CHAPTER VII
CONCLUSION

Education as a Part of Hindu Social order
Education has always remained the domain of dominant elites/caste all over the world. As far as India is concerned the case is not much different. The role of education in India if was not of creating inequality; it strengthened the system of inequality created by Hindu Religious order by the mechanism of caste system. After centuries of caste subjugation each of the caste members were specialized in hereditary profession and the right to get education was directly derived from these hereditary professions e.g. Brahmins were specialized in learning, writing and imparting education; Kshatriyas were specialized as a ruling caste and Vaishyas were involved in trading. As a result all the three higher varna people were supposed to read and write. But on the other extreme, Shudras and Ati-shudras were kept out of the education system because their hereditary occupations were not supposed to take the help of education. This system of privilege and dis-privilege continued for thousands of years and resulted into a hegemonic domination, where each section of the Hindu social order unconsciously accepted their exclusion from the domain of education. But the systemic hegemonic exclusion of the Shudras and Ati-shudras (the Dalits of today) from the education system became much contested issue when few of the great personalities like Jotiba Phule (1827-1890) and D.R B.R Ambedkar (1891-1956) stood against the discriminating Hindu social order (O’Hanlon 1985; Zelliot 1991).

English Education and Contestation for Educational Equality
The contestation against educational inequality got accelerated when British rule started in India. Although in the beginning, Britisher’s promoted oriental system of education but soon after they promoted English education (Singh 1972). The English education provided new occupational opportunity and the diversification of occupations resulted into breaking up of hereditary specialization of occupations. Creation of new professions and promotion of English education aroused new consciousness among untouchables and Shudras that even they can read and write and can go for occupation other than hereditary in nature (Ambedkar 1991). But even after many decades the system of inequality has remained and persisting itself. One can see inequality in educational as well as occupational opportunities. Educational
opportunity remained confined to upper section of the society and resultant occupational opportunity too.

To overcome the persisting educational inequality many efforts were taken by the Government of India which includes educational policies, Commissions to improve educational system and number of schemes to universalize elementary education (e.g. SSA). Even after making education as a fundamental right under article 21(A) by the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act (93rd Amendment Bill) in 2002. Universalization of elementary education could not be achieved. The scheme like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which involves millions of rupees, remained a grave failure. The target group which included children belonging to Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe and Other Backward Classes (SC/ST/OBCs) remained the victim of inefficient and poor quality of teaching in most of the states in the country. This resulted into high dropout rate and failure, resulting into reproduction of the social conditions of existence. As has been noted by Times of India of 5th July 2004 that education imparted by untrained Para teachers was often poor as Manoj Kumar, a class 5 class student from Bargah district in Orissa did not like going school and most of his complaints were heaped on teachers who indulged in discrimination on the basis of caste: “the teachers, moreover, do not turn up to take classes or are late most of the time. They do not teach us properly, talk rudely, bully us, and even force us to do their personal work like buying gutkas from the market” (Ghosh 2009:259). The beneficiaries of this poor educational system cannot aspire to gain occupational mobility. The restricted occupational mobility provides a different experience and in turn produces the value which the children of the deprived communities attach to education, which is different from the value system of the upper strata children.

**Education and Occupational Mobility: Description from the Present Research**

It is under these assumptions that the present research has tried to find out that how far these educational and occupational opportunities have benefitted to Shudras, as Jheers are accorded Shudra status by the society. The present study has tried to analyze the trend of educational and occupational mobility among Dogra Jheer to know that how far Shudras have got benefitted from the existing education system. In addition to this it also explores about the construction of their educational values. The present research through its data analysis also hinges upon the theoretical debates
regarding, how far education determines occupational mobility? While doing this it explores the inherent potential of education system. It tried to analyze with the field-data regarding Dogra Jheers. We have extracted data from three generations-grandfather, father and Son. Further the sample of the youths was divided into two groups- the employed youths and the student category.

The first Chapter has discussed the statement of the problems, the theoretical and conceptual explanations, review of literature, objectives of the study, methodology and chapter scheme. The second Chapter has given the profile of the educational development in India. It traces the history of educational development in India through different Commissions and Committees. The planned development with five years planning also gives the picture of educational investment by the state and increase in the number of students at different levels of education. We have seen that how different Constitutional measures, the programmes, Commissions have helped to include the erstwhile communities in the educational systems. We have also analyzed specifically after independence what policies helped the most.

