

## **CHAPTER III**

### **STATE OF EDUCATION**

The objective of the present study is to identify the problems of educational development of Scheduled Caste students with emphasis on girl students. Before independence, there were hardly a few thousand scheduled Caste students in the primary stage of education in this state. The aim of different educational and welfare programmes to bring the Scheduled Castes nearer to the standard of the general mass within a reasonable period still remains to be fulfilled.

In our region of study, North Bengal, we have tried to examine the situation. Among the scheduled caste of North Bengal numerically, the Rajbansi is the dominant community. Yet, there are little studies on this community. The schools where this study has been undertaken are located in Darjeeling District which has become educationally very advanced during the last few decades. But when we look at the scheduled caste population the picture undergoes a considerable change (see page 3 of Chapter II).

The literacy among the Rajbansi females is considerably lower than that of the males. In the whole North Bengal the highest literacy rate among the Rajbansis is found in Darjeeling district (24.66% and 22.18% in 1961 and 1971 respectively) (Census of India 1961 and 1971). But the female literacy rate was 5.59% (1961) and 6.06% (1971), while the corresponding male literacy was 40.05% and 37.84%. Thus it is important for a researcher to diagnose the underlying socio-economic and cultural factors responsible for such glaring discrepancy and to find out what changes, if any, are taking place in this area.

The study has been designed keeping in mind both the present educational problems and the past attainments and difficulties of the Rajbansi students with special reference to the girl students. In this chapter I shall discuss the state of education in two schools studied. The areas covered are (a) enrolment, (b) the extent of dropping out and (c) the catchment area of the schools.

#### **THE TWO SCHOOLS**

The two schools studied are the Phansidewa H.S. School and the Phansidewa Govt. Sponsored Ashram Type Junior High School for girls. The first one is a coeducational school from class IX onward, while the latter is only for girls. The first one has eight classes (class V to XII) and the other only four classes (Classes V to VIII). Girls can be enrolled in Class IX of Phansidewa Higher Secondary School as there is no secondary school for girls in the vicinity.

In the Phansidewa Higher Secondary School the students come from different ethnic groups but the students in the Junior High School belong to Scheduled Castes and

Tribes only. They enjoy the government stipend and other school materials.

The survey conducted in the schools during 1992 for the 1991-92 session provides us a profile of the students in the two schools and the state of education there. This shall now be presented. After presenting the findings about the two schools separately a comparative picture shall be drawn in the concluding part of each section of the chapter.

## ENROLMENT AND DROP OUT

### Phansidewa Higher Secondary School:

The total number of students enrolled in Phansidewa Higher Secondary School (PHSS) was 757 (1991-92 session) of which 622 were boys and 135 girls. 691 Students were enrolled in the Secondary School section which culminates in Madhyamik (Secondary School learning) examination and 66 students were enrolled in the Higher Secondary Section, which ends with the Uchcha Madhyamik (higher Secondary) examination. A class-wise distribution of enrolment and drop-out is shown in the following table.

**Table-3.1**  
**Class-wise enrolment and drop-out**

Class	Enrolment		Drop-out	
	No.	%	No.	% of enrolment
V	95	12.55	15	15.79
VI	105	13.87	12	11.43
VII	113	14.93	19	16.81
VIII	104	13.74	29	27.89
IX	183	24.17	45	24.59
X	91	12.02	20	21.99
XI	33	4.36	14	42.42
XII	33	4.36	3	9.09
Total	757	100.00	157	20.74

The table 3.1 shows an increasing enrolment upto class IX and then a sudden decline in class X. This is mainly due to a strict screening in the terminal examination of the class IX as the secondary school learning examination (Madhyamik) is held after the class X and only the competent students are sent for Madhyamik. So the remaining students either repeat the class IX or drop out. There are other reasons for drop out also. One is that the boys get the certificate of passing class VIII and get some job and drop out. The girls of higher age get married off or they drop out for domestic works. The high enrolment

in class IX is also due to the fact that from class IX onward girls are enrolled.

Those who reach class XII rarely drop out. Thus the percentage of drop out is the lowest in class XII (9.09%) and highest in class XI (42.42%) and very high in the classes VIII and IX (27.89% and 24.59% respectively). Those who reach class XI try to complete the Higher Secondary examination. A class-wise and Sex-wise distribution of the present students show a sex-differential bend in drop out.

