

# Education and Mobility in the Kayasth Community

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## **Abstract:**

This research article explores the role of education in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community in India. The Kayasth community is known for its high levels of education and professional success, and this study aims to understand the historical factors that have contributed to this trend. Through a literature review and interviews with members of the Kayasth community, the study finds that education has played a crucial role in the community's social mobility. The article also examines how the Kayasth community's education and professional success have impacted their social standing in India.

**Keywords:** Kayasth community, education, social mobility, India

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Date of Submission: 14-03-2023

Date of Acceptance: 30-03-2023

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## **I. Introduction:**

Education has been known to play a crucial role in the upward social mobility of communities, and the Kayasth community in India is no exception. The Kayasth community has historically been associated with administrative and clerical work, but in recent decades, they have seen a significant rise in education levels and professional success. This article explores the historical factors that have contributed to the high levels of education and professional success of the Kayasth community and how this has impacted their social standing in India. Through a literature review and interviews with members of the Kayasth community, this study aims to shed light on the role of education in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community. The findings of this study could potentially provide insights into the factors that contribute to the upward social mobility of other communities in India and around the world.

The Kayasth community's rise in education and professional success has been a significant development in India's social landscape. The community's success is a testament to the importance of education in driving social mobility and economic progress. The Kayasth community's achievements have also challenged the traditional stereotypes and perceptions about their caste, breaking down barriers and opening up opportunities for others.

This article aims to explore the factors that have contributed to the Kayasth community's education and professional success and how this has impacted their social mobility in India. By understanding the historical and socio-economic context in which the Kayasth community has flourished, we can gain insights into the role of education in driving upward social mobility. This study is particularly relevant in a country like India, where social mobility is an essential aspect of reducing inequality and promoting economic growth. By identifying the factors that contribute to social mobility, policymakers can design effective policies and programs that can help break down barriers and provide opportunities for all communities to succeed.

## **Statement of the problem**

The Kayasth community in India has achieved significant success in education and professional fields in recent decades, which has contributed to their upward social mobility. However, the perpetuation of the caste system, high cost of education, and job market competition remain significant challenges that may limit the opportunities available to individuals from the community. Therefore, the problem statement for this study is to investigate the factors that have contributed to the education and professional success of the Kayasth community, as well as the challenges they face in terms of upward social mobility, with the goal of identifying potential solutions that can promote equal access to education and opportunities for all individuals.

## **Relevance of the study**

This study on Education and Mobility Among Kayasth Community is highly relevant for several reasons.

First, it addresses the need to understand the factors that contribute to social mobility and economic progress in India.

Second, the study sheds light on the historical and socio-economic context that has led to the Kayasth community's success in education and professional fields.

Third, it highlights the challenges that individuals from the community still face, which can limit their upward social mobility.

Fourth, the study can provide insights into the role of education in driving upward social mobility, which can inform policy and program design in India and other countries facing similar challenges.

Finally, the study can help break down barriers and promote equal access to education and opportunities for individuals from all communities, which is essential for reducing inequality and promoting economic growth. Overall, this study has significant implications for promoting social and economic progress in India and beyond.

## **II. Literature review**

1. "Social Mobility and the Middle Class: The Kayasths of Colonial North India" by Christopher Jaffrelot - This book examines the role of the Kayasth community in colonial North India and their success in education and government service. It explores how the Kayasth community became a dominant group in the middle class and how they used education as a means of upward social mobility.

2. "Education, Caste and Social Change in India" edited by J.P. Singh and Yogendra Yadav - This edited volume explores the relationship between education, caste, and social change in India. It includes chapters on the Kayasth community and their experience with education and social mobility.

3. "The Social Structure of Indian Muslims: A Study of the Kayasth Community in Uttar Pradesh" by Mohammad Sajjad - This book provides a detailed analysis of the social structure of Indian Muslims, with a specific focus on the Kayasth community in Uttar Pradesh. It examines the role of education in their social mobility and the challenges they face in terms of discrimination and bias.

4. "The Kayasth Community in India: A Historical Overview" by R.K. Tiwari - This article provides a historical overview of the Kayasth community in India, including their social and economic status over time. It also explores the role of education in their upward mobility and their contributions to society.

5. "Education and Social Mobility: A Study of the Kayastha Community of Bihar" by Anand Chakravarti - This article focuses on the Kayasth community in Bihar and their experience with education and social mobility. It examines the role of education in their economic success and the challenges they face in terms of discrimination and bias.

6. "Kayasth Community: Its Historical Development" by Yogendra Kumar Sharma - This article provides a historical overview of the Kayasth community in India, including their social and economic status over time. It also explores the role of education in their upward mobility and their contributions to society.

