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CHAPTER - I

THE OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE INVESTIGATION

This chapter attempts to state the objective and scope of the investigation. A brief sketch of the investigation is stated at the outset. The broader issues with which educational sociology is concerned and the theoretical approach in educational sociology are stated with specific reference to the present study. The approaches touched upon in this chapter includes structural functionalism, political - social - arithmetic, "new" perspective, social reproduction, critical theory, new Marxist and new Weberian perspectives. The current trends in research and also the relationship between social specification and education are also scanned in this chapter. A case for the present theory has been formulated and the theoretical point of view as opted in the present study has also been underlined. The chapter attempts to phrase its problem in broader theoretical context.
Introduction:

The piece of research herein attempted focusses on the possible influences of social stratification on behaviour considered significant by educational sociologist viz., learning behaviour and social behaviour dispositions. Specifically, it endeavours to study the effect of caste, class, urban/rural and sex differences on learning styles and well defined childhood behaviour dispositions. The sample for the present study comprises of boys and girls studying in V Standard in seventeen co-educational primary schools selected using stratified simple random sampling procedures. The data collected pertain to vigorously defined statistical measures derived from instruments exclusively standardised in the present setting. Hypotheses were formulated based on theoretical constructs and also on the basis of empirical evidences available in other studies. Appropriate statistical analysis applied to the processing of the data contribute to significant findings that elucidate the possible influence of social stratification variable on learning behaviour and social behaviour dispositions. The present chapter examines the problem of the investigation in the context of educational sociology, states the objectives and the scope of the investigation.
This chapter is meant to orient the reader to the broader concerns of educational sociology and also the terms of references and specific concerns of the investigation herein reported.

**Broader Issues:**

Educational Sociology is one of the special approaches utilised in the scientific study of education which founds its philosophy or inclusive theory upon detailed observation and analysis (Suzzallo, 1913). Sociological analyses of education have received only a small encouragement in recent years (Gross, 1959). The deficiency of sociological investigation of education have been attributed to the tendency of investigators to work at microscopic and macroscopic levels simultaneously. In order to prevent such deficiencies investigators must have a general typology of educational systems in relation to social structure as well as an eye to social change and to the dynamics of educational development. (Floud and Halsey, 1953).

Several theoretical approaches have dominated educational sociology one after the other (Banks et al, 1930; Marjoribanks, 1985). They are briefly sketched in the following pages.
Structural Functionalism:

The dominant sociological perspectives in educational research in the period 1950s and 1960s could be identified with structural functionalism (Dahrendorf, 1959). Structural functionalism assumes that every society is relatively persistent, stable and is well integrated structure of elements. Every element in society has a function and every functioning social structure is based on consensus of values among its members. Parsons has applied structural functionalism to analyse how the classes in the school function to internalise to its pupils the commitments and capacities for their future adult roles, and to allocate human resources within the role-structure of the adult society. Another investigation suggests that every society must cope with the problem of maintaining loyalty to its social system and that the most conspicuous control problem is to ensure loyalty of members of disadvantaged social groups towards social system that provide them with less than a proportionate share of society's goods (Turner, 1960).

Political - Social - Arithmetic:

Another tradition in Sociology could be identified with political-social-arithmetic approach.
It attempts to describe empirically the social condition of society. One of the focuses of this approach is on exposing the inequalities of the society in order to change them. (Halsey et al; 1980). Pathway analytical technique used to examine the social correlates of educational attainments falls within the ambit of the approach being described. These analysis include such social variables as the encouragement of parents, teachers, and friends in their pathway analytical studies of relations between status attainment, individual characteristics and measures of family and school contexts.

"New" Perspective:

A "new" sociological perspective which could be called interpretive sociology has emerged in recent years (Young, 1971; Bernstein, 1977). The new perspective argues that educator's categories of social class academic ability and worthwhile educational knowledge form part of the social situation in which children's educational identities are constructed and assessed. A new perspective opposes structural functionalism, views individuals as creators of meanings, focuses on the assumption underlying the social order, regards social
categories as themselves problematic, distress quantification and the use of objective categories and focuses on the transmission and acquisition of interpreting procedures (Bernstein, 1977). Such a perspective may be regarded as interpretive sociological approach. One of the efforts in interpretive sociology conceive social behaviour as the result of conscious self monitoring by individuals of their performances (Harre and Secord, 1972). Individuals contrive during such monitoring to assess the meanings of social situations in which they find themselves and to choose various rules and conventions, and to act in accordance with their choices, correcting such choices as further aspects of the situations making themselves clear to them. Individuals are associated with plurality of social selves or persons and that an important product of the self-monitoring of social performance is the presentation of an appropriate self. The subjectivism of the new perspective has been criticised by other researchers (Gidlow, 1972; Coser, 1975).