**Table-3.2**

N = 340

**Distribution of the Students by sex**

Class	Enrolment			Drop-out		
	Boys	Girls	Total <sup>st</sup>	Boys	Girls	Total
IX	86	97	183	23	22	45
X	65	26	91	18	2	20
XI	26	7	33	13	1	14
XII	28	5	33	03	-	3
Total	205 (60.29)	135 (39.71)	340 (100.00)	57 (16.76)	25 (7.35)	82 (24.12)

The girls are enrolled in the school only from class IX, therefore the data for the classes IX to XII have been presented in the table 3.2 PHSS being the only school in the area having recognition for Madhyamik and Uchcha Madhyamik examinations, girl students from other schools, who want to pursue high school studies enroll in PHSS. Thus in class IX there are more girls enrolled than the boys. Also the girls passing class VIII from the Phansidewa Balika Vidyalaya get priority in admission to class IX in PHSS. Besides this some of the boys tend to go to a better school far away. However, the girls soon drop out as has been stated earlier.

**Table-3.3**

**Percentage distribution of the drop-outs by sex and class**

Class	Boys	Girls	Total	
			No.	%
IX	26.74	22.68	45	24.59
X	27.69	00.08	20	21.99
XI	50.00	15.38	14	42.42
XII	10.71	-	03	09.09
Total	27.80	18.52	82	24.12

In the table 3.3 dropped out students have been expressed as percentages of the enrolled students in each class by sex. Thus 22.68% of the girls enrolled in class IX have dropped out. Of the girls who finally reach class X, they are about one quarter of those enrolled in class IX. However, there is very little drop-out in class X onwards. Only the serious girl students sit for Madhyamik and higher Secondary examinations. The drop-out among the girls of higher classes is also lower due to the fact that the girls are rarely allowed to attend a far-away school, while the boys, specially in class XI go to Siliguri schools, if they get the chance to be admitted there.

The main reasons of drop-out or lower enrolment among the girls are (a) their getting married, (b) negligence and negative social attitude towards girls' education and (c) poor economic condition of their families. Among the boys the reasons are (a) entering into earning works, (b) poverty of their families and (c) going to other schools.

**Table- 3.4**  
**Distribution of students by class and age**

Age	Class								Total present students
	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	
10	49	1							50
11	23	15							38
12	3	62	18						83
13	5	11	34	6					56
14		3	17	20	10				50
15		1	18	22	49	17			107
16			4	17	51	34	4		110
17			2	3	16	10	9	2	42
18			1	6	10	9	5	14	45
19				1	2	1		6	10
20							1	3	4
21								2	2
22								2	2
23									
24								1	1
Total students	80	93	94	75	138	71	19	30	600

N.B. - Only those students who are continuing studies have been presented in this table.

Table 3.4 shows the age of all the students of PHSS who are continuing studies. In each of the classes a wide range of ages are observed. In this table we find that the modal age of students in class V is ten years, and twelve years in class VI, thirteen in class VII, fifteen in class VIII, sixteen years in class IX and X. It is seventeen and eighteen years in classes XI and XII respectively. But there is a sex-differentiation in the modal age.

**Table - 3.5**

**Age-Sex distribution of the students of classes IX & X**

**N = 209**

Age	IX						X					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
14	6	9.67	4	5.26	10	7.24	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	12	19.35	37	48.68	49	35.50	5	11.11	12	46.15	17	23.90
16	22	35.48	29	38.15	51	36.95	22	48.88	12	46.15	34	47.88
17	11	17.74	5	6.57	16	11.50	9	20.00	1	3.84	10	14.08
18	9	14.50	1	1.30	10	7.24	8	17.70	1	3.84	9	12.67
19	2	3.22	-	-	2	1.44	1	2.22	-	-	1	1.40
Total	62	100.00	76	100.00	138	100.00	45	100.00	26	100.00	71	100.00

From table 3.5 we see that the modal age of the boys of class IX is sixteen and that of the girls is fifteen. Of the students of class X the modal age of the boys is sixteen and that of girls is fifteen to sixteen. The lower modal age of the girls may be due to several factors, which are stated below.

(a) The girls receiving encouragement for studies from their families are very studious as they have not much outside activities, and start studying at an early age.

