

Chapter VI

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

Introduction:

With the acceptance of democracy as a way of life, the Indian society has been trying its best to make each and every section of the society to participate in its goal directed activities. To have this wider participation it has provided for the ideal of equality of opportunities to all, in all spheres of life. The target is to make education upto the age of 6 to 14 ~~free and compulsory~~ free and compulsory. And yet we can see that the upper caste-class-groups in the society (the 'Haves' in the society) have gained substantially and have bettered their position while the 'have nots' especially the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have comparatively not progressed.

The 1971 census figures show that inspite of the tremendous industrial growth in the district of Baroda the literacy figures for the SC/ST are not encouraging. They are an eye opener when we consider that these groups constitute 30 per cent of the total population of the district. In the case of ST the percentage has shown downward trend. Ninety-six per cent of their women-folk are still illiterate.

Statement of the problem:

This study aims at listing some of the educational problems of the SC/ST High school and college students of Baroda District.

The Problem:

The title of the study therefore reads "Educational problems of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes of Baroda District".

Objectives of the Study:

The study aims at fulfilling the following objectives.

- (1) To study the educational problems of the SC/ST students arising out of their socio-economic environment.
- (2) To study the level of aspiration of the SC/ST students.
- (3) To study the emotional difficulties of the SC/ST students with regard to their studies.
- (4) To study the perception of the school and the school task by the SC/ST students.
- (5) To study the attitudes of parents and teachers with regard to the education of the SC/ST students.
- (6) To find out whether there are differences in the aspirations, diffidence, rejection, self-conception, perception of the school and the perception

of the teacher of the SC/ST students grouped according to:-

- (a) Father's/Guardian's education;
 - (b) Father's/Guardian's occupation;
 - (c) Mother's education;
 - (d) Size of the family;
 - (e) No. of earning members in the family;
 - (f) No. of non-earning members in the family;
 - (g) Facilities available in the house; and
 - (h) Relatives staying outside the village.
- (7) To find out whether there are differences in the difficulties experienced by the SC/ST students in their school subjects, as against the other students, school subjects like
- (a) Gujarati (c) Science and
 - (b) Mathematics (d) Social studies.

Review of Literature:

There has been a number of studies which tried to explain the problems of education of these groups at the national as well as the state level. Koppiker (1956), Dasgupta (1963), Sackchidananda (1967), Kaul (1967), Ambast (1970), Srivastava (1971), and Azad (1976) focus their attention on the socio-economic aspects of the group and show that poor economic conditions, acute poverty, excessive involvement in household work, in-

effectiveness of the legal restrictions with regard to the age at marriage (the practice of early marriage in these groups) and the isolation of these groups broadly hinder their education.

Psychological Aspects:

Dasgupta (1963), Sharma and Sapra (1969), Sachchidananda (1967), Mehta (1976), Rath (1976), and Gad (1976) have focussed their attention on the psychological factors which hinder the education of the SC/ST students. Under the psychological factors they have listed the following: the lack of co-operation between school and home; the apathetic attitude of parents; lack of ambitions; partial indifference; the low self esteem and inferiority feeling; low aspirations and the parents belief as to education shall corrupt their children. These psychological factors hinder their education.

Pedagogical Factors:

Mehta (1976), Rath (1974), Srivastava and others (1967), Dantwala (1976), Deutch (1965), Dasgupta (1963), Srivastava (1967), Ambasht (1970), Hilda, Taba and Elkins (1966), Riessman (1962), and Benjamin Bloom (1970) have focussed their attention on the pedagogical factors. There are lower cognitive development of the children leading to

cumulative deficit phenomenon which becomes more marked in higher classes, absence of proper medium of instruction, textbooks unsuited to the level of students, lack of physical facilities, negative attitude of the teachers towards these children, dearth of trained teachers in these areas, poor speech habits and language patterns in the home. These pedagogical factors hinder their education.

