THE COLLEGE'S ACTIONS IN COUNTERACTING EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION IN THE BHAVNAGAR REGION, INDIA ON THE EXAMPLE OF SWAMI SAHAJANAND COLLEGE OF COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: In this article will be presented the phenomenon of educational exclusion in the context of the available literature, based on the example of one of the higher education institutions in India, compared to the Polish understanding of this occurrence. The structure of Indian higher education with the structural location of the college institution and its role in counteracting the above-mentioned phenomenon will also be presented.

Key words: educational exclusion, anti-educational exclusion, college, education, India

JEL Classification Codes:

1. BRIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BHAVNAGAR REGION, INDIA

Bhavnagar is a city in western India, on the Gulf of Khambat, in the state of Gujarat. It owes its popularity to the presence of diamond cutting and polishing units and the salt industry. About 60% of the farms are small and marginal farmers and the average farm size is 2.40 ha. For years, this town has been an attractive strategic location due to its potential for maritime trade[1].

Source: https://www.mapsofindia.com/india/where-is-bhavnagar.html
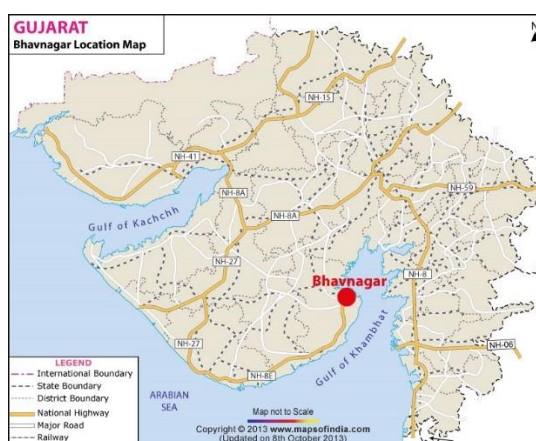
The development of the region is strongly dependent on the current level of education. Quoting Beata Skubiak[2] *According to contemporary concepts of regional development, the most*

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[1] https://bhavnagar.nic.in/history/ (access: 3.10.2022)

[2] B. Skubiak, *Edukacja a rozwój regionalny,* Studia Ekonomiczne, University of Economics in Katowice, *Problemy edukacji wobec rozwoju społeczno- gospodarczego* | p. 218-228, 2013

important factors of socio-economic development include the quality of human resources and the ability to cooperate. In particular, education and continuous improvement of qualifications are important factors and generators of the development of regions and the country. The legal basis regarding the right to education in India is a party to numerous regulations such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The right to education was established in 1978[3]. Nevertheless, the law on the right of children to free education and its regulation lasted until 2009. Therefore, as Iwona Florek[4] writes, *some provisions are criticized (eg. Age restrictions for students). It is not fully implemented and enforced (a large percentage of children do not attend school or leave school under the age of 14).* An issue that should also be raised is the cultural conditioning of the community living in the Gujarat region. When analyzing the research from 2019[5], the following conclusion can be drawn. The population of women aged 6 and over who have ever attended school is 72%. The education system in Gujarat in relation to school learning is divided into four distinct stages:

- Basic (Class I-IV);
- Higher Elementary (Class V-VII);
- Medium (Class VIII-X);
- Higher Secondary (Class XI-XII);

Higher and technical issues are provided by universities and colleges in the category of higher education (arts, science and commerce) and in the category of technical education (engineering, pharmacy, agricultural sciences, etc.).

2. THE PHENOMENON OF EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION IN INDIAN ENVIRONMENT

Basically, the concept of exclusion is a situation in which some individuals or social groups do not have equal access to opportunities and services that would allow them to lead a decent and expected life. It may also include being unable to speak or be heard in accordance with the rules of the community in which we live. Services that may be unattainable include infrastructure - even essentials such as electricity or running water - and services such as public education, healthcare, and the welfare system.

This situation can be compared by analogy to the power grid that connects the different parts of society, connecting each part of society to reap the same benefits. Exclusions apply to power-off areas - communities that are not connected to a network and cannot enjoy the same benefits and opportunities as everyone else. These communities are often referred to as "marginalized" and "social marginalization" is another term used to describe social exclusion. The above-mentioned factors have a very negative impact on the situation of young people on the labor market, and the group of people at the beginning of their professional career can be considered a group particularly exposed to social risks, including educational exclusion.