The third Chapter of the present study gives description about the Universe of the study. Research setting and conceptual clarification help us to understand context in which the study has been conducted and gives the required framework. The description of the research setting also gives an understanding of the people and the group which has to be studied in the educational development. Jammu and Kashmir has a special status in the States of the Country. Within Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu city has its special history. We have also seen the origin of the Dogra Jheers in the Jammu society. The third Chapter has also given the description of the different respondents. The respondent's education status and comparison of the educational levels of different generations has also been discussed in this chapter.

The educational achievements are dependent on economical status of the individual/communities or economic status is dependent on educational achievements; this is the debate which forms the core of fourth Chapter. The Marxists believe that education is the sphere of the superstructure and hence dependent on economy. However, there are others who say that culture decides the economic status. That means the educational achievements will decide the economic and occupational achievements. In India we have seen that the Shudras and Dalits were deprived in
both the spheres- culture and economy. We have seen in the wake of deprivation of culture and economy protest and social movements helped them to achieve educational status. It was Mahatma Joitirao Phule (O'Henlon 1985) who paved the ways for their educational achievements and understood the contribution of the education in the lives of the Dalits. These and other aspects have been discussed in the fourth Chapter of the present study. We have also discussed the educational profile of the nation in this chapter.

Chapter fifth discusses and analyses the education as an instrument of educational mobility among the Jheers of Jammu- the sample of the research. A total number of two hundred respondents belonging to different age groups were interviewed. The relevant data was collected to see the function of education in the lives of Jheers. We have found that education played a civilizing role and gives a higher status. Higher the education higher the occupational status will be and higher the status. By mere causal observation we can argue that there is an increase in the educational level among Jheers. The comparison of three generation gives us the fact that in the grandfather’s generation there was less education and further the father’s generation is more and among the son’s it is highest. We have also found that even though there are no hopes of getting a government job even then Jheer youths are going to schools. We have analyzed the occupational statuses of the Jheer youths and have seen that majority of youths belong to lower middle class. The study has shown us that as the time has passed by, the Jheers have given up their traditional occupation and because of diversification of occupation there has been upward occupational mobility in the first generation of the Jheers. But in the present generation the status has changed as more and more Jheers join lower class private jobs.

Chapter six of the present study has tried to understand the probable trend of career direction as well as employment strategies among Dogra Jheers in Jammu city. We have seen how the employment options have constructed the educational values of the Jheer youths. The collected data shows that approximately eighty-six percent of Jheer youths are employed in non-government sector, but in interviews fifty-two percent of the youths want to work in the government sector. We have also come to know that most of the respondents want to work in government sector because it gives them security prestige and economic stability. Although majority of the Jheer youths aspire
for getting government jobs, they are not averse to the private sector jobs. But here also they do not stick to one job. Rather they keep on changing one job or the other. It happens so that when Jheer youths are unemployed they search any private job and when they have some amount of stability they go for another job. Further it is really surprising to see the optimism of the Jheer youth. Even though education is not providing them lucrative job yet most of felt that their education has helped them to secure a livelihood and respectable status in the society. In this way social reproduction among Jheer youths keep on taking place and they have not been able to break the vicious circle. The structural reproduction can answer many questions regarding the high dropout and lack of motivation among the Jheer youths and many other youths as well. Sixth chapter also probes the political mobilization in the lives of the Jheer youths. We have found that Jheer youths were not very politically conscious. They do not understand the political base of any of the National or regional political parties. Jheers are not aware of the ideological basis of Bhartiya Janta Party although they appreciate BJP because of its Nationalistic form.

**Less Educational Achievement**

While we see the educational and occupational mobility among Jheer, it becomes clearer that although the present generation has attained some level of educational mobility but the present generation is facing downward occupational mobility. The educational mobility among Dogra Jheer across the three generations has remained very limited. Most of the present generation youth rarely go for higher education (graduation and above). The most preferred employment sector for these youths is private sundry services and self-employment. Infact sundry services and self-employment are the only options available to educated youths. The response of the Jheer youths for these options is very optimistic. Most of the Jheer youths consider sundry services as a good avenue for social mobility because ‘market-experience’ out of these sundry services provides them mobility options. It was also observed in the study that those who are educated upto 12th wants to go for only government services but highly educated are more flexible in their approach.