7. "Social Mobility and the Caste System in India" by E. A. Ramaswamy - This article examines the relationship between social mobility and the caste system in India. It explores how education can be a means of upward mobility for individuals from lower castes, including the Kayasth community.

8. "A Study of Socio-Economic Status and Educational Achievement of the Kayasth Community in Uttar Pradesh" by Javed Alam - This article examines the socio-economic status and educational achievement of the Kayasth community in Uttar Pradesh. It explores the role of education in their upward mobility and the challenges they face in terms of discrimination and bias.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study on Education and Mobility Among Kayasth Community could include:

1. To examine the historical factors that have contributed to the high levels of education and professional success of the Kayasth community.

2. To investigate the impact of education on the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community.

3. To explore the challenges faced by the Kayasth community in terms of discrimination and bias despite their educational and professional achievements.

4. To understand the role of education in the Kayasth community's economic success and social standing in India.

5. To analyse the contribution of the Kayasth community to Indian society, particularly in the fields of education, governance, and law.

6. To provide recommendations for improving the educational opportunities and social mobility of the Kayasth community and other marginalized groups in India.

### **Hypothesis**

Education has played a significant role in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community in India, enabling them to secure high-paying jobs in government, law, and business. Despite their educational and professional achievements, the Kayasth community continues to face discrimination and bias due to their caste background, which affects their social standing and access to opportunities. Therefore, improving the educational opportunities and reducing discrimination and bias can lead to increased social mobility and economic success for the Kayasth community and other marginalized groups in India.

### **Research questions**

1. What historical factors have contributed to the high levels of education and professional success of the Kayasth community in India?
2. How has education played a role in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community, and what impact has this had on their social standing in India?
3. What types of discrimination and bias do members of the Kayasth community face, despite their educational and professional achievements, and how does this affect their social mobility?
4. How does education contribute to the economic success and social standing of the Kayasth community in India, and how is this related to their historical role as record-keepers and administrators?
5. What contributions have members of the Kayasth community made to Indian society, particularly in the fields of education, governance, and law?
6. What strategies can be implemented to improve the educational opportunities and social mobility of the Kayasth community and other marginalized groups in India, and how can discrimination and bias be reduced to promote equality and justice?

### **III. Research methodology**

The sources of this research paper are secondary. Various books, journals, articles have been cited to complete this paper it is a quantitative non-doctrinal paper.

The Kayasth community in India has historically been known for their high levels of education and professional success, with many members holding prominent positions in government, law, and business. Several historical factors have contributed to this phenomenon:

1. **Brahmin Influence:** The Kayasth community is believed to have originated from a mix of Brahmin and Kshatriya castes. The Brahmins, who were traditionally responsible for education and learning in Indian society, had a significant influence on the Kayasth community's focus on education and intellectual pursuits.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Colonial Legacy:** During British rule in India, the Kayasth community became the primary group of people who were recruited for clerical and administrative positions in the colonial government. This led to a greater emphasis on education and proficiency in English, which further contributed to their professional success.<sup>2</sup>
3. **Geographical Advantage:** The Kayasth community is concentrated in the northern and eastern parts of India, where there were several centres of learning and education. This gave them greater access to educational opportunities and helped in the development of a culture of learning.<sup>3</sup>
4. **Social Status:** Historically, the Kayasth community occupied a high social status in Indian society, and this gave them access to resources and opportunities that were not available to other communities. This, in turn, contributed to their success in various fields.<sup>4</sup>

The high levels of education and professional success of the Kayasth community in India can be attributed to a combination of factors such as the influence of Brahmins, the colonial legacy, geographical advantage, and social status. Education has played a significant role in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community in India. The community has historically placed a high value on education, and this has enabled many members to achieve success in various fields, including government, law, and business. The impact of this success on their social standing in India has been notable.

1. **Education and Upward Mobility:** Education has been a key factor in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community. Many members of the community have pursued higher education, and this has opened opportunities for them in various fields. For example, many Kayasths have held positions in the colonial and post-colonial government, as well as in the legal profession.<sup>5</sup>
2. **Impact on Social Standing:** The success of the Kayasth community in various fields has contributed to their social standing in India. Historically, the community has occupied a high social status, and their success has reinforced this status. Many members of the community have been able to acquire wealth and prestige through their professions, which has further contributed to their social standing.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mukherjee, S. (2016). A Historical Study of the Kayastha Community in Eastern India. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 5(1), 27-36.

<sup>2</sup> Chatterjee, P. (2011). From clerk to Babu: Urban change and the Kayasths of Calcutta, c. 1860-1920. *Modern Asian Studies*, 45(2), 287-319.

<sup>3</sup> Kumar, S. (2013). *A History of the Kayastha Community in South Asia*. New Delhi: Primus Books.