When citing "exclusion" on the basis of the book Social Diagnosis and the definition of Polish professors Czapiński and Panek contained therein, social exclusion should be considered a state in which *a given individual or some social group, being a member of the community (most often it is a community of state citizens), cannot fully participate in important areas of life of this*

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[3] Supreme Court of India, University of Delhi & Anr vs Anand Vardhan Chandal on 9 July, 1996, Bench: Kuldip Singh, M.M. Punchhi, N.P. Singh, M.K. Mukharjee, S. Saghir Ahmad, https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1748962/ (access: 3.10.2022)

[4] I. Florek, Wyższa Szkoła Gospodarki Euroregionalnej im. Alccide De Gasperi w Józefowie, *W trosce o rozwój i bezpieczenstwo dziecka- aspekty społeczno- prawne,* published by Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomiczno-Humanistycznej, p. 393-402, May 2021

[5] Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, National Family Health Survey-5 2019-20, District Fact Sheet, Bhavnagar, Gujarat, International Institute for Population Sciences (Deemed University), Capacity Building for a Better Future.

community[6]. Social exclusion as a multidimensional phenomenon is not and should not be equated with poverty (although poverty is strongly correlated with exclusion and can be both its cause and effect). Poor people do not have to be socially excluded if, for example, The low level of material resources is compensated by institutional or family support. On the other hand, social exclusion may affect people living in an affluent, e.g. if they cannot participate fully in society due to discrimination or disability.

The conditions that Polish scientists dealing with exclusions on their native soil have to study, however, seem inadequate to Indian conditions. Although many elements have a common source, it is necessary to focus on the differences resulting from radically different cultural background, social stratification and, for example, the scale (number) of the population. The notion of social exclusion in Indian conditions does not allow for easy generalizations and comparisons, but nevertheless studies of such people as, for example, Charles Gore, Jose B. Figueiredo International Institute for Labor Studies provided information to build the first, general view of this phenomenon. In industrial and post-industrial countries, exclusion is strongly linked to long-term unemployment, loss of work-related entitlements and loss of access to so-called welfare state and the process of breaking social ties and a sense of isolation (disaffiliation). In developing societies and in transforming economies (e.g. Indian), social exclusion is strongly associated with the process of forming the labor market or awakening the ideology of entrepreneurship and self-employment in society, and in societies of this type it is associated not only with the problem of enforcement social rights, but also human rights and other political prerogatives. There is a huge formal gap between the applicable law and the right to use it. Civil society institutions are particularly important when civil rights (and related obligations and expectations) are not well established, when social exchanges are unbalanced due to poor distribution of bargaining power between social actors, and when exchanges are dominated by personal arrangements. than non-arbitrary procedures[7]. In Indian conditions, the relationship between material poverty and social exclusion, including educational poverty, is also noticeable, crucial and necessary to understand the complexity of this problem. Nevertheless, this relation can be understood differently.

The key issue in shaping India's policy in this area, which also colleges are part of this, is how to change institutions so that social participation allows for a level of well-being higher than the minimum standard defined by society. Hence, many issues relating to the shape of meso-politics arise. They can be defined as policies that are supposed to influence the relationship between macro-politicians and individual situations (outcomes). Their significance lies in the fact that macro-policy outcomes and pattern of growth depend on the social matrix within which policies are implemented and there is growth[8]. Responsibilities undermines social and occupational participation and leads to socially unacceptable levels of well-being. It is also important how much can be provided through the law and to what extent certain types of affirmative action programs are necessary for specific disadvantaged groups. The general question is this: what are the consequences of the rights-based approach in relation to poverty reduction? A very interesting definition of exclusion is presented in the report by the Government of India itself, describing it as: *denial of basic social rights (welfare rights), providing citizens with positive freedom to participate in social and economic life and thus giving meaning to their basic negative freedoms*. When defining the causes of educational exclusion, which are also opposed by the institution of colleges, the following can be mentioned: social exclusion within countries is the result of policies and institutions and cannot be simply attributed to individuals. Institutions that

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[6] Diagnoza Społeczna 2015, report issued by. J. Czapiński, T. Panek, Warsaw: Rada Monitoringu Społecznego, Warsaw 2015

[7] C. Gore, J. B. Figueiredo, *Social exclusion and anti-poverty policy*, International Institute for Labour Studies, Geneve 1997

[8] National Education Policy 2020, Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi 2020

act excluding are both formal and informal. They, including educational institutions, are important in the process of social exclusion, as they shape the relationship between macroeconomic change and the path of economic growth and the changing living conditions of individuals[9]. The conclusion from the cited NEP study, where an analysis was made on the basis of comparisons between the situation in different states, that the critical issue is to create a base of political support for integration programs and anti-poverty policies. This requires attention to the power relations between social actors, the mechanisms that consolidate democracy, and the reorientation of institutions so that they work for the benefit of the poor. In addition, it is important to build efficient and accountable public and private institutions that are both shaped and controlled by civil society. Such institutions are, among others colleges, i.e. an educational body that is intermediate between basic education and highly specialized scientific and research education conducted in universities.

