

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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### INTRODUCTION

During the pre-independence period our education was extremely retarded and had a lop-sided development under the long colonial rule. After independence the basic task was to build vibrant systems of national education in tune with modern era. "This meant, among other things, universal free elementary education, removal of adult illiteracy, adoption of Indian languages as media of instructions at all stages, a rational language policy for facilitating inter-state and international communication, restructuring secondary and higher education by introducing vocationalisation and diversification, raising standards at all levels, modernisation of the contents (making them socially relevant) and of methods of teaching and examinations, development of research facilities and raising its level and devoting special attention to the educational advance of the retarded sections of society such as women, the scheduled castes and tribes and other backward communities" (Kamat, 1972).

During the period 1950-51 to 1975-76 the total number of educational institutions rose from a little below 250 thousand to over 625 thousand, that is by two and a half times; the enrolment increased from a little below 25 million to over 100 million; the number of teachers correspondingly increased four-fold from 0.7 million to 3 million; the total outlay on education rose from Rs.1444 million to about Rs.25,000 million, at current prices or from about 1.2% of the nation's income to a little over 3%. Literacy went up from 16.6% in 1951 to 29.3% in 1971 and 36.17% in 1981. If one

considers the expansion at different stages, it is found that during these 12 years, enrolment (in numbers) has increased  $3\frac{1}{2}$  times at the primary stage, 5 times at the middle, seven times at the high school/higher secondary and almost 12 times in higher education. In terms of the corresponding age-group, the proportional enrolment has risen from one in three to two in three at the primary, from one in eight to one in three at the middle, from 5 per cent to 22 per cent in the high school/higher secondary and from 1.1 per cent to about 6 per cent in higher education. Though it seems that the educational system has considerable growth both absolutely as well as proportionately, but it has not been possible to achieve the goal of universal education of children upto the age of 14 years as enshrined in the Constitution and to provide equality of opportunity. There are enough statistics to show that for almost 95% of the pupils, education does not fulfil even its professed objective of imparting knowledge. Some 65% drop-out during the first five years of school and another 15% during the next three years of education (Editorial, the Statesman, Nov.1984). This situations of low rate of achievement in literacy and high rate of wastage is more prevalent in rural areas than urban areas. India is the country of villages. If it has to achieve the goal of universalization of education more and more concentrations should be put in developing and strengthening the educational infrastructure in the rural areas.

The position of West Bengal in terms of literacy and educational achievement is not very encouraging at present (according to 1971 and 1981 Census) in comparison to other States. It's position of literacy was better during 1951 and 1961. Also, there is gap of educational achievement in rural and urban areas. Various studies

have been made in different States to examine the constraints in educational development. There has not been any study conducted (excepting P. Choudhuri, 1965) in West Bengal mainly concentrating on the constraints of educational achievement in rural areas. This motivated the researcher to undertake this study 'the problems of wastage and stagnation in the schools of rural area(s) of West Bengal : A Sociological Study'.

According to Adiseshia "The real ills of the present educational system are its elitist nature, its heavy push-out and drop-out rate, its scandalously poor rural school environment, its growing unemployed and unemployable product outcome, its indifference to the 70 per cent adult illiterates and neglect of the special claims of first generation learners, its minimal learning and atrocious evaluation system and its widening gap between the overt (prescribed) curriculum and the hidden (real) curriculum." (1977)

According to A.S. Abraham "That (Education) system is becoming increasingly irrelevant and unproductive, it entails massive wastage and stagnation, its coverage is extremely limited, its resources slender and unevenly distributed the society it buttresses and perpetuates manifestly unjust and unequal, inequality of opportunity is in-built into it, access to it is still determined largely by wealth, it is turning out thousands of young people who are scarcely more than semiliterate, unemployed and unemployable, their expectations aroused only to be frustrated" (1976).

No country can improve quality of life and standards of living unless its human resources are wedded to its natural resources. This is axiomatic. The days of economic or political colonialism when a country could thrive by exploiting the natural resources of another are fast dying. According to an ILO study, 84% of the people in

Indian villages are engaged in farming and allied activities. But, with few exceptions, in large parts of the country the people just do not know how to get the optimum produce from their land and cattle. India's two main resources are land and water. One would have thought that a country whose main stay is land and the great majority of whose people are involved in farm-related activities, the entire education system would be geared to produce better farmers, foresters, dairymen, irrigation experts, nutritionists and men of related professions. What all this means essentially is creating a link between education and work. The Father of the Nation, Gandhiji advocated for this doctrine of "Karmayoga"<sup>1</sup> and propounded the theory of basic education. It contrasted with the prevalent elitist view of education as a means of acquiring knowledge or the doctrine of "gyan yoga"<sup>2</sup>. In the same way Tagore, the builder of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan admonished the prevailing book centric education and favoured to launch the life centric education. For a sociological analysis of these philosophies, it is necessary to view them against the background of the structure of Indian Society and to examine their function and disfunction in relation to the times in which they were prescribed and for the kind of Indian Society which they seek to build.

Much deliberation in education and reporting have taken place. Radhakrishnan commission on University education (1948-49), the Kher Committee on primary education (1948), the Mudaliar Commission on Secondary education (1953) and the last and the most comprehensive effort, the Kothari Commission (1964-66) which considered almost every aspect of education and recommended a thorough modification of educational system in the country.

