University of Warwick & NIEPA Research Project

Widening Access to Higher Education in India: Institutional Approaches

Haryana State Report

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Accompanying resources for the project

In addition to this report, other resources about the project are available on the project website: www.warwick.ac.uk/WAHEI. This includes various project outputs such as project reports, training materials, and presentations, as well as other information about the project and the people involved.

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About this report

This report is a final State Report for the University of Warwick and NIEPA collaborative research project entitled Widening Access to 'Higher Education in India: Institutional Approaches' (WAHEI). The WAHEI project explored the role of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Institutional Leaders, and Faculty Members in enhancing informed choice for young people as they make decisions about higher education. The project focused, in particular, on rurally situated and rural-serving, publicly-funded universities and colleges, given the role of these institutions in providing higher education to socio-economically disadvantaged students. Of key importance has been enhancing the familiarity of the term 'higher education outreach' in the terminology in higher education in India, within the scope of the study, as a key term denoting the activities that HEIs can undertake to guide and inform young people and their families about their higher education choices and admissions processes. WAHEI included a large-scale, multimethod empirical research study to explore existing higher education outreach practices across states and regions of India, followed by the co-development, implementation, and evaluation of a professional learning module for faculty members to learn about higher education outreach, and final dissemination of project findings and recommendations.

Project outputs can be accessed from the WAHEI website: www.warwick.ac.uk/WAHEI . The explanation of the background and rationale for the project can be found in CPRHE-NIEPA Research Paper 20, 'The Role of Higher Education Institutions and Faculty Members in Higher Education Outreach in India': https://cprhe.niepa.ac.in/assets/papers/CPRHE_Research_Paper_20.pdf.

The project is a four-year research project (2022-2026) funded by the Fair Chance Foundation and hosted by the University of Warwick's Doctoral Education and Academia Research Centre (DEAR). The DEAR Centre conducts specialist research on topics relating to doctoral education and the academic profession, with a focus on inequalities and inclusivity (www.warwick.ac.uk/DEAR).

The project has been led by Professor Emily F. Henderson (University of Warwick) and Dr Nidhi S. Sabharwal (NIEPA) as Co-Principal Investigators, and Professor Ann Stewart (University of

Warwick) as Co-Investigator. The project has been coordinated by Matt Phillips and the project has been supported by a number of colleagues, most substantially S. Arokia Mary, Arushi Painuly, Chandrika, Ragini Khurana, Denisse Lillo Sierra, Sejjal, Evan Zheng, Susan Deeb. The project has involved a significant empirical phase across HEIs located in five states of India: Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Kerala, and Maharashtra. In each state, a team of three faculty members has led the empirical component, including collection, analysis and interpretation of data. Each State Research Team has consisted of two faculty members from a State University – the team lead and an early career faculty member, and a faculty member from a college in the same state (publicly-funded or aided, rurally located where possible). The State Research Teams were supported in the process through three two-day residential workshops at NIEPA which focused on (i) instrument development and data collection, (ii) analysis processes, and (iii) presentation and peer review of draft report material. In addition, field visits and monthly online meetings were held to bring together all team members across the central and state teams during the empirical phase.

This report showcases the State Research Team findings as part of a series of five State Reports for the WAHEI project. Links to access the reports include: www.warwick.ac.uk/WAHEI and https://www.niepa.ac.in/. The report has been entirely produced by the State Research Team, based on the empirical research conducted for the WAHEI project. The report structure and contents were guided by the central team to bring continuity between the reports. All chapters of the report have been thoroughly peer reviewed by Professor Emily F. Henderson and S. Arokia Mary, and additionally, a chapter of the report has been reviewed by team members of one of the other State Research Teams. The report was revised in response to the peer review process.

The final contents of the report have been prepared and finalised by the State Research Team, with editing support from Matt Phillips and Emily Henderson, Robyn Shreeve and Ann Stewart, and as such responsibility for the contents therein remains with the report authors.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Context of HE Access and Choice at the State Level

The global higher education (HE) landscape is changing at a very fast pace with more than 220 million students enrolling at post-secondary and tertiary level across countries (Chattopadhyay et al. 2022). India currently has the second largest post-secondary sector in the world, with over 58,000 HE institutions and it enrolls second largest number of students (35 million) after China (47 million) (UNESCO, 2021; Varghese, 2022). The bulk of this expansion has taken place in the last two decades with the increasing number of institutions and the student intake increasing from 10.7 million in 2002 to 32.3 million in 2013 and further to 35 million in 2021. HE in India is in massification stage with gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 28.2 during 2021-22 (Tierney and Sabharwal 2018; MHRD, 2023).

It is also an accepted fact that educational attainment in HE directly and significantly depends upon the availability and accessibility of HE institutions among various other things. The availability and physical access are one form of equity, while another form is social and economic inclusion. One may find that HE campuses are now marked by the presence of a spectrum of socio-economic groups who were earlier excluded from HE due to various socio-economic and historical reasons. The disaggregated GER, however, still shows a wide gap in rural and urban locations (22.2 and 45.6 respectively) during the year 2021-22 (MoE, 2023). The gender gap, though narrowing down over a period of 2 decades in India, is still marred with regional variations across states and social groups (Sabharwal, 2021; Sabharwal, 2021a). A study by Sinha and Kar (2024) pointed out that positive change in women's education in India has taken much longer compared to other Asian countries, as invoking tradition in the case of women has been a cultural tool which made them follow rather than make choices. The study is further reinforced with NSSO data showing that disparities in enrolment by inter-state and socio-religious groups continue to exist, despite expansion (Sinha and Kar, 2024).

The state of Haryana too, has made rapid strides in the field of HE since its formation in 1966. The demand for HE grew following the Green Revolution which witnessed significant economic growth and consequently establishment of various institutes of higher learning, i.e. colleges and universities. It may be noted that GER in the state increased at a moderate pace until the year

2000. It gained momentum post 2005-06 and increased rapidly to an extent that it reached from elite stage to massification stage, and at present, it is 33.3 percent (MoE, 2023). It may however be noted that, like all-India pattern, the rural-urban gap in the state also remains sharp. GER was reported to be 21.5 and 37.6 in rural and urban locations respectively during 2015-16 (IIHED, 2017). Similarly, despite increase of GER for all social groups, the gap in GER for socially disadvantaged groups (SCs) and other groups (non SCs and non-OBCs) remained high. During 2021-22, GER was 26.0 for SCs and 33.3 for all categories, including SCs (MoE, 2023). These statistics suggest that the educational opportunities for school leavers are not enough and need further expansion. It also underlines the need for certain HE outreach activities so that HE can be more inclusive.

The gender parity index, however in the state during recent period shows predominance of women with an index value of 1.22. The positive trend in GPI would be an oversimplification to equate with gender equality, as it considers women as a single category, instead of looking at their multiple identities. For example, a SC woman and a woman from a religious minority and from a so-called backward district of the state is at the bottom of the pyramid so far as her opportunity to HE is concerned. Research on Haryana posits that higher education access and choices are gendered and shaped by caste, religion and location identities. The studies also reveal that there is a need to address the issue of gender stereotyping manifested in the enrolment of women into certain types of courses (Henderson, et al., 2024; Samanta and Stewart, 2022; Stewart, et al., 2023).

Social inclusion in higher education institutions, therefore, is an important issue of research. Inclusion also refers to assimilation of diversity of students in HE institutions, not only in terms of caste and religion, but in terms of rurality, parental educational background (i.e. the challenges of first generation in higher education), challenges of language, challenge of being uninformed regarding information of HE Institutions, various courses and subjects: all these are also of critical importance. In addition to this, how college affects students, the experience of first year students is of critical significance in success of higher education learners. NEP 2020 in India has identified the role of Government Colleges, particularly in delivering on high quality, localized higher education provision (MHRD, 2020). Maximizing the role of higher educational

institutions in such social transformation through educational leaders and faculty is a meaningful area of concern.

The literature on HE suggests that students' transition challenges and formation of learner identity are being researched in developed countries, particularly in UK, Netherlands and USA (Briggs et. al, 2012; Winkle-Wagner and Locks, 2014; Herpen et. al, 2020) and in the case of India, the process of student transition to higher education and the challenges students face in general are few and far between (Sabharwal and Malish, 2018; Sabharwal et al, 2025). Therefore, the experiences of diverse students in HE Institutions need urgent attention as students' diversity and their HE experiences are of considerable weight in the successful policy implementation and in delivery of social inclusion and equity.

In this context, the present study attempts to explore how institutions and social structures influence students' opportunities and the way students navigate these structures, their interactions and experiences with institutions and faculty.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

As discussed earlier, the state of Haryana has made tremendous economic growth during the decades of the 1980s and 1990s due to the green revolution in agriculture. The increased agricultural growth has resulted in manifold increase in per capita income of the state and the state ranks among the top three states of India in per capita income (GoH, 2021). It needs further mention that, subsequent to the agricultural revolution, the state has seen significant growth in its infrastructure, including drinking water, electricity, roads, schools, colleges, medical facilities, industrial and logistics (Rani and Jaglan, 2020). Generally, it is believed that the expansion of physical infrastructure and increase in per capita income leads to overall development, increased opportunities for social mobility and creates a more enlightened citizenry. Research however, does indicate that the expansion of physical infrastructure is largely driven by economic growth, while equity concerns is a social agenda.

It is paradoxical to find that Haryana mirrors a pattern where, with increase of per capita income and high growth of all types of physical infrastructure, the social development indicators in the state (such as sex ratio, crime against women, infant and child mortality), do not show better

performance. In terms of higher education also, Haryana lies among the category of states with high income and low higher education enrolment and attainment (NEP, 2020).

While engaging the question of geographical location and also gender, it needs mention that the region represents the case of classical patriarchy – with its foundations still secure in caste, family, marriage practices; where female sexuality has to be curbed; where women are killed in the name of 'family honour' and the technology to eliminate female children is widely practiced (Chowdhry, 2004; 2011; Rajeshwari, 2014; Sangari and Vaid, 2015). Education of women has registered a change during past few years, yet operates within the permissible structures of patriarchy. Gender inequality is visible in the work participation where work participation is not only gendered but also women's engagement in primary economic activities remains invisible and categorized as domestic duties, particularly related to agriculture and animal rearing (Chowdhry, 1993; Rajeshwari and Himanshi, 2024). Furthermore, access to resources and choices are gendered and shaped by caste, religion and location identities. Even with acceptance of new technology in all vistas of life, higher education of women is seen more as a means of getting a good match for marriage rather than as a path to empowerment. The social norms restrict mobility of women, which further reduces their academic choices and reinforces gendered pattens of enrolment (Henderson, et al., 2024a).

In this context, the state of Haryana presents an interesting and paradoxical study area for researchers. The impressive physical infrastructure of higher education and the unequal participation of different sections of population based on social and economic characteristics, in rural and urban locations, are equally significant and researchable concerns.

1.3 Objectives & Research Questions

(i) To explore the status and potential of higher education outreach practices prevalent in State University and affiliated Government Colleges located in different geographical locations of Haryana – urban and rural respectively.

(ii) To document the contributions of faculty members and HE Institutional leaders in HE outreach programmes in Haryana.

(iii) To evaluate the problems and prospects in developing outreach practices of higher education institutions (HEI, Faculty and students).

Following are the research questions of the present study:

RQ1. What is the current and potential role of HEIs based in rural/semi-urban Haryana, their faculty members and institutional leaders, to engage in gender-equitable, socially just HE outreach for students in their local communities?

1a. Who is delivering HE in Colleges and Universities in rural and semi-urban locations? Who are faculty members and the institutional leaders?

1b. What do faculty members in rural and semi-urban areas currently perceive to be the role of HEIs and their role/s in facilitating access to HE and HE choice in the localities of their workplaces/ what are the existing practices of HE outreach?

1c. What do institutional leaders of rural and semi-urban colleges and universities perceive to be HEIs' role, their role and their employees' role in relation to facilitating access to HE and HE choice?

1d. Which students are receiving HE in rural/semi-urban colleges? How do they perceive the role of faculty members in facilitating HE access and choice?

RQ2. How can the potential contribution of rural and semi-urban faculty members to fair HE access and choice be consolidated and maximised? How can continuing professional learning (CPL) assist with developing the capacity and motivation of faculty members and institutional leaders to engage in gender-equitable and socially-just HE outreach practices?

RQ 3. How can a consolidated HE access/choice role for faculty members and institutional leaders be embedded at a policy level to ensure sustainable change? How can interactive policy consultations contribute to policy change?

1.4 Methodology & Sources of Information

The report is based on a survey of four higher education institutions (HEIs). Here, data has been generated from three stakeholders, i.e. institutional leader (ILs), faculty members (FMs) and undergraduate students (UG students). Both secondary as well as primary sources of data have been collected.

The selected HEIs are three colleges and one university in the state. The criterion of selection of the university has been that it needs to be an apex body of higher education learning in the state catering to rural and semi-urban population. The basis of selection of other HEIs has been: HEIs' affiliation to the state university and being in public sector (government colleges) with rural or semi-urban locations. Keeping these criteria in view, one state university (hereinafter, SU), and three government colleges affiliated to the SU have been selected. One government college has

been researched in depth, (herein after, referred as GCID). The other government colleges (GCs) have been researched to a lesser degree but provided as a comparator for GCID. These two GCs are referred to as GC-A and GC-B.

SU: In SU, the data has been collected from three groups of stakeholders, i.e. IL, FMs and UG students. In SU only those departments were selected which have been running an UG programme. The information has been collected from first year UG students only. Data has been collected from secondary as well as primary sources. Secondary sources include the administrative data of UG students, while primary data has been obtained through the student survey questionnaire, conducting focus group discussions and semi-structured interview. Data have been collected from a total of 269 students in SU. Other than UG students, 57 FMs have been surveyed in SU. These FMs are engaged in the selected UG departments. Quantitative as well as qualitative data have been collected from these FMs. The third stakeholder in SU has been the institutional leader (IL). Both types of information, quantitative as well as qualitative, have been collected from the IL of SU.

GCID: In GCID also, three groups of stakeholders have been selected, namely, IL, FMs and UG Students. Here also, the first year UG students, irrespective of department and streams have been selected for collection of primary as well as secondary data. As discussed earlier, the secondary data relates to administrative data of all UG first year students to understand their socio-economic and demographic background. Similarly, quantitative and qualitative information has been collected from all FMs in GCID (whosoever consented). In the same manner, information has been collected from the IL of GCID. In GCID the data has been collected from one IL, 34 FMs and 191 UG students (Table 1.4.1).

GC-A and GC-B: In GC-A and GC-B, administrative data of UG first year students have been collected which is a secondary source of information. Here, the primary information has been obtained only from two stakeholders, i.e. FMs and IL. A total of 10 FMs (5 from each GC-A and GC-B) have been researched in these HEIs.

It needs mention that the primary data have been collected by adopting a mixed-method approach. This means that quantitative as well as qualitative methods have been used. In the

case of UG students, for primary data collection, the semi-structured questionnaire has been canvassed to collect the quantitative data (in both SU and GCID). The qualitative data has been collected from focus group discussion (hereinafter, FGD) and interviews. Two FGDs of 5 students each have been organised and from these two FGDs, a total of 6 students were interviewed in depth. Participants were selected to ensure diversity across gender and academic discipline. The FGDs explored students' views on the role of HEIs and FMs in supporting access to higher education and the challenges the students face in accessing HE.
The qualitative data from FMs have been collected in the form of solicited diaries and stand-alone interviews. In the case of GCID and SU, 5 FMs in each have been researched for the solicited diary study. This qualitative component includes an interview-diary-interview structure. The initial interview (pre-diary interview) in this method is conducted to introduce the subject, collect the demographic information of FMs and focus on their views relating to widening participation of higher education. They have been asked whether they have counselled students regarding higher education choices to students or anyone known to them. Following the interview, participants have been invited to keep a solicited diary over a three-month period, where they were supposed to record the counselling events regarding HE. At the end of the diary period, a follow-up interview (post-diary) has been conducted to discuss diary content and gather final reflections on HE practices and their engagement in HE wider participation vis-a-vis students.

The qualitative information collected from the FMs of other two HEIs, has been in the form of a stand-alone interview. Here, five FMs each from GC-A and GC-B have been invited to participate.

The interview was recorded with participants' consent to understand their perspectives on challenges faced by rural students in accessing HE and how they help in navigating these challenges. The potential solutions in mitigating these challenges have also been discussed with FMs. In the same manner, the qualitative information from the ILs of all the selected HEIs has been obtained. The qualitative information has been obtained through interviews on participants' perspectives on the role of HEIs and FMs in outreach practices of widening access to HE to rural and disadvantaged students. The quantitative information has been collected with a semi-structured questionnaire. The information on sample survey of students, FMs and ILs in each institute has been presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Sample students, faculty and institutional leaders in selected HEIs: 2024

HE Institution	FM Survey (including diary & interview	Solicited Diary	FM Stand alone Interview	Student survey (including FGDs + interview)	FGD +Interview (total students)	Institutional Leader (Interview)
SU	57	5	0	269	2+6 (10)	01
GCID	34	5	0	191	2+6 (10)	01
GC-A (interview)	05	0	05	0	0	01
GC-B (interview)	05	0	05	0	0	01
Total	101	10	10	460	20	4

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 1.2: Basic Information of Selected ILs in Haryana

HEI	Title and Pseudonym	Gender	Caste/Social Group	Religion
SU	Senior Professor/ Daarji	M	General	Hindu
GCID	DEHO/ Vaasu	M	SC	Hindu
GC-A	Principal/Anji	F	General	Hindu
GC-B	Principal/Ranju	F	General	Hindu

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

A brief profile of Institutional leaders is presented in Table 1.2. The summary of collected information reveals that two institutional leaders were men while another two were women. One among them belonged to the disadvantageous social group, but from a well-educated and economically sound family background. Two institutional leaders, namely Daarji and Ranju, were from science stream, while another two were from humanities or social sciences. All the ILs were married, 55-60 years of age, having children with responsibility towards them. Born in India, all have been living in urban areas, with Hindi and Punjabi as their mother tongue. It may be concluded from their background that they can very well situate themselves and understand the diverse background of students who also belong to the same periphery. It may also be noted that one IL among them belongs to first generation in higher education, and all other three are having multi-generational higher education history and they have been living in urban locations for a long time.

The SU and GCID ILs have been in this role for more than 5 years, while in GC-A and GC-B, the ILs have been in this role for less than 5 years. It needs mention that, in the case of SU, the IL has delegated his role to a senior professor for the present study. The present IL of SU is in this role for last 3 years and is being nominated by state government, and may remain in the position at the goodwill of the state government.

In all other HEIs, the ILs are promoted to this role for their seniority. Daarji, has been in the institute for more than 25 years and he has been in the role of senior professor for about 8 years.

Table 1.3: Basic information of selected FM participants

HEI	Title and Pseudonym	Gender	Caste/Social Group	Type of Disability	Religion
SU	Dr /Gary	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
SU	Mr/Vipul	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
SU	Dr/Akram	Male	OBC	NA	Muslim
SU	Dr/Dhiraj	Male	SC	NA	Hindu
SU	Dr/Damini	Female	General	NA	Hindu
GCID	Mr/Kuljeet	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
GCID	Dr/Stargazer	Female	SC	NA	Hindu
GCID	Mr/Pankaj	Male	General	NA	Hindu
GCID	Dr/Nimmo	Female	SC	NA	Hindu
GCID	Dr/Balu	Male	SC	NA	Hindu
GC-A	Dr/Das	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
GC-A	Mr/SriKumar	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
GC-A	Mr/Ram	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
GC-A	Mr/Rajat	Male	SC	NA	Hindu
GC-A	Mr/Disky	Male	General	NA	Hindu
GC-B	Dr/Ginny	Female	General	NA	Hindu
GC-B	Dr/Rubal	Female	General	Locomotor	Hindu
GC-B	Ms/Sarina	Female	SC	NA	Hindu
GC-B	Dr/Saabir	Male	OBC	NA	Hindu
GC-B	Mr/Satnam	Male	General	NA	Hindu

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

A profile of sample FMs in the selected HEIs has been presented in Table 1.3. Overall, 20 faculty members were interviewed in all four selected HEIs. Among them, 14 FMs were men and 6 were women. In case of SU, four men FMs and one woman FM have been selected, while in GCID the two were women and three were men FMs. It may be noted that in GC-A, there was no woman FM and therefore, all five FMs were men. In GC-B, the gender composition was favorable to women and here, three women and two men FMs have been selected for interview. It needs mention that in GC-B, one among women FMs was differently abled with locomotor disability and hence she also formed part of this selection. In all other HEIs, there was no differently abled FM.

As far as their religion is concerned, an overwhelming majority FMs practiced Hindu religion, while only one in SU belonged to Muslim religion. The social identity in terms of caste groups reveals that 6 among them belonged to SCs and another 8 belonged to OBC social group. The institution-wise distribution reveals that in SU three were OBC, one SC and one belonged to

General caste group. In case of GCID, 3 among them were OBC, one SC and one from General caste group. In case of GC-A also, 3 OBC, one SC and one from General caste group was selected, while in GC-B, three from General caste group, one from OBC and one from SC was selected for the survey. Their higher educational attainment shows that eleven among them had obtained a doctorate degree. There was no significant difference among males and females with doctorate degree (as almost equal number of male and female had obtained this). The majority of them were married; however, two among them were separated and another two were unmarried. The majority of them had children. It may be noted that 45 percent among them were 32 to 40 years of age, another 40 percent were 40 to 50 years, and 15 percent were in 50 plus age-group. It may be noted that the FMs were from diverse subject streams ranging from Mathematics, Economics, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Fine Arts, Journalism, Law, Psychology, Geography, Physical Education and Commerce. The majority of faculty members were appointed through a set procedure of regular appointment, i.e. interview by selection committee or the test and interview. However, one among them was on contract and another was working under self-financing scheme. Only one among them had language Punjabi as mother tongue, while all others reported Hindi as their mother tongue.

As stated in the methodology, the qualitative data has been generated from 10 UG student participants in each SU and GCID. A profile of participants in FGDs is presented in Table 1.4. As far as the social identity of UG participants in SU is concerned, out of 10 participants, 6 belonged to OBC group while another 4 were from general caste group, i.e. non SCs and non OBCs. All of them were Hindu by religion. Three among them were women students while majority were men. The participants belonged to diverse streams and courses: Fine Arts, Law, BBA and Mass communication. In the case of GCID, the majority of participants were women (7 out of 10). As far as religion is concerned, all of them are Hindu. Their social background reveals that half among them belonged to OBC social group, while 3 belonged to scheduled caste group (SCs) and another 2 from general social group, i.e. non-SCs and non-OBCs social group.

Table 1.4: Basic information of selected UG student participants for FGD and interview

HEI	Pseudonym	Gender	Caste/Social Group	Religion	Interviewed Yes/No
SU	Shiksha	Female	OBC	Hindu	Yes
SU	Jashan	Female	OBC	Hindu	Yes
SU	Lucky	Male	OBC	Hindu	Yes
SU	Deep	Male	OBC	Hindu	Yes
SU	Prashi	Female	General	Hindu	Yes
SU	Arpit	Male	General	Hindu	Yes
SU	Sandy	Male	OBC	Hindu	No
SU	Akku	Male	OBC	Hindu	No
SU	Shivu	Male	General	Hindu	No
SU	Reshu	Male	General	Hindu	No
GCID	Ritika	Female	General	Hindu	Yes
GCID	Khushi	Female	General	Hindu	Yes
GCID	Tanvi	Female	SC	Hindu	Yes
GCID	Gippy	Female	SC	Hindu	Yes
GCID	Amarpal	Male	OBC	Hindu	Yes
GCID	Devender	Male	OBC	Hindu	Yes
GCID	Himani	Female	OBC	Hindu	No
GCID	Ekta	Female	OBC	Hindu	No
GCID	Lavi	Male	OBC	Hindu	No
GCID	Mehak	Female	SC	Hindu	No

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The participants represented all the three streams, i.e. humanities, commerce and science. As far as their age is concerned, all are 18 to 20 years of age. None among them has reported any physical disability. All reported to be unmarried with no caring responsibilities. All of them identified themselves with the traditional gender binary. In SU, half of them have permanent residence in urban area; in GCID, all of them are residing in rural area. Majority of them reported Hindi as their mother tongue, though many of them knew three languages, i.e. *Hindi, English* and *Punjabi*. Amarpal (from GCID), however reported he knows *Telugu* and *Sanskri*t along with *English, Hindi* and *Punjabi*.

1.5 Chapter Scheme in the Report

The first chapter is the introduction of the report which contextualizes HE access and choice at the state level. The subsequent sections present the rationale of study, objectives, research questions, data sources and methodology. All the instruments applied in carrying out the study have been discussed in detail. It also presents a summary profile of participants of the study.

The second chapter discusses the pattern and growth of higher education institutions and academic profession in the state of Hayana since its inception. Haryana's higher education expanded rapidly post-2005, especially via private institutions. While enrolment has increased and gender parity has been achieved, the rural-urban and social group disparities persist. The academic quality has been discussed with reference to availability of FMs, research funding, and other higher education practices. Government efforts for women's education and inclusion exist, but structural gaps and inequities remain significant.

The third chapter discusses the profile of the selected HE institutions. The selected institutions have been described with the help of secondary data related to availability of FMs and students' strength, their composition and other characteristics. The professional opportunities accessed by FMs in selected institutions are discussed. The chapter also presents a commentary on HE outreach culture or practices in the state of Haryana.

Chapter four is based on primary data generated through the survey using mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The chapter provides a detailed profile of faculty members in HEIs in terms of demography, gender composition, their location history, family education and occupation background. The chapter examines in detail whether they are the first person in family to be FMs and who was involved and motivated them to be FMs.

Chapter five is devoted to HE outreach practices and the perspectives of ILs and FMs of selected HEIs. It presents a detailed account of how the ILs and FMs perceive the challenges of prospective students and the institutional HE outreach practices. The chapter also describes how FMs facilitate rural and disadvantaged prospective students to HE.

Chapter six throws light on the demographic, locational and education history of enrolled UG students. Signifying the need for HE outreach activity, the chapter discusses and highlights the challenges of students in accessing HE and their perspectives on the institutional activities which need to be practiced in facilitating access to higher education.

Chapter seven identifies the gap in the perception of students, faculty members and institutional leaders and puts forward the potential role of FMs and HEIs in access of HE to rural, disadvantaged students of the state.

Chapter eight presents a summary of conclusions highlighting key concerns. The study captures the significance of HEIs and FMs in fostering a strong commitment to inclusive education.

Chapter 2: State Level Profile of HE and Academic Profession

2.1 Introduction

Constitutionally, education is a 'concurrent' subject, meaning thereby that the education provision, development of infrastructure, its access and equity has been the responsibility of individual states in India. Central Government and its various agencies, however, formulate public policy on education and thus education occupies centre stage of higher education in India. Besides the institutes of higher learning in the national capital, the Central Government, over the years, has also established several institutions of higher education and maintains them. It has established one Central University in each state of India and the functioning, governance and regulation of these Central Universities are entirely in hands of central government. Therefore, the education system in India is managed by both central and state governments. While the central government plays a significant role in setting policies and guidelines, the state governments are responsible for implementing them. The state governments are a vital link in the entire higher education chain and the studies on financing and management of higher education show that the bulk of funding for higher education in the state comes from the state governments (Aggarwal, 2009). As a consequence, individual states have the main say in all administrative and operational matters. Therefore, state policies and reforms are critical for the success of the education system in India. Unlike central Government where responsibilities are discharged through UGC and other professional councils, the state governments carry out most of the functions by themselves through the concerned government departments or directorate in the states. Few states have either state councils or advisory board for higher education; these are largely advisory bodies. Generally, the powers with respect to higher education in the states are concentrated in the higher education departments and subject to similar bureaucratic control as other wings of the government (Agarwal, 2009: 312).

2.2 Profile of the State in Terms of HE and Equity

The higher education landscape in Haryana has undergone a major transformation due to changing economic, technological and demographic situation. The social demand for higher education has grown at an unparalleled rate since 1980s.

At the time of formation of state, i.e. in 1966-67, there was only one University, 14 government colleges and 38 government-aided colleges. It may be noted that until late 90s, the number of universities in the state remained as 4 and all were in public sector. The number of colleges has also witnessed a steady rise. After 2005-6, there has been a considerable rise in the number of universities, when not only the state universities increased but 5 private universities and 5 deemed universities have also been founded. The total number increased to 21 during this period. After this, the growth in universities in the state has been phenomenal and this was largely due to private and deemed universities which have emerged in large numbers. At present, there are 51 Universities and almost half among these are private universities, 6 deemed universities and one central university (Table 2.1). It needs mention that these 51 universities include medical, veterinary, agriculture and others. The increase of private HEIs widened the access to higher education and enhanced the transitioning from limited enrolment to massification, yet this has wider implications in a socio-economically stratified society. Studies have shown that this has led to commodification of education, shifting the financial burden of higher education from state to individuals and resulting in marked inter-group or social inequalities in accessing high-value academic subjects (Tilak, 2015; Duraisamy and Duraisamy, 2016; Sabharwal, 2021).

Table 2.1: Number of universities in Haryana: 1966 to 2020.

Years	University				Total
	State/ Public	Central	Deemed	Private	
1966-67*	01	0	0	0	01
1970-71*	01	0	0	0	01
1975-76*	03	0	0	0	03
1980-81*	03	0	0	0	03
1985-86*	03	0	0	0	03
1990-91*	03	0	0	0	03
1995-96*	04	0	00	0	04
2000-01*	04	0	00	0	04
2005-06*	05	0	00	0	05
2010-11**	10	01	05	05	21
2012-13***	10	01	05	08	24
2013-14***	11	01	05	13	30
2015-16***	14	01	05	17	37
2019-20***	18	01	06	23	48
2021-22***	20	01	06	24	51

*Source: * Government of Haryana, Statistical Abstract of Haryana of various years.*

*** Government of Haryana, State Higher Education Plan.*

**** Government of India, AISHE, various years.*

Table 2.2: Number of colleges by management and type in Haryana: 1966 to 2019

Years	Government Colleges			Government-Aided Colleges			Private Un-Aided Colleges			Grand Total
	General	Women	Total	General	Women	Total	General	Women	Total	
1966-67	12	2	14	31	7	38	NA	NA	NA	52
1970-71	14	1	15	58	14	72	NA	NA	NA	87
1975-76	15	1	16	93	24	117	NA	NA	NA	133
1980-81	27	1	28	90	28	118	NA	NA	NA	147
1985-86	36	1	37	89	30	119	NA	NA	NA	157
1990-91	43	2	45	90	33	123	NA	NA	NA	169
1995-96	48	3	51	88	42	130	NA	NA	NA	181
2000-01	58	7	65	87	37	124	30	9	39	228
2005-06	62	11	73	91	34	125	64	20	84	282
2010-11	77	16	93	68	39	105	527	52	579	776
2015-16*	NA	NA	169	NA	NA	112	NA	NA	589	870
2019-20*	NA	NA	234	NA	NA	127	NA	NA	673	1034
2020-21*	NA	NA	258	NA	NA	138	NA	NA	685	1081
2021-22*	NA	NA	253	NA	NA	133	NA	NA	703	1089

Note: NA refers to non-availability of disaggregated data.
Source: Govt of Haryana, Statistical Abstract of Haryana of various years.
**Govt of India, AISHE, various years.*

As discussed above, there were 52 colleges in the state during 1966-67, catering to the need of higher education in the state. Among these 52 colleges, 40 were Arts and Science colleges. The increase of arts and science colleges[1] has been steady until 2001. It may also be noted that, until the year 1995-96, almost all the colleges were either managed by state government or were government aided. After the year 2001, the growth of colleges was largely on account of private colleges and there has been phenomenal increase in private colleges after 2005-6, when the number of private unaided colleges increased from 84 to 579. It needs mention here that a large number of these colleges were education and engineering colleges. At present, the state has 1,089 colleges which include arts, science, education and engineering and public, private aided and private unaided.

It may also be noted that, at the time of state formation, i.e. during 1966-67, the gross enrolment ratio was 2.9 and it was even lower for women. The GER increased at a fast pace from 1980s and, from the year 2005-6 onwards, the enrolment increased phenomenally from elite to

[1] According to AISHE Report, Arts and Science colleges imparting education leading to a degree (mostly Bachelor) have been instrumental in extending the HE landscape of the state.

massification stage (33.2 percent) by 2021-22. It may also be noted that at the time of state formation during 1966-67, there were 9 women colleges and by 2005-06, the proportion of women colleges (arts and science colleges) increased to 27.8 percent which were fully or partially state funded (Table 2.2). It has been pointed out in a study by Navani (2019) that the focus on education for women's equality in the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 emerged when the number of illiterate women in the country had increased from 158.7 million in 1951 to 241.7 million in 1981. Since access to education in India was restricted to men and women's education was advocated much later by reformists such as Savitribai and Jyotiba Phule, Ambedkar, Tagore, Gandhi and many more, but this was within the framework of gender segregation and with women-only institutions of education such as schools and colleges (Frykenberg, 2010, quoted from Henderson et al., 2024: 10). Further, the history of access to higher education for women in India traces the persistent presence of patriarchy. Patriarchal norms across India restrict movement of women outside the home (Phadke, 2007). Hence, women's access to higher education is very much related to presence of women colleges in the vicinity of habitation. A number of studies have shown that gender segregation is culturally rooted and how symbolic boundaries impact their access to higher education (Chowdhry, 1995; Rajeshwari 2014; Henderson et al. 2024). The gender norms in the state led to establishment of women's colleges and their proportion in all types of colleges increased by 45 percent by 2005-6. In addition to women's colleges, the state Government has introduced schemes for waiving tuition fees for women, free travel facilities in roadway buses up to 150km commute to educational institutes, provision of one seat in admission for single girl children to increase female enrolment and retention in schools and colleges (Govt of Haryana, 2023). To further the agenda of social justice, affirmative action policies are in place to promote access to education for marginalized communities. Another affirmative policy of the state is the compulsory computer education in graduation. It was started from the year 2010-11 in all the Government colleges of the state for all first-year students of non-IT faculties.

The expansion of the HE system is expected to reduce inequalities in access, provide opportunities for social mobility through better employment opportunities in the formal sector, and create a more enlightened citizenry. However, it is interesting to explore how the expansion of HEIs has shaped up the higher educational scenario of the state.

As higher education in the state gets re-imagined and when the state is playing a significant role in shaping and anchoring the HE system, one may ask, how critical or marginal is the issue of women and socio-economic disadvantaged groups in relation to higher education in the state. The issue of access and equity is assessed here in terms of GER for women vis-à-vis men and socially disadvantaged group (SCs) vis-à-vis other than SC population.

The higher education enrolment (GER) in Haryana has been presented in Table 2.3. It shows that GER increased at a slow pace until 2000. After 2005-6, the enrolment in higher education increased at a fast pace and increased from elite to massification stage (24.1 percent) by 2011-12. The increase is for all sections of population, i.e. for boys, girls, and all sections of population living in rural as well as in urban areas. However, the growth varied significantly for different geographic locations and for different sections of population.

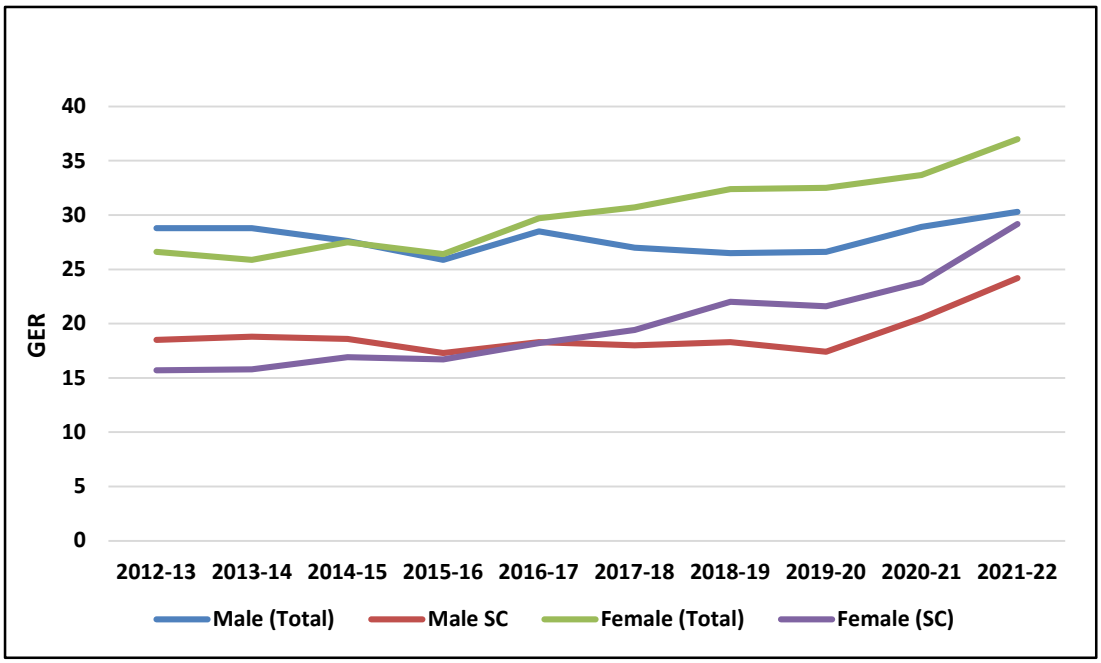
It may be seen from Figure 2.1 the GER for women increased at a faster pace than men for both total population as well as for SC population. However, the gap between the two, i.e. socially disadvantaged girls and for others, remained almost the same. Only recently for year 2021-22, it shows sign of convergence. In case of men GER, though the gap among social groups, i.e. all category men and SC men, has not reduced substantially, meaning thereby that, though the enrolment is increasing, yet the gap among social groups is still a matter of concern. The data further reveals a gender parity in higher education enrolment (Table 2.3. and Figure 2.1). This may, however, be taken with a pinch of salt as studies have demonstrated that data belies the hidden gender inequality, and strong gender norms prevails in the region even when the higher education enrolment for women increases (Stewart et al., 2021; Henderson et al., 2024).

