CAMPUS DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHR LEARNING, PUTTAPARTHY, ANDHRA PRADESH

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **CAMPUS DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING, PUTTAPARTHY, ANDHRA PRADESH** submitted by **ANAND VALMIKI** is in partial fulfilment of eight credits out of a total requirement of twenty-four credits for the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of this university. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university and is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.

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With divine blessings
of
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Dedicated
to
Amma & Nanna

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since Independence, many forces have deeply affected our national life. The euphoria of the early post-independence years dissolved rapidly under the pressures of several competing forces. One of the major problems facing the Nation in the education sector at the time of Independence was to provide a large number students who had been hitherto excluded because of socio-economic deprivation. Attempts were made to reform the system to include these sections of population through constitutional provisions and to bring them into the national mainstream. As a result, there was an increase in the number of students who entered the system of higher education since the sixties.

A direct consequence of the proliferation of educational institutions is the ever increasing tension on the campuses as first generation learners with aspirations to enter the job market felt the lack of relevance of their education to their immediate environment and employment opportunities, thus paving the way for a rapid politicization of the youth and the campuses. Moreover, harmony on the college campuses was affected due to several extraneous factors.

The cultures of the homes of a large number of students entering the higher educational institutions were to in consonance with the cultures of the educational organisations. (Nayak & Rao, 1999:4). This has created a gap in the socialisation processes among the students and led to conflict, confrontation and unrest on various campuses.

These issues are still with us even after fifty years of Independence. The adjustment and understanding between various groups is still lacking. These concerns are compounded by increasing incidents of hostility between the students of different backgrounds in undergraduate colleges and universities. As a result, campuses all over the country are faced with the problems of how academia can best fulfil its role in educating various groups of students.

It is also to be kept in mind that the campuses serve as a microcosm of the society at large and hence the issues, problems and tensions being played out elsewhere in the society are often reflected on the campuses. Diversity issues are, therefore, directly related to the larger social issues. They are central not only to our campuses, but also extend to the villages, communities, towns, and cities and to a healthy civil democracy. Therefore, colleges and universities pressed by both internal and external constituencies are inevitably being

called upon to clarify the larger relationship between higher education and society. It is in this context, the present study attempts to explore the linkages between diversity and educational organisations. The study tries to articulate the institutional strategies and responses to various issues of diversity on their campus.

This chapter is divided into five section. **Sections I** discusses the conceptual understanding of 'diversity'. It tries to seek the usage of the concept of diversity in Education and Sociological literature and also try to analyse the issue of 'campus diversity' in a multi-cultural context. **Section II** of the chapter looks into various theoretical perspectives on multi-cultural education in so as to build a perspective to understand the issues of diversity in the educational institutions. **Section III** focuses on the recent surge in studies on linkages between higher education and campus diversity issues world over and how they attempted to raise a debate even in India. **Section IV** brings out a review of literature on campus diversity. **Section V** of the chapter gives the relevance of the present study and its' objectives, hypothesis, sample, operationalisation of the concept of diversity and chapterisation.

SECTION I

CONCEPT OF 'DIVERSITY'

Any dictionary of English language would tell us that the term 'diversity' signifies nothing more than 'difference' or 'variety'. But, it is sometimes misleading, particularly when we see its relevance in a democratic set-up, where it also signifies the component of unity in societies which are multicultural, multi-racial, multi-ethnic societies. For instance, when we call 'Americans' or 'Indians'[1] are 'diverse', we are saying that they are all 'American' or Indians i.e. as equal members of a category (Beckham, 2000). Therefore, taken in this context, like democracy, diversity encourages us to establish a unifying context, community of meaning and action in which individual differences can thrive and strengthen the community that nurtures them (Beckham, 2000).

The Study of diversity is an evolving multi-dimensional field (Smith, 1997: 50). Though terms such as multicultural, multi-ethnic, under-represented, minority, disadvantaged, marginalised or stigmatized, that are frequently used, they provide conceptual nets for filtering the broad literature on diversity. Thus diversity contains a

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[1] Added by the researcher.

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wealth of controversial theoretical assumptions about the nature of society and the practice in social sciences. Darly G. Smith describes diversity as the 'variety created in any society (and within any individual) by the presence of different points of view and ways of making meaning which generally flow from the influence of different cultural and religious heritages, from the difference in how we socialise women and men and the differences that emerge from class, age and developed ability (1997:7).

For a better conceptual understanding of diversity, it may be worth describing the concept of 'cultural diversity', Lynch, et al describes.

"Cultural diversity as the presence within one geographical area a number of different cultural dimensions: linguistic, credal, racial, etc. (1992; 8). According to them:

"If we consider the overlapping dimensions of diversity, i.e. racial, religions, linguistic, regional, ethnic gender, age, social class and more recently caste, we cannot avoid the conclusion that, not only most nation states culturally diverse, but that the world population as a whole, manifests rich diversity (1992:8)".

Therefore, to recognise that diversity is a rich resource that sustains the vibrancy of national life of multi-cultural societies is important to al those concerned with education. It may be stressed that rather than talking of only 'unity in Diversity', it would also be worthwhile to recognise diversity within unity'. When differences are welcomed rather than deplored and viewed positively, then it is easier to see that diversity within unity is possible, and cultural variations are seen as contributing to a strong national image, and more labeled as backward and primitive (Nayak and Rao, 1999:2).

While discussing diversity in higher educational institutions the term 'camps diversity' is used. According to Daryl G. Smith the term 'campus diversity' has come to refer to the

> "variety of strategies that institutions and leaders have developed to address the consequences of earlier homogeneity both at particular institution and higher education generally" (1997:8).

She observes that campus diversity for some is a code word of the presence of designated and previously excluded groups; for others it is a climate that welcomes heterogeneity, for still others, it is a range of programmes designed to influence what and how students

learn and thus for many all the above said things simultaneously would give a better understanding of campus diversity.

It is interesting to note that African American Students describe diversity in the university as a 'commitment to inclusion between teachers and students of color, and most of all in being taken seriously. Students at the university seem to think of diversity in terms of proportions of students whereas African American and Latino students perceives diversity in terms of cross race social interaction (Adelman: 1997:38). Therefore, these different definitions of diversity immediately suggest that, questions dealing with racial and ethnic diversity must not only address diversity in terms of proprtions of representation of various groups but also must refer to the multiple dimensions that constitute larger society.

SECTION II

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Theoretical approaches to diversity could be understood only supplementing the approach to multicultural education. The importance of the subject of multiculturalism to the education can be understood with the assumption that within any social context, there would inevitably coexist a number of cultures together and each

culture is distinct in itself in its sets of norms, rules, behavioural features of its members (Banks, 1992). However, a few cultures, likely to be, occupying a position of greater importance than the other cultures. Some as a 'dominant culture' and some other as 'minority cultures'. Within a social context, more often than not, the cultural practices of the dominant culture are the ones that are most visible, with the minority cultures being relegated to the background. Within the education, this kind of domination of majority cultures could lead to unequal education opportunity' among the 'minority cultures' (Banks, 1992). Therefore, the importance of multi-cultural education becomes relevant in this context.

The ethnic revitalising movements, aiming at development of ethnic consciousness and individual identity with respect to one's ethnic and cultural attachments, developed around 1960s in the western world mainly in Europe and USA, which are characterised by tremendous ethnic, cultural and racial diversity. Despite such diversity the goal of such nations was one of socio-cultural assimilation. James Banks (1992) sums up the assimilationist ideology of such nations.

"The assimilationist ideology that dominated the western

nations was undergirded by the liberal expectancy and a

liberal ideology that envisaged a nation-state in which individuals from all ethnic, cultural and racial groups are able to participate fully. However, the liberal believes that in order for this kind of equitable, modernised society to emerge and blossom, individuals must be freed of their ethnic and cultural attachments". (Banks, 1963: 3).

There are many strategies, definitions and approaches to multicultural education. However, at least three major groups of approaches can be identified (Banks 1992).

1. Curriculum Approaches

2. Achievement Approaches

3. Inter-group Education Approaches

According to Banks (1992), **Curriculum approaches** conceptualises multi-cultural education as a process that involves addition or changes in the content of the school or university curriculum. The primary goals of these approaches is to incorporate the voices, experiences, culture and struggles of cultural and gender groups into the curriculum. Thus, curriculum approach develops knowledge of understanding about cultural differences.

Achievement approaches, according to Banks (1992), conceptualises multi-cultural education as a set of goals, theories and strategies to increase the academic achievement of lower class students of colour, women and students who were handicapped. Here the movement is towards achieving equality of educational opportunity and equality. While discussing **Inter-group Education Approach**, Banks (1992) views that the primary goal of this approach is to help students to develop more positive attitude towards people from various racial, gender and cultural groups and towards one's own group. In this approach a person develops competence in multiple ways to perceiving, evaluating and believing.

According to Fleras (1992), multicultural education encompasses a variety of policies, programmes and practices that entails the management of diversity within an educational institution. They view that, multicultural education includes processes associated with the formation of a healthy identity, cultural preservation, intercultural sensitivity, awareness of racism and cross cultural communication (1992:12).

Maurice Craft (1982) seeks to locate multi-cultural education in a broader context namely, the central delimma or reconciling education for diversity with provision for a basis of common skills

and attitudes. According to him, we must inevitably look for some pattern and one perspective is to view education as 'social process in which provision relates to the powerful structural and ideological processes of the wider society' (1982:6). He raises a debate on conformity versus diversity in the context of social change draft observes that greater part of the education enterprise in any society is likely to be concerned with social continuity rather than social change. But, in highly industrialised societies and particularly in social democracies, continuity includes the capacity to initiate and adopt to change. Therefore, Craft prefer diversity to continuity, but without a good measure of agreement, there is likely to be social breakdown.