(b) The girls not receiving encouragement for studies from their families have to undertake heavy burden of domestic chores and drop out.

(c) The rural girls enter into marriageable age from about 14 years and drop out after marriage.

(d) Some girls go for agricultural work or plantation work and drop out or are irregular in attending school.

Thus, the girls who continue studies are of lower age (a) and most of the other girls (b, c & d) tend to drop out. This brings down the modal age of the girl students.



Table - 3.6

**Age-sex Distribution of the present students of classes XI & XII**

N = 49

Age (Years)	XI						XII					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
16	1	8.33	3	42.85	4	21.00						
17	8	66.66	1	14.28	9	47.03	1	4.00	1	20.00	2	6.66
18	3	25.00	2	28.57	5	26.03	12	48.00	2	40.00	14	46.66
19							5	20.00	1	20.00	6	20.00
20			1	14.28	1	5.26	2	8.00	1	20.00	3	10.00
21							2	8.00			2	6.66
22							2	8.00			2	6.66
23												
24							1	4.00			1	3.33
Total	12	100.00	7	100.00	19	100.00	25	100.00	5	100.00	30	100.00
	(60.16)		(36.84)		0.00		(83.33)		(16.67)		(100.00)	

Very few girls after passing Madhyamik go for Uchcha Madhyamik studies. In the table 3.6 the students of Higher Secondary Classes (XI & XII) have been distributed by age and sex to illustrate this statement.

Of the 19 students of class XI 36.84% are girls and of the 30 students of class XII only 16.67% are girls. The modal age of the boys of class XI is 17 years and that of the girls is 16 years. In the class XII the age range is very wide. Moreover, the modal age of the few girl students are not statistically significant. So we take resort of the mean age .

**Table-3.7**  
**Mean age of the students of classes IX to XII by sex**

Class	Mean Age (in years)	
	Boys	Girls
IX	16.18	15.50
X	16.51	15.65
XI	17.17	17.29
XII	19.12	18.40

The table 3.7 reveals the lower mean age of the girls of almost all the classes. The probable reasons of this have been discussed earlier.

**Phansidewa Government Sponsored Ashram Type Junior High School for Girls :**

In the Phansidewa Govt. Sponsored Ashram-type Junior High School for girls (PAJHS) altogether 108 girl students were enrolled in 1991-92 session. Most of the students in this school are residential.

**Table-3.8**  
**Class-wise enrolment and Drop-out**

Class	Enrolment		Drop-out	
	No.	%	No.	%
V	40	37.04	4	10.00
VI	32	29.63	7	21.88
VII	25	23.15	1	4.00
VIII	11	10.18	1	9.09
Total	108	100.00	13	12.04

From the above table we can see a declining trend in enrolment in the upper classes but percentage of drop-out also decrease in the upper classes. Thus highest enrolment is seen in class V (37.04% of the total enrolment), but 10% of the students enrolled in class V has dropped out. The highest drop-out percentage is seen in class VI, which has about 30% enrolment of the total students enrolled in the school. Enrolment is the lowest in class VIII.

These are all scheduled caste and scheduled tribe girls. Many of the girls get married at an early age, but the main reason for not getting enrolled in class VIII is that the girls get absorbed at about 14-15 years of age in the tea gardens for tea-plucking. A look at the age distribution of the girls corroborates this statement.

**Table-3.9**  
**Age-wise distribution of the students**

Age (Years)	Class				Total
	V	VI	VII	VIII	
10	21 (58.33)	2 (8.00)	-	-	23 (24.22)
17	5 (13.89)	11 (44.00)	1 (4.17)	-	17 (17.89)
12	9 (25.00)	10 (40.00)	2 (8.39)	1 (10.00)	22 (23.15)
13	1 (2.78)	2 (8.00)	9 (37.50)	8 (80.00)	20 (21.05)
14	-	-	8 (33.33)	1 (10.00)	9 (9.47)
15	-	-	4 (16.67)	-	4 (4.22)
Total	36 (100.00)	25 (100.00)	24 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	95 (100.00)

Of the 108 enrolled students 95 are continuing studies while 13 have dropped out. Of these 95 students 36 study in class V, 25 in class VI, 24 in class VII and only 10 in class VIII. From the table 3.8 it may be seen that the number of students remain more or less steady in the age-range of 10-13 years. After that there is a sudden decline. As already stated the students in this school come from scheduled caste and scheduled tribe families. Early marriage and tea-leaf plucking, therefore, take heavy toll of the students.

