add extra probabilities for the perception of discrimination in higher education. Further, it is noticed that the behaviour of administrative staff / officers and partiality done in extra-curricular activities also induce good amount of discriminatory experiences among the students of higher education.

Therefore to capture a comprehensive analysis of perception as well as experiences of discrimination, one has to focus different lenses from different direction with different
dimension of discrimination in higher education. In our society, only the multi-phasic analysis will provide the whole picture of discrimination in higher education.

2.11. Impact of Discrimination on Academic Performance and Achievement
Due to felt or experienced discrimination one may go into the hands of social stress, depression, emotional upheaval, race based traumatic stress, lower level of memory recall and poor concentration on work and personal life. It is also true that discrimination induces stress, and both have greater impact on mental as well as physical health. The impact of discrimination could be manifold and may overlap from physical level to psychological level. There are number of impacts and consequences of discrimination such as- mental block, stress and tension, frustration and behavioural problems, lower self-esteem, lower creativity, feelings of humiliation, inferiority complex, escapism, ‘we’ and ‘they’ feeling, poor performance, crisis and conflict and distortions of self perceptions (Wankhede 2003). Studies reported that discrimination of any kind can distort one’s self concept, weakens the self–esteem, lowers down the self confidence, lowers down the productivity and impair the overall well being of human being in general (Berkowitz 1989; William et al. 1997; Harrell 2000; Taylor & Turner 2002; Forman T. A. 2003; Carter 2007). Massey and Denton (1993) hold the view that discrimination leads to segregation, but segregation by restricting economic opportunities for Blacks, produces inter-racial economic disparities that incite further discrimination and more segregation.

Human resource is a prominent asset among all other kinds of resources of a nation to determine the overall economy of that nation. Within the human resource of a nation, the energy, potential power, capability, enthusiasm and endurance of youth are highly important. The youth energy or youth power can bring any change in any field, which is required for the development of a nation. Youth are the assets of future for the development of nations. To channelize youth energy to the right direction for the right cause and welfare of the society by protecting the same from the existing social discrimination and other traditional dogmatic practices, the leaders of the nation are fully responsible to safeguard it. Social practices like discrimination based on race or colour in international context and practices of discrimination based on caste / community in Indian context are very harmful for the well-being and mental health of youth in particular and human being in general.

India is populous country where the population share is categorised according to the caste and community. Table 2.1 gives the population of various social groups by two rounds (61st and 62nd) of National Sample Survey (NSS), National Family Health Survey- III (NFHS III) and Census 2001 (TISS Report 2009). From the table 2.1, as it is seen that estimated share of population in every source of survey is somewhat equal to one or other sources. But as census does not enumerate OBC population, the little disparity exists in the population share of SC than to other sources of data. It is noted that other sources revealed that overall population share of SC is around 20 percent of total population; however census reveals that SC population share is 16.2 percent of total population. This is a substantial difference and could be attributed to many factors.

Table-2.1 Comparison of Population of Social Groups in NSS, NFHS and Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>OBC</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSS 61st round (2004-05)</td>
<td>8.61</td>
<td>19.75</td>
<td>40.23</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSS 62nd round (2005-06)</td>
<td>9.16</td>
<td>20.02</td>
<td>40.17</td>
<td>30.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFHS III (2005-06)</td>
<td>8.64</td>
<td>19.73</td>
<td>40.64</td>
<td>30.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census of India (2001)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75.6*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mean general population including OBCs as Census does not enumerate OBC population. Source: TISS Report (Unit records of NSS 61st round, NSS 62nd round, NFHS III Survey and Census of India 2001).

Education is necessary for the upliftment as well as development of a nation along with constructive improvement of social status of poor, deprived and marginalised

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2 The Unit level data from N.S.S. and N.F.H.S. has been computed by T.I.S.S. team for the project on ‘Impact of OBC Reservation Policy in Higher Education in India’ in 2009. The population statistics of SC and STs estimated by N.S.S. 61st (2004-05), N.S.S. 62nd (2005-06) rounds and N.F.H.S.-III (2005-06) was compared with the estimated Population of SCs, STs by the Census of India (2001). This statistics was found quite similar among them. So it was proposed that estimation of OBC population from these surveys will be valid. The statistics of census 2001 is similar to both survey but not for state level analysis.
people. Through proper education, insurance of vertical social mobility is assured especially of those who have been downtrodden in the social structure of the society. Therefore education is important means for achieving equality in the society.

**Table-2.2- Representation of Socio-Religious groups at Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and Higher Education levels (age: 7+)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-religious group / Education</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Middle and Secondary</th>
<th>Higher Secondary</th>
<th>Above Higher Secondary</th>
<th>Population share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu ST</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>7.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Sc</td>
<td>18.37</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>10.57</td>
<td>8.46</td>
<td>18.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu OBC</td>
<td>34.56</td>
<td>34.58</td>
<td>31.85</td>
<td>24.61</td>
<td>34.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Others</td>
<td>21.59</td>
<td>29.72</td>
<td>39.61</td>
<td>49.86</td>
<td>21.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim ST &amp; SC</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim OBC</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Others</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>7.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian ST &amp; SC</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian OBC &amp; Others</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jains &amp; Zoroastrians</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others &amp; Buddhist</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TISS Report (Computed from NSS 62nd round unit level data)