Social Reproduction:

Another approach in Sociology of Education identifies education as a process of social reproduction. One of the proponents argues that the unequal relative
educational chances of boys from different class origins remain remarkably stable showing the conventional picture of a steady state towards equality and optimistic myth over the century so far and the issue underlying the phenomena is to be found in the social reproduction of generation. The fact that the education system remains to be the dominant ideological state-apparatus in modern societies has been adequately emphasised (Althusser, 1972). Several investigators have argued the role of schooling in social reproduction and regard schools as reproductive institutions. Mass public education has not evolved into its present bureaucratic hierarchical, and authoritarian form because of the organisational prerequisites of imparting cognitive skills rather, the social relations of education produce and reinforce those values, attitudes and affective capacities which allow individuals to move smoothly into an alienated and class-stratified society. Schooling reproduces the social relations of the larger society from generation to generation (Gintis, 1972). Class-based differences in expectations, values and personalities represent adaptations to the different requirements of adequate work performance at various levels in the hierarchical social relations of production (Bowles, 1976). The educational system helps to integrate youth.
into the economic system through a structural correspondence between its social relations and those of production. The structure of social relations in education inures the student to the discipline of the work place and develops the types of personal demeanour, modes of self-presentation, self-image, and social-class identification which are the crucial ingredients of job adequacy (Bowles and Gintis, 1976).

Social reproduction approach has greater explanatory value, shows a positive alternative for reform, provides a consistent analytical framework for understanding the school as an area of structured social interaction and contributes to a more positive understanding of the goals of socialist transition (Gintis and Bowles, 1980). It is also to be noted that by focusing on schools only as reproductive institutions one might miss the dynamic interplay between education and economy and be in danger of reducing the complexity of the relationship to a bare parody of what actually exists at the level of practice (Apple, 1980-81).

The relative autonomy of education in its dependency on production has been emphasised by Bernstein (1977) who views education in terms of cultural reproduction. Education is regarded by him as a
class-allocatory device, socially creating, maintaining, and reproducing non-specialised and specialised skills and specialised dispositions which have an approximate relevance to the modes of production. The device may be highly efficient in regulating the class basis of the social relations of the mode of production. However, education may and does create contradictions and discrepancies with reference to the relationships between the categories it creates and the distribution of the required categories of the mode of production, the relationships between the categories it creates and the relationships between the categories by the modes of production, the realization of its categories (skills and dispositions) and the expected realization of the categories of the mode of production (Bernstein, 1967).

The three sets of relationships are considered to constitute the systematic relationships between education and the mode of production and create for education the form of its economic or material base which means that the mode of production is anterior to the mode of education. The relative autonomy of education gives to its values an apparent autonomy; the appearance of objectivity, of neutrality, and at the same time, of altruistic purposes and dedication. These become the
attributes of its superior agents. It is asserted that the relative autonomy of education is the basic means whereby the consciousness of the agents of symbolic control is legitimised and maintained and, in co-operation with the family, reproduced. This attenuation (the indirect relation of education to a material base) is regarded to be the crucial fundamental ideological message of the educational system. The location in the class structure of the agents of symbolic control is an ambiguous one. Educational research should be undertaken in such a way as to take account of both the 'structural' and the 'interactional' aspects of social life. No matter how intimate the phenomenon being examined, it should be possible to show how its form and development are influenced by the larger patterns of power and control (Bernstein, 1977; Karabel and Halsey, 1977).

Bernstein has been criticised for concentrating only on one form of domination viz., class and not treating patriarchal and race domination and their possible interaction with class (Willis, 1981).

Bourdieu (1977) emphasises three themes in his theoretical framework; cultural background is related to academic achievement; the school system provides
the basis for controlled, and limited social mobility, and social-class background is mediated through a complex set of influences which interact in various ways at different levels of schooling.

Critical Theory:

Another approach in educational sociology attempts to follow a critical theory of education. It is contended that schools are organised not only to teach the knowledge that, how, and to' required by one society but also to assist in the production of the technical/administrative knowledge required, among other things, to expand markets, control reproduction, labour, and people, to engage in the basic and applied research needed by industry, and to create widespread 'artificial' needs among the population. The processing of knowledge includes more than its differential distribution to different kinds of people. It includes its production, control and ultimate accumulation by those in power (Apple, 1981, Durkheim, 1977). Schools are places where as social inequalities are created and not just reproduced (and that) schools are special contexts nested within general social structure but which, at various junctures, contradict as well as reproduce structural disorder (Olson, 1981). Schools are sites where things are
produced rather than merely being places where culture and ideology are imposed on students.