The primary goal of our freedom movement and development plans is to eradicate poverty from the land and educational system should not stand as a major stumbling block in the achievement of this goal. According to statistics almost half the people of India live below poverty line. It would be more appropriate to state according to Dr. M.S. Swaminathan that some 80% of our people can be called "dependents" who are fed on the meagre earnings of the remaining 20%. The possible positive or negative impact of our educational system on the battle against poverty has also to be examined. On the other hand how the poverty is hindering the masses to avail the present formal education also is to be examined and vice versa. A microtype of study with the community variables to find out the causes of wastage, stagnation and drop-out was felt important. In Indian Society, one of the main socialising institution is the family. The process of socialisation adopted by the specific family largely depends on its socio-economic background. The labouring class in Indian rural society is so severely affected by poverty that they can not think of providing elementary education to their children. Majority of these families may be categorised of wasting the universal provision of educational facilities in rural areas. On the other hand the families of small landholding class in the rural areas (small and marginal farmers) constitute the category of stopping the education of their children. Even the children of medium and small holding classes occasionally drop-out from the school though not in the primary stage but may be from middle or secondary stage. The hypotheses which is drawn about this situation may be explained in the way that the practice of farming in India is not like the western country as a matter of commercial practice rather farming in Indian rural society is a way of life. The social life is

also affected by the system of farm practices. The family, as primary institution for socialising children, had in the rural sector responsibilities for providing education to them. But the farm practices in a traditional farmer's family always had the environment of farming and allied culture which invariably affects the child's mind and attitude towards vocationalism. On the other hand the environment of our schools is so artificially created that it encourages the children to become "Brown Sahab"<sup>3</sup> or alien to the traditional life and culture and waste of their parents and a potential consumer of the good things of life. Sometimes these two contrasted culture components annihilate him to stop education further.

The Constitution of India under Article 45 provides for free, compulsory and universal education for all children upto the age of 14 years. It was expected and spelt out that by 1960 the country will achieve this objective. The reign of 30 years have passed away, the country has neither been able to shape its educational system, nor able to keep the promise of giving free education to all children below the age of 14 years. Now the time has come to face the challenges and to plan realistically towards broadening the educational perspective by rounding the universal education.

There are three aspects of universal education that need to be borne in mind. These are (i) universal provision, (ii) universal enrolment, (iii) universal retention. Universal provision calls for the establishment of a network of primary and middle schools spread all over the country in such a way that there will be a school within easy reach of every child. Universal enrolment calls for efforts to bring every child to school by making people education-minded, providing the necessary incentives and enforcing compulsion.

Universal retention seeks firstly, to avoid wastage by taking measures to prevent children from dropping out from school before completing the course and secondly, to avoid stagnation as much as possible by providing for conditions that enable to succeed in their school work and to obtain regular promotion from grade to grade.

On the point of universal provision, the country is progressing by extending the provision for universal enrolment for children in our country. The latest report ensured enrolment of about 80% of the children. The question of enquiring the facts has a great importance here. May it be the dilemma that parents will not send their children to school, support them through a period of years, and deprive themselves of the chance of an additional income unless they value education in the abstract and also see its relevance in their own lives.

"The values and beliefs of people are related to the objective conditions of life. They will not use the services offered to them unless they see the use for them. At the level of subsistence and poverty at which most people in developing countries live, what they ask for is work, food, clothing and shelter. Without adequate work and food, lack of education and protein and vitamin deficiencies in diet do not appear as problems" (Joshi, P.C. and M.R. Rao, 1965).  
An important policy question relates to the level of education at which major financial investments should be made. From an economic as well as social point of view, it is of the highest importance that universal literacy in the adult age group and compulsory primary education for children between 6 to 11 years of age should be achieved.

Literacy is a value in itself. In addition there is an economic reason, a developmental reason for primary education, for it enables children to acquire literacy and to retain it in adulthood, besides cultivating in them the capacity to acquire skills and develop the right attitude to work and production. Thus while many agree that education acts as a facilitator of socio-economic development, some others seem to be rather sceptical about the very possibility of spread of literacy and education in an under-developed community where the poor people form the majority and owing to sheer poverty can not avail of the educational opportunities.

India is the land of villages. As 76.27% of her people live in the villages, the country is practically rural. The education as an institution introduced in our society and the extent of its adoption for the upliftment of her people and the interaction of this institution to our society should be studied but this can only be examined by studying the rural areas of the country. The social policy in relation to education of the country is to launch universal education. This can be realised when its every rural folk would enjoy the benefits of the system and utilise its fruits in their socio-economic affairs. Again, whether education as an institution fits into or is rejected by the society may be analysed by studying the utilization or non-utilization of educational facilities. The problem of not-enrolled, drop-out and stagnation are important indications to the utilization or non-utilization of our education system.

Sometimes it is said that the main constraints in education lies within our social structure and with the system of education itself. In this study the main intention is to analyse the constraints

lying in our social structure in relation to our education system. In the Indian social system, caste-dominance is still a matter of wide practice. The history reveals that the Hindu caste system gives each occupational group a fixed standing within the community, must of necessity have certain patterns of behaviour which enable each caste to maintain its own status and satisfactorily engaged in relationship with others. In the social ladder, the upper caste Hindus still occupy higher position. The so-called lower caste people occupy the lower strata of society and their movements among the people of higher strata are often considered infringement of the latter's rights. Naturally, therefore, adoption of education for innovating the changes in social thoughts remain mostly out of bound for them. In this present study, it is one of the sole concern to see how caste system interact with our education system and how its elements contribute to wastage, non-enrolment and stagnation. Caste as a factor in the deprivation of education and as a factor in educational backwardness has been studied by Kulhali, Tirtha (1967) and others. In this study the main intention is not only to identify the factors for non-utilization of education system, but also to analyse the root causes underlying with the wastage, drop-out, stagnation.

Durkheim's views of education as the systematic socialisation of the younger generation may be worthy for putting here in this context. He defined education as "the influence exercised by the adult generation on those who are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to arouse and to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and by the special milieu for which he is specifically destined." (1956) It stressed traditional

values and strengthened prevailing customs and beliefs. The authoritarian pattern continued and the growth of rationality was inhibited for a long time. Such education was confined to the upper and middle classes and that also in cities and urban centres (Emile Durkheim, 1956). We have become accustomed, through KARL MARX's writings about the alienation of the worker from his work in a class society and recognise the estrangement of man from his learning. It may be noted here that the more education on individual consumers, the more "knowledge stock" he acquires and the higher he rises in the hierarchy of knowledge capitalists. Education thus defines a new class structure for society within which the large consumers of knowledge stock can claim to be of superior value to society. The hidden curriculum thus both defines and measures what education is and to what level of productivity it entitles the consumer. It serves as a rationale for the growing correlation between jobs and corresponding privilege.