The present study tries to consider two levels of SC/ST students namely the secondary and college and tries to pinpoint the various aspects influencing education of the SC/ST, such as the socio-economic conditions, the attitudes of the parents' towards education of their children and the teachers' attitude towards these SC/ST students which constitute an educational environment. These environmental conditions which may help or hinder education of the SC/ST students, these conditions in their turn may influence the psychic aspects of the SC/ST students.

Definitions of the Basic Terms:

- (i) Educational Problems: All the hindrances caused by the socio-economic, psychological and pedagogical aspects of the people belonging to SC/ST in their education are considered as educational problems in this study.
- (ii) Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes: All the children born and brought up in the castes which

are legally approved by the Gujarat state as belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribes at the time of this study in Baroda District (See Appendix 'G/H')

The Population of the Study:

The population of the study consists of

- (a) All the High/school and college students belonging to SC/ST in Baroda District (excluding Baroda city).
- (b) All the parents of the above students, and
- (c) All the teachers working in these schools and colleges.

Selection of the Sample:

- (a) Students: All the Secondary schools and colleges of Baroda District (excluding Baroda city) were serially arranged (There are 145 secondary schools and 3 colleges in the district). A ten per cent sample was selected using the random sampling technique. The sample thus consisted of fifteen High schools and one college. All the students of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes studying in these schools and colleges, were included in the sample.
- (b) Parents: All the parents of the sample students constituted the sample of parents.

- (c) Teachers: A sample of twenty-five per cent of teachers teaching in these institutions were selected in the same manner, but a special care was taken here to see that one of those 25 per cent teachers, is the principal/head of the institute.

The Tools:

In collecting data for the study, separate questionnaires were used for students, parents and teachers.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The following procedure was adopted for the analysis and interpretation of data.

- I. The socio-economic background of the students, their parents and teachers is examined as 'Educational Environment for the SC/ST students.

The following aspects were considered and examined as 'educational environment' of the SC/ST students:

- (i) Age of the Father/Guardian
- (ii) Education of the Father/Guardian
- (iii) Occupation of the Father/Guardian
- (iv) Income of the Father
- (v) Parents' attitude towards education
- (vi) Parent's assessment of the capabilities of their children.

- (vii) Parents' interest in the day-to-day school work of their children.
- (viii) The students' home conditions as -
 - (a) No. of members in the family
 - (b) No. of earning members in the family
 - (c) No. of non-earners in the family
 - (d) No. of handicapped members in the family
 - (e) Facilities available in the house
 - (f) Member of family living outside village
 - (g) Intra-family relations
 - (h) Inter-family relations
 - (i) Time devoted to study (school home work)
 - (j) Availability of educational facilities.
- (ix) The characteristics of teachers -
 - (a) Sex of the teacher
 - (b) Age of the teacher
 - (c) Marital status of the teacher
 - (d) Caste background of the teacher
 - (e) Educational background of the teacher in terms of rural/urban orientation.
 - (f) Specific experience/Training in working in backward areas.
 - (g) Knowledge of the customs and traditions of the SC/ST of the region.
 - (h) Their attitude towards SC/ST expressed through their recommendations of their students for different occupational trainings.

II. A chi square test was applied to find out the difference between socio-economic status of the SC/ST students and their aspirations, diffidence, rejection, self-conception, and their perception of the school and the teacher.

In order to apply the chi square test the following null hypotheses were developed.

- H₁ There is no difference between socio-economic status and aspirations of SC/ST students at .05 level of significance.
- H₂ There is no difference between socio-economic status and the feeling of diffidence amongst the SC/ST students at .05 level of significance.
- H₃ There is no difference between the socio-economic status and the feeling of rejection amongst the SC/ST students at .05 level of significance.
- H₄ There is no difference between the socio-economic status and self-conception of the SC/ST students at .05 level of significance.
- H₅ There is no difference between the socio-economic status and the perception of the school of the SC/ST students at .05 level of significance.
- H₆ There is no difference between the socio-economic status and the perception of the teacher of the SC/ST students at .05 level of significance.

