**PhD: A reason for frustration for middle-class/poor bright students**

***Abstract-*** *This article is just a personal statement about PhD scenarios in India. All are written based on my personal experience. Maybe I am wrong, but I cannot stop myself from expressing. To me, a PhD is just like a market product nowadays. Is it good for our society? Or it is harming the education system?*

**Keywords:** PhD, Frustration, Nepotism, Recruitment, Lobbies

For those who love studies, getting a degree becomes like an addiction. Traditionally, one such degree that places people in a good position in higher education is the Ph.D. or Doctor of Philosophy. Different countries have different concepts or ideas about obtaining this PhD degree. But I will highlight the scenarios of only India or West Bengal in this article. This is written entirely from my personal experience. I have seen them happen. I have a lot of pain in writing this. I am sorry if anyone is getting hurt after reading this article.

First, those who love academics have a dream of teaching in a school or in a college, or in a university. There was a time when this dream was successful for many people but nowadays it seems to be very difficult. Competition or various reasons are behind it. I will tell you about some things that I have seen happen with my own eyes.

Once, a graduation or master's degree was enough to teach students in schools/colleges/universities. But in the context of India or West Bengal, this picture has changed radically over the last 20 years. The main reason for this is the growth of private educational institutions along with government institutions in various ways. Many of the private educational institutions do not provide adequate quality of education or they have proper infrastructure yet people enroll in them. I will highlight more about the Ph.D. because many people in our society have the idea that a doctorate title next to the name will bring much more respect. So anyway, it must be done from one place. Many respected academicians on this subject have criticized the declining quality of research, in a society filled with mediocrity, but very few have come forward to solve the issue. Because many of their students are working in these private universities. If they protest, their face value will lost.

In India, upon completion of the master's or during the second semester of the master's A student must appear in NET, SET, SLATE, GATE, or RET or Research Entrance Test organized by the institute to get admission to Ph.D. There are two types of posts in the NET exam. One is for a lecturership or assistant professorship and another one is junior research fellowship. NET JRF qualifiers get a monthly stipend and after conducting two years of research they are promoted to a Senior research fellowship. Whether NET LS and SET qualified candidates are the same in this respect. Though SET is only valid for a particular state. They can pursue PhD with institutional fellowship only. This is a little different in the case of the GATE exam or other reputed university entrance exams. Now let us come to the real thing. Now all the students who passed the NET or SET or GATE exam, some of them got admission in the institution of their choice and some of them did not. They seem to have taken their careers in a different direction. We have had this thing here before, still have it, and will have it here in the future. It is desirable to have this because without this diversity society will not progress. Let us say here that even in the case of getting admission to the institution of your choice, nepotism works, and those who are not able to pass the NET or SET with their own merit, the professors of the university also ask the research entrance question of their university. And a group of students who have talent and money is not in favor of staying in this country at all. They are seen taking exams like the GRE or TOEFL and going abroad. Now I share my matter, I also had results, and got offers from various foreign universities but did not go due to financial and family conditions not being compatible. Foreign universities always charge higher fees for international students and getting a full scholarship is a matter of luck. I have also seen here, all the places where there is a full scholarship there are also lobbies of bureaucrats or professors working. There is no fee to apply to universities abroad, especially in London. I did so. I also got an offer. Not one but many. But they said I must clear English qualification. I told them that at that moment I did not have enough money to take that exam, and I gave enough proof of that. Moreover, completed all the alternative formalities but they did not listen to any of my pleas. I received such bad behavior from a World’s first-class university. Maybe it was not in their rulebook but do you know what happens here? Talent is lost to money. This is not the story of mine, this is story of many other students. Many people here will ask you were poor, why did you like to go abroad? You could also give NET/SET or take the job test. Let me tell them that I did not have the mindset to do a government job, nor did I have the time to prepare because I needed a job urgently that I would not have been able to support my family. Hence, I was forced to join a job from the college recruitment drive. Why didn't I go to the net set? I heard from many seniors that even though they are NET junior research fellows, they do not get regular monthly payments. This is still common in India. Even in top most research institutes. Anyway, they had someone to support them, but I had to take responsibility for my family, so I lost interest in that aspect as well. Later, I must add that while working, I cleared the WBSET exam and completed my professional doctorate from a foreign university. I enrolled during COVID time and collected data through various online forums. That is why most recruiters think my degree is invalid in the Indian context. I can not make it clear that online data collection, and writing a research paper is still one kind of research but they avoid me. UGC in India does not grant any kind of remote research. I do not know why. Many organizations and many foreign bodies are providing doctoral courses even top-class universities from all over the World support & accept remote research but in India, the recruiters do not. The greatest joke is here that many private universities as well as government universities are now offering part-time PhD with higher fees (4-5 lacs package minimum) in India. In many cases, the enrolled scholars are doing remote research there. But when it is done from a foreign accredited university, it becomes disapproved in India. Some companies are there who are doing business by writing a thesis for PhD enrolled candidates.

OK leaving everything, what about my job? I got my degree and now I must get a job. But now I talk about all the toxicity of the recruitment atmosphere in India. Specifically, in all the universities professors are practicing lobbies. Not all are bad but a maximum of them are doing it. Nepotism is very common here. Frankly speaking, in some cases respected male professors are taking advantage of female students to meet their frustration or biological needs. If I am not considering government colleges or Universities, it is common in private universities too. I have a research plan; I want to contribute to academia as well as in research but can not get. In our state, recruitment from the government side is not familiar and not common. They release notifications within a 5-8-year gap and without a competent political source or lobby getting a position is quite hard. It is observed that people without PhDs are getting recruited because of providing money to the competent authorities. In private universities or colleges, this becomes very common practice day after day. Now the question is, what can I do with my degree? How can I utilize it? Therefore, it seems clear that NET or SET qualification or a PhD does not guarantee a job in the academic sector in India. Moreover, UGC has recently started a specific portal named Professor of Practice for industry experts. But the same condition applies to there. I do not know, where I am going.

This article is based on all my observations and experiences. Therefore, treat this as a paper of statement and hereby I am not giving any references. I request my government to please investigate the matter & stop nepotism. Stop practicing lobbies in the name of recruitment. To maintain quality in academia, please hear the voices of candidates as well as budding researchers. I want my India as a hub of Nobel laureates. I know, my India has talents. Please, respect Indian scholars, respect Indian Postdocs, respect the dream of the younger generation. Give flexibility in research and create more opportunities. So, we can together make our nation proud.

From this article researchers can do research on the following topics-

1. Is having a Ph.D. a reason for frustration now a days?
2. Recruitment practices in Indian colleges and Universities
3. Possibilities of Indian PhDs
4. Impact of Indian post-docs & post-doc faculties in the research atmosphere in India
5. Online University vs Offline University
6. Impact of remote PhDs in India
7. Job market in INDIA after PhD
8. PhD & unemployment