However some held that education would solve all problems and once people were educated they would devise ways and means to improve their own living standards. Others held that it is of no use educating hungry masses and education would take care of itself when people's standard of living is improved. This controversy is indeed futile. Both educational and economic improvement must go side by side.

It is necessary for the sociologist to carry the analysis further towards probing into the manner in which the home enters into a child's performance at school. Moreover patterns of authority and freedom in the home are likely to affect the child's relationships with his teachers and his peers. The home environment influ

not only the academic performance of a child but its interpersonal relationship as well. The family determines a child's accessibility to education. The financial status of the family is a major constraint for the child's education. Besides, the family also influences a child's chances for education - by providing guidance in career making, the type and quality of the school at which the child will study and the occupation the child will choose. Though it has been established by various research work that the family background determines accessibility to education, but how the family background impede to accessibility and how disadvantaged homes do not have access to education needed to be examined thoroughly. This study intends to examine some of these factors determining accessibility and non-accessibility to education of the different rural families having varied socio-economic background.

Wastage in the form of dropping out of school prematurely or repetition of grades has assumed a staggering dimension with the expansion of education in India. Education services are not fully utilised in the rural areas and it is estimated that less than half the children enrolled in the first year go on to complete even the primary school education. In countries with high income disparities and socially imposed stratification expansion of higher education benefits primarily the middle and the upper classes. Such lopsided development of education implies a waste of scarce resources and takes place at the neglect of the needs of the poorer segments of the population. There are larger variables involved, such as the socio-economic status and attitude of the parents, the quality of home environments, the state of public health and communication, local customs, laws regarding the minimum age for employment etc. should be systematically analysed to understand the problems of

educational development in rural areas.

Among the most difficult to cope with are those that relate to the education of girls. Basically, the disadvantage operates in the form of a lack of conviction about the fact that schooling is as important for girls as it is for boys. This is accentuated by factors like : early marriage, needed to look after siblings or domestic cares, apathetic attitude of sending girls to schools located at long distances, the role-taking and role performance of our society as wife and a mother, etc. These factors inhibit the enrolment of girls at school and lead to the early withdrawal. This study also intend to examine these factors in more concrete terms.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The social scientists' involvement in educational research in India is fairly recent. Now it has gained an importance and many sociologists and social scientists have been taking keen interests on several issues of education relating to various social components of our country. India as a soil of multi-religious, lingual, racial and multi-cultural population is a fertile bed for the sociologists. It is difficult, too, to have a single picture of India by representing only few studies, because of its long-standing social heritage, regional variation have given it to a pattern maintenance. An aspect of the same issue is an analysis of whether education as a newly introduced institution fits into or is rejected by society into which it is introduced. One way of understanding the acceptance or rejection of formal education is an analysis of the utilization or non-utilization of educational facilities. Wastage and stagnation are clues to the utilization or non-utilization of the facilities.

The important advocates in the field of sociology of education may be named as Desai, I.P., 1952 and Naik, J.P. 1964 who had been associated with the various committee and commission and conducted studies on the problems of educational in India and recommended alternative programme like adult education, non-formal education for the weaker section of our society. Mr. Naik also devises the index of equality in education.

Halsey, Floud and Anderson (1961), Hopper (1968) and Ioan Davies (1971) reported that there are necessary systematic relations between kinship, educational, occupational and economic system which are sub-systems of the social system and are held to exist theoretically and substantively and by a process of boundary maintenance to account for a sufficient degree of equilibrium within the social system as a whole.

Sharma, R.C. (1962) studied the problem of enrolment (6-11 yrs.) of children in schools. His findings reveal that neither the occupational status of the parents, nor their educational status seems to influence tangibly the school enrolment of children by and large financial handicaps are not warranted by the data collected as conclusive reasons. Only one out of four socio-economic factors studied as being responsible for non-enrolment was caste and this too was not significant in the boy's school.

Mallick (1962) finds that the family determines a child's accessibility to education. The financial status of the family is a major determining factor. But there are more subtle ways in which the family influences a child's chances for education. His study on refugee students indicates the manner in which financial circumstance may curtail a student's education.

Desai (1962), Patel (1969), Shah (1960), Shahani (1962), Ahmed (1968), Chitra (1969), Hooda (1968), Manuel (1960) studied the socio-economic and cultural background of the student. The variables measured are the structure of the family, education level of the parents, income of the family, ordinal position of the student, leisure time activities etc. The studies reveal that the educational opportunity is mostly open to better strata of the society. Educational atmosphere are more conducive in the urban families where either one of the parents or both are educated. Chitras (1969) study reveals that caste has a dominant role offering Brahmins better facilities for educational training. Ahmed's (1968) study reveals that the girls are not deeply concerned about their future work and a section of them look upon marriage as their ultimate objective. Manuel and other's (1960) study shows that various occupational categories differed in the attitude and choice of education. The parents were reluctant to send their girls to schools. Distance of school from home in rural areas was a handicap and there was marked positive correlation between nearness of school and achievement in English and Mathematics.

Thompson (1962) has shown that educational gaps in various communities in a country arise due to differentials in the provision of educational facilities, socio-economic status of the parents and lack of motivation for education. The effect of these differentials are cumulative.

Murray and Russalic Wage (1964) in their study of 'Formal education in an Indian Community' have shown that isolation - lack of communication and social distance is the cardinal factor in the problem of education in primitive communities. They pointed out that isolation affects in many contexts - the community as a whole, the

school within the community, the pupil within the classroom and the teacher within the educational system.

Harbison and Myers (1964) in their study of 75 countries of the world discovered a correlation of 898 between GNP per capita and the human resource indicators selected by them. Educational enrolments at all levels were considered important indicators.

Programme Evaluation Organisation (1965) while studying the problem of extension of primary education in rural areas reported that the growth in enrolment of children in schools had been somewhat lower in rural areas than in the urban areas where schooling facilities are available in or near the village, parents show a greater readiness to send their children to school. There had been no appreciable increase in the proportion of girls among school children, inspite of the rapid growth of schools in the rural areas. One of the disturbing findings of the study is the relatively low level of schoolgoing among the children of landless labourers and tenants. The main reason is the financial difficulties, besides, another difficulty faced by the children of these weaker section, namely, the pressure on them to engage in work. It was also found that the problem of stagnation appears to be much more grave and extensive in the lower primary classes, particularly in the first standard than in the upper three classes and the maximum proportion of drop-outs of enrolled children was found in the last two grades of elementary education. The main reasons for the withdrawal are the domestic circumstances and demands from the family.