III. Teachers' opinion about the difficulties experienced by the SC/ST students in variety of aspects of different school subjects in comparison to the difficulties experienced by other students. Subjects and the various aspects therein were:-

(a) Gujarati:

- (i) Pronunciation
- (ii) Reading
- (iii) Writing
- (iv) Comprehension.

(b) Mathematics:

- (i) Understanding the numerical concepts.
- (ii) Understanding the concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- (iii) Practical use of mathematical concepts.

(c) Science:

- (i) Understanding the theoretical concepts.
- (ii) Knowledge and use of simple apparatus.
- (iii) Personal Health and Hygiene.
- (iv) Social Health and Hygiene
- (v) Knowing the living environment.

(d) Social Studies

- (i) Understanding the importance of social living.
- (ii) Knowledge of agricultural activities.

(iii) Understanding the means of communications.

(iv) Development of the habit of self reliance.

This data was analysed with the help of computed means for the difficulties.

The following were the assumptions:

- (1) The socio-economic background of the SC/ST students, the attitude and interest of the parents in their education and the teachers' social background and their attitude towards SC/ST students will help or hinder their education.
- (2) The socio-economic background of the SC/ST students may affect their aspirations, diffidence, rejection and self-conception which will further affect their perception of the school and the teacher.

Major Findings:

- (1) Majority of the fathers/Guardians of the SC/ST students are below the age of 45 (85 per cent). This is one positive aspect because they are likely to work hard to earn more with a view to give education to their wards.
- (2) A majority of the fathers/guardians have 'no education'. These parents and those with some primary education upto IV Standard together constitute more than 82 per cent of the total parents. These parents cannot help the students in their day-to-day homework or provide any inspiration to them to pursue their education.

- (3) Nearly 95 per cent of the parents of the SC/ST students are engaged in agriculture and a large majority of them are daily wage earners. Also those who are engaged in agriculture, a majority of them own land less than five acres. Even their income is barely upto Rs.1200/- per annum. Taking all these three things, which tell upon their economic condition, it can be safely said that the economic condition of the parents of the SC/ST is ⁱⁿ no way favourable to bear the financial burden of education of their children. *into consideration*
- (4) The mother, in the house, plays an important part in the socialization of the children. Majority of them are below the age of 40 years (80 per cent). They can provide an atmosphere in the home and encourage them in their studies. But more than 95 per cent of them have either no education or have studied only upto IV standard. They, therefore, cannot show any interest and cannot guide their children in their studies. Again 76 per cent of them have to attend the house duties and have to work on daily wages to support the family. As such these SC/ST students are deprived of any kind of tender encouragement in their studies from their mothers.
- (5) The parents have a positive attitude towards education of their children (72 per cent). But a significant number of parents (28 per cent) do not show a positive attitude towards education. And in case of some adverse economic conditions, these children would be the most likely to leave their education.

- (6) The parents of the SC/ST students are doubtful about the capabilities of their children (67.73 per cent). This conservative assessment of the students' capabilities by their parents is likely to affect the education of these SC/ST students.
- (7) A majority of parents (62.2 per cent) show very little interest in the day-to-day school work of their children. With so many parents with 'no education' and leading a life of 'daily wage earner' we cannot expect any thing more from such parents. It clearly means one of the most important aspects of 'educational environment' (interest by the parents in the day-to-day school work) is very poor in the case of these SC/ST students.
- (8) The size of the family is also large in the case of these SC/ST students. Nearly 74 per cent of the families have more persons to feed. But there are ^{more} earning members also to compensate the economic liability. In nearly 72 per cent of the SC/ST families, they have two ~~or~~ or more members earning. And still we find that there are more 'dependents' than the family can support. In more than 80 per cent families there are three or more non-earners to be supported. Supporting a large number of dependents a substantial amount of earning is spent on food alone and very little is left for the education of the children.