Multidimensional Approach on Campus Diversity

This framework has been developed by Smith (1997). The benefit of a multidimensional approach it that is allows us to examine a range of strategies currently used in higher education both to address the needs of diverse students and also to help institutions adjust to reality of increased heterogeneity on campus (Smith, 1997:8). This approach analyses the 'student experiences with diversity' from four dimensions which are inter related:

Figure: 1
Multidimensional Approach

```
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │ Climate/Inter│
                    │   groups     │
                    │  Relations   │
                    └─────────────┘
          ↗            ↑              ↘
   ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
   │Representation│← │     The      │→ │  Education   │
   │              │  │Dimensions of │  │     and      │
   │              │  │   campus     │  │ Scholarship  │
   │              │  │   diversify  │  │              │
   └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
          ↙            ↓              ↘
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │ Institutional│
                    │Transformation│
                    └─────────────┘
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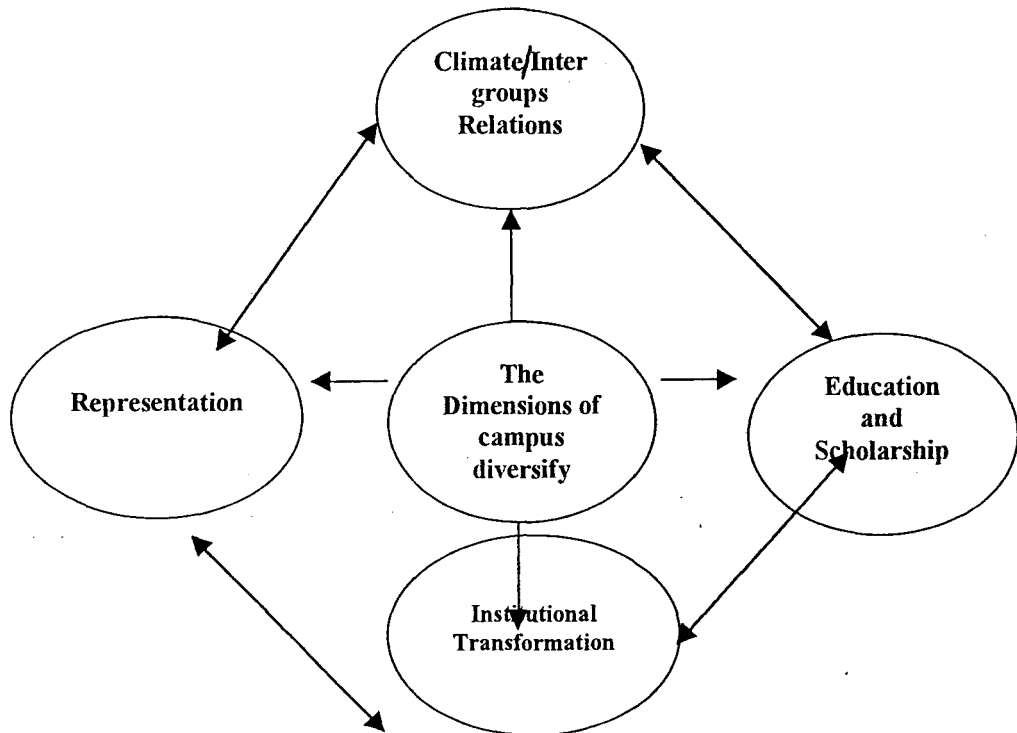
1.   Representation

This dimension focuses on the inclusion and success of previously under represented group. This dimension enables to reflect over diversity issues which has emerged from a social and historical context of exclusion and resulting under representation.

2. Campus Climate And Inter Group Relations:

This dimension addresses the impact of collegiate environment on institutional and student success. It includes activities which seek to prevent students from experiencing campuses as alienating and hostile.

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3. Education And Scholarship:

This dimension involves the inclusion of diverse traditions in the curriculum, impact of diverse traditions in the curriculum , impact of issues of diversity on teaching methods and the influence of societal diversity on scholarly inquiring .

4. Institutional Transformation

This dimension refers to deep reorganizing questions which build upon the many changes promoted in earlier dimensions.

These above said four dimensions provide a way of seeing both, who diversity includes, whom it affects, and how its impact extends beyond individual groups being added or an individual institution becoming role diverse (Smith, 1997:12).

Smith, Wolf & Levithan (1994) focuses specially on charting campus progress in promoting diversity and cultural pluralism through a method called institutional portfolio assessment. The uniqueness of the portfolio assessment method is that, it engages people in real life problem solving, giving them the opportunity to handle phenomena and situational dilemmas commonly found in day-to-day life and to work with authenticity (Ingle, 1994:35). The eight stages involved in the development of Institutional Portfolio process are as follows:

"Firstly: past history and performance of students, secondly, specification of benchmarks, critical incidents and key priority indicators, then thirdly development of competency levels and scoring rubrics to access campus performance and progress in specified areas of diversity is recorded, fourthly, collection of information in detail, then fifthly, selection of information, sixthly, reviewing of portfolio, seventhly, developing meaning and finally integration (Ingle, 1994:40).

Thus this portfolio assessment helps in assessing diversity issues by charting campus progress at various stages and promotes diversity on campuses. Therefore, it is important to have theoretical approaches as a base to develop and analyse the issue of campus diversity.

SECTION III

Diversity And Higher Education

Diversity in higher education has also come to mean, however, not just the differences among and between people, but also the value and significance that a community places on particular community (Smith, 1995:7). A community in general refers to a set of interlocking or integrated functional and social sub-system based on economic, political, religious, ethical, educational, legal, social and

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other dimensions. Individuals in the society belong to one or other community and these communities supply students to the institutions of higher learning, which are inextricably linked with the society of which they are a part.

For thirty years, higher education has been addressing the issues of diversity world over. But early diversity efforts focussed on access to institution through affirmative action programmes with less attention paid to student experiences and perceptions on diversity issues in higher educational institutions, and to the institutional strategies and commitment to diversity on campus.

Tinto (1993) has noted in the preface to second edition of *Learning College* that interest in student persistence exploded in late 1980s as enrollment at many institutions of higher education in America began to decline. Recently, the focus of the diversity issues have broadened on the institutional changes necessary to truly educate a diverse population of students for the society in which we live (Appel, Cartwright, K Smith, 1993:1). Appel et al (1993) believe that many programmes now focus on institutional changes based on the assumption that these changes will ultimately serve the interests of the students-either indirectly, by creating an institution that is truly prepared to educate a diverse population of students; or directly, by

providing all students the skill and experiences necessary for leadership in a diverse society. These diversity efforts simultaneously focuses on developing practices and programmes that address an increasingly diverse population while also incorporating fundamental institutional change. Thus the diversity and higher education can influence each other positively.

Edgar F. Beckham brings out the interlinkages between diversity and higher education as follows (2000:4-5)

- Diversity and educational linkages must involve primary and secondary as well as tertiary institutions

- Diversity includes working to redress the disadvantages resulting from differences in power and positions with in hierarchy

- Faculty need to be more involved in defining institutional mission. Institution must be imbued with democratic values.

- Diversity cannot end with curriculum, with numbers or with resolution of access issues, it is also about ethos.

- To address diversity issues, educational institutions need to be more collegial and less hierarchy

- Diversity can positively depoliticise caste in educational hierarchy.

In the Indian context, Nayak (1999:177) holds the view that the diversity initiatives transform society by engaging its many divisions, differences and disparities in our midst through the educational process. She goes on to say that to educate young people in a situation that is not linked with the human conditions around is not the goal of educational institution. According to Nayak, diversity is an inclusive term that embraces all the Indian Society stratified by divisions of caste, class, religion, region, language and gender. It also includes the disadvantaged section of the population, including the lower castes, members of minority religion such as Islam, Christianity, etc. and women who have not received their fair share of the benefits of education (Inderasen, 2000:53). Moolchand Sharma (2000) holds view that affirmative action policies in higher education as an instrument to enhance diversity as a powerful source and also as an agent of transformation and change. The founding fathers considered affirmative action as method of creative social engineering and a way of eliminating the traditional caste hierarchy and hence this polity has had a major redistribute effects (Sharma, 2000:177).

These affirmative action schemes described above have been partly responsible for the steady increase in the number of students form backward classes who reach the institutions of education. By the

1961 Census, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes accounted for closer to 1 percent of nation's graduates whereas by 1993, the percentage of students belonging to these categories exceeded 10 percent (MHRD, 1993-94)

Secularism is another key element for diversity and hence Radha Krishnan Report sees secularism as an enabling device but it is not 'an irreligious or anti-religious policy, it does not belittle the importance as such' (Radhakrishnan, 1950:300). Where as Kothari Commission Report suggest for a tolerant study of religions in such away that citizens can understand each other better and live amicably together. Thus, Indian higher education attempts to realise the goals of the Indian Constitution, primarily the diversity for all positive and constructive purposes.

SECTION IV

Review of Literature

Since the studies in India about 'campus diversity' in higher education are negligible, the studies conducted on the 'theme' in some other multicultural societies else where in the world are included for a review of literature. For instance Astin (1993) uses data from the Higher Education Research Institute to examine questions of how institutional policies on diversity and multiculturalism, faculty

emphases on diversity, and direct involvement in "diversity experiences" influence various students. Astin found that the emphasis on institutional diversity is strongly associated with cultural awareness and commitment in promoting racial understanding. He concludes from the result that, a strong emphasis on diversity in the institution and its faculty and an opportunity for students to take course on multicultural issues and to interact with others belonging to different cultures are all associated with positive outcomes in most general education programs.

Stage and Hamrick (1994) propose a model for developing and practicing activities in the college campus to foster an appreciation for and volleying of diversity. Building on a model of moral development, the author illustrate how a campus can turn its words into deeds in dealing with issues of diversity. Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedd and Teranzini (1996) conducted a multi institutional study sought to determine the factors influencing student' responses to diversity during first year of college. Authors concluded the controlling for student background characteristics and other confounding influences, a non-discriminatory racial environment, on campus residence, participation in a racial & cultural awareness work shop, and extent of involvement with diverse peers had positive

effects on openness to diversity. Conversely, Greek affiliation had a negative effect.

Nora and Carbora (1996) assessed the role of perceptions and discrimination in college persistence. The study showed that minorities and non-minorities alike perceived a negative campus climate, discriminatory attitude held by faculty and staff, and negative racial experience in the classroom. Authors concluded the prejudice and discrimination negatively effected the adjustment of minority students. Hurtado (1992) discusses the impact of diversity in higher education on teaching and learning. Author concludes that the growth of a diverse student population leads to increased research on learning styles, emphasis on quantitative and scientific literary, and new research on students' issues in learning. Fischer and Hartmann (1995) initiated a study regarding the quality of African American students and their overall social experience in a predominantly white campus. The study explored the importance of making friends of other ethnicities of the 102 African-American students, 74 percent said it increased their potential for adjustment on the predominantly white campus and their potential for success. The study noted that a students social life and opportunities are strongly affected by his/her racial back ground.

Gillard (1996) studied the impact of campus racial climate on the success of African American and white students in six predominantly white mid western-colleges and universities. The study concludes that an institutional climate that supports and affirms people from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds is important for the success of all students.

Moolchand Sharma (2000) studied affirmative action policies in higher education and analyses how this commitment made an attempt to integrate the historically disadvantaged and excluded population, i.e. scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, in to mainstream of national life. He observed that, although a steady increase in the enrollment of students from scheduled castes, tribes in higher education has occurred, it India has for centuries been a truly pluralistic, heterogeneous multiethnic, society. However, in recent years, Indian society has been shaken up. A sharply increased awareness of group identities has led to conflicts. Long standing hierarchies of caste, religion, region and language are challenges. In this context, campus diversity research on understanding the role of diversity in a multi-cultural society like India would be significant.
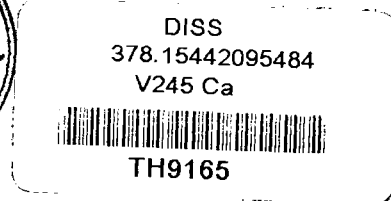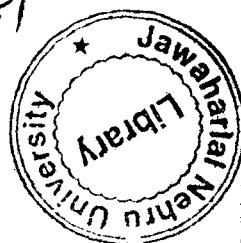
Significance of the Study