The increase of women's enrolment in HE Institutions does not correspond with their job engagement, as when these numbers are disaggregated and transferred into jobs, the proportion of women is very low. The trend in the workplace still remains asymmetrical. It suggests that, the higher the position, the lower the proportion of females in jobs and vice versa. The current policy and programmes look at women as a single category, instead of looking at their multiple identities. For example, a scheduled caste woman from a rural area, that too from a backward district of Haryana will be at the bottom of the pyramid so far as her opportunities for HE are concerned, and thus needs special consideration. There is also a need to address the

issue of gender stereotyping manifested in the enrolment of women into certain types of courses (Henderson, et al., 2024).

The enrolment of students in degree colleges from 1966-67 to 2023 for different social groups further reveals that the gap in enrolment among SC and other than SC has widened over a period of time. Another study conducted by Jindal University in collaboration with DHE, Haryana (IIHED, 2017) also suggests that rural urban gap in higher education enrolment is a matter of concern (Figure 2.3). The state also reveals inter-district variations in GER in general and among social groups in particular (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.1: GER of SC and total population



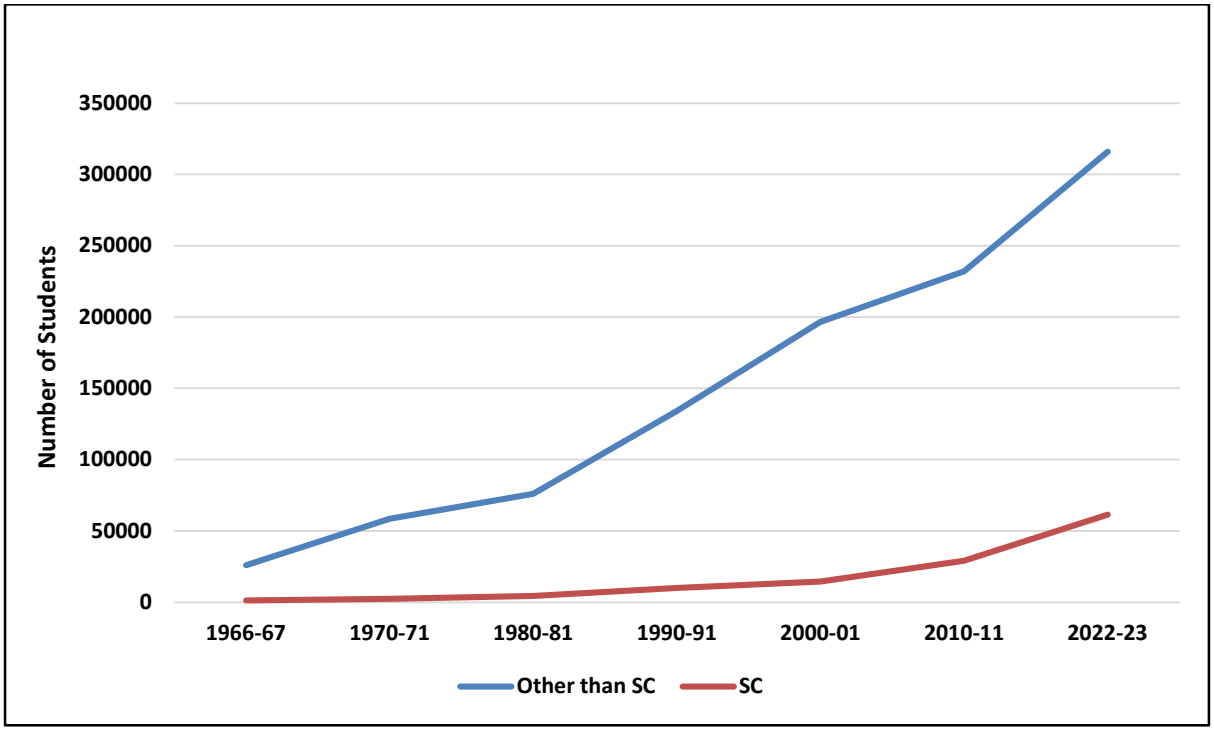
Source: Annual AISHE Reports.

Table 2.3: GER of SC and total population in Haryana: 1966 to 2022

Years	All Categories			SC		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1966-67	2.9	*	*	*	*	*
1975-76	3.2	*	*	*	*	*
1980-81	4.7	*	*	*	*	*
1985-86	4.9	*	*	*	*	*
1990-91	5.6	*	*	*	*	*
1995-96	6.0	*	*	*	*	*
2000-01	8.2	*	*	*	*	*
2005-06	12.84	13.05	12.67	*	*	*
2011-12	24.1	27.2	20.7	14.2	16.5	11.5
2012-13**	27.8	28.8	26.6	17.2	18.5	15.7
2015-16**	26.1	25.9	26.4	17.0	17.3	16.7
2019-20**	29.3	26.6	32.5	19.3	17.4	21.6
2021-22**	33.3	30.3	37.0	26.5	24.2	29.2

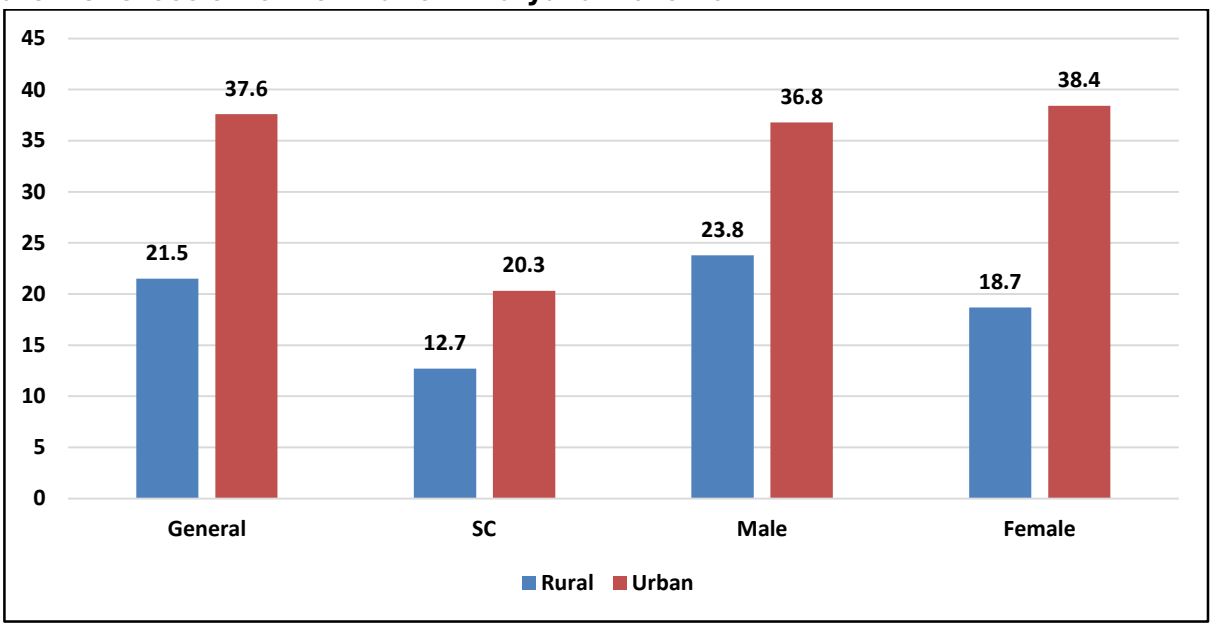
*Note: * refers to non-availability of data*
*Source: Directorate of Higher Education, Panchkula. ** AISHE Reports of various years*

Figure 2.2: Enrolment of students in degree colleges: 1966-2023



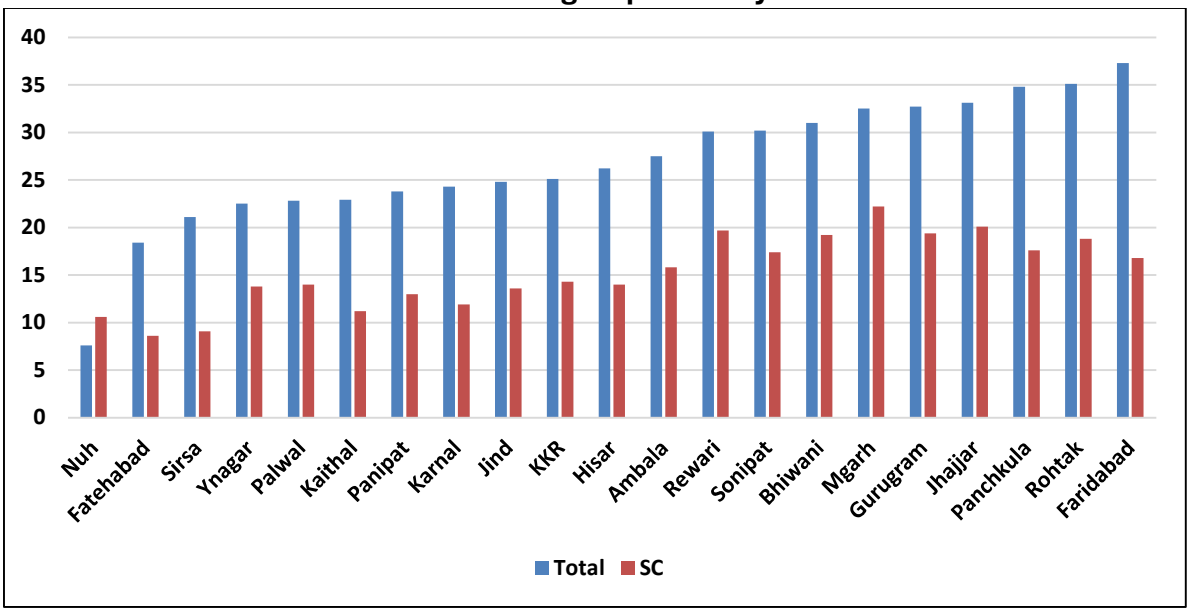
Source: Statistical Abstract of Haryana: 1967 to 2025.

Figure 2.3: Gross enrolment ratio in Haryana: 2015-16



Source: IIHED, State Higher Education Plan, Haryana. IIHED, Global Jindal University in collaboration with Department of Higher Education, Government of Haryana. 2017.

Figure 2.4: GER across districts and social groups in Haryana: 2015-16



Source: IIHED, State Higher Education Plan, Haryana. IIHED, Global Jindal University in collaboration with Department of Higher Education, Government of Haryana, 2017.

In addition to enrolment of women and socially disadvantaged groups, some significant inclusion issues which need to be voiced at higher educational institutions are (i) related to the basic infrastructure for differently abled population, i.e. are educational institutions disability

friendly? (ii) are the websites used by universities and colleges friendly for visually challenged students?

2.3 HE Access and Choice Strategies at the State Level

The state government of Haryana has recently constituted the Haryana State Higher Education Council (2018) and one of its objectives is to frame policy on higher education and help the HEIs to implement it (HSHEC, 2025). Since this is recently constituted, the state has the potential to develop HE policies. The state is committed to implement NEP 2020, which has a focus on improving access of the SEDGs to 'quality' HEIs.

The following schemes or programmes are extracted from various government documents and news items related to Haryana state higher education. One of the visions of the state government on higher education is to provide greater opportunities of access to HE and ensure inclusion of vulnerable groups such as economically disadvantaged, females and minorities (DHE, Haryana, 2025). In this context, the existing outreach strategies for higher education in the state are largely related to opening of colleges (HEIs) within easy physical access. The state government has an active policy to open government colleges within a radius of 20km, so that all the students, especially women, can access HE institutions. In order to increase physical access, the Government has a policy to provide free and safe transportation facilities up to 150 km to students in HEIs. The scheme is named as "SATHI, safe and accessible transport: Haryana Initiative". Another policy is to waive the tuition fees for women students at the UG level. In addition to providing educational facilities, the main focus of the equity strategy is to widen access for socially disadvantaged groups by providing scholarships or stipends to students from SC and OBC social groups. The scheme is named as "*Annusuchit Jati Chhattra Ucch Shiksha Protsahan Yojana"*. In order to decrease financial burden of HE, the state government has a policy of "Earn While You Learn" scheme. This scheme is designed to attract students to HE where they can gain financial independence. Twinning Programme is another approach and an outreach activity adopted by government schools, where the students are exposed to government colleges by visiting them in the vicinity. In order to increase social inclusion, the state government has various reservation policies during enrolment, which include reservation for single girl child (parents having single girl child having one seat reservation during admission), reservation of sports person in HEIs and reservation for SCs, OBCs and EWS.

Studies have pointed out that reservation and financial assistance for socially disadvantaged groups have been a favourite tool of social inclusion of all state governments in India (Sabharwal and Malish 2016).

2.4 State of the academic profession at state level

The state of academic profession in the state may also be understood in terms of the number of regular faculty in the state. The full-time faculty members in HEIs can ensure stability and continuity within the academic workforce. The NEP 2020 also highlights the need for full-time faculty members, as they are better positioned to contribute to research activities and provide mentorship to students, thereby fostering a culture of academic excellence within HEIs (NEP Clause: 13.1, 13.6).

As per AISHE report, there were a total of 41098 teachers in higher education during 2021-22 in the state of Haryana. Among these, 19,012 (46.3 percent) were men and 22,086 were women. The temporal pattern of all types of teachers working in higher education institutions (including: assistant professors and equivalent, associate professors and equivalents, professors and equivalents, tutors, demonstrators, visiting faculty and temporary teachers) has been presented in Table 2.4 for 10 years. It shows that total strength of teachers in HE has declined from 49,438 in 2014-15 to 31,068 in 2017-18 and now it stands at 41,098. It may be noted that during this period, the number of HEIs and the enrolment of students have increased significantly.

Hence one can very well imagine the state of affairs regarding faculty position in these HEIs. It may again be noted that the absolute number of temporary teachers is increasing. During 2021-22, the proportion of temporary teachers in total teachers stood at 5.45. The ratio of men and women among temporary teachers is 33:66 respectively (AISHE, 2024).

Table: 2.4: Teachers in higher education institutions in Haryana: 2011-12 to 2021-22

Years	Temporary Teachers	All Teachers
2011-12	1988	40872
2012-13	2177	45618
2013-14	2731	48077
2014-15	2956	49438
2015-16	2939	45722
2016-17	1258	35993
2017-18	1285	31068
2018-19	1339	35677
2019-20	1390	39231
2020-21	1563	39256
2021-22	2241	41098

Source: GOI, 2024. All India Survey of Higher Education, 2023-24. MHRD, Department of Higher Education, New Delhi.

Table 2.5: Pupil teacher ratio in India and Haryana: 2012-13 to 2021-22

Year	India		Haryana	
	Regular & Distance Mode	Regular Mode	Regular & Distance Mode	Regular Mode
2012-13	23	20	19	19
2013-14	24	21	18	18
2014-15	23	21	18	17
2015-16	23	20	18	17
2016-17	26	23	26	21
2017-18	29	25	29	25
2018-19	26	24	26	23
2019-20	26	23	24	20
2020-21	27	24	26	22
2021-22	26	23	26	22

Source: Govt. of India: AISHE, various years.

The pupil teacher ratio in higher education has been presented in Table 2.5. In comparison to all-India average, the pupil teacher ratio is better in Haryana since 2012-13 to 2021-22. However, it may be noted that, in the state of Haryana, the pupil teacher ratio has increased with time. It was 19 students per teacher in 2012-13, which increased to 25 students per teacher by 2017-18. The distribution of teachers across socio-religious groups is presented in Table 2.6. At a broader level, the data show that, though the proportion of teachers from disadvantaged groups (SCs and OBCs) has increased over a period of time, yet it is short of the required norms.

Table 2.6: Teachers in higher education across social and religious groups

Years	Other than SC/ST/OBC (General)	SC	ST	OBC	PWD	Muslim	Other Minority Communities
2012-13	86.2	4.1	0.1	7.7	0.3	0.4	1.2
2013-14	85.2	4.2	0.2	8.5	0.2	0.5	1.2
2014-15	85.3	4.7	0.2	8.1	0.2	0.6	1.0
2015-16	85.5	4.6	0.2	7.9	0.2	0.5	1.1
2016-17	78.6	5.3	0.2	10.4	0.3	1.3	3.9
2017-18	77.0	5.9	0.1	11.0	0.3	1.3	4.3
2018-19	75.9	6.3	0.1	11.1	0.3	1.8	4.4
2019-20	75.4	6.5	0.1	11.5	0.3	1.9	4.2
2020-21	74.7	6.7	0.1	11.8	0.7	1.8	4.2
2021-22	74.1	6.9	0.1	12.1	0.8	1.8	4.2

Source: Govt. of India: AISHE of various years.

It may be accepted that, when knowledge is expanding at an unprecedented speed and when most sophisticated technology is becoming outdated in a very short span of time, there is a continuous need of learning to remain up to date and relevant and face the challenge of other modes of acquiring knowledge. In this context, the existence of efficient faculty members (FMs) can increase the organizational efficiency and performance of HEIs. The Educational Commissions have also highlighted the significance of professional education and training of teachers for the qualitative improvement of education. Studies have indicated that, in order to improve performance of FMs, improvements in their hiring practices, working conditions, and engaging them in faculty development programs are the need of the hour (Kaushal, 2017).

The recruitment or hiring practices of teachers in higher education in the state of Haryana is in consonance with UGC (University Grant Commission) guidelines. Their training and promotions are also linked to API as suggested by UGC. The guidelines for temporary recruitment are also similar to regular appointments (in terms of eligibility conditions), but the practice varies and is need-based which is therefore often left to individual HEIs. The hiring practices of institutional leaders (ILs) in the colleges are direct recruitment as well as through career promotions. Generally, it is the career promotion through seniority which is being practiced for the last 25 years in the state. In case of State Universities and other similar HEIs, the IL is a political appointment. Though the guidelines of IL appointments are set by UGC (a central body of regulating higher education), but it may not be said with certainty that these are followed by each state. In case of Haryana universities, the ILs are political appointments.

2.5 Summary and Conclusion

The higher education scenario in Haryana has witnessed large-scale transformation since the formation of state in 1966. The social demand for higher education has grown tremendously during the 1980s when the state's economy grew manifold due to green revolution, and this was the time when many government colleges and universities were established in the state. The last two decades, however, have seen the rise in number of colleges and universities at a very fast pace. It was noted that during this period the growth of private institutions of HE was phenomenal and the impact of privatization of HE on the state scenario is not the ambit of this chapter. The access to HE has undoubtedly increased, which has been measured in terms of GER (indicator of physical access to HE). The average GER in the state is 33.3, but one may find large rural urban variations. The male/female variations, however, have narrowed down in the recent years, yet one may find the gap between social groups has not minimized and this is a matter of concern. As far as academic scenario in HEIs is concerned, one may find that the number of FMs in HEIs is declining and more particularly after the year 2014-15. It needs mention that, during 2015-16 to 2020-21, a large number of HEIs have been created, and enrolments have also increased significantly. Hence, the declining faculty in HEIs is a matter of great concern. As far as the recruitment policy of FMs is concerned, the state government recruits FMs in HE through the public service commission of the state as per the guidelines set by UGC (Central commission to regulate higher education). The appointment of institutional leaders in HEIs (Colleges) are on promotion by seniority, while the appointment of key leaders like Vice-Chancellors in state universities is typically handled by the state government, often with the Governor as the Chancellor.

Chapter 3: Profile of the Case Study Institutions

3.1 Introduction to the Institutions

As stated in the first chapter, higher education is in massification stage in India, where young people from families and communities who have historically not completed schooling are accessing HE. However, the informed choice for admission process, choice of courses, and institutions emerges as challenge in accessing HE. In this context, higher education institutions (HEIs) are key but under-acknowledged institutional actors in HE-related outreach and widening participation. Faculty members are vital sources of college knowledge in rural and semi-urban areas, but their potential is currently under-utilised in these settings. In order to explore and showcase the potential of HEI and faculty members, the present study has selected one state university (SU) and 3 government colleges affiliated to the university. It may be noted that SUs in India play a crucial role in higher education by providing accessible and affordable learning opportunities, particularly in their respective states. They establish and manage colleges, oversee curriculum, examinations, and degree conferment. Furthermore, they develop and implement academic programmes, often tailored to the specific needs of their state, including regional languages and cultural contexts. Hence, one SU in the state had been selected. In addition to SU, three government colleges affiliated to the SU were also selected. From these 3 government colleges, one government college was selected for in-depth study (hereinafter GCID) where all the faculty members and all the newly enrolled (first semester) undergraduate students were surveyed, to obtain information on the role and potential of institutions and faculty members. In addition to SU and GCID, two other government colleges (herein after GC-A and GC-B), affiliated to the SU were selected. Therefore, in all one SU and 3 government colleges have been studied to explore HE outreach culture in different HEIs. A brief introduction of the selected HEIs is presented in following sections.

3.1.1. State University (SU)

The selected university is one of the oldest state universities, established in the late 1950s. It has transformed its initial unitary character into a multi-faculty University. At present, it is a multi-disciplinary and multi-faculty prestigious centre of learning, spread over a vast lush green campus. It houses almost 50 departments and institutes (offering 175 courses) across 10 faculties. These ten faculties are: arts and languages, social sciences, life sciences, sciences,

education, Indic studies, law, commerce and management, engineering and technology and pharmaceutical sciences. The student strength at the university campus is almost 15,000. Once dominated by male students, its composition changed over a period of time and at present, girl students account 54 percent, while remaining 46 percent are boys. It is an affiliating university and its jurisdiction extends over 7 districts in the state. This SU affiliates more than 90 degree colleges and among these 40 (42.5 percent) are state public or Government colleges. Another 42.5 percent are government-aided while 15.5 percent are private unaided degree colleges. It needs mention that one-third of government colleges are exclusively for women. In addition to this, 72 percent of the government colleges are located in rural settings.

It may be noted that accreditation is a process of assessing the performance of institutions that volunteer to be accredited, on the basis of a few set parameters. In India, the NAAC is an autonomous body (established in 1994, by UGC), which ensure quality education via assessment and accreditation of institutions that volunteer for the same. The SU has been accredited with A++ grade in the most recent cycle.

3.1.2. Government College in-depth (GCID)

Situated in a semi-urban setting, the selected GCID college is the only government college in a radius of around 20km and it serves the population of about 25 villages. Established as a private co-education institution in the late 1990s, it was taken over by the state Government in the mid-2000s. Since then, the college has gained in terms of courses, students and faculty strength immensely. The undergraduate programme is for Humanities, Commerce, Science (medical and non-medical) and Computer applications. In addition to UG, it also offers PG programme in Commerce, English and History. The College has almost 1,300 students, almost 50 teaching and around 25 non-teaching staff. The college campus is vibrant with almost equal number of boys and girls (both almost 650, as per administrative data of GCID, 2024).

3.1.3. Government College-A (GC-A) and Government College-B (GC-B)

GC-A, which is among the newly established women's colleges of the state, is located in a rural setting. The college is spread over more than 10 acres of land donated by the villagers for housing the higher education institution for girls. It offers three UG programmes, namely graduation in arts, science and commerce. The college has almost 10 regular faculty members with one Principal and 1 regular non-teaching staff. It may however be noted that around 5 other

peripheral staff members, such as clerk, and other catering to the college's needs such as peon, sweeper are recently recruited as contractual staff under Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam (HKRN). Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited has been set up on 13th October, 2021. It is an official Haryana government portal for hiring contractual staff for various departments, boards and universities in the state. Until HKRN was established, each department in Haryana was responsible for its own contractual staff. It needs mention that the college has a catchment of about 10km and serves the higher education need of 6 to 7 villages.

GC-B is a co-educational college located in rural setting and was established in the mid-2000s. The newly-constructed college is in a large area built over the land generously donated by villagers. It offers four streams of UG programme, namely Humanities, commerce, life Sciences and Physical Science and postgraduate in Commerce and Geography. The total student strength is about 900 with around 30 teaching and 20 non-teaching staff. The college follows the curriculum of affiliating SU.

3.2 Profile of Institutional leaders and faculty members: faculty strength and composition

It is very important for any institute of higher learning to create a culture of learning within the institute. Therefore, leaders of HEIs play a significant role in creating a culture for faculty and other employees to cultivate the habit of continuous professional development and also becoming better decision-makers themselves. In this context, a profile of institutional leaders and faculty members of the selected institutions has been presented as following.

3.2.1. State University (SU)

The Governor is the Honorary Chancellor of all state-owned Universities in India. The role of the Chancellor, however is mainly ceremonial and for all practical purposes, the leader of SU is Vice-Chancellor. It needs mention that the VC is generally a state-nominated tenurial post for a period of three years in SUs and may be extended for another term. In the selected SU, the Governor of Haryana is ex-officio Chancellor. The leader or vice-chancellor of the selected SU was nominated by the state government about three years ago, and is a male in the age group of 55 to 60, and with Engineering educational background. He is married, Hindu and belongs to advantaged social group, i.e. non-SC and non-OBCs. The SU institutional leader is in the role of

IL for the last 4 years. The SU IL is professor (permanent post) and on deputation from another institute of higher learning, where he was not in the role of IL.

As discussed in the earlier paragraphs, the SU has ten faculties and only three faculties offer the UG programme. The departments which offer UG programme are: (i) fine arts, (ii) mass communication and media technology, (iii) tourism and hotel management, (iv) 5-year law course, and (v) three years and five years (integrated) business administration course (BBA). The faculty strength in these UG courses is just over 100.

Table 3.1: Composition of IL and faculty members in state university and selected colleges in Haryana: 2023

Characteristics of FMs and ILs	State University	In-Depth College	GC-A *	GC-B
Gender of FMs				
Male	64.00	40.0	100.0	51.00
Female	36.00	60.0	0.00	49.00
Gender of ILs	Male	Male	Female	Female
Social Groups of FMs				
SC	24.3	27.7	42.5	34.3
ST	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
OBC	14.6	23.4	42.5	31.4
General	61.2	48.9	15.0	34.3
EWS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Caste of ILs	General	SC	General	General
Religion of FMs				
Hindu	95.1	97.9	100.0	94.3
Muslim	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sikh	2.9	2.1	0.0	5.7
Christian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Buddhist	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Religion of ILs	Hindu	Hindu	Hindu	Hindu
Designation Status of FMs				
Assistant Professor	81.6	29.8	85.7	94.3
Associate Prof	4.8	70.2	14.3	5.7
Professor	13.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
ILs Designation	VC/Professor	DHEO & Principal	Principal	Principal
Type of Appointment				
Permanent	45.6	95.7	100.0	68.6
Contractual	33.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Temporary	13.6	4.3	0.0	0.0
Visiting	7.8	0.0	0.0	11.4
Appointment of ILs	Tenurial/Nominated	CAS Promotion	CAS Promotion	CAS promotion
Current Residence				
Rural	20.4	6.4	14.3	54.3
Urban	79.6	93.6	85.7	45.7
Residence of ILs	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban
State of residence				
Haryana	97.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
Other State	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total (N)	103	47	07	35
Vacant Position	25	**	12	**

Note: (i) CAS refers to career advancement scheme.
(ii) refers to exclusively Girls/women College.*
*(iii)** refers to no response.*
Source: Administrative Data collected from State University, GCID, GC-A and GC-B respectively.

The composition of the faculty in SU has been presented in Table 3.1, which shows the domination of men (64 percent). Though they belong to diverse social groups, yet 61 percent are from General castes, followed by SCs (a disadvantaged social group, accounting 25 percent of faculty strength in these courses). It needs mention that none of the FMs belong to ST category

and also none reportedly are from EWS category. An overwhelming majority of FMs (81.6 percent) are assistant professors. It is worth mentioning that less than half of the faculty (45 percent) is holding a regular position, while another one-third is on contract and 13 percent are employed temporarily (i.e. their services were coterminus with each teaching session). Further, 97 percent belong to Haryana state only and about 80 percent live in urban areas. It may again be noted that 25 positions of faculty in the mentioned UG programme (all together) are lying vacant as revealed by the administrative data.

3.2.2. Government College in-depth (GCID)

The IL of GCID has dual responsibility. This IL has an additional charge of leading another higher education-related institution in the state. This IL works as bridge between directorate, higher education (at headquarter) and colleges as well as between district commissioner (DC) and colleges. This IL belongs to a disadvantageous social group i.e. SC. It was obtained from the interview that this IL has an educated family background. His father was a public servant and lived in number of cities. Hence, higher education choice was natural or automatic for him. (WAHEI Survey, IL interview, 2024).

GCID has a faculty strength of around 50 members. About 60 percent of FMs are women (Table 3.1). The gender composition of FMs in the institution is liable to change at any point of time as the FMs are transferrable to another government college. It may be noted that an overwhelming majority live in an urban area (nearby towns/cities). As far as their social group identity is concerned, about half of them belong to General caste group (i.e. non-SC and non-OBC group), followed by SCs and OBCs.

3.2.3. Government College-A (GC-A) and Government College-B (GC-B)

The ILs of GC-A and GC-B are working in their capacity as principal of these respective colleges. Both the ILs are women, married and in the age-group of 55 to 60 years. They reached to this position by promotion on the basis of seniority.

As far as faculty strength of both the colleges are concerned, GC-A is a women's college with a faculty strength of just under 10 members. It needs mention that all are men. It may be noted that 12 positions of FMs are vacant in the college. The GC-B is a co-educational college with well over 30 faculty strength, with almost equal number of men and women FMs. The social

composition reveals that, in GC-A, a small proportion (15 percent) are from the General social group. About 42.5 percent FMs belong to SC social group and another 42 percent from OBC social category. In GC-B, almost equal number of FMs belong to all three social groups, i.e. 33 percent each belong to SC, OBC and General category. The overwhelming majority of faculty members are Hindu by religion in both the institutions. It may be noted that in GC-B, one FM is from Sikh religion. In GC-A, all are employed as regular and their professional status is Assistant Professor. In GC-B, 68 percent FMs are regular, 20 percent are employed on contract basis and another 12 percent FMs are working as visiting faculty. In GC-B also, the majority of FMs are young and their professional status is Assistant professor. About 5 percent of FMs are ranked as Associate professors. In case of GC-A, almost all of them live in nearby urban area. In GC-B also, a substantial proportion of FMs reside in urban locations (Table 3.1).

3.3 Faculty professional development opportunities

The faculty professional development opportunities are marred with various inequalities. In an all-India study, which collected large-scale (all India level) data on social inequalities in higher education, applying mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative) and focusing on faculty participation in conferences, professional development activities, reveals that women from marginalized groups not only experienced discrimination based on caste but also encountered exclusion based on their gender (Sabharwal, et al., 2020). In this context, the professional development opportunities of FMs in the sample HEIs are explored.

3.3.1. State University (SU)

The professional development activities of SU FMs, for the year 2024 (based on WAHEI data), is presented in Table 3.2 in totality, i.e. irrespective of caste and gender. It shows that, in the SU, only one-third (33.9 percent) FMs could access professional developmental opportunities during the last one year, while this proportion was 85 percent in case of GCID. The difference might be due to the fact that, in the case of SU, about half of FMs are working as temporary and on contractual basis. It is noteworthy that temporary and contractual faculty do not have the opportunity for such professional advancement activities due to two reasons: (i) it is not a compulsory professional activity required for their promotion in career advancement and (ii) they cannot avail leaves of two to three weeks to attend such activities. In the case of SU faculty, about 55 percent had taken advantage of such an activity within the university, while another 36 percent availed this opportunity in another HRDC (Human Resource Development Centre)

within the state. The responses on type of professional opportunity reveal that, in SU, one fifth of FMs attended FDPs (Faculty Development Programmes), while another one fifth had availed the opportunity of professional development by undertaking a short-term course. The proportion of summer or winter school workshop was availed by a mere 9 percent FMs.

Table 3.2: Professional opportunities accessed by FMs in SU and GCID

Professional Development (PD) Characteristics	SU	GCID
PD accessed during last year	33.9	84.8
N (% valid response)	56 (98.2%)	33 (97.1)
Place of professional development activity		
In your college/university (not within HRDC)	54.5	23.3
In another college/university (not within HRDC)	4.5	11.6
HRDC within the state	36.4	34.9
HRDC in another state	4.5	30.2
N (% valid response)	22 (100%)	43 (82.4%)
Type of professional activity		
Orientation Programmes	15.9	22.7
Refresher Courses	15.9	22.7
Staff Training (FIPs, FDPs)	20.5	26.1
Writing & publication workshops	18.2	9.1
Summer/Winter school workshops	9.1	2.3
Short-term course	20.4	17.0
N (% valid response)	22 (100%)	43 (82.4%)

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

3.3.2. Government College in-depth (GCID)

In the case of GCID, the FMs seem to be more mobile as one third had availed this opportunity in another state of HRDC, while in case of SU faculty this proportion is 4.5 only. In GCID, the majority of FMs, however, have utilized the HRDC facility within the state for professional development activity. The information on type of professional opportunity reveals that here, 23 percent availed professional development activity by undertaking an orientation or refresher course, while another 26 percent utilised this opportunity for FDPs. It may be noted that writing and publication workshops were attended by merely 2 percent of FMs. The information was also generated on why the FMs did not avail of professional development activities. Since such proportion was high in the case of SU, 70 percent of FMs reported that no such opportunity was offered to them, and another 7.5 percent reported that they could not do this due to their work status. Here, all (100 percent) who were not availing this opportunity reported that they could not avail of the opportunities due to their work status. This shows that, in GCID, the FMs were aware that professional development opportunities are there and they cannot avail of these due to their work status.

3.4 Student strength and composition

The details of students' strength, composition and their other socio-economic characteristics are presented in Table 3.3.

3.4.1. State University (SU)

There was a total of 512 students enrolled in 5 different UG programmes (fine arts, mass-communication and media technology, law, tourism and hospitality management and business administration) in the state university. It may be noted that, in terms of students' geographic location, almost equal proportion came from rural and urban areas. The students' composition however reveals that majority of them were female students (61 percent). Since the SU offered UG programmes in professional courses, where students from different streams can enroll, it was found that almost 52 percent were from an Arts background, followed by commerce, and about one-fifth belonged to the science stream. It may again be noted that 45 percent of students were from general category, while 28 percent were from OBCs. The SU also had some international students (Ethiopia and Nigeria) but their proportion was less than one percent. As far as their economic background is concerned, a large disparity exists. A large proportion (40 percent) were from a humble economic background with annual income of less than 2 lakh INR, while 10 percent were from elite background (with an annual family income of more than 8 lakh INR). Further, the majority of their schooling (72 percent) was from private schools or semi-private school. Only one-fifth of them came from fully government schools. About one-third of students had English as medium of instruction in their schools, while another 27 percent reported Hindi or mother tongue as medium of instruction in school. About two-thirds studied CBSE syllabus, while another one-third had passed higher secondary from state board syllabus (Table 3.3).

3.4.2. Government College in-depth (GCID)

The first semester enrolment of students in all disciplines (arts, commerce and sciences) in selected GCID was 527. The college received students from both rural and urban surroundings, but 60 percent students were from rural areas. Their composition reveals that 61 percent were female students and the majority of them (60 percent) came from Arts stream. Students from Science and Commerce background comprised 20 percent each. It may be noted that about

half of the students belonged to OBC social group (it needs mention that the surrounding villages are dominated by the OBC caste group), followed by SCs (28 percent).

