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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIGNITY OF LABOUR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN STUDENTS OF DEI AND AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY

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#### ABSTRACT

Dignity of labour means equal respect for all types of mental or manual jobs without discrimination. A double group design was made to test the significance of difference. 'Dignity of Labour' scale by Das and Sharma (2020) was used. A sample of 214 students selected randomly from the city of Agra and Mathura. All the students in the sample were between 18 to 25 years of age. Mean of DEI Students (N=66) came out to be 63.86 with standard deviation of 4.47 and mean score of Non-DEI students (N=154) was 61.10, with standard deviation of 5.73. At degree of freedom 212, the value of  $t = 3.8$  was found to be significant at .01 level.

## INTRODUCTION

Dignity of labour means equal respect for all types of mental or manual jobs without discrimination. If one has positive attitude towards dignity of labour one should not hesitate to do any type of labour if he is capable of doing it. Nobody can be said to have lost his dignity even if he does semiskilled or unskilled jobs. Dignity of labour is a value, like honesty and punctuality, an internal characteristic of personality inbred since childhood leading to spiritual bliss. It is the attitude towards dignity of labour which should be taught to students by their family members, teachers and mentors of their society. According to this point of view, no occupation is considered superior and none of the jobs should be discriminated on any basis. Dignity of Labour means all types of works, physical, mental or spiritual should be given respect because no work is superior or inferior to others. Since all types of works are essential for healthy and peaceful living of human society, each type of work is equally. Labour of a farmer, a street sweeper, a washer man, or a carpenter is equally important as is the work of the teacher, a scientist, an administrator, a doctor or a lawyer.

A society can survive and progress only if all the workers are given importance and respect. Dignity of Labour is the core of Gandhian Philosophy of Education. Mahatma Gandhi also insisted that Education should be centered around some manual or productive work. If our houses and streets are not cleaned or foodgrains are not produced in farms, no one in society can live a healthy life. So every job has its own worth and dignity.

**Dayalbagh way of life and Dignity of Labour:** In Dayalbagh, a person may be highly qualified academically or professionally, but still if he does semi skilled or unskilled physical labour, his dignity is not lowered, rather he is highly respected. In Dayalbagh way of life, each and every person has to perform all sorts of work. Here, a person is trained from very early childhood to do the works of all four 'Varnas', Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra at the same time. Children observe their parents and elders do all sorts of work for the benefit of society from their very childhood and thus develop a positive attitude towards Dignity of Labour. Such children are called 'Superman' or Superhumans' in Dayalbagh. They themselves enjoy doing farming, cooking, cleaning and serving the mankind selflessly since their childhood.

This leads to their complete development both physical as well as cognitive. Scientific researches have proved that such children who do physical labour are significantly higher in their Cognitive and Intellectual abilities. Kumar V. & Bhatnagar A. (2021) Physical exercises keep their body and mind fit for their overall personality development. Also, Dayalbagh is a self-sustaining society. Thus one must have all life skills. Various kinds of hormones and neuropeptides like Beta Endorphins are released due to manual exercise and labour. Serotonin and Beta Endorphins are few of such happy hormones, essential for human health and well-being. In Dayalbagh Educational Institute (a Deemed University), therefore, practical subjects like Agricultural Operations, Social Service, Work Experience courses are compulsory subjects for all undergraduate students apart from various vocational courses. When students themselves do these activities they realize how difficult and important, all these works are. They develop positive attitude towards all types of labour and blue collar jobs. In DEI, even a highly qualified engineer does not hesitate to do manual work, because he knows how to do it and enjoys doing it. So here nobody can remain idle or unemployed. The same person works as a farmer at dawn, a teacher during daytime, as a cook, and a shopkeeper on the same day. He is also physically fit to protect himself and his community workers if needed. A superman never feels ashamed to do any type of work and the completion of work is not delayed due to unavailability of manual worker. After achieving the target and completion of work, he also gets involved in practices like prayer and meditation for his spiritual upliftment. In such atmosphere, students generally develop positive attitude towards Dignity of Labour, which is not easily seen anywhere else. The investigators were therefore curious to know whether students of DEI, studying in such an environment, where "work is worship", develop more positive attitude towards Dignity of Labour in comparison to students of Ambedkar University. It was hypothesized that students of DEI (Deemed University) Dayalbagh, Agra would have more positive attitude towards Dignity of Labour, as compared to those of Ambedkar University, Agra.

**Design:** A double group design was made to test the significance of difference in the direction and intensity of 'Attitude towards Dignity of Labour' of DEI students and Ambedkar University students.

**Tool:** A scale of Attitude towards 'Dignity of Labour' by Das and Sharma (2020) was used to measure students' attitude towards Dignity of Labour. It is a 5-point Likert type attitude scale consisting of 15 statements. Some of these statements are positive while others are negative statements, expressing positive and negative valences of attitude. The response categories are Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The scoring for positive items is 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively and for negative items is 1,2,3,4 and 5 respectively. Thus, the maximum possible score in the scale is 75 and minimum possible score is 15.

**Reliability:** Test-retest reliability of the "Attitude towards Dignity of Labour" scale with time duration of one month came out to be  $r = .60$  ( $N = 30$ ).

**Validity:** The scale was validated against two known groups of positive attitude and negative attitude towards Dignity of Labour.

The difference between their mean scores on the scale was found to be significant at 0.01 level, indicating high construct validity of the 'Attitude towards Dignity of Labour' Scale.

**Norms:** For the purpose of standardization, Z Score norms were established on a sample of 214 University students. Table-I indicates the Z Score norms. Z Scores express the distance from the mean in standard deviation units.

**Table 1. Z- Score Norms**

(Mean= 61.8)		
Raw Score	Z- Score	Description
71-75	$2\sigma$ to $3\sigma$	Extremely High
66-70	$1\sigma$ to $2\sigma$	High
61-65	$0\sigma$ to $1\sigma$	Above Average
56-60	$0\sigma$ to $-1\sigma$	Below Average
51-55	$-1\sigma$ to $-2\sigma$	Low
43-50	$-2\sigma$ to $-3\sigma$	Extremely Low

**Table 2. Showing the Mean, SD, t value and Level of Significance**

Groups of Students	N	df	Mean	SD	t	Level of Significance
Non- DEI	154	212	61.10	5.73	3.8	$p < 0.01$
DEI	60		63.86	4.47		

**Sample:** The data was collected on a sample of 60 students of Psychology and Cognitive Science departments of Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Dayalbagh Agra and 154 students of Ambedkar University (Non- DEI) Agra. All the students in the sample were between 18 to 25 years of age. They rated the statements in the scale of Attitude towards Dignity of Labour according to their choice.

**Data Analysis:** After data collection the scoring was done according to the scoring key. The total raw score indicating the attitude towards Dignity of Labour was calculated for each student. On the basis of all the raw scores in the sample, a frequency distribution for all the 214 cases was formed. The distribution was normal, with minimum score of 43 and maximum score of 75. The raw scores of DEI students ( $N = 60$ ) ranged from 50 to 74, where as the raw scores for Ambedkar University students ( $N = 154$ ) ranged from 43 to 74. The data was further analysed and mean and standard deviation for the two groups were computed and t- test was applied to test the significance of difference between means.

## RESULTS

**Interpretation of Result:** Table- II shows the means and standard deviations of Attitude Scores of the two groups. Mean of DEI Students ( $N = 66$ ) came out to be 63.86 with standard deviation of 4.47 and mean score of Non-DEI students ( $N = 154$ ) was 61.10, with standard deviation of 5.73. At degree of freedom 212, the value of  $t = 3.8$  was found to be significant at .01 level. This indicates that DEI students have significantly more positive attitude towards Dignity of labour, in comparison to non DEI students. DEI students have above average positive attitude whereas Non-DEI students have below average (or Negative) attitude towards Dignity of Labour, according to the norms. The hypothesis was thus proved that Dayalbagh Educational Institute students have significantly more positive attitude towards Dignity of Labour in comparison to Ambedkar University students, where courses on physical labour is not included in the syllabus. So, on the basis of findings, it is suggested that an important value of Dignity of Labour should be included in the syllabus of universities in India for the prosperity of India.

## DISCUSSION

'Karm' or 'Kriya' holds prime significance in Indian philosophy. Even though, work that exists in the form of 'required action' garners actions but misses 'dignity' for it. In the new world, appreciation for the work itself has been reduced due to technology. Dignity in itself means the inherent worth and value of an individual. Dignity being the fundamental right of any Indian remains missing in terms of labour. This concept has evolved over time, shaped by cultural, economic, and philosophical influences. In today's society, the recognition and appreciation of diverse forms of labor continue to be essential for fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities, and promoting human rights. Despite this, there are many occupations which are stigmatized. Unfortunately, even after many attempts the issue still persists. Even though people might shower respect once in a while in the form of *Vishwakarma Day*, it still fails as people are not able to practice what they preach. In Radhasoami Faith, Dayalbagh the 'preach' is followed by practice as community members come together every day without fail and take care of the farming field. The *sevadars* who participate in these activities are from all walks of life and no matter what they do professionally they come together and take care of the work together. It is a self-sufficient community which hopes to foster value from maternity to eternity. Individuals often say that individual differences make the world a more interesting place, but following up on the practice remains afar. Psychologically, Self-esteem for any individual is extremely important for 'self-acceptance' and not being accepted by society makes life unsatisfactory.

Stacey (2005) even suggested that missing dignity leads workers to feel contradictory and conflicted towards their work. They don't consider life meaningful sometimes and understand it as 'Dirty Work'. Jose (2004) even suggested that providing this justice to all workers would allow equitable distribution of the fruits of economic growth and justice. So on the basis of findings, it is suggested that 'Dignity of Labour' should be inculcated in students in all educational institutes and universities in India in order to make India prosper.

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