Recent attempts to assimilte the diverse cultures are resulting in sharp differences among various caste and religious communities and threatens the fabric of higher educational in the county. Also caste polarizations has become a very sensitive issue on the campuses. Reservation based on caste has become a major source of tension. In 90's Indian colleges has been a violent anti-mandal and pro-mandal agitations which affected the campuses. Even in a central university like JNU the introduction of admission policy which provides 27% reservation to OBCs and gender deprivation points for girl students led to heavy tension.

Therefore, it is in this context, this study is pertinent because of the reason that diversity on the college campuses impel to prepare students and institutions for a future in which diversity of our communities and institutions is widely recognized as a powerful source of social transformation and pluralistic democracy.

Broad Objectives:

1 To inquire into nature of relationships established between students living in an institute of higher education

2 To examine whether diversity affects the campus life

3 To examine the role of the institution and its commitment in promotion of diversity on the campus.

Specific objectives:

1. to study the institutional policies, programmes, strategies in approaching the issue of diversity on the campus.

2. To study socio-cultural composition/diversity profile of institution

3. To study the perception of the students on the issues of diversity on their campus.

Hypothesis:

1. The ideals of the institution enriches the diversity on the campus

2. The institutional policies, programmes, strategies and its commitment, nurtures positively the issues of diversity on the campus

3. The perceptions of the students on issues of diversity on the campus is positively influenced by the institutional commitment to diversity.

Description of the Institution Selected for the Study

Sri Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) Puttaparthy, Andhra Pradesh founded by Sri Satya Sai Baba, was inaugurated on November 22, 1981. It is an autonomous body accredited to and recognised as a deemed university by the Ministry

of Human Resources Development (MHRD) of the Government of India and University Grants Commission (UGC).

The Institute claims that students of the institute are from all parts of the country and also from abroad, and belongs to diverse religious groups, linguistic groups, caste, class, race, etc., and are encouraged to conduct themselves in the light of highest principles of integrity in all academic activities and extra curricular programmes. Institute seeks to shape students to be sensitive and to be aware of the problems of the people living around them in society. A major focus of education at the institute in addition to academic excellence is the development of correct attitudes and values which will shape them to be leaders in scientific, civic and professional enterprise. The institute has a band of highly competent and motivated faculty members drawn from different parts o the country. The teacher-student ratio, which in spontaneous national integration and hence an open admission policy, purely based on merit, encouraging enrollment of boys and girls, irrespective of income, class, creed, religion and region.

Sample

A total number of 52 students who belonged to third year under-graduation, B.A and B.Sc, are selected for recording their

perceptions on Campus diversity. All these students have already experienced two years of campus life in the Institute and have undergone a thorough training and hence they are selected as a sample.

An interview schedule is used to record the students perceptions on campus diversity. The interviews were held at the institute almost every day from 01/02/2001 to 20/02/2001. Researcher visited the college and classroom premises, and observed classroom interactions and group behaviour in the campus. Also, researcher visited the hostels, play ground, gymnasium, laboratory and library to have a detailed discussion in line with the interview schedule.

Operationalisation of the Term 'Diversity':

Diversity on the Campus and within Indian society could be operationalised in terms of several factors like:

1. Religion, 2. Caste, 3. Family, 4. Class, 5. Language, 6. Region, 7. Rural/Urban

Thus students' diversity profile could be viewed from the above dimensions.

Chapterization:

The chapter I introduces the conceptual and theoretical perspectives on diversity and higher education along with the review

of literature available. The chapter II describes the higher education scenario in India and also the complex issues of diversity in the Indian Society. It tries to focus on the relevance of understanding diversity in contemporary higher education system Chapter III provides the institutional philosophy and profile of the institution selected for study. Chapter IV analyses the diversity profile of the students and their perceptions on diversity. Chapter V provides the summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER II

DIVERSITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

This chapter focuses on diversity and higher education in India. It explores the linkages between diversity and higher education and the location of diversity issues in Indian higher education. This chapter also examines the role of higher education in preparing students to live effectively amidst diversity.

When the educational enterprises in any society shifts its concern from social continuity to social change in the context of diversity, then it would be feasible in enquire, to what extent does education aim to promote and celebrate the diversity (Craft: 1982). As a matter of fact, Suma Chitnis holds the view that 'education should produce real opportunities for employment, Political empowerment, upward mobility, and improved socio economic status'. (2000:16). But in reality how far these goods of education are realized is debatable. Hence in this context an overview of the diversity in the current Indian context and also the higher education system in India would help to understand the intricacies of this very pertinent issue.

Diversity in Current Indian Context

A brief portrait of the current Indian society may help to illustrate the dynamics of diversity in Indian context. One feature that is most often noticed about India is its unity. In diversity and this overworked cliché has become a part of India's self identity (Dube, 1990:29). Analyzing the concept of diversity in India society, Dr. Zakir Hussain writers,

> "Indian population it self is a conglomerate of variety; variety in its ethnic expressions, languages, beliefs cultural patterns, social composition and so on cited in Radhey Mohan (ed.), (1984).

India's population as on 1 March 1991, stood at 846.30 million (India, 2000: 9.7), composed of people belonging to different languages, following various customs and traditions in different regions and vary extensively in their food habits and dress codes and 74.3 percent of population lives in rural India.

In a multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual, pluralistic society like India, belonging to a particular community is an intrinsic part of very individual's identity (Indiresan: 1999: 129). Indiresan notes that individuals can have affiliation to several communities at the same time based on various permutations and combinations of caste,

religion, region, language etc. Thus people having multiple identities

can be illustrated as in the below figure:

Figure: 2 Diversity and Multiple Identities
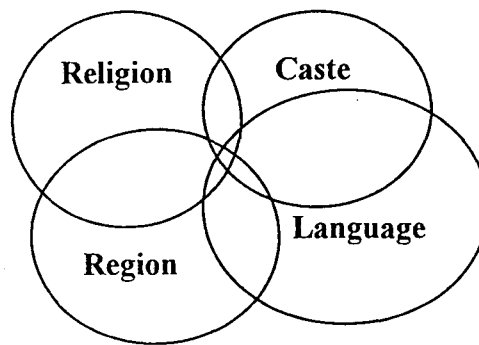
The following are the diversities that are generally identified in

the Indian society by sociologists:

Caste:

The number of castes, and sub castes in modern India has been

estimated to be in the order of 2000 to 3000 ranging from small

groups of few individuals to large groups numbering few millions.

(India, 2000: 14) Scheduled castes constitute 16.48 percent and

Scheduled Tribes are 0.80 percent of the total population (India, 1991,

Series 1, p.2 of 1992, final population totals).

Rural and Urban Population:

According to 1991 census, 629 million people resides in rural areas and 218 millions in Urban centres forming 74.3 and 25.7 percent respectively.

Religions:

In India, according to the data available on Census of India series, paper I of 1995 (Religion) the percentages of the major religions are as follows: Hindus: 82.41; Muslim: 11.67; Buddhist: 0.77; Jains: 0.41; others 0.43

Languages:

India is a multi lingual society with eighteen official languages with different scripts. 1991 Census Report reveals that Hindi is spoken by 39.85 percent of the population and remaining speak their own regional languages.

Gender:

Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per thousand males (India, 2000: 7) in 1991, there were 927 females against 1000 males.

Thus, diversity in India is rich resource and can be a powerful source for development if channelised in a proper manner. Diversity can become a source of strength, and not of conflict only if all linguistic,

cultural, religious and caste groups are provided equal opportunities just not equal rights (Engineer, 2000). According Indiresan (1990) diversity by itself is not an issue. It not only provides a certain identity, but is also linked to ascribed status. According to Talcott Parsons, the decisive factor is the ' socio-economic status of child's family. Since, ascribed status is hierarchical in nature, making certain identities superior and others relatively inferior. So, in Indian society where caste and class are considered to be a social reality, family's caste and class are reflected in the students who form groups in the campus just as in the case of larger society. Thus college can be viewed as a microcosm of the society.

DIVERSITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Higher Education in India : An Overview

Higher education refers to education in post–higher secondary institutions – colleges and universities (Shukla, 1964: 174). Soedtmoko (1997) views that it is higher education, firstly, because it constitutes the top most state of formal education and more importantly, because it is concerned with processes in the more advanced phases of human learning.

India 's higher education system, one of the largest in the world, has been tremendous growth in the country's five decades of

independence. At the fine of independence in 1947, there were only twenty university and 500 colleges in the country. After independence , there has been an exponential increase in all these numbers. There has been a twelve fold increase in the number of university and twenty fold increase in the number of colleges.

Table 2

Growth of Higher Education Institutions in India

Year	Number of university	Number of Deemed universities	Number of colleges
1970-71	84	9	3604
1980-81	112	11	4722
1990-91	142	29	7121
1998-99	195	42	110089

Source : UGC Annual report (1998-99)

Student enrolment in to the institutions of higher education has been tremendous growth in the country's five decades of independence. Students enrolment has risen from 4.1 lakh in 1950 to 60.14 lakh in 1994 (UGC – Annual Report: 1998-99) At the beginning of the year 1999 – 2000 the total number of students enrolled in the universities and colleges was 78.18 lakh where as 12.25 lakh in university departments and 61.93 lakh in the affiliated colleges . Eighty percent of the total enrolment was encentrated in the three faculties i.e. Arts :40% , Science: 20% and commerce 20%

while the remaining 20% was absorbed by professional faculties .

Enrolment of at the degree level was 65.20 lakh (87-9 percent), at the

P.G level 7.25 (9.8 percent) and the remaining at research and

diploma/ certificate level.

Table 2.1

All India Growth of Student Enrolment

Year	Enrolment	Increase over Preceding decade
1978	26,18,228	6,52,368
1978-79	42,85,489	16,67,251
1998-99	74,17,968	31,32,479

Source: UGC Annual Report : 1998-99.

Generally, Indians perceive their cultural identity as essentially

composite, which emphasizes the importance, of tolerance,

accommodation and coexistence. Scholars such as M.N. Srinivas

(1967), Yogendra Singh (1973,1986) have pointed out that tolerance

and respect for the views and feelings of others have been hallmarks

of Indian culture for centuries.

Indiresan (2000) observes that religion, gender, region,

language caste, socio- economic background, are divisive factors in

the campuses of higher education in India. The summary of her

findings reveal that, although several religions have co-existed in

India for centuries and increasing trends of communal inter- religious clashes, mainly influenced by political vested interest. However, religion is not identified as a major factor of conflict in campuses of higher education. But religion plays a crucial role of vote bank in the students' union elections.

With regard to the gender, Indiresan (2000) observes that women continue to be concentrated in traditionally feamle-oriented courses. Except in metropolitan colleges, female students do not mix freely with male students, and they keep a low profile, even in co-educational colleges. Also ' eve teasing' a form of sexual harassment, is a real problems in some college campuses.

Regional identity is also a significant divisive factor. General hostility and lack of interaction existed between regionally diverse groups in the institutions of higher education in India. However, regional identity is closely linked to the language identity. Further, there is an additional divide between English speaking, upper class, urban students and lower class students who speak regional languages. Sharma (2000) observes that the caste and socio-economic background of students are dividing the campuses into "haves" and "have not". Indiresan (2000) observes that the Urban, upper caste students come from better socio-economic backgrounds, have been

educated in English –medium schools, are well informed, possess good communication skills and have the confidence that accompanies all the these advantages. The rural students who are generally from backward areas, have been interested in the vernacular medium and, are less informed, have poor communication skills, and often suffer from low self –esteem.

Interestingly, in the context of religious diversity and its linkages with education, Ouelett (1985) opined that religions should appear as a secular subject, clearly distinct from traditional religious instruction and its objectives should be comparable to those of other disciplines of science. This would enhance the tolerance of students towards other religions. In this context, it is worth mentioning Radhakrishnan Report (1950), which sees secularism as an enabling device to enhance the tolerance of the students towards other religions. The Report advocates that 'it is in the detached atmosphere of the academic institution that we can study, analyze and eliminate the prejudices and misunderstandings, which disfigure inter-religious relations. The recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Commission are that firstly, students in all educational institutions should start with a few minutes of silent meditation, secondly, that in the First year of under-graduation course, the lives of great leaders be taught;

and thirdly, that this should be followed by studies in the universalistic character of all religions and discussions in the philosophy of religion (1950:30). Even, the recent attempts to saffronise education stimulated the 'intellectual community as well as educationalist. This led to the educational views like hindu majoritiarianism should not reflect in the education system and hence education should be dealt in a secular way.

Equality, Diversity and Higher Education

In a democratic society, access to higher education must be linked to equity (Sharma, 2000:124). The diversity initiatives in Indian higher education can be viewed from the decades following the Independence, where a special commitment was emphasized to raise educational levels among those, who had previously been denied access to education. The obligation of the state is clearly articulated in the Constitution, particularly in the Preamble, Parts III and IV, and in various policy announcements made by the State and the Judiciary (Sharma: 2000).

The Radhakrishnan Report (1950) saw the university as an attempt to realize the goals of the Indian Constitution.

'The university was a hermeneutic institution that read and re-read and re-invented justice through the three

axes of liberty, equality and fraternity. (Radhakrishnan: 1950:247).

In Indian society, the diverse population groups identified for special treatment include Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes, women, groups identified as socially and educationally backward, and the handicapped. (Sharma: 2000).

The initiatives that are taken by the University Grants Commission which are in accordance with the one of the goals of Constitution of India i.e. social justice shall be highlightened to analyze the diversity issues in Indian higher education. Part XII of University Grants Commission's Annual Report: 1998-99 highlighted the facilities for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the handicapped and the disadvantaged sections of the society. To ensure effective implementation of the reservation policy for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, the Commission provides financial assistance to universities/deemed universities for the establishment of SC/ST cells (1998-99). Under this scheme, the Commission provides some staff positions for the work of the SC/ST cells. Thus, as on 31-3-99, the report says that total number of SC/ST cells in universities and deemed universities was 103. Also a Standing Committee for the Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes has been constituted by the

commission to oversee the implementation of the reservation policy in the university. The reservation policy of the Government of India provides reservation to the extent of 15% and 7.5% for SC/STs. Moreover, UGC Reports from time to time say that, the Programme Monitoring Committee monitors the implementation of the reservation policy in central and deemed to be universities. In this context, Sharma (2000) finds it significant, as the Government of India, through University Grants Commission and Ministry of Human Resource Development, is committed to remove the disparities and equalizing educational opportunities in higher education. These measures, as stated in UGC Annual Reports (1991-99), include a wide array of preferential schemes, including reservation of seats, relaxation of admission qualification for getting admissions into the institutes of higher education, special entitlements such as scholarships, grants and free books, and special services, including extra hours of teaching and special academic coaching classes.

The affirmative action schemes described above have been responsible for the steady increase in the enrollment of the students from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in higher education. Sharma (2000) opines that this reservation policy has not met the expectations, the reasons, which, includes poor economic and social

conditions, the rural origins of most disadvantaged candidates, lack of encouragement and the intense competitiveness in higher education. Hence, UGC has introduced a scheme called "Remedial Coaching for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the universities and colleges", (Annual Report, 1995-96). The Report says the main purpose of the scheme is to improve the academic skills and the linguistic proficiency of these students, with poor economic and social conditions, in subjects involving qualitative techniques and laboratory work.

Moreover, it is interesting to observe that in 1998-99 out of 71,00,442 students enrolled in higher education only 6,32,689 students belonged to Scheduled Caste and 2,20,391 students belonged to Scheduled Tribes (M.H. R.D. Annual Report 1999).

Table 2.2

Enrollments	1993	1994	1995
Students enrollment at different levels of higher education	4,902,198	5,124,685	5,853,464
Enrollment of Scheduled Caste students at different levels of higher education	416,946 (8.51%)	458,528 (8.93%)	533,264 (9.4%)
Scheduled Tribe students at different levels of higher education	136,686 (2.7%)	162,818 (3.5%)	181,311 (3.2%)
Combined percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes in higher education	11.2%	12.03%	12.31%

Source: MHRD, Selected Educational Statistics (1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96).

The table 2.2 shows that from 1993 to 1995, there is an increase in the enrollment of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students in higher education, but only in decimals when calculated in percentages.

In summary, the various initiatives that have been launched during the past four decades, including reservations and the provisions of special services and facilities, have helped socially and educationally backward classes to achieve "access' to higher education.

Thus, managing diversity presents both an opportunity and a challenge. Diversity 'offers teachers, opportunities to use the classroom as a workshop for exploring contemporary sociological issues with students from varied social background' (Indiresan, 2000:68). The challenge, which diversity has to manage, is that it has to diversify the higher education and build the capacity of students to address the issues of diversity.

The next chapter attempts to describe the institutional philosophy and profile of Sri Satya Institute of Higher Learning, which is selected for the study.

CHAPTER III

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

This chapter deals with the philosophy and profile of the institution selected for the study. As mentioned earlier, the institution selected for the study is Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSHIL), Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh a deemed to be University. Part A of the chapter provides the genesis, philosophy and activities of the Institute. Part B of the chapter deals with the statistical profile of the Institute under the study.

Part A

History, Philosophy and Activities

Every educational institute has its own historical background as to when and how the institute has been setup, which explains the establishment of the institute. Against such a backdrop it is interesting to understand the historical dynamics of SSSHIL.

Genesis:

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL)[1] was founded on November 22nd 1981, by Sri Satya Sai Baba. It has been

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[1] SSSHIL would be used hereafter instead of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

recognized by the University Grants Commission as an autonomous, deemed to be university[2]. The Institute has been admitted as a regular member of the Association of Indian Universities in 1986. (SSSIHL information handbook: 2001)

SSSIHL is one such Deemed University among 42 Deemed Universities in India. SSSIHL grew out of the colleges founded earlier by Sri Satya Sai Baba from 1968 onwards. But it was only in 1981 that SSSIHL was recognised as a deemed university. The Institute is scattered at three different places and serves the needs of students of higher education in those regions as well as adjoining states.

The campuses of this institute are:

Prashantinilayam Campus, Puttaparti, Ananthapur Andhra Pradesh.

This is the headquarters of SSSIHL. Policymaking and policy decisions are made here. This campus is meant for boys. It does not only have specialised research and computer facilities, but also the central library, the planetarium, and the museum of eternal heritage. Administration building is located in this campus only.

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[2] A deemed University: Section 3 of UGS act provides for declaring an institution of higher education other than a university to be a deemed university and when such an institution is deemed as University, the UGC act applied on it, as a University within the meaning of Section 2f of the act.

Sri Satya Sai Women's College of SSSIHL, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh.

This institute is exclusively meant for women and is located on the outskirts of Anantapur town of Andhra Pradesh.

Brindavan Campus, WhiteFields, Bangalore.

This campus is located in Bangalore city and is a boys' campus.

Educational Philosophy of SSSIHL:

The Founder as well as the Chancellor Sri Sathya Sai Baba is of the view that:

'Education is the basis for leading a purposeful life in the physical world in the realm of the mind and in society. Real education should enable one to realise that mankind is one Family and should help one to experience the unifying forces amidst diversities in the society'. (SSSIHL information Handbook : 2000:39).

Sri Sai Baba declared that 'Education is for life and not for making a living'. (SSSIHL, 1998:8). Paresuraman in a book let Sai Vandana, observes that higher education institutions established by Sai Baba reflects the ideal of 'unity in diversity', where students from different parts of the world studying in this institute follow and practice the inspiring words of Sri Sai Baba (2000: 124) :

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"There is only one Caste, the Caste of Humanity.

There is only one language, the language of heart.

There is only one religion, the religion of love.

There is only one class, the class of human services. "

The Institute believes in the ideals which are universal human values like "Sathya : Truth; Dhrama:Righteousness; Prema:Love; Shanti:Peace; Ahimsa:Non-Violence." The institute proclaims that these values helps in developing personality of the students as well as overall behaviour, their outlook i.e., the way of looking at the diversities in the society as well as in their classroom.

The Emblem

Every Institute/University has an emblem of its own which is symbolic presentation – in it's quintessential form-of it's aspirations, ideals & philosophies. The emblem represents the five symbols of the basic philosophy of the five religions encompassed by one circle, i.e. religion of love.

The symbols of religions are as follows

Fire	: Parsis
Wheel	: Buddhism
Cross	: Christianity
Crescent and The Star	: Islam
(Aum) Pranava	: Hinduism

The stambha i.e. Pillar with the lotus on the top of it signifies not only the unity of religions but also sets as a goal the blossoming of human personality into it's totality. The symbolic meaning of the place in which Institutes headquarters is located i.e. Prashanthi Nilayam – means through universal religious tolerance of religion and there it is abode of peace.

Life and Activities at SSIHL

To analyze the diversity aspects of the institute it is important to signify the distinctive features of SSSIHL, which are as follows:

1. RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE INSTITUTE:

All the three campuses of the institute have hostels, which are of dormitory style. A group of 8-12 students are accommodated in spacious rooms, and students with different social backgrounds are randomly allotted the rooms. Living in these dormitories helps the students not only in understanding the viewpoints of others but also to co-exist and co-operate with other students and live amicably. (NIEPA, 2000). Thus, the Institute believes that diversity on the campus is sustained and nourished in this kind of community living, where senior students automatically assume the role of elder brothers-guiding their juniors in the light of their own experience. The interaction patterns of