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P. Choudhury (1965) noted the following factors responsible for wastage and stagnation.

	<u>Percent</u>
1. Economic causes (parental poverty etc.)	33
2. Parental indifference to education	26
3. Social habits and customs	6.8
4. Irregularity of attendance	15.8
5. In effective teaching method and curriculum	4.0
6. Other causes	7.1

On coming to the literature on Indian situation caste as a factor in deprivation of education and as a factor in educational backwardness has been examined by many (Kulhalli 1967, Thirtha 1967 and Chauhan 1967 for example). Caste as a factor in sponsorship of educational facilities and institution has been the subject of empirical studies by Halder and Madan (1966). Stratification in terms of sex, education and social mobility has been studied by Ramananam (1968), Sethi (1968) and Chauhan (1968).

Roy Chowdhury, B.K. and Bhattacharya, B. (1967) studied the problem of stagnation of scheduled tribe and castes students. The study reveals that the differences in stagnation rate between scheduled castes students and students of other communities are not very marked up to Class VIII.

It increases from Class IX and X whereas for tribals it increases from Class VI. This sudden rise owing to this late entry to the school when they reach Class VII or VIII become adult and the parents insist them to leave school and contribute in family earning to balance their below subsistence family budget.

The Gargoti study conducted by Chikermans (1968) established the relative significance of four features related to home circumstances for wastage and stagnation as under :

<u>Feature</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Excessive involvement of children in domestic work	1
Indifference of parents towards education	2
Educational status of the family	3
Economic condition of the family	4

The causes of drop-out which lead to high "percentage of wastage can be traced as irregular attendance of children in those small schools due to indifference of parents towards education".

Such N.S. (1969) has studied the issue of enrolment and found that the growth of enrolment of girls in the rural area is very low (34.26%) and accentuated that if enrolment is to be brought up, the conscientious efforts will have to be made to bring in girls into schools in rural areas.

Myrdal (1968) points out, that "social and economic inequality determines the effects of attempts to improve education and also that educational advance often serves to stratify inequality." Rapid expansion in higher education and the clamour for manpower approach mainly for this level, is a reflection of the power and influence. On the other hand, compulsory schooling and general literacy programmes have been very slow and lethargic.

Sewall, et al (1968) reported that the higher the socio-economic status (SES), the higher the level of educational aspirations. Further, they state that while social class difference can not be entirely explained by differences in parental encouragement (or

intelligence) among the various socio-economic classes, parental encouragement makes an independent contribution to social class difference in college plans of both male and females. The effects of sex-role expectations are such that girl's educational aspirations are generally lower than those of boys and are somewhat more sensitive to socio-economic background than to ability or parental encouragement.

Rajagopalan, C. and Singh, J. (1968); Sharma, K.N. (1974) revealed that it is evidence of the failure to realize the national goals of universal primary level education, data on drop-out at successive stages of school and on the socio-economic backgrounds of University students indicate that the promise of equality of opportunity of education has not been realised either. Access to successively higher levels of education is more and more exclusive. High school students are almost invariably drawn from a higher socio-economic bracket than middle school and primary school student and college students in turn, come from more privileged socio-economic and caste backgrounds than high school students. By and large secondary and higher education is accessible to children from white colour occupation background than to children from agriculture backgrounds, more accessible to males than to females, more accessible to children from urban areas than to children from rural areas and more accessible to children from upper castes than to children from the lower castes.

Chitnis (1969) in a paper analyses the urban concentration on higher education. Sopegamage A, (1978) and Rao, R.N. noted that the extent of wastage, drop-out and stagnation among the tribal and backward class people is higher than the general population. The status and the role of the family influence the children towards the

end of education. The parent's ignorance to send their children to school is one of the important factors of drop-out, stagnation and wastage in rural area of India.

Taylor and Ayer (1969) in their book "Born and Bred unequal" have demonstrated the relationship between inequalities of educational rewards and the effects of class or social status or parental attitude to education. They pointed out that utilization or non-utilization of existing educational facilities will depend to a great extent upon non-educational factors in the environment which include the socio-economic conditions of the families, their level of literacy, health standard of the family, the quality of available social services etc. They studied the complex interaction of provision of educational resources, the socio-economic environment of the family and attitude to education.

Tiwari (1970) in studying of family dynamics of drop-outs, considered structure of the family, ecological framework of schools, hazards of population, teacher-student ratio and problems of teachers. It was revealed that majority of the drop-outs were from the economically well-up business families where parents and other siblings were less educated. They were more rejected by their parents than their counterparts.

Raj, K.N. (1971), points out that giving priority to primary education is necessary in a country where three-fourths of the labour force is engaged in agriculture and small-scale industry. Without the minimal advantages of literacy economic advance on necessary and acceptable technological changes would be difficult to achieve.

Byrne and Williamson (1972) in their paper have shown that variations in the provision of educational resources in an area is a significant factor in the variations in educational attainments of different social groups.

Sociologically relevant features of the growth of education in rural communities in India have been studied by Kamat (1973). In the first study, Kamat makes an analysis of secondary data to describe the growth of a village school and the progress of literacy and education in the village in the context of educational policies and programmes of Government of India. Also, he has tried to show the effect of education has on the occupational pattern in the village. In the other study, Kamat traces the growth of education (between 1947-63) in rural Maharashtra on the basis of data from 69 villages in the Satara district and showed the inter-relationship of educational growth with that of caste composition, occupations, the size of holding and the level of income of the people. He observed that it is mainly the landowning groups and the middle castes who are the chief beneficiaries of schooling in rural areas. The landless poor and the share-croppers rarely educate their children, as the opportunity cost is regarded as being too high.