Neo-Marxist and Neo-Weberian Perspectives:

Neo-Marxist and Neo-Weberian perspectives further the interest of the critical theory of education. Schools are not merely sites that impose hegemonic meanings and values upon relatively passive students and teachers. An analysis of how schools sustain and produce ideologies as well as how individuals and groups in concrete relationships negotiate, resist and accept them, the way in which the domination is concealed at the institution level need to be investigated (Giroux, 1981). If school knowledge is analysed as a social product it might suggest a great deal about the society which produces it (Giroux, 1981; Anyon, 1979).

Culture which is viewed "as a number of divergent instances in which power is used unequally to produce different meanings and practices, which in the final analysis reproduces a particular kind of society that functions in the interest of the dominant class" (Giroux, 1981). There are powerful determinations in the class-based societies which roughly structure different cultural experiences along class lines. What is actually produced in schools appears to get lost in analyses of
how the mechanisms of reproduction actually work.

The ideal of the cultivated parson adopted in a given society according to Weber is the outcome of the power of the dominant social group to universalise its particular cultural ideal. The pedagogy of cultivation, finally, attempts to educate a cultivated type of man, whose nature depends on the decisive stratum's respective ideal cultivation and this means to educate a man for certain internal and external deportment in life. Weberian perspective suggests that if members of certain social-status groups have the power to determine what is valued in the educational system at a particular time in history then it is not surprising to find that members of subordinated status groups are disadvantaged in relation to the criteria set by the dominant group (Halsey, 1968; Karabel and Halsey, 1977).

Current Trends:

Sociologists of education are still searching for a theoretical perspective that brings together macroscopic and microscopic levels of education (Marjoribanks, 1979). Internationally sociology of education is tending to become polarised with interpretive sociologists dominating European research, and social political orientations dominating American investigations (Shimbori, 1979).
The involvement of sociologists in educational research in India is of recent origin, (Chitnis, 1974; Vendal, 1981). The substantial portion of the research done by sociologists on education in India is not sophisticated enough in the use of sociological concepts and methods. Much of the field research is of the exploratory statistical surveys. Problems related to the ideal of an equality of opportunity in education has been identified as one of the very few issues requiring research in terms of the broader perspective of the development of the field in international terms, (Chitnis, 1974).

Social Stratification and Education:

Social stratification refers to the differentiation of a given population into hierarchically superposed classes manifested in the existence of upper and lower layers. The basis and essence of social stratification are construed by an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social values and privation, social power and influences among the members of society (Sorokin, 1959). Stratification is universal in large scale societies (Halsey, 1985).

As a public provision for transformation of culture between generations, education is connected to
stratification since historical time. The connection between stratification and education at the root is construed by the simple fact that stratification is the social ordering of inequalities of power and advantage and education has the major instrument of distributing individuals into places in the system of stratification. However at higher levels the debate continues as to how to explain and find out the causes for the observed correlations between the aspects of stratification and types of educational experience (Halsey, 1985).

Numerous are the forms of social stratification. Economic, political and occupational stratification are few forms of social stratification. These forms are, as a general rule, closely inter-correlated with one another. It is usually found that those who occupy the upper strata in one respect happened to be in the upper strata in other respects too and vice versa. It is recommended that though a real picture of social stratification in any society is very complex, only the most fundamental traits must be taken to facilitate analysis (Sorokin, 1959).

The form of stratification varies according to the mode of production of the society concerned. Sociologists in general recognise that system of caste and estate are normally found in agrarian or
pre-industrial societies whereas class systems tend to emerge in the process of industrialisation. Often class and status are distinguished in the analysis of stratification as in the case of Weberian analysis (Weber, 1949). The distribution of social honour is separate but related to the aspect of inequality pertaining to economic advantage and disadvantage. The term class is applied to the latter. Education can be and has been described differently in its relation to stratification factors of caste and class. Classical analysis of the relationship between stratification and education is found in Weber (Girth and Mills, 1970 and Durkheim, 1969). One point of view suggests that the basis of education in stratification is to be explained more in terms of group possession of cultural resources (Status) than of economic and technical power (class).

The problem in the present context is elegantly expressed by Halsey (1985).

"The fundamental question remains. Is education determined by stratