CHAPTER II

SOCIAL CONTEXT OF SCHOOLING: A SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Education, social class, community, and family

A significant part of educational research has focussed on the influence of family, community, and social class upon education. This chapter is a survey of such studies that explore the linkages between social class differences and education, linkages between child-rearing practices within the family and education, the relationship, if any, between schooling and the community. The chapter begins with a review of large-scale macro level studies regarding social class influence upon education, and then gradually moves into the area of community and family influence vis-a-vis cultural, racial, linguistic or gender issues. The implications of these studies upon the present one are brought out in the concluding section of this chapter.

Social-class and education

The concept of 'social class' stems from Marx's use of the concept for the first time in his 'Capital' where Marx 'made "class" the central aspect of his analysis of the society and his theory of social change (International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences 1968: 267). At a later date the concept of social class extended to 'groups within stratified collectivities that are said to act politically as agents of change' (International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences 1968: 267).

Social class has also been studies within educational research, primarily because of the connection between education and economy. Jean Floud perhaps summed it up most comprehensively when she said:

The best contribution that the educational system can make towards the economic problem is to send forward recruits to the labour force...whether by guidance, direction or merely in response to the prevailing pattern of the economic incentive (1961: 31).

However, the sociological aspect of educational and economic differences cannot be overlooked in the analysis of the relationship between
education, economy and the labour market. Specifically, the relationship between inequality of access, achievement and outcome and that of socio-economic inequality have been the focus of considerable amount of education-related research across societies.

The definition of social class as a system of socially ranked groups based on income (Morris and McIntyre 1971) tends to be linked with hierarchical differences in educational access and educational performance. Studies conducted as early as 1920s (Lindsay 1926) and 1930s (Gray and Moshinky 1938) document that working-class children, particularly children of unskilled manual workers (those occupying the lowest rungs in the social-class hierarchy) are under-represented in selective secondary and higher education. These findings have been corroborated through a number of research initiatives in the successive years. Certain studies in United States belong to such groups of research (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1954, 1959; Robbins 1963; Douglas et al. 1968; Schools Council, 1968). A similar study in Netherlands (Svalastoga 1965) reported that the upper 5 per cent of the population produced 45 per cent of all male students and 66 per cent of all female students in the higher education field in 1958-59, while the lower 68 per cent of the population produced only 9 per cent of all male and 3 per cent of all female students.

The study by Craft (1970) related to school dropouts in Ireland also shows same variations between social class and school-leaving age of children. It has been documented in this study that at the age of 14, the percentage of school-leaving children from the middle-class is 14, which increases with the upper working-class (37 per cent) and lower working-class (60 per cent). The findings also document that among the children who are at school till the end to complete their school education, 57 per cent are from the middle class, 18 per cent from the upper working class and 7 per cent from the lower working class.

Sexton (1961) in his research based on a quarter of a million children in three hundred schools of a major American city pointed out the relationship between the average family income, guided largely by the rather simple index
of 'father's income', and the schools which children from these families attended. His study reflects that schools categorised in such a manner based on father's income varied markedly in pupils' levels of ability, achievement, delinquency, etc. In this study a relationship is, thus, established between social class and the nature of educational access, opportunities and outcome that are consequently available to different social groups.

Some other studies within educational research document findings that demonstrate significant correlation between school leaving years and lifetime earnings. Millar (1965) demonstrates this very clearly with respect to the United States of America, where the number of years completed in school is shown to be directly proportional to average annual income and expected lifetime earnings (ELA). Less than eight years of schooling, for instance, would lead to an average annual income of $2550 and an ELA of $143,000, while for more than 16 years of schooling, the corresponding figures would be $9206 and $425,000 (approx.) respectively.

Similar projected figures had been provided by Abrams (1964) for Great Britain using a random sample of 6,500 male heads of households over twenty years of age. Abrams found that for those who left school at 15 years, the median income in 1963 was 636 pounds, for those who left between 16-18 years it was 1,036 pounds, and for those who left at 19 years or over it was 1,583 pounds. Abrams further noted that two or three years of additional education led to an expected financial income for life which was more than double received by someone who left school at fifteen years or less (Abrams 1964: 26).

Blaug et al (1967) in their research with a sample of 3,000 individuals in industry had also constructed actual age-earning profiles that followed a similar pattern with school-leavers between 15-19 years of age having lesser earnings than those between 15-19 years of age. The highest income group constituted of individuals who were holders of university degrees and were over 22 years of age.
These studies were primarily designed to provide an overall picture of the educational opportunities and profiles of school-going children; specifically designed to address questions at the level of educational policy-making and administration. They proved their usefulness in highlighting the significant relationships between education, social class and socio-economic opportunities or life chances.

However, apart from pointing out significant statistical relationship between social class differences and levels of education, such ‘macro’ level studies based on large-scale survey techniques of research do not focus on the reasons ‘why’ such differences exist. In other words, beyond establishing a correlation between social class and educational performance and providing us with significant ‘predictors’ (Swift 1967), these studies do not really explain why such correlation exists and why upper and middle class children perform better in schools in comparison to the working class children. However, there are other studies that attempt to study the impact of social class influences by looking at various aspects of a child’s social class—ranging from class-level or community level motivation to obstacles within the schools that prevent lower class children to perform equally as their upper and middle-class counterparts.