3. COLLEGES IN THE INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The present-day education system in India was greatly influenced by the British from 1835 onwards and their legacy is evident in the higher education system to this day. In India, the term "college" is reserved for institutions that offer high school diplomas in year 12 ("Junior College", similar to US high schools) and those that offer a bachelor's degree; however, some colleges offer programs up to the doctoral level. In general, colleges are located in different parts of the state and all are affiliated with a specific local university. Colleges offer programs that can in the future prepare the participant or student to enter a specific course conducted by the university at which they are affiliated. Colleges can be autonomous or non-autonomous. Autonomous colleges are entitled to develop their own curricula and to conduct their own examinations; in non-autonomous colleges, examinations are conducted by the university, simultaneously for all affiliated colleges. There are about 1,000 universities in India (as of 12/31/2021) and virtually every university has developed institutional colleges, often in large numbers. This gives a total of about 20,000. colleges throughout the country.

Due to their small size, colleges provide limited research and development opportunities to students who wish to pursue higher education. On the other hand, a university may be home to many colleges operating on or off campus. Universities also have many so-called Schools within their collegiate campuses such as School of Arts, School of Music and School of Architecture. Colleges usually offer their students bachelor's degrees and so-called post-graduate due to the availability of a wide range of courses at the universities that affiliate them. It should also be noted that due to the limited resources offered in colleges, enrollment is relatively cheaper compared to a university where the fee structure is much higher due to the number of facilities and programs available to students. This builds an extremely high importance for counteracting educational exclusion, because the price of education is of key importance here. In 2022, almost all Indian universities have integrated colleges or schools, e.g. a medical school or a law school for students seeking professional degrees. Summing up, speaking about the differences and popularity of colleges in the Indian higher education system, it is determined by lower price, greater availability, short period of obtaining a diploma and limited, closed topics of study.

4. THE ACTIVITY OF SWAMI SAHAJANAND COLLEGE OF COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF COUNTERACTING EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION

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[9] R. Leppert, M. Cichosz „Współczesne środowiska wychowawcze. Stan obecny i kierunki przemian" Bydgoszcz 2011

The college, which will be abbreviated hereinafter as SSCCM, was established in 2011 and is affiliated with Maharaja Krishnakumarsinhji Bhavnagar University. A characteristic phenomenon in Indian colleges, which can also be seen at SSCCM, is the strong link between science and the spirituality and culture of the region - in this case the state of Gujarat. The college is dedicated to one of the gods of Hinduism, and at every step of education there are evident references to the philosophy of Hinduism, the cultural distinctiveness of the region, as well as the values of education related to human spiritual development. The language of instruction at SSCCM is mainly English, which is a natural practice in the Indian environment, but also in the regional Gujarati language.

SSCCM College offers only 3-year bachelor degrees in areas such as: Trade (which is extremely important from the point of view of the Gujarat resident, who is approximately 80% involved in commercial activities), Human Resource Management, IT, Work social, sociology. Based on a report of the Indian government, the presented directions correspond exactly to the needs of the local society for education[10]. We do not find only education in the field of culture, art and music, but the SSCCM has solved this matter in a different way by creating extremely dynamic sections of student interest and activities, whose members are successful in the regional and national fields. Responding exactly to the demand, SSCCM creates a precisely correlated ecosystem that counteracts the phenomenon of educational exclusion. But these are not the only advantages of such a structure. An important role is played by factors such as: a fast, three-year educational path that allows for a quick entry into the labor market with appropriate competences, high quality of academic staff, including foreign teachers (e.g. from Poland), a very strong connection of science with local traditions and customs, which allows for a strong identification of students with their place of study, but also creates a specific atmosphere in which it is easy for young people, especially from the so-called social lowlands strongly attached to traditions and customs. Studying in such an environment ceases to be a kind of cultural shock.

SSCCM has a campus very well adapted to science, with a high degree of development and technical preparation, which is a clear enclave from the surrounding environment, which makes it a desirable target for young people. Some of the SSCCM courses are conducted in the local Gujarati language, which undoubtedly facilitates access to higher education. Finally, the most important counteracting factor is the cost of such education, oscillating around 40% of the cost of education in a traditional university, which radically increases its availability. Prof. Roman Leppert in his publication[11] shows how the simple linear way the accessibility of education translates into its dissemination. There are no side effects here. The last element of preventing educational exclusion by the SSCCM is cooperation with educational centers for children suffering from extreme poverty. Such an example is the Takshashila Bilanguall School educational and language unit, where children live and learn language and writing. SSCCM has been supporting this institution financially and substantially for many years.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly, the activities of the SSCCM and the entire college system in India have a positive impact on counteracting educational exclusion. A 2021 Indian government report reports that since the introduction of the college system in the early 2000s, the bachelor's degree in northern India has increased from 0.81% to 1.6%[12]. These numbers may not impress Western

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[10] Government of India, *op cit.*
[11] R. Leppert, M. Cichosz *op. cit.* str. 46
[12] Government of India, *op. cit.*

societies, but it should be noted that Indian society is still extremely stratified, and above all very numerous. This is an increase of nearly one hundred percent over 20 years, which demonstrates the remarkable success of this program. So large that in the perspective of the coming years, India will put emphasis on this branch of higher education, hopefully with an equally spectacular effect.

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