students with diverse social backgrounds is in turn facilitated by the mechanisms like:

a) **Sick Pantry:**

Constituted by a group of students voluntarily to serve the sick students. Here the pantry caters to the students who are suffering from fever and other ailments. The sick pantry keeps track of the diseases that are seasonal and scientifically evolves the menu to suit the needs of the students based on their ailments.

b.)**Medical Apprenticeship:**

Here students who are in Bio-Sciences work in conducting simple medical examinations like blood tests, urine tests, etc under the doctor's supervision. This develops a sense of belongingness, caring for others and service attitude in the students.

c.)**Gardening:**

Another group of students take care of beautifying the gardens in the campus. Here, students work in teams and develop team spirit as well as motivation to accomplish their tasks in time with respect to gardening.

2. Study Teams:

Students who are weak in academics are teamed up with those who are relatively stronger in such a way as to help them assimilate with other students who are better in their studies.

Also, mess committee, sanitation committee, departmental stores are managed by the students by the students themselves which allow more interaction and interrelations between the students of various social backgrounds. Moreover, the role of resident teachers who stay under the same roof as the students help students to experience more interaction with teachers and to approach teachers for help, guidance and general counseling. In a single day, the student spends almost 65% of time in the hostel (NIEPA, 2000:14).

3. Free Education:

The institute does not charge any type of fees- tuition fees, laboratory fees, library fees, examination fees, caution deposit or otherwise and hence allow the student from underprivileged and economically backward classes to avail of higher education at minimum expenditure. (SSSIHL, 2000:2). This helps in sustaining the diversity where students from lower economic classes can get admission.

4. Open Admission Policy:

This enables students from all over the country to seek admission to various courses, irrespective of, income, class, creed, religion or region making it truly national in character.

5. Merit Based Selection:

Selection is made through a very comprehensive testing and interview procedure giving adequate weightage to intellectual attainment and intuitive insight. Open admission policy is complemented through admission test procedure, where objective type questions are asked to test the knowledge of the students in their own discipline. A qualifying test of general English is also conducted.

6. English As Medium Of Instruction:

Since students come from various linguistic backgrounds, English is made the medium of instruction. Students who are weak in English are given special attention to cope up.

7.Action Packed Day:

The activities of the three residential campuses starts from 5am in the morning and goes on till 10 pm in the evening and is packed with a variety of curricular and co-curricular activities. Participation in these activities supposed to be developing in them the correct

perspective and a balanced view of attaining physical, emotional, psychic, intellectual and intuitional perfection.

8.Interaction with the Society and Neighbourhood:

The institute seeks to shape students who are sensitive to and aware of the problems of the people living around them in the society. (NIEPA, 2000:15). Students visit the village communities around the campus and do medical/health campaigning to educate their villages about the importance of maintaining hygienic conditions with regard to drinking water and food habits. Also students attend educational campaigning to encourage the members of village communities to attain minimum literacy levels. Through this social work, extension programs, students learn to help the poor, the unfortunate, the disabled and the sick.

9. Awareness Programs:

One of the unique features of this institute is the 'Awareness Courses'. Students in the institute come from different places and different regional, cultural and social backgrounds (NIEPA, 2000:26). Awareness Courses like *'Unity of Religions and Faiths'*, *'Ethos and Values and their Relevance in the Current Milieu'* and *'Philosophy of Education'*, etc, sensitise students to diversities that exists in the

society. These programs enhance the students' understanding about plural societies and democratic culture of the countries like India.

10. Participatory Instruction:

The methodology of instruction adopted includes: Dialogue, Panel Discussions, Skits, Group Presentations of various kinds, sessions devoted to situation analysis etc. Thus the unique features of this Institute make it a distinctive one and is distinguished from the conventional Institutes of higher education.

A study conducted by National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration NIEPA observes that the best practices in higher education of SSSHIL as follows:

- an upto date and well balanced curriculum, meant to avoid stuffing of the brain with information but promoting a spirit of enquiry based on the current levels of knowledge.

- teaching methods, imparting the right values, aimed at promoting the learning capabilities and facilitating total awareness.

- an examination system which brings out the best in the students and makes a continuous assessment of his comprehension in stead of making it a stressful one shot operation.

- Co-curricular and extra curricular activities like yoga, music, sports, and group activities which promote team and community spirit instead of merely stressing individual excellence.

- full residential nature of the course, which ensures a holistic approach to the content and method of imparting education.

Thus the interplay of these elements results in a healthy amalgam of distinct character, self-confidence and love for the community in the finished product, i.e., the student. (NIEPA, 2000:32).

PART B

Statistical Profile of Students and Teachers

The Institution selected for the study is the Prashantahi Nilayam campus for boys at Puttaparthy, Andhra Pradesh. The college offers undergraduate, postgraduate and professional courses as mentioned below (SSSIHL, 1998):

BA (History, Economics, Political Science), B.Sc. (Hons.) Mathematics

B.Sc (Hons)Physics, B.Sc(hons)Chemistry, B.Sc (Hons) Biosciences

Post Graduate Courses

MA (English), M.Sc (Mathematics), M.Sc (Chemistry), M.Sc (Bio-Sciences)

Professional Courses

MBA, MFM, M.Tech(Computer Science)

Students admitted in the B.Sc (Hons) course will ,during the first two years be given a pertinent, broad-based training; the third year is set apart for specialisation in a particular subject.

Current Enrolment of students in Institutes (SSSIHL)

Table 3.1 shows that the total strength of the institute which is spread in three campuses of Anantapur, Puttaparthy and Brindavan. It may be understood from the table that the Puttaparthi Campus has almost all the UG and PG courses whereas Anantapur and Brindavan Campus have only UG courses. The Number of UG students enrolled in Puttaparthy is much less compared to other two campuses, which enrolled considerable number of UG students. Puttaparthy campus enrolled 143 students in Undergraduate courses and 115 students in Post Graduate courses. Professional courses such as MBA M.Tech and MFM registered an enrollment of 52, 22 and 36 respectively. Interestingly the stress on research seems to be less when we look at the number of Ph.D students admitted in the institute there is only 1 enrolled in Prashanti Nilayam, 4 in Anantapur in the year 1998-99.

Table 3.1

Total strength the students at SSSIHL (1998-1999)

Programs	Prashantahi Nilayam Campus	Anatapur Campus	Brindavan Campus	Total
UG	143	389	270	802
PG	115	31	0	146
MBA	52	0	0	52
MFM	36	0	0	36
B.ED	0	23	0	23
M.TECH	22	0	0	22
PH.D	1	4	0	5
Total	369	447	270	1086

Source: SSSIHL: An Overview: 1998-99.

It is to be noted that the institute is said to have dropout rates minimal and hardly 2 to 3 students drop out of any of the above said courses.

The education system of SSSIHL proves the feasibility of a viable model for a total reorientation to university level education. (NIEPA, 2000:32).

The actual enrolment of students in various subjects of undergraduation in Pattaparthy Campus is shown in table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Actual Enrolments of Students in under graduation at Prashanti Nilayam campus, Puttaparthy

Year	BA HEP	BSc MPC	BSc Bio Sc	BSc MES	Total
1994-95	12	21	12	7	52
1995-96	10	20	14	8	56
1996-97	11	22	0	7	40
1997-98	8	24	0	9	41
1998-99	11	21	8	12	52
1999-2000	8	23	13	8	52
2000-01	8	24	12	8	52

Source: Annual Reports: SSSIHL 1994-2000.
Note: Groups: HEP: History, Economics & Political Sc.
MPC: Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry.
Bio Sc.: Bio Sciences & Chemistry.
MES: Mathematics, Economics & Statistics.

Table 3.2 shows that the enrolment of students in under graduation courses is steady from time to time. It may be observed that the sciences intake is more when compared to arts. The intake of MPC usually varied between 21 and 24 students, Bio Sciences between 8 and 12, MES between 7 and 12 students from 1994 to 2001. Throughout the years except 97 and 98 the intake of the students for

undergraduate programs varied between 52 and 56 except for 97 and 98.

It may be observed that the number of students enrolled in BA (HEP) declined from 12 to 8 in 2000-01. Again, in the years 1996 and 1998, Biological sciences students were not at all enrolled. Interestingly the total enrolments of students across all subjects remained the same in all the years from 1994 –95 to 2000-01 with an exception in 1996-97 and 1997-98.

For instance intake of the students for undergraduate courses in Prashanti Nilayam campus alone is consistent and varied between 50 & 54 intake of students every year.

The enrolment of students in three consecutive decades in Prashanti Nilayam campus is shown in the table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Enrolments In BA and B.Sc.

Year	BA	BSc	Total
1981-82	12	30	42
1991-92	13	40	53
2000-01	10	42	52

Table 3.3 shows that in 1981-82, there were 12 students in BA and 30 students in BSc. In 1991-92 the number of BA students is 13 and and BSc being 40. In 2000-01, there are 10 BA students and 42 B.Sc students.

Total Number of Teachers

The institute claims a very favorable teacher-pupil ratio for closer rapport between students and faculty. The faculty is well qualified and has 73 Ph.D degrees. The teachers come from all over the country having diversified backgrounds, socially as well as discipline wise.

Table 3.4

Strength of teachers

Category	Total Strength	Male	Female
Professor	12	9	3
Reader	30	21	9
Lecturer	52	38	14
Total	95	69	26

Table 3.4 shows that there are 12 professors, 30 readers and 52 lecturers. Among the professors 9 are male and three are females.

Among readers, 21 are males and 9 are female. There are 38 male lecturers and 14 female lecturers. The total number of male teachers is 69 against 26 female teachers.

This chapter described the institutional Philosophy, campus life and activities at the Prashanti Nilayam Campus in Puttaparthy. It also presented a profile of actual student enrolments across the three campuses, enrolment in various subjects of study and the strength of the teachers. The next chapter looks into the diversity profile of the sample selected for the study and the perceptions of students on various aspects of Campus Diversity.

CHAPTER IV

DIVERSITY PROFILE AND PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS ON CAMPUS DIVERSITY

This chapter is divided into two parts. The Part A of the chapter presents the diversity profile of students selected for the sample in Sir Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning at Puttaparthy Campus. The Part B attempts to describe their perceptions on various dimensions of diversity in the campus.

Diversity profile may be interpreted as nothing but a set of background variables. These variables constitute a variety of identities a student may bring to the educational institution, which provides for interaction of various sets of identities among its constituent members- students, teachers and non-teaching staff. This aspect is of great significance particularly in institutions which admit students irrespective of their backgrounds or identities and promote heterogeneity. In a way the open admission policy of institution makes a conscious attempt to bring a wide variety of student groups to the campus in order to facilitate an understanding, appreciation and celebration of diversity. As mentioned earlier, it is important to take note of these heterogeneities in a multi-cultural society such as India.

PART- A

Diversity Profile of the Students

The diversity profile of the students included in the sample includes components like regional, religious, linguistic, caste, rural-urban, medium of instruction, and socio-economic diversities. The composition of the students in terms of their socio-economic backgrounds include variables such as education of father and mother, occupation of father and mother and family income.

1. Regional Diversity