Table-2.2 represents the educational comparison between the socio-religious groups of Indian society. In Indian context the education up to higher secondary level is the stepping stone for higher education. However the ability to reach the higher secondary education level depends upon a lot of social, economic and cultural factors. A community is said to be under-represented if its share of the population pursuing higher education is less than its share in the overall population. From the computed data of N.S.S. 62nd round, it is revealed that ST, SC and OBC of Hindu origin as well as from Muslim religion is underrepresented at the Higher Secondary and above (Table-2.2). Similar pattern is seen at the higher level of education (Graduation and Post-Graduation) in the population which have attained 20 years and more of their life (Table-2.3).
Table-2.3- Representation of Graduates and Post Graduates among Socio-Religious Groups (Age 20 +) (Year 2005-2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-religious group / Education</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Post-Graduate and above</th>
<th>Population Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu ST</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>7.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Sc</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>17.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu OBC</td>
<td>23.59</td>
<td>23.11</td>
<td>34.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Others</td>
<td>51.38</td>
<td>52.94</td>
<td>23.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim ST &amp; SC</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim OBC</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Others</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>6.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian ST &amp; SC</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian OBC &amp; Others</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jains &amp; Zoroastrians</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others &amp; Buddhist</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TISS Report (Computed from NSS 62nd round unit level data)

From the tables it is found that Hindu-others are over represented in higher education however other socio-religious group like Hindu SC & OBC and Muslim SC & OBC are underrepresented because their population share is higher than their representation in higher education. Surely this analysis provides the insights that overrepresented and under-represented groups are definitely different and unequal in terms of their access to higher education. From 62nd round NSS, it is also noticed that of the total population at Uttar Pradesh, 37.5 percent of population above age 7 is illiterate. Socio-religious group-wise it is assessed that of their corresponding population share, 43.88 percent Hindu SC, 56.52 percent ST Hindu, 39.64 percent OBC Hindu, 48.38 percent Non Hindu OBC and 38.40 percent Non Hindu SC & ST are illiterate. Thus illiteracy is higher among the ST, SC and OBC communities regardless of their religion (TISS Report, 2009 pp 57-58)

It is accepted that there are several factors responsible for accessing higher education. Of that gender disparities, economic deprivation and rural / urban disparities are significant and altogether, all of them are known to play an important role in defining access to and attainment in higher education. The poor students from villages are bound to move towards urban areas for higher education from rural and poor backgrounds. They are and forced to migrate to town or city for education and hence
find education more expensive and inaccessible. The analysis has been done for the assessment of extent of such differentials that exist specially in higher education in various socio-religious groups. Thus the relationship between caste and higher education is mediated through a number of social, cultural, psychological and economic factors.

It is clear that there is something in the gate keeping mechanism which regulates entry into higher education that makes it discriminate in favour of the ‘upper’ against the ‘lower’ caste (Deshpande 2006). Therefore, the influence of caste however has certainly not disappeared- it persists in the educational exclusion of several lower castes /communities and caste discrimination. Further class has emerged as a fundamental category of exclusion- including a few but excluding the overwhelming majority. Thus the important feature of higher education in poor and populous country is that it tends to be associated with various kinds of discrimination in practice. These may be collectively called ‘resource discrimination’ i.e. discrimination born out of inadequate endowments of the resources required to access and succeed in higher education. It is well known that higher education in India is biased against the poor and against the lower castes or other groups who suffer from social disadvantages in society. This is true of developed countries as well but is more starkly relevant in the country like India.

2.13. Rationale of the Study:

From the above discussion, it is clear that caste based discrimination is a phenomenon of the Indian society because of its hierarchical structure of the society. Majority of Indian communities have been traditionally, historically deprived of socio-economic opportunity and educational rights. Prominent among these sections of the society are SCs, STs and OBCs. Nationally the literature based on the other social issues implicitly deals with the issue of caste-based discrimination and its impact on societal development but gap exists in literature relating to caste-based discrimination in the context of higher education with its impact on educational attainment and mental health consequences. Though, plethora of literature is available internationally on race based discrimination in the educational settings with its impact on educational attainment along with psychological consequences and mental health problems. Several studies in India on education, socio-economical problems, discrimination in educational situations and educational attainments of SCs, STs and OBCs students are
available but very few studies have explored the intricacy of discrimination and mental health consequences along with appraisal of stress while pursuing higher education.

In our society there are numbers of youth who have been the victims of the discrimination and have health and mental health problems. Considering our society with majority of youth population and a chunk of that are pursuing higher education. Higher education system is part and parcel of larger society and assumed to be ideologically discrimination free which is prevalent at large in the society but in the higher educational institutions, there are strong probabilities to be discriminated on the basis of caste and to have its consequences on health and mental health (Rao 2002, Thorat 2002, 2005; Wankhede 1999, 2003, 2008 and Sebastian 2006). Therefore, it was proposed to select purposely students pursuing higher education for this study and to explore their overall stress and mental health related problems caused due to discrimination.

Keeping in mind the scenario of national and international levels about the issue of discrimination and mental health problems, it was proposed to identify and analyze the stress and related mental health problems among students caused due to social discrimination during higher education. Purposely, the students pursuing higher education were proposed to be covered in the present study from the universities in the northern state of India- Uttar Pradesh, which is highly prone to caste identity and orthodoxy with socio-economic backwardness.