Bhagwati, Jagdish (1973) put forth the hypothesis that when the State in less developed countries subsidizes education the benefits accrue disproportionately to the elite. Though the State subsidizes education at all levels, a combination of social and economic factors keep the lower classes away from education. Important among these are the high opportunity cost of educating a child coupled with a low rate of return on investment in education. An agricultural labourer's son or a construction worker's daughter can be gainfully employed from the age of eight while this is not the

case for children from higher income groups. Again, when a few years of schooling are not likely to increase employ ability, there is little incentive to educate a child. Finally, as school vacations do not coincide with peak agricultural seasons, a share-cropper or small farmer would rather have his son help with harvesting than be in school. Working in the field raises the family income while schooling appears no immediate financial gains. Further in most cases, there is little hope of any gain at all from education.

Fraser (1973) finds that the school progress of a child is related to factors in his home environments and intelligence; the conclusion is that home environment is "more closely correlated with school progress than with intelligence.

Freire, Paulo (1973); Illich, Ivan, (1973); Reimer, Everett (1974) pointed out that apart from the general difficulties, there are several other inadequacies that children from economically disadvantaged homes have to face. Among the major inadequacies suffered are those relating to food, shelter and other basic necessities of life. It has been observed that children from poor families are deprived of nutritive, brain building proteins, in early infancy and enter school with a deficiency that proves to be a continuing handicap. This handicap is further aggravated by continuous hunger and malnutrition, and by unsanitary and sub-standard living conditions. It is reflected in their poor stamina, limited capacity to concentrate, frequent illness and repeated absence from school. These children lack space, privacy and quiet to study and to do their home work. They also reported that many of those who are concerned with equality of opportunity for education, and particularly those who are committed to equalization of opportunities for those who are economically or culturally

disadvantaged for schooling, have agreed that the entire school system is heavily biased in favour of the continuation of power for the privileged elite.

Khandekar, M. (1974) studied the problem of drop-out in the slum area of Bombay and reported that the drop-outs' families are probably the poorest among the poor, i.e. lack of financial resources was the singlemost important reason for dropping-out even though non-economic reasons such as dislike for studies, need to do household work, indifferent health etc. were frequently asserted. Failure in studies does not appear to be related to liking or disliking for studies. Majority of the youths had themselves taken the decision to drop-out. The remaining few dropped out at the suggestion of others mostly their own parents. A large percentage of the drop-outs was sad when the time came for them to stop education. Comparatively more older than younger youths felt sad. In fifty percent of the cases either the drop-out himself or his father or mother was either happy or indifferent. The urban concentration of higher education has been discussed by Chitnis (1969) in a paper based on census data. Social background as determinant of educability has been examined by Karup (1967), Reddy (1967), Shah (1960) and Sharma (1962).

Douglas, J.W.B. and Jackson, B. and Marsden, D, 1974, found that even when inequality of education opportunity declined, inequality of social opportunity did not; this was primarily due to the persistence of social stratification. The same was also observed in a study of ICSSR, Delhi.

Goel (1975) finds variation in higher education negligible. His study shows that "The greatest variation is in regard to secondary education, followed by primary education. The variation in the development of higher education in different States is almost negligible". The interest of the elite group in higher education is

common, irrespective of the States they might belong to. The middle and somewhat lower middle class concentrates its interest on secondary education and their assertiveness varies. Primary education is mainly the concern of the lowest strata and differences in the conditions result in achievement variation.

Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Co-operation, 1975 noted that the tendency to leave the school is often encouraged by parents who may have initially wanted their children to be educated, but subsequently find it more productive to put them to work. In most such cases, the opportunity cost of primary education is substantially higher than the expected rate of return. In rural areas, the poor children gather firewood, graze cattle and work as labourer from an early age, while upper caste peers are left free to study.

Hug. Md. Shamsul (1976) highlighted the problem of enrolment of children in schools, and wastage in the form of dropping-out or repetition of grades and opined that the expansion of education did not prove to be the social equalizer. The proportionately higher rates of growth of the higher levels of education, the unequal distribution of the available educational facilities in each level, and the inverse relationship between the participation of the under privileged and the enrollment in levels of education widened the existing inequalities. In India, there are special social groups, which is the product of the particularistic structures of traditional societies, that because of their socially ascribed inferior status have remained economically and educationally backward, thus presenting a special problem. He also reported that the variables such as the economic status attitude of the parents, the quality of home environment, the state of public health and communications

(in rural areas) local custom and laws regarding minimum age for employment etc. are mainly responsible for wastage.

Gupta, S.C. (1976) revealed that the attitude of parents and the demands they make on the time and effort of pupils were found to be the principal factor responsible for large scale wastage, and the individual qualities of the child appeared to be the most important factor influencing both stagnation and wastage.

Cicoured, A.C. and Kitosose, John, I 1977; Husen, Torsten, 1977, Jenks, C. 1975; Rist, Ray, C. 1977 opined that in the existing hierarchies of our society where educational facilities range from the excellent to the very mediocre, children from poor homes are almost invariably placed in schools with poor physical facilities and with poor performance levels. This in effect amounts to denial of equal opportunity to them. The standards at some of these schools are so poor that even if the children manage to survive through the primary and secondary levels at these schools, they are rarely able to hold out in the open competition. Thus, they are indirectly engaged out of qualification for courses leading upto the more prestigious and profitable occupations, and excluded from opportunity just as they arrive at the point at which possibilities for upward mobility open up.

Mishra (1977) undertook a study to find the impact of education on socio-economic variations, in the rural context and discovered a correlation of '62 with social factors and '87 with economic conditions. The studies establish the view that education plays a determining effect on the socio-economic conditions of the society.

Rathnaiah, E.V. (1977) while studying the structural constraints in Tribal education found that ecological and socio-economic variables have their impact on the educability of children. Unfavourable geographical conditions, low socio-economic level and educational level of the families act as constraints and as such there is more educational wastage among those living in the interior areas and among the lower classes and having low educational status of the parents. Sex being the element of stratification became constraints for girl's education.

The following objectives are drawn for the present study :

1. To explore the extent of non-enrolment, drop-out and stagnation among different sections of population under study
2. To assess the sexwise variation in enrolment, drop-out and stagnation.
3. To ascertain the relationship between enrolment, drop-out, stagnation and socio-economic status of rural families.
4. To find out the relationship of parents' educational status with enrolment, drop-out and stagnation.
5. To study the factors influencing the wastage and stagnation.
6. To find out the socio-economic characteristics of drop-out, not-enrolled and stagnated pupils.
7. To ascertain the social factors that affect the utilization and non-utilization of the school facilities.
8. To study the parental aspirations towards the education of sons and daughters - the differences and the factors determining these differences.
9. To study the attitude of the parents towards modern education.
10. To examine the effect of modern innovation towards the achievement of education.

MAJOR HYPOTHESES

1. If schooling facilities are available in or near the village, parents show a greater readiness to send their children to school.
2. The growth in enrolment of children in schools of remote villages may be lower than the developed villages and villages nearer to urban area.
3. The aggregate private demand for education goes up with the growth of socio-economic status, provided education yields greater satisfaction in the form of higher wages or greater capacity to enjoy culture and leisure.
4. There are wide differences in wastage and stagnation rates according to social background; the rates are higher for the socially handicapped.
5. Other things being equal, the educational attainments in the families of upper socio-economic status groups are likely to be higher than the families of middle and lower socio-economic status groups.
6. Peoples' perception of opportunities of mobility influences their participation and continuation in the educational system.
7. The achievement in education will invariably influence to accept modern innovations and vice-versa.
8. There is definite relationship between the education of the children with that of their parents : the higher the parents' education, the higher the children's education.

9. Other things being equal, the attitudes of parents and the demands they make on the time and efforts of pupils were found to be the principal factor than the individual qualities of the child in influencing both wastage and stagnation.
10. It is commonly accepted that in traditional society, education of the girls is generally neglected. Hence, the hypothesis is that the education of the boys is more encouraged than the girls in rural area.

#### METHODOLOGY

The Problem and the Area : The world illiteracy is on the rise; - one adult out of three is illiterate and persons belonging to young age group form a big percentage of illiterate. The percentage of literacy in India only 36.17% in 1981. Despite the rise in literacy from 24.0% (1961) to 36.17% (1981), the number of illiterates has increased from 33.4 crores in 1961 to 38.6 crores in 1971 due to rapid growth of population. Again if we analyse the extent of literacy in urban and rural sector, we get a very staggering picture. In 1981 more than half of the people, nearly 52.18% were literate in urban areas whereas slightly more than one third of the rural population, 32.97% was literate.

If we compare the rate of literacy in various States, the position of West Bengal is not encouraging. It may be placed in the sixth position among the States and is ranked as one of the backward States in terms of educational attainment. The percentage of literacy in West Bengal as a whole was 33.0 in 1971. Leaving aside Calcutta and the industrial belt of Howrah, Hooghly and 24-Parganas districts, the highest was in Burdwan (34.4%) followed by Jalpaiguri (32.9%).

The District of Birbhum is categorised as one of the six backward districts of West Bengal whose overall percentage of literacy is only 33.80. This situation lead the present researcher to select Birbhum as the field of study.

If the level of literacy is considered on the basis of police station, the position of Bolpur police station can hold the highest rank; but if we analyse the level of literacy in rural and urban areas simultaneously, it is found that though Bolpur has highest literacy rate in urban area, the position in the rural area is fifth (percentage of literacy in rural area) in comparison to other police stations. The Visva-Bharati is situated within the purview of Bolpur P.S. and its wings of Palli Samgathana Vibhaga trying for the socio-economic including educational development of the region are working in the surrounding villages since 1922. One of the important objectives of this organisation is to spread education in the villages. Even then the phenomenon is quite disturbing. This background further motivated the researcher to select Bolpur P.S. (rural) district Birbhum for this specific study.

#### STUDY DESIGN

A strict attempt at finding out cause-effect relationship would require greater amount of control of the predictor variables for the entire sample under study which though invariably, undesirable. Since the study is about bringing into surface the socio-economic factors (as a dependent variables) and the caste, class and sex (as independent variables) in a stratified society like India, it is not known or have any prior evidence as to whose influence should remain in the measurements. Therefore, a study of this nature should contain a larger number of variables and geared

on descriptive line. The present study is based on the research design in which an ex-post-facto scientific field study was conducted in five villages. This section describes the criteria for selection of the villages and respondents, procedure followed in sampling and method of data collection, methods of identifying the empirical measures developed and techniques used to measure the variables and concepts and finally statistical procedure employed in the analysis of data.

The total number of family units of each village selected for the study has been divided into four groups based on preliminary census data. The groups are namely (i) School-going (boys and girls), (ii) Not-enrolled (children from six to eleven years), (iii) Stagnated, (iv) Drop-outs. These family groups were categorised by giving weightage of probability to specific section and if there had been more than one category of cases falling into each family unit, the probability of cases were studied and grouped into specific section :

School-going (boys and girls) :- Means those who have enrolled in the school and continuing their study (6 -20 years).

Not-enrolled :- Means those children of 6 -11 years who have not enrolled in the school and not studying in any other form.

Stagnation :- Means those who have enrolled in the school, but repeating class/classes due to failure in examination.

Drop-out :- Means premature withdrawal of a child (boy and girl) from school before completing the last grade of the stage of education in which he or she is studying.

THE SAMPLE

This study has been conducted in five villages of Solpur police station, District Birbhum of West Bengal, India. The selection of the final study units was carried out in four phases - selection of districts, selection of police station, selection of villages and selection of the study groups from each of the study villages.

The selection of the district Birbhum and the Solpur police station has been done on following two criteria.

- (i) The district and the P.S. should have low percentage of literacy (as per 1971 census) in the rural areas and
- (ii) They should have disparities in rural-urban ratio in education, caste, class and sex-ratio in education.

In the selection of villages it has been assumed that the following criteria would give true representation for the aforesaid study.