The neighbouring tea gardens prefer the girls of tender age with nimble fingers for leaf plucking and the scheduled Tribe girls go for this job readily. Table 3.10 corroborates this statement.

**Table-3.10**  
**Mean age of the students of classes V to VIII**

Class	Mean age ( in years )
V	10.75
VI	11.96
VII	13.50
VIII	13.00

**Observations about Enrolment and Drop out in PHSS and PAJHS:**

Dropping out is considerable in both the schools. Of the 757 students enrolled in PHSS 157 (20.74%) had dropped out and of the 108 enrolled in PAJHS 13 (12.04%) had dropped out. This problem has two aspects, one is open dropping out and the other is irregularity in attendance.

In PAJHS the high educational incentives for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students have perhaps kept the drop out rate at a lower level.

Although the enrolment in both the schools show a decline in the upper classes but the pattern differ somewhat in the two schools. In PHSS enrolment remains more or less at the same level in the classes V to VIII (12.55%, 13.87%, 14.93% and 13.74% of the total students). Then in the class IX a sudden increase in the enrolment (24.17%) is observed. This may be due to enrolment of students from other Junior High Schools. But then the enrolment falls very rapidly in the classes X to XII (12.02%, 4.36% and 4.36%). This indicates that a large proportion drops out from the school before class X and only a small proportion of those who try for Madhyamik ultimately enrolled for the Higher Secondary (Classes XI). But those who enroll for the Higher Secondary are seen to be continuing in the class XII (4.36%).

In the PAJHS the enrolment rapidly falls from class V to the upper classes. This suggests a poor encouragement for the education of the girls.

Altogether 157 (20.74%) of the enrolled students have dropped out during the session 1991-92 in PHSS. The largest proportion of drop outs are in the upper classes, i.e. classes VIII to XI. It is the least (9.1%) in the class XII. This probably indicates that those who reach beyond class XI try to complete the course. The drop out rate is more or less uniform in the classes V to VII in PHSS.

In the PAJHS altogether 13 students (12.04%) are drop-outs in the session 1991-

92. We find that larger proportion of students have dropped out in the lower classes than in the upper classes. This pattern may also be found in the PHSS.

In order to have clearer understanding of the situation we have also taken into cognizance 'regularity in attendance' of the students.

**Table-3.11**  
**Regularity in attendance of students in PHSS**

Class	Total Enrolment	Attendance		
		Regular	Irregular	Drop-out
V	95 (100.00)	45 (47.36)	35 (36.84)	15 (15.78)
VI	105 (100.00)	85 (80.95)	8 (7.61)	12 (11.42)
VII	113 (100.00)	84 (74.33)	10 (8.84)	19 (16.81)
VIII	104 (100.00)	55 (52.88)	20 (19.23)	29 (27.88)
IX	183 (100.00)	110 (60.10)	28 (15.30)	45 (24.59)
X	91 (100.00)	40 (43.95)	31 (34.06)	20 (21.09)
XI	33 (100.00)	11 (33.33)	8 (24.24)	14 (42.42)
XII	33 (100.00)	19 (57.57)	11 (33.33)	3 (9.09)
Total	757 (100.00)	449 (59.31)	151 (19.94)	157 (20.73)

For the purpose of this study we have taken those students to be "regular" who do not absent themselves more than one day per week. Taking out the drop-outs from the remaining enrolled students we have the "irregular" students.

From the table 3.11 we find that except in the classes VI and VII the students are quite irregular. The students of upper classes often help their family by working in agricultural operations or domestic works. This may be the reason of the irregularity in attendance of the continuing students. Boys are probably more irregular than the girls, who continue studies. Distance of the school from home may be another factor. Irregularity increases during the rainy season and other agricultural seasons.

**Table-3.12**  
**Regularity in attendance of students of PAJHS**

Class	Total Enrolment	Attendance		
		Regular	Irregular	Drop-out
V	40 (100.00)	22 (55.00)	14 (35.00)	4 (10.00)
VI	32 (100.00)	18 (56.25)	7 (21.87)	7 (21.87)
VII	25 (100.00)	17 (68.00)	7 (28.00)	1 (4.00)
VIII	11 (100.00)	8 (72.73)	2 (18.18)	1 (9.09)
Total	108 (100.00)	65 (60.18)	30 (27.77)	13 (12.03)

In the above table the regularity of attendance of the students of PAJHS has been presented. It appears that the regularity in attendance increases from lower to upper classes, while irregularity and drop-out rate decreases from lower to upper classes.