The distribution of students in terms of the regions they come from is shown in the table 4.1. In a total number of 52 under-graduate students from B.A/B.Sc. Third Year batch, representation is there from all parts of the country.

Table 4.1

Distribution of students in terms of their region.

Region	BA	MPC	Bio.Sci	MES	Total
South	7	9	6	4	26
North	1	5	2	0	8
East	3	3	3	2	11
West	0	4	1	2	7
Total	11	21	12	8	52

Explanation of the Table codes:

B.A.- Bachelor of Arts.

MPC- Mathematics, Physics & Chemistry.

Bio. Sci.- Bio Sciences.

MES- Mathematics, Economics & Statistics.

Note: In all the rest of the tables the same abbreviations are used.

A large proportion of 26 students are from the South. There are 11 students from the East, 8 students from the North and 7 from the West. Class-wise distribution reveals that in B.A. there are 7 students from the South, 3 from the North, 1 from East and none from the West. Even in B.Sc., a large proportion of students are from the South. Also, students come from other regions except in M.Sc. classes where they come from the North. Thus, the Campus is represented by students from all four corners of the country, which makes the classrooms multi-regional.

2. Religious Diversity

The table 4.2 shows the distribution of the religious backgrounds of the students. Broadly, students come from Hindu, Christian and Hindu communities only.

Table 4.2

Distribution of students in terms of their religion

Religion	BA	MPC	Bio.Sci.	MES	Total
Hindu	10	18	11	8	47
Christian	1	0	1	0	2
Jain	0	3	0	0	3
Total	11	21	12	8	52

There are two students who are Christians, 3 are Jains and the majority of the class i.e. 47 students are Hindu. All the 3 Jain students are in MPC class. B.A. and Bio Sciences classes have one Christian student each. Therefore, though the student composition seem to be predominantly Hindu, it also has students from other religions as well. Though Muslims are not found in this sample, it is said that they are also present on the Campus.

3. Caste Diversity

The table 4.3 presents the distribution of students in terms of their caste backgrounds. A majority of 46 students are from the Forward castes, 4 from backward castes and one each from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In all the four classes, Forward caste students are in majority. There are two backward caste students in Bio Sciences and one each from MPC and MES classes. There is one

scheduled caste student in B.A. and one scheduled tribe student in MPC.

Table 4.3

Distribution of students in terms of their caste.

Caste	BA	MPC	Bio.Sci.	MES	Total
Scheduled Caste	1	0	0	0	1
Scheduled Tribe	0	1	0	0	1
Backward Caste	0	1	2	1	4
Forward Caste	10	19	10	7	46
Total	11	21	12	8	52

4. Rural-Urban Diversity

The table 4.4 describes the rural/urban backgrounds of the students based on their schooling upto class X and XII. Class X and class XII are very important in a student's career, as they may be terminal. After class X, one tends to select a particular discipline or subject for their higher studies. Similarly, class XII is also crucial as it may determine which stream of higher education a student can and may enter, namely, professional or liberal arts or pure sciences streams. Since these two stages of education are important, it is thought that their education in rural-urban area would also reveal

whether one got good education or not as almost good educational institutions may be located in an urban area.

Out of 52 students, 19 students studied their class X in rural schools and 33 students studied in urban schools.

Table 4.4

Rural-urban background of students in their classes X and XII.

School studied upto class X & XII	BA		MPC		Bio.Sci.		MES		Total	
	X	XII	X	XII	X	XII	X	XII	X	XII
Rural	5	3	5	1	4	2	5	2	19	8
Urban	6	8	16	20	8	10	3	6	33	44
Total	11	11	21	21	12	12	8	8	52	52

In B.A. class, 5 students completed their class X from a rural school and 6 from an urban school. In MPC class, significantly, a large of number of students studied in urban schools. In Bio Sciences 8 students went to an urban school and 4 to a rural school in order to complete their class X. Finally, in MES, 3 students are from urban areas as against 5 students who are from rural areas.

It may also be noted that a majority of students i.e. 44 students completed their class XII from urban schools as against only 8 from

rural school. This finding is significant because, as mentioned earlier, almost all good and higher level educational institutions are located in urban areas. So, many a times, a student may have to go to urban centers to complete their higher studies.

Interestingly, in B.A. class, there are only three students who did their class XII in a rural school. One in MPC, 2 each in Bio Sciences and MES completed their class XII from a rural school, in each. In each class, the majority proportion of students are from urban school at their XII class.

5. Linguistic Diversity

Though the Institute is located in Andhra Pradesh, it receives students from all over the country. It is the policy of the Institute to admit students from all over so that they can get exposure to different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The table 4.5 shows the linguistic diversity (mother tongue) of the students in the sample.

It may be found that 10 students each are from Telugu and Hindi language backgrounds. There are 9 students with Tamil with as mother tongue and 5 with Odiya. There are 4 students each from Malayalam, Bengali and Marathi. There are 3 students with Kannada as their mother tongue, and one student with Gujarati, Assamese and Manipuri respectively as their mother tongues.

Table 4.5

Distribution of students in terms of their mother tongue

Mother Tongue	BA	MPC	Bio.Sci.	MES	Total
Telugu	3	4	2	1	10
Tamil	2	3	3	1	9
Kannada	1	1	0	1	3
Malayalam	1	1	1	1	4
Odiya	1	2	1	1	5
Bengali	1	1	1	1	4
Hindi	1	6	2	1	10
Marathi	0	2	1	1	4
Gujarati	0	1	0	0	1
Assamese	0	0	1	0	1
Manipuri	1	0	0	0	1
Total	11	21	12	8	52

6. Diversity in Medium of Instruction

Diversity in terms of medium of instruction is very important as it can create a void between students from different media of instruction. Particularly, several studies have shown that there exists a gap between students from English medium and vernacular media of instruction in the institutes of higher education. Often, the students from vernacular medium are seen as inferior by those with English medium background. It is also found that in some campuses that this often leads to tensions and violence.

Table 4.6

Distribution of students in terms of medium of instruction.

Medium of Instruction at Class X and Class XII	BA		MPC		Bio.Sci.		MES		Total	
	X	XII	X	XII	X	XII	X	XII	X	XII
Telugu	2	2	2	0	2	1	1	0	7	3
Tamil	0	0	1	1	3	1	1	1	5	3
Kannada	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Malayalam	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Odiya	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3	1
Hindi	1	1	3	2	0	0	1	0	5	0
English	6	8	14	18	6	10	3	6	29	42
Total	11	11	21	21	12	12	8	8	52	52

The table 4.6 shows the medium of instruction of the students in class X and XII. It may be observed that 29 students are with English as a medium of instruction, 7 with Telugu, 5 each with Hindi and Tamil, 3 with Odiya, 2 with Kannada and 1 with Malayalam as their media of instruction in their class X.

Distribution in terms of class reveals that 6 students out of 11 B.A. students are with English as a medium of instruction in their class X. 14 students out of 21, 6 students out of 12 and 3 students out of 8 in MPC, Bio Sciences and MES respectively are with English as a medium of instruction in the class X.

The distribution of students in terms of their medium of instruction at class XII shows that there are 42 students with English as a medium of instruction. There are 3 students each from Telugu, Tamil and Hindi and one student with Odiya as a medium of instruction at class XII.

7. Socio Economic Background

'Socio-economic background' is a broad term, which includes those factors that are external to the educational system, but influence the educational prospects and interaction of the students. This term 'social background' is known in various ways, as for example, social class, family background, home environment, etc. For Douglas (1967) the term 'social class' is comprehensive in the sense that it includes various aspects of home environment and society, therefore, the data on socio-economic background of the students selected for the sample, was collected, so as to understand the social class nature of diversity in the institution.

The present study includes the education of father and mother, occupation of father and mother, and family income as critical variables in understanding the social class composition of the students.

(a) Education of Father

The table 4.7 shows, interestingly, the distribution of education of fathers, which shows that fathers of only three students are illiterate. Among those who are literate, father's of 19 students had school education, 20 had graduate education and 10 had post-graduate education. The father's education has major influences on students educational attainments. The primary socialisation that child undergoes in the family in the context of father's education would sensitise the attitudes of the child towards the larger societies which may be multi-cultural.

Table 4.7

Education of the Father

Education of Father	BA	MPC	Bio. Sci.	MES	Total
Illiterate	0	1	0	2	3
School	5	6	3	5	19
Graduate	5	7	7	1	20
Post-Graduate	1	7	2	0	10
Total	11	21	12	8	52

(b) Education of Mother

The table 4.8 shows that there are 9 literate mothers 28 school educated, 13 graduate mothers and 2 post-graduate mothers. It may be

noted that a majority of the mothers of students in science stream are school educated and a few are even graduates.

Table 4.8

Education of Mother

Education of Mother	BA	MPC	Bio. Sci.	MES	Total
Illiterate	3	4	1	1	9
School	5	10	7	6	28
Graduate	3	6	3	1	13
Post-Graduate	0	1	1	0	2
Total	11	21	12	8	52

(c) Occupation of Father

In table 4.9 it is found that there are 11 students whose fathers are small farmers (of 2-5 acres of land holdings), one student whose father is a landlord (with 6-12 acres of land holdings), fathers of 11 students are small businessmen with 20 to 40 thousand rupees turnover per month, and those of 5 students are medium businessmen with 80 thousand rupees turnover per month, it is also noted that the fathers of 6 students are working as clerks and those of 8 students are professionals like doctors, engineers, professors and lawyers etc. Fathers of 10 students are officers.

Table 4.9

Occupation of the Father

Occupation of the father	BA	MPC	Bio. Sci.	MES	Total
Small Farmers	2	4	2	3	11
Landlords	0	1	0	0	1
Small Business	4	2	2	3	11
Medium Business	0	3	1	1	5
Clerical	2	3	1	0	6
Professional	2	3	2	1	8
Officer	1	5	4	0	10
Total	11	21	12	8	52

(d) Occupation of Mother

It is found that almost all mothers of the students in the sample are housewives, except only 4 students whose mothers are in income generating occupations such as clerks. The distribution in terms of subject of study do not have any significant variation.

(e) Family Income

Family income is precisely the indicator of one's social class position. Therefore, it is a crucial element in judging diversity in terms of social class of the student. The family income of the student per month is recorded in this study.

The table 4.10 shows the family income of the students. Five students have a family income of 1,500 to 3,500 rupees per month, 14 students have 3,501 to 5,500 rupees per month and another 15 students have 5,501 to 7,500 rupees. Further, 12 students have 7,501 to 9,500 rupees and 6 students have 9,500 rupees per month. In other words, a majority of the students fall in the category of middle-income group from 3,501-9,500. Only a few are below or above this group.

Table 4.10

Family Income

Family Income	BA	MPC	Bio.Sci.	MES	Total
1500-3500	3	1	1	0	5
3501-5500	4	4	3	3	14
5501-7500	1	6	4	4	15
7501-9500	1	8	3		12
9500 and above	2	2	1	1	6
Total	11	21	12	8	52

Thus, diversity profile of the students selected for the study reveals that the students came from almost all the regains of the country, belong to different religions and castes, came from both rural and urban areas, speak a variety of languages, studies in different

media of instruction and with a diverse socio-economic background. Therefore, the institute seem to provide a meeting place of various cultures the students bring to their Campus.

PART B

Perceptions of Students on Campus Life and Diversity

This part of the chapter attempts to explore the perceptions of students on campus diversity. Students with different social backgrounds but in the same batch of under-graduate programme are asked questions on campus diversity and their responses are recorded as follows:

1. Reasons for joining the Institute

The students are asked 'why did they join the institute?' This is to know how different students came to know and motivation to 'join the college'. The table 4.11 shows the reasons of the students for joining the Institute. Major proportion of the students i.e. 19 out of 52, said that it was because of 'free education' that they have joined the Institute. 12 students cited the 'open admission policy', 10 students said the reputation of the Institute as the reason for joining the Institute.

Table 4.11

Reasons for joining the Institute

Reasons for joining the Institute	BA	MPC	Bio. Sci.	MES	Total
On my own	1	0	1	0	2
Parents Advice	1	5	0	0	6
Free education	7	5	4	3	19
Open admission policy	0	4	4	4	12
Families of Sai devotees	1	2	0	0	3
Reputation	1	5	2	1	10
Total	11	21	12	8	52