- (i) The villages to be typical of the communitywise distribution characteristic of the region.
- (ii) On the basis of the available educational facilities in different localities (villages under study) the attitude towards the education is likely to differ.
- (iii) It should provide representation in respect of education to various segments of our society like caste, class, sex and religion of the region.
- (iv) Better and widely applicability of results.
- (v) Well acquaintance with socio-cultural and educational setting by the researcher.

- (vi) The propinquity to Visva-Bharati.
- (vii) The area provided a basis for selecting the categories of villages of different socio-cultural and religious background.
- (viii) There was no specific similar study conducted in this area in this direction.

In view of the above criteria the five villages under Bolpur police station were selected as hereunder :

- (i) A village with close urban contact with reference to educational facilities (multi-caste).
- (ii) A developed roadside village (multi-caste) having primary and secondary school facilities.
- (iii) An interior village where educational facilities are lacking.
- (iv) A tribal village.
- (v) A typical Muslim village having traditional educational institutions.

The selection was made after pilot survey. The present study seeks to analyse the various aspects of the problem of enrolment, drop-out and stagnation in education as studied in these villages. Survey and case-study methods were used for data collection. Structured interview schedules were administered after pre-testing in three separate phases. In the first phase, preliminary census survey was conducted to identify the problems of enrolment, drop-out and stagnated pupils and the families. For this, complete enumeration of households was made.

During the second phase of the survey, all the heads of the households were interviewed with a interview guide pertaining to various aspects of education in general and education of their

children in particular. Thus 265 respondents from five different villages were interviewed for this study.

In the third phase, identified section of not-rolled, drop-out, stagnated and school-going study-group's heads of the households and the pupils, (that is not-enrolled boys or girls, drop-out boys or girls, stagnated boys or girls, school-going boys or girls) were interviewed with the structured interview guide. Fifty units of families from each group were selected through stratified (disproportionate) random sampling method. The stratum were namely religion, caste, sex and socio-economic status. A number of case-studies were also collected.

#### Methods and Tools of data collection

##### Establishing Rapport :

Necessary rapport has been established during the preliminary village visits. To gain confidence and faith, the researcher was introduced by some of the village leaders. It was made clear to them that the study was purely for academic purpose. Local idioms were used during conversation to create confidence in them and make them feel that the investigator was their own friend and not an outsider.

The final data were collected with the help of interview schedule specially constructed for the purpose of this study keeping in view the objective and variables. A few case studies were conducted, keeping in view to give the practical bias to this study. Personal interview schedule was considered to be useful in dealing with the villagers of different educational attainments. It was also possible to have reliable and valid data from the respondents. The pretesting of the draft interview schedules were conducted and necessary improvements were made in the final schedules. Local

language was used to obtain the responses.

The schedules which are divided into several sections are stated as follows.

Preliminary Census schedule No.-A

This schedule has been designed to provide information on demographic characteristics, education, occupation, land holding, occupation, income (range and source) of each of the family units.

Census schedule No.-B

It was designed to collect informations on particulars or education i.e. school-going, stagnation, drop-out and not-enrolled of each of the family units.

Schedule No.-C : Socio-Economic status scale

The scale of socio-economic status (rural) developed and standardised by Trivedi and Pareek (1963) with some modification was used. It has eight areas viz, (1) Caste, (2) Occupation, (3) education, (4) social participation, (5) Land, (6) house, (7) farm power and (8) material possessions. Weightage is given for each of sub-category in each area so that the sum of these would indicate the SES of an individual family unit with the maximum possible scale scores of 61. Algebraic sum scores on all items yielded the total socio-economic status score of an individual respondents. The total scores which obtained during investigation are classified into four classes of socio-economic status viz. class-I low SES, score upto 10, class-II lower Middle SES 11 to 20, class-III Middle SES 21 to 30, class-IV Upper SES 31 and above.

The first interview guide was prepared to furnish detailed data on farm practices of the family members including children, attitude towards occupation and opinion of children's future occupation, attitude towards education. This attitude scale was developed by Sinha and Kolte (1974) and applied in the field of adult education in relation to agriculture development (NIRD, Hyderabad). This attitude scale was used to measure the general attitude of the respondents towards education. It has thirteen statements consisting of ten positive and three negative. Each statement is given weightage by putting five different scores against them like strongly agree-5, Agree -4, Undecided -3, Disagree -2, Strongly disagree -1. While putting the score against each statement, the reverse were the scores for negative statements (viz. Strongly disagree -5, Disagree -4, Undecided -3, Agree -2, Strongly agree -1).

The algebraic sum scores on all statements indicate the attitude score of an individual respondent. The maximum possible scale scores obtained is 69 and minimum -35. The total scores which obtained during investigation are classified into five groups viz. Group -1 Indifferent -35 to 39, Unfavourable : 40 to 44, To some extent favourable 45 to 49, Favourable -50 to 54, Highly favourable 55 and above.

Distribution of annual expenditure on food, education, medical, social activity etc., health and family welfare practices, feeling of discrimination in education, extension of education (plan for the education of the children), utility of education, the disadvantage of modern education, attitude towards the Governmental benefits and suggestion for future measures etc., all these information were collected from the head of the family or in his absence the

senior most adult member of the family.

#### Interview guide - II

The second guide was meant for the school-going pupils and their fathers or guardians. Information was obtained about the desire for occupation, views of parents about education, affiliation with friends, treatment of the school teachers to the students, co-curricular activity, motivation for study, type of financial assistance. On the other hand, fathers/guardians were asked to get information like method followed to send their children to school, reason for absence, opinion about the teachers, reason of failure etc.

#### Interview guide - III

This guide was meant for the non-enrolled children and their fathers/guardians. It was framed to collect information related to reasons for non-enrolment, their present status, views about education, opinion about school schedule, school environment, mode of running the school, present occupation, desire for future improvement, etc.

Informations were also gathered from the fathers/guardians regarding the reasons for not sending the children to school, facilities provided by the Government for universal education, other incentive they can suggest etc.

#### Interview guide -IV

This fourth interview guide was meant for the drop-out pupils and their fathers/guardians. The information gathered related to reasons for drop-out, future aspirations, occupation, leisure time activity, views regarding education, opinion regarding school

environment and treatment of the teachers towards their students, feeling about the situation in drop-out etc.

Data collected from the fathers/guardians were related to reasons for drop-out, caste or class discrimination, if any, facilities required for sending them again, occupation of the drop-out, amount earn, opinion regarding teaching and teachers, attitude towards drop-out children etc.

#### Interview guide - V

This was meant for the stagnated pupils and informations gathered were related to the aspects like reasons for failure, regularity in study, difficulties in subject, causes for difficulties, teacher's help and guidance, assistance from tutor etc.

#### Measurements of Variables :

The relevant variables for study have been selected on the basis of extensive review, consultation with experts and a pilot study conducted in the area of investigation. The variables and the measurement techniques are furnished below :

#### The variables studied and techniques used

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Technique of measurements</u>
Dependent Variable	
Wastage, Stagnation, Drop-out	
Independent Variables	
Age	Chronological age of the respondents
Education	Scores assigned as per Socio-economic status scale (Rural) SES developed by Trivedi & Parekh (1963)

Variables

Socio-Economic Status

Technique of measurements

Scores assigned as per Socio-Economic Status scale (Rural) SES (Rural) developed by Trivedi & Parekh (1963)

Attitude towards Education

Scores assigned as per Attitude scale developed by Sinha and Kolte (1974).

Variables

**Age :-** The age was computed on the basis of completed chronological year reported by the respondents at the time of investigation. The respondents were grouped for this study as 6-20 year for studying the problem of non-enrolment, drop-out and stagnation. In rural area generally the children are sent to the school at the age of 6 to 7 years and many of them complete the school education even at the age of 20. Keeping this in view the researcher considered 6 to 20 year age group for studying this problem.

**Education :** The education status of the respondents was measured as per socio-economic status scale developed by Trivedi & Parekh (1963). The scale composed of "illiterate", "can read only", "can read and write", "primary", "Middle", "High School", "Higher Secondary", "Higher education" with corresponding scores 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 respectively.

VariablesTechnique of measurement

Scores assigned as per Socio-Economic status scale (Rural) by Trivedi and Parekh (1963).

For operational advantages the castes belonging to a particular horizontal category were grouped together for the purpose of analysis namely High Castes, Clean Castes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled tribes and Muslims.

## Type of family :

The respondents were asked about their types of families. Five type of families were taken into consideration name Nuclear, Nuclear with addition (Nuclear family in addition with other members), Broken family (means nuclear family but either husband or wife expired), Single family (where any man or woman remain single), Joint family (more than one generation live together) The corresponding scores were 1, 2, 4, 4, 5 respectively.

## Size of family -

The respondent's size of family was noted against the alternative small size 'upto 4 persons', medium size 'upto 5', large size '6 to 9', very large size 'above 10' and distinctive features with corresponding scores like 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Social participation :

It was operationalised whether an individual is a member of one organisation, a member of more than one organisation, an office holder and other distinctive features (MLA, MP, Pradhan of Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti or Zila Parishad etc.). The measurement and scoring of this variable has been done in accordance with the SES scale by Trivedi and Pareek (1963).

Land holding :

It was measured by the number of acres actually cultivated by the respondent. In case of Bargadars (share croppers) the farm size was also measured by the number of acres held by each share cropper. The distinctive feature were landless, less than one acre, 1 to 5 acres, 6 to 10 acres, 11 to 15 acres and above. The scoring technique of SES scale by Trivedi and Pareek (1963) was followed.

Income (Annual) average :

The respondents were about the annual income of the family. They were grouped into six distinctive classes with corresponding scores like less than Rs.1,000, 0, 1,000 to 5,000, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 respectively.

Scoring key for rural variable in respect of Wastage, Stagnation and Stay in :

Three point rating scale used by Sharma and Sapra (1967) is followed in this study.

<u>Parent's view :</u>	Important -3	Satisfied -3
	Neutral -2	Neutral -2
	Unimportant -1	Dissatisfied -1
	Sympathetic -3	Good -3
	Neutral -2	Yes -3
	Apathetic -1	Neutral -2
		Cannot say -2
		Bad -1
		No -1
<u>Pupil's view :</u>	Competent -3	Kindly -3
	Incompetent -1	Harshly -1
	Average -2	Can not say -2
	Good -3	
	Average -2	
	Bad -1	

Sharma and Sapra (1967) have also used Four point scale in relation to measure the consequences of drop-out. The same scoring technique is used in this study also.

Both sad - 1

Both indifferent or happy - 2

Drop-out sad but parents happy -3

Drop-out happy and parents sad - 4

#### Data analysis and Statistical Measures :

The tabulation and processing was done by manual method. The mechanical device was, however, used in calculation. The percentages were used in all the table to analyse the data collected. Ratio method is used in case of six ratio of educational attainment. Arithmetic method is also used to categorise the respondents with respect to their characteristics. The statistical measures used to test the empirical hypotheses in this study was 'Chi-square' test.

The R x C Table :

If each member of a sample is classified by one characteristics into R classes, and by a second characteristics into C class, the data may be presented in a table with R rows and C columns. The entry in any of the R.C. cells is the number of members of the sample falling into that cell. The formula used was :

$$\text{Chi-Square } (X^2) = \frac{(E - F)^2}{F}$$

where,  $F$  = the observed frequency in any cell

$F$  = the frequency expected i.e.

$$\frac{\text{row total}}{n} \times \text{Column total}$$

$$n = \text{Total sample} = \text{summation d.f. (degree of freedom)} = (R-1)(C-1)$$

where,  $R$  = Row,  $C$  = Column.

Case study method was used scientifically for gathering qualitative data. Where quantitative data fail to explain the real situation, cases are put to analyse the data. Also cases are added where it is thought essential to give practical bias to explain the situation.

NOTES

1. Karmayoga : Science of action leading to perfection. It aims at learning by doing. It gives emphasis in developing the skills in vocation.
2. Gyanyoga : Science of knowledge leading to perfection. It aims at developing intellectual capacity in an individual
3. 'Brown Sahab: An Indian who is trying to imitate the styles and ways of White Sahab.