It may be suggested that the drop-out rate decreased in upper classes as most of the students try to complete the study for better jobs and they can understand the value of academic qualification. Some of the students have stated that they can please the family members and their younger brother and sisters if they complete their studies, and for this reason they continue the study in upper classes.

The irregularity in attending the school and dropping out can be due to several factors one of which is the distance of the school from home.

### **Catchment Area**

The PHSS being the only Higher Secondary School in the surrounding has a wide catchment area. The students and their guardians interviewed have stated that the inadequate number of schools in the area is the main educational problem of the students. Table 3.13 shows the distance of residence from Phansidewa Higher Secondary School of all the students who are studying in different classes.

**Table-3.13****Distribution of Students by class and distance of residence from school (PHSS)**

Class	Distance of residence					Total No. of students
	Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ km	$\frac{1}{2}$ km- 1 km	2-5kms	5-10 kms	11 kms or more	
V	10	12	40	17	1	80 (13.33)
VI	9	24	26	30	4	93 (15.50)
VII	6	17	45	24	2	94 (15.67)
VIII	5	9	25	32	4	75 (12.50)
IX	19	24	47	34	14	138 (23.00)
X	12	4	24	26	5	71 (11.83)
XI	2	-	6	9	2	19 (3.17)
XII	12	5	5	4	4	30 (5.00)
Total	75 (12.50)	95 (15.83)	218 (36.33)	176 (29.33)	36 (6.00)	600 (100.00)

Of the 600 students 36.33% come from 2 to 5km distance, 29.33% come from 5 to 10 km distance, and 6.00% from beyond 11 km. 28.33% live within 1 km.

**Table-3.14**

Percentage distribution of students by class and distance of residence from school (PHSS)

Class	Distance of residence					Total No. of students
	Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ km	$\frac{1}{2}$ km- 1 km	2 km- 5 km	6 km- 10 km	11 km+	
V	12.50	15.00	50.00	21.25	1.25	100.00
VI	9.68	25.80	27.96	32.26	4.30	100.00
VII	6.38	18.08	47.87	25.53	2.12	100.00
VIII	6.67	12.00	33.33	42.67	5.33	100.00
IX	13.77	17.39	34.06	24.64	10.14	100.00
X	16.90	5.64	33.80	36.62	7.04	100.00
XI	10.53	-	31.58	47.36	10.53	100.00
XII	40.00	16.67	16.67	13.33	13.33	100.00

From the percentage distribution of the students given in the table 3.14 it may be seen that the students of higher classes come in greater proportion from longer distance. A student of class VIII comes from a tea estate 50 Kms away by bicycle. Naturally he is very irregular in attendance. Two students of class IX come from 30 Km. and 45 Kms distance. Some of the higher class students from distant homes stay near the school making temporary arrangements like staying with the relatives, staying as paying guests in some local people's homes, renting room and making messing household with other students in similar situation. These students are included in the first two categories. Otherwise the proportion of students coming from longer distance would have been still larger in the higher classes.

PHSS's having such wide catchment area is mainly due to two reasons. One, there is only this single Higher Secondary Schools in Phansidewa Block. The other higher Secondary Schools in the area are in Kharibari, Naxalbari, Bagdogra and Siliguri. Two, PHSS offers subjects like commerce, geography and sociology in the H.S. streams. These are not offered by most of the other nearby schools. So those interested in these subjects flock towards PHSS, even from a very long distance.

Mode of journey to school differ, depending on the distance and the economic capabilities of the students' families. The local students come on foot. It is often found that the students of the third category ( 2 - 5 Kms.) even come to school on foot. Most of the students from long distance come by bus. Some come by bicycle. The distance of residence is a major cause of irregularity and dropping out.

PAJHS is a residential school. There is a girls' hostel and the residents receive financial support from the government. There are day - students also, who come to the school from their respective homes.