Allen (1956) in his study of dropouts in secondary schools of England, for instance, focuses on socio-economic factors originating in social class differences as one of the major determinants for students to underachieve in schools which, in turn, result in students dropping out. In fact, according to Allen, social-class differences among students affect dropout rate by affecting several factors, ranging from intelligence-test scores to participation of students in curricular and extra-curricular activities. As far as intelligence tests are concerned, according to Allen, ‘most of these tests favour students from the middle and the upper social classes; dropouts from lower-class homes get unrealistically low scores’ (1956: 20). Also, students coming from low socio-economic backgrounds have difficulties in meeting school costs and often cannot participate in extra-curricular activities due to extra financial expenditures likely to be incurred. All these have a cumulative effect upon the
student, resulting in their alienation and finally dropping out of the education system. Allen also goes on to state that among lower social class families, less value is placed on education and completion of schooling since they have already accepted their low social status and do not feel the drive to move up the social ladder.

Miller (1964) looking at the problem of educational achievement, links the decision of leaving school early to that of the availability of jobs. According to him, social class plays a key role not only in educational achievement but also in the availability of job opportunities, and even completing graduation would not necessarily ensure an improvement in one’s occupational chances unless coupled with one’s social class, since the labour market provides inadequate opportunities to students despite their completion of education. Also, the society attaches social class value to the educational qualification of a person before providing him/her with occupational chances. Miller asserts that working class students are aware of this and so are not interested in achieving well in school or continuing with education, which in turn creates inequality between them and the upper/middle-class children.

Jean Floud (1970) in her extremely relevant discussion on social class as a determinant of education mentions how only the material (emphasis mine) aspect of social-class was initially linked to access to education. She, however, talks about social class not merely as a barrier to education in material terms of economic deprevation, but as a factor that has profound influence upon the educability (emphasis mine) of children. She refers to ‘social class differences’ as not merely economic, but as those fundamental differences between social classes in ways of life, values, aspirations and attitudes. Her postulation is:

So far as education is concerned, these class differences, which reflect a social distribution of probabilities in the life experiences of children of different social origins, can be translated as possibilities that they will respond differently to school, even at the same level of measured intelligence. 1970: 33, emphasis mine).

Floud elaborates these probabilities in terms of marked social-class variance in access to grammar schools for middle-class and working-class students, but she ventures beyond this to look at other factors as extremely
important to the education of children. These factors include family environment, size of the family and culture/community influence, all of which have varying degrees of influence on children belonging to various social classes. Floud also points out the role played by the school in the social selection process (in the guise of academic selection) and discusses the social-class differences in the dynamics between middle-class teachers and working-class students.

In the same breath one could also mention the inferences drawn by Douglas (1964) in his work *The Home and The School*. In this work he stated that the social-class context not only affects the manner in which students respond to school but also the manner in which the school responds towards students, even at the same level of measured intelligence. While describing the streaming process adopted by the school, Douglas reported that even where children of the same-level of intelligence were considered, children who came from middle-class homes were allocated to the upper streams by the teachers while children from manual working-class were sent to the lower streams. Also, children from large-sized families or children with dirty clothes—usually, attributes not related to middle-class families—were also allocated to the lower streams. He further argued that this process of selection by the school based on the students' social-class and environmental differences probably accounted for measurable differences in ability between children at a later period of their schooling, even though initially such differences did not exist.

In observing the relationship between social class and education, some researchers go beyond considering social class as a homogeneous characteristic—they point out heterogeneity within the social classes e.g. the working-class or the middle-class. Such studies focus on the sub-cultural aspect of social class differences and link them to the school experiences of children. To begin with, for instance, Kahl in his study (1953) of working-class boys differentiated between the two types of family environment among the intelligent boys and the dropouts, even within the generic 'working-class'. The study demonstrated that those boys whose parents had come to recognise the career value of education had influenced them to seek a college course, while
the dropouts did not have any such parental expectations or pressured upon them, and their educational performance was likewise influenced.

Klien (1965), identifies at least three main groups within the scope of the concept of ‘working class’—the ‘deprived’ group characterised by insecurity and deviation from a variety of social norms, the ‘traditional working class’ who try to ‘maintain standards’ rather than ‘let things slide’, and the group that does not belong to any of the above because their lifestyle is ‘changing’. Klien further argues that the last group, whom he calls ‘the status dissenters’, would be the ones who are more home-centred and less oriented to kin and community. They tend to have more democratic and child-centred family environments, and tend to be more ambitious for their children and see more relevance in education than the traditional working class—the ‘status assenters’, living in long-established, close-knit communities.

A similar study by Carter (1966) demarcates the heterogeneity in the working class (and consequently the extent of variations in the motivational family/community environment with respect to education of children). In this study, the researcher classifies the working class into the ‘roughs’, the ‘solid working class’ and the ‘home-centred, aspiring type’—classifications that also define the nature of attitudes and aspirations of children belonging to these three different groups. For instance, it is evident that children coming from homes of the ‘roughs’ would tend to regard school with irreverence and hostility and would tend to lay greater emphasis on chance achievement rather than rational planning and perseverance. On the contrary, children coming from the ‘aspiring type’ homes might have small, planned families that are keenly ambitious for their children and overtly supportive of school activities; at times, even putting extra pressure on the children to do well at school.

Community/ neighbourhood, schools and education

Educational performance and achievement has also been studied by researchers vis-a-vis the areas or communities where the children reside. The demographics, culture, language and thought processes of members within a community vis-a-vis education has a potentially powerful influence on
educational performance and achievement, and these factors have been examined by researchers. In this respect, community as a sub-section of the wide gamut of social-class has been the focus of educational research.

The study by Rogoff (1961) focussing on child achievement was one of this kind. It demonstrated that working-class children rated lower than middle-class children as far as school performances and college aspirations are concerned; however, Rogoff also found that working-class children in larger suburbs performed better than working class children in smaller neighbourhoods. Here, the influence that the community/neighborhood might make a difference vis-a-vis achievement is brought to focus. Rogoff does not stop merely at establishing a correlation between neighbourhood and educational achievement but offers possible explanations, e.g. working class children might be subject to significantly different home environmental pressures then those in small towns and cities. His study, therefore, is a step beyond the usual co relational analyses of the day, in that it takes into consideration the context or setting of a particular social class that could have an influence on educational performance.

Blyth in his work (1967) provides another example of a contextual study being done not pertaining to social class alone but the social environment as well. In a review of the varying social settings of an English primary school, he discussed implications of factors like curriculum and organisation, teacher's role and school's value system and ideology within the context of a range of community environments from villages. This study again is a contextual report than an in-depth analysis of the community environment. Nevertheless, it is important because it describes the influence of the neighbourhood on education of members of different social classes.

Another study that elaborates the difference between schools located in 'downtown' communities and in suburban localities is that of Conant (1961), whose primary focus is how on community attitudes and values are brought to bear on the schools located within that community. His findings reveal that in superior suburban area high schools, from where majority of students enter
college, the problems for parents is to ensure admission of their children into prestigious colleges and teachers have to adjust the families’ ambitions according to the students’ abilities. However, in communities consisting of slum dwellers where almost half of the children leave school early, teachers have to address a very different concern of preparing students for jobs as soon as they leave school, alongside raising the ambition of those with academic talent for higher education.

The in-depth documentation of the relationship and interaction of the school and community in several ‘inner city’ districts in Liverpool’s ‘Crown Street’, by May (1962) is a classic study within British sociology of education. This work highlights the dissonance between the values of the sub-culture of the working-class communities and the schools that function within these communities. The Crown Street community consists of decaying houses filled to overcrowding by an unskilled, nomadic and cosmopolitan population and has schools that share the same material handicaps as the community. The importance of schooling, or education, is not felt in a similar manner by the teachers and the members of the community, since the socialisation experience offered by the schools were irrelevant in comparison to the internal socialisation by the community; also because the school failed to bring the students forward to any improved future prospects—children after leaving school filled the unskilled manual jobs at the lowest hierarchical position.

Eggleston (1967) in his study offers an in-depth description of the primary characteristics of a community—the shared values and ways of life that constitute a culture catering to all the needs of the individual members, and the relationship between community and educational performances. Eggleston’s findings from his observation of the school catchment areas in the Leicestershire plan reveal that working class children in middle class areas were more likely to stay on at school than working class areas; 59 per cent of manual workers’ children transferred to schools for higher education in the middle-class suburbs in comparison to only 30 percent in the working-class areas. He advances what he calls the ‘community context thesis’—that distinctive community attitudes, values and behaviours could exist over and above the
influence of individual socio-economic background of members of the community, which could have a more prominent influence on educational aspirations of the younger people of a community.

The influence of the neighbourhood is elucidated also in policy documents regarding effectiveness of education. Central Advisory Committee for Education's *Early Learning Report* in its study of grammar school dropouts state the following:

Children in different social groups may start their...school life with different sets of...assumptions....but ideas are picked up not only in the home but in the neighbourhood. It is easy to imagine, for instance, that a headmaster may despair of keeping in the sixth form any boy from a particular street, not only because of the poor condition of the houses but because of the character and atmosphere of the street as a community. There is no doubt the strength of the pressure of even conscientious parents from neighbours who see no point in education beyond fifteen or sixteen...and if the pressure on the parent is strong, it is much stronger on the children. (C.A.C.E., 1954, paras 98-99)

The community context within the corpus of educational research is heightened not only due to the fact that social class is one of the major defining parameters. Communities have even more variations apart from that of social class, namely, ethnicity, race, language, caste, religion and gender—all of which influence the education of children in terms of socio-economic barriers, ethnic/racial identity and cultural and linguistic differences. What Floud (1970) called 'educability' of children is very much determined by these aspects of a subculture or community. In a broad sense of the term, researchers regarding interaction between the community and the school have explored the question of 'educability'.

It has repeatedly been established in research that if the school and community environment are congruent and complimentary to each other, the educability of the child increases, and vice versa. While some maintained that there ought to be more identical interests between the school and the surrounding community (Eggleston 1967), others lay emphasis on factors like cultural consonance (Bourdieu 1970, Tharp 1989 or Wells 1997) or socio-
linguistic similarities (Bernstein 1962, 1985, Dell, 1964, Lawton, 1964) as other factors apart from social-class differences that educability of certain children is greater than certain others within a given context. Factors like race (Ogubu 1989, 1997, Delpitt 1997) and ethnic cultural identity (Tharp 1989) are other factors that differentiate educability of children of culturally and socially different communities.

In the seminal work by Bernstein (1962) on language codes and their relationship with educational performance of children from different social classes, the focus is upon the kind of language used within the middle-class and the working-class community. For Bernstein, the unit of analysis for identifying social class difference was linguistic development and thought processes, and he applied it to the variance in schooling experiences of the working-class children from the middle-class children. Making use of taped-recorded discussions between working-class and middle-class boys, Bernstein suggested that speech could be divided into two codes, 'elaborated code' and 'restricted code', which are functions of two different social situations. The restricted code would consist of utterances loosely strung together, for which very little mental planning or exercise is required, and would be used mostly in intimate, informal, 'closed' social situations (e.g. within the family or within intimate peer group). The elaborate code, on the other hand, would be the medium of unique individual expressions comprising of abstractions, complicated information and novel ideas.

Bernstein’s argument was that middle-class speakers tend to be more adept in switching from the Restricted Code to the Elaborated Code as per the social situation (who is being spoken to and what is being communicated), while members of the working-class community would have problems doing the same and their communication would be limited to the Restricted Code due to their social position. The educational implications of this phenomenon would be that of the working class child giving immediate responses, displaying low levels of curiosity especially with regard to abstract problems, thus not communicating adequately with the teacher—which would in turn be regarded as poor intelligence, poor motivation and lack of cooperation and interest.
Difference in language code of the working-class community, therefore, became the intrinsic factor that influenced educability of working-class children.

A replication of Bernstein's work occurs in studies conducted by other researchers, including Lawton (1964) who observed the writing skills of working-class boys at school and compared it to that of middle-class boys. His results portrayed that working class boys do have the potential of switching over to the Elaborate Code to the Restricted Code. However, when given a choice, they revert to the Restricted Code for expressing their thoughts and ideas. He further linked this ability to I.Q. (a departure from Bernstein) and stated that only working class boys with average I.Q. have the potential of transferring thought and speech and writing from the Restricted to the Elaborated Code, but they prefer to do so only when the context unambiguously requires it and there is no other easier alternative. The nexus between language and educability of children belonging to different language communities (also different social classes) is, therefore, once again highlighted.

Tharp (1989) in his research for effective education among culturally ethnic minority communities looks at language as one of the intrinsic factors that affect schooling experiences. However, he goes beyond language and delves into other socio-cultural variables with respect to the schooling of the children of two different ethnic communities, namely the Hawaiians and the Navajo Indians. Tharp argues that for educational compatibility between the school and the students, the socio-cultural context of the community environment and the school environment must be the same. He observed motivation, social organisation, linguistic patterns and their cognitive dimensions within the socio-cultural settings of the Hawaiian, and the Navajo Indian community, and the interaction between school and community based on these. With the vastly different eco-cultural settings of the two communities, the respective schools were given culturally compatible inputs from within the socio-cultural aspects of the communities that they catered to. This, according to Tharp, is what needs to be practiced on a large-scale to ensure culturally compatible education and effective schooling.
Delpit (1997) takes a diametrically opposite view from Tharp in her analysis of the pedagogical process of black children. Her basic argument is that racial difference translates into socio-economic differences between the communities of the dominant whites and the minority blacks. She acknowledges there is a culture that is more powerful than the culture of the blacks as this is the culture of the dominant social members (the whites), and this is the culture that is transmitted through pedagogical interventions in schools. She calls this culture the ‘code of power’ and those students who can receive and appropriate the code of the powerful are the ones who have the key to this acquire this power for themselves. Her contention is that if within mainstream pedagogy, the education of blacks is restricted within the context of their own cultural elements, this would mean further segregation of blacks from the dominant ‘code of power’ of the whites. She therefore opposes context-specific, culture-specific education of blacks in schools, as blacks would require learning the code of the dominant and the powerful whites so as to acquire that power for themselves.

In a more recent study, Ogbu (1997) in his analysis of inequality of education in America looks at the chasm in performance between black students and the whites, and ascribes such unequal achievement to racial differences. He differentiates between social class difference and racial differences, defining the latter, shaped by historical and structural forces, as “socially defined ‘races’ or groups (as distinct from biologically defined races and groups) on the basis of assumed inborn differences in status honour or moral worth, symbolised in the United States by skin colour” (Ogbu 1997: 768, emphasis original), which translates into social-class differences. He analyses the manner in which the white students perceive blacks, also the self-perception of black students within a frame of reference of ‘white’ schooling experiences, and the articulation of racial differences through such perceptions, which, in turn, affects performance of black students. In this regard, Ogbu lays great importance on the community forces of blacks that shape their perceptions regarding education. He particularly emphasises upon the role of community forces, stating that community forces constitute one integral part of school performance gap between blacks and whites, stating “it is among the things that most distinguish
immigrant minorities who are doing relatively well in school from non-immigrant minorities who are not doing well” (Ogbu 1997: 775).

