

Issue Corrigendum to Revoke the Reactionary Changes!!

The prospectus for the admission for academic session 2016-17 shows that the deprivation points model has been changed. We have come to know that this change has come in the light of the recommendations of the Ajay Patnaik Committee. The final proposal which was sent by the administration to the chairpersons of centres and the dean of schools was finalized in December, 2015 (with signature of the JNUSU President, as well). Any change of this scale required elaborate discussion among the wider student community. On the contrary, what has been surprising is that not even a council meeting was held on the issue. The committee to look into the deprivation points was formed in 2014 and deliberations were being held with union leadership. This is a serious lapse on the part of the current and previous JNUSU leadership which could have been avoided and in the future such mistakes should not be repeated while dealing with issues as important and consequential as this.

It is noteworthy that the 'deprivation points' are the backbone of the admission policy in JNU and it is the prime reason which ensured that JNU could never become what the ruling classes had wanted it to become. It was the JNU Student movement which radically altered this vision of the ruling class and broadened the scope of JNU's admission policy to give space to the students belonging to deprived sections.

Deprivation Points: Old and New Model

At first look at the new system seems to be an improvement over the earlier one. Indeed the differentiated model of the regional deprivation points is something which should be welcome and is in fact a reflection of the reality of the student's composition. The earlier system awarded deprivation points to students on the basis of whether they passed their last qualifying exam in a quartile district or not with no consideration for the education history of the student. This excessive reliance on the last qualifying exam did not address regional deprivation that students hailing from backward regions had to overcome due to their schooling or non-qualifying formal education which laid the basis for their qualifying education. This system had resulted in a situation where the number of students availing quartile based deprivation points in M.Phil/Ph.d admissions amounted to only 3.7% of the total intake in that program in 2014. The same figure for Masters program stood at 8.4% and the for Bachelors program the figure stood 42.4%. The differentiated system can help in improving the inclusiveness of the admissions to Masters programs as well as M.Phil/Ph.d programs.

Old model (Max: 10) Regional Deprivation (based on the place of last qualifying examination)		New Model (Max:10) Regional Deprivation (a differentiated model)		
		10th/12th	UG	PG
Q1	5	3	2	1
Q2	3	2	1	1
NQ	0	0	0	0
Gender Deprivation: 5 All female candidates :5		Gender Deprivation: 4 All female/ transgender candidates who have studied in Q1/Q2 districts at any point of time : 4 All female/ transgender candidates from non-quartile districts: 2		

But parallel to this change has been the change in the gender component of the deprivation points from earlier 5 to now 4 in quartile districts and from 5 to 2 in non-quartile districts. This is something which has been made without any basis. This seems to be based on the assumption that the gender balance will remain intact and the differentiated deprivation points will somehow shift the region and class imbalance. What will be the actual impact though? Let us take for example how the new model will impact the admission from the perspective of gender balance of the campus. In order to assess the impact we will require identifying the shift in the relative advantage of the girl students.

Relative advantage for Female candidates over male candidates

The above comparison between male candidates and female/transgender candidates with identical regional educational backgrounds shows that the advantage for female/transgender candidates has been reduced. In the new model, points allocated for female/transgender belonging to non-quartile areas have been reduced. If the committee intended to increase the proportion of women from quartile areas in the total university intake by this reduction of points allotted to female/transgender from the non-quartile areas, there should have been a parallel increase of deprivation points allotted to female/transgender

from quartile areas. But this has not happened. Deprivation points for female/transgender from quartile areas have been reduced from five to four. Thus it is possible that men from both the quartile and non-quartile areas will benefit from the reduction of points allotted to women from non-quartile areas.

	M.Phil./ Ph.D. Admissions (In terms of deprivation points)	M.A. Admissions (In terms of deprivation points)	B.A. Admissions (In terms of deprivation points)
In Non- Quartile Districts	5 (old) 2 (new)	5 (old) 2 (new)	5 (old) 2 (new)
In Quartile Dis-tricts	5 (old) 4 (new)	5 (old) 4 (new)	5 (old) 4 (new)

Hasty implementation by the University

The members of the committee were themselves surprised when the university implemented the new rules. The legality of the new rules are also not clear. While all members of the Academic council have been sent a copy of the new rules, there was no further deliberation or a formal ratification of the new rules. The hasty nature of the implementation is clear from the fact that the software for online application has not been updated according to the present policy. Students are still asked to only fill the information regarding their last place of admission. The rules have also not been publicized enough creating further confusion.

The committee members believe that the new rules will allow them to experiment to see if the new rules result in increased intake from quartile areas. But instead of experimenting with the new rules, they could have had experiments with the data available from the previous admissions and see if any changes are possible with the new rules. Hypothetical situations could have been constructed to see the impact the new rules would have had in previous admission processes. But nothing of this nature was conducted.

Unhealthy changes for B.A. admissions

The university has also further changed their policies for the admission in B.A. This has happened without any consultation with the students. While students could apply for any three foreign languages previously, now the subjects have been divided into three clusters and students can apply for three subjects from only two clusters thereby limiting the options. Further, the syllabus for B.A. have been changed. About 75% of the questions now deal with English aptitude of the students. This will create further hindrances for students from deprived and rural backgrounds. We strongly feel that these changes have to be revoked.

Issue Corrigendum

While the progressive changes in the new quartiles rules have to be kept, we believe that the university should issue a corrigendum to partially change the unhealthy recommendations in the new rules given in the prospectus. A corrigendum is issued in newspapers when the details which are already in public domain have to be changed. While a large debate is needed regarding the various nuances of the new quartile rule, there is clear discrimination met out at some categories.

- 1) Students applying for B.A from quartile districts will be getting either 2 or 3 points. This is a reduction from the previous 5 points granted and thus will directly impact the intake in BA from quartile districts. This has to be revoked and the students applying from quartile districts for B.A should be given the points previously granted.
- 2) The reduction of gender deprivation points for women have to be revoked. Women from both non- quartile and quartile districts should be given the previous 5 points.
- 3) The changes with respect to B.A admission which include the new cluster system and the syllabus which emphasis on English aptitude have to be taken back.

Dipsita Dhar
(President, SFI, JNU)

Srabani Chakraborty
(Joint Secretary, SFI, JNU)

Reject the Reduction in Deprivation point!!
Reject Cluster System in BA Admission!!
Undue emphasize proficiency in English!!

Join JNUSU's

Protest Demo

12 April 2016 (Tuesday) 2 PM @ Ad. Block

11 April 2016

SFI