- (9) In most of the houses of the SC/ST students (89 per cent), there are no facilities like, light, running water, lavatories, or separate space for study. For want of these facilities, they have to help themselves and have almost no energy left to mind their school home work.

With all these handicaps, these students have somehow or the other managed to continue their studies. Was it due to some kind of inducement from any relative staying outside the village and having some stable job? only 21.15 per cent have their relatives staying outside the village. So there is no inspiration from the relatives to these SC/ST students. But a large number of them have stated that they are encouraged by their neighbours. The encouragement from the neighbours is bound to be limited as they are also very likely ^{to be} from the SC/ST group. Which means, a large majority of them would be illiterate and as such cannot be expected to help these students in their difficulties in their studies except a kind of lip service.

In short the socio-economic condition of these SC/ST students, except in one or two instances like the age of the father/guardian and the relations with their neighbour, is not favourable to induce them to pursue their education.

The socio-economic condition may hinder their aspirations. It may also create a number psychological problems

which would in its turn hinder the education of these children. The major hinderances in the pursuit of education are the feelings of diffidence and rejection, the concept of 'self' and the perception of the school and the teacher.

- (10) The highest aspiration score for these SC/ST students is 35 and the lowest is 3 shows that there is a wide gulf between the aspirations of these students. Even the mean score for all the SC/ST students is 25.34 (as against 36 which was considered to be the ideal score). The group is in no way nearer to the ideal, indicates that they are not clear about their future.
- (11) In the case of diffidence the highest score is 33 and the lowest is zero. Thus we find that here too we have a wide range of variations. The mean for the whole group being 25.82. This clearly indicates that these students have some element of the feeling of diffidence.
- (12) In the case of rejection feeling, the highest score is 48 and the lowest is 8, while the mean for all the students being 40.96. This shows that though there are variations the number of students having greater amount of rejection feeling is very small and that is why the 'mean' is somewhat nearer to the ideal (48 mean). These students, inspite of their poor socio-economic background they ^{have} not lost their faith in life and they hold on the hope of 'improving' their condition. It is this aspect which explains the fact that inspite of all odds they have continued their education.

- (13) The highest score for self conception is 30 while the lowest is zero. The 'mean' for the whole group being 24.76 which is very much towards the ideal (30). This clearly indicates that barring a few exceptions these students have somewhat a clear image of themselves and as such they are at least aware of their strong and weak points. This will go a long way in their pursuit of education.
- (14) The SC/ST students have somewhat better perception of the school. Their 'mean' score being 64.21 (the ideal expected being 76). And this is also a positive sign.
- (15) But their perception of the teacher varies from 45 to zero and the mean for the whole group being 35.92 (as against 48 which is an ideal score). The mean score and also the variation are self explanatory. The teachers have not been able to present the right image of themselves. Their approach towards these students still continues to be the approach of the traditional teacher. And it is the perception of the teacher which can hinder their education.

The following were the findings of the study pertaining to the teachers who constituted part of the educational environment of these SC/ST students.

- (16) The schools are still male dominated. A large number of them (84.91 per cent) are male teachers. Considering the 'male dominated' pattern of Indian society on the one hand and the special

tender and sympathetic treatment needed to these SC/ST students on the other, it is very likely that these children would be 'afraid' of approaching the teacher for their personal or school/classroom problems. The male dominance in the school also explains why girls' education could not expand in this country.

- (17) All the teachers are 'trained' and also a majority of them are young, but very few of them have any specialized training in working in schools in backward areas. With the absence of such training, these teachers are unable to do any 'justice' to the specialized needs of these SC/ST students.
- (18) Majority of these teachers belong to the upper castes and have received their initial education in rural schools. As such they are expected to be aware of the rural problems and needs. But at the same time we know that the 'rural orientation' is more traditional than secular. So the traditional norms and the prejudices that they have internalized, are likely to hinder them in taking more interest in these students.
- (19) The influence of this 'prejudice' held by the teachers against this group (SC/ST) is seen in the list of names of the students, they have suggested for different occupational training. A large majority of them have suggested the names of the SC/ST students for the lower occupations like drivers/helpers etc. Not a single teacher has suggested a single name from the SC/ST students for the training of higher scientists

or higher industrial or occupational training. We cannot believe that not a single SC/ST student could be available in the whole of the district with at least a slightly above average intelligence. The teachers are influenced by the prejudices they have against these SC/ST students.

