

CHAPTER V

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

The U.K. and the U.S.A. are the oldest democracies of the world. Scholars here are more concerned with social inequality based on racial grounds. In the socialistic countries like, the Peoples' China, the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia etc. scholars are relatively more keen to understand the problem of social class. India is also beset with problems of the deprived and the disadvantaged sections of the society which seek more facilities to improve their lot. However, some indologists, political scientists, historians, sociologists and psychologists have for quite sometime been engaged in the study of inequalities and injustices inflicted upon people by those in power on the grounds of caste, creed and economic status.

The number of researches conducted in the area of Muslims, particularly in education is very meagre.

Studies in India

1. 'Datta (1)' studied the problem of social and economic compulsions behind communalism, in one town of Deccan. The study is based on field work and also goes into the educational status of Muslims.

The composition of population in the area of study is: Muslims 19,627 (45.4 percent); Hindus 18,806 (43.5 percent); Scheduled Castes 3,063 (7.1 percent); Christians 1,665 (3.9 percent) and Sikhs 61 (0.1 percent). But the typical status of Muslims in education may be viewed from the fact that the number of children attending the high school is not even one half of the total number of Hindu children.

Another conspicuous factor is that in the years 1960, 1965 and 1970 the percentage of school-going children shows a down-ward trend from 20 percent in 1960 to 12.2 percent in 1965 and to 10 percent in 1970. Their position at the college stage is no better as compared to schools. It rather exhibits the likewise pattern of decrease at all levels over the years.

Though the study is micro in character and does not diagnose the causes underlying the poor receptivity of education among Muslims, yet it makes abundantly clear that in their case utilization of educational opportunity is far from satisfactory.

2. 'Paras Ram (2)' conducted a research study on 'Muslim notions of themselves' at the Aligarh Muslim University. The responses may be categorized as follows:

Firstly, there were those who felt hurt on being called Muslims instead of Indians. They wanted to be accepted as simply Indians and nothing else like the rest of the population in India.

Secondly, it was generally held that Muslims were po

less educated and thus at a disadvantage in all walks of life as compared to non-Muslims.

Thirdly, it was pointed out that although they receive pin-pricks at the hands of the non-Muslims, yet they were nevertheless in no danger of being exterminated or expelled from India.

Fourthly, a small section of the interviewees expressed that they were not at all accepted by the non-Muslims in everyday life.

The study had many lapses in terms of design and thus conclusions drawn could not be generalized at all levels. It, however, indicates the trend of Muslim thinking.

3. 'Moinuddin (3)' examined in depth the 'Muslim Political Ideas in India (1919-1947)' which may be described below:

Firstly, the character of Muslim political ideas in India during (1919-1947) is determined by the Islamic medieval political traditions. These have essentially been authoritarian and unfavourable to independent political thinking.

Secondly, two mainstreams of Muslims' political thought, namely, the conservative and liberal, flow simultaneously and occasionally converge.

Thirdly, no Muslim in India could be described as a political theorist in the strict sense of the term.

Lastly, Muslims failed to produce modern political ideas, because they were largely bound by tradition, and even the modernists among them were never prepared to face realities.

Studies in the U.S.A.

The credit goes to the U.S.A. to introduce the subject of equality and study its implications in the class-room. The people have the abiding faith that success of democracy is concomitant to the equality of education imparted by the nations' schools. The most important studies of the decade which throw light on the controversial problem 'equality of educational opportunities' are discussed below:

1. 'Coleman's study (4) Equality of Educational Opportunity' was conducted in response to section 402 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which aimed at finding out the lack of availability of equal educational opportunities for individuals of different ethnic groups. It included six ethnic groups: Negroes, American Indians, Oriental Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans and Whites.

The study focussed its attention on the questions listed below:

- (i) The first is the extent to which the racial and ethnic groups are segregated from one another in the public schools.
- (ii) The second is whether the schools offer equal educational opportunities in terms of a number of other criteria which are regarded as good indicators of educational quality.

- (iii) The third major question is addressed to how much the students learn as measured by their performance on standardized achievement tests.
- (iv) The fourth is attempt to discern possible relations between students' achievement on the one hand, and kinds of schools they attend on the other (5).

Findings

Some of the important findings of the study are as under:

It is reported that a majority of American children irrespective of their ethnicity or race attend segregated schools. There are 97 percent Whites at grade I and 99 percent Whites at grade XII which attend schools that are 80 percent or more White. However, in the case of Negroes 67 percent at grade I and 66 percent at grade XII attend schools which have 80 percent or more Negro pupils.

The achievement of minority pupils increases if they are put with school-mates with strong educational backgrounds.

There are real and definite differences between the schools attended by minorities and those attended by the major community. Minority communities have poor laboratories, few books per student in libraries, texts are less often in sufficient supply and practically few extra-curricular activities which promote academic growth. The Negro suffers from disadvantages as he grows up in a cultural world of deprivation and is exposed to an inferior kind of schooling.

Aspirations and motivations play a special role in the outcome of education and stimulate the child towards further education and achievement. The Negro pupils report high level of motivation, interest and aspiration. This suggests a considerable lack of realism in aspirations, especially among the Negroes whose responses deviate most from actual rates of college-going and completion of high school.

Child's achievement is also affected by his self-concept and the degree of control he has over his environment. There does not appear to be any significant difference between the Negroes and the Whites on their level of self-concept, but there are significant differences between the Negroes and other minority groups. To find out the child's sense of control over his environment, he was asked to respond: (1) Good luck is more important than hard work for success. (2) Everytime I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me. (3) People like me don't have much of a chance to be successful in life. On these items, Negroes and other minority children show much less control over the environment than others. But it remains to be seen as to how much effect this attitudinal factor has upon the child's achievement in school.

Coleman's study shows that school factors are more important in affecting the achievement of minority group students.

The results suggest that the environment provided by the student body is asymmetric in its effects, that it has its

greatest effect on those from educationally deficient backgrounds.

If we minutely study the results of the study one implication stands out above all, i.e. schools bring little influence to bear on child's achievement. The inequalities imposed on children by their home, neighbourhood and peer environment are carried along to become the inequalities with which they confront adult life at the end of school life.

Equality of educational opportunity through the school must imply a strong effect of schools that is independent of the child's immediate social environment. But such a strong independent effect is not present in American schools (6).

Two major defects of the study have been pointed out by Henry S. Dyer as:

Firstly, "the analysis fails to show the possible impact of schools on the development of pupil attitudes and outlook. Secondly, Coleman results have the unfortunate, though perhaps inadvertent effect of giving schoolsystems the false impression that there is not much which they can do to improve the achievement of their pupils (7).

E. Jencks' and others (8) (1973) undertook the research on: 'Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and schooling in America' with the financial support of Carnegie Corporation. The report contested the claims of reformers that education would reduce socio-economic inequality. To the authors, schools have few long term effects on the later success of those who attend them. Equalization of opportunity

without greatly reducing the absolute level of inequality is a myth.

The study treats the subject of inequality in three sections. The first section deals inequality in schools. It studies the degree of opportunity children have by way of attending school, describes resource allocation pattern between rich and poor in districts and states between Negroes and Whites. Then it proceeds to assess the amount of segregat-
-racial economic and academic- within the schools.

The second section of the study concentrates on cognitive skills -the effect of school resources and school achievements alongwith personal characteristics of children on final levels of educational attainment. Finally, the third section examines inequality in the context of education, occupation and income of parents. Against these three frameworks the effects of economic background, family background, the qualities of school race and cognitive skills have been studied.

Findings

The report states that differences in cognitive skills vocational competency are inevitable, and efforts to eliminate them can never be 100 percent successful.

The distribution of resources is unequal among schools. Some people have more chance than others to attend schools with

kind of classmates they prefer, and some people are denied access to the curriculums of their choice.

It estimates that genes explain 45 percent of the variation in American Test Scores, that environment explains about 35 percent, and the tendency of the environmentally advantaged families to have genetically advantaged children explains the remaining 20 percent.

Jencks concludes from evidences that investment and reforms in schools would do very little in improving test-scores and making adults equal in terms of income. The reforms of the sixties failed because they focussed only on equalizing opportunity rather than narrowing down economic imbalances. The authors offer three possible explanations why school reforms cannot make adults more equal.

First, children seem to be more influenced by what happens at home than by what happens in schools. Second, the aspects of school life as how teacher and students treat each other has a great bearing on the children but administrators wield very little control over them. Third, even when schools exert unusual influence on children, the results are not lasting and carried over to adult life.

This work has been criticized by educationists on different grounds:

To Coleman, the fundamental difficulties in the treatment of the subject arise because of confusing the issue of inequality

of result with inequality of opportunity. Jackson attacks the soundness of research methodology of present work. In fact his writing is constrained by an analytic framework (9).

Rivlin describes the work as obscure. "The problem arises not for the layman, but for the scholar. To anyone with a professional interest in the subject a reasonable acquaintance with statistical methods, the usual data resources, and a lively interest in how the authors got their results, this book is extremely frustrating (10)." Clark finds fault with the style of the book. He is of the view that the important issue of racial equality in public education "is presented in an essentially glib, journalistic smart-alecky manner (11)." Michelson sees an inherent contradiction as a study on the whole. First, the questions taken for academic debate are trivial. Second, it discusses lifetime "income chances for some individuals, but misrepresents those chances for others. Third, there is little relationship between the questions posed and solutions offered (12)."

In the end, it may be said that the work has produced lively debate. While some have denounced it by not willing to accept it as a piece of research, others have congratulated it on vocalizing the importance of bridging the hiatus between the two extremes of the society.

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