Remaining reasons include 'parents advice', 'family being Sai devotee', and 'joining on my own', which were given by 6, 3 and 2 students respectively.

It is observed that class wise, 7 of the B.A. students joined the Institute because of free education. Again, 5 each of the MPC students joined the Institute because of its reputation, free education and parents advice being the reasons respectively.

In Bio Sciences class, 4 students have given the reason of open admission policy and again 4 students mentioned that of free education as a reason for joining the Institute. In MES class, 4 students said they joined the Institute because of the open admission policy and 3 of them because of free education.

Qualitatively, it is interesting to describe the explanation students gave for joining the Institute. Some said that they have joined the Institute on their own. They felt that it was their sense of adventurism, enthusiasm and inquisitiveness to know about the Institute and join it. For some students, parent's advice was a matter of principle to be followed for joining the Institute. A Major proportion of students cited free education as a reason and said that,

> "since under-graduate programs be it Arts, and particularly Sciences have become expensive and the quality of infra-structure and academic excellence are not upto the mark in most of the other colleges".

Hence, they joined the Institute for its economical costs i.e. Rs. 550 per month for mess bill, while the other academic facilities being free and of the highest possible quality.

The explanation for the open admission policy is that it induced a sense of competitiveness to appear in the entrance exam. Since it was open to all regions, religions, castes and linguistic groups, students felt that there would be a rich exposure from interacting with students from diverse backgrounds in the Institute. 'Reputation' of the Institute had a fascinating influence on the students. A large number of students joined the Institute for its

reputation of academic brilliance, simple living and high thinking, etc.

2.Expectation before joining the Institute

The study also attempted to know the initial expectations of students before joining the institute. The table 4.12 gives the variety of expectations that students had before joining the Institute. Foe instance 19 students had a expectation that " life in the campus is going to be very disciplined". Another 13 students had an expectation that,

"since the students are going to come from various diverse

social backgrounds, exposure with fellow students would

be enthusiastic as well as educative".

A number of students observed that "there would be an emphasis on philosophical and spiritual foundations incorporating various religious traditions of the world". Lastly, 3 students had an expectation that "this Institute is different from conventional college setting".

Table 4.12

Expectation before joining the Institute

Expectation before joining the Institute	BA	MPC	Bio. Sci.	MES	Total
Different from conventional college setting.	1	1	1	0	3
Exposure to students from diverse background.	1	4	4	4	13
Discipline.	7	5	4	3	19
Emphasis on philosophical and spiritual foundation.	2	11	3	1	17
Total	11	21	12	8	52

Again, class wise, in B.A. 4 students had an expectation about the diversity, 3 each had an expectation about the 'disciplined campus life", "philosophical and spiritual foundations" and of the "Institute being different from conventional colleges". Conventional colleges according to some students are those colleges, which are not residential in nature, without regular attendance and without a semester system of education.

In MPC class, 11 students observed that they felt they are going to "counter philosophical and spiritual milieu", 5 students noted that expected a disciplined campus life, 4 students had an expectation on diversity among the students and one student expected that the

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Institute would be different from the conventional colleges. In Bio Sciences, 4 students had an expectation on diversity and 4 of them on discipline, 3 students on philosophical and spiritual foundations and one had an expectation on different college setting. In MES, 4 had an expectation on diversity among students, 3 had an expectation on discipline and 1 on philosophical inclinations of the Institute.

3.Whether expectations are fulfilled

Students believed that their expectations were fulfilled after joining the Institute. It was also observed that their expectations before joining the Institute were in consonance with their fulfilled expectations. Students reasoned that:

"the Institute was different from conventional college

setting because of the 'Action Packed Day'- which starts

from 5 a.m. in the morning till 10 p.m in the night".

During this period the students are motivated by the accomplishments of daily tasks like classes, yoga, meditation, sports, study hours and managing the hostel activities etc. Students also believed that exposure to students from diverse backgrounds helped them to understand the diversity among students and sensitized them in interacting with the diversity itself. In the context of the discipline, students believed that "discipline in the class, mess, play ground,

while walking and talking, etc, is maintained with the watch word of the Institute being 'DISCIPLINE'". Again the student expectations on the philosophical and spiritual inclinations was met through the 'Awareness Program', which is a part of their curriculum. These Awareness Programs introduced the students to the philosophical world of religions where they were taught to realize the unity of faiths, values and ethics that would enhance their personality development etc.

Thus, most of the students were satisfied that most of their expectations were fulfilled after joining the Institute.

4. Students Perception on Diversity as an Issue on the Campus

Table 4.13 explains the diversity issues on campus with a precondition that all students are in consonance with the fact that " diversity being an issue on the campus, their perception of diversity and how it has interacted".

The perceptions of the students on diversity as an issue and the way it is realized can be broadly categorized into three categories:

a. Dormitory Style Accommodation.

b. Open Admission Policy.

c. Awareness Programmes.

Table 4.13

Students perception on diversity as an issue on the campus.

Diversity as an issue	BA	MPC	Bio. Sci.	MES	Total
Dormitory style accommodation	0	4	4	3	11
Open admission Policy	1	9	8	5	23
Awareness programs	10	8	0	0	18
Total	11	21	12	8	52

In a total number of 52 students, 23 students perceived that open admission policy was the reason to allow students to get admission in the Institute from various regions, religions, classes and castes. Another, 18 students perceived that awareness programs are sensitizing the students towards issues of diversity and stimulating them to look at diversity as an issue. Finally, 11 students perceived that dormitory style accommodation allowed them to interact, since community living and living as one family sensitized them to adjust to each other and live amicably.

In B.A., 10 students out of 11 believed that awareness programs were the reason for transacting diversity, students perceived the open admission policy to be an impetus for diversity. In MPC, a student viewed open admission policy to be a major factor for transacting diversity issues, and 4 viewed that it was dormitory style accommodation that transacted diversity issues. In Bio Sciences, 8

and 4 students respectively are for open admission policy and dormitory accommodation. In MES, 5 and 3 students respectively are for open admission policy and dormitory accommodation. Therefore, students from arts and sciences seem to hold more or less similar perceptions on campus diversity.

5. Perceptions on the campus diversity in terms of Region

The table 4.14 shows the perception of regionally diverse students on broad categories which transact diversity. Out of 26 students from the south, 11 perceived that dormitory style accommodation helps them in interacting with other students, 10 students, on the other hand, believed that open admission policy sustains diversity and still 5 students opine that awareness programs transact diversity.

Table 4.14

Perceptions on the campus diversity in terms of Region

Diversity as an issue	South	North	East	West	Total
Dormitory style accommodation	11	3	5	2	21
Open admission Policy	10	4	5	4	23
Awareness programs	5	1	1	1	8
Total	26	8	11	7	52

Again, 3 students from the north are of the view dormitory style accommodation sustains diversity while 4 students believe that it is the open admission policy that perpetuates an understanding of diversity and still 1 student believes that it was the awareness programs that transacted diversity. Similarly, among the students from the east 5 each believed that dormitory style accommodation and open admission policy respectively transacted diversity while one student believed that it was the awareness programs that transacted diversity.

From west, 4 students responded that open admission policy allows students from all regions to take admission in the Institute, 2 students viewed dormitory style accommodation as transacting diversity and finally 1 student believed awareness programs to help them to adjust and interact with students from regionally diverse backgrounds. Thus, it is interesting to find that the students cutting across regional barriers felt that it is mainly dormitory style accommodation and open admission policy that help them understand, and know about each others diversities.

6. **Perceptions on campus Diversity in terms of Religion**

The table 4.15 shows the perceptions of students based on their religious backgrounds.

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Table 4.15

Perceptions on campus Diversity in terms of Religion

Diversity as an Issue				
Religion	Dormitory accommodation	Open admission policy	Awareness programs	Total
Hindu	7	10	30	47
Christian	1	0	1	2
Jain	1	0	2	3
Total	9	10	33	52

Out of 47 Hindu students, 30 students are of the view that awareness programs like 'unity of religions and faiths' are helpful in transacting the diversity issues related to religion. 10 students are of the view that open admission policy encourages all the religious communities to enter the campus and coexist, and 7 students believe that dormitory accommodation encourages the brotherhood feeling amongst them.

One Christian student and two Jain students hold the view that awareness programs are sensitizing them to the philosophies of world religions. One Christian student and one Jain student's views that dormitory accommodation helps in interacting with the students of various religious background.

7. Perceptions on campus Diversity in terms of Caste

This table 4.16 shows the caste diversity of students and their perceptions on campus diversity. It is an awareness programme that is majorly influencing and sensitizing the issues of caste.

Table 4.16

Diversity as an issue and Caste Background

Caste	Dormitory style of accommodation	Open Admission Policy	Awareness Programme	Total
Scheduled Castes	0	0	1	1
Scheduled Tribes	1	0	0	1
Backward Castes	1	1	2	4
Forward Castes	10	11	25	46
Total	12	12	28	52

8. Social Classes and Perceptions of Students on Diversity

Students perceived that mechanisms like "cooperative stores" managed by students themselves would help in regulating consumption attitudes of the students. Since, in the stores, only necessary toiletries, stationary material are generally sold that to on credit basis and hence no extravagant attitude can be found. Also students perceive that "uniform dress code' which is white shirt and

white pant helps in not reflecting the social class attitudes of the students. Free education and discipline is influencing the students to live in harmony without any divisions and conflicts based on their social backgrounds.

9. Perceptions on Campus Diversity in terms of Rural-Urban Diversity

It is observed that there was not even a single instance of any discrimination, bias, favoritism, bigotry ever countered by a student based on their rural-urban background. The interaction among students, as they claim is amicable and hygienic. Even the urban students revealed that they will have to forego their urban attitudes and socialize themselves to incorporate the values and ideals of the Institute such as *"love all serve all"*, and *"help ever hurt never"*. Further, students narrated that after two years of experience of the campus life in SSSIHL, they are indoctrinated with the philosophy of the Institute which believes in equality of all human beings regardless of caste, class, religion, urban-rural, regional, and linguistic backgrounds.

10. Formation of groups and regional diversity

Most of the students are unaware of the issue that students generally can form groups based on the region they come from. Here,

in the Institute, the working hours are packed in such a way that the schedule is tight and hence, students have no time to think about formation of groups based on region they come from. Students responded that they form voluntary groups to look into the matters of hostel management such as 'sick-pantry', 'gardening group', 'sanitation committee' and 'mess committee', etc. Here, in this formation of voluntary groups, region does not play any role but the interest of the students to serve the fellow hostel residents.

11. Awareness progammes and campus diversity

Interestingly, every student was able to relate the awareness programmes as medium or channels through which diversity issues could be addressed, understood and transacted. Students said that the awareness programme-'**Unity of Religions and Faiths**', helped them in understanding the philosophies of various religions with a thread of unity underlying all the religions. They believed in freedom of religious practices and tolerance towards other religions with secular attitude, alone, can sustain the democratic country like India.

Again, awareness programmes- '**Ethos and Values and their Relevance in the Current Milieu**', according to the students, enabled them to understand and practice the basic universal human values that the Institute attempts to imbibe in them, sensitized them to look at the diversity issues from a philosophical point of view.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

The study has attempted to explore the relationship between diversity and higher education in a multicultural society like India. After conceptualizing 'diversity', the study tried to evaluate the institutional commitment to diversity, and analyze, how this institutional commitment influence the perceptions of students on campus diversity. In order to analyze the 'institutional commitments' various theoretical approaches to multi-cultural education, as well as theoretical models are discussed. Also, literature related to campus diversity in higher education is also reviewed and the significance, objectives and sample of the present empirical study is mentioned.

The study also attempted to examine the inter-linkages of diversity and higher education in India. It overviewed the diversity in Indian context as well as its reflection in higher education system. Various issues and problems that are faced by the higher educational institutional in terms of or with reference to diversity are discussed. Especially, the problems and issues such as affirmative action policy,

religious intolerance, etc. which have been affecting the Campuses all over the country in the recent past are discussed.

The study also examined institutional profile, and its programmes which nurture the diversity. Institutional philosophy and ideals are taken into account. It is found that the SSSIHL has over the years since its inception created and undertook several mechanisms to provide for a meaningful understanding between various diverse groups of students entering its Campus life and activities are organised in such a way that the students from different socio-cultural backgrounds interact with each other freely.

The study examined the diversity profile of the students and then tried to explore how various dimensions of diversity influence their perceptions on campus life. It also examined whether the Institute's philosophy, policies and programmes influenced and sensitized the students on the issues of diversity. The diversity profile of the students revealed that the institute attracts students from all over the country, from all regions and states, speaking different languages, belong to different religions and castes, and different socio-economic background.

Conclusions

SSSIHL as an educational institution is founded on certain ideals. Which are preached and practiced in the everyday life of the Campus. The ideals are Sathya (Truth), Daharma (Righteousness), Santhi (Peace), Prama (Love), Ahimsa (Non-violence). It may also be noted that the emblem of the institute embodies the messages of all the major religious of the world. This is certainly the institutional commitment which provides for an understanding, appreciation and celebration of the multi-cultural characters of Indian society.

The belief of the Institute is that in a plural society like India there has to be a constant endeavor to identify generally acceptable universal ideals. So, in the present era of shrinking distance, rapid communication and increased inter-cultural contact, our horizons are widened. Hence, the emphasis the philosophical, ethical, legal and cultural diffusions of world's great cultural traditions help in building the consensus across cultural and doctrinal boundaries, resulting in verification of five ideals, which these cultures hold in common.

It is interesting to observe that these ideals of the Institute had a considerable effect on the students' perception on campus diversity. Generally, most of the students had to an extent, philosophical bent of mind, where they tried to explain their perceptions. For example,

"Truth is that all human beings are one. But they manifest themselves in diversified ways based on the socio-cultural background."

In this way, the institutional philosophy of SSSIHL helped students in understanding the diversity that exists in larger society as well within their campus and classrooms. This certainly gave them some inner strength, to transact the diversity around them with a sense of maturity.

Further, one of the ideals of the Institute, namely, 'Dharma' (Righteousness), seem to induce in students the social values such as justice and equality where students realize the 'essential equality of all human beings' in the light of 'social justice'. Students commented that this enhances the morale to serve the community around the campus, and in interacting with the diversity in the village communities, and understand the problems the villagers have and to help them through counseling.

Duty, Discipline and Devotion are also the ideals of the Institute. These ideals, as the students perceived, "can cut across the social backgrounds of the students and sensitize them to realize their duty through Baba's preaching's like 'help ever; hurt never', 'love all; serve all' etc". Disciplined campus life regulates the behaviour of

students and also promotes interaction among students with various social backgrounds. Thus, the hypothesis 1: 'The ideals of the Institute enriches the diversity on the campus' is evaluated.

The hypothesis 2: 'the institutional policies, programmes, strategies and its commitment, nurtures positively the issues of diversity on campus' may also found to be reinforced though the study. It is observed that the Awareness programmes on world religions and human values help students to contemplate the deeper issues of life and hence to enhance their perceptions about the social reality in which diversity exists. Since these programmes educate students to understand 'essential equality and oneness of human beings', students addressed the diversity as a social construct, which has a sociological and philosophical basis on essential unity of mankind. This philosophy of awareness programmes is put into practice by the residential character of the Institute in which, dormitory style accommodation perpetuates community living of togetherness within the Institute.

By and large, hypothesis: 3, i.e., 'perceptions of the students on the issues of diversity on the campus is positively influenced by the Institutional commitment to diversity, is also substantiated. The students are contended with campus life, which is different from

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conventional college setting and the philosophical approach the institution adopts to address the issues of diversity.

Students in the institute are of the view that, definitely, different social backgrounds of the students enrich the campus life. They hold the view that diversity arouses a sense of enthusiasm and inquisitiveness in a student to know about others and appreciate diverse social and cultural backgrounds of the fellow students in the campus.

It is interesting to note that students are able to grasp the term diversity in the society, which is also reflected in the Institute and philosphy.

First of all, students were enthusiastic in understanding, appreciating the regional diversity. In the initial days of their campus life i.e. when they joined the Institute for the first year of graduation course, most of the time students were conversing on a variety of food habits that different regions have within the country. Students, generally talk about such issues like how geographical conditions of the region mould the food habits, dress codes and overall mannerisms of an individual.

Secondly, students believe that 'there exists only one caste i.e. humanity', and follow this with utmost respect and hence, as the

students said they are never curious about others castes. This is in consonance with what Srisatya Sai Baba preaches.

Thirdly, students were given exposure to understand the unity of the faiths in the religions world over. Here, students understood, 'religions as channels to realize the ultimate goal of human life i.e. self realization'. So, whatever the way may be the religious practice, the destination is the same.

Income inequalities does not seem to manifest and show up in the students attitudes because of the watchword of the Institute, 'discipline', that is promoted among the students in the Institute. Apparently, students may have different social backgrounds, but the sensitization that takes place in the Institute sustains their heterogeneity and complements mutual diversity. Moreover, the present study, attempts to explore the implications of 'institutional Commitment to Campus diversity' on perceptions of student on Campus diversity'.

Thus, the study attempts to explore not only the diversity that exists in the campus but also the institutional commitments that the Institute follows to address and manage the issues of diversity. It is also an attempt to explore the perceptions of students on the campus diversity. However, the study has a few limitations. Firstly, it could

not cover all the three campus of the SSSIHL. Secondly, since the college selected for study was a college for men, the researcher could not seek a comparative perspective of women students of well in order to provide explanation in terms of gender diversity.

Thirdly, an intensive case study method could have brought in more interesting results. But, due to paucity of time, the researcher could not undertake this method. Fourthly, SSSIHL presents a typical institution which is run by a religious sect or trust and has some uniformity in terms of a particular of characteristic, i.e, almost all of the students have to believe and respect the founders philosophy. This may not give a perspective that can be compared with other colleges.

However, despite all these limitations, the study could be a basis for a more broader study at the advanced levels of research. Some of the issues and aspects left out in the present study may become the future areas of research in the hitherto unexplored theme such as Campus diversity.

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APPENDIX I
Interview Schedule for Students

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire focuses on diversity profile of students and their perceptions on diversity. Since, India is well known as land of "Unity in diversity", this questionnaire tries to inquire into the perceptions of students on the issues of diversity on their campus. This study is strictly academic, and data collected shall be kept confidential.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

(ANAND VALMIKI)
M.Phil Student
ZHCES/SSS
JNU, New Delhi

(A)   Preliminary Information:

(1)   Class/Branch   :   B.A./B.Com/B.Sc.

(2)   Year of Study   :

(3)   State/Country   :

(4)   Region   :

(5)   Caste/Tribe   :

Forward Caste

Backward Caste

Schedule Caste

Schedule Tribe

Any other

(6) Where did you study for your: V5 High School   V6 10+2

                                           (Upto Class X)

Rural

Urban

(7) Language spoken   :

(a) Mother tongue   :

(b) Language of the neighbourhood:

(c) Languages acquainted with

8) Medium of Instruction:

    (a) Present   :

    (b) Earlier   :

9)   (i) 10+2   :

        (ii)   School   :

(B)   Socio-Economic Background :

11)   Highest educational level of your father :

12)   Highest educational level of your mother :

13)   Occupation of your father :

14)   Occupation of your Mother :

15)   Family income per month :

(C) perception of students:

16) Did you join this institute on your own or somebody suggested you to join the institute?

17) What was your expectation before joining the institute?

18) Do you think your expectation have been fulfilled after joining the institute.

    i) If so, how?

    ii) IF not, why not?

19) Do you think 'diversity' is an issue on your campus? [Yes/No]

    a) If yes how   :

    b) If no, why   :

20) In your opinion, the diversity among students is a cause of concern for the institute?

    b) If yes, how :

21) Do you think that religious background of student influence the interaction among students in the campus?

22) In your opinion caste differences create any tensions between the students in the campus?

23) In your opinion social class differences among the students influence their behaviour on the campus?

24) Did you observe any incident where rural students are being disregarded by urban students?

Yes / No

25) Do you think students form groups on the campus based on their state/region they come from?

Yes /No

26) Are you aware of any programme of your institute to increase the understanding of diversity on the campus?

Yes /No

b) If yes, what are the programmes and how do your appreciate them?

27) Awareness programme (AWR: 200) -' unity of Religions and faiths' did it really helped your in understanding your religion as well as others.

28) Do you think that the awareness programme (AWR: 200) 'Ethos an values an their relevance in the current milue helped you to imbibe values into your personality behaviour?

29) Do you think diversity among students i.e., different social back grounds of students enriches the campus life of the students? Explain?