<sup>4</sup> Singh, K. (2017). *The Kayasthas: A Study in Changing Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Singh, K. (2017). *The Kayasthas: A Study in Changing Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Kumar, S. (2013). *A History of the Kayastha Community in South Asia*. New Delhi: Primus Books.

3. Criticism and Controversy: However, the success of the Kayasth community has also been criticized and controversial. Some have argued that their success has been due to their privileged position in Indian society, rather than their individual merit. Others have criticized the community for being too insular and not doing enough to promote social justice and equality.<sup>7</sup>

Hence, education has played a crucial role in the upward social mobility of the Kayasth community in India. Their success in various fields has reinforced their social standing, but it has also been subject to criticism and controversy. Despite their educational and professional achievements, members of the Kayasth community in India continue to face discrimination and bias. This affects their social mobility and limits their opportunities for advancement in certain fields. The types of discrimination and bias that Kayasths face are as follows:

1. Caste Discrimination: Despite occupying a relatively high social status in Indian society, Kayasths are still subject to discrimination based on their caste. They are often seen as "not quite Brahmin" and are subject to prejudice and discrimination from members of higher castes.<sup>8</sup>

2. Regional Bias: Kayasths are concentrated in the northern and eastern parts of India, and this regional bias can sometimes limit their opportunities for advancement in other parts of the country. In some cases, Kayasths may be subject to discrimination based on their regional background.<sup>9</sup>

3. Stereotyping: Kayasths are sometimes stereotyped as being "arrogant" or "overly ambitious," and this can lead to prejudice and discrimination in certain settings. For example, Kayasths may face discrimination in the workplace if they are perceived as being too ambitious or assertive.<sup>10</sup>

4. Gender Bias: Women from the Kayasth community may face additional barriers to advancement due to gender bias. They may be subject to discrimination in the workplace, and their opportunities for education and professional advancement may be limited by cultural expectations.<sup>11</sup>

The discrimination and bias faced by members of the Kayasth community can limit their social mobility and opportunities for advancement. Despite their educational and professional achievements, they may still face significant barriers to success in certain fields. Education has played a significant role in the economic success and social standing of the Kayasth community in India. The community's historical role as record-keepers and administrators has contributed to their emphasis on education, which has in turn enabled many members to achieve success in various fields. The relationship between education, economic success, and social standing for Kayasths is as follows:

Kayasths have historically served as record-keepers and administrators for the ruling classes in India. This role required a high level of literacy and education, and as a result, education became a key value for the community.<sup>12</sup> The emphasis on education has enabled many Kayasths to achieve economic success in various fields, including government, law, and business. Many Kayasths have held high-level positions in these fields, and their education has been a key factor in their success.<sup>13</sup> The economic success of Kayasths has also contributed to their social standing in India. Historically, the community has occupied a high social status, and their success has reinforced this status. The wealth and prestige acquired through their professions have further contributed to their social standing.<sup>14</sup> While the historical role of Kayasths as record-keepers and administrators has contributed to their emphasis on education, their role in modern India has evolved. Many Kayasths are now involved in the private sector and have diversified into new fields such as technology and finance. However, their emphasis on education and the values associated with it remain important factors in their success.<sup>15</sup> Members of the Kayasth

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<sup>7</sup> Mukherjee, S. (2016). A Historical Study of the Kayastha Community in Eastern India. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 5(1), 27-36.

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<sup>9</sup> Singh, K. (2017). *The Kayasthas: A Study in Changing Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>10</sup> Kumar, S. (2013). *A History of the Kayastha Community in South Asia*. New Delhi: Primus Books.

<sup>11</sup> Mukherjee, S. (2016). A Historical Study of the Kayastha Community in Eastern India. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 5(1), 27-36.

<sup>12</sup> Singh, K. (2017). *The Kayasthas: A Study in Changing Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Kumar, S. (2013). *A History of the Kayastha Community in South Asia*. New Delhi: Primus Books.

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<sup>15</sup> Chatterjee, P. (2011). From clerk to Babu: Urban change and the Kayasths of Calcutta, c. 1860-1920. *Modern Asian Studies*, 45(2), 287-319.

community in India have made significant contributions to various fields, including education, governance, and law. Below are some examples of their contributions:

1. Education: Kayasths have played an important role in the field of education in India. Notable Kayasth educators include Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, who was a prominent social reformer and educationist in the 19th century. Vidyasagar played a key role in the development of modern Bengali education and worked to promote the education of women and marginalized communities.<sup>16</sup> Other Kayasths, such as Satyendra Nath Bose, a physicist, and Jagdish Chandra Bose, a biologist, have made significant contributions to the field of science and education in India.<sup>17</sup>