- (20) A majority of these teachers have worked in backward areas and so such, have some knowledge of the customs and traditions of these SC/ST people, is a good sign. But how far this experience and 'knowledge' about the customs and traditions of the SC/ST, would keep their prejudices under control is a question.

In short the 'teachers' barring a few exception, is weak link and cannot be said to provide an appropriate educational environment for these SC/ST students.

The chi square test applied to establish the difference between the socio-economic status of these SC/ST students and the various psychological aspects like aspiration, diffidence, rejection, self conception and the pedagogical aspects like the perception of the school and the perception of the teacher, shows that there is no significant difference at .05 level of significance. How can we explain this?

To explain this difference we have considered eight major aspects of the socio-economic status of these SC/ST

students namely, (i) Education of the father/guardian (ii) Occupation of the father/guardian (iii) Mother's education (iv) No. of members in the family (v) No. of earning members in the family (vi) No. of non-earning members in the family (vii) Facilities available in the house and (viii) Relative staying outside the village. These aspects were divided in different categories say for example we have considered education of the father/guardian and divided them into five different categories. These categories were selected for the sake of our analysis, same can be said about different aspects of the socio-economic background of these students. We do not find any difference, not because these are not significant, it simply means that the fact of isolation of the group, the economic hardships that they experience, the lack of educational traditions in the house, these and many others become prominent. And a little education here or a slight more income there does not show any difference.

The teachers' opinion about the various aspects of difficulties faced by these students in their school subjects as against the difficulties faced by other students clearly indicates that the students of the SC/ST in general have more difficulties in understanding the school subjects, especially the concepts are more abstract and the theme is above their cognitive map. But this is

not so when the topic is about the various agricultural operations or about the birds and animals around. It is the other student who find some difficulties.

Suggestions for Further Research and Administration:

- (1) The findings of the study shows that the socio-economic status of these SC/ST students does not show any impact on their aspirations but at the same time these students are ^{not} clear about the prerequisites for the fulfilment of these aspirations. The various courses available, the job opportunities that will accrue from such courses etc. have not reached to these students. The society should make an effort in that direction. In each and every school and college there should be at least one guidance teacher who would be ready to guide these students in those variety of courses.
- (2) The SC/ST students with various socio-economic background are almost on par in terms of feelings of diffidence and rejection, have the similar self conception and also perceive the school and teacher in the same manner shows that the bonds of the group and influence of the culture (of the SC/ST) of their own is so strong that any socio-economic variation has no impact on it. A deeper comparative study in this direction would go a long way in understanding the psychological barriers for this group.

- (3) The 'teachers' appear to be a weak link which has been shown in the analysis of their social background and also supported by the students' perception of the teacher, as shown by the mean score for this of the SC/ST students. The society will have to do something to give sufficient training to the teachers, particularly those who are working in these backward areas, and thereby make them aware of the special needs and problems of the people in these areas. The more sensitive the teacher to the needs and problems of this region better will be his image. This will go a long way in the attainment of the stated goals of the society, equality of educational opportunities and participation of all in all its goal directed (economic, social and cultural development) activities.
- (4) The topics prescribed should be within the cognitive map of the children at least in the initial stage. The content of the curriculum which is suited to the urban middle class children needs to be readjusted, to suit the cognitive needs of these children. An effort should be made to prescribe different types of textbooks for at least at the initial stage. Once they become familiar with the 'middle class world' (at least in the cognitive sense), we can have common textbooks for the SC/ST as well as other students.
- (5) The textbooks, the types of teachers required for these schools and the types of courses suitable for SC/ST high school and college students may be other areas of research.

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