Table 3.3: Students' characteristics in selected HEIs

Characteristics	SU	GID	GC-A	GC-B
Geographic Location				
Rural	49.3	59.8	94.3	100.0
Urban	50.7	40.2	5.7	0.0
N (%valid case)	503 (98.2%)	*527(100%)*	*105(100%)*	*285(100%)*
Gender				
Male	38.9	38.3	0.0	58.2
Female	61.1	61.7	100.0	41.8
N (%valid case)	512 (100.0)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)
Stream (12th)				
Arts	51.8	60.7	79.0	72.6
Commerce	27.7	19.4	15.2	18.2
Sciences	20.5	19.9	5.7	9.1
N (%valid case)	465 (90.8)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)
Social Groups				
SCs	22.7	27.9	31.4	58.9
OBCs	27.7	48.2	21.9	25.6
EWS	3.3	0.9	0.0	0.0
General	45.9	23.0	46.7	15.4
International	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
N (%valid case)	512 (100.0)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)
Annual Income				
<2,00,000	40.8	67.4	70.5	82.8
2 to 4,00,000	19.1	18.9	14.3	9.8
4 to 6,00,000	22.1	9.7	12.4	6.7
6 to 8,00,000	7.9	1.3	1.0	0.7
>8,00,000	10.1	2.7	1.9	0.0
N (%valid case)	456 (89.0)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)
School Type				
Govt	27.8	63.2	80.0	78.9
Private/aided	72.2	36.8	20.0	21.1
N (%valid case)	464 (90.6%)	527	105	285
Medium of Instruction				
Hindi	27.8	No response	87.6	84.5
English	66.7	No response	12.4	14.8
Others	5.6	No response	0.0	0.7
N (%valid case)	54 (10.5 %)	No response	105	285
Religion				
Hindu	97.3	94.1	98.1	95.4
Muslim	1.0	1.7	0.0	1.1
Sikh	1.6	4.2	1.2	3.5
Others	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
N (%valid case)	487 (95.1)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)
Syllabus in 12th				
CBSE	65.9	28.5	21.0	37.4
State Board	31.5	70.0	79.0	60.7
Open school	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.8
Others	2.2	0.6	0.0	0.7
N (%valid case)	502 (98.0)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)
Differently Abled	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
N (%valid case)	506 (98.8)	527(100%)	105(100%)	285(100%)

Source: Administrative Data, 2023-24 (collected from respective HEIs).

As far as their economic background is concerned, there is diversity among students. However, the majority belong to lower income groups (67 percent with less than 2 lakh INR annual family income), yet students from wealthier economic background were also enrolled. About 3 percent students were with more than 8 lakh INR annual family income. A large majority (63 percent) studied in government schools and only 28 percent had studied the CBSE syllabus. Students who studied with state board syllabus were about 70 percent. As far as their religious identity is concerned, though the majority were Hindus, 4 percent of students were Sikhs and 1.7 percent were Muslim.

3.4.3 GC-A and GC-B

The student strength of GC-A is 105, while that of GC-B is 285. It may be noted that GC-A was a small, newly established exclusively women's college, while GC-B is a co-educational one. Both the colleges were rurally located. However, in GC-A, a very small proportion (5.7 percent) also enrolled from urban areas, but GC-B is 100 percent catering to rural students. In GC-B, 58 percent students were male, while women constituted 41 percent. In both the colleges, the majority of students were from the Arts stream, followed by Commerce and Science. In the case of GC-A, about half of enrolled women students were from General castes and another one-third were from the disadvantaged social group SCs. Contrary to this, in GC-B, the majority of students (58.7 percent) were from SCs (a disadvantaged social group), followed by OBCs. The students from General castes comprised only 15 percent, indicating that people from advantaged social and economic classes may send their sons and daughters either to urban areas or in private colleges elsewhere. Economically, there is not a great deal of disparity in GC-B students, as the majority of them (about 85 percent) belong to the lower income group. In the case of GC-A too, the majority belonged to families with income of less than 2 lakh INR per annum, yet a few from higher income group were also enrolled. Almost 80 percent in both the colleges had Government schooling and 85 percent had Hindi as their medium of instruction during schooling. Religion wise, GC-B was little more heterogenous with Sikh and Muslim students, while in GC-A, only 1 percent were from Sikh community. GC-B was also heterogenous in terms of the syllabus during their schooling, as more than one-third studied CBSE syllabus and other one percent studied the syllabus of Open school or other state board. In case of GC-A, 80 percent passed their schooling with the state board syllabus. It may be noted that, in both the colleges, none was enrolled in the category of differently abled students.

3.5 Existing Institutional HE outreach strategies and activities

Higher Education outreach refers to activities and programmes designed to engage individuals and communities outside of a traditional higher education setting. These initiatives aim to broaden access to higher education, promote awareness of its benefits, and support individuals in their educational journeys. Outreach initiatives are often designed to reach individuals from underrepresented or disadvantaged background. This is connected with widening participation, a policy and practice aiming to increase the numbers and diversity of students attending universities. The literature on academic outreach practices suggests that many a times outreach practices become more focused on increasing enrolment or are seen in terms of enrolment 'outcomes', and there is a need to engage with the public in terms of participatory research to bring societal change. Such challenges are discussed and researched at length by researchers in UK and USA (e.g. Demb and Wade, 2012; Johnson et al., 2019).

SU: The academic activities of the SU are conducted through regular mode and correspondence mode. Education through correspondence is not an outreach activity, yet in order to know the academic activities of SU, it may be noted that the SU has a Directorate of Distance Education (DDE), which offers UG level programme: BA, BCom and BBA. Among professional courses, it offers one year certificate course in Computer applications, 3 years BCA, 3 years BIM and Diploma and Bachelor of Library and Information Sciences.

The HE outreach activities of SU (traced as official) are limited to providing information through the university website which is run by the University and updated time to time. It may be noted that there are no specific guidelines to the departments from the SU administration or authorities to cater to HE outreach activities in a guided manner. It depends on the vision of individual department heads or individual faculty members to engage themselves with rural students or how they empathise with prospective students from diverse socio-economic background.

GCID: It may be noted that there is no specific and exclusive widening higher education activity being undertaken by government colleges as a compulsory or directed activity. Only those colleges which are largely located in rural areas and have low enrolments (it needs mention that,

in case of low enrolment, FMs' workload reduces and they become surplus and subsequently the FMs get transferred to any other government colleges), they do campaign for more admissions. It may be noted that one may not find this type of campaign in cases of urban-located government colleges. In this context, the GCID campaigns to promote enrolment in the college by putting up large posters in front of the college, bus stand and prominent public places where the community can read them. A committee or group of senior and active FMs is constituted by the IL to enable prospective students to fill in online application forms to assist applicants, which is generally being carried out when the admission dates are announced; largely due to the centralised admission and with lack of information, the rural colleges remain underserved (i.e. low enrolments). This is also voluntary and no state or official policy is there to require this practice.

For prospective students, the state government has initiated a twinning programme where the nearby government schools visit the private schools or other similar educational institutes of learning for interaction among them. This activity is undertaken by government schools where students of 11th and 12th class are supposed to interact with other students of different educational institutes. It may however be noted that many school teachers plan and undertake the visits to nearby government colleges to make them aware of future academic activities. It may also be noted that such activity largely depends on the vision of the teacher-in-charge or principals of the respective government schools.

The community-level outreach activities in the educational institutes are also occurring. In GCID, the community-level outreach, where current enrolled students visit a nearby village, is in the form of a NSS camp, generally organised once in a year, for seven days by NSS in-charge FM and the current student volunteers. Through this, they interact with the village community and pass information regarding various activities of social concern and signify the importance of various government schemes like Clean India (Swachh Bharat), financial literacy, opening of bank account and other related activities proposed and directed by directorate of higher education in the state. For the current students, the college also has a red ribbon club to create awareness regarding AIDS and a women's cell to sensitise for gender issues.

GC-A and GC-B: It may be noted that there are no official guidelines either from the state Higher Education Commission or State University for HE outreach. Hence, this applied to the selected HEIs (GC-A and GC-B) also. However, it may be noted that the selected HEIs are positioned in rural locations and they struggle for enrolments, and these HEIs do campaign for increasing their enrolments.

It became known during the interviews with FMs (WAHEI Survey, 2024), that the FMs of GC-A campaign in nearby villages do promote admission in the college. This is completely a voluntary activity undertaken by the faculty and Principal of the college collectively for reasons mentioned above. Further, this is an exclusively women's college and, in order to increase girls' enrolments in the college, the campaign is more rigorous (involving community i.e. village sarpanch and other people of the village).

For the existing students, GC-A is also voluntarily running a 'Karate' training programme to enable girls for self-defence and expecting that it may attract prospective students as existing/current students act as ambassador. During the standalone FMs survey, the researchers witnessed a visit of nearby government school students and the college teachers interacting with them on almost all issues related to HE outreach (such as admissions and subject choices).

As reported in the case of GCID, GC-A also campaigns for prospective students through posters and announcements in the village during the dates of online centralised admission dates are announced. The admission committee of FMs carries out the admission facilitation after the announcement of the first admission list by the state centralised admission process. No other specific outreach activity is officially in place in government HEIs.

For the community-level outreach activities, both the government colleges have women's cells, environment clubs and NSS units in their colleges. The outreach activities are undertaken from these cells which are largely awareness creation for enrolled or existing students. The NSS unit may impact the community as the students act as ambassadors to society in large.

3.6 Summary and Conclusion

The present chapter discusses the profile of the selected HEIs based on administrative data, and the information gathered through the survey of these selected HEIs. Four higher education institutions are selected for the study; one is a state university and three are government colleges affiliated to the selected state university. In order to understand how the FMs in the public sector are involved in outreach practices and how to build the culture of outreach practices, a publicly-funded state university and colleges affiliated to this were selected. The SU is in an urban location, while other three selected HEIs are located in rural settings. The selected SU is one of the oldest state universities having a rural catchment and the selected colleges are rural, being located in villages.

The gender composition of FMs in SU displays that it had more men FMs as compared to its affiliated colleges. However, in terms of social and religious composition, SU faculty is more diverse compared to selected college faculty. As far as the designation of FMs is concerned, the data shows that the majority of FMs are young and their work/professional status is Assistant professor except the GCID where the majority of FMs are 50 to 55 years age and are Associate professors. In the case of SU, the majority of UG programme teaching FMs are contractual or temporary, while in colleges, the majority are in regular and permanent job positions. It may also be noted that, in all HEIs, the majority of FMs are residing in an urban area, i.e. in towns or cities.

The students' characteristics as obtained from administrative sources of the selected HEIs reveal that the students of SU are from diverse social and economic background, while in the case of colleges, an overwhelming majority of students are from a humble economic background and from disadvantaged social groups. The gender composition of students shows a majority of women except in GC-B, which has a ratio of 58 percent men and 42 percent women. The schooling background of students varies in SU and colleges. While the majority of students in SU have a private or private-aided school background with CBSE syllabus, the situation is the reverse in the case of colleges, where the majority of students have passed their 12th from government schools and with state board syllabus.

In SU, there is absence of structured or official practice of outreach activities for prospective students. The colleges undertake HE outreach activities entirely on a voluntary basis and it depends on the vision and activeness of the IL of the respective colleges. The HE outreach practices are largely undertaken to increase enrolment by facilitating students who are constrained and are uninformed due to the centralised online admission policy of the state. The voluntary HE outreach practices include campaigns through posters and placing FMs on duty during admission times. The rural location of the HEI and low enrolment necessitate the HEIs to undertake HE outreach activities. In urban-located government colleges and in SU, no outreach activity is organised officially.

Chapter 4: Who are the Faculty Members?

4.1 Introduction

Institutional leaders (ILs) and faculty members in higher education have different responsibilities, but they both play important roles in the success of a higher education institution. While ILs manage, administer and provide the vision and strategize pathways of their campuses, the faculty members (FMs) on the other hand, can be instrumental in implementation of the vision envisaged and in preparing a generation of student citizens with a mindset which could be socially useful as well as financially rewarding.

Researchers have shown that difference and diversity of faculty members in higher education institutions affect classroom interactions significantly. It has been reported that faculty diversity supports students' success as diversity impacts students' sense of belonging, retention rates, and persistence (Bitar, et al., 2022). Engaging with racially and culturally diverse faculty fosters greater understanding and respect for others, inspires creativity, enhances problem-solving skills, and ultimately prepares students from all backgrounds to become good global citizens and successful workers in the increasingly diverse and multicultural world in which we live. Diversity of faculty members with respect to faculty authority in the classroom and faculty expertise concerning subject matter has also been researched by a number of researchers (Young, et al., 2014). In this context, the present chapter seeks to explore the following research questions:

(i) Who are faculty members and the institutional leaders?
(ii) Who is delivering HE in Colleges and Universities in rural and semi-urban locations?

An attempt has been made to find answers to these questions through primary data which has been generated through quantitative and qualitative approaches in selected HEIs (discussed in Chapter 1).

4.2 Demographic background of faculty members

The socio-demographic profile of institutional leaders and FMs in the selected HEIs has been presented in following sections. It needs mention that the SU and GCID are offering different UG courses. In case of SU, largely professional UG courses are offered. These are: fine arts, mass-communication and media technology, law, tourism and hospitality management and business administration, while in GCID, the traditional streams of humanities, commerce and sciences

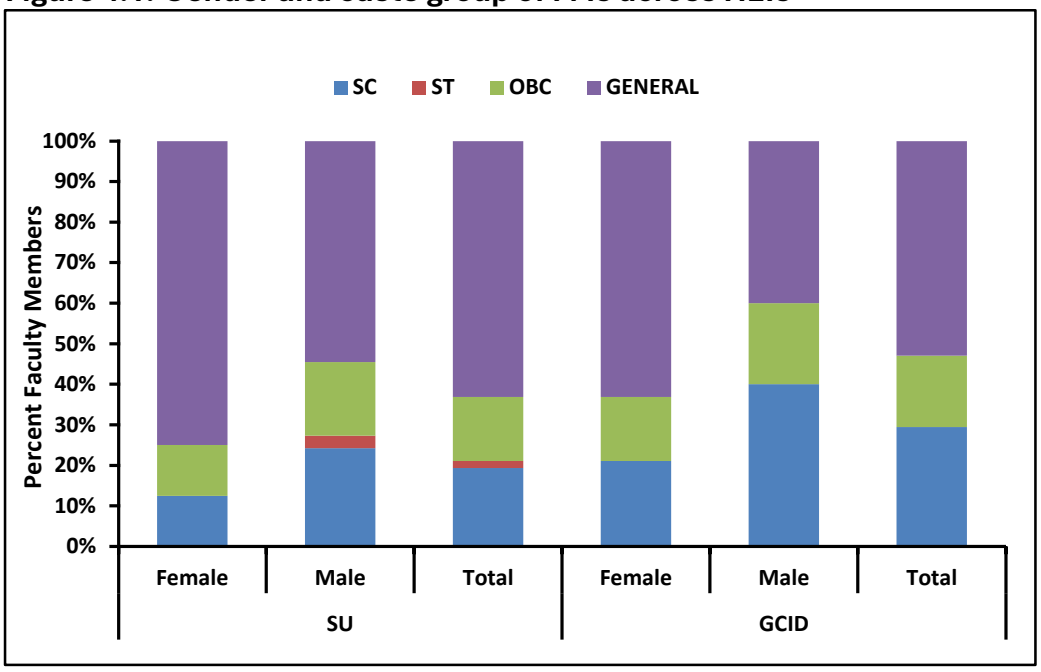
are there. The following demographic information may be extracted from the survey of selected HEIs.

4.2.1. State University (SU)

In SU, information has been collected from 57 FMs, involved in teaching the UG programme. Their age-group is presented in Table 4.1, which shows that 46 percent FMs are in the age group of 31 to 40 years, while another 40 percent are in 41 to 50 years of age. The senior FMs (51 to 60 years) accounted for about 7 percent.

The gender composition reveals that the majority of FMs are men (58 percent), while women FMs constituted 42 percent. The administrative data also reveals that majority FMs are men (64 percent). As far as their social identity is concerned, the surveyed data reveals that majority of them (63 percent) are from privileged caste group. This also matches with administrative data which suggests that 61 percent FMs belong to general or privileged caste group. The proportion of FMs from SCs and OBCs social group constitute about 19 and 16 percent respectively. About 1.8 percent FMs belong to STs. It needs mention that Haryana does not have an ST population; the FMs from ST community are from other states of India.

Figure 4.1: Gender and caste group of FMs across HEIs



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Religion wise, 90 percent are Hindus which mirrors the administrative records (95 percent). The religious diversity among FMs may be witnessed as Buddhist and Sikh also showed their presence with 3.5 and 1.8 percent respectively. None of the faculty members is differently abled (DA). Even in administrative data, DA among faculty was conspicuously not present. It may be noted that about 16 percent FMs were unmarried and 7 percent were separated. A majority of FMs were married. Two-thirds of FMs have children. It may be noted that the majority of FMs (84 percent) are born within the state, while the rest of them are from nearby states of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

Table 4.1: Demographic profile of FMs in SU and GCID

Demographic Characteristics	SU	GCID
Age group		
20-30	7.0	2.9
31-40	45.6	44.1
41-50	40.4	35.3
51-60	7.0	17.6
Gender		
Male	57.9	44.1
Female	42.1	55.9
Social Group		
SC	19.3	29.4
ST	1.8	0.0
OBC	15.8	17.6
General (Non- SC/ ST/OBC)	63.2	52.9
EWS (Non-SC/ST/OBC)	0.0	0.0
Religion		
Buddhist	3.5	0.0
Hindu	89.5	97.1
Muslim	0.0	0.0
Sikh	1.8	2.9
Others	5.3	0.0
Differently abled	0.0	0.0
Relationship Status		
Married	77.2	85.3
Unmarried	15.8	11.8
Divorced/separated	7.0	2.9
Caring Responsibility		
Having Children (yes)	68.4	85.3
No Children	31.6	14.7
Place of Birth		
Outside State	11.2	5.9
Within State	84.2	94.1
Permanent Residence		
Rural	33.3	44.1
Urban	66.7	55.9
Mother tongue		
Hindi	91.7	79.4
Punjabi	3.5	2.9
Haryanvi/ local language	1.8	14.8
Other	3.5	2.9
	N=57	***N=34***

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

About one-third have their permanent residence in rural areas, while the majority are residing in urban area. Only a small proportion among them (3.5 percent) had Punjabi as their mother-tongue, while an overwhelming majority (91 percent) reported Hindi as mother tongue.

4.2.2. Government College in-depth (GCID)

The age-group composition of faculty reveals that about one-fourth of them are senior faculty (51 to 60 years of age), while another 35 percent are in the age group of 41 to 50 years (Table 4.1). It may be noted that younger faculty (31 to 40 age-group) comprised about one-third of total FMs. The gender composition of FMs reveals that women are relatively more as compared to men FMs and this corroborates the administrative data, which suggests 60 percent women FMs in this HEI. As far as the social status in terms of caste affiliation is concerned, about one-half FMs are non-SC and non-OBCs, but a substantial proportion (about one-third) of FMs belong to disadvantaged caste group, i.e. SCs. This finding also corresponds with the administrative data which suggests their proportion to be 28 percent. In addition, 18 percent of FMs were from OBCs. Predominantly Hindu by religion, a marginal 3 percent belonged to Sikh religion. None among them is differently abled and 85 percent among them are married and have children. Only a small proportion of 6 percent are born outside the state of Haryana and about half of them are having permanent residence in rural areas. Though 80 percent reported Hindi as their mother tongue, yet 15 percent reported Haryanvi dialect (local dialect) as their mother tongue.

4.3 Demographic background of institutional leaders

As discussed in section 1.4, four HEIs have been selected for the present study and information has been collected from the ILs of these HEIs through a semi-structured questionnaire and interview. The information has been compiled in Table 4.2 which shows that two ILs among them are men while another two are women. All are 55 to 60 years of age. Two ILs are from science background, while another two are social scientists. All are Hindus by religion. One among them belongs to disadvantaged social group, i.e. SC. Except one, all others are born outside the state, mainly neighbouring states. All are married and have caring responsibilities towards their children and aging parents. Except SU IL, who had longer experience in leadership role, all others have experience of 2 to 3 years. The ILs of GCID, GC-A and GC-B are in the leadership role by virtue of promotion based on seniority in their career promotion. In the case of SU, the IL (who is in this role for the past 3 years) had authorized the senior-most Professor of the HEI, for the purpose of this study, to speak on his behalf. The authorized Professor is in a leadership role of various offices and holds this position due to his professional seniority.

Table 4.2 Demographic and residence characteristics of ILs in selected HEIs

Characteristics	SU (proxy IL)	GCID	GC-A	GC-B
Gender	Man	Man	Woman	Woman
Age (years)	59	58	56	56
Subject	Science/Engineering	Social Science	Social Science	Science
Designation	Dean/ Senior Professor	DHEO/ Principal	Principal	Principal
Religion	Hindu	Hindu	Hindu	Hindu
Caste	General	SC	General	General
Marital Status	Married	Married	Married	Married
Caring Responsibility	Children	Children	Children	Children
Place of Birth	Punjab	Delhi	Haryana	Punjab
Positioned as IL	5 years	3 years	2 years	1 year
IL Appointment	Nomination	Promotion by Seniority	Promotion by Seniority	Promotion by Seniority
Languages known	Punjabi, English, Hindi	Punjabi, English, Hindi	English, Hindi	Punjabi, English, Hindi
Residence	Same town	Other district	Same District	Other District
Commute	8km	20km	25km	25km
Mode of Travel	Own Car	Own car	Own car	Own car

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

4.4 Institutional Leaders and Faculty Members: residence and commute information

This section presents a detailed account of the residence and the commute pattern of ILs of the four selected HEIs based on the interviews conducted with them. The residence and commute information of FMs in SU and GCID has been gathered through the questionnaire and in-depth interviews. This information provides valuable insights into the broader mobility trends of FMs.

4.4.1. State University (SU)

It may be noted that the IL of SU resides within the same town as the university, approximately 8 kms from the place of work. The IL commutes using a personal car and it takes about 10 to 15 minutes to reach the place of work. The resident and commuting pattern of FMs however varies (Table 4.3). Around 23 percent of FMs stated that they have split residence and they reside in more than one residence on a weekly basis, while another 77 percent stated that they do not have a split residence. It has been found that about 36.4 percent FMs reside in the same town as the university, while another 34 percent stayed on the university campus. It shows that nearly 70 percent FMs are residing very close to their workplace. Further, about 11 percent FMs commute from nearby towns.

For FMs with no split residence (77 percent), the majority are commuting from short distances, typically within 15km (87 percent). A thin proportion of 6.8 percent commute from distances between 30 to 45km. As far as transport mode is concerned, about 30 percent of FMs – mostly those staying on campus – either walk or use bicycle. Furthermore, 46 percent of FMs exclusively use motorcycles or scooters for their commute.

Table 4.3: Commute information of FMs in SU and GCID

Commute Information	SU	GCID
More than one weekly residence		
Yes	22.8	0.0
No	77.2	100.0
On Campus	34.1	0.0
Same town/location	36.4	17.6
Same district but not same town/location	11.4	38.2
Same state, different district	15.9	44.1
In a different state	2.3	0.0
Distance Travelled		
Less than 15km	88.6	5.9
15 to 30km	4.5	82.3
30 to 45km	6.8	2.9
45km and more	0.0	8.8
Mode of travel		
Walking/cycle/Rickshaw	29.8	0.0
Bus/Train	15.8	5.9
Scooter/ Bike	45.8	5.9
Car pool	0.0	61.8
Own car	54.4	26.4
Other Mode	0.0	0.0
N (valid %)	57 (100.0)	34 (100.0)

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

4.4.2. Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The ILs of GCID, GC-A and GC-B are commuting from the nearby towns, each covering a distance of about 20 to 25km. It needs mention that these HEIs are situated in villages or semi-urban areas; the region has good road connectivity. All three ILs from the selected HEIs use their own cars for daily travel, and the average commuting time ranges from 30 to 35 minutes. It may also be noted that the campuses of GCID, GC-A and GC-B are non-residential and, due to their rural location, the majority of FMs commute from nearby towns. A thin minority (17.6 percent) reside at the same location where the HEI is located. A large proportion among them travel from another district, while another 38 percent commute from a nearby town but same district. The majority of FMs (82 percent) who commute are travelling from distances between

15 and 30km. Regarding the mode of transport, nearly two-thirds of FMs arranged a car pooling system. Another 26 percent commute using their own cars, while 6 percent are commuting using public transport such as buses or trains. About 6 percent FMs use scooters or motorcycles to reach their workplace.

4.5 Institutional Leaders' and Faculty Members' Background

This section provides an overview of the family, educational and socio-economic background of the ILs and FMs. Key family demographics, such as the highest educational attainment of parents, grandparents, and siblings, as well as the occupations of parents or guardians is examined here. This provides an understanding of the foundational influences that may have shaped their academic and professional journeys. Also, data on the family's average monthly income offers an understanding into the economic conditions during their formative years. This section also provides information about FMs who are first-time faculty members in the family. This sheds light on the educational advancement and generational mobility into the academic profession.

4.5.1 Educational and family background

Family education plays a significant role, not only in the educational trajectory of individuals but also in their achievements. Generally, it is assumed that the individuals with a solid educational family background are more confident decision makers in relation to HE, as the home environment supports and nurtures certain values through education. Studies have shown that communications of educated parents at home through strong vocabulary, good pronunciation and logical arguments help not only in developing strong language skills but also have a significant positive relationship with students' academic achievement (Idris et al., 2020). In this context, the educational background of the family members of ILs and FMs of selected HEIs has been discussed in detail.

4.5.1.1 State University (SU)

The family education background of ILs in SU and other selected HEIs was generated through semi-structured interviews with them. This information has been summarized in Table 4.4. The family education background of SU IL reveals that he has a multi-generational education history. The HE choice was a natural progression for him as he belongs to third generation in higher education. Both of his parents (father and mother), and paternal and maternal grandfathers had the opportunity to access higher education. His spouse is a postgraduate. However, both

paternal and maternal grandmothers had accessed school education up to matriculation and could not access HE. The parental occupation background of SU IL revealed that he belonged to an economically well-established family. His father superannuated as a government servant while mother settled with traditional gender role of a home maker.

Table 4.4: Education and occupational background of ILs in selected HEIs

Family members	SU	GCID	GC-A	GC-B
Educational Characteristics				
Mother	Graduate	10	No schooling	5th
Father	PG	PG	10	Graduate
Parental GM	10	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate
Parental GF	Engineer	Graduate	Illiterate	Illiterate
Maternal GM	8th	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate
Maternal GF	Graduate	10th	Illiterate	Illiterate
Maternal Uncle	PG, IIT	-	-	-
Spouse	PG	PG	PG	PG
Brother	NA	UG	UG	PG
Sister	PG	NA	NA	NA
Occupational Characteristics				
Father	Government Servant	DSP (State)	Farmer	Government servant
Mother	Home maker	Home maker	Home maker	Home maker
Whether first in family as FM	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: (-) refers to no information.
Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

As discussed in the methodology section, quantitative information from 57 FMs of SU has been obtained. The family educational history of FMs has been presented in Tables 4.5. It is surprising to find that about one half of FMs in SU did not report the educational background of their maternal and paternal grandparents. Another one third reported that their parental grandmother had no formal schooling, while in case of maternal grandmother, the situations seem a little better where this proportion was 10 percent point lower, as 23 percent had no formal education. In case of grandfather, this proportion was 16 to 18 percent, meaning thereby that gender difference was sharp in formal education two generations ago. There is no substantial difference in the levels of education of maternal and paternal grandparents. In the case of their parents, the variation in educational attainment still exists. The education levels of their fathers reveals that about half of FMs father had the opportunity to access HE and about one third among them could attain HE up to postgraduate level or above that qualification.

In case of their mothers, 17.5 percent of FMs reported that their mother had no formal education. Another 28 percent could access school level education, i.e. up to 10th level. It may be noted that only 19 percent of FMs' mothers could access HE (Figure 4.2).

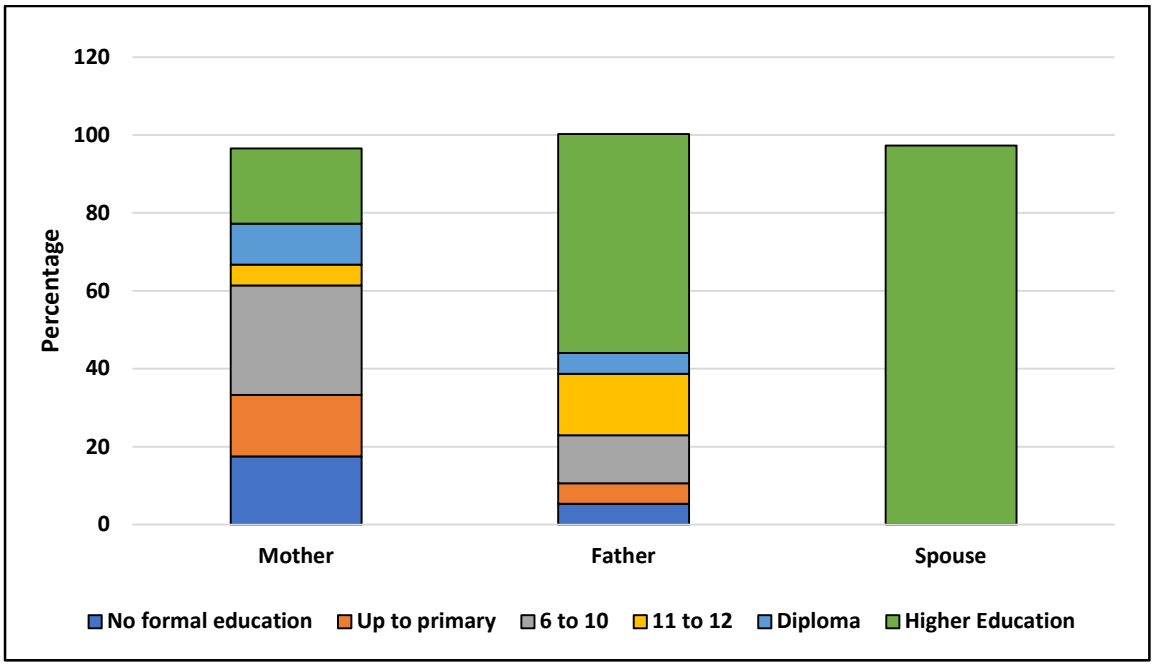
In case of their spouses' education, the response rate has been 63 percent. Here also, about 3.0 percent reported that they do not know the educational background of their spouse, which seems strange (they might not want to reveal it). For all others, the information suggests that they had accessed HE and about one-sixth among them had gained graduate degree, while 50 percent among them could attain education PG level. Another 30 percent reported to have a research degree.

Table 4.5: Educational characteristics of FMs family members in SU

Educational Characteristics	Mother	Father	Maternal Grandma	Maternal Grandpa	Paternal Grandma	Paternal Grandpa	Spouse
Do not know	3.5	0.0	54.4	50.9	50.9	52.6	2.8
Single Parent	-	-	-	-	1.8	-	0.0
No formal education	17.5	5.3	22.8	15.8	33.3	17.5	0.0
Up to primary	15.8	5.3	7.0	7.0	1.8	5.3	0.0
6 to 10	28.1	12.3	7.1	10.6	5.3	14.0	0.0
11 to 12	5.3	15.8	7.0	5.3	5.3	3.5	0.0
Diploma	10.5	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Degree (BA/BSc)	7.0	26.3	1.8	7.0	1.8	5.3	16.7
PG	12.3	21.1	0.0	1.8	0.0	1.8	50.0
MPhil/ PhD	0.0	8.8	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	30.6
N (% valid response)	57.8%	57.8%	57.8%	57.8%	57.8%	57.8%	63.2%

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Figure 4.2: Level of education of family members (SU Faculty)



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The family or parental occupational characteristics of SU FMs has been presented in Figure 4.3 and Table 4.6. Findings reveal that the occupational background of FMs' mothers and fathers are quite diverse. As far as the occupation of father of FMs is concerned, a huge 48 percent among them are employed in public sector, while another around 6 percent are in teaching profession. It may be noted that 23 percent were self-employed and another one-sixth of them were engaged in agricultural activities. It needs mention that the father of about 8 percent FMs worked as wage labourers.

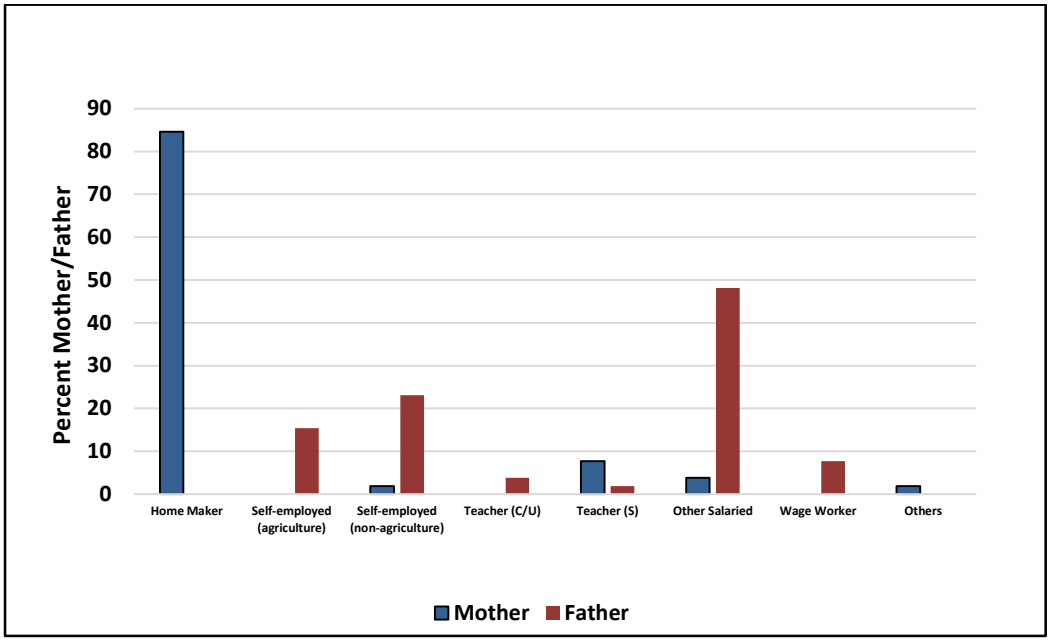
The occupational engagement of FMs' mothers shows a gendered pattern as an overwhelming majority (85 percent) reported their mother as home maker. About 4 percent reported that their mother is employed in tertiary sector (having a job in public sector), while for another 2 percent-they had retired from gainful employment and were classified as 'others'.

Table 4.6: Occupational characteristics of FMs family members in SU

Occupational Characteristics	Mother	Father
Home Maker	84.6	0.0
Self-employed (agriculture)	0.0	15.4
Self-employed (non-agriculture)	1.9	23.1
Teacher (C/U)	0.0	3.8
Teacher (S)	7.7	1.9
Other Salaried	3.8	48.1
Wage Worker	0.0	7.7
Others	1.9	0.0
Unemployed/No Occupation	0.0	0.0

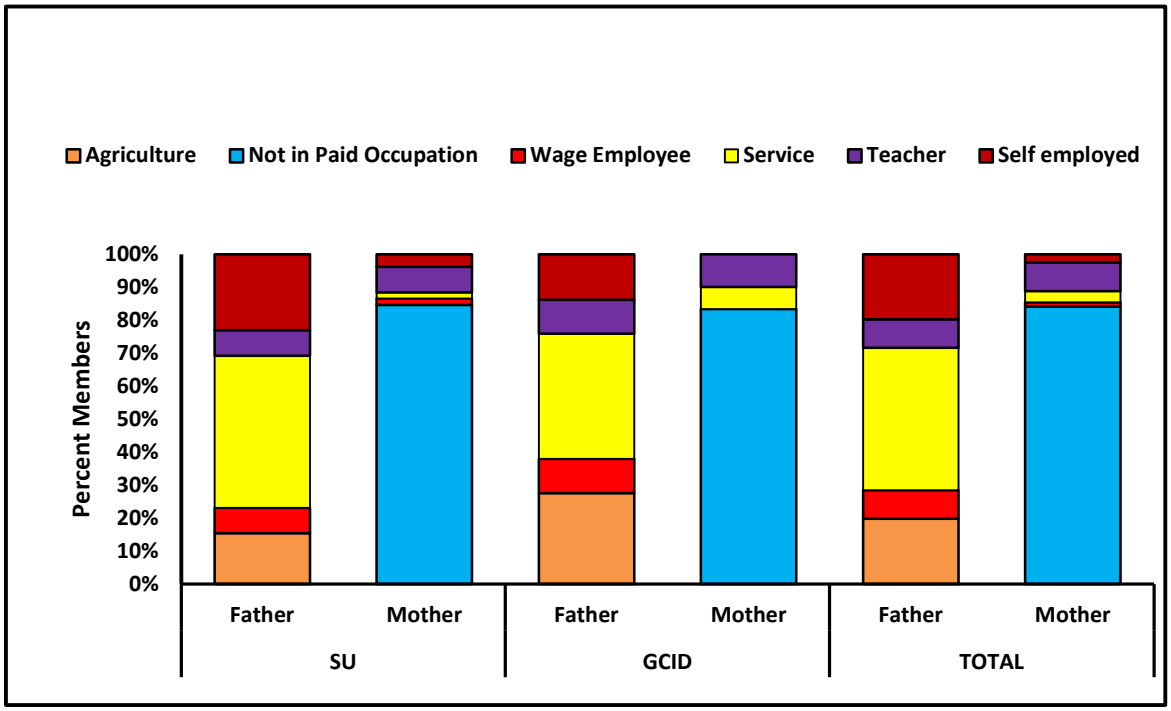
Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Figure 4.3: Occupation of Parents (SU Faculty)



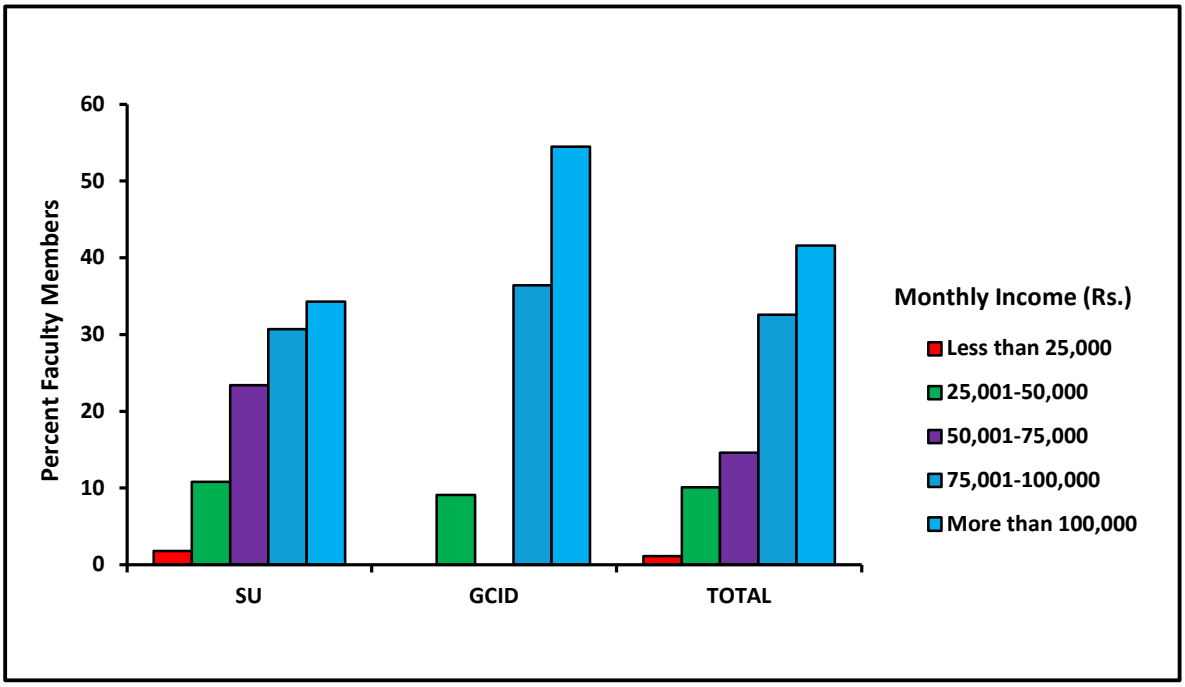
Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Figure 4.4 Occupation of FMs parents in HEIs



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Figure 4.5: Monthly Family Income of FMs in HEIs



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Table 4.7: Average monthly family income of FMs in SU

Average monthly family income (INR)	Number	Percentage
Less than 25,000	01	1.8
25,001-50,000	06	10.8
50,001-75,000	13	23.4
75,001-100,000	17	30.7
More than 100,000	19	34.3
N (% VR)		**98.2**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

As far as the family income is concerned, the information presented in Table 4.7 shows that FMs belong to diverse economic groups. About two thirds of FMs in SU had a family income above INR 100,000 per month. Another 30.7 percent reported that their average family income lies between 75,000 to one lakh INR. About 10 percent have an average family income is 25,000 to 50,000 per month and 1.8 percent are below 25,000 (these FMs are invariably part-time or working on contract).

Table 4.8: First person in the family to work as faculty member in SU faculty

Characteristics	SU Faculty	
Percent FMs first time faculty	**Yes**	**No**
	80.7	19.3
N (% VR)	**100.0**	
Gender		
Female	47.8	20.0
Male	52.2	80.0
Caste Group		
SC	19.5	20.0
ST	0.0	10.0
OBC	19.5	0.0
General	61.0	70.0
Religion		
Buddhist	2.1	10.0
Christian	0.0	0.0
Hindu	93.7	70.0
Jain	00	0.0
Muslim	2.1	0.0
Sikh	2.1	0.0
Others	0.0	20.0
Geographical Location		
Rural	32.6	40.0
Urban	67.4	60.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The information has also been generated on whether the FMs are first in their family to work as FMs in HE. This has been summarized in Table 4.8 and the findings suggests that the majority (80.7 percent) of FMs are the first in their families to take up the role of FM. Gender distribution shows notable differences between first-time and non-first-time faculty. Among first-generation faculty in SU, women make up 47.8 percent and men 52.2 percent, showing near gender parity. However, in the case of non-first-time FMs, the picture is reversed, where 80 percent are men and only 20 percent women suggesting that academic positions are more often held by men. Caste group distribution also highlights interesting results. Among first-time faculty, the representation from marginalized communities is evident. SCs and OBCs each make up 19.5 percent, while 61 percent belong to the General category. Scheduled Tribes are absent among first-time faculty. Non-first-time faculty are predominantly from the General category (70 percent), suggesting that they had the advantage of HE choices through their earlier generation. The smaller share of SCs (20 percent) and STs (10 percent), suggests that faculty legacy is more prevalent among socially privileged groups in the university system.

Religion-wise distribution shows that the SU FMs are a little more diversified where one finds first time FMS are also from Sikh, Muslim and Buddhist community. Geographical location however reveals that majority of first time FMs come from urban areas with 32.6 percent from rural backgrounds. Interestingly, among non-first-time faculty, SU continues to show a greater urban share (60 percent).

Similar information has been generated from the FMs through solicited diary and interviews. It was observed that a majority of the women FMs had familial support and background in education, which facilitated their entry into higher education and academic careers. Notably, many had educated mothers and fathers who had accessed higher education themselves. For instance, Damini's mother was a teacher, and her father was a veterinary doctor, indicating a strong educational environment at home (Table 4.9).

4.5.1.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The family education history of the IL of GCID has also been presented in Table 4.4. This table reveals that he also had a multi-generational education history and he belongs to the third generation in higher education. However, it may be noted that both grandmothers (paternal and maternal) had no formal schooling. His mother, however, could access school education and

attained level 10 in school, but could not access higher education. His paternal grandfather had accessed higher education. So, it may be concluded that HE choice was a natural progression for Vaasu, the IL of GCID.

The family education history of the IL of GC-A, however is different. This IL belongs to the first generation in higher education. None of her parents had accessed HE. Her father accessed school education. It may also be noted that her mother had no formal education and similarly her grandparents never accessed school education. The education leap in this case is massive. The information generated from the IL of GC-B (Table 4.4) shows that she belongs to the second generation in higher education. Her parents are educated, but none of her grandparents, maternal as well as paternal, had any formal education. It needs mention that the spouse of the ILs of GCID, GC-A and GC-B accessed higher education and all of them attained postgraduate degrees.

Table 4.9: Educational background of FMs (based on solicited diary Interview)

HEI	Pseudonym	Paternal GM	Paternal GF	Maternal GM	Maternal GF	Mother	Father	Sibling
SU	Gary	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	5th	12th
SU	Vipul	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	10	NR
SU	Akram	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Literate	Literate	BA
SU	Dhiraj	5th	5th	Illiterate	Illiterate	8th	BA B.Ed	BA
SU	Damini	Illiterate	BA	Illiterate	10th	JBT Teacher	BSc, VetDoc.	BA
GCID	Kuljeet	Illiterate	NFS	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	12th	10th
GCID	Stargazer	Illiterate	NFS	Illiterate	3rd	NFS	12th	B.Arch
GCID	Pankaj	Illiterate	5th	Illiterate	NFS	NFS	12th	MA
GCID	Nimmo	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	NFS	5th	PG	PG
GCID	Balu	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Literate	5th	10th	PG
GC-A	Das	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	BA	10th	Ph.D	MA
GC-A	Sri Kumar	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	6th	BA
GC-A	Ram	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate
GC-A	Rajat	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	12th	
GC-A	Disky	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	PG	NA
GC-B	Ginny	5th	10th	8th	12th	10th	BA	NA
GC-B	Rubal	Literate	5th	12th	12th	MA	Doctor	MCA
GC-B	Sarina	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	8th	Literate	BA	MA
GC-B	Saabir	5th	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	10th	JBT
GC-B	Satnam	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Illiterate	Literate	Graduate

Note: NR refers to no response.

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

The parental occupation of the ILs of selected HEIs generated from interview has also been summarized in Table 4.4. It shows that the IL of GC-A belongs to a farming household, i.e. her father is a cultivator/agriculturist. The fathers of all other ILs worked as government employees. Vaasu's father (the IL of GCID) was a police officer, meaning thereby that they had a regular and good source of income. Mothers of all ILs were home makers. It may also be noted that all three ILs, working in respective colleges, are the first ones in their family to work as FMs. It is only in SU where the IL is the second generation to adopt the teaching profession in HE. His father taught in a college and maternal uncle taught in reputed technical institute of India.

The information obtained from interviews with FMs in GCID and other two government colleges reveal that the majority of FMs are predominantly first-generation learners in higher education (Table 4.9). This means they are the first in their families to access and complete higher education, breaking new ground for their families. Their journey into academia represents a significant shift in educational access and social mobility, as they did not have parental precedence in higher studies to guide or support their academic paths. In case of Rubal, her father was a doctor and her mother had completed post-graduation, providing her with a strong academic foundation. Ginny from GC-B also benefited from a supportive background—her mother was educated up to the secondary level, and her father, who served in the Army, was well-educated. Their daughters' progression into higher education was a natural extension of the family's educational values.

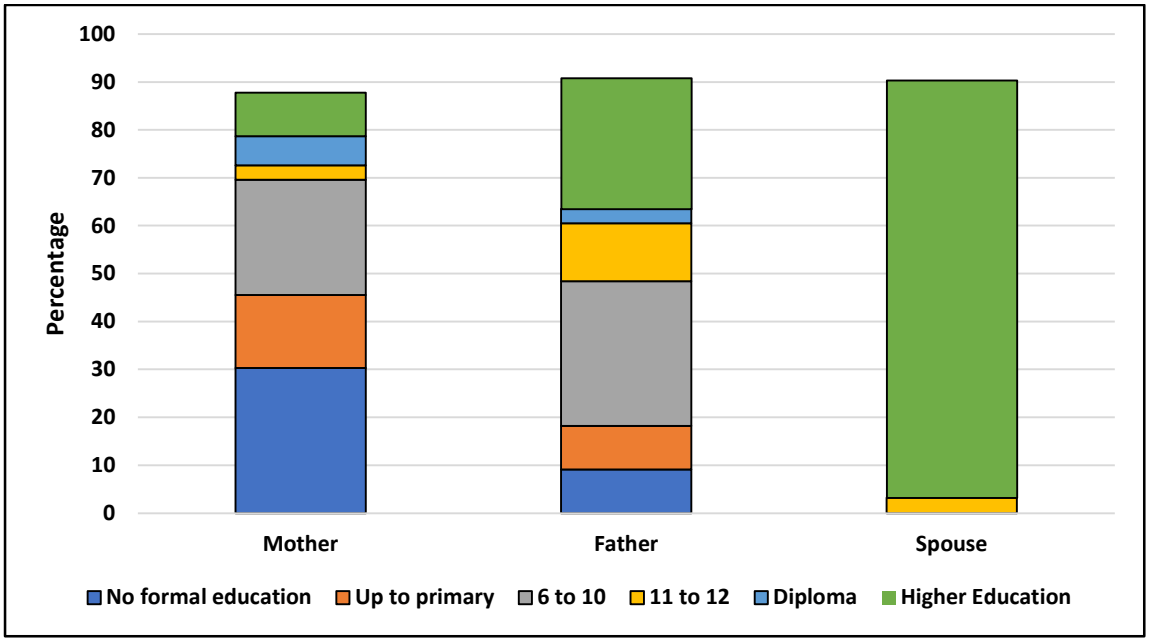
The educational background of family members of GCID FMs is presented in Table 4.10 and Figure. 4.6. For their grandparents (maternal as well as paternal), one-third reported that they had no knowledge of their education. Another one third reported that their grandmother (both paternal and maternal) had not accessed any formal schooling. While one-sixth among them reported their level of schooling up to primary and about 6 percent reported their grandmother (*dadi)* being educated up to 10th level. In the case of maternal grandmother, only 3 percent of them were educated up to primary. The education levels of grandfather were a little higher, where 3 to 6 percent were educated till 12th. About 3 percent of them *(*both *dada and nana*) had accessed higher education and attained a graduation or postgraduation degree.

Table 4.10: Educational characteristics of FMs family members in GCID

Educational Characteristics	Mother	Father	Maternal Grandma	Maternal Grandpa	Paternal Grandma	Paternal Grandpa	Spouse
Do not know	9.1	3.0	31.3	34.4	34.4	31.3	0.0
Single Parent	3.0	6.1	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	9.7
No formal education	30.3	9.1	31.3	18.8	34.4	21.9	0.0
Up to primary	15.2	9.1	15.6	15.6	15.6	9.4	0.0
6 to 10	24.1	30.2	6.2	12.6	3.1	15.7	0.0
11 to 12	3.0	12.1	3.1	3.1	0.0	6.3	3.2
Diploma	6.1	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Degree (BA/BSc)	9.1	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	16.1
PG	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	51.6
MPhil/PhD	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	19.4
% Valid Response	97.1	97.1	94.1	94.1	94.1	94.1	91.2

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Figure 4.6: Level of education of family members (GCID Faculty)



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

As far as education levels of their parents based on the survey data are concerned, there is difference in mothers and fathers' level of education. One-third of FMs reported that their mother had no formal schooling, while another 9 percent reported to be unaware of their education levels. About 15 percent of FMs reported that their mothers accessed schooling up to primary levels, while 24 percent reported a higher level of schooling, i.e. 5th to 10th. It may be noted that 15 percent had accessed HE. For fathers, the proportion of uneducated was much

less as compared to mothers. About 30 percent were educated till 10th and another 12 percent had completed 12th. In addition to this, about one-third had accessed HE in the form of diploma, graduation or post-graduation. A comparison of mothers' and fathers' education levels may be seen in Figure 4.6.

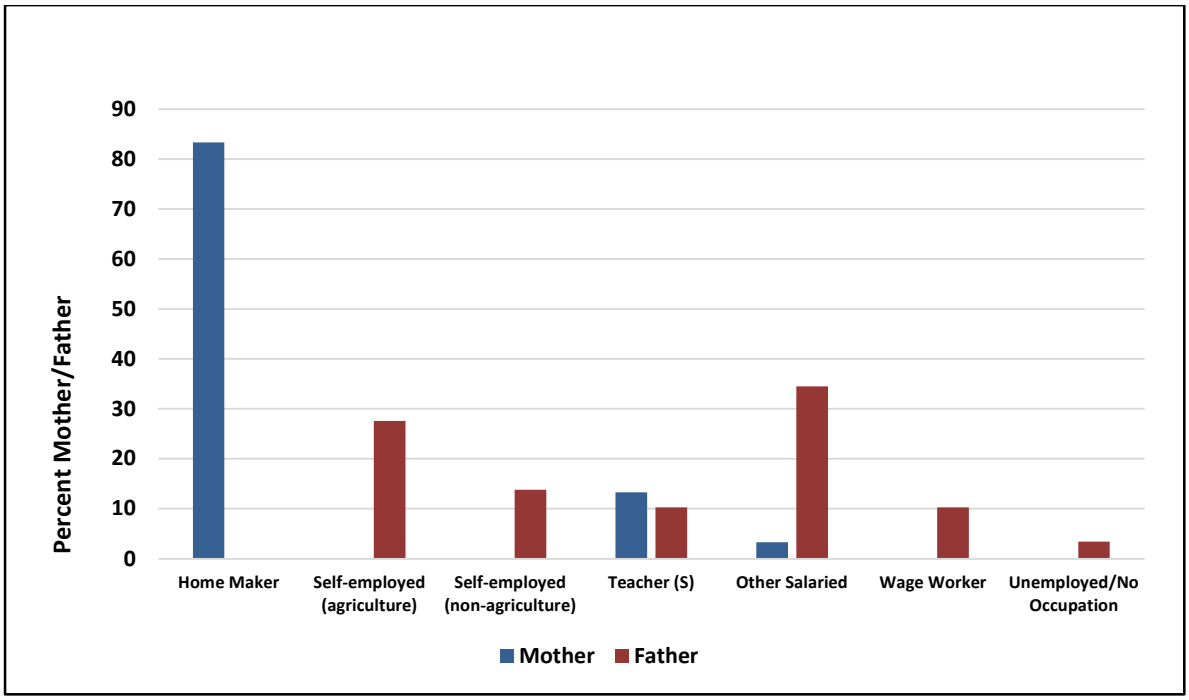
The family occupation history suggests that 28 percent FMs belonged to the farming community (cultivators). About 10 percent of FMs, have been in families where their fathers worked as wage labourers (Figure 4.7). It needs mention that, for 34 percent of FMs, the family occupation has been a government sector employee and 10 percent among them in teaching profession. For an overwhelming majority of FMs (83 percent), their mother remained in traditional role of home maker. It may however be noted that, for 13 percent FMs, their mother was a school teacher, while for another 3 percent, mother was engaged in some gainful economic activity and worked as salaried employee.

Table 4.11: Occupational characteristics of FMs family members in GCID

Occupational Characteristics	Mother	Father
Home Maker	83.3	0.0
Self-employed (agriculture)	0.0	27.6
Self-employed (non-agriculture)	0.0	13.8
Teacher (C/U)	0.0	0.0
Teacher (S)	13.3	10.3
Other Salaried	3.3	34.5
Wage Worker	0.0	10.3
Others	0.0	0.0
Unemployed/No Occupation	0.0	3.4

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Figure 4.7: Occupation of parents (GCID Faculty)



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

The average monthly family income of FMs in GCID is presented in Table 4.12. Around 90 percent of FMs had a family income of above INR 75,000 per month. Only 9 percent of FMs belonged to a humble economic background.

Table 4.12: Average monthly family income of FMs in GCID

Average monthly family income	Number	Percentage
Less than 25,000	00	00
25,001-50,000	03	9.1
50,001-75,000	00	00
75,001-100,000	12	36.4
More than 100,000	18	54.5
N (% VR)		**92.1**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Table 4.13: First person in the family to work as faculty member in GCID Faculty

Characteristics	GCID Faculty	
Percent FMs first time faculty	**Yes**	**No**
	90.9	9.1
N (% VR)	**97.1**	
Gender		
Female	56.6	66.7
Male	43.4	33.3
Caste Group		
SC	23.3	66.7
ST	0.0	33.3
OBC	20.0	0.0
General	56.7	0.0
Religion		
Buddhist	0.0	0.0
Christian	0.0	0.0
Hindu	96.7	100.0
Jain	0.0	0.0
Muslim	0.0	0.0
Sikh	3.3	0.0
Others	0.0	0.0
Geographical Location		
Rural	46.6	33.3
Urban	53.4	66.7

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

As in SU, a significant majority FMs (90 percent) in GCID are also first-generation academics This indicates strong upward professional mobility, where educational roles appear to be opening up more broadly to those without family backgrounds in academia. Notable differences are observed in gender distribution between first-time and non-first-time faculty. Women constitute a majority of first-time faculty at 56.6 percent, reflecting a progressive gender trend. Interestingly, in GCID, even among non-first-time faculty, females dominate at 66.7 percent, indicating a broader trend of female representation in government college teaching roles. As far as the category-wise distribution is concerned, SC accounts for 23 percent, 20 percent OBC, and 56.7 percent General. Non-first-time faculty in GCID are entirely from SC and ST backgrounds (66.7 percent and 33.3 percent respectively), with no representation from OBC or General categories. Religion-wise, an overwhelming 97 percent are Hindus and a mere 3 percent belong to Sikh community. GCID shows a more balanced mix, with 53.4 percent from urban areas and 46.6 percent from rural areas among first-time faculty. Among the non-first-time FMs, it has been observed that 66.7 percent faculty members are from urban areas and

33.3 percent from rural areas, indicating that both systems still largely favour urban-origin faculty in legacy positions.

4.5.2 Schooling history

An understanding of the schooling history of the FMs of SU, GCID, GC-A and GC-B gives an insight into their educational journeys and how their academic paths took shape. It also provides an understanding into the patterns of access and exclusion. Many FMs who might have started from rural schools later transitioned to urban schools with better resources. A knowledge of this background helps recognize the socio-economic and regional diversity within the faculty.

4.5.2.1 State University (SU)

The IL of SU had schooling in an urban area and studied in a government school. He attended a co-educational school throughout his education. The majority of FMs employed in SU had their primary schooling in urban areas (Table 4.14). The FM survey data presented in Table 4.15 shows that at the middle and secondary levels, most continued in urban schools, with 91 percent attending co-educational schools at the secondary level. During higher secondary education, around 81 percent had urban schooling. Regarding the type of school, 42 to 50 percent of SU faculty studied in government schools, followed by private unaided institutions. None of them studied under the ICSE syllabus; the majority followed the national CBSE syllabus. As for language of instruction, 51 percent of SU faculty had English as the medium at the secondary level, and this increased to 60 percent at the higher secondary level. In terms of academic stream choice, one-third opted for science, 45 percent chose arts or humanities, and 20 percent went into commerce.

The data generated about the schooling history of FMs in SU, through the solicited diary and standalone interviews, reveals that the FMs belong to diverse educational backgrounds. The majority of them attained schooling from government schooling system with a mix of rural and urban setting. Gary and Vipul both studied in a rural school during their primary years and continued their middle and matriculation studies from a nearby rural government school. Akram also started his primary education from a rural school but transitioned to a private institution for his matriculation, indicating exposure to both sectors. Dhiraj's academic journey began in a village primary school, followed by residential schooling. Damini had a more varied schooling

experience, she studied in an urban school up to the 3rd grade, then moved to a rural school from 4th to 8th grade, and finally completed her education in an urban English medium school.

4.5.2.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The IL of GCID had a diverse schooling background due to his father's transferable job in the police service. As a result, he studied in multiple private schools across different locations. His entire schooling took place in urban areas. He attended co-educational institutions throughout. The ILs of GC-A and GC-B (both women) had their schooling in urban government schools. From 6th to 10th grade, they studied in single-sex (girls') schools. This reflects a common pattern among women ILs, where access to urban girls' schools was crucial for continuing education beyond primary levels.

Table 4.14: Place of schooling of FMs in SU and GCID (percent FMs)

Level/ School Characteristic	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Higher Secondary	
	SU	GCID	SU	GCID	SU	GCID	SU	GCID
Location								
Rural	35.1	57.6	28.1	51.5	22.8	48.5	12.3	18.1
Urban	56.1	39.4	64.9	45.5	68.4	48.5	80.7	78.8
Semi-urban	8.8	3.0	7.0	3.0	8.8	3.0	7.0	3.1

Source: Based on WAHEI Survey in Haryana.

The FMs of GCID had different schooling experiences compared to SU. A majority of them had their primary and middle-level education in rural schools. However, during the higher secondary level, approximately 79 percent transitioned to urban schools (Table 4.14). At the secondary level, 82 percent of GCID FMs studied in co-educational schools, but at the higher secondary level, about 45 percent studied in single-sex schools (either all-boys or all-girls). In terms of school type, close to 50 percent FMs attended government schools, for their secondary and senior secondary respectively. Notably, one-third of GCID faculty had studied in government or private aided schools. The majority followed the state syllabus, and none followed the ICSE syllabus at the secondary or higher secondary level. Regarding language of instruction, an 90 percent of GCID faculty studied in Hindi medium at the secondary level, and about 66 percent continued with Hindi at the higher secondary level. In terms of stream choice, the majority opted for humanities, 24 percent for commerce, and only a marginal 12 percent for science.

Table 4.15: Schooling history of FMs in SU and GCID

Schooling History	9th and 10		11th and 12th	
	SU	GCID	SU	GCID
Type of School				
Co-ed.	91.2	81.8	84.2	54.5
Single Sex	8.8	18.2	15.8	45.5
Management Type				
Government	42.1	48.5	50.9	45.5
Govt. aided/Private aided	17.5	27.3	14.0	36.4
Private (unaided)	40.4	24.2	35.1	18.2
Syllabus				
State	57.9	93.9	59.6	90.9
CBSE	42.1	6.1	40.4	9.1
ICSE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Language				
Regional Language	5.3	0.0	1.8	0.0
English	50.9	9.1	59.6	33.3
Hindi	43.9	90.9	38.6	66.7
Stream Choice				
Science	*	*	31.6	12.1
Commerce	*	*	22.8	24.2
Arts/Humanities	*	*	45.6	63.6
N (% valid response)	100%	97.1%	100%	97.1%

*Note: *Refers to no information*
Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The information generated from interviewing the faculty shows that the FMs of GCID had a mixed (rural as well as urban schooling) educational background. Kuljeet and Pankaj studied in rural co-educational schools at the primary and secondary level. Kuljeet, however, shifted to a rural private school for senior secondary. Balu also studied in a rural school, but it was a boys-only school. Later, for senior secondary, he shifted to an urban private school. Stargazer and Nimmo studied in urban schools, but it was a private school in the case of Stargazer and a government school for Nimmo. Overall, the GCID faculty reflect a mix of rural and urban experiences, spanning both government and private educational institutions.

4.5.3 Higher education history

4.5.3.1 State University (SU)

The higher education enrolment of IL in the SU in UG programme was largely a natural progression due to his family background. For post-graduation and doctorate, he pursued science from the state university based in his hometown. The majority of FMs in SU opted arts or social sciences in HE at their graduation level. A notable 79 percent of them pursued graduation from university departments, with the remaining one-fifth having graduated from affiliated colleges, and the majority of these colleges were located in urban areas. In the case of

post-graduation programmes however, the completion from university department increased substantially. This proportion was 93 percent for SU FMs. As far as the funding of their education is concerned, 77 percent FMs in SU reported that it was self-funded, whereas 5 percent had freeship and another 12 percent had obtained some sort of scholarship. As far as post-graduation of FMs is concerned, two-thirds of FMs in SU were from social science/humanities background, followed by commerce and science. All the FMs from humanities had obtained M.Phil. degrees and 94 percent had attained their doctorate. Only a small proportion (2.8 percent) from commerce and sciences had attained a doctorate degree.

The information from FMs was also collected regarding social justice or wellbeing programme of the government during their studies, in the form of reservation availed by them during higher education study. It may be noted that only 21 percent FMs in SU availed reservation on caste basis (Table 4.17). Among them, the majority of them availed of reservation for admission in graduation as well as for master's admission. Another one-fifth FMs also used it for NET exam an eligibility test for entering as FMs in any institute of HE.

Table 4.16: Higher education history of FMs in SU and GCID

Higher Education	Bachelor's Degree		Master's Degree		M.Phil		Ph.D	
History	**SU**	**GCID**	**SU**	**GCID**	**SU**	**GCID**	**SU**	**GCID**
Stream/ Subject Choices								
Arts	68.4	58.8	66.0	53.0	100.0	63.1	94.4	60.0
Commerce	10.5	32.4	17.8	23.5	0.0	21.1	2.8	20.0
Science	21.1	8.8	16.2	23.5	0.0	15.8	2.8	20.0
Institution Attended								
Affiliated College	21.1	78.8	7.1	27.3	Nil	Nil	2.8	0.0
University	78.9	21.2	92.9	72.7	100.0	100.0	97.2	100.0
Type of Institution								
Government	82.5	57.6	91.1	75.7	83.3	84.2	91.7	85.0
Govt aided/ private aided	15.8	36.3	3.6	15.2	0.0	5.3	2.8	5.0
Private	1.8	6.1	5.4	9.1	16.7	10.5	5.6	10.0
Location								
Rural	8.8	00	3.6	3.0	0.0	5.3	2.8	5.0
Urban	84.2	93.9	92.8	94.0	100.0	94.7	91.7	95.0
Semi-urban	7.0	6.1	3.6	3.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.0
Overseas	00	00	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Funding								
Freeship/ Tuition Waiver	5.3	3.0	5.4	0.0	16.7	0.0	2.8	0.0
Scholarship	12.3	3.0	10.7	3.0	16.7	5.3	0.0	10.0
Fellowship	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	11.1	10.0
Self-funded	77.2	94.0	76.8	97.0	66.7	89.5	83.3	80.0
PTA funding	3.5	00	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.8	0.0
Funding Pool	1.8	00	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

4.5.3.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The ILs of GCID and GC-B, have transitioned to HE arguably as a natural continuation as they had an educated family background and their parents accessed higher education. Furthermore, they all lived in urban areas. In case of GC-A, however, the family support played a major role. The early marriage of women generally leads to drop out and they can continue only with strong support of family and marriage partner. This was exactly the case with GC-A IL.

However, it, may be noted that the majority of ILs attained graduation from private aided colleges as during their times, there were shortage of state funded HEIs and the government, and that aided HEIs, particularly in urban areas, had established their reputation. The selection of government college was thus based on its availability. However, they pursued post-graduation from the university departments, which were physically near to their place of residence. ILs of GCID and GC-A pursued social sciences in HE whilst staying in the university

hostel away from their place of residence. Anji, from GC-A acquired a doctorate degree and Vaasu of GCID completed his M.Phil. degree. Ranju, the IL of GC-B, acquired an M.Phil. degree while staying at her place of residence. In case of Vaasu and Ranju, their family was a source of inspiration for higher education completion. However, in case of Anji, the FM played a significant role in selection of subject and institution for HE attainment. During interview, the IL showed special respect and gratitude to the FMs who guided her to attain the present level.

The stream wise distribution of GCID faculty shows that half of them were from humanities and another half were from commerce and sciences in HE at their graduation level. At the undergraduate level, most GCID FMs studied in affiliated colleges (78 percent), while only a small portion attended university departments. Regarding funding, 94 percent FMs of GCID reported self-funding their education - a proportion even higher than SU. The majority of FMs from humanities streams had attained the doctorate and M.Phil. research degree, while from science and commerce streams, only one-fifth among them had attained doctoral degree.
In the case of post-graduation programme, however, the completion from university department increased substantially to around 73 percent for GCID FMs. It needs mention that 27 percent of FMs in GCID had completed their PG education from affiliated colleges.

The information has been collected regarding reservation availed by the FMs in selected HEIs. The objective is to understand whether the FMs benefited from the affirmative action in the form of reservation whilst pursuing HE. This insight helps in understanding the extent of support mechanism in accessing educational attainment and professional advancement among FMs of disadvantaged sections of society. It may be noted that about 11 FMs in SU and 12 FMs in GCID, accounting for 19 and 35 percent respectively, availed reservation on caste basis which was used for entry into all or any HE degree programme. In both the selected HEIs, i.e. SU and GCID, the majority of the FMs who availed reservation belonged to SC category. They constitute 7 and 8 FMs accounting 63.6 and 66.7 percent of total FMs who availed reservation respectively. The majority of FMs utilized reservation for entry in HE, yet a significant 30 percent reportedly used in for National level test (NET) for employment eligibility as FM.

Table 4.17: Availed reservation during higher education: SU and GCID

Level of reservation	SU	GCID
1. Bachelor's degree	37.9	17.1
2. Master's degree	37.9	22.9
3. M.Phil. degree		20.0
4. PhD degree	3.4	11.4
5.NET/SLET examination	20.7	28.6
% availed Reservation	(21.1%)	(35.3%)
Category of reservation		
OBC	36.4	33.3
SC	63.6	66.7
N & % Valid Response	11 (19.3%)	12 (35.3%)

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

4.5.4 Involvement of Faculty Members in HE access

In the context of widening access to higher education in India, faculty members were reported to play a pivotal role in bridging gaps for underrepresented and marginalized communities. In India, where socio-economic disparities and regional inequalities can limit educational opportunities, faculty engagement is essential in creating an enabling environment for first-generation learners, students from rural backgrounds, and marginalized communities. By their active involvement, FMs can help to democratize access to higher education and to support the national goal of inclusive and equitable learning for all.

4.5.4.1 State University (SU)

As reported in earlier chapters, at present, the HE enrolment in the state is in a massification stage, hence an attempt has been made to understand who motivated the FMs and what can be the future prospects for universalization of HE. In this context, the information for SU and GCID is tabulated in Table 4.18. The respondents answered using multiple responses where parents, siblings and other relations or FMs simultaneously motivated or helped in selection of subjects and selection of institution. The information tabulated reveals that in this multiplicity also, the parents (both father and mother), siblings, and their own willingness weighed higher as the major motivating force for pursuing higher education. The role of schoolteachers was minimal, as about 5 percent FMs in SU reported their role in motivation and selection of college and subjects. The role of college FMs has been observed as 6 percent in motivation towards HE, but only 2 percent could indicate their role in selection of college and subjects. In the selection of college, the involvement of parents, particularly father, was more prominent, but the role of mother was also frequently quoted. It needs mention that about 29 percent FMs reported that it

was their own choice in selection of course/subject. The role of parents in college choice might be governed by the fact that they financially supported them (which in many cases was nearby government college).

The additional information on their FMs involvement in HE choices has been summarized in Table 4.19. It shows that the involvement of FMs was more prominently reported by male members, while FMs role was limited to 37 percent among female FMs. It may further be noted that in the case of SU faculty, the majority of FMs from advantaged caste group could seek their FMs advice in selection of institution. The involvement of FMs was 37 percent for SC FMs compared to 12 percent for OBC faculty members. Furthermore, FMs living in urban areas could involve their teachers more in HE selection (see Table 4.19). The FMs of SU were asked what options were available to them to enrol in HE and the majority of FMs reported that they physically visited the colleges or universities before making a decision (Table 4.22) and a sizeable number of FMs also read in newspapers for information about the college or university in which they enrolled. As the social media platforms were virtually missing at the time, a sizeable proportion also visited another campus to compare the infrastructure or facilities available in other HE institution.

Table 4.18: Motivation and involvement in HE enrolment for SU FMs

Options	Motivation to undertake HE	Involvement in College Selection	Involvement in course / subject selection
Mother	17.6	16.3	13.9
Father	21.0	26.8	20.0
Sister/s (sibling)	7.4	7.3	7.0
Brother/s (sibling)	8.0	7.3	7.0
Maternal grandmother	1.7	0.0	0.0
Maternal grandfather	0.6	0.0	0.0
Paternal grandmother	1.1	0.8	0.9
Paternal grandfather	4.0	1.6	1.7
Maternal aunt/s	0.6	0.0	0.0
Maternal uncle/s	1.1	0.8	0.9
Paternal aunt/s	0.6	0.0	0.0
Paternal uncle/s	1.1	0.0	0.0
Cousin/s	0.6	2.4	3.5
School teacher/s	5.1	5.7	5.2
College/university teacher/s	6.2	1.6	2.6
Friend/s	5.7	5.7	6.1
Senior student/s	1.1	0.0	0.9
Neighbour/s	0.6	0.8	0.0
Coaching/tutor	0.6	0.8	0.9
Yourself	15.3	22.0	29.6
N (% valid response)	100%	100%	100%

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 4.19: Involvement of any faculty member in HE journey for SU and GCID FMs

	SU		GCID	
Options	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
Involvement of any FM (school/college/any other) in UG college Choice	28.1	71.9	21.2	78.8
Gender				
Female	37.5	43.9	71.4	53.8
Male	62.5	56.1	28.6	46.2
Transgender	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other gender	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Caste/Social Group				
SC	37.5	12.1	42.8	23.0
ST	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0
OBC	12.5	17.0	28.5	15.3
General	50.0	68.2	28.7	61.5
EWS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Religion				
Jain/Buddhist/Christian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hindu	93.7	87.9	100.0	96.1
Muslim	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sikh	0.0	2.5	0.0	3.9
Other	6.3	4.8	0.0	0.0
Place of permanent residence				
Rural	43.7	29.2	57.1	42.3
Urban	56.3	70.8	42.9	57.7

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

4.5.4.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The motivation and involvement of different persons in the developmental trajectory of GCID FMs is summarized in Table 4.20. It also shows that in terms of motivation, both parents had a major role. However, in selection of college and in subject choice, the role of father weighed more as compared to mother. Similar to SU FMs, here too the GCID FMs reported their own efforts were significant in selection of course /subject. The role of school teachers was pointed out by 3.9 to 4.9 percent FMs in motivation and selection of HE institution respectively. Though the role of college FMs was a quite significant in case of GCID FMs in motivation of pursuance of HE (9.5% respondents). Though the involvement of FMs is much less indivated in institution selection and subject selection.

The detailed information suggests that about 21 percent FMs in GCID indicated the involvement of any FM/teacher in the process of their HE journey. Among these 21 percent, a majority were

women FMs (71 percent) who indicated the involvement of teachers/FMs. Those who sought advice or for whom the FMs or teachers were involved, 43 percent belonged to disadvantaged social groups. About 28 percent of FMs from OBC and 'others', i.e. non-SC and non-OBC teachers, indicated that teachers were involved in their HE journeys. Interestingly, in contrast to SU, the GCID FMs from rural background were more dependent on teachers for their college selection.

Table 4.20: Motivation and involvement in HE enrolment for GCID FMs

Options	Motivation to undertake HE	Involvement in selection of	
		College	course / subject
Mother	20.2	15.6	13.8
Father	21.4	24.7	18.5
Sister/s (sibling)	3.6	6.5	6.2
Brother/s (sibling)	7.1	10.4	9.2
Maternal grandmother	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maternal grandfather	0.0	0.0	0.0
Paternal grandmother	0.0	0.0	0.0
Paternal grandfather	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maternal aunt/s	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maternal uncle/s	2.4	1.3	1.5
Paternal aunt/s	0.0	0.0	0.0
Paternal uncle/s	2.4	2.6	4.6
Cousin/s	1.2	2.6	3.1
School teacher/s	4.8	3.9	0.0
College/university FM	9.5	6.5	4.6
Friend/s	6.0	6.5	7.7
Senior student/s	2.4	1.3	0.0
Neighbour/s	00	00	3.1
Coaching/tutor	00	00	0.0
Yourself	19.0	18.2	27.7
N (% valid response)	97.3%	97.3%	97.3%

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The type of involvement of FMs for GCID FMs HE journeys reveals that about two-third FMs found their involvement while making choice about HE itself and another one-third reported that they were involved during admission process and choice of subject. Table 4.21 shows little variation for SU and GCID FMs as during their times, they faced almost similar situations, i.e. doubt about pursuing HE and also choice of subject/course which may bring them better employment etc.

Table 4.21: Involvement of FMs in HE choices of FMs of SU and GCID

Higher Education Choice options	SU	GCID
% valid Response	31.6%	20.6%
Involvement Period/Type		
Making choice about Higher education	69.6	66.7
During admission	30.4	33.3
Type of advice		
Advice on whether to go for higher education or other options	19.2	16.0
Choice of which colleges/universities to apply to	19.2	20.0
Choice of course/subject	28.8	24.0
About the admissions process	9.6	16.0
About covering tuition expenses/funding options	3.8	0.0
About higher education entry exams preparation	7.7	4.0
About special admissions programme/processes e.g., reservations	0.0	4.0
Checking application form/other documents	3.8	4.0
Choice of which colleges/universities to enrol in if selected in more than one	1.9	8.0
Accompanying for a visit to the college/university where they worked	1.9	4.0
Accompanying for a visit to another college/university	3.8	0.0
Total Yes	**52**	**25**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The quantitative information collected from the FMs of SU and GCID regarding which choices were available to them before enrolling or at the start of their HE journey has also been presented (Table 4.22). It shows that the majority of GCID FMs (56.8 percent) physically visited the college or HE institution before enrolling in the UG programme. Another 13 percent indicated that they referred to the brochures of the concerned college. Unlike SU FMs, the GCID FMs reported a limited option available to them while starting their HE journeys.

Table 4.22: Choices before enrolling in UG programme for SU and GCID FMs

	SU	GCID
% valid response	98.2	97.1
Options		
Visited the college/university, i.e., physically stepped to the campus before enrolling in the course you pursued	38.1	56.8
Visited other college/universities to compare options	13.3	2.7
Discussed options for higher education study with other college/university staff (e.g., administrative staff)	9.5	0.0
Explored various online platforms, such as College Dunia, as well as your current college/university website	3.8	0.0
Referenced the college/university brochures for detailed information	9.5	13.5
Watched information videos on YouTube related to college/university	1.9	0.0
Used social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) to gather information and insights about college/university	1.0	0.0
Read about college/university in newspapers	13.3	0.0
Listened to radio FM providing information about higher education institutions	0.0	0.0
Visited Common service centres (e.g., Akshaya Kendra/e-Kendras, Saral, etc.,) to inquire about higher education options	1.0	0.0
Consulted with representative or designated contact persons from various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for advice related to higher education study	0.0	0.0
Visited College Fairs	1.0	0.0
Obtained information from the local administration, such as Gram Panchayat, Nagar Panchayat, Village Administrative Officers, Municipal Councils/Corporations and District Admin.	1.0	0.0
None of the above	6.7	27.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

4.6 Faculty Members' professional trajectories

4.6.1 State University (SU)

In the case of SU, the proxy IL (as the existing IL authorized to interview the most senior FM in the university, instead of him) got the opportunity to be in many leadership roles such as Chairperson of Department, Dean of Faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs - the highest leadership role for teaching faculty in the university system. His career reflects a progression based on seniority, long-term commitment to the institution, and involvement in significant academic and administrative responsibilities.

The SU FMs profile (Table 4.23) reveals that there is a mix of young and experienced FMs. Though the majority of them (38 percent) are young faculty with less than 10 years of teaching experience and 17 percent are in the profession with less than 5 years; yet one-fifth of FMs had more than 20 years of teaching experience. Their current designation, however, reveals that an

overwhelming majority of them are Assistant Professors and only 9 percent among them are Associate Professors. As noted earlier, only 31 percent among them had a regular appointment. It needs mention that 25 percent among them are guest faculty and rest of them are appointed on a contractual basis. About 10 percent FMs have been with the same HEI for more than 20 years. Another 21 percent are in the university for between 15 to 20 years. Furthermore, a good proportion (i.e. about 28 percent with less than 5 years and 19 percent with 5 to 10 years respectively) of the younger faculty stayed at the same institution (Table 4.23).

Table 4.23: Professional trajectories of FMs in SU and GCID

Length of service	SU	GCID
% of VRs	**82.5**	**100**
Less than 5 years	17.0	11.8
5-10 years	21.3	32.3
10-15 years	23.4	17.6
15-20 years	17.0	17.6
20-25 years	14.9	8.9
25-30 years	4.3	8.9
More than 30 years	2.1	2.9
Current Position		
Professor	0.0	0.0
Associate Professor	8.9	17.6
Assistant Professor	78.6	82.4
Appointment		
Direct Recruitment Call by HEI	98.2	44.1
Examination conducted by the State Govt.	1.8	29.4
Transferred to this institution from other Institution	0.0	26.5
Nature of Appointment		
Regular	31.6	88.2
Contractual	40.4	8.8
Guest Lecturer	24.6	2.9
Ad-hoc	0.0	0.0
Visiting Faculty	0.0	0.0
Working in present Institution		
Less than 5 years	28.1	41.2
5-10 years	19.3	47.0
10-15 years	21.0	5.9
15-20 years	21.0	0.0
20-25 years	8.8	0.0
25-30 years	0.0	5.9
More than 30 years	1.8	0.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

4.6.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The professional trajectory of ILs reveals that currently all: are senior faculty, started their career about 30 to 34 years ago, are appointed as regular faculty, and remained in the same institution. Though the ILs have served three or more colleges due to transfer policy of the state government, all of them were promoted into a leadership role through a career advancement scheme and on the basis of seniority. Furthermore, all of them hold regular postings and report that they never thought of changing institution. Although, the IL from GCID had tried for other lucrative positions but had not been appointed, hence they remained with the same institution. The IL of GCID also

served as a cluster head, i.e. coordinating the activities of all the government and aided colleges of the district and coordinating with district administration for implementation of various government schemes through colleges.

In the case of GCID faculty, the length of service is quite diverse. Though a majority of faculty is young (about 44 percent among them have less than 10 years of teaching experience), yet the FMs with 10 to 15 years and 15 to 20 years constitute about 35 percent. Further, 3 percent among them have been in the profession for more than 30 years. However, their serving period in the institution varies significantly in case of GCID, as they get frequent transfers to other government colleges. A significant proportion (41 percent) are in the college for less than 5 years while another 47 percent are in the college for the last 5 to 10 years. Only 6 percent are in the college for 25 to 30 years (Table 4.23). In the case of SU, the scenario is a little different as the FMs, once appointed, generally remain in the same institution and departments.

4.7 Summary and Conclusion

The present chapter deals with the demographic profile of faculty members of selected HEIs. The age composition disclosed that FMs in SU are younger as compared to GCID faculty. The gender composition reveals that proportion of women FMs was higher in GCID faculty. The religious identity also suggests that SU FMs have been more diverse and they belonged to different states of India, as compared to GCID faculty, which are predominantly Hindu and belong to the state of Haryana. It may, however, be noted that in GCID faculty, the representation of disadvantaged caste group is relatively better than SU FMs. Among SU, a significantly large proportion have urban residence and the majority have been residing on campus or in the same town. The data suggests that in GCID, a majority of FMs have been commuting to the place of work from nearby towns, as the HEI was non-residential and located in a village. The educational background of FMs in GCID and SU had little variation. However, the educational background of women FMs in both SU and GCID disclosed that they belonged to second generation in HE and most of their parents lived in urban areas. The higher education history of FMs revealed that the role of parents, siblings and self-motivation remained prominent. The role of teachers, though listed by many FMs, was low compared to the role of parents and siblings.

Since FMs themselves had limited exposure to mentorship, they understand its importance better and hence can play a pivotal role in widening access and ensuring equitable participation in higher education.

Chapter 5: Institutional Leaders, Faculty Members and HE Outreach: Practices and Perspectives

5.1 Introduction

Educational outreach is a vital aspect of any educational institution, as it helps to attract, engage, and retain students. Educational outreach must be distinguished from community outreach. Community outreach generally refers to initiatives that engage with the broader public to address local needs and improve well-being, while HE outreach focuses specifically on raising awareness about, and access to, higher education opportunities. The outreach efforts can be challenging, time-consuming, and costly, especially if they are not well-planned and supported. In this regard, faculty members and institutional leaders play a crucial role in bridging the gap between local populations' needs and academic prospects. The practices and viewpoints of faculty members, institutional leaders, and outreach programmes for higher education in Haryana are all examined in this chapter. This chapter thus attempts to understand how faculty and leadership support student success and the inclusion of marginalized groups, especially those from rural origins, by looking at the initiatives used by educational institutions. With an emphasis on enhancing the accessibility and equity of higher education for all students in the state, it also examines the efficacy of current outreach initiatives and identifies opportunities for development.

By addressing the broader question of how higher education institutions (HEIs) can play a more active role in enhancing access and choice for students, the chapter focuses on the specific practices and perspectives of ILs and FMs in local contexts. The chapter responds to the following two key research questions:

(i) What do faculty members in rural and semi-urban areas currently perceive to be the role of HEIs and their role/s in facilitating access to HE and HE choice in the localities of their workplaces? What are the existing practices of HE outreach?

(ii) What do institutional leaders of rural and semi-urban colleges and universities perceive to be HEIs' role, their role, and their employees' role in relation to facilitating access to HE and HE choice?

5.2 Facilitating access to HE: institutional level

In this section, the practices adopted by institutional leaders in all selected higher education institutions and their different dimensions are discussed in detail. The ILs of all the four selected HEIs were fully aware that an overwhelming majority of students (90 to 95 percent) enroll from rural areas. Daarji, the IL of SU, pointed out that since the location of SU itself is in rural hinterland, the village students may have a natural choice in its selection. Further, SU provides the financial facilitation in terms of scholarships and fellowships. Though, he further states that the grant of scholarship is not specific to rural students, rather caste specific as per the policy of state government. It may be noted that the SU IL did not differentiate between community outreach and HE outreach. He suggests that the SU is carrying out outreach activities through National Service Scheme (NSS) when students camp in one village for a week. He further states that the students of Social Work department in the University visit to villages (visiting village is part of their Masters' programme to study social structure and various activities at village panchayat level) and must be facilitating the rural students for admission in the SU.

The institutional leaders of other colleges, however, mentioned the specific activities the individual HEI is engaged in to increase their enrolment. The IL of GCID stated that when he initially joined the institute, the commerce stream had only 17 enrolments at 80 seats. He was concerned and made the FMs visit nearby government high schools. The visit duration was selected just before the board examinations and the principals of the schools were requested to invite the parents of 12th class students on the day of FMs visit. The efforts were made to convince the parents to get them to admit into this college by informing on the courses offered, and college and faculty advantages. Vaasu proudly stated that subsequently the students' strength in commerce stream increased in the college. Similarly, the IL of GC-A narrated elaborately how the FMs of that college convince the parents in the village through village sarpanch to enroll the girls in HE. FMs do visit door to door to convince girls' parents regarding the regularity of classes and teachers' discipline. (GC-A being a women's college and in rural setting struggles to get enough enrollments). Ranju, the IL of GC-B, however, told that enrolling students in rural college is a big challenge as after schooling, urban college remains a natural choice. The IL pointed out that facilitation is majorly in the form of scholarship or waiving the tuition fee, as per the state government policy.

5.2.1 State University (SU)

The information collected from the faculty survey of the state university regarding comfortability of rural students in selecting HEI and the outreach practices conducted by their institution is summarized in Table 5.1. About 95 percent of faculty members in SU responded to this query. An overwhelming majority of FMs (87 percent) responded that rural students are comfortable in selecting the higher education institutions. It may however be noted that almost half of faculty members responded in affirmation regarding whether the university is conducting any activity to attract rural students while another half (48.1) responded that the SU is not conducting any such activity.

Table 5.1: Outreach information from faculty survey in state university

Options	N & (% Valid response)	Yes	No
Are rural students comfortable in selecting the University	54 (94.7)	87.0	13.0
Is the university conducting any activity to attract rural students?	54 (94.7)	51.9	48.1

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Five faculty members of SU were interviewed to obtain information regarding proportion of rural students and how they are being facilitated in higher education access. The information varied as they were teaching different courses and hence their perception about proportion of rural students varied accordingly. One FM, Gary, mentioned that proportion of rural students are less as compared to urban, while all other FMs reported the rural dominance of students. Dhiraj however, reported that even with rural dominance, the proportion of rural girl students is less. The majority of girls are urban and from good economic backgrounds. All five faculty members reported that the SU officially is not conducting any HE outreach activity to facilitate the rural students. They however added that at individual level, many FMs and they themselves are involved in outreach practices. It needs mention that all of them were aware about the challenges rural students face in accessing HE. Akram showed concern for rural girls' safety, lack of safe transport and communicated financial and digital divide as major challenges of rural students, which is being supported by other FMs. Damini, however, presumes that rural students should feel comfortable as the fee structure of SU is inexpensive compared to private institutions. Further, the courses offered by SU are market oriented with competent faculty. Damini, however, mentioned that the composition of rural and urban students has changed over a period of time, and that, now, urban, upper middle-class students who can afford to are

enrolling in private HEIs due to better facilities, or choosing to go abroad. However, it is agreed upon that SU does not conduct specific HE outreach activity to attract rural students.

5.2.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The outreach information collected from the faculty of GCID (Table 5.2) suggests that the majority of FMs are of the view that rural students feel comfortable in selecting HEI and 91 percent FMs reported that their college was conducting outreach activities to attract rural students.

Table 5.2: Outreach information from faculty survey in GCID

Options	N (% Valid response)	Percent response	
		Yes	No
Are rural students comfortable in selecting the College/University	34 (100.0%)	91.2	8.8
Is the college/university conducting any activities to attract rural students?	34 (100.0)	91.2	8.8

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The summary information regarding rural students in selected HEI from the interviews of FMs in GCID, GC-A and GC-B suggests that the majority of students in all these HEIs are rural. One FM from GCID, however, pointed out that girls outnumbered boys as girls' parents are unwilling to send their daughters to city college and hence, rural HEIs are the obvious and comfortable choice for girls' higher education. Almost all FMs reported that girls' parents feel comfortable in selecting the college due to physical access and also, they hesitate in sending their daughters to far off places or in urban colleges. The findings may be related to the research paper which discusses that higher education access and choices for women in Haryana are constrained by gendered symbolic boundaries and how spatial and symbolic boundaries are constructed (Henderson, et.al., 2024). It also suggests that these boundaries impact women's mobility and educational opportunities. Kuljeet also shared that the National Cadet Corps (NCC) in college is also an added reason for its selection (NCC students from schools prefer the HEI where NCC is offered), as it increases their employment opportunities in armed forces. The FMs in GCID also mentioned that science faculty members visit schools to increase the enrolments in science stream.

In the case of GC-A, which is exclusively a girls' college, the FMs are of the view that rural location of the college itself (i.e.in vicinity of students' home) comforts the parents of girl

students. It may be noted that in Haryana, the decision of girls' education and the choice of institution is largely made by their parents. Hence, the FMs pointed out that the rural location of college is a comfortable choice. The FM, however, disclosed that the college does not have any women faculty member except the IL, hence, at times, rural girls do hesitate interacting with male FMs and in revealing their challenges. All FMs of the college reported that they as a group canvas in nearby villages by arranging a meeting through village sarpanch where they signify higher education for girls and convince the parents to enrol their daughters in the college.

The interview information from the GC-B FMs also confirmed that more than 90 percent of students were rural. In their opinion also, rural students had no challenge in selecting this college due to its rural location. They further added that the college also has good physical infrastructure which may aid its selection. Another FM reported that the schools do visit the college under the twinning programme[2] and at times FMs also visit nearby schools to increase the enrolments in this college.

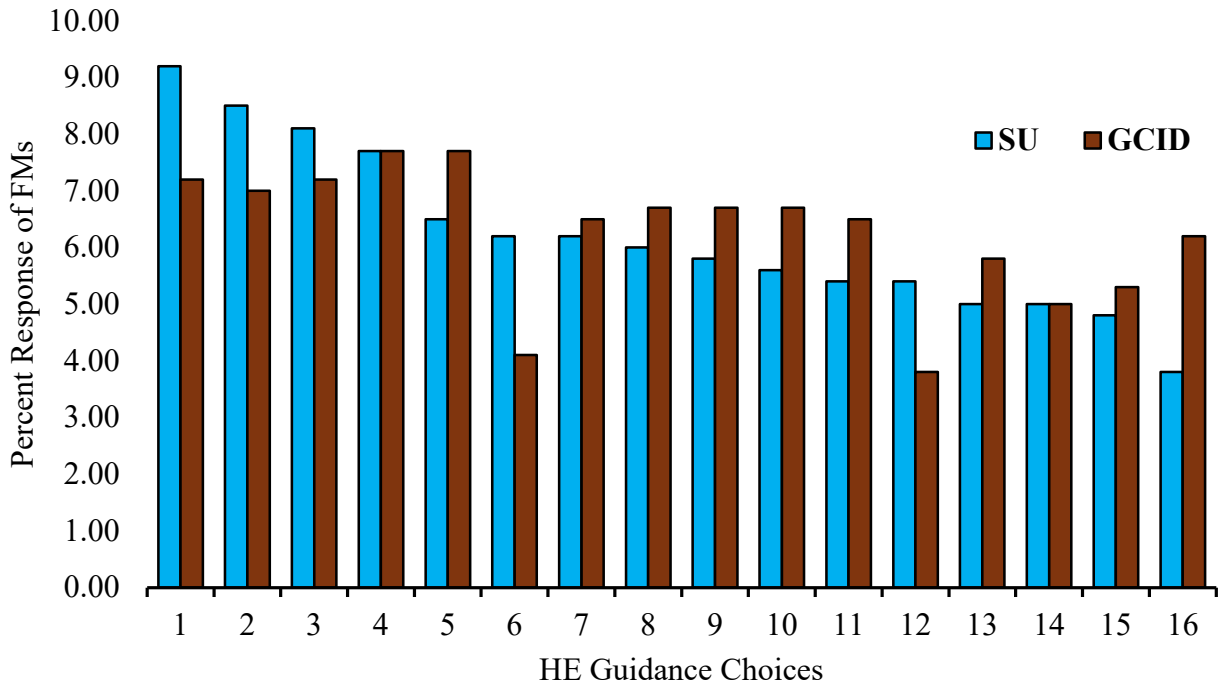
The topic of guidance to attract rural students, as perceived by the FMs of SU and GCID, has been summarized in Table 5.3. In SU, most FMs suggested that the students need to be guided about the choice of course or subjects closely followed by the admission process and employability prospects (Figure 5.1). It may be noted that another major opinion was that the students need guidance on whether to go for higher education or to explore other options, which was voiced by 7.7 percent of total responses. It needs mention that the information about academic functioning of HEI weighed about 6.2 percent of total responses and a similar proportion of responses related to organising a visit to college/university. Choice of college/university and the facilities therein were other major opinions of FMs which they deemed fit to be guided about while rural students make choice of HE.

The perspective of GCID FMs varies from SU FMs. Two most frequently voiced opinions which weighed about 7.7 percent each of total responses were: (i) guidance on whether to go for higher education, i.e. to explore other options and (ii) choice of college/university, where one can apply

[2] Twinning Programme is an activity of Government of Haryana where all government schools are directed to visit nearby educational institution to provide an exposure to 12th class students. Though they may visit any reputed private school also under this programme. However, the teachers of government schools invariably visit nearby Government colleges with their 12th class students to unveil what a college looks like and how it is different from school etc. (in terms of infrastructure and courses etc.).

for enrolment. About 7.2 percent FMs opined that the employability prospects, choice of course/subjects and the admission process are major issues on which rural students need guidance. This is closely followed by guidance on college facilities, campus safety and security and preparation of HE entry exams, which formed 6.7 to 7.0 percent of total responses of GCID FMs. (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: FMs guidance on HE choices in SU and GCID



1 Choice of course/subject
2 About the admission process
3 About employability prospects
4 Advice on whether to go for higher education/other option
5 Choice of which colleges/universities to apply to.
6 Organizing a visit to the college/university
7 About whether the HEI has good academic functioning
8 About college facilities/activities/provisions
9 About HE entry exams preparation
10 About campus safety and security
11 About covering tuition expenses/funding options
12 Advice on accommodation
13 Choice of colleges/universities if selected in more than one
14 About transport facilities
15 About special admissions programs/processes - reservations
16 Checking application form/other documents

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Table 5.3: Perspective of FMs on guidance to facilitate rural students' HE choices

Options on Guidance required	SU	GCID
% valid response & total (multiple response)	**(98.2%) 520**	**(100%) 417**
Advice on whether to go for higher education or other options	7.7	7.7
Choice of which colleges/universities to apply to	6.5	7.7
Choice of course/subject	9.2	7.2
About the admission process	8.5	7.0
About covering tuition expenses/funding options	5.4	6.5
About HE entry exams preparation	5.8	6.7
About special admissions programs/processes - reservations	4.8	5.3
Checking application form/other documents	3.8	6.2
Choice of colleges/universities if selected in more than one	5.0	5.8
Organising a visit to the college/university	6.2	4.1
Advice on accommodation	5.4	3.8
About college facilities/activities/provisions	6.0	6.7
About campus safety and security	5.6	6.7
About employability prospects	8.1	7.2
About whether the HEI has good academic functioning	6.2	6.5
About transport facilities	5.0	5.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

It may also be noted that the FMs of SU and GCID expressed differently on outreach activities conducted by their respective institutions (Table 5.4). In the case of SU, almost 52 percent of FMs stated that their institution is facilitating rural students in higher education choices, while in the case of GCID, an overwhelming 91 percent of FMs responded in affirmative, i.e. they responded that their college was conducting HE outreach activities to attract rural students.

Table 5.4: FMs perspective on outreach activities of SU and GCID for rural students

Option	SU	GCID
%valid responses	54 (94.7%)	34 (100%)
HEI conducting any activities to attract rural students (% Yes)	51.9	91.2

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

5.3 Facilitating access to HE: Institutional Leaders

In order to understand the current status of HE guidance, the ILs of all selected HEIs were asked whether they had given advice to rural students or other students regarding the options and process of higher education. The information obtained from them is discussed in detail in following paragraphs.

5.3.1 State University (SU)

The IL from SU revealed that since the University mainly offers master's level programme and few professional UG level courses, the FMs in SU generally remain in contact with master's students. Therefore, there is a gap between UG students and SU FMs. It may be noted that the UG professional courses in the SU were started some 25 years back. He further adds that FMs from SU visit colleges twice a year and interact with students and teachers there (it may be noted that this relates to UG students' interaction with FMs). The SU IL also mentioned that when College FMs visit the SU departments to meet for UGBOS (Undergraduate Board of Studies), they do discuss and strategize for increasing enrolments. The IL agreed that the organized activity in this regard (HE outreach) is not being organized at SU level.

5.3.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

In case of GCID, the IL disclosed that he directs students to his fellow colleagues for pre-admission advice; while the IL of GC-A mentioned the formation of FMs pre-admission committees where they visit schools to encourage rural students towards HE enrolments. The IL of GC-B narrated occasions when the advice on HE options were given in personal connections. In response to whether the ILs have organized any activity at institute level to provide pre-admission guidance on higher education options, the SU IL responded that "No such activity is carried out", whereas all other ILs (GCID, GC-A and GC-B) answered in the affirmative. The GCID IL, as well as the GC-A ILs, were proactive in such activities. All three of them have constituted pre-admission committees in their colleges, campaigned through posters, hoardings and canvassed through school visits. GC-A motivated the FMs of the college to carry out door-to-door campaign in nearby villages. The IL of GC-A further mentioned that they had no financial support for such activities, yet the FMs of the college are voluntarily pooling up finances to carry out such campaigns. They, in association with non-teaching staff members of the college, campaigned in nearby villages to enhance enrolment in the college (they involved community, as it was a girls' college and the decision of enrolling girls in HE is generally taken by the girls' parents).

5.4 Facilitating access to HE: Faculty Members

5.4.1 State University (SU)

The FMs of SU and other selected HEIs were interviewed and asked about any advice given by them regarding undergraduate higher education options. In SU, all the faculty members enthusiastically narrated episodes of advice advocated by them. The majority of them expressed that rural students face challenges in selection of course and subject and they seek advice on these issues. All their efforts were at an individual level, whether it was to visit village or school to advise students regarding selection of institution, stream and subjects. Gary from SU narrated an incident when a rural student was helpless in enrolling due to financial difficulties. He helped him and also motivated him to make the creative art a source of income. He also voiced that rural students, in general, lacked informed choices and are constrained financially. Vipul, Akram and Dhiraj narrated that they themselves belong to a village and empathize with rural students. They consciously spare time to encourage and guide rural students in facilitating rural youth for higher education options. Dhiraj was associated with an NGO and through that he keeps counselling students for HE also. Though largely, the NGO engages in community outreach activities.

5.4.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

In case of GCID, all five FMs narrated how they are involved in guiding school students. They do visit schools before the commencement of higher secondary examinations and introduce them to various financial schemes of government (e.g. scholarships, tuition waivers, earn while learn schemes etc.) and motivate them to enroll in their institution. In GCID, the pre-admission campaign is carried out by putting posters in public places, such as – at bus stops, outside wall of HEI etc. On these posters, the contact number of GCID FMs are mentioned for guidance regarding online application and other admission or subject related queries. Pankaj particularly revealed that since his contact was mentioned on the campaign poster, he had been contacted by prospective students round the year. Similarly, in GC-A, FMs narrated stories of their door-to-door campaigns in the village. Here, HE outreach is carried out as community outreach involving the village Sarpanch, as discussed earlier. In GC-B also, the FMs motivated school students when they visit college under the twinning programme (a state government programme, where the school students visit a nearby government college).

5.4.2.1 Insight from FMs Diary

As discussed in the methodology, 10 FMs (5 each from SU and GCID) were selected for an in-depth diary study where the diary/questionnaire was kept with them for 6 weeks and they were asked to enter the experience of advice given by them regarding undergraduate higher education options. A total number of 72 experiences were entered and 59 were considered valid entries. The advice given to students during the institution timings and to students or those who are either siblings of any college student, is classified as professional circle. The advice given by FMs in their own family circle or to neighbor, friends' offspring, or any other person known to them in their personal circle (e.g. any local shopkeeper, maid or any service provider), is classified under personal network.

Table 5.5: Details of FM diary entries in SU and GCID

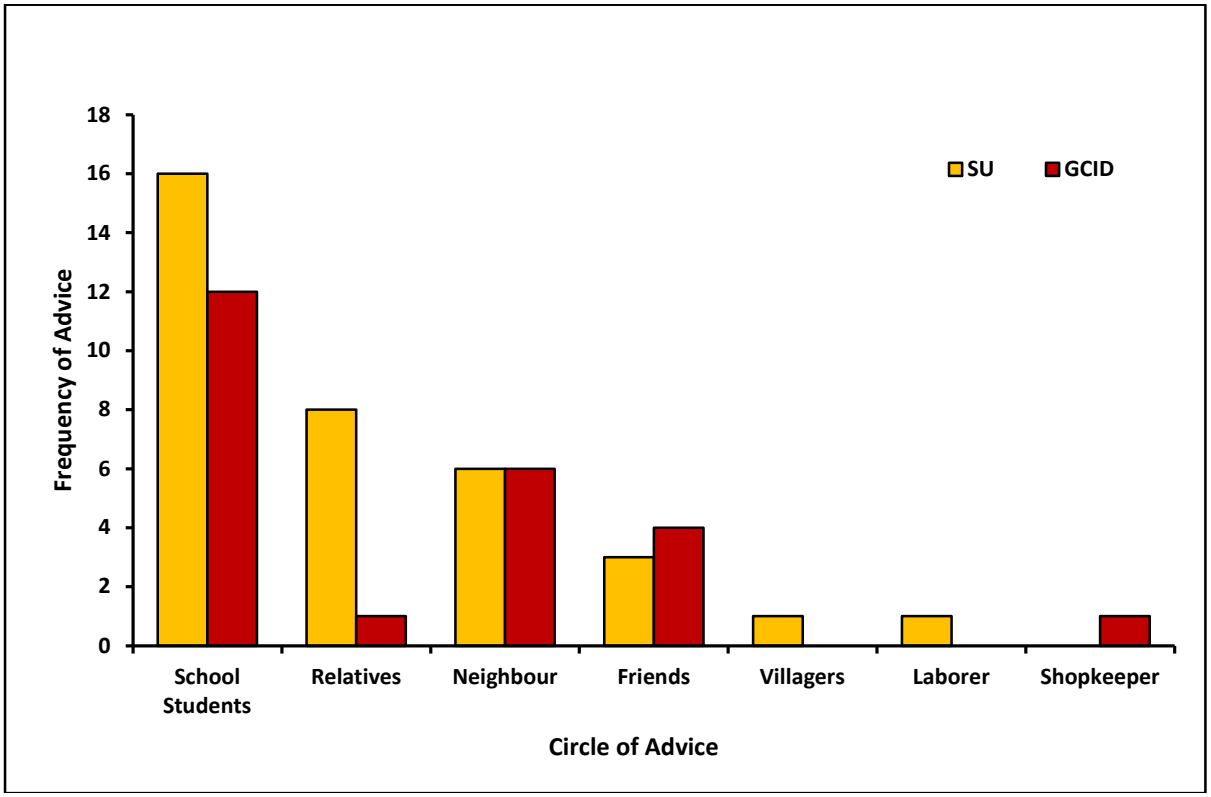
HEIs	**Pseudonym**	**Number of Valid Experience Entries**
Total number of diary experience entries and (invalid entries)	72 (13)	59
SU	Gary	12
SU	Vipul	05
SU	Akram	07
SU	Dhiraj	08
SU	Damini	03
GCID	Kuljeet	06
GCID	Stargazer	04
GCID	Pankaj	05
GCID	Nimmo	07
GCID	Balu	02
Coded as Personal entries	***69.5%***	***41***
Coded as Professional entries	***30.5%***	***18***

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

From these total valid entries, 69.5 percent were coded as personal while the remaining 30.5 percent were in professional network. It shows that the majority of FMs have been advising in their life radius. The highest number of advising experiences (12) were recorded by Gary, a FM from SU. It was followed by 8 experiences, recorded by Dhiraj, also from SU. It may be noted that FMs from SU, have recorded 17 experiences (advice/counselling) in their personal network, while 16 were in professional network. In GCID, FMS recorded 12 instances of advice to direct students, while 11 were reported either for neighbor, friend circle or relatives. The post-diary discussion reveals that the SU FMs have largely offered HE advice to neighbours, relatives, and

in friends' circle. The experience of direct advice to students was reported by Gary and Damini. However, in case of GCID FMs, almost half of HE advices were directly to school students and half indirect, i.e. asked by parents, relatives, neighbours and not directly by students. In the case of SU, the FMs have counselled all rural students and about one-third among these were disadvantaged students. In the case of GCID, however, the majority of experiences were related to rural students but a few were also offered to those other than rural students, i.e. to those living in semi-urban and urban areas (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: HE advice given by FMs in SU and GCID



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 5.6: HE advice given to persons

Advice given to	SU	GCID:
1. Neighbour	06	06
2. Relative	08	01
3. Friends	03	04
Others :	18	13
(i) School Student	*16*	*12*
(ii) Villagers	*01*	-
(iii)Laborers	*01*	-
(iv)Daughter of local shopkeeper	-	*01*
Rural &/or disadvantaged	**100.0**	**76.5**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 5.7: Type of advice given by SU and GCID FMs

Type of Advice	SU	GCID
1. Advice on whether to go for higher education or other options	34	18
2. Choice of which college/universities to apply to	34	18
3. Choice of course/subject	34	21
4. About the admissions process	29	20
5. About covering tuition expenses/funding options	19	10
6. About higher education entry exams preparation	27	08
7. About special admission programme/processes e.g., reservations	22	08
8. Checking application form/other documents	12	08
9. Choice of which colleges/universities to enroll, if selected in >than 1	21	13
10. Organizing a visit to the college/ university	16	05
11. Advice on accommodation	12	03
12. About college facilities/activities/ provisions	22	18
13. About campus safety/security	18	08
14. About employability prospects	25	18
15. About whether the college/university has good academic functioning	26	14
16. About transport facilities	10	05
17. Other advice (*rows below*)	01	01
Importance of HE	*01*	
Classes (regularity) and peaceful environment.		*01*
Total	**362**	**178**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

5.4.2.2 Type of Advice Given by FMs of SU and GCID

The FMs were also asked about the type of advice they had advocated or the most frequently asked help from the students. Each one responded that the advice was sought on multiple issues. The most frequent information was sought on whether one should pursue higher

education, which institution and which course should be selected. The process of admission, preparation of exam and the academic functioning of the institution was second common query which was recorded by the FMs of state university. In case of GCID, the FMs reported that they had offered the majority of advice on selection of course/subjects and admission process, which was followed by choice of institution, facilities available in the institution and employability prospects. Pankaj however, reported that the most popular query was related to institution social and teaching environment e.g. whether classes are held regularly and what is the overall environment (whether it was peaceful and safe for girls), as it was a co-educational college.

The post diary discussion with the FMs brought out the fact that not only did they advise on subject selection etc., many a times, they developed personal rapport with the students. In the case of SU, Gary stated that recently, a student whom he advised for admission process, also told him about his poor financial condition and Gary suggested he monetize his work and make it sustainable. Similarly, Akram mentioned that he used to emphasize on personality development with higher education and how students can be benefitted economically with earn while learn scheme practices in higher education institutions. Dhiraj highlighted the awareness to legal rights of individuals while counselling students as well as to their parents and villagers. In case of GCID, one FM, (Stargazer) revealed that recently, a group of students approached her and asked the difference between pass course and Honours course, which helped them in deciding their course of study.

It may also be noted that both SU and GCID FMs have recorded their experiences of HE advice at varied locations, i.e. at home, telephonically, at their respective place of work and in neighborhood etc. Quantitative information regarding this has been presented in Table 5.8 which suggests that the FMs are accessible at number of places and they are being contacted at varied places.

Table 5.8: Place of advice given by FMs of SU and GCID

Location	SU	GCID
Home	07	07
Telephone call/phone contact	07	04
Location not identified	02	01
Other Locations (listed below)	19	12
(i)School/College/University/Institute	*17*	*10*
(ii)Neighbourhood	*-*	*02*
(iii)Family visit	*01*	*-*
(iv)Visit to village	*01*	*-*

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The context of advice (during post diary discussion) revealed some interesting facts. It was observed that FMs own life radius, subjects they taught and how they carry themselves in public, matters a lot. For example, the experiences of one FM in SU (Akram) largely were telephonic. The HE advice he offered were to parents of prospective students and it was due to the fact that he acts as anchor to a number of cultural and public events. Hence many contacted him telephonically regarding career choices. Similarly, another FM from SU was actively involved with an NGO (community outreach) which organizes legal camps in villages. Hence, the context of advice was related to his work in village community. Another two experiences of HE advice which he offered in personal network (at home) were also related to his association with NGO. Another FM from SU mentioned that it is the rural students who are less informed (urban students, do not need counselling as they are well informed) and rural students contact through some personal network. Vipul, however seemed to be fond of speaking to students with rural background as he empathized with them. So, one can say that the FMs in SU are largely offering HE counselling in the personal radius of their life.

Stargazer in GCID indicated that her two telephonic counselling were with those in her personal network, known to her father. These were regarding choice of institution, course and process of admission. Another FM from GCID (Pankaj) highlighted that since his contact was mentioned on the poster put up by the college for HE campaigns, he has been contacted anywhere and anytime. Similarly, Nimmo mentioned that being part of college admission committee for many years, she is being approached by parents and students both round the year in the HEI. It shows that in case of GCID, largely students and their parents contacted the FMs for career prospects

at the place of their work, as well as telephonically (since their contact is published on campaign poster).

5.4.2.3 Reasons of Advice

During the diary interview, efforts were made to understand the reasons for which the FMs had advised and directed the students. In both institutions (SU and GCID), a majority of FMs stated that it is their professional responsibility. In the case of State University, other than professional responsibility, the reasons cited were: (i) experience of higher education institution and (ii) their concern about individual. Social responsibility and interest in supporting the individual was also reported as one of the reasons by SU faculty members.

In the case of GCID faculty, professional responsibility was cited by the majority, followed by interest in supporting individual. About 3 reasons quoted by the GCID faculty pertained to the fact that they were being approached for advice, hence they suggested. Family connection, personal connection and the need or concern for individual were also quoted as the reasons by GCID faculty (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9: Insight on reasons of advice (based on Diary Interview)

Motivation reason	**SU**	**GCID**
Interest in advising/supporting the individual	3	5
Experience/knowledge of HEIs, processes etc.	4	-
Need/concern about the individual	4	2
Professional responsibility	11	9
Family connection	1	2
Personal connection (not family)	-	1
Social responsibility	3	2
Others, please specify (given below)	-	3
(i) Approached by the concerned		*3*

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

5.4.2.4 FM motivations for the HE advice

A majority of FMs reported that it is their professional responsibility to guide the students who seek advice related to the admission process. Helping students with admissions to higher education is seen as a natural extension of their role as mentors. They feel motivated to help ease this transition, by providing emotional and practical support. It was also observed that many faculty members were passionate for their fields and want to see the next generation of

scholars and professionals succeed. Faculty members also felt motivated to ensure that all students, including those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds, could access the best possible higher education opportunities. Their motivation to provide advice to students for admission to higher education was driven by a combination of professional responsibility, academic passion, personal fulfillment and also for the upliftment of the society. It is noteworthy that the faculty members who were guided by their teachers in their own academic careers often felt a sense of responsibility, i.e. "pay back to society" by helping the next generation of scholars. Social responsibility is one of the significant aims and objectives of higher education. The reasons of practicing HE outreach by FMs in Haryana may be related to the findings of another study conducted at outskirts of Delhi which also suggests that FMs make a significant contribution in HE outreach as social responsibility despite not having an organized culture of HE outreach (Henderson, etal., 2025).

5.4.2.5 Most Active Participants in SU

Gary was the most active FM participant and recorded 12 experiences during six weeks of diary study. In the first week, he guided two school students and directed them for almost each aspect related to higher education, i.e. whether they should opt for higher education, which college they should apply to, the choice of subjects, admission process, tuition fee, entrance exam preparation and which institute to prefer if they are selected in more than one college/institution. He also mentioned that students asked for the guidance because of his teaching background. He also hinted that he empathized with them as he belongs to similar/rural background, and considered it to be his moral duty to direct them. He has also been providing guidance in this neighborhood, to relatives at home as well as at the place of work. He also stated that he feels happy directing students and students feel comfortable asking him about the courses and career prospects about the subject which he is teaching.

The second most active participant in the SU was Dhiraj who recorded eight experiences during the course of 6 weeks. The range of counselling varied from school students, close friend's circle, relatives, those within their neighborhood and to other villagers. Since he was actively involved with an NGO for community outreach, varied people approached him. As far as HE counselling is concerned, he guided students to almost all aspects such as choice of institution, admission process, preparation of entrance exam, accommodation facilities, tuition fee,

reservation for admission and also employability aspects. It was also mentioned that he facilitated his neighbor visiting his institute in order to have a look and understand the facilities available there. The FM expressed his willingness to serve society, which motivates him to do more.

5.4.2.6 Most Active Participants in GCID

The most active participant from GCID was Nimmo, who recoded seven experiences. The majority of her guidance was within her personal network though she counselled school students at the place of work also. Her guidance ranges from people whom she interacts with at public places such as people in the park, a local shopkeeper, in her friend's circle and in relation to her. The FM indicated that HE advice is largely sought on admission process and available financial assistance. The recording of experiences by using this method (i.e. solicited diary) was appreciated profusely by this FM and it was conveyed that it is a method of self-reflection.

Kuljeet was the second most active participant from GCID, who recorded six experiences during the diary keeping window. It was mentioned that he offered HE advice in personal network as well as at his place of work. During post diary discussion, it was mentioned that being the only teacher in locality, he is being approached by students and their parents feel comfortable asking his advice. Most frequently, he has been asked for course selection, admission process, tuition fee and type of facilities the HE institution provides. In some cases, connectivity to college or transportation facility and employability is also being asked for. He further mentioned that diary keeping has motivated him to guide the students more diligently and also had positively modified his attitude towards the students.

5.4.3. Awareness Regarding other FMs providing HE Guidance

The ILs were asked regarding their awareness of any other members in their institution who were engaged in HE counselling. The SU IL was not aware of any of the FMs' engagement in an organized manner. It was however, mentioned that some FMs might be counselling students in their personal circle.

The IL from GCID, however, praised the involvement of four to five FMs who interact with school students and guide them for higher education. In addition to staff, he mentioned that certain non-teaching staff members who live in village settings are also involved in such counselling. The ILs of GC-A and GC-B enthusiastically participated in the discussion. The IL of GC-A revealed that all FMs in GC-A were fully involved in widening access to higher education, particularly as it was girls' college. In the case of GC-B also, the IL suggested that the majority of FMs were involved in counselling school students, with varying level of intensity.

Similar information was gathered from the FMs of SU and GCID during the diary interview. The majority of FMs in SU (except one) presumed that other FMs in their respective departments must be involved in counselling for higher education choices. The majority of them suggested that the guidance is regarding course selection and career opportunities. In case of GCID, almost all were aware about the engagement of other FMs in HE counselling. Pankaj, however, indicated that the counselling work is conducted in organized way, where the FMs have been assigned duties of counselling by the IL. Nimmo mentioned one FM who was sensitive to poor students with financial hardships and disclosed the convincing capacity of HE enrollment. Das, another FM in GC-A described in detail that not only the FMs but also the non-teaching staff members participated in higher education widening choices. He mentioned that they are being involved in making announcements during house-to-house campaign in villages for increasing enrolments. In GC-B, one FM (Rubal) mentioned that some science FMs demonstrate science experiments to school students to arouse interest among them to opt for science courses in higher education.

The FM survey data collected from 91 FMs (57 from SU and 34 from GCID) were asked about whether they offered any advice related to UG HE choices. The information is compiled in Table 5.10, with 93 percent valid response in SU and 100 percent response in GCID.

The socio-economic characteristics of FMs who offered UG advice, suggests that in case of SU, more men were engaged in this activity as compared to women FMs (the proportion was 60:40 respectively). However, in case of GCID, the proportion of women FMs were more active as compared to men FMs.

The social background reveals that the majority of FMs from General caste were actively engaged in counselling students in both institutions, i.e., in SU as well as in GCID. However, in case of GCID, 27.2 percent FMs who were offering UG counselling belonged to disadvantaged caste group (27.2 percent), and the reason was that they felt that it is their moral duty to do so and they empathized with rural students. As far as place of residence is concerned, in both the institutions, FMs living in urban areas were majorly engaged in SU, while in GCID, the rural/urban difference was not so large.

Table 5.10: Advice by FMs of SU and GCID for UG HE options

Options	**SU**		**GCID**	
	Yes	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
Valid response	**92.9%**	**7.1%**	**100 %**	**0.0**
1.2 Gender				
Female	40.4	75.0	57.5	0.0
Male	59.6	25.0	42.5	0.0
1.3 Caste/Social Group				
SC	19.2	0.0	27.2	0.0
ST	01.9	0.0	00.0	0.0
OBC	17.3	0.0	18.2	0.0
General	61.6	100	54.6	0.0
EWS	0.0	0.0	00.0	0.0
1.4 Religion				
Buddhist	3.8	0.0	00	0.0
Christian	0.0	0.0	00	0.0
Hindu	88.5	100.0	96.9	0.0
Muslim	0.0	0.0	00	0.0
Sikh	1.9	0.0	3.1	0.0
Other	5.8	0.0	00	0.0
1.9.3 Place of permanent residence				
Rural	32.7	25.0	45.5	0.0
Urban	67.3	75.0	55.5	0.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 5.11: Type of advice or guidance given by FMs in SU and GCID

Options of HE Advice	**SU**	**GCID**
Valid response	93.0%	97.1%
1.Advice on whether to go for higher education or other options	13.5	12.8
2.Choice of which college/universities to apply to	13.8	11.6
3.Choice of course/subject	16.1	11.6
4.About the admissions process	12.2	11.2
5.About covering tuition expenses/funding options	6.4	7.6
6.Checking application form/ other documents	10.6	8.8
7. Choice of which college/university to enroll in if selected in > one	8.4	7.6
8. Advice on preparing for HE entrance exam	3.9	8.4
9. Contacting college/university on behalf of applicants	1.9	4.4
10.Accompanying for a visit to the college/university where you work	2.9	3.6
11.Accompanying for a visit to another college/university	1.0	2.8
12.Advising via social networking e.g., WhatsApp	6.1	6.4
13. About special admissions programmes/processes (Reservations etc)	3.2	3.2
Total of Answer (Yes) n and %	**(311) 100**	**(250) 100**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The type of advice given by FMs at both places has been documented in Table 5.11. In the case of SU, the most frequently given advice was related to course selection, followed by choice of institution and admission process, closely followed by checking of documents. It needs mention that a significant 13 percent of total advices were related to whether they should go for higher education or opt for other options.

The FMs of GCID disclosed that the most frequently sought HE advice was whether to go for higher education or opt other options. It was closely followed by choice of institution, selection of course/subject and admission process. It may be noted that in both institutions, students sought almost similar advice on HE options. The slight difference was observed in SU, where FMs were more frequently guiding students for selection of courses. In other selected HEIs, the FMs were counselling them for higher education significance, as well as for entrance exam preparations, checking documents, tuition fee and selection of institutes if selected in more than one college.

Table 5.12: HE advice in personal network

Options of Advice Circle	SU	GCID
Number of valid responses (VRs)	91.2	97.1
1.Extended family (beyond nuclear)	22.7	28.4
2.Neighbours	26.6	27.5
3.Domestic staff	12.3	15.6
4.In a faith-based setting e.g. temple	07.8	04.6
5.In a community group	16.2	19.3
6.Through NGO work	03.9	00.0
7.Through local politics	03.2	01.8
8.Through your own tutoring/coaching work	07.1	02.8
Total Answer(N)	**154 (100%)**	**109 (100%)**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The HE mentoring was in abundance in personal networks, as more than 90 percent FMs in SU and about 97 percent in GCID have been offering counselling to their personal contacts. Within personal networks, the FMs of SU are counselling most frequently to their neighbours or acquaintances in extended family. The GCID FMs revealed that the majority of their recommendations were in extended family followed by neighbours. The next most frequent personal network was a community group and domestic staff, i.e. a maid or service providers.

It needs mention that about 90 percent FMs (89 percent in SU and 91 percent in GCID) revealed that they are counselling in their professional network also. About one-third FMs in SU and GCID advised/counselled the students when they met them during their admission visit to the college/university. Another leading occasion was (i) when the college (already enrolled) students asked the FMs to guide (meaning thereby that the prospective students approached the enrolled students to introduce them to college or university FMs,) and (ii) when the FMs visited the schools. About 16 percent FMs in SU as well as in GCID stated that they guided students on their visit to another community setting.

Table: 5.13: HE guidance in professional role (as FM in College/ University)

Options of Guidance	SU (%Yes)	GCID (% Yes)
% Valid Response	89.5	91.2
1.When you went on a visit to a school	19.6	21.3
2.When you visited another community setting	14.5	12.0
3.When you met with students who were visiting your college/university	33.3	33.3
4. When you organized or assisted with an open day/official visit/taster day for students to visit your college/university	12.3	6.7
5.When you asked some current students to advise other young people in their communities	20.3	26.7
Total of Answer (N)	**(138) 100**	**(75) 100**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

5.5 HE Outreach: current challenges and future opportunities

5.5.1 HE outreach: current challenges

5.5.1.1 State University (SU)

The current challenges in higher education outreach activities, obtained from FM survey of SU has been listed in Table 5.14. The majority of FMs stated the lack of financial support is a major challenge. Another significant challenge mentioned by the FMs is having more workload, as FMs were always constrained by time in carrying out outreach activities. A significant proportion of faculty also indicated that outreach activity is not a priority with SU and about 13 percent FMs suggested that many FMs are unaware of the fact that prospective students are facing any hardship while accessing higher education. The SU institutional leader, however, shared a different opinion. The major challenge in his opinion was that students were preferring foreign universities in view of better opportunities which the state universities failed to provide. The second challenge voiced by the IL was the low spending in public universities in comparison to private universities which were offering many facilities in terms of labs and infrastructure and hence the affluent students were opting those institutions.

Table 5.14: Challenges to college/university for HE guidance in SU and GCID (FM Survey)

Option	SU: 3_1	GCID: 3_2
	(% Yes)	(%Yes)
% Valid Response	**80.7**	**100**
1.There is not enough funding available for extra activities	38.3	47.5
2.More Staff workload means that people do not have time	24.5	27.1
3.Faculty members are not aware of the issues that young people are facing in accessing higher education	12.8	8.5
4. Faculty members do not live near the college so do not know the local community	7.4	11.9
5.This is not a priority for this college/university	17.0	5.1
Total N	**94(100%)**	**59 (100%)**

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

In response to how these can be addressed at the institutional level, the institutional leader of SU suggested the need of strategizing. Though initially, he mixed HE outreach with community outreach activities, with understanding of the significance of HE outreach, he suggested for an independent team to plan and carry out HE outreach in a more organized and planned manner, for which a separate set-up was his preferred choice. He also suggested that if any readymade module is provided, it may be implemented at SU level.

The faculty members of SU (during post diary interview) also shared the views of their institutional leader regarding challenges for HE guidance. In view of Gary (FM from SU) - information lag was a major challenge for rural students, while Vipul (from SU) pointed out the mismatch of subjects (at school and college level). Akram and Dhiraj both showed concern for digital divides and disclosed that the online admission process was also posing a challenge in accessing higher education for rural students. Though there are many common service centers (CSCs) and cybercafe are available which are providing such facility. Yet, the FMs observed that many of these CSCs are filling wrong information and giving their own contacts, making it difficult for rural students to access HE. Therefore, the students face a double challenge: (i) lack of digital infrastructure (i.e. internet facility and access to personal computer), and (ii) the knowledgeable person to help.

The FMs of SU suggested that organized efforts are required from the university to make it (university) more visible in terms of professional courses it is offering. They also emphasized on the need of having a strong linkage with schoolteachers and students. Damini (FM from SU)

argued for having a dedicated team for outreach activities, as the FMs already have a substantial workload and HE outreach is a piece of essential and significant work.

5.5.1.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The challenges faced by GCID faculty were similar to that described by the FMs of SU, i.e. lack of financial support and overburdened by workload meaning thereby that they lacked time for outreach activities. A significant proportion of FMs in GCID, however, also mentioned that since they were residing in an urban area (nearby city and not at the place of work, which is invariably village), hence their connect with villagers or local community was also low.

This has been supplemented with the interview of ILs and FMs of GCID, GC-A and GC-B. The IL of GCID perceived the challenges of outreach activities differently (as compared to FMs). He viewed the location of college (rural and with low public transport/bus connectivity) makes it physically inaccessible to surrounding villages. In addition to this, students prefer urban colleges where the level of exposure is huge for many things (the overall personality development, fascination to urban mannerism, way of speaking, dressing etc.). Similar views were aired by the IL of GC-B. One additional challenge listed was the fascination to get enrolled in a foreign university or college, which is viewed as guarantee of providing employment/work opportunities and a better quality of life. The attraction of HE enrolment in foreign countries was also articulated by the ILs as well as FMs. Anji and Ranju (ILs of GC-A and GC-B) also identified online centralized admission a challenge in restriction of widening higher education access in view of existing digital divide. In addition to this, Anji (IL of GC-A) indicated lack of teaching faculty as a major challenge in widening access to HE. Ranju (the IL of GC-B) indicated that while rural location is an issue (with transport or connectivity problem), another challenge is from the administration itself who keep increasing the seats in urban government colleges, making it more challenging for rural colleges and staff to enroll students. In addition to this, Ranju also indicated that the government rural schools also have low enrollments in science and commerce streams making it even more challenging for them to convince leaders to prioritise higher education in sciences and commerce streams.

When asked for their suggestions to overcome these challenges, Vaasu (the SU IL) appraised that there is no readymade solution to these challenges. There is a need to ponder over the problem and more urgent is the need to link higher education with employment or work

opportunities. Ranju and Anji (ILs of GC-A and GC-B), however, suggested that admission processes need to be decentralized so the respective colleges can cater to their hinterland or students from surrounding villages. They also suggested that more robust campaign of "know your college" needs to be carried out in the surrounding villages.

The guidance challenges of FMs in selected government colleges were shared by all faculty members. The majority of FMs in the selected HEIs suggested that (i) online and centralized admission process; (ii) financial hardships; (iii) fascination to foreign countries, (iv) lack of linkage between employment and education or limited work opportunities, are major challenges to convince students for HE. Kuljeet (a FM from GC-A), however, indicated that the mismatch of subjects (taught in school and offered in HEIs) was also a challenge as many have not heard of the subjects offered in college (such as psychology, geology, public administration and even political science). Das (GC-A, FM) argued for limited and crowded transport facilities/connectivity to villages where HE institutions were located, had a reverse impact on access to girls higher education. Another FM, (Rubal from GC-B) mentioned that the local community were still inclined to think that colleges are places of enjoyment and nothing serious is being deliberated there, or it does not prepare them for many worldly skills. So, convincing parents (with these perceptions) was a challenge. This challenge was shared by Srikumar and Sarina (FMs of GC-B) as well.

The majority of FMs proposed the need of a more robust campaign by respective higher education institutions, offline and decentralized admission processes where the respective colleges could admit the students; and a need to train school teachers regarding the courses and subjects being offered by the HEIs. Ram from GC-A and Sarina from GC-B showed concern for the vacant positions of FMs and lack of teachers is a challenge in students' enrolment in HEIs of rural settings. Ginny and Satnam proposed for new job-oriented courses and a need to introduce the new subjects in schools, so that the mismatch may be taken care of.

5.5.2 HE outreach: future potential

5.5.2.1 State University (SU)

The suggestions of SU IL regarding what additional activities the university can undertake to increase access to HE for rural students were also recorded. The IL of SU (Daarji) suggested (i)

the formulation of an Outreach Cell on the lines of placement cell. (ii) the Placement Cell should also be made more active as an effective placements in itself are incentive in attracting new students; (iii) to develop a long-term, perspective plan to support these efforts.

The FMs of SU suggested a variety of strategies to improve access, guidance, and awareness of rural students. The majority of FMs emphasized the importance of organizing career counselling camps by the SU. Some others suggested school visits by FMs (which would help in informed decisions by rural students). Dhiraj (FM from SU) however, suggested the widening of admission process, i.e. offline as well as onfline admissions to overcome digital divide. He also suggested that inviting school students to visit university departments for more exposure. Akram (FM from SU) suggested setting up of university counselling set-up at the existing Common Service Centers (CSCs) in villages, and to have a policy initiative by government where it is mandatory for FMs to guide rural students. Gary (SU) showed concern for non-visibility of the state university. He mentioned that the SU ranking of professional courses (which is better than the private universities), should be made visible through strong outreach programme. Hence, a rigorous campaign and strategy to reach out to rural students is required. Akram, however, emphasized that while reaching out to local community, the significance of higher education needs to be linked with overall personality development, interpersonal skills, which could shift the perspective of parents for higher education. The SU must facilitate schools to visit university departments. Dhiraj focused on engaging students by making books accessible (due to a need to develop a culture of reading books in villages by having some sort of library facility) and improving transportation facilities (nearby villages to university, especially for girls') to support learning.

5.5.2.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

The suggestions of GCID, GC-A, and GC-B, ILs was a little different from SU IL. The IL of GC-A (Anji) suggested a more robust campaign through the existing setup of NCC, NSS, Women Cell, Red Cross, and Red Ribbon clubs in colleges, arguing that in order to encourage girls into higher education, their parents need to be brought into fold through this campaign. Ranju, the IL of GC-B, however, suggested to enhance the academic infrastructure and emphasized on building labs and adding new courses. Raising the physical infrastructure of education might attract rural students. Vaasu, the cluster head and IL of GCID, suggested that the existing campaign should be sustained and strengthened.

The majority of FMs in all the selected government colleges argued for stepping up of existing campaigns and involvement of schools in widening access to HE. Pankaj (FM from GCID) suggested that the college should effectively advertise the admission process in surrounding villages as rural students lack informed choices regarding HE. The GCID faculty, in general, indicated that the college FMs are currently engaged in various outreach activities, though it can be further strengthened through involvement of NSS volunteers, creation of help desks and through college alumni. The creation of a help desk and decentralization of admission process was spelt out in context of rural students who were experiencing digital divide in terms of infrastructure and lack of internet access. The discussion with the faculty of GC-A revealed that they were actively engaged in HE outreach practices. They further suggested financial provisions from government for outreach activity, the involvement of influential persons from surrounding villages (combining HE outreach with community outreach), counselling students for subjects offered in the college and helping students with text books etc.

The FMs in GC-B indicated for education work linkages in attracting rural students to higher education. Rubal (a FM from GC-B) however, pointed out that early interventions in schools, (i.e. informing school students at 10th or 11th level) by college FMs may enhance their choices and subsequently increase their access to HE. This is regarded as a proactive strategy to give students more time to consider their choices and prevent them from making hasty decisions. The proposal to involve parents in better understanding the importance of higher education and choices was also argued by the FMs. The growing recognition of skill-based courses and its linkages with employment opportunities; hence the need of introducing these courses, was another suggestion (recommended by Sarina and Saabir, FMs of GC-B).

The elaborate discussion with FMs (who were involved in the diary study) emphatically brought out that limited work opportunities pose a serious challenge in convincing parents of rural students to higher education. Hence, HE and work linkages remain a big challenge and government should guarantee good career opportunities by creating new employment/jobs. Decentralization of admission process (where students can walk into the college and take information and complete the admission process therein), is also suggested by FMs (Pankaj and Balu) to overcome the challenge of digital divide. That the four-year graduation, introduced in

NEP-2020 (before 2023, it was three year graduation) needs more engagement with rural communities in terms of guidance, especially during admission periods, is voiced by Stargazer and Nimmo

5.5.3 Knowledge of other HEIs (Involvement in outreach activities)

The information collected from the ILs regarding the type of activities that other college/universities undertake or are engaged in to attract rural students has also been summarized. Daarji, (the SU IL) was aware that private universities make organized efforts and strategize to attract students from rural areas (for example, they invite people or arrange assemblies at some hotels). Anji, the IL of GC-A mentioned about the Twinning Programme, undertaken by other government colleges which involves collaboration among colleges and schools. The ILs of GCID and GC-B mentioned that other government colleges are also involved in similar activities which they perform to increase enrollments. They all agreed that private institutions are making rigorous efforts to attract students. The FMs of SU, Gary and Akram, mentioned that private universities are running extensive campaigns to attract students, which they feel is lacking at SU. It was observed that Vipul, Damini and Dhiraj (SU FMs) were not aware of HE outreach activities carried out by other universities.

The majority of FMs in GCID, GC-A and GC-B mentioned that the other colleges also were conducting similar outreach activities such as door-to-door visits in several villages, putting up hoardings at public places with the helpline numbers for admission, distributing pamphlets, visiting schools and facilitating the schools who are visiting them under twinning programme. Das from GC-A, however, specifically mentioned about the efforts made by one nearby government college for providing transport facility for the rural students. A few FMs were unaware of any outreach activities other colleges or universities are carrying out in attracting rural students.

5.6 Summary and Conclusion

Outreach is of great importance to the society as well as to institutions and there is a need to differentiate community outreach activities to higher education outreach.

Despite performing HE outreach activities; there is a need to highlight the role of HEIs and faculty members in HE outreach practices. The chapter reveals that all ILs understand the catchment area of their HEIs is rural i.e. a majority of students are from rural background. It is

generally presumed that being in rural areas, the rural students must be comfortable in selecting these HEIs and it has to be natural progression for them. The majority of FMs are aware that rural students do face challenges in enrolling as they may have limited access to information about courses, higher education institutes and other characteristics of HE. The digital divide makes HE more inaccessible in the wake of online admission process in HE. Despite being low fee, HE access is not natural due to many underlying factors and hence the HE outreach practices are required.

The institutional leaders of all HEIs agreed that HE outreach practices are not institutionalized. In rural Colleges, where enrolments are low, the ILs on their own are informally organizing HE outreach practices to enhance the enrolments. The detailed discussion with FMs brought out that many of them empathize with rural students as they also faced similar challenges when they were prospective students, hence, they practice HE outreach. About 90 percent FMs responded that they have been guiding UG students or practicing HE outreach. The guidance of HE outreach practice is generally more focused on choice of courses, the admission process, employability, and the credibility of HEI. However, many FMs also reported that they are also being consulted for whether to pursue HE or opt other options. The campus safety, security and preparation of entry level exams are also other issues for which the queries are made frequently. It was also noted that FMs are practicing HE outreach in their personal as well as in their professional circle. However, it needs mention that that majority of their HE outreach is in their local neighborhood, among relatives, and within friendship circles. FMs have been counselling students at their place of work also, but it tends to be less frequent than with their personal circle. Thus indicating the need of enhanced HE outreach culture in institutions of HE.

The HE outreach practices are occurring, but they are being practiced by FMs at their own individual level. The challenges of HE outreach practices, as narrated by FMs, are also discussed in detail. These are in context of the professional constraints as well as their own experience with society and students. The professional constraints include the balancing of teaching workload and HE outreach practices (such as low faculty or vacant FMs position), institutional financial constraints, subject mismatch, lack of infrastructure and other administrative issues. The societal constraints which the FMs encounter for HE outreach include the fascination for abroad, low employment opportunities, low transport linkages to

rural HEIs, digital divides, financial hurdles and the impression that HEIs do not prepare them for life challenges.

The analysis on reasons and motivation of advice revealed that the majority of FMs considered it as professional responsibility and the relatives or neighbours' approach them only because they are in this profession. Other major reasons reported were social responsibility and concern for individuals and interest of advising.

The ILs and FMs of selected HEIs were asked for their suggestions to increase HE outreach practices. The majority of them suggested that the HEIs must make their institutions more visible through more robust campaigns, by facilitating the school students to visit their institution (such as by organizing camps, hosting Open Days etc.), have more strong linkages with schools or school teachers, and also make a policy to institutionalize HE outreach.

Chapter 6: Who are the students and what is their experience of, and perspectives on, HE outreach?

6.1 Introduction

Higher education (HE) outreach programmes aim to increase access and participation in higher education, by raising awareness and aspirations about higher education benefits and opportunities for prospective students. One of the objectives of HE outreach is to empower students from diverse backgrounds to pursue their educational goals, especially the students from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds. Research has indicated that there is considerable investment, across countries, from higher education providers to support outreach and increase participation of young people (Narsimarao and Sridhar, 2007; Zambari, 2014; Johnson et al. 2019). The enactment of HE outreach practices in different societies and countries has also been researched widely (Hasan and Nussbaum, 2012; Harrison and Waller, 2017; Jones and Giles 2022; Stewart et al., 2022; Sabharwal, et al., 2025; Henderson, et al, 2025). Though the UGC has taken several initiatives to strengthen and improve the University education, including emphasis on outreach activities, yet, the HE outreach culture is not formalised in India. The policy acknowledges that 'students from socially and economically disadvantaged groups face significant barriers in accessing higher education, including a lack of information about the college-going process and making informed choices' (Sabharwal et al. 2025).

It has also been widely observed by researchers that even with expansion of HEIs, educational opportunities for school leavers are neither sufficient nor inclusive. In this context, the present chapter aims to study the following objectives:

(i) Which students are receiving HE in rural/semi-urban colleges?

(ii) How do they perceive the role of faculty members in facilitating HE access and choice?

6.2 Demographic background of Undergraduate Students

As stated earlier in chapter one, a total of 480 undergraduate students from both SU and GCID were surveyed to understand the students' experience in higher education. A demographic profile of these UG students has been presented in following paragraphs.

6.2.1 State University (SU)

In the state University, 279 undergraduate students were surveyed. The age composition of UG students (Table 6.1) reveals that the majority of them (65 percent) were 19 to 20 years of age. About one-fifth were 18 years of less, while 10 percent were 21 to 22 years of age. It may be noted that 23 years or older accounted for about 5 percent UG students. The gender composition reveals that men and women students constitute almost equal proportion i.e. 50.9 percent men and 49.1 percent women (Table 6.1). It is contrary to administrative data, which showed dominance of women students (Table 3.3). The social group composition reveals that the general category students (i.e. non-SC and non-OBC) constitute almost one-half of total, followed by OBCs. It may be noted that socially disadvantaged students account for 23 percent. This composition is similar to administrative data. As far as their religious composition is concerned, there is very little diversity. An overwhelming majority among them are Hindus (93 percent). Sikh students constitute 4.8 percent and a very thin minority are Muslims and Jains (1.1 percent each respectively). It may also be noted that no student was differently abled.
Since there is lack (almost absence) of social acceptance for diverse sexual orientations, particularly the social and legal contexts surrounding LGBTQ+ identities, no one in the SU reported from LGBTQ+ identity.

The relationship status reveals that 99.6 percent were unmarried. The rural-urban composition is also almost equal i.e. 50.2 percent belonged to urban area and the rest 49 percent from rural area. The rural-urban composition was similar in administrative data. It may also be noted that 95.5 percent reported Hindi as their mother tongue, while another 3 percent reported Punjabi. The mean number of siblings are 2.5 per family.

6.2.2 Government College in-depth (GCID)

It may be noted that 191 UG students from GCID were surveyed. Their age composition reveals that they are a little younger in comparison to SU students. In GCID, the younger students (18 years and < 18 years) accounted almost double than SU students, i.e. 39 percent while another 55 percent were in 19 to 20 age-group. Only 6 percent UG students were more than 21 years old. The gender composition of surveyed students is in favour of men constituting 62 percent of total UG students. The gender composition of surveyed students varies with administrative data

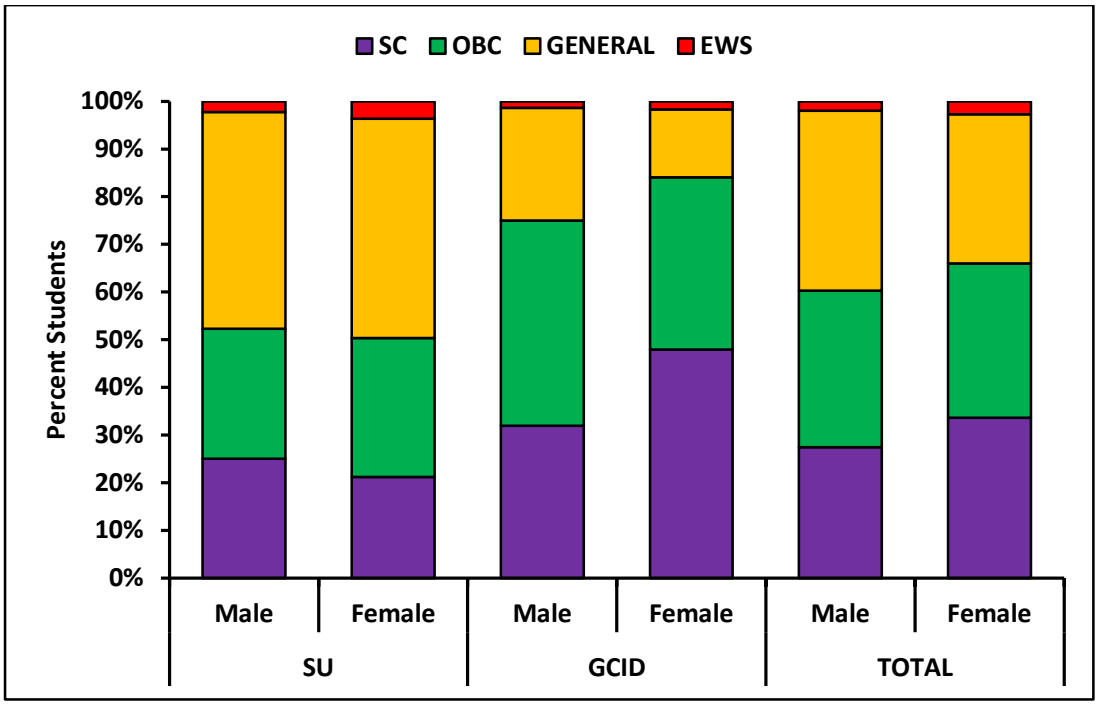
where it is in favour of women with a ratio of 61:39 to women and men respectively. The social composition suggests that SCs constitute about 42 percent, closely followed by OBCs (38.7 percent). The students from general castes account for 18 percent of total students. The low proportion of students from general castes may be due to their economic access to more reputed and city-based government or private colleges. The administrative data collected from GCID, however, showed that the majority of students were from OBC social group, followed by SCs (27.9 percent) and 23 percent from general caste group. As far as religious identity is concerned, an overwhelming majority of students are Hindu. The religious diversity is very little. In SU, one may find students from Sikh, Muslim and Jain religion, the religious diversity is limited to Sikhs (3.7 percent of total students) among GCID UG students. None of the surveyed students reported for LGBTQ+ identity.

Table 6.1: Demographic characteristics of undergraduate students in SU and GCID

Demographic Characteristics	SU	GCID
Age in Years		
18 and below	20.8	38.7
19-20	65.0	55.2
21-22	10.5	4.1
23 and more	4.7	2.0
Gender		
Male	50.9	62.3
Female	49.1	37.7
Caste/ Social Groups		
SC	23.0	41.9
ST	0.0	0.0
OBC	28.3	38.7
Others (General)	45.7	17.8
EWS (Non-SC, Non-ST)	03.0	1.6
Religion		
Hindu	93.0	95.8
Muslim	1.1	0.5
Sikhs	4.8	3.7
Others (Jains)	1.1	
Disability (% differently abled)	0.7	0.5
Type of Disability		
Physical (Locomotor, visual, hearing, speech)	100.0	100.0
Mental	0.0	0.0
Sexual Orientation		
LGBTQ+	0.0	0.0
Relationship Status		
Married	0.4	0.0
Unmarried	99.6	100.0
Permanent Residence		
Rural	49.8	87.4
Urban	50.2	12.6
Mother Tongue		
Hindi	95.5	97.4
Punjabi	3.0	2.6
Other	1.5	0.0
Mean number of Siblings per Family	**2.5**	**3.0**
Valid response (%) (N)	99.25 (267)	100 (191)

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Figure 6.1: Gender and caste group of students across HEIs



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

It needs mention that almost all the students are unmarried. The rural-urban composition of UG students reveal that 87.4 percent among them are residing in rural locations. The students with permanent urban residence account for a mere 12 percent. The majority of UG students have their mother tongue as Hindi and only 2.6 percent reported Punjabi. The average number of siblings per family is (3.0), a little larger than SU students

6.3 Undergraduate Students: residence and commute information

In Higher Education (HE), students' living and commuting arrangements vary widely. Many students live with their parents, while others choose to live in university accommodation, private rentals etc. Commuting patterns also differ, with some students traveling short distances while others face long commutes. These choices can impact a student's sense of belonging, academic performance, and overall well-being. In this context, the commute information of SU and GCID students is discussed in detail.

6.3.1 State University (SU)

The residence information of the students indicates that 42 percent students had split accommodation, i.e. residing at two places – a place of study, and other residence during

weekends or in vacations. It may be noted that the majority of students (58 percent) were staying at one residence only. Since SU is a residential university, therefore among those who had split residence, about 90 percent stay in a hostel on the campus. The other 9 percent were commuting from some place within the district, but not from the same town. It may also be noted that about 1 percent of students commute from another district but the same state.

The information on mode of transport reveals that about one third of students prefer to walk to the place of study. Invariably, these students live in university hostel. Another 25 percent reached the institution by bus or minivan. The personal two-wheeler is being used by another 23 percent students. It may be noted that about 7 percent students in SU use personal car, which may suggest that they belong to affluent family background.

6.3.2 Government College in-depth (GCID) & Other Government Colleges

It may be noted that none of the student in GCID had split residence. All of them choose to live with their parents. The travel history reveals that about 12 percent are from the same location as the HE institution, while 79 percent among them commute from places lying in the same district but other than the place of study. About 8 percent of students mentioned that they commute from other districts. It needs mention that surrounding villages of the college lies in another district of the state. The information on mode of transport reveals that the majority of students (38.7 percent), travelled by their bike or scooter, while another popular mode of transport is bus (used by one-third of surveyed students). About 14 percent of students do not use any mode of transport and walk, meaning thereby that they live within the village at a walking distance; while 10 percent used auto-rikshaw.

Table 6.2: Residence and commute information of UG students in SU and GCID

	SU			GCID	
Residence	**Yes**		**No**	**Yes**	**No**
Split residence	42.0		58.0	0.0	100.0
Residence location		vacations			
Hostel/on Campus	90.2	0.0	9.6	0.0	
Same town	0.0	0.0	49.0	0.0	12.6
Same District	8.9	3.6	23.6	0.0	79.1
Same State	0.9	87.6	10.4	0.0	8.4
Different State	0.0	8.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mode of Transport					
Walking	30.3			13.6	
Cycle	2.0			2.5	
Auto-rikshaw	4.6			10.6	
Bus/Minivan	25.9			32.7	
Train	4.9			0.5	
Bike/scooter	23.1			38.7	
Personal Car	7.8			0.0	
Other	1.5			1.5	

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 6.3: Residence and commute information of UG students (Interview)

HEI	Pseudonym	Residence split or not?	Distance to HEI from weekly residence (km)	Travel time to HEI from weekly residence (minutes)	Mode of transport used to reach HEI
SU	Shiksha	Yes	60	90	Bus
SU	Jashan	Yes	5	25	Bike, Bus, auto
SU	Lucky	Yes	90	150	Bus, Train
SU	Deep	Yes	150	240	Bus
SU	Prashi	Yes	95	140	Bus, Train
SU	Arpit	Yes	190	4	Bus, Train
GCID	Ritika	No	2	20	On foot, bike
GCID	Khushi	No	25	45	Scooter
GCID	Tanvi	No	3.5	30	Bus
GCID	Gippy	No	20	30	Bus
GCID	Amarpal	No	8	30	Bus
GCID	Devender	No	10	35	Bus & on foot

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The information on residence and commute information collected from student interviews in both the HEIs is similar to the one discussed above. In case of SU, all surveyed students had split residence and they preferred to stay in university hostel. From their residence to HEI, they generally used bus or train as mode of transport. The students from GCID preferred to stay with their parents as none had reported split residence. All of them commute from nearby villages. The one who comes from the same village (Ritika) generally prefer walking; while Tanvi, who commutes from another nearby village, prefer to take bus. The distance, however, is not more than 3 kms. All other students commute by bus to the HEI.

6.4 Undergraduate Students' Background

The importance of family background impacts hugely in individual's pathway to development and it has long been acknowledged by researchers. Subsequently, policies are framed across countries to nullify the socio-economic stratification in the society. In order to understand the diversity of students in both the HEIs, the educational, occupational and economic background of students' is discussed with the surveyed information.

6.4.1 Educational and family background

A student's family education background significantly impacts their academic journey in HE. It influences their preparation, attitudes, and support systems, ultimately affecting their success and aspirations. Specifically, a family's educational values, engagement, and resources can shape a student's motivation, and access to opportunities.

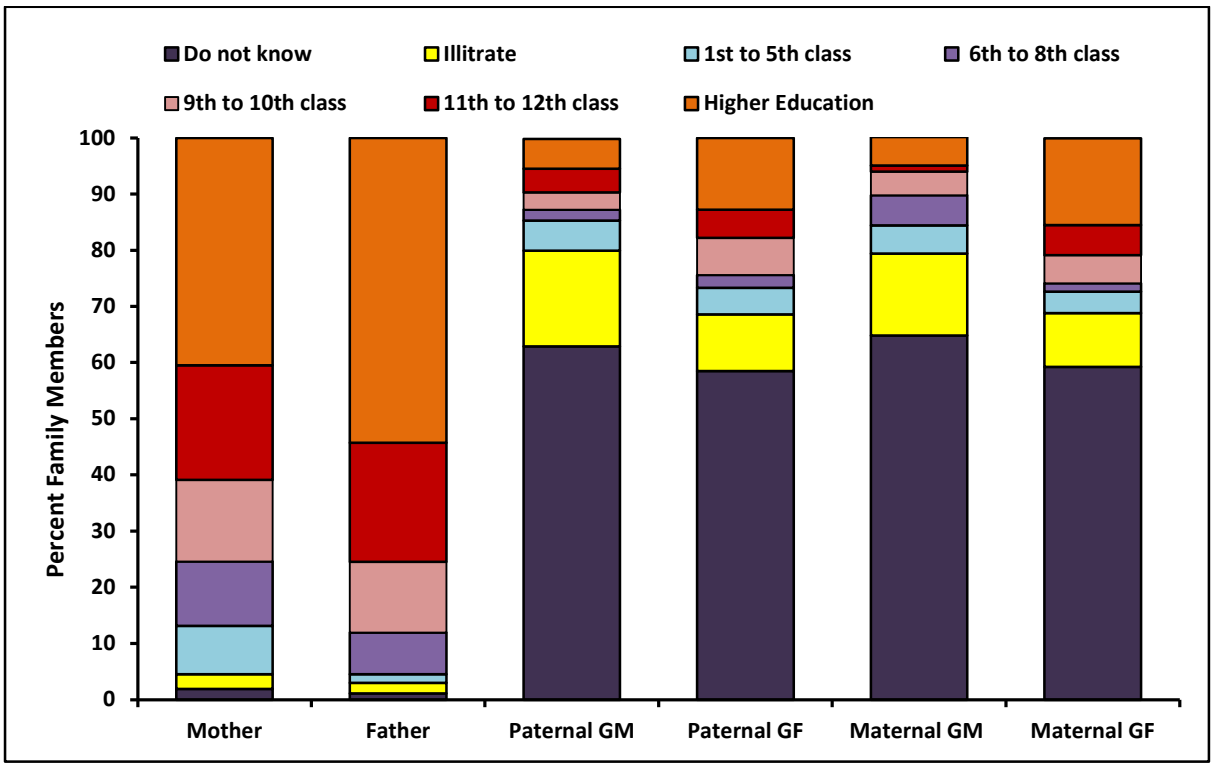
6.4.1.1 State University (SU)

The educational background of the SU students is presented in Table 6.4, which carries detail of educational characteristics of their mother, father, grandparents and siblings. It may be noted that about 2 percent and 1 percent students reported that they do not know the educational status of their mother and father respectively, this may be due to wishes to avoid highlighting illiteracy. Around 58 to 64 percent students had no knowledge of their grandparents' educational status. Another 9 percent reported that their grandfather (maternal as well as paternal) were illiterate and had not accessed formal schooling. It may be noted that 19 percent students were such where grandfather (maternal as well as paternal) were school educated (up to 12th). The grandfather of about 12 percent students, however, had accessed higher education. Here, too, the grandmothers' access to higher education was limited to 5 percent students and another 14 percent could access schooling. The family educational history shows that for two-third students' education is not beyond second generation and only one-third students had third generation education history.

The educational background of their parents reveals that the father of 54 percent students had accessed HE (Figure 6.2) while 40 percents students' mother had accessed HE. The male-female gap prevalent in accessing higher education is visible in their parents' education also. The parental educational history suggests that about 46 percent students are the first

generation in higher education. It may be noted that for 52 percent students, both parents had schooling, while 40 percent students both parents had accessed higher education. Broadly, for about one-half students, higher education is arguably a natural progression.

Figure 6.2: Family education history of SU students: 2024



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Table 6.4: Educational background of UG students in SU

Characteristics	Mother	Father	Grand Mother	Grand Father	Maternal GM	Maternal GF	Sibling
Do not know	1.9	1.1	62.9	58.5	64.8	59.2	0.0
Not Applicable single-parent HH.)	0	0.4	0.8	1.6	14.6	0.8	0.0
No formal schooling	2.6	1.5	16.2	8.5	0	8.8	0.5
1st to 5th class	8.6	1.5	5.4	4.7	5.0	3.8	5.2
6th to 8th class	11.5	7.4	1.9	2.3	5.4	1.5	10.4
9th to 10th class	14.5	12.6	3.1	6.6	4.2	5.0	14.6
11th to 12th class	20.4	21.2	4.2	5.0	1.1	5.4	22.6
Diploma/ITI/ITC	2.2	4.5	1.5	1.9	0.8	3.1	3.3
Degree education (BA, BSc)	19.0	24.9	2.3	3.5	3.1	5.4	32.5
PG (e.g., MA, MSc)	16.7	21.2	1.5	5.8	0.8	5.0	10.4
MPhil and/or PhD	2.6	3.7		1.6	0.4	1.9	0.5

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Table 6.5: Occupation of family members of UG students in SU

Occupation	Mother	Father
Home maker	82.1	0.0
Wage Labourer	0.4	7.8
Self-Employed (Agriculture)	0.0	13.0
Self-Employed (non-agriculture)	1.6	39.7
Teacher (school)	10.1	8.7
Faculty (College/University)	0.4	2.0
Other Salaried	5.4	28.7
Non-worker/ unemployed	0.0	0.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The occupational background of SU students discloses that occupation of family members is gendered, where mothers are largely engaged in household duties, and fathers' are employed in diverse economic activities. The data reveals that an overwhelming 84 percent students reported that their mothers are home makers. It may be noted a substantial percent among them are working as school teachers (10.0 percent), while a very thin proportion (less than one percent) are employed as FM in HE. Another 5.4 percent of parents were salaried employee working in diverse economic activities. It needs mention that mothers' of 1.6 percent students are self- employed in non-agricultural activities (having a small shop etc.). The occupational engagement of their father seems more diversified. The majority among them are self-employed, in agriculture and non-agricultural economic activity. It may be noted that about 40 percent are self-employed in non-agricultural pursuits while 13 percent are working as farmers. Another most dominantly reported engagement among them is some kind of salaried job in government or private sector. It may also be noted that about 11 percent students are such whose father are in teaching profession with 8.7 percent working as schoolteachers and another 2.0 percent as faculty (FM) in HEIs. It is also noteworthy that about 7.8 percent students are such whose father is a wage labour.

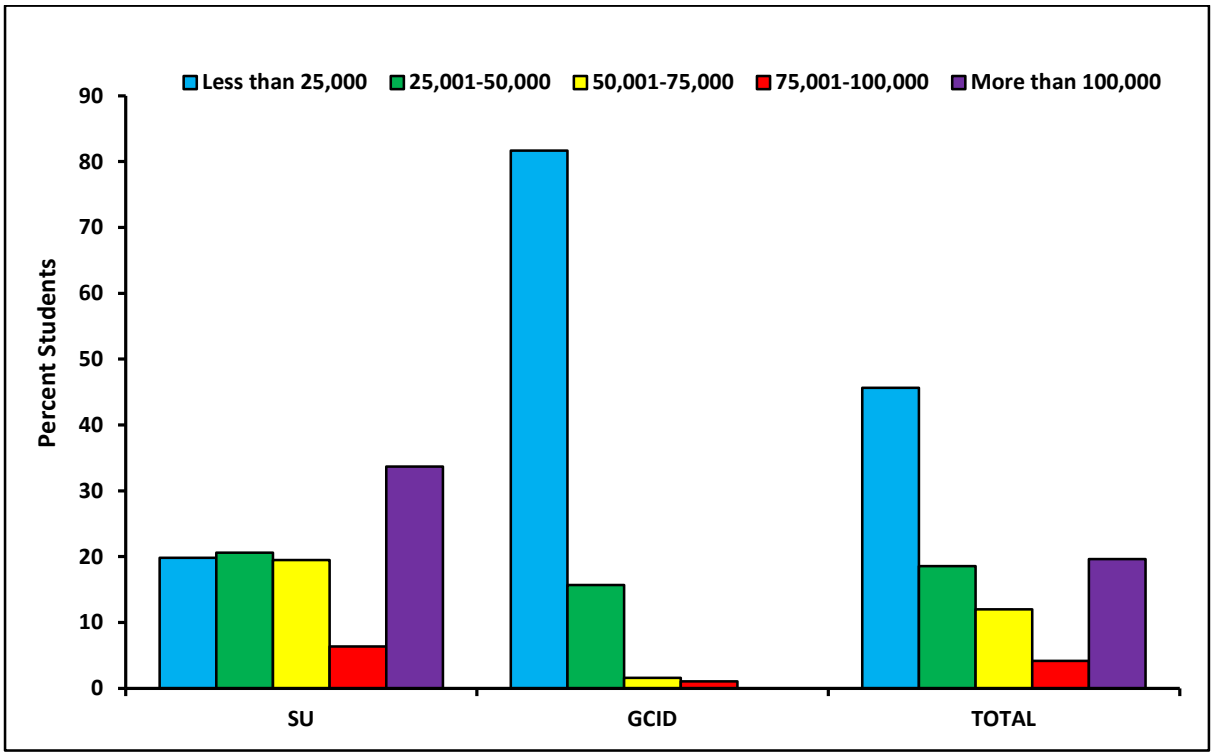
The data on monthly family income is presented in Table 6.6. It reveals that the students in SU are from diverse economic backgrounds. About one-third are from families where average monthly income is more than 1 lakh rupees. It may also be noted that one-fifth are from more humble economic background where the monthly family income is less than 25,000 rupees. Another 20 percent indicated family income between 50 to 75 thousand rupees. It is important to note that the average family size of the students is 3.35 members.

Table 6.6: Average monthly income of SU and GID students' family

Monthly Income (Rs)	SU	GCID
Less than 25,000	19.9	81.7
25,001 to 50,000	20.6	15.8
50,001 to 75,000	19.6	1.5
75001 to 100,000	6.4	1.0
100,001 and above	33.6	0.0
Total valid response	(99.3%)	(100%)
Average persons supported by HH income	4.0	5.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

Figure 6.3: Monthly family income of students in HEIs



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

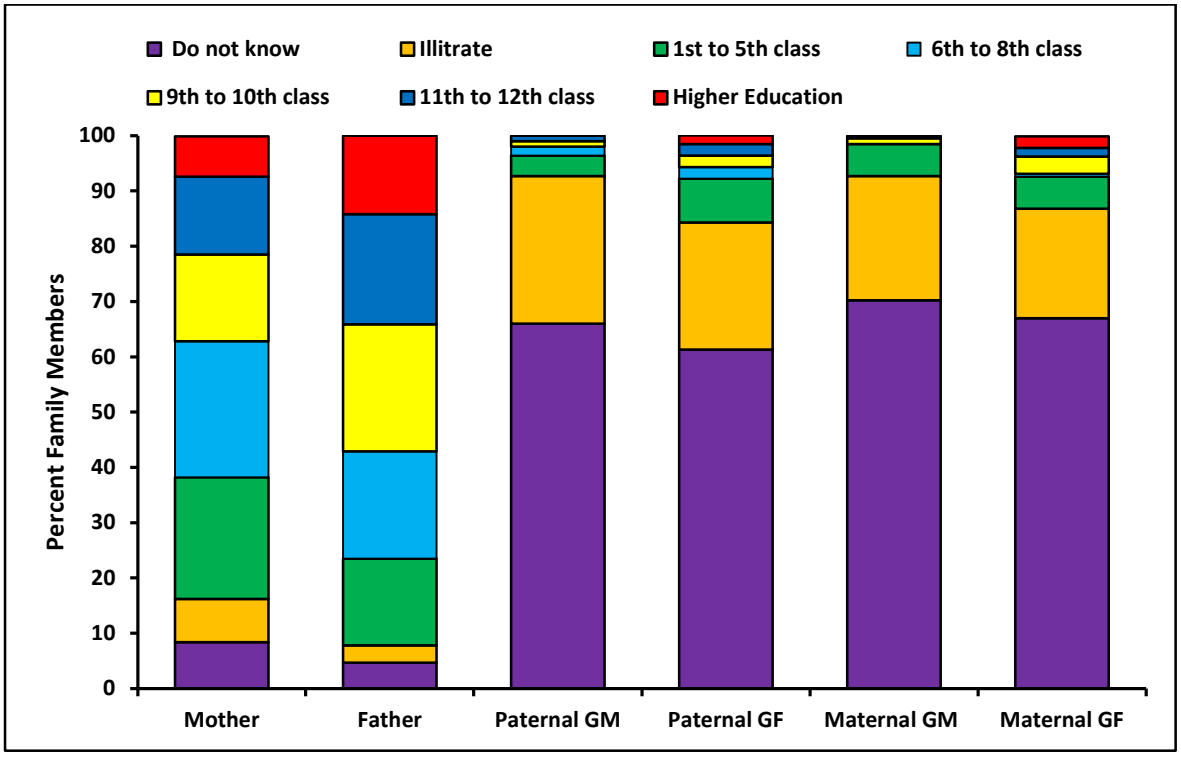
6.4.1.2 Government College in-depth (GCID)

The family educational background of GCID students' reveals that about 10 percent students reported uncertainty about mothers' education. Another 7 percent belong to families where their mother could not access any formal education. The majority of students (61 percent) reported their mother's education is up to school level, where 22 percent are up to 5th level, 24 percent up to 8th and another 15 percent accessed 10th to 12th level. It may be noted that 6.8 percent of students reported that their mothers are educated beyond schooling, i.e. had accessed higher education (Figure 6.4).

Among both parents, the father seems to have better education levels in comparison to their mothers. About 78 percent students reported that their fathers are educated up to school level, i.e. grade 12th. Among them, the majority (23 percent) are secondary educated (10th class), followed by higher secondary (19.9 percent). It needs mention that 8.4 percent students reported that their fathers are graduates, while another 1.6 percent reportedly are postgraduates.

It is noteworthy that about two-third students reported that they have no knowledge about the education status of their grandparents (both maternal as well as paternal). Another one-fifth to one-fourth reported that grandparents are illiterate and had no formal schooling. Only 6 percent students reported that their grandmother is school educated and the majority of them are up to 5th level. In the case of their grandfather, about 10 percent reported that they are school educated, but again the majority are up to primary level. It is worth mentioning that 1.6 percent student reported that their grandfather accessed HE.

Figure 6.4: Educational history of students in GCID



Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

The above analysis shows that for only 10 percent students, they are second generation in higher education, where any of their parents had accessed HE. (Table 6.7). For the present generation, however, the access to education is better. 94 percent of students reported that they are not the only child and have siblings. The education levels of siblings reveals that almost all of them had some level of education. About one-sixth reported that either they have attained a higher education degree or are currently pursuing it, while 40 percent reportedly had attained higher secondary level of education.

Table 6.7: Educational background of GCID students

Characteristics	Mother	Father	Paternal GM	Paternal GF	Maternal GM	Maternal GF	Sibling
% valid response	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*	100.0	*100.0*	
Do not know	8.4	4.7	66.0	61.3	70.2	67.0	0.0
NA (single-parent HH.)	1.0	0.5	1.6	2.6	1.6	1.0	0.0
No formal schooling	6.8	2.6	25.1	20.4	20.9	18.8	0.0
1st to 5th class	22.0	15.7	3.7	7.9	5.8	5.8	2.9
6th to 8th class	24.6	19.4	1.6	2.1	0.0	0.5	12.2
9th to 10th class	15.7	23.0	1.0	2.1	1.0	3.1	26.4
11th to 12th class	14.1	19.9	1.0	2.1	0.5	1.6	40.3
Diploma/ITI/ITC	0.5	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
Degree education (BA, BSc)	6.3	8.4	0.0	1.6	0.0	1.6	14.2
PG (e.g., MA, MSc)	0.5	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.4
MPhil and/or PhD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

As far as family occupation background of students is concerned, a majority of them (38 percent) belonged to agricultural family occupation, as about two-fifth students reported that their father is self- employed in agricultural activity. It may also be noted that nearly one-third (29.1) students reported their fathers' occupation as wage-laborer. Another major occupation is self-employment in non-agricultural activity from where one-sixth students of GCID are surveyed. It may also be noted that about 14 percent of students come from family where their father is salaried employee and for 5.5 percent students, their father is a school teacher (Table 6.8).

As far as the occupation of students' mother is concerned, as noted earlier in case of SU students, an overwhelming majority (93 percent) are home makers. About 2.6 percent students

reported that their mother is a salaried employee, while another 2 percent are working as wage-laborer. It is noteworthy that the mother of 1.1 percent students are schoolteachers.

Table 6.8: Occupational background of GCID students'

Occupational Status	Mother	Father
% valid response	*99.0*	*95.3*
Home maker	93.1	0.0
Wage Labourer	2.1	29.1
Sele- employed (Agriculture)	0.0	38.5
Self- employed (Non-agriculture)	1.1	15.9
Teacher (School)	1.1	5.5
FM (College/University)	0.0	0.0
Other Salaried	2.6	14.3
Non-worker/ unemployed	0.0	1.6

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The average monthly family income of GCID students has been presented in Table 6.6. It shows that the majority of students (81.7 percent) were from relatively humble economic backgrounds where the monthly income was less than 25,000 rupees. It needs mention that an average of 4 to 5 members were supported by that income. Another one sixth of students' monthly family income was 25 to 50 thousand rupees. Only 2 percent students belonged to comparatively wealthier households where monthly income was more than 50,000 rupees.

6.4.2 Schooling history

The literature suggests that understanding the schooling background of students is of crucial significance as it provides valuable insights into their prior learning experiences, academic strengths and potential areas of need. In many countries, this knowledge is used by educators to tailor their approach, address learning gaps, and ensure students are adequately prepared for the challenges of higher education. In this context, the broad aspects of schooling history of SU and GCID students' is presented in following sections.

6.4.2.1 State University (SU)

The schooling history in terms of rural- urban location of school reveals that 35 percent of students in their pre-primary attended a rural school. It may be noted that the proportion of students in a rural school declined by 17.1 percent by the time they reach higher secondary level. It shows that with increase in level of education, i.e. from primary to higher levels, there is a movement out of rural education. However, the proportion of students in semi-urban locations remained almost unchanged as about 7.8 percent students attended pre-primary in these

locations and up to higher secondary, the students' proportion is comparable (7.4 percent). It shows that of the students who were in rural schools in pre- primary, almost half of them moved to urban schools by their 12th class (Table 6.9). The move to urban schools may be due to various reasons, with urban schooling providing increased opportunity to HE as one potential reason. However, this would need further investigation and was outside the scope of this study,

Table 6.9: Schooling history of SU students

Location	Pre Primary	Primary	Middle	Secondary	H Secondary
Rural	35.7	25.3	22.7	20.4	17.1
Urban	56.5	66.9	69.9	72.5	75.5
Semi-urban	7.8	7.8	7.4	7.1	7.4

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

A more detailed information regarding schooling history of SU students has been presented in Table 6.10. It reveals that at secondary level, an overwhelming majority of students (90 percent) attended co-educational schools, and the proportion remained almost the same at higher secondary level also. It is noteworthy that during secondary level, about 77 percent attended private schools, however this proportion was almost 9 percent less at higher secondary level, i.e. 68.8 percent. It shows a shift to government-aided and government school for higher secondary. The majority of students passed their secondary and higher secondary by CBSE (Central Board of School Education) pattern, while about one-fourth passed with the syllabus of state board. The ICSE syllabus is taken by less than one percent students. It is interesting to find that three-fourths of students in secondary as well as in higher secondary preferred English as medium of instruction. Though regional language as medium of instruction is preferred by a marginal 2 percent students, Hindi was used by 22 percent students. As far as the stream choice is concerned, humanities seem to be very popular as more than half of total students (56 percent) had humanities in their 12th level, while another 28 percent students preferred commerce stream. The science stream students were a mere 15 percent. The majority of students (about 92 percent) in higher secondary lived with their parents and commuted to the place of study, while about 5 percent stayed in a hostel, and those who lived with relatives constituted 2.2 percent of total SU students.

Table 6.10: Secondary and higher secondary school characteristics of SU students

School Characteristics	Secondary (9^{th}-10^{th})	H. Secondary ($11^{th}$$12^{th}$)
Type of school		
Co-ed	90.0	89.2
Single sex	10.0	10.8
School Management		
Government	17.5	24.2
Govt-aided	5.6	7.1
Private	77.0	68.8
Syllabus pattern		
State board	27.5	26.8
CBSE	71.7	72.5
ICSE	0.8	0.7
Medium of instruction		
Regional language	2.6	1.9
English	75.1	75.8
Hindi	22.3	22.3
Stream choice		
Science	-	15.2
Commerce	-	28.3
Arts	-	56.5
Residence information		
School hostel	NA	4.8
Day scholar (home)	NA	91.8
Living with relatives	NA	2.2
Living in rented accommodation	NA	0.9
In paying guest accommodation	NA	0.4
% valid response	100.0	100%

Note: (-) refers to not applicable.

NA refers to not available.

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

The schooling history of students obtained from group discussion and interview at SU reveals that most of them passed their higher secondary education from schools located in urban areas. However, many among them completed secondary education from nearby schools, whether it was government or private or co-education. Deep (student from SU), discussed how their family moved to an urban area when he completed secondary education, which was from rural school.

6.4.2.2 Government College in-depth (GCID)

The schooling history of GCID students reveals that attendance at rural schooling is decreasing as level of education increases. At pre-primary level, about 84 percent of students were going to rural schools, however this proportion decreased to 59 percent when they attained higher secondary. The information on type of school shows that instead of co-education schools, from secondary to higher secondary schooling, the single sex schools are more preferred as their attendance increased by 5 percent points. It may also be noted that though a majority of them

(59.7) attended government school during secondary level, it further increased to 68 percent during higher secondary level. The majority of students (77 percent) studied the state board syllabus, which remained unchanged during higher secondary also. The medium of instruction remained Hindi for 63 percent of students in secondary level. Increasingly, students adopted English medium, as during senior secondary, the proportion of students with English medium increased by 5 percent points. As far as stream choice during higher secondary level is concerned, the majority adopted humanities stream followed by science. Commerce was opted for by about one-sixth students. Their commute information reveals that all of them lived with parents and commuted from home.

The schooling history of GCID students (as noted from group discussion and interview) suggests that they completed their secondary education from neighborhood school located in habitation or village. After secondary, many moved to urban areas for higher secondary.

Table 6.11: Schooling history of GCID students

Location	Pre primary	Primary	Middle	Secondary	H Secondary
Rural	83.4	80.1	76.4	69.1	59.2
Urban	14.1	17.8	21.5	29.3	39.3
Semi-urban	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

6.4.3 Higher education history

6.4.3.1 State University (SU)

The higher education history of SU students reveals that about 60 percent are from humanities, followed by 28 percent from commerce and a smaller proportion of 11 percent from sciences. They enrolled in different professional courses and one-third among them are in law, followed by management and mass communication (20 percent each). About 16 percent are enrolled in fine arts and 11 percent in tourism and hotel management. Since the university is located in a town, all are enrolled in an urban institution.

Table 6.12: SU students' enrolment in courses

Professional courses	Percent Enrolled
Mass Communication	19.3
Bachelors in Fine Arts	16.0
Management Course (BBA)	20.1
Law course	33.1
Tourism and Hotel Management	11.5

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

It may be noted that an overwhelming majority of students (81.8 percent) are self-funding their fees, while another 12 percent paid their fees with the scholarship amount. It is noteworthy that a marginal 2.2 percent students had partly taken money from family and arranged it with the help of a loan or working. As far as reservation is concerned, among the enrolled students, only 27 percent were on social reservation. In this, all six types of reservation given by government is availed by students during admission. In case of university students, the social category reservation of SC was availed by 57 percent followed by OBC, (33 percent). The EWS reservation was availed by 4 percent. There is a provision of certain supernumerary seats in educational institutions, typically to address specific needs or improve representation of certain groups. In this context, Haryana state government has made provision of 2 seats for single girl child (as the state has adverse sex ratio and to encourage the birth of girl child). Similarly, 1 additional seat is given for differently abled and ex-defense personnel. This seat is interchangeable. If case of absence of differently abled applicant, the seat may be filled up with the wards of ex-defense personnel. In the present survey, the single girl child and ex-defense category reservation has been availed by 1.7 and 2.4 percent students respectively.

The information has also been collected regarding the motivation to pursue HE, included who motivated the student to apply for HE. The majority of students in SU highlighted the role of both the parents as foremost influential. This is followed by siblings and friends. About 5 percent of students signified the role of schoolteachers in motivating them for higher studies. In the selection of higher educational institutions, i.e. university and in the selection of subject or course, the parents were prominently involved for the majority of students in SU. Wherever, their parents were not involved, it was their own choice to select the institution and the subject. In about 15 percent of cases, siblings and cousins were involved in choosing college and subjects. It is concerning to find that the involvement of schoolteachers was limited to 3.2 to 3.8 percent and that of college and university teachers was even less than 2 percent.

Table 6.13: Higher education history of SU and GCID students

Options	SU	GCID
Course Selection (% enrolled)		
Science	06.3	18.3
Humanities/Arts	59.2	56.5
Commerce	02.6	14.1
Management	27.9	0.0
Technical Sciences	0.0	10.5
Medical Sciences	0.0	0.5
Location of Institution		
Rural	0.0	100.0
Urban	100.0	0.0
Funding of fees (exam, tuition)		
Fees paid entirely by family	81.8	96.3
Fees paid partly by family	2.2	0.5
Fees paid with the help of a scholarship	13.1	3.2
Fees paid by taking a loan	1.5	0.0
Fees paid by taking up a job	0.4	0.0
Fees paid by freeship (tuition waiver)	0.4	0.0
Fees paid through Faculty pool	0.8	0.0
Reservation Availed	26.8	67.5
SC	57.5	50.4
OBC	32.9	48.1
PWD	1.4	0.0
EWS	4.1	1.6
Single girl child	1.4	0.0
Ex-Defence	2.7	0.0
Current Work Status		
Full time student not working	92.3	91.5
Employed part-time	1.8	3.0
Helping in family business	1.5	0.5
Helping on farm work	0.4	1.5
Helping in domestic household work	3.3	3.5
Conducting tuition classes	0.7	0.0

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 6.14: Involvement of persons in higher education choices (SU students)

Options	Motivated for HE	In the Selection of	
		College	Subject
Mother	16.3	17.5	15.0
Father	17.2	22.8	19.9
Sister/s (sibling)	7.1	7.7	7.2
Brother/s (sibling)	7.0	6.9	7.5
Maternal grandmother	2.4	0.8	0.6
Maternal grandfather	2.2	0.8	0.6
Paternal grandmother	2.4	1.2	1.1
Paternal grandfather	1.8	1.5	1.4
Maternal aunt/s	1.4	0.8	1.1
Maternal uncle/s	1.7	1.4	1.3
Paternal aunt/s	1.3	0.7	0.5
Paternal uncle/s	2.1	1.9	1.3
Cousin/s	4.8	4.7	4.8
School teacher/s	5.3	3.2	3.8
College/Univ./teacher/s	3.0	1.9	1.4
Friend/s	6.1	5.1	4.9
Senior student/s	2.1	1.5	1.8
Neighbour/s	1.4	1.1	1.1
Coaching/tutor	1.2	1.2	1.0
Yourself	12.9	17.2	23.6

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The information has also been collected regarding the motivation/ motivating person to pursue HE, i.e. who motivated to apply for HE. A majority of students in SU highlighted the role of both the parents- father as well as mother as foremost. This is followed by their own understanding and the siblings and friends. It indicates that their immediate environment plays a major role in determining HE choices. About 5 percent students signified the role of school teachers in motivating them for higher studies. In the selection of HEIs, i.e. study institute/university, the involvement or guidance of father is prominently reported, closely followed by mother. Similarly, in the selection of subject or course, the parents were prominently involved for the majority of SU students. Other than parents, the involvement of siblings- sisters and brothers, and friends is significant in selection of HEIs as well as subject. About 5 percent students reported the involvement of cousin in choosing college and subjects.

It is noteworthy to find that about 8 percent students reported that in selection of HEIs, teachers/FMs motivated them. However, in this the role of schoolteachers remained more prominent than FMs of college/University. Similarly in case of college and subject selection, about 5 percent of students reported the involvement of teachers, but here too, the involvement of FMs remain limited to less than 2 percent.

Broadly, it seems that selection of higher education institution and subject was largely shaped by their parents' values, and the experiences or opinions of siblings and friends.

6.4.3.2 Government College in-depth (GCID)

The higher education history of GCID students is a little different from SU students with regard to enrolment in various streams. Though university students are largely enrolled in professional courses, while the GCID students are in traditional courses and the majority of them are in humanities (53.6 percent), followed by sciences (18.3 percent) and commerce (14.1 percent). About 10 percent of students are enrolled in technical subjects such as computer science applications and other courses. The college is situated in a rural setting and its feeder (the students) remain in nearby villages. It may also be noted that 96 percent paid their fees from their own resources, i.e. family funded, while the rest of them paid it with the help of scholarship awarded to them. The reservation policy of government is similar for college and university students. However, in the case of GCID, among all enrolled students, 67.5 percent had availed reservation of social category. 50 percent among them availed SC reservation and another 48 percent availed OBC reservation. The economically weaker section reservation was availed by 1.5 percent students. The enrolment in other categories of reservation such as single girl child, ex-defence and PWD are not found in the case of GCID.

Table 6.15: Involvement of persons in higher education for GCID students

Options	Motivated for Higher Education	In selection of	
		College	Subject
Mother	25.3	22.2	13.2
Father	27.2	25.4	17.3
Sister/s (sibling)	5.9	6.3	6.4
Brother/s (sibling)	6.7	6.7	5.6
Maternal grandmother	0.0	0.4	0.0
Maternal grandfather	0.0	0.4	0.0
Paternal grandfather	0.3	0.4	0.4
Maternal uncle/s	0.3	0.0	0.0
Paternal aunt/s	1.1	0.0	0.4
Paternal uncle/s	1.1	0.7	0.4
Cousin/s	2.8	1.1	2.3
School teacher/s	4.8	2.1	1.9
College/University/teacher/s	0.8	0.7	0.8
Friend/s	4.8	7.7	7.1
Senior student/s	0.3	0.7	0.4
Neighbour/s	0.3	0.4	0.4
Coaching/tutor	0.3	0.0	1.1
Yourself	18.0	25.0	42.5

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The parents (father and mother) are reported as playing a leading role in motivation of higher education pursuance and in selection of college and subjects in the case of GCID students, as about 50 percent reported that either their father or mother motivated them to opt for higher education. Another 18 percent were self- motivated to pursue HE. In selection of college, also, the leading involvement remains of their parents - fathers and mothers (for 25 and 23 percent students respectively). However, 25 percent selected the college on their own. In the case of subject choice, however, the majority (42.5 percent) reported it as their own decision. About 7 percent made subject choice with help of their peer group or by seeking the help of their friends.

It may be noted that while about 5 percent of students reported the role of teachers (schoolteachers) in motivation of pursuance of HE, their role in college and subject selection is limited to 2.1 percent. The involvement of FMs in selection of subject and college is reported by less than one percent of students.

6.4.4 Involvement of Faculty Members in HE access

6.4.4.1 State University (SU)

As stated earlier, the involvement of FMs in students' access to higher education is less evident. About 12 percent of students reported their involvement. When it was asked how the FM was known to them, one-third among them stated that the FM was a family member and for another 15 percent, it was through some family connection. Another major point of their (FMs) involvement is reported that when they (students) met them (FMs) during their visit to college or institution. SU students however, reported a number of other connections, such as FMs being tuition teachers, having met the FM in a community group or in a faith-based community gathering, connecting when they (FMs) visited schools, or having met them when the students visited another community meeting etc. Information has also been collected for type of advice taken by FMs and during which time of the year their advice has been sought. It needs mention that 54 percent students reported that they (FMs) were consulted during the process of making choices for higher education while another 45 percent sought advice during HE admission.

The involvement of FMs has been varied in purpose in the case of SU students. The choice of course/subject remained the most common point on which about 25 percent students sought advice from FMs, followed by admission process and choice of college/university. The involvement of FMs nonetheless remains from whether they go for higher education to choice of college, subject selection, exam preparation, admission process, checking of application etc. The involvement of FMs in 2.4 percent cases was such where FMs accompanied students for a visit to the institution.

6.4.4.2 Government College in-depth (GCID)

It is noteworthy that in GCID, only 4 percent of students reported the involvement of FMs in HE choices. Here, about 37 percent students reported that the involvement of FMs have been due to their family connection, while in the case of 25 percent students, FMs are a family member. It is interesting to find that about one-fourth of students reported that they sought advice when they (students) visited the college and met them. The involvement of teachers has been at three major points in the case of GCID students. In 58 percent cases, the FMs were involved in subject selection, followed by admission process and preparation of entry level exam.

It may also be noted that about one-sixth of students reported FMs' involvement for special admission programme or processes such as reservation or financial assistance available. The involvement of FMs in GCID was highlighted prominently (87 percent) during admission time (as far as the time in a year is concerned).

Table 6.16: FMs/Teacher involvement in HE in SU and GCID

FMs/Teachers Involvement and how are they known	SU	GCID
	Yes	Yes
Teachers' involvement in HE	11.9	4.2
How FM/ teacher was known to students		
Neighbour	7.8	0.0
Family Member	31.4	25.0
Family connection	15.7	37.5
In a faith-based setting e.g., mosque, temple	2.0	0.0
In a community group	5.9	0.0
Through NGO work	0.0	0.0
Through local politics	2.0	0.0
As a tuition teacher/in a coaching institute	3.9	0.0
Met them when I visited their college/university	21.6	25.0
Met them when they visited my school	2.0	0.0
Met them when they visited another community	2.0	0.0
Met them during admission process at their university	5.9	12.5

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Table 6.17: Type of involvement in HE for SU and GCID students

Options	SU	GCID
Teachers' involvement in HE	11.9	4.2
Type of Involvement		
Advice on whether to go for higher education or other options	14.3	0.0
Choice of which colleges/universities to apply to	11.9	0.0
Choice of course/subject	25.0	58.3
About the admissions process	15.5	16.7
About covering tuition expenses/funding options	2.4	0.0
About HE entry exams preparation	7.1	8.3
About special admissions programme/processes e.g., reservations	6.0	16.7
Checking application form/other documents	7.1	0.0
Choice of which colleges/universities to enrol in if selected in >1one	6.0	0.0
Accompanying a visit to the college/university where they worked	2.4	0.0
Accompanying for a visit to another college/university	2.4	0.0
Involvement Time		
During the process of making choices about HE	54.8	12.5
During admissions	45.2	87.5

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

The similar questions were asked to students during focus group discussion and during personal interviews, i.e. relating to type and occasions of involvement of teachers in access to higher education. It was observed that SU students confirmed the role of schoolteachers in motivation for pursuing higher education. The role of schoolteachers comes out prominently in cases where

the student performed well in some form or other. One such example is of Jashan, (SU student), who narrated that he was good in drawing and painting - a subject which is largely not taken seriously due to its low job opportunities – and was motivated and guided by his schoolteacher to purse it as a subject in HE. Another student, Shiksha, narrated how she herself, in absence of subject/course guidance, but just motivation to pursue HE from school teachers, on her own and by interaction with fellow students, carved the path for higher education, specifically the course choice and preparation of entry examination.

In the case of GCID students, two out of six discussed the role of teachers. In one case, the student reported that the schoolteacher, although suggested they pursue HE, also presented HE as some sort of challenge. It was told "school education is different from college/higher education and you have to study on your own and the tutors in HE are not bothered for syllabus etc." She told that initially, it (self- study) was demotivating to pursue higher education. The other two GCID students to comment on schoolteachers, Gippy and Amarpal, hugely admired the role of schoolteachers in the selection of higher education institution, as well as in subject selection.

Hence, the analysis reveals that though schoolteachers are motivating them to pursue HE, the information gap regarding choice of course etc. is massive and they have an unmet need in this regard.

In the students survey, the information was also obtained regarding choices used before enrolling in HE. This information is summarised in Table 6.18. It shows that in the case of SU students, about 22 percent physically visited the campus where they wanted to enrol. About 12 percent compared the HEIs by visiting another campus also to weigh their choices. It may however, be noted that 15 percent of students watched online videos to know the campus while another 10 percent explored the institutional website. Another 6.6 percent read about the HEI in print media. Therefore, one may say that a significant proportion (25 percent) students do explore online platforms such as YouTube channels, university websites and social media platforms to gather information about the institution to weigh their decisions of enrolment. It may also be noted that about 5.6 percent students discussed their choices with the college/ university staff.

In GCID, 17 percent students visited the campus or institution of HE physically before enrolling, while another 8.3 percent compared it with other campuses by visiting physically, before enrolling in the HE. About 8 percent discussed their options with college staff and another 7 percent referred to the college brochures for detailed information. It is noteworthy that about 5.8 percent students utilised the service centres (Common Service Centers, *e-Kendras etc.)* to inquire about higher education options. It is surprising to find that about 44 percent students in GCID were neither visiting the HEIs physically, nor exploring the online platforms before enrolling into HE. They are largely enrolling either on hearsay or as suggested by family (parents, siblings).

Table 6.18: Choices availed prior to enrolment in HE by SU and GCID students

Options/ choices availed by students	SU	GCID
Visited the college/university, i.e. physically stepped in campus you pursued	22.4	17.0
Visited other college/universities to compare options	12.0	8.3
Discussed options for higher education with other college/university staff	5.6	7.8
Explored various online platforms, such as current college/university website	10.0	3.4
Referenced the college/university brochures for detailed information	7.3	6.8
Watched informative videos on YouTube related to college/university	15.3	0.5
Used social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram) to gather information and insights about college/university	7.1	1.5
Read about college/university in newspapers	6.6	3.9
Listened to radio FM providing information about HE institutions	0.6	0.0
Visited Common service centres (e.g., Akshaya Kendra/e-Kendras, Saral, etc.,) to inquire about higher education options	1.5	5.8
Consulted with representatives or designated contact persons from various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for advice related to HE study	1.1	0.5
Visited College Fairs	0.9	0.5
Obtained information from the local administration, such as Gram Panchayat, Nagar Panchayat, Village Administrative Officers, Municipal Councils/Corporations and District Administration	0.6	0.0
None of the above	9.3	44.2
Percent valid response	*99.6%*	*100%*

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024.*

6.4.5 HE Outreach: current and future opportunities

6.4.5.1 State University (SU)

The equitable access to higher education has been measured by a number of methods. In this regard, information was collected from enrolled students regarding how they feel and opinions about current educational opportunities, which is summarised in Table 6.19. In the case of SU, about 88 percent of students reported that rural students feel comfortable in the selection of institution. About 65 percent of students were of the view that university/colleges conduct outreach activities to attract rural students.

Their perspective on institutional efforts in widening access to HE was also recorded. It has been summarised in Table 6.19. It discloses that multiple opinions were given and among SU students, the most popular opinion (10 percent of total) was that the higher education institution should provide guidance related to choice of course or subject. This was followed by campus safety and security, admission process, how to prepare for entry level examination. Some equally significant proportions of students opined that institutions should also address whether one must opt for higher education or advice on other options also. The organisation of a visit to a HE institution, choice of institution, funding, transport and employability prospects are also being voiced by students in large proportion. It shows that students do face difficulties in selection of institution, preparation of entry exams, and selecting courses. Many students also voiced for active contact numbers of faculty from the institution. Though higher education institutions do provide helpline contact numbers, many students voiced that they do not function and the active helpline facilities must be ensured to be working throughout the year.

Table 6.19: SU and GCID students' opinion on HE institutions

	SU	GCID
1. Rural students are comfortable in selecting college/University (yes)	88.1	77.5
2. College/ university conduct activity to attract rural students (yes)	64.7	50.8

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

As discussed in the methodology, two focus group discussions (FGD) were also carried out. In this FGD, faculty members involvement in HE was asked. In the first FGD of SU, the students hinted at no involvement of teachers in HE choices. All of them in the group unanimously stated the role of their parents. However, one student indirectly hinted that since his parents were alumnae of the university, they were deeply influenced by teachers and their selection of university was governed by that. In the second FGD, however, the students agreed on the role of teachers in selection of institutes and others mentioned their involvement in admission process and providing information on hostel accommodation once they came to the university after their selection in the particular course.

The current and future perspective of students on higher education outreach activities has been supplemented with the observations obtained through focus group discussion and interview. It has been observed that in their opinion, rural students constituted about 40 percent of total students. They were asked whether the institutions welcome the students from rural areas? Two students categorically answered in affirmative while one denied it. Another three narrated the

challenges faced by rural students. Deep (SU student) mentioned the challenge of online application (filling of admission form), pattern of entrance exam, financial problems etc. He suggested that since FMs can't visit many schools, there must be some kind of online information and the university must organise a workshop where students can get career counselling, know about the courses, fee structure and financial aid available for the courses. The accommodation problem in terms of cost was highlighted by another student. Another student argued that the majority of students are from urban areas and there is little campaign from the University to attract students, while private institutes campaign heavily for their institutes. The proper showcasing is required for courses offered by the university. Shiksha, (SU student) narrated that she had information lag when she was at that stage but also disclosed that now (after enrolling, in her first year) she witnessed the FMs visit the nearby colleges and introduce the courses offered by the university. She mentioned that the department also conduct the legal literacy lectures in schools and the students also accompanied them (FMs) to nearby villages for one such activity. However, she also posits that more such interactions are required on behalf of HEIs. The information lag of rural students was voiced by almost all the SU students who were interviewed.

The discussion also revolved around their opinion on *ratio of rural students enrolment as well as on how do they know them or interact with them*? In both groups of FGDs in SU, students were aware that rural urban student ratio is 40:60. In group one, where many students were from urban backgrounds, they hesitantly suggested that rural students were apparently known from their way of speaking and dressing. They remain quiet and hesitantly interact with urban students. The students voiced their concern for low efforts made by HEI to attract students residing in rural and even urban areas. Though they appreciated the efforts made by FMs after the admission in terms of introducing them to diverse academic and other activities. The second group of SU was more sensitive to rural students' opportunities and challenges. The majority of them believed that SU has a large number of rural students and they receive fewer options as compared to city-based students. They were unaware that University was making any concerted efforts to attract rural students.

6.4.5.2 Government College in-depth (GCID)

The opinion of enrolled students from GCID shows that three fourths of students felt comfortable in choosing the HEI. However, only half of them stated the institution conducts outreach activities to attract rural students. In other words, half of students were convinced that higher education institution does not conduct any such activity which may attract rural students to HE.

Table 6.20: SU and GCID students' perspective on guidance of HEIs.

Options	SU	GCID
1. Advice on whether to go for higher education or other options	7.7	8.7
2. Choice of which colleges/universities to apply to	6.9	6.6
3. Choice of course/subject	10.3	15.1
4. About the admission process	7.7	13.0
5.About covering tuition expenses/funding options	5.8	4.8
6. About HE entry exams preparation	7.3	8.0
7.About special admissions programmes/processes e.g., reservations	4.3	2.1
8.Checking application form/other documents	4.1	3.2
9.Choice of which colleges/universities to enrol in if selected in more than one	3.1	2.3
10.Organising a visit to the college/university	6.4	9.8
11.Advice on accommodation	3.8	0.9
12.Advice about college/university facilities, activities, provisions	5.1	3.7
13.About campus safety and security	8.6	8.5
14.About employability prospects	5.4	2.5
15.About whether the college/university has good academic functioning	6.1	4.8
16.About transport facilities	7.6	6.2
Percent Valid response	99.6%	100%

Source: *WAHEI Survey, Haryana, 2024*.

Their suggestions on guidance however discloses that the majority want more guidance on choice of course/subjects followed by admission process. Meaning thereby that students face immense challenges during admission process itself and also in selection of subjects. About 10 percent of students were of the view that a visit to the higher education institution must be organised, while another 8 percent believed that they need advice on whether they should pursue higher education or an alternative option. It needs mention that another 8 percent aired their opinion on entry level exam preparations. Campus safety and security was voiced by a majority of girl students and provision of transport was an equally significant issue for them. The academic reputation of college and the funding options also accounted a significant opinion (about 10 percent of total suggestions). The employability options however were voiced by about 2.5 percent students.

The interaction with GCID students revealed that they encounter similar challenges as narrated by SU students regarding admission and subject choices. The students unanimously voiced that the rural students constitute 80 percent of total students' strength. Tanvi and Gippy, however, disclosed that their interaction with college students through NSS (National Service Scheme) camp was a positive contribution in access to higher education. NSS is an almost compulsory unit in all colleges where students volunteer to serve and it gives them an opportunity to participate in community service activities. NSS camp is also a compulsory feature of all government colleges, organised once in a year in any nearby village where students stay in the village for 5 to 7 days. The NSS camp thus has a two-way effect where participating students develop their personalities and they also act as ambassadors of respective HE institutes to village community.

The teachers' involvement was mentioned by the both group of FGD students in case of GCID. In the first FGD, Himani (GCID) narrated the efforts of her schoolteacher which led to her enrolment in HE. Her parents didn't want to enrol her for further studies after schooling and one teacher in the school persuaded her father of the significance of higher education and that she could enrol in the college which was nearby to her home. Other students in the group, though didn't mention the direct involvement of teachers yet, indicated at their support as their siblings graduated from the same college. In the second FGD, two students mentioned the direct involvement of their schoolteachers. Mehak (GCID) mentioned involvement of a schoolteacher at each step - right from filling the admission form, selection of institute and subject selection, while another student discussed the involvement of his teacher during the process of subject selection. All other students in the group suggested that the teachers in the college were helpful when they approached them during their admission in the institute.

The FGD with GCID students also suggested that the students had an idea about how many rural students constituted the total strength and they unanimously indicated them to be more than 80 percent of total strength. As rural students constitute a large majority, it is unlikely that they are unwelcome in the institution. Regarding admission, the group agreed that they didn't face any major problem related to admissions in the college. However, a few among them voiced the seat restrictions in arts courses. Further, they also opined that the campaign from the institutions was much less in comparison to city-based private colleges. They unanimously agreed on certain challenges faced by rural students, such as the centralised online admissions. In wake of online and centralised admissions, many students do not have access to computer

and hence they go to common service centres[3] (CSCs) for admission applications. Ritika narrated her own story that she took help of CSC and the person in-charge made a mistake and also provided his own contact. She was told by some of her friends that she should inquire for her admission and she visited the college to find her name on the admission list. So, indication is that there is a risk CSCs do not update them on various details of applications. They voiced their concern for incomplete forms or not uploading all documents which creates problem in admission. Hence, in their view, the college staff should visit the nearby schools and organise a workshop for increasing access to HE and in mitigating the challenges to access HE. Some students felt that offline admission is a good way where students can interact with teachers and discuss in person the problems related to subject choice etc.

The second FGD also voiced similar concerns. They, however were more influenced by the NSS camp organised by college, where they could freely interact with students as well as FM and could get an insight of significance of various subjects and what that particular college was offering. In addition to this, they unanimously raised that awareness still is low and information lag exists. In order to overcome this, campaigns from HEI is considered the only way out. Campaigns may be in terms of putting posters at public places, organising a tour to HEI and workshops related to subjects, and admission process.

6.5 Summary and Conclusion

The demographic profile of students suggests that both SU and GCID, students are coming just after schooling and are young. However, the proportion of young students is more in GCID as compared to SU students. The gender composition reveals that SU has almost equal proportion of men and women students while in GCID, it is in favour of men. The social composition of students in GCID was in favour of OBC and SCs, while in SU almost one half were from general social group, i.e. non-SCs and non-OBCs. It needs mention that since the majority of students are 18 to 20 years of age, almost all of them are unmarried in both the HEIs.

[3] In Haryana, Common Service Centers (CSCs) are access points for delivering various government and private services to citizens, particularly in rural areas. They act as a bridge between citizens and online services, offering a range of facilities like Aadhaar-related services, insurance, passport applications, and more. CSCs are part of the Digital India initiative and are operated by Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs).

In SU, there is almost equal proportion of rural and urban students while GCID has an overwhelmingly higher proportion of rural students. In both the institutes, the majority has reported Hindi as mother tongue, while a small proportion also reported Punjabi as their mother tongue. The residence and commute information suggests that all students preferred to live with their parents in GCID, while in SU, being a residential institute, half of students had split residence and the majority stayed in university hostel.

The family education background shows that in the case of SU, it seems that for about 50 percent students, progression into HE is a natural progression, i.e. both their parents had accessed some form of HE. It was also observed that about one-third SU students were first generation in higher education as their parents had access to only school education. It needs mention that in case of GCID, only 10 percent students had multi-generational education history. In comparison to SU students, here about 85 percent students are first generation in higher education.

The family size in terms of dependents has been small (4 persons), in SU students while in case of GCID, it was a little larger (5 persons per family). The economic background has been measured in terms of monthly income and it shows that SU students belonged to a diverse economic background where 20 percent students were from low-income group and 33 percent from very high-income bracket. In comparison to this, the majority of GCID students belonged to families with low monthly income.

The schooling trajectory of SU and GCID students reveal that the majority of SU students studied in co-educational private schools with CBSE syllabus, while the schooling history of the majority of GCID students was government schools with state board syllabus. In both institutes, the majority students selected humanities, followed by commerce and sciences. In both the HEIs, the fees are paid entirely by family for an overwhelming majority of students. In both the institutes, 92 percent students are full-time students and not working elsewhere.

The forgoing analysis suggests that parents are the major motivating force in choice of their HE pursuance as well as in selection of HEI and even subject choices among SU students. In case of GCID, parents' role was mentioned much more prominently as for 50 percent students, it was

either of their parents who motivated or decided their entry into HE. The role of schoolteachers, though occasionally mentioned, weighed much less in comparison to family members. The involvement of FMs in higher education was reported by 12 percent students in SU and only 4 percent for GCID students. In SU, the faculty members were either family members, or known to family or neighbour. In 20 percent of cases, they met teachers only when they visited the HEIs. Similarly, in the case of GCID, the involvement of teachers was largely due to family connection or being family members. In another 25 percent of cases, the teachers were known when students visited the college. SU students were more vocal and they stated the involvement of teachers at a variety of points during admissions as well as during the process of making choices of higher education. The GCID students, however, mentioned the involvement of faculty mainly during admissions and in selection of subjects.

The students were asked of the current challenges, current outreach activities and what future HE outreach practices may by conducted by HEIs to attract rural students. A majority of students identified information lag as major challenge in accessing HE. About one-third in SU and 50 percent in GCID students denied any HE outreach activity being organised by HEIs.. Students of both HEIs- SU and GCID voiced their views in favour of guidance for choice of courses followed by admission process. The guidance on entry exam preparation and organizing a trip to college university also weighted heavily. The girls in GCID also raised that information on the campus safety and security and transport facility being provided may contribute in widening access to higher education.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a synthesis of research questions and discusses the existing institutional approaches for widening access to higher education in the state of Haryana. The discussion draws on both primary data and secondary sources to examine the role of HEIs in addressing widening access to higher education in the state. It discusses how HEIs interpret, translate and enact the spread of higher education. It discusses how affirmative initiatives in enrolment such as reservation policies, financial assistance schemes, expansion of government colleges, etc. are operationalized in Haryana.

By contextualizing institutional efforts within Haryana's socio-political and economic realities, this chapter provides insights into how far the HEIs are equipped to meet the massification in higher education and highlights areas where targeted efforts could further enhance equitable access to higher education across the state.

7.2 Synthesis of RQ1a: who are the faculty members and institutional leaders?

The lLs of all HEIs except SU are in leadership roler by virtue of their seniority and due to career promotion scheme. In SU, the IL (Vice Chancellor) is invariably nominated by the respective state government, who may or may not be an academic. The SU IL in the present study however, is an academic, but he nominated the senior most Professor of the university to discuss the HE outreach issues on his behalf. All other ILs are senior academics and in 55 to 60 years age cohort.

A total of 101 FMs are surveyed for the present study in the selected HEIs. The gender composition of FMs in SU is in variance to other HEIs. In SU, men FMs predominate (58 percent), and women FMs account 42 percent. This, however, is close to the national gender composition of FMs (men and women ratio of 57 and 43 percent respectively, as per AISHE report of 2022). The FMs of SU are more religiously diverse with representation of minority such as Sikhs, Muslims and Jains among a primarily Hindu FM population, while the GCID FMs are overwhelmingly Hindus.

The social composition seen in caste groups suggests that the majority of FMs belong to General category (non -SC/ST/OBC castes), with SCs and OBCs underrepresented despite reservations. Among female FMs, the composition is more skewed towards General category. The caste-group composition in higher education may be related to the overall picture of Indian higher education faculty positions, (Varghese, et al., 2022), which highlights that despite affirmative action mandating reservations for disadvantageous groups in faculty positions, the disadvantaged groups are still underrepresented.

The age structure of FMs on the basis of surveyed data discloses that a balance of experienced and young faculty exists with nearly equal proportions in the 30–40 and 40–50 age cohorts suggesting a healthy mix of younger and mid-career academics. A majority of FMs are married with the responsibility of children in both SU and GCID.

The education history of SU and GCID FMs shows marked variation. FMs from SU have multi-generational education history, while the educational history of GCID FMs could not be traced beyond second generation. It may also be noted that mothers of about one- third FMs had no formal education, while for most FMs, their fathers were school educated. The grandparents of most of FMs in GCID had no formal education and those who had the formal education, the level was not beyond primary. More FMs in SU reported that their parents could access HE, while in GCID, HE opportunities were significantly less availed by their parents. It is noteworthy that the majority of FMs are the first person in the family as teachers. The proportion of FMs working as teaching faculty for the first time in SU was 80 percent and in case of GCID, it was 91 percent.
The parental occupation of the majority of FMs is gendered in nature, meaning thereby that their mothers are home makers while fathers are gainfully employed. The occupational pattern however reveals diversity ranging from wage labour, agriculture, petty shop-keeper, small entrepreneur, employed in armed forces, working in formal public sector (government employee). Economically, SU FMs are spread across middle and high-income groups, while in GCID, one-half FMs are in the highest income bracket. An overwhelming majority are residing in an urban area. Due to residential characteristic of State University, about one-third of FMs are residing in the campus and others commute either from the same town or nearby town or village. In GCID, the FMs are commuting from the nearby towns, with average distances of within 25 km.

The majority of FMs travelled to HEIs by their own car or pooled car. The majority among them are Assistant Professors in both HEIs.

Overall the findings highlight more religious diversity and longer educational history among the SU FMs. However, there is a lower representation of women. On the other hand, GCID has greater gender and generational mobility, though less diversity. In both the HEIs there is an underrepresentation of disadvantaged caste groups and women at higher positions. Economically, faculty members across both settings belong largely to middle- and upper-income groups, though government colleges lean towards higher income slabs. The Haryana picture broadly reflects minority representation proportionate to state demographics, and clear evidence of upward mobility into the teaching profession.

7.3 Synthesis of RQ1b & RQ1c: what do institutional leaders and faculty members perceive to be the role of HEIs in HE outreach?

All ILs and the majority of FMs undoubtedly accepted that there could be a lag in information for potential students and subsequently supported the need for outreach activities. FMs agreed that most families who take decisions about HE for their offspring may also lack sufficient information. They are also convinced that a significant digital divide exists in rural areas, and that only resourceful people are having access to digital infrastructure and internet availability successfully. It can be said that this divide is not only income-based, where economically disadvantaged families lack access to smartphones, computers, or reliable internet connectivity, as social norms often dictate access to digital devices. In most cases, boys are often given priority over girls when it comes to technology use. Furthermore, disparities in digital literacy among parents and students may widen this gap, reinforcing inequalities in awareness and access to higher education opportunities.

The IL of SU agreed that the HEI was not making direct interventions to facilitate UG students, yet believed that the location of HEI in a rural setting itself is sufficient for local students to be aware of the HEI. The SU IL emphasized on the need of strengthening the placement cell and creating an outreach cell. The argument was that both are organically linked. He opined that if the placement cell is robust and students get placement (job security), that will speak louder for the HEI and therefore students will be attracted to it. The other ILs of government colleges,

however, perceived that the HEI must make its presence felt in the area either through the school visits or inviting schools to HEIs, exposing students to the courses offered by HEIs, making students aware of different activities and avenues which HEIs may open for them.

The faculty in SU perceived that HEI as not organizing specific outreach activities and expressed that, like private universities, the HEI must make them visible through specific campaigns. In their opinion, HEIs must have provision of guided visits to schools, while some others perceived directly engaging with communities or families of young students as important. FMs felt that the connection or the bridge between schoolteachers and FMs were missing. Some suggested mandatory visits by teachers to rural schools for making students aware of their subject/ courses. Involvement of common service centers and e-seva Kendra (an e-Seva Kendra is essentially a government-supported service center set up to provide citizens with easy access to various digital services and information. These centers are particularly important in rural and semi-urban areas where the digital divide is stark) at village level was communicated by one teacher, while others put forth that more attractive and meaningful websites would be effective for enabling HE outreach.

The college FMs perceived online application and centralised admission as a big hurdle in accessing higher education by potential students. The faculty expressed information lag and perceived that this gap has widened with digital divide. School visit by teachers, putting up big posters and hoardings at public places, timely information of online admission dates with helpline numbers, were all communicated as being the HEI's responsibility. Another FM voiced that a campaign from higher education department regarding the location of institutions and subjects offered by college is the main outreach activity.

7.4 Synthesis of RQ1b (second part): How much HE outreach activity is already happening?

The SU IL expressed that no organized/structured and systematic outreach activity is conducted by the state HEI. HE Outreach practices were found to largely be undertaken by individual FMs. The FMs of SU mentioned their individual experiences when they engaged with prospective students in a variety of ways, including advising their close circle of friends, discussions with

relatives and as part of community outreach in collaboration with NGO in nearby villages. The engagement also depends upon how socially active an individual FM is. In other words, their interaction and engagement are affected by their personal network and radius of life in which they are moving.

In contrast to SU, the ILs of other HEIs, namely GCID, GC-A and GC-B, have developed more structured and collective outreach practices, which involved their FMs in outreach practices. They encouraged their FMs to visit schools in nearby villages and inform the students regarding the courses offered, other facilities and infrastructure in their institutions and the potential benefits of higher education. The ILs, in these HEIs, practice outreach through various committees (of FMs) formed for the purpose of new admission seekers in these HEIs. The ILs and FMs revealed that the Twinning Programme (where government schools visit nearby government colleges) is in practice and the researchers witnessed one such visit in GC-B and one in a department of SU. In GCID, ILs encouraged FMs of different streams to visit nearby government schools to demonstrate engaging activities to arouse interest in their subjects. ILs mentioned of inviting parents and schoolteachers on their annual days and students of nearby government schools to the Science Day Exhibition and similar events. The IL of GCID made efforts to put up large hoardings outside the college gate and at public places like bus stands, mentioning dates of admission for prospective students and also with helpline contact of FMs who could be contacted for HE information.

In GCID, GC-A and GC-B, the ILs and FMs were collectively making efforts to increase their enrolments, without any financial or any other formal support from Director, HE or official instructions. Acknowledging that families, especially parents of girls, play a critical role in decision-making about HE, FMs were engaged in explaining opportunities, addressing cultural concerns, and reassuring families about safety and affordability. Specific and intensive efforts for HE outreach were mentioned by GC-A FMs and ILs where they involved their non-teaching staff and students for making announcements in the village for HE enrolment.

The FMs were also involved in intensive door-to-door campaigns in surrounding villages before admissions, pooling their own resources for such campaigns. In one HE, they adopted a creative method by hiring an autorickshaw with a pre-recorded message conveying the significance of

HE, targeting young people and their parents, especially of girls. The GCID FMs visibly made public presence by displaying posters and hoardings at bus-stops and at the college informing about admission dates with helpline numbers of teachers who volunteered to help students in online applications for enrolment in HE.

In short, it may be argued that while SU relied on individual, subject-focused, and their own social network mediated outreach, the GCID, GC-A, and GC-B demonstrated faculty-led but institution-oriented outreach that was diverse and aimed at increasing enrolments. Importantly, these initiatives illustrate how, in the absence of formal state support, colleges are improvising strategies that range from personal persuasion to other campaigns.

7.5 Synthesis of RQ1d: who are the students and what are their experiences/perceptions of HE outreach?

A total of 480 UG students were surveyed in both SU and GCID. Out of these, 279 students were from SU and 201 belonged to GCID. The two institutions serve very different student profiles. SU attracts students from a more diverse socio-economic and urban–rural mix. In GCID, an overwhelming 90 percent are rural students, while in SU, the ratio of rural urban students is almost equal. Gender patterns also differ. The SU enrolments are balanced between boys and girls students, while in GCID, it is in favour of male students to a ratio of 62:38.

Socially, GCID serves a higher proportion of students from disadvantaged and backward castes, reflecting its role in widening access for marginalized groups and more particularly for girl students. In GCID, the proportion of SC girl students is 47 percent while this proportion is 32 percent among boys. In SU, the majority of students are non-SC and non-OBCs. Here, the social composition is almost similar among boys and girl students. Overall, their composition suggests that rural colleges are largely catering to the higher education needs of socially disadvantaged sections of society. It needs mention that government colleges have low tuition fee and also provide financial assistance in the form of scholarship to socially disadvantaged students, likely significantly influencing enrolment demographics. The students from affluent backgrounds in rural areas generally prefer to enroll in urban private colleges. (It needs mention that the admissions are centralised in Haryana, i.e. for all government and private colleges, the centralised lists are prepared by Directorate, Higher education and HEIs are supposed to admit students as per list).

The WAHEI survey data reveals that an overwhelming majority of GCID students are from economic background with less than 25,000 monthly family income. In contrary to this, the SU students are from diverse economic background. In SU, 33 percent belonged to affluent families with more than one lakh monthly family income, while 20 percent belonged to low monthly family income of less than 25,000. Another 20 percent each belonged to lower middle- and middle-income group.

The family educational background of students reveal that fathers are better educated in comparison to their mothers in both the HEIs. The parents' education is relatively better for SU students as compared to GCID students. It is noteworthy that grandparents of SU students are also a little better educated as compared to GCID students. So, it may be assumed that, for the majority of SU students, higher education enrolment was a more accepted choice as their parents had accessed higher education. This generational advantage makes higher education a more "natural" choice for many SU students, whereas for GCID students, entry into HEIs often represents a first-generation transition in higher education.

When it comes to outreach and guidance, students in both institutions report limited involvement of teachers in influencing their enrolment decisions. The students' perception for outreach activities conducted by HEIs on the basis of survey data suggests that 65 percent of students in SU and 50 percent of students in GCID are of the view that outreach activities are conducted by HEIs. Though half of surveyed students in GCID mentioned that college faculty guidance is significant once they reach the college before or after enrolment and only a small minority credit faculty guidance as decisive before admission.

It was noted that digital exclusion was much more in case of GCID students hence their HE enrolment choices were restricted to either peer group interaction or on hearsay from neighbours, relatives or to college visit, etc. In comparison to this, among SU students, the HE information was sourced through YouTube, social media campaigns and also interaction with teachers, in addition to their parental and siblings' understanding of higher education institutions.

Across both institutions, students highlighted a need for more structured guidance. This includes advice on whether to pursue higher education at all, how to choose suitable courses, navigating the admission process, and understanding campus safety. Similarly, the exam preparation guidance was another important issue (mentioned by 8 percent of students in each HEI) on which students need guidance from HEIs. The GCID students reportedly suggested that visit to HE campus is a much needed activity which may be organised by HE institutions to attract rural students.

In sum, SU students tend to come from relatively privileged educational and economic backgrounds with broader access to digital information, while GCID plays a critical role in expanding opportunities for socially and economically disadvantaged rural youth. However, both groups would benefit from stronger, more proactive outreach and guidance mechanisms from HEIs.

7.6 Preliminary views on RQ2: How can the potential contribution of rural and semi-urban college faculty members to fair HE access and choice be consolidated and maximised?

The study highlights that FMs are not only central to the teaching–learning process but are the most valuable assets when it comes to outreach, as they have the knowledge, skills and passion to deliver quality education and services to the prospective and current students. This suggests a benefit to involving them in every stage of the outreach process, from planning and designing, to implementing and assessing. Seeking their input and feedback and encouraging them to share their ideas and suggestions could add significant value. Moreover, by creating a culture of collaboration and innovation, where FMs feel valued and empowered to make a difference, their potential can be further harnessed.

Evidence from the field also indicates that many FMs are willing to go beyond their formal duties to contribute to educational outreach, reflecting a spirit of volunteerism. Therefore, the FMs and ILs in HEIs can create a culture that encourages staff and faculty to volunteer their time and expertise for educational outreach. This can be done by offering flexible scheduling or incentives to support their involvement, and also by emphasizing the benefits of giving back to the community and the fulfilment that comes from making a positive difference in the lives of

others. Similarly, documenting and celebrating success stories of faculty-led outreach—through newsletters, websites or social media—can serve not only as recognition of their efforts but also as inspiration for fellow FMs.

The study also suggests that while enthusiasm exists, FMs may benefit from training and institutional support to sharpen outreach skills and ensure that efforts are well-coordinated.

7.7 Preliminary views on RQ3: How can a consolidated HE access/choice role for faculty members be embedded at a policy level to ensure sustainable change?

A consolidated role for faculty in widening access to higher education and supporting informed student choice can only be sustained if it is embedded at the policy level in a way that integrates guidance into the core functioning of HEIs.

The study highlights that there are several factors that affect the effectiveness of outreach in HE. In order to make outreach practices sustainable there should be some provision of availability of funds with the HEIs to carry out outreach activities. FMs, during survey, voiced emphatically that outreach activities require resources, and without financial support HEIs struggle to make themselves visible to potential students, particularly those from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds.

Instead of contractual faculty in HEIs, there should be appointments on a regular, permanent basis so that the feeling of belonging within HEIs and students develops, consequently creating accountability towards HEIs. A policy can be framed towards providing training to the FMs regarding sensitizing the significance of outreach for rural/disadvantaged students to ensure that outreach is inclusive and meaningful.

Greater emphasis needs to be placed on building early and sustained linkages between schools and HEIs. More twinning programmes should be organised to expose students to higher education pathways at an early stage and motivate them to aspire for HE enrolment. HEIs can also play a proactive role by organising open days, seminars and workshops where senior

secondary teachers and students are invited to interact directly with HEI faculty, explore the range of courses offered, and admission process, financial assistance, etc.

To ensure sustainability, such activities should not be confined to a small group of FMs but should involve FMs from diverse disciplines on a rotational basis, engaging both senior and younger FMs. This approach prevents the exercise from becoming routine or monotonous, while also creating a culture of shared responsibility across departments and enhancing the collective impact of outreach initiatives.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Conclusions

As part of methodology, four HEIs namely one state university and three government colleges, affiliated to the SU were selected. In this process, the researchers came into contact with four institutional leaders, 101 FMs, and 480 students from SU and GCIDs. All four institutional leaders and 20 FMs were interviewed from all four selected HEI. Besides this, 12 students were interviewed and 4 focus group discussions were carried out.

The project has been a very engaging and learning experience for the team members. This has led to an enhanced understanding on higher education access and outreach needs of students from diverse socio-economic background living in rural, semi-urban places. It also made us understand the potential role of HEIs and FMs in mitigating the challenges of students from diverse background. The project adopted a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches in data collection, which included canvassing of semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and solicited diary entries. Though well explained in project workshops, the team initially was skeptical of data through solicited diary method, as this method not only required the long-term participation of FMs, (i.e. 10 weeks) but also the plurality involved in the method of interview-diary-interview. The implementation of solicited diary indeed was a pleasant surprise as it provided much required context specific details. Further, the success of the solicited diary interview method lies in its plurality of approach i.e. interview-diary-interview. The first interview was to introduce the project to the participants and make them comfortable and persuading them to write down their experience of counselling students which they had been practicing, without keeping a record of it. The diary itself was structured so the FMs did not have to make long entries. The post diary interview was very useful in extracting comprehensive information. In fact, it would have been difficult to obtain the information if only one element of the method was applied, i.e. only interview or only writing the diary pages. The team could learn the wider application of this qualitative method of data collection (solicited dairy) in future work.

The learning experience was not limited to the team members. The project has left an indelible mark on those FMs who were recruited for the solicited diary method. All who kept the diary expressed that they had enhanced understanding of higher education access and outreach

issues. They felt more involved and engaged during the process of keeping diary. The FMs reported that they empathized more intensively with the students as compared to their early interaction episodes with them. This resonates with the findings of CPRHE Research Paper 20 (Sabharwal et al., 2025), which highlights the central role of faculty members in outreach and guidance for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The majority of FMs reported that they reassessed their advising role meaning thereby that they reflected on their own behaviour and expressed that it made them a better person. Though counselling and advising students was a routine activity previously, their participation in the project made them feel their potential and the significance in society.

At the institution level, the study brought out certain facts which are as follows:

1. In state university, no organised and coordinated efforts are in practice for outreach activities where students from diverse background are guided to enroll. The SU faculty are making efforts at individual levels and it varies. It was however, realised that FMs who were more active in public life were being approached by diverse people as compared to the ones who were engrossed exclusively in their academic activities. The interaction with the SU institutional leader led them to appreciate the need of institutional outreach activities and agreed to participate and enact in policy implementation in this regard. The findings are in consonance with other studies in case of Haryana and in Delhi on similar theme. (Stewart et al., 2024; Sabharwal et al., 2025)
2. It was realised that the institutional leaders of government colleges (GCIDs) were very much aware of the need of HE outreach and ILs were engaged in enacting the spread of HE in a varied and organised manner. The ILs were involving FMs in making their institution visible by putting posters/hoardings, involving FMs through various teams to visit schools and increasing enrolment in various courses.

The project also helped in recognizing the students' perspective and interpret their experiences for choices and enrolment in higher education. The perception of students in social and physical aspects of HEIs is crucial in their engagement and retention. The discussion with students did highlight anticipated challenges relating to the centralized admission, digital divide, affordability/ financial challenges for professional courses, and employability etc.

Overall, the project served as a transformative learning experience, illustrating how theoretical frameworks can inform practical interventions. It inspired a lasting commitment to advancing inclusive education, both at the institutional level and among individual team members.

8.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the primary survey and intensive interview with ILs, FMs and students:

Institutional Leaders:

- ILs need to be empowered financially and feel engaged to carry out the outreach activities.

Faculty Members:

- Instead of ad hoc/temporary/contractual FMs, the ones who are regular would carry out the outreach activities with greater responsibility and passion because they have a long-term stake in the institution and stronger accountability to its goals.
- The training of FMs need to be mandatory on rotation basis regarding sensitizing the significance of outreach for rural/disadvantaged students.
- The seminar or workshop may be made a regular feature organised by the colleges/University where diverse FMs (from diverse courses) participate.

Higher Educational Institutions:

- The existing HEIs in rural and semi-urban locations need to be made visible by highlighting their courses offered, specialised faculty etc.
- The admission needs to be decentralised and must be conducted at the concerned HEI level (instead of one centralised application at DHE level) in order to overcome the existing information lag and widening the choices of rural students.
- An offline admission and application process should be maintained alongside the online system to ensure accessibility for students who face digital barriers. The offline admission/application process, which has been discontinued need to be in practice in addition to online process of application.
- The digital divide needs to be addressed (i) by encouraging in-person application process along virtual, as many students still do not have internet facility to apply online. Instead, they can visit the college, take hardcopy application form, fill it and submit it in the

college itself (which was in practice before the centralised online application/admission which started in 2018); (ii) more of outreach activities.

- Building a strong bridge between college/University teachers and higher secondary school teachers is required.

Policy Makers:

- The financial hardships for professional and self-financed courses need to be looked into (the competition of professional courses being offered by public universities and colleges at equivalent fee structure of private universities).

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