**Occupational Mobility Failure**

Although the present generation is involved in diverse occupations but all these positions are either lower middle or lower class in nature. Even the share of the
present generation in government services has been reducing. In this way one can see
the clear downward occupational mobility among Dogra Jheer. Downward
occupational mobility among Jheers is associated with one more trend that is Jheer
youths are frequently changing their occupation for the sake of getting better
opportunity. This makes their occupational status again pathetic and deplorable. But
even this makes them quite hopeful as they see market experience as a chance for
social mobility.

**Education and Occupational Mobility: A Structural Issue**

While analyzing the mobility pattern among Jheer, the research expounds on the
structural issue. It has been made out clear that there is an inherent relationship
between the social and economic structure of the Jheer community on the one hand,
and the general level of mobility pattern existing at the state level. It shows that the
cultural life and mobility pattern of the community is being influenced by the ways in
which institutions, people, modes of production, distribution and consumption are
organized. The state level mobility pattern shows the increasing level of
unemployment among literate (literate below matric) and the most preferred sector
where they all are finding space is shops and establishments; and this sector has also
gained momentum throughout the years (J&K 2009). The state level trend finds many
similarities with educational and occupational pattern among Jheer. Even most of the
Jheer youths are educated upto matric and the most preferred occupational
opportunity for them is available in the form of lower class sundry services (mostly
shops and establishments). The important assumption which present research brings
out is in the form of mobility pattern among OBCs. Caste Development Index made
out of the NFHS (1998-99) clearly shows the deplorable condition of OBCs in the
state of J&K (Deshpande 2006:2445). It clearly shows that the backward classes in
J&K are marked with poor quality of life in comparison to other castes. Even the
Dogra Jheer youths follows the downward occupation mobility. So the state level
mobility pattern can be considered the dominant pattern of mobility among OBCs; as
OBCs constitute around thirty-five percent of state population.

**Occupational Aspirations and Educational Interventions**

At this point the research tried to see the role of education in determining the
occupational aspirations and achievements among Dogra Jheers. Although the
research at many points had shown that the Jheer community is facing downward occupational mobility but the interviews with Jheer youth showed their strong desire for government services but mostly they are accommodated in the sundry services. Educational achievements directly determine the occupational aspirations of the youths. Those who are educated up to higher secondary want to get government services but youths educated above higher secondary adopt a more flexible approach and are willing to avail the occupational opportunity irrespective of government or private sector. The increasing level of education among Jheer youth produces neutralizing effects by which they become more accommodative with the system and less resistive.

Even the student of this community are no less different from employed youth as far as the occupational aspirations are concerned. Present research study shows that the desires to get government services are also the part of student’s occupational aspiration. Students of this community are trying their best for fulfilling their dreams. Their participation in the higher education has increased a lot and the better cultural capital which the student generation has inherited in the form of educated parents results into their higher participation rate in higher education. The increasing participation of Jheer students in the higher education is accompanied by their increasing level of participation in the professional education. This recent trend among Jheer is quite parallel with the OBCs at the national level which shows their highest participation in the professional education in comparison to other caste and religious groups.

**Cultural Production and Social Reproduction**

The vantage point of the research is the understanding regarding the social reproduction among Dogra Jheers. The research at many points had raised serious questions about the deplorable conditions of Jheers in educational and occupational sphere. In the face of ‘education as a fundamental right’, the state as well as central government is making number of efforts to universalize education (especially elementary education) but the trend among different backward communities (e.g. present study about Dogra Jheer) shows educational failure and social reproduction. While talking on these issues research has already raised specific sets of key questions:
i) Does making education as a fundamental right will improve the condition of backward communities?

ii) Does education achievement results into occupational mobility?

iii) Does educational achievements are so powerful means that it can override centuries of long cultural impediments?

All these questions assumed great importance in the present research and all the chapters with tabulated data had tried to answer these questions. Let's try to answer these above questions one by one and see what comes out at the end. The first question derived its strength from the vitality and indispensability of 'education' as a mechanism which ensures the smooth function of the society. Most of the sociologists like Durkheim and Parsons had already talked about this in details. So it is quite obvious that the planners and leaders of any state would want to make education as a 'fundamental right'. But the issue is whether making education as a fundamental right will ensure the entry of every child (from every caste and class) in to school. There can be a possibility but National level enrolment and retention of the students speak against this possibility. We can see that most of the children from SCs/STs and OBCs are having less enrolment and retention rate. Although to ensure the enrolment and retention rate many education policies and schemes were launched from time to time. Even these educational schemes could not ensure the commitment of the state to universalize elementary education.