**Table - 3.15**

**Distribution of day students and boarders by class in PAJHS**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Day students</b>	<b>Boarders</b>	<b>Total</b>
V	28	8	36
VI	15	10	25
VII	12	12	24
VIII	5	5	10
Total No. Students	60	35	95
%(Percentage)	63.16	36.84	100.00



Of the 95 students 36.84% are residing in the hostel and the rest commute from home. Looking at the distance of the home from the school significant difference is found between the boarders and the day scholars.

**Table-3.16**

**Distribution of the boarders by class and distance of home from PAJHS**

Class	Distance of home					Total
	Less than 1/2 Km	1/2 - 1 Km	2- 5 Kms	6- 10 Kms	11Kms+	
V	-	4	3	-	1	8
VI	-	-	2	3	5	10
VII	1	-	2	5	4	12
VIII	-	-	-	4	1	5
Total No	1	4	7	12	11	35
%	2.85	11.43	20.00	34.29	31.43	100.00

Table 3.16 shows the distance of the boarders' homes from the school. Most of the boarders (65.72%) have their homes beyond 5 kms. 20% boarders have their homes between 2-5 kms. 14.28% have their homes within 1 km, but reside in the hostel. This is because of the fact that the resident students receive certain financial help from the government, like food subsidy and bedding.

All the students of this school receive school bags and books from the school as well as the stipend for scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students. The students of class V also receive weekly ration of wheat and rice. The resident students used to take the stipend money to their families, which practice has now been stopped by the school authority and the money is being spent to purchase dress and educational materials like exercise books, pen, pencil, etc. for the boarders. However, all these facilities as well as the convenience of study have drawn the students from nearby homes. This has been possible also because the hostel has a large accommodation — 120 seats. Still the hostel seats lie vacant, because the girls prefer to stay at home with their families. The catchment area of the day-students is shown in the next table.

**Table -3.17**

**Distribution of the day-students by class and distance of residence from PAJHS**

Class	Distance from residence					Total
	Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ Km	$\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 Km	2- 5 Kms	6 10 Kms	11Kms+	
V	5	5	10	6	2	28
VI	1	2	4	7	1	15
VII	-	-	4	7	1	12
VIII	-	1	2	2	-	5
Total No.	6	8	20	22	4	60
%	10.00	13.33	33.33	36.67	6.67	100.00

From the table 3.17 it is apparent that most of the day students come from beyond 2 kms, although only 6.67% come from beyond 11kms. Percentage distribution of the students is shown in the table 3.18.

**Table-3.18**

**Percentage distribution of the boarders and day-students by class and distance of home from PAJHS**

Class	Distance from home of the boarders					Distance from residence of the day students					Total Students
	1 Km	2-5 Kms	6-10 Kms	11 Kms+	Total	1 Km	2-5 Kms	6-10 Kms	11 Kms+	Total	
V	11.11	8.33	-	2.78	22.22	27.78	27.78	16.67	5.55	77.78	100.00
VI	-	8.00	12.00	20.00	40.00	12.00	16.00	28.00	4.00	60.00	100.00
VII	4.17	8.33	20.83	16.67	50.00	-	16.67	29.16	4.17	50.00	100.00
VIII	-	-	40.00	10.00	50.00	10.00	20.00	20.00	-	50.00	100.00
Total No.	5	7	12	11	35	14	20	22	4	60	95
%	5.26	7.37	12.63	11.58	36.84	14.74	21.05	23.16	4.21	63.16	100.00

From the table 3.16 it may be seen that the percentage of boarders increase in upper classes. It is just the opposite for the day-students. Looking at the distance of home of the students it is found that 65.71% of the boarders homes are more than 5 kms away, whereas 43.33% of the dayscholars come from that distance.

**Observations about the Catchment Area of PHSS and PAJHS:**

Catchment area of PHSS is wider than that of the PAJHS. PHSS, offering a large number of subjects in upper classes and being the only Higher Secondary School in the area draws students from a wide surrounding area. PAJHS, on the other hand, enjoys the advantage of being a residential school for special category girl students. This too draws about 52% students from beyond 5 Kms. However, the distance from home affects the regularity in attendance of the students. In case of girl students this often becomes a major factor of drop-out. Of course, there are many other social and economic constraints of enrolment and continuation of studies in schools, some of which have cropped up while discussing the problem of drop-out and more will follow in the succeeding chapters.