

“RESEARCH PAPER ON IMPACT OF STUDENT POLITICS ON KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY WITH REFERENCE TO DELHI UNIVERSITY”

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Abstract

Knowledge Society is a term used to describe societies which are economically and culturally characterized by a high degree of dependency on their potentials to create scientific and technological knowledge. One such knowledge society in India is the University of Delhi (informally known as Delhi University or DU). It is the largest institution of higher learning in India and is also counted among the largest universities in the world. Being the largest and a highly reputed institution the standards of admission in DU are the highest in the country and thus only the best students in the country are able to get admission in the Delhi University. DU has not only given highly intellectual and educated people to the society but it has also given a big number of Political Leaders not only to the nation but to the world too. Being situated in the country capital and being a place of young intellectuals DU has always been a famous platform for political debates, nukkad natak on social issues and many more social activities. Thus, DU has also been the hub of student politics as it represents the thoughts and opinions of youth in the country. The student politics inside the campus cause several problems on academic curriculum and other cultural activities of the institute. There are regular strikes and *dharnas* conducted by different parties and student unions sometimes due to some serious issues and sometimes just to make people aware of their presence. Such strikes and *dharnas* cause problems for the students who are only for studying in the institute. Having such politically active campus political parties also see DU as a place for political experiments and thus appreciates such actions. Every big political party of the nation has its student wing active in the campus of DU. Thus, this research paper studies about the impact of student politics on the academic curriculum of the largest university of the country DU. The data for the same is collected through secondary sources through articles and interviews of the students and the faculties of Institute in past times. The research paper tells us about the past remarkable incidents happened in DU due to student politics and its impact on the academic curriculum of the institute. It also talks about the daily problems faced by the students not being part of such politics due to people involved in it. The research paper suggests ways to control such actions and what role should top management play in the same.

Keywords : Delhi University (DU), Knowledge society, student politics, political parties, academic curriculum

INTRODUCTION

In general terms politics can be defined as an art or science of practicing power over a group of people or human community or particularly a state. It refers to achieving and practicing positions of governance over the same. There are mainly three types of politics namely formal, semi-formal and informal on the basis of the power or impact the person or organization practicing it gets. Formal Politics mainly refers to the operation of a constitutional system of government and publicly defined institutions and procedures. Whereas Semi-Formal Politics mainly refers to

the politics inside the government organizations. They usually include student unions, trade unions, associations, etc. In Informal Politics on the other hand the idea of 'politics is everywhere' is spread through forming alliances, practicing power, and advancing particular goals or ideas. Informal Politics is also referred as everyday politics.

Student Politics as mentioned above is a type of semi-formal politics which is mainly practiced in educational institutions. Specifically, the main core of student politics since the time of British rule has been the centralized government universities. This is so because the students studying here are the ones who first get affected by any of the policy of Government. Being a democratic country full of diversity there is always one or the other group of students who doesn't agree with the decision or feels that the decision is against them. These disagreements lead to birth of politics. All students of similar ideology come together and form alliances to practice power of non-cooperation and disobedience against the institutions. These Non-Cooperation movements often lead to academic loss of other students and also economic loss of the government.

As Delhi is the capital of the country and Delhi University being the biggest government university of India it is the most affected of them all. Every national political party of India has its student wing with a different name highly active in DU. Main Student Union parties active in DU are Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (aka ABVP, student wing of BJP), National Student Union of India (aka NSUI, student wing of INC), Chattra Yuva Sangarsh Samiti (aka CYSS, student wing of AAP), and All India Student Association (aka AISA, student wing of CPIL).

This Research paper studies about the current scenario of student politics in Delhi University. It also enquires about the impact of these political activities happening inside the campus of DU on academics of DU, on environment in DU and on National Politics.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nathan Glazer, in 1969, in an article while talking about the student's politics in Berkeley University said that the student rebels themselves strongly resist any tendency toward totalitarianism or even central control in their own movement. He pointed out that the young rebels bring in a refreshing sense of community, one that joins students and faculty as well as student with student, into an institution.

Sanjoy Kumar Satpathy, in his article in 2017 in The Pioneer claimed that one of the reasons behind Indian colleges not ranking in top 100 colleges of world is the student politics. He suggested that there should be a different political college for those who are interested in later joining any of the political parties. While comparing Indian institutions with foreign institutes he said that in most of the education institutions in the world, violence is discouraged and those indulging in it are immediately thrown out but that's not the case in India. In India, if you indulge in violence on the goading of your political masters, you know they will save you when you are in trouble. This, in effect, gives a free license to indulge in violence in Indian colleges and universities.

OBJECTIVE

- To study the current situation of student politics in Delhi University.
- To study the impact of student politics on Delhi University.
- To study the impact of student politics in Delhi University on National Politics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research paper is descriptive in nature and based on secondary data. The data has been collected from various newspapers, reports, journals and websites.

DATA ANALYSIS

Current Scenario and recent trends of student politics in Delhi University

As the definition of the term Politics suggests it is a process of practicing power and in Delhi University the power of leadership of students and communication with management lies with the elected members of Delhi University Student's Union (DUSU). DUSU is the official student representative body of Delhi University recognized by authorities. All student unions and associations of colleges affiliated to Delhi University work under DUSU. Organizational Structure of DUSU is similar to that of any other union or association in the country. In the central body it has 4 posts namely President, Vice-President, Secretary and Joint-Secretary. For these posts an election is held every year in which every student of DU votes for each post separately and every regular student of DU has an equal right to contest in the same. In this academic year (2018-19) around 1,50,000 students voted for the same. In current academic year three out of four posts namely President, Vice-President and Joint-Secretary are won by ABVP while the post of Secretary is won by NSUI. Other than these four posts every college affiliated to DU have their separate student panels for which elections are held separately. In majority of these colleges as well, in recent years, ABVP has proven its dominance.

The elected students including the four post holders and the representatives from different affiliated colleges together form Executive Committee which takes all decisions regarding students' rights and welfare.

Impact of student politics on Delhi University

Student politics have had a huge impact on both students and campus of Delhi University. Majorly the impacts have been positive but there is nothing in this world which doesn't have bad consequences.

Student politics provide students a strong and recognized platform to keep their opinions and demands. It helps students to discover their hidden leadership qualities. It also gives students an experience of what politics in real life is all about because when you are in the campus of DU willingly or unwillingly you become a part of politics happening around you as it is going to impact your lifestyle in campus. This student politics gave birth to many political leaders not only for India but for our neighboring countries too. In fact, our present Prime Minister is an alumnus of Delhi University. Other than national leaders the international leaders who have been a part of Delhi University includes G.P. Koirala, former PM of Nepal, Bingu wa Mutharika, current President of Malawi, Sangay Ngedup, former PM of Bhutan, etc. Not only allies but even Pakistan's 6th President Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq is an alumnus of Delhi University. Benefits of student politics in the campus of Delhi University not only comprises up to giving political leaders to the state but it also gives the Management of the University a chance to enquire about the willingness and capabilities of their students. Student Union helps them to know about the thoughts of the students regarding their certain policies and hence, helps them to take a decision suitable and acceptable to everyone.

But as mentioned above it has certain ill effects too. Firstly, the elections held every year causes a lot of expenditure of money and other resources on advertisement, propaganda and the electoral process itself is done which comes from the pocket of a common man as tax. From a common man's perspective, it is wastage of money. Student's politics inside the campus of Delhi University also creates an unpleasant environment with regards to academics. Many students get involved in politics such that they forget their studies. A remarkable decrease in academic performance of many students who became politically active has been noted in past few years. The reasons behind this can be the cut throat competition seen nowadays in the campus of DU between student political parties and the increased interference of National politics in the campus. One more notable reason can be the increased technology. As majority of student leaders aims to enter national politics hence, they keep trying to gain media coverage by doing one or the other ethical or unethical work. So that as soon as he passes out from DU he would already be recognized and get direct entry in any national political party. Thus, the person is tries to be more active in politics and such stuff rather than studying. Politics in the campus of DU not only impacts academics of the ones involved in it but also the ones who come to DU only for studying. Political leaders often to prove their existence call for rallies and *dharnas*. It undoubtedly often turns into chaos and disturbs normal students. Political parties keep influencing other students to join their parties which also disturbs them a lot. One of the major discomforts caused to these students due to politics in the campus is that many times due to the rallies and protests of these political parties' classes are called-off and several times even exams gets delayed.

The impact of student politics in Delhi University on National Politics

Delhi University is the hub of students of all types of cultural, regional, economic, financial and intellectual backgrounds. The crowd at DU can be considered as the perfect sample of the nation. Thus, it is the best place to experiment, test and research about the political stand of the nation. For Example, if somebody wants to know about the educational status of sub-urbans in India so he doesn't have to go to each and every state of India for collecting the data. He/she just have to find students from the required background and the person can easily get a rough data required. Similarly, when a Political Party wants to know about the political stand of the nation it analyses the result of the DUSU elections as the student unions contesting the elections in DU fight with the similar ideology of their parent parties. The DUSU also represents the youth power of the nation. At present two-third population of the country comprises youth, thus, for any political party to win any election in the country have to take care of the youth and their demands. Any demand put up by the DUSU is taken up as the demand of the all the youngsters around the country and with technology being on all time hike it has become very easy for any issue in DU to become a national issue. For example, in 2016 an issue of anti-national slogans being spoken during a midnight rally in JNU, neighboring university of DU, within two days became a national issue and the government authorities had to really work hard to sort out the matter. Even the government was questioned in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha about the way the matter was handled as the students convicted were of the student wing of another political party. Thus, student politics in DU and neighboring universities impact national politics a lot.

SUGGESTIONS

- Interference of National Parties in student politics should be controlled
- Management and authorities should keep a close eye on activities and rallies of Student Unions inside the campus to avoid indiscipline and violent affairs.
- Management should only permit rallies and functions relevant to campus of DU to decrease interference of anti-social elements of the society.
- Student leaders should not only think about their personal and party benefits. They should be mature enough to distinguish between right and wrong.
- Student voters should vote to the right candidate irrespective of their political, economic or cultural background.
- Budgeting of DUSU elections should be watched carefully.

CONCLUSIONS

Student Politics in India as a whole have both positive and negative impacts as every big thing in the world does. But majority of the negative impacts rely on the kind of leadership students choose and hence is reversible. If we talk about DU in particular the student politics major problems are created because of the interference of National Politics in the campus. National political parties knowingly enforce topics unrelated to campus but playing a major role in national politics for discussions in the campus through their student wings so as to justify their stand and actions about the same. They do so to create an illusion or a positive image in the minds of the students about them. Hence the Management should control and take care of such cases and should try to minimize such activities in the campus.

LIMITATIONS

- Lack of availability of data.
- Reliability of data depends upon credibility of the sources.

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