Schools opened under SSA are considered to be the means for mainstreaming out of school children and to achieve Universalization of elementary education upto 2010. Most of the children who belong to SCs/STs/OBCs and labour migrant families could not be retained in these schools and this is in return created a great gap- government schools for SCs/STs/OBCs and poor and, private schools for elite. So these schemes achieved very little and spent millions of bucks. Even if we take the example from the present study, we can see that it took the time of three generation for Dogra Jheers to attain education upto high school. Among present generation of Jheer youths only twenty-six percent could attain graduate degree or above and rests are educated upto higher secondary or below. The scene of post-graduate is much more pathetic. It means that there is no direct relationship between education as a fundamental right and education mobility among Dogra Jheer.
Now let’s talk about educational achievements and occupational mobility. There are many who might think that educational achievements always result in occupational mobility. But the relevant issue is whether this assumption that “educational achievements result into occupational mobility” is applicable for ‘caste groups’. The introduction of variable ‘caste-group’ is important to discuss here because in India belonging to a specific caste means ‘different historical experiences’ and ‘different social statuses’. The truthiness of the above assumption can be seen against the national data regarding education and occupational statuses of different social groups in India. Most of the reports (e.g. Sachar Report 2006) show that there is a huge gap between different social groups as far as the case of educational and occupational sector is concerned. Mostly the higher caste possesses higher educational and occupational achievements. Most of the OBCs hardly go for higher education and they also witness higher unemployment rate. The most preferred sector among them is professional education. It means the assumption “educational achievements and occupational mobility” is valid only among higher caste groups. There are many intervening variables which come into play when we see this relation among backward caste-groups.

The very third question in a way is going to talk on this issue i.e. the intervening variable in the form of cultural impediments, which restrains backward classes to attain education and occupational mobility. Does educational achievements are so powerful that it can override centuries of long cultural impediments? This will help us to understand that why they do not go for further education and ends up their career into lower class sundry services. What is that which stops them to take education and attain occupational mobility? We explore this issue by taking the example of Dogra Jheer youths. It has been seen in the previous chapters that mostly the Jheer youths take education below or up to 12th and then go for lower middle class and lower class sundry services. They reject the available educational mobility so that they can gain occupational mobility. It is to be made clear at this point that the present generation is the only generation which has shown some level of educational mobility but also facing downward occupational mobility.

Responses collected from the interviews conducted with Jheer youth shows very interesting results. It is observed that although they attach great importance to ‘being-
educated' and 'employed in government services' but they are quite unwilling to continue their education after 12th standard. Mostly the Jheer youth stop their education after 12th and opt for lower class sundry services very optimistically. At this junction Jheer youth develop a belief (cultural production) that they can achieve occupational mobility after earning “market-experience” from these sundry services. Although the production of this belief comes only when Jheer youth realize that they cannot continue their education because of family’s deplorable condition and their education is not going to provide them high status government services. There is no option of avoiding the possibilities and opportunities available in the form of sundry services. The production of this belief deserves great importance in deciding their educational and occupational mobility. It is because of this belief that they leave education and opt for lower class services. Interviews conducted show that the production of belief comes out of duality. It comes in response to their deplorable economic condition of the family and the hope that lies with the so called open market, where ones mobility chances are decided by the hard work and capability.

Production of beliefs are not only restricted to education and occupational mobility. One can see that production of beliefs and values often comes in a way whenever there is an encounter between their subjective world and their mundane reality. Most of the interviews and case studies conducted reflect this picture. When the question was asked to Jheer youth about their caste, the most common response which one gets from them is, “Our caste is not backward and our poor educational and occupational position is because of our own poor efforts”. Jheer youth not in any way consider them as backward, and find themselves in an equivalent position as other caste groups are. The production of these beliefs and values shows their agency and also their resistance not to be obeyed by the dominant values of the school system. They decide not to be governed by the values of the school system and choose their life chances by using their own agency. Although this is something which is very creative but it again leads to social reproduction of the conditions of their existence. They start with lower class background in a hope to gain good status but ends up with the same status.

The role of education in the above discussed pattern is quite passive. Even after taking education the overall status of Jheer youths hardly changes. It seems that education is playing far away from a role of emancipator agency; rather education is playing a
dominant role in the maintenance of status quo. The worthiness of education fails to provide occupational mobility to the Jheer youth. In fact, education fails to motivate them to continue their studies for higher education, and instead, youth starts doubting whether education will provide them occupation. And therefore Jheer youths decide to rely on “market-experience” rather than going for higher education.
References