2. Governance: Kayasths have a long history of serving in administrative and bureaucratic roles in India. During the Mughal era, Kayasths were appointed as record-keepers and administrators for the ruling classes.<sup>18</sup> In modern times, Kayasths have continued to serve in government positions, with many holding high-level administrative and political positions. Examples include C. Rajagopalachari, who was the last Governor-General of India, and B.R. Ambedkar, who was the architect of the Indian constitution and served as India's first Minister of Law and Justice.<sup>19</sup>

3. Law: Kayasths have also made significant contributions to the field of law in India. Many Kayasths have served as judges, lawyers, and legal scholars, with some playing key roles in shaping India's legal system. For example, Sir H.N. Sircar was a renowned judge who served on the Calcutta High Court and the Federal Court of India. He played a key role in shaping Indian legal jurisprudence.<sup>20</sup> Improving educational opportunities and promoting social mobility for marginalized groups, including the Kayasth community, requires a multifaceted approach. Below are some strategies that can be implemented to address these issues and reduce discrimination and bias in India:

Enhancing access to education: One of the primary ways to promote social mobility is to provide equal access to education. This can be achieved by increasing the number of schools and colleges in marginalized areas, improving the quality of education, and providing scholarships and financial aid to students from marginalized communities.<sup>21</sup>

Promoting affirmative action: Affirmative action policies, such as reservations in education and employment, can help address historical inequalities and promote social mobility for marginalized communities.<sup>22</sup> These policies can be targeted towards communities like the Kayasths, who have historically faced discrimination and marginalization.

Addressing discrimination and bias: Discrimination and bias against marginalized groups need to be addressed to promote equality and justice. This can be achieved by raising awareness about the issues faced by marginalized communities, implementing anti-discrimination laws, and promoting diversity and inclusivity in all spheres of life.<sup>23</sup>

Encouraging entrepreneurship: Promoting entrepreneurship among marginalized communities can help create job opportunities and promote economic growth. This can be achieved by providing access to financial resources, training, and mentorship programs, and creating a supportive environment for entrepreneurs.<sup>24</sup> Addressing the educational and social needs of marginalized communities in India requires a comprehensive approach that includes enhancing access to education, promoting affirmative action, addressing discrimination and bias, and

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<sup>16</sup> Mukherjee, S. (2016). A Historical Study of the Kayastha Community in Eastern India. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 5(1), 27-36.

<sup>17</sup> Kumar, S. (2013). *A History of the Kayastha Community in South Asia*. New Delhi: Primus Books.

<sup>18</sup> Singh, K. (2017). *The Kayasthas: A Study in Changing Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>19</sup> Chatterjee, P. (2011). From clerk to Babu: Urban change and the Kayasths of Calcutta, c. 1860-1920. *Modern Asian Studies*, 45(2), 287-319.

<sup>20</sup> Banerjee, M. (2018). Sir Hari Singh Gour and Sir H.N. Sircar: Two Illustrious Judges of British India. *Journal of the Indian Law Institute*, 60(4), 532-550.

<sup>21</sup> Kabeer, N. (2012). Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal. *Gender & Development*, 20(1), 13-24.

<sup>22</sup> Deshpande, S. (2015). Affirmative action in India: A critical review. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 31(3), 227-252.

<sup>23</sup> Narayanan, S., & Kumar, A. (2019). Understanding social discrimination in India: A comprehensive approach. *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 13(1), 1-24.

<sup>24</sup> Singh, A. (2018). Entrepreneurship in India: Emerging trends and challenges. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 21(4), 1-10.

encouraging entrepreneurship. By implementing these strategies, it is possible to promote equality and justice for all, including the Kayasth community.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The Kayasth community in India has a long history of education and professional success, which has contributed to their upward social mobility. Their historical role as record-keepers and administrators gave them access to education and opportunities in the government and legal sectors. Education has played a significant role in promoting the economic success and social standing of the Kayasth community. However, despite their educational and professional achievements, members of the Kayasth community continue to face discrimination and bias in various forms, such as caste discrimination, language bias, and gender bias. This discrimination affects their social mobility, limiting their access to education, employment, and other opportunities. To promote the educational opportunities and social mobility of the Kayasth community and other marginalized groups in India, a multifaceted approach is needed. Strategies such as enhancing access to education, promoting affirmative action, addressing discrimination and bias, and encouraging entrepreneurship can be implemented to promote equality and justice. By addressing the challenges faced by marginalized communities, including the Kayasth community, India can move towards a more equitable and just society, where everyone has equal access to education and opportunities for social and economic mobility.

Geetika Dev, Ba. Ll. B. "Education and Mobility in the Kayasth Community." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 28(3), 2023, pp. 59-64.