**Family and education**

Though the dynamics between the community and schools is of supreme importance vis-a-vis education, yet it does not supersede the importance of family. The influence of family with respect to education of the child is central to the question of educability. The roles played by family members and the upbringing of the child within the family environment influences the socio-cultural and linguistic attributes of a child, and socialisation within the family are the first set of lessons learnt by the child towards her construction and interpretation of her life experiences. Early childhood experiences of the child within the family and the criticality of their bearing upon the child’s later life experiences have been observed by Brofenbrunner (1958) and Mead (1955); interaction of the child with her/his parents have been observed by Helen et al (1975), and Hess and Shipment (1968) found that differences in children’s learning is related to difference in maternal speech and maternal teaching strategies.

The school in its position of the other most important agent of socialisation in building the life expectations and life possibilities of future social actors draws immensely from the value systems and socio-cultural practices of the family. However, there are also several situations when the schooling of the child does not continue as a natural extension of the family socialisation process and education in school does not follow from the informal learning environment of the family. Hence, it is evident that the overall dynamics between family and school as twin agents of socialisation have always been fundamentally complex with several aspects or dimensions to it. As stated by David (1989):

Home-school relations or the family-education couplet are still as familiar today as they were twenty, thirty or even a hundred years ago, despite major transformations in both educational policy and socio-economic structure...but...it is suffused with a variety of meanings to the different partners.
The various ways in which the family and the school influence each other and their combined influence upon the student constitute a vast range of research. Several of these research studies concern themselves with child-rearing practices and values transmitted to the child in the family, or aspects of parental control/discipline over the child, linking these attributes with social class differences (Bernstein 1985), socialisation based on cultural differences (Rosen 1956), or gendered value systems of the society (Bhattacharya 2000, Chanana 1996, 2001, David 1989). All these studies are linked to the educational performance and achievement of children in schools. While some researchers offer family-child interaction as an explanation for the students' educational performance, others look at lack of participation between the family and the school as the reason for educational disadvantage, while yet others state that the very interpretation of the concept of family is politicised and requires to be redefined in the light of present and future social changes in order to address the problems within the home-school relationship.

As stated by Marsden, “parents guide their children’s education by what they are, what they do consciously, and, possibly more important, what they do unconsciously” (1967: 38). The exploration of whether or not there exist any causal relationship between family environment and education of children has been the subject of discussion by researchers. The social-class context of the family and its relationship with educational performance or educational achievement occupies a large portion of this debate. Thus, Coleman (1966) in his wide-scale survey of I.Q and performance of children emphasises the social background of students, namely, socio-economic opportunities and valuesystems within the family and their effect on educational performance more directly than I.Q. The Plowden Committee Report (1967) on primary education highlights that the home environment such as physical amenities of the home, family size, number of dependent members, fathers' occupation and parents' education affect variations in attainment of children and influence success in school. Ahmad (1968) states that the school environment of the students is dependent upon the social background of their family—in other words, upon the educational, occupational and income levels of their families.
Within a family, parental attitudes reflect themselves in child-rearing practices, and several studies point out the difference in child rearing practices and controlling of child behaviour based on the social-class position of the family. For example, parents in the middle-class families, though more tolerant of expressed emotions and desires of the child, have more expectations from the children. In contrast, the working class parents, being more immediate in their expressions, tend to resort to physical punishment but have lesser aspirations from their children (Brofenbrunner, 1975).

Kohn (1959) attempted to relate child-rearing practices of working-class and middle-class families with respect to their values and their expectations from the children—while working-class parents valued external obedience and respect for rules in their children, middle-class parents valued development of internalised standards of conduct. Kohn related such differences in values to the occupational positions of the social classes. He suggested that since middle-class occupations have a greater degree of self-direction, such parents value self-direction and encourage qualities such as curiosity and self-control, while working-class parents stress such qualities as honesty and obedience because in their working lives it is required of them to follow rules laid down by someone in authority.

In a later study with Carroll (1960) Kohn looked at the allocation of parental responsibilities with respect to child rearing, and traces the differences in perception of what constitutes responsibilities, to social-class differences. He found that middle-class mothers tended to emphasise father’s obligation to be as supportive as the mother herself, and fathers tended to agree with the mothers, especially as it applied to sons. Working-class mothers, on the other hand, saw the fathers’ responsibility only to impose constraints, while the fathers seemed to look upon child-rearing only as their wives’ responsibility, rejecting the supporting or the constraining/disciplinary role that their wives expected of them.
Typologies have been developed by researchers for child-rearing behaviour of parents that would differentiate between the middle and the working classes; one example of that would be the typology provided by Kerckhoff (1972). This includes the basic permissive/restrictive differentiation noted by Brofenbrunner, a distinction between love-oriented and power-assertive forms of the parent-child relationship, and a third dichotomy based on the significance of explanation in parental discipline—where he makes a distinction between parental responses that are simply expressive and those that attempt to explain and make values explicit.

Bernstein (1971) in his work also focused on the distinction between working-class and middle-class families, stating that the former are more position-oriented, that is, the right to command is in term of formal status like age or sex with clear separation of roles between both parents as well as parents and children. In contrast, the latter are more subject-oriented where status ascription by age and sex is much less. Bernstein extended these hypotheses into his study of middle-class and working-class mothers and their behaviour towards their children (1975). On the basis of detailed interviews with the mothers, Bernstein and his associates constructed an index of maternal communication and control, and they found that high scores were obtained on this index by middle-class mothers who do not avoid difficult questions, rely more on explanation than punishments or other coercive forms of control, and value the educational use of toys. Bernstein further observed a link between high index of communication and control and a measure of educational orientation. He reported that mothers who scored high in the above index read to their children more frequently, were favourably disposed towards the teachers, and took positive steps to prepare their children for the start of the school.

In this context, Bernstein’s findings have been replicated to a great extent in the study conducted by Wootton, (1974) based on recordings made of parent-child interaction in the homes of 20 four year-old children with no researcher present. When analysed, these interactions once again demonstrated a greater extent of parent-child interactions in the middle-class families than
working-class families (where the television was switched on for greater period of time and children mostly played outdoors away from their parents). Like Bernstein, Wootton also pointed out that in middle-class homes, parents lay greater importance on interacting with the child, transmitting values and in this manner, making constructive use of the child’s fantasy. Control in middle-class homes was, once again, found to be based not on coercion but on explanation.

Though no direct relationship has been established in educational research between child-rearing practices or parent-child interaction, it needs to be noted that these studies have provided valuable cues about the environment within the child’s family, which has a bearing on the educational performance of the child.

Subsequent studies have build up their arguments based on examination of such criteria like family environment and their influence on the family-school interaction, which they have linked to the child’s educability. Floud (1964) points out that parental attitudes are the principal ingredient in the subculture that a social class represents from the point of view of the school. She states that parental attitudes are both symbol and source of social differences in the children at the same general ability. Her contention surrounds the concept of an ‘educative environment’ being provided by the family, which supports social and intellectual pressures in the same direction as those exerted by the schools. This environment requires having the following criteria: a ‘smaller than average’ family size, parents require to have certain education beyond the ‘compulsory minimum’ and before marriage the mother may have followed an occupation superior to that of the father. Under such circumstances, the climate of the home would be educationally favourable such as parents’ willingness to visit the school and talk to the teachers and a knowledgeable approach to education. This, in turn, would lead the to the child being more successful than average, both in terms of entering the education system and staying in it. Floud contends that such educational environment is usually not provided among working-class families and this explains the under-achievement of children coming from working-class family environments that do not support education.
Toomey's work (1969) also looks at the home environment and the relationship between home environment and parental attitudes towards child's education. He looks at the family-environment of 'home-centred' working class families (primarily characterised by the withdrawal of the father/husband from his independent male friends), and reports that such families showed a greater degree of interest and participation in the children’s education, and expected higher educational attainment on the part of their sons even when the income of the family was held constant.

Greenberg and Davidson's study (1972) using black children from working class families in Harlem based on home environment and parental interaction with children seems to validate Floud's argument. What is interesting about this study is that it portrays the extent of impact of home environment irrespective of the social class position of the family. It was found that even within the working class, children could be divided into high and low achievers, and it was found that the high achievers belonged to homes where there was a high level of parental interest, an orderly home environment, the use of rational discipline and an awareness of the child as an individual.

These theories have been reiterated in later studies like that of Lareau (1989) whose observation of two predominantly white schools showed important differences in the family-school interaction between the middle-class and the working-class students. Her findings were that while there was limited interaction between the working class families and the school, there was a continuity and inter-connectedness between the school and the family as far as the middle-class parents were concerned, which, in turn, affected the educational performance of the working-class students vis-a-vis middle class students.

Some studies on family environment and education were not based on social class differences but cultural differences, but their focus nevertheless was once again on family environment, child-rearing practices and educational performance. Rosen (1962) compared socialisation patterns and achievement motivation using samples of boys from United States and Brazil.
findings of this study, the scores of achievement aspirations of boys from United States were found to be twice as large as the Brazilian boys. This was coupled with the characteristic Brazilian social structure of the family in which authoritarian fathers were combined with protective and indulgent mothers who were less likely to train their sons in self-reliance, autonomy and achievement in comparison to their U.S. counterparts.

Kumar (1993) in his survey of literature on childhood and family in India argues that influence of home environment and child-rearing practices upon schooling of children in India should be studied within the specifics of the Indian cultural context since childhood in India is a socially and culturally different experience from those of children in other parts of the world. In support of this argument, he attempts to point out aspects of childhood experiences that are unique to the Indian culture. For instance, he suggests that the absence of peer group activity is a critical feature of the culture of childhood in India and relates it to the ‘strong adult-child continuity that the culture continues to project as a norm’ (Kumar 1989: 70). In the same work he points out a conflict between forces of modernity and cultural traditionalism within the socialisation of the child at school or at home. The former exercises itself through pedagogical messages in school, emphasising on the differentiation of the child, her/his special status as a social actor and her/his autonomy. The latter force is more of a ‘silent command that the child should accept parental wisdom and elders’ right to shape the child’s personality, career and family life’ (1993: 73).

A set of studies based on a pattern of focussing on the impact of parental communication with their children upon achievement aspirations of children or their educational achievement in actual terms would include the work of Drews and Trehan (1957) on parental attitudes and academic achievement of children which investigated the attitudes of mothers of over and under achievers, of both high and average intelligence, and it was found that the mothers of high achievers were more authoritarian and restrictive than the mothers of low achievers.
Also, Douvan (1958) in his study attempted to relate child-rearing methods to level of achievement values through the investigation of occupational aspirations of 1,000 high-school boys from white collar and skilled manual families. The findings pointed out that boys who had upwardly mobile aspirations perceived their relationship with their parents to be congenial with mild and essentially verbal discipline and infrequent physical punishment. Though once again, there is no exact causal relationship established between parental interaction and achievement, yet it is observed that there is a correlation between the two.

The study by Rosen (1962) of high scorers in reading among Grade I children is another one of these. In this study, the features of parental control that were discovered for the high scorers was said to be a mixture of emotionally positive parent-child interaction and controlling, preventing and prohibiting disciplinary techniques. The parent-child interaction of low scorers, on the other hand, was characterised by liberal amount of direct physical punishment.

Gender socialisation of girls and their educational achievement has been a consideration in the work of educationists like Bhattachraya (2000), Chanana (1990, 1994, 1996, 2001) Chapman (1986) Deem (1978) and Nambissan (2004). The studies primarily concern themselves in addressing the problematic of educational inequality from a gender perspective, outlining the difference in treatment of girls in the family, the attitude of girls towards education and the relationship, if any, between the family environment, parent-child interaction and educational performance of girls.

Deem (1978) looks at the difference in educational achievement between boys and girls within a capitalist society, despite the entry of women by large numbers into mass-scale education. She argues that the achievement of equal education by women is something incompatible with the culture, ideology and social relationships of production in a capitalist society (1978: 20). She looks at how family and schools within the structure of a capitalist society
supports subordinating and differentiating women through sex stereotyping. She highlights the difference between the manner of interaction of girls and boys with their teachers and with each other as an example of sexism within the school. Added to this is the representation of woman in the pedagogical content, with lack of female protagonists and portrayal of women as poor role model for girls. Another instance of sex-stereotyping within the ‘hidden curriculum’, is when schools channel girls into ‘separate areas of curriculum from boys’ (1978 : 43) with girls ending up opting for traditionally ‘feminine’ subjects like cookery or opt for arts discipline while boys ‘gravitate towards practical, technical, mathematical and science subjects’ (1978 : 43).

Chapman (1986) explores the manner of gender differentiation within the school. She looks at how educational inequalities at school stem from gender socialisation within the family and are further reinforced within the schooling experiences. She traces the beginning of the process of gender socialisation within the family during the early childhood of girls and boys when they ‘learn their social roles from the behaviour of members of their family and the expectations placed on them’ (1986: 65). Thus at the very inception of their schooling experiences children start school with well-developed ideas of what constitutes ‘correct’ male an female behaviour. To add on, their ability to perform in school is also assessed on the basis of gender. The school curriculum, teachers’ treatment and expectations of the students and attitudes of peer group, all reinforce inequality based on gender. For instance, the manner in which teachers address pupils in school is different. “Within a class, pupils themselves have reported that boys are referred to by their names, while girls are referred to as ‘the girls’. Three strong lads are frequently asked to move heavy objects, while girls may be asked to serve tea to visitors” (1986: 70). Also, the pressure from the peer group to conform to a gender-typed behaviour also ensures that few pupils would question the assumptions made about them by the teachers in the school. All these factors add up to the gender-differentiation within the schooling experiences of girls and boys that in the long run reproduces the unequal gender relations within the society.
Chanana (1996) examines the gender-inequality evident in schools of India within the context of primary schooling. Her argument is that to provide education to Indian girls, the socio-cultural gender biases of a social structure that limits the role of women to traditional domesticators need to be examined critically. The family plays a crucial role in such gender-socialisations that would restrict women within the boundaries of the home space. Besides, she also points out that even among Indian women there are wide variations in life chances and life experiences based on factors like caste, tribe, religion, rural-urban residence, social class and socio-economic status. The instrumentality of policies mouthing equal educational opportunities to boys and girls are thus, lost if strategies are not evolved to ‘neutralise or circumvent’ these ‘ideological, structural and family impediments’ (1996: 377).

Bhattacharya (1999) looks at how the process of socialisation in school is a continuum of the gender-socialisation process at home. Her observations within the context of schooling reveal that girls are entrusted with responsible activities in class (for instance, the class monitor is a girl) which, she argues, is an extension of the gender-socialisation within the family that prepare the girl for a more responsible role as the home-maker. Segregated seating arrangements in classrooms further reinforce the boundaries pertaining to gender, which is also an extension of the socialisation within the family, which is that girls and boys have different ‘spaces’ at home. Gender-based peer group formation by girls and boys that lead to differences in peer-group interaction between girls and boys is also an example provided by her which reinforces the gender roles that are transmitted to the children through socialisation within the family. She goes on to state that in this manner, gender discrimination within schools result in inequalities within the education achieved by girls and by boys.

