CHAPTER II
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The present study has been undertaken mainly to study the social attitudes towards a few social issues, as entertained by persons of varied generational levels, education levels, caste and socio-economic status. More specifically the author intended to study the influence of generational differences or gap and parental influence in the family, besides other factors. It is worthwhile to first to examine the concept of inter-generational gap and also to summarize some research studies in this connection.

INTER-GENERATIONAL GAP

In every age since the dawn of mankind, some kind of gap has existed between the views of the young and the old, that is between any two generations. The father has often felt that the generation of his son is not as good as people were in the good old days. The younger generation is regarded as easy-going, less honest, less intelligent, not as brave and straightforward as people used to be earlier. The mother-in-law has often complained of disrespect for the age and lack of modesty in the behavioural manners of the daughter-in-law. And when it comes to the dress and fashions, the younger generation has always been considered as outrageous and shocking. The father has always regarded the era of the younger generation as the 'Kaliyug' the age of evil and sins, which is replete with dishonesty and
corruption. Little does he remember that in his younger days
the father was himself looked down by his own father in the
same derogatory light. For every generation, the generation to
come represents the ‘Kaliyug’, and what is begone belongs to the
‘good old days’. The anthropologists have characterized this
inter-generational difference very aptly. Radcliffe-Brown calls
it ‘disjunction between proximate generations’. Strain between
the father and sons is a phenomenon of not uncommon occurrence.
The Greek poet symbolized it in the Oedipus myth, which Freud
took over and used it for depicting the situation of ambivalence
between father and son. In fact, he named his famous complex
after the unhappy Greek king who unknowingly slew his own father.

Prof. D. Sinha (1972) has coined a new word ‘The Mughal
Syndrome’ for this inter-generational difference of gap and
quotes a number of illustrations from the history of Indian kings,
both ancient and medieval, in order to support the new term used.
Hindu mythology is not lacking in such instances of the
‘rebellions’ of the younger generation against the old. Kansa,
the powerful Lord of Mathura, was haunted by the fear that he
would meet his death at the hands of his own sister’s son. He
imprisoned his sister and ordered that every child born to her
be killed at birth. The last child, Krishna, was miraculously
snuggled out of the prison, and grew up to kill his own uncle.
Another instance of generational gap is Prahalad’s legend. He
was virtuous, god-fearing son of Hiranyakashyap, the powerful,
but sinful king. Prahalad was tortured repeatedly by his father.
Ultimately at the prayer of Prahalad, the god in anger took the
half animal and half human form of Nrisingh who tore off the
entrails of Hiranyakashyap. Again during the historical times,
D. Sinha in order to depict the revolt of the young against the father, quotes the ancient story of the overthrow of Bindusara by his own favourite son, Ajatsatru. While King Bindusara defriended Buddhism, his own was hostile to it and as a political game patronized its rival sect, the Jainism, led by Vardhamana Mahabir and Buddhist schismatic Devadatta. Mak

Ultimately, Ajatasatru usurped the throne by imprisoning his own father, which led to a war between Magadh and Kosala. Sinha again quotes from the mediaeval history which is also replete with the instances of son rebelling against the father. In spite of the fact that Babur, the first Mughal Emperor of India, was prepared to lay down his life so that his son Humayun may recover from his illness, the latter showed signs of rebel against his father. Jahangir, and his own son, Aurangzeb, rebelled, imprisoned him and took over his throne. Rebellion against the generation of their father was true not only of the Great Mughals, but prevailed even when the empire was disintegrating. The son rebelling against his father is so typical of the Mughals that the phenomenon of parent-child conflict and intergenerational differences and tensions can aptly be designated as the "Mughal Syndrome", as Prof. Sinha puts it. However, in my opinion, it is doubtful to turn it as Mughal Syndrome, which is more or less the reflection of feudal, family jealousies and differences leading to killing for selfish gain and political power, rather than simple inter-generational differences reflected in social life.

The youth in every era has regarded the old as out of date, old-fashioned, conservative and lacking in understanding. The son complaints that his father cannot 'understand' him. On
the other side, the older generation has felt the young as lacking in respect and radical in outlook which is bound to mismanage the affairs of the world. As Gangarde (1969) has put it, generational conflict has perhaps always existed, but it has become more conspicuous in recent times for the simple reason that the society in the developing as well as the developed countries is moving today as a much faster rate than in the past. Rapid change in modern civilization tends to accentuate parent-youth conflict, for within a fast changing social order the time-interval between generations creates a hiatus between one generation and the other, as observed by Sinha, who further expressed the gap as follows.

Though the gap between the generations has existed in every age, the phenomenon that is witnessed today is a little different. The problem had never been experienced on such a ubiquitous magnitude. What generally was manifested on a familial level is now a kind of universal social experience. It has no longer remained a matter of differences and tensions between the parents and their children. Differences and gaps have now-a-days permitted the society as a whole and is being manifested on different levels of our experience like tension between students and teachers, youth against the administration, and the youth deriding the ways and outlook of the older generation. The youth of the earlier generation had its own resentments which it sometimes expressed by non-cooperating with the elders, withdrawing or at times running away from home. Every generation had its own differences and strains with the elders, but rarely they were overtly expressed or protested.
Today, the protest or rebellion is not so much on the individual level. It has assumed an organized and mass dimension. The gap as such is old. What is new is that the present generation is not ready to accept and put up with the disparity. Generation gap has created a big hiatus, a communication block between the generations and has resulted in complete lack of understanding and appreciation of one generation by the other. The young go about 'shocking' the elders in their dress, manners, speech and entertainment. They are swayed by different feelings and thoughts, entertain different ideals and cherish radically different values. The youth is highly critical of society, family and the government. The two generations appear to perceive their worlds quite differently. Characterizing the American scene, Kenneth Keniston (1968) says that the youth is 'turned off by American Society'. They were outraged at the hypocrisy of the last generation. A generation that has professed the highest values but failed to put them into effect, as witnessed in the poverty, inequalities and injustice prevailing in the richest nation on the earth. In the words of Feuer (1969), "the new generation is appalled by the disparity between the society and its own values, and refused to be morally castrated as its fathers had been". The new generation has been radicalized in the sense that it is out to implement the values which their parents only professed. Placing a moral vacuum, the young step in as the chosen redeemers. As seen in the student movement on the university campuses and elsewhere in USA since the young have a mission rather than any specific purpose, they attach themselves to a "carrier" movement: civil rights, labour, anti-draft, and Vietnam. Not
only in the USA, but in almost any modern society, be it French, German, Great Britain, Polish, Italian or Czechoslovakian, there is something that makes it unnecessarily oppressive, inhuman, machinelike, unresponsive and out of control to the young. There seems to be a revulsion against the mores of the affluent society. As a reaction, it has generated a form of extreme Bohemianism and non-conformity as seen among the Beatniks and the Hippies and the band of young men and women quaintly attired, unshaven, dirty and without bath for days seeking new experiences in eastern religion practices and trance and flights induced by psychedelic and other drugs.

In India, it is contended that the main scene of inter-generational conflict is in urban society. In the rural setting, even if the gap is experienced, it at best causes intra-family strain. In the urban setting, the exposure to mass media of communication has intensified the gap, and magnified the differences in attitudes, approaches, and value. The disharmony is felt more acutely, and there is also greater opportunity to express the tensional differences in an organized manner. The tension and conflict between the young and the old have assumed large proportions, and are specially marked in the student world. The epidemic of student unrest seems to be sweeping the world. The youth problem is best manifested in the shape of student agitation and unrest which have boiled up in universities all over the country, and in many scores of universities throughout the world. The educated youth have been exposed to the rapid pace of changes much more, and constitute that group which faces
It has imbibed the newer values, has its own sub-culture and as a class it appears to be in a state of revolt. The student agitation has become more widespread and frequent, and disruption of academic life due to agitations and strikes has come to be accepted as a normal phenomenon in many universities, agitating for the lowering of admission norms, lowering of examination standards, and so on. Through such agitations the students are simply acting out their hostility against the older generation, the people in power and the prevailing values and norms. They are expressing their feelings of violence and anger against the society as a whole and against all forms of authority.

The gap, thus, experienced is magnified by the rapid pace at which the change is sought to be induced in the developing countries. In developing countries like India, economic development has been sought through governmental planning, which, as Myrdal (1968) observes, has inevitably included programmes for policy action extending over the entire field of social relations. It not only encompasses the economic processes like investment, taxation, mobilisation of economic resources, but also changes in population, health, education, vocational and professional training, general civic culture, improvement in administration and self-government, land reforms, protection and uplift of depressed classes, and so on. Thus, the stress and strain produced by the pace of all-round changes is widespread, and the distance between generation as a result of such changes is far greater than what would have occurred in the course of normal process of growth.
A kind of disillusionment and cynicism that the 'failures' of two decades of independence has produced is another factor contributing to the tension between the generations. There has been a collapse of the exaggerated vision of progress that attainment of independence was expected to usher. The generation that rules today on the attainment of political independence in 1947 had painted the most rosy picture of future. Radical socio-economic transformations and vast development in the country had been promised and were said to be only round the corner. In spite of the promise of egalitarian and 'socialistic pattern of society', social and economic disparities have become more accentuated, and the rich seem to have become more richer, and the poor poorer. Progress has no doubt occurred in various sectors of our life, but so has the ugly panorama of widespread corruption, bribery, black-market and graft in our society. Corruption and dishonesty may not be as deep-rooted as is often talked about, but its widespread spectacle has generated a sense of cynicism, disgust and a lack of faith in the generation that seems to have adopted it as the instrument to richness, power and success. The most demoralizing belief in the efficacy of corruption prevails. It has at least made the younger generation lose faith and respect in the elders in the authority, and the generation that rules today.

To all these factors accentuating the intergenerational gap must be added the factor of 'Youth-power' and the part played by the mass media of communication. Mass-media communication have been a factor in intergenerational conflict.
in two ways. Exposure to radio, television, international press and other agencies of mass communication has made readily available what is happening and what changes are taking place in the remotest countries in the world. They bombard the young and impressionable minds with newer ideas, new mores, and norms. Conflict between the students and university administration, between youth leaders and the Establishment are profusely reported and prominently flashed in the world press. This over-playing of the news by the press concerning the youth movement, and giving it a prominence far out of a proportion than it deserves have created an awareness of 'conflict' in the minds of the young and the old alike and has b helped to build up an image of conflict between generations.

The demographic aspects of the intergenerational gap is also worth looking at. In a paper entitled 'Demographic Dimension of the Youth Problem,' presented before a seminar held at the Delhi School of Social Work, Dr. Roy Burman (1969) points out that if the population in the age-group 15-34 is considered to be the youth of the country, it is found that they form 33.04 per cent of the total population. Van Ree (1970) has also emphasised the demographic aspect of the problem. With the average age on which people die shifting upwards, a different structure of the population has resulted. Now-a-days, we find three or four groups: children below 11 years, youngsters from 11 to 35 years (consisting of teenagers and people in their twenties and early thirties), and adults from 35 uppers. 'Psychologically, a third generation has developed' (Van Ree, 1970).
Agarwala (1971) points out that of the large democratic countries, India has one of the youngest populations. That the youth problem is more acute in urban areas is also revealed by demographic analysis. The migrant population, in the urban areas is not only more educated but is exposed to high degree of frustration. Potential frustration coupled with higher literacy and educational level makes the group relatively more agitation-prone.

The phenomenon of intergenerational difference in India, as in other countries, can best be looked upon as the outcome of many changes that have taken place in the Indian society during the years since independence. Mrs. Suma Chitnis (1969), however, regards 'the decline of parental authority and parental influence in the value orientation of children' as a major factor underlying the conflict. The family in modern India is fast giving up its vital role in inculcating the attitudes and values in children. The fact that the role of the parents and the elders does not appear to be relevant to the younger generation is an important contributory factor in the intergenerational gap and the alienation of the youth. The extent of alienation may vary all the way from mild misunderstanding through strain, maladjustment and tension to the extreme form of anomie. The situation is accentuated due to the 'educational gap' between the parents and children. The survey made by Chitnis (1969) has revealed that except for the sample from West Bengal, less than 22 per cent of the high school boys had college educated fathers. The situation was a little better for the high school girls, where in seven out of eight states studied, more than 30
per cent of high school girls had college-educated fathers. There is nothing to be surprised at if many of parents with lower educational status fail to understand the interests and aspirations of the youth, and feel sometimes shocked at their patterns of behaviour, feelings, attitudes and values. Added to this is the difference in occupational aspiration of the young. The majority of students studied by Chitnis (1969) aspired for high-level white collar jobs. Many of them felt their parents to be occupationally 'lower in status', and the chances of identifying themselves with their values and way of life were obviously remote. Such parents could very rarely serve as 'Models' for behaviour, conduct, and aspirations for the younger generation.

Another factor contributing to the conflict is the stress caused by authoritarian set-up of the family and the expectation for the democratic pattern of life on the part of the young. Being exposed through books, films and other sources to the democratic norms of family behaviour and parent-child relationship that prevail in the Western society, the young have come to look for and accept similar treatment by the elders. It is one thing to accept democratic ideas and another to practise the same in daily living. Indian family has been traditionally authoritarian and the parents of today have not been able to shake off the traditional garb of expecting unquestioned obedience and submission to the authority of the elders. They try to impose their own views and ideas on the youth. The age-old dictum in Sanskrit that 'Prapte tu shodashe varshe putram mitramivadacharet' (on attaining the age of sixteen the son is to be treated as a friend by the parents) has seldom been a
Finally, Prof. Sinha has pointed out that the intergenerational conflict is often taken for granted, though it may not be a conflict, but actually a difference in view. The difference may reflect itself in different areas of spheres which may also be indicative of its intensity. It may centre around dress, diet, choice of career, choice of a mate, entertainment and use of leisure, habits, patterns of behaviour, friendship, sex, attitudes towards socio-political and religious issues, ideas of right and wrong, good and bad, and morality generally, and ideologies and fundamental values. For example, the two generations may have different perceptions and evaluations of specific patterns of behaviour like fashions in dress, habits, and other modes of social behaviour. This may be called the level of specific behaviour pattern, and is indicative of only superficial gap. Secondly, the gap may go a little deeper, reflecting differentials in perceptions and reactions to various contemporary socio-political events and incidents. This may mean a gap in the shape of differential perceptions or in ways of perceiving events and situations. Thirdly, differences may exist on the level of attitudes, manifesting in different evaluative reactions towards religion, morality, marriage, divorce, property, family, and other social and political institutions. This may be termed as the attitudinal gap. Lastly, the gap may manifest itself through more fundamental differences on the level of goals, aspirations, hopes and fears, and values. It may be termed as the motivational gap.
SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS

Attitudes towards superstitions and beliefs or opinions regarding varied social issues have been studied by many. Every society and its culture maintain a number of superstitions and beliefs. One can find their impact on the life-style of the people. A few cross-cultural studies on superstitious beliefs have been reviewed below in brief.

(i) The study of Kaku and Mastumoto (1976) conducted an investigation to find out the influence of folk superstitions on fertility of Japanese in California and Hawaii. According to this study, the Japanese folk superstition of Hinoe-Uma to have been a factor influencing their crude birth rates of Japanese in California and Hawaii in 1966 in addition to other more obvious factors, such as, declining fertility and increased use of contraceptions.

(ii) B. G. Prasad, Amla R. Rao and S. B. Nayar (1969) carried out a study of beliefs and customs in villages around Lucknow in relation to certain diseases, Menstruation, child rearing and family planning. The sample consisted of 367 including 73 households and observed that people adopted the health practices based on beliefs and customs prevalent in their society and had negative attitude towards medicine. Further they observed that the attitude of mothers towards family planning was favourable; if it is only meant children by choice and not by chance. Mothers showed an aversion to stopping the addition of children in the family.
Yagnik L. R. (1985) has recently carried out "An experimental study of some variables affecting persuasion and change in belief". This study was based on inoculation approach (technique of inducing resistance) of McGuire, later on adopted and elaborated by Tannenbaum and his colleagues. This investigation was aimed to study the relative efficacies of various techniques of persuasion for inducing resistance to attitudinal change particularly the superstitions and beliefs. A total sample of 1200 college students in $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3$ factorial design was undertaken. Each of the 24 sub-groups consisted of 50 subjects. Superstition attitude scale of Dr. Patel was used for measuring the intensity of beliefs or attitudes towards different superstitions. Two types of persuasive techniques, i.e., defensive and attacking were employed, with pretest and protest experimental procedure to change the attitudes towards superstitions. The following conclusions were drawn:

(1) The supportive defence technique of persuasion (message) induced greater change or reduced to resistance to effect a change in superstitious beliefs, refutational technique induced greater resistance to persuasion.

(2) Whatever might be the type of sequence or order of presentation of defence, both types of defense induced greater change or less resistance to persuasion.

(3) There was no significant sex difference in change or resistance to persuasion even after adjustment, just it was the case before adjustment. Both males and females equally
changed or resisted to persuasion. In other words, persuasion technique did work out but equally in both the sexes.

(4) The generation gap was found to be most strikingly significant in effective change or resistance in superstitious beliefs. The change was greatest in case of parents and the least in case of adolescent, i.e., the parents resisted the least and the adolescents resisted the most.

This work was carried out at the S. P. University, Vallabh Vidyanagar. A similar work was carried out at M. S. University, Baroda by Sanyu Desai (1984) studying the efficacy of similar techniques of persuasion with respect to different types of issues, besides the social issue pertaining to superstitious beliefs.

(iv) Another recent study of some social beliefs and attitudes of tribal and non-tribal, high school and college students was undertaken by M. M. Patel (1985) at S. P. University, Vallabh Vidyanagar. He has studied the attitudes towards 12 social issues as a function of community, sex, level of education and socio-economic status. The issues included attitudes towards (i) caste system and reservation policy, (ii) family system and child rearing practices, (iii) marriage system, (iv) social reforms, (v) women status, (vi) the youth, the old and the generation gap, (vii) family planning and sex education, (viii) superstitious beliefs, (ix) religion, (x) higher moral values in life, (xi) modern social ways of living, fashion & cinemas, (xii) Drug Abuse. His findings are summarized below.
Almost all subjects showed their favourable attitudes towards all social issues (above the median point score), implying that they were more or less reformists and were for social change, except in their attitudes towards issues of caste system, superstition and religion regarding which they held conservative views.

Most of the young students who served as the subjects for the study were found to hold most favourable attitudes towards the issue of women - their status, rights, freedom and opportunity for their education.

Next in order of favourableness with the subjects, were their attitudes towards the issue of family planning, sex education, the issue of drug abuse, the issue of religious beliefs and devotion to god, and the issue of social reforms.

Next favourable attitudes of the adolescents were towards the issue of higher moral values and ideals in life, the issue for the youths and against the role of the older generation, and the issue on marriage, divorce and widow remarriage - all for reforms.

Last but not the least favourable attitudes of the young were with respect to the issue of evils of caste system, the issue of family system and child discipline, the issue of modern ways of living, fashions, cinemas, etc. and the issues of superstition.
Another similar study was undertaken by Sohini Patel ((1986), examining the attitudinal perspectives towards similar social issues as a function of generation gap, sex, caste, and education. The inclusion of generation gap variable made the collection of data from three generations very difficult for the investigator to study all these four variables in a factorial design. Besides the role of these four factors, she also studied the role of Socio-economic status in random group design, since the investigator could not plan to collect sufficient number of subjects in each cell of the Five-factor factorial design. Her additional findings on role of generation gap are very striking. The adolescents were found sometimes conservative in their views and the grandparents were found sometimes even reformist.

The present investigator after reviewing similar studies on social issues, especially the last two ones, thought of improving his research design including all the five variables viz., generation gap, sex, caste, socio-economic status and education, to be studied in the five-factor factorial design, taking sufficient care to collect subjects adequate in each of the cell of the factorial design and analyzing the data by advanced multi-variate techniques of analysis. Additionally, his subjects comprising all of three generations of adolescents, parents and grandparents were mostly from the same family. And another similar group from different family. This enabled the author to study also the effect of family environment or parental influence on the attitudes of subjects towards these issues. This has formed a special feature of the present study in comparison to earlier studies reviewed above.