In a similar vein, Nambissan (2004) analyses factors related to gender-discrimination within both the school and the home environment that results in unequal educational opportunities for women. Within the school environment, different chores performed by boys and girls (boys doing ‘muscle work’ and girls sticking to more household-related chores like sweeping the floor, filling up water, etc.), peer group interactions in which girls and boys maintain their
respective boundaries, that is sanctioned by the teacher as well, are observations similar to those of Bhattacharya. Besides, the study also points out instance of gender-bias in teacher student interaction with teachers (especially if they are male, which is more often the case) interacting more frequently with boys more than girls, expecting girls to be ‘shy’ and participate less in the classroom discussion. Within the home environment, she has identified ‘marriage considerations’ within the family as a major influencing factor in deciding the level of education for a girl child irrespective of the socio-economic position.

Within the Indian context, some studies explore and analyse educational deprivation stemming from socio-economic factors, and also discrimination based on caste, class and gender. The PROBE Report (Public Report on Basic Education in India) is one such study that raises issues regarding school infrastructure and pedagogical content of primary education. It also explores the socio-cultural and socio-economic factors that lead to educational deprivation. Built on ‘extensive field work in rural areas’ (PROBE Report 1999: 2) in 234 villages in five Indian states (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh), the report consists of inputs from children, teachers, parents and members of the community in the selected villages. The economic and infrastructure-related reasons for children being deprived of education, e.g. high costs of schooling (despite primary education being officially ‘free’), lack of schools within close proximity, lack of proper classrooms and basic amenities like drinking water and toilets have been reported to have a negative impact on the quality of provisioning of primary schooling. Lack of teachers in schools, teacher absenteeism and apathy towards teaching, poor quality of teaching, and pedagogical content that fails to retain the interest of the children are also reasons that cause children to drop out of school.

The processes of social discrimination along the lines of gender, caste and class have also been elaborated in this report. For instance, prejudices of the teacher or harassment from upper-caste pupils have been reported to be common experiences of Dalit children. Class-based discrimination has also been noted to exist, with new textbooks being distributed from affluent families,
while old textbooks, recycled from previous years, being given to poorer children. Gender bias, in terms of teachers’ giving more attention to boy students than girls, or a pedagogical content that lack any representation of gender equality, are some forms of discrimination against girls prevalent within the school. Besides, parental motivation for sending girls to school has also been reported to be lesser than boys. However, despite such barriers in accessing education, what the report stresses on is the high overall parental motivation among the rural poor for sending their children to school. The report states that 80 per cent of the total surveyed population wanted to avail of schooling facilities for their children, a situation that is contrary to the myth that education is often the least of the priorities for the underprivileged.

Similar barriers to access related to caste, class and gender have also been highlighted by Kaul (2001) in her field-based study of seven districts in Karnataka. The findings are that economic compulsions have a major role to play in lack of continuity of schooling. 55.67 per cent of the children coming to school from low income groups stated that they would not be able to complete school, and “only around 20 per cent of the children nursed some career aspirations for themselves” (Kaul 2001: 157). 81.14 per cent of the total sample population of children within the study dropped out of school due to low household income and poverty. Though high motivation and keen desire was found to exist among the parents, they find it difficult to send their children to school due to economic compulsions.

Conclusion

In this survey of literature, an attempt has been made to trace out a pattern of the various dimensions of educational performance/educational achievement, and its linkages with social class, community context and most importantly, family influence. It has been observed that the relationship between education and social class is intrinsic. That difference in socio-economic status and income of a household leads to a difference in the kind of schools children attend, has been highlighted. It has also been established that social class differences determine the ‘educability’ of the children, that is, even at the same level of measured intelligence children might respond differently to
schooling depending upon differences in socio-economic background. While such inequalities would pertain primarily to social class differences between the working-class and the middle class, heterogeneity among working classes themselves might sometimes result in differences of achievements of their children in school. Not only socio-economic status but factors like linguistic codes based on social class differences also influence the educational performance of children in school.

The influence of the community upon the education of the child has also been elaborated upon. What seems apparent is that the interests of the community need to be aligned with that of the schools to have an impact upon the educability of children. Other aspects that shape student performance and influence achievement in schools include socio-linguistic abilities and ethnic, racial or cultural identity of a community. The concepts of culture, ethnicity and race have been elaborated upon with respect to different communities/subcultures within different social class divisions.

Socialisation within the family and influence of the family environment is another important aspect that determines schooling experiences of children, and the relationship between child-rearing practices, parental ambition and schooling has been the focus of a significant amount of research as mentioned above. The cultural context of the family is also important, as some researchers would like to point out conflict between the socialisation processes at home and at school if there is a cultural dissonance between the school and the home environment. Others would demonstrate the socialisation process at school to be a continuous extension of the socialisation process at home.

The influence of gender-socialisation within the family and its relationship with education of girls is also significant. This is because such gender socialisation determines the educational opportunities provided to girls (as being different from those provided to boys), and hence, highlights the difference between academic performance of girls and boys. Gender, therefore, becomes an important determinant of educational opportunity and educational outcome.
The review of literature portrays the school as an institution situated at the confluence of social forces like social structure, economic status, cultural/community identity, and family environment. A combination of these forces is what tends to mould a particular education system, and within this system, the education of individual groups of social actors. With respect to the present study, this review of literature attempts to provide an understanding about the possible influence of forces like social class, community culture and family environment upon the schooling of children of sex-workers. This is looked at in greater detail in the subsequent chapter, which examines the influence of these factors specifically upon the education system in West Bengal, thus establishing the specific socio-cultural context of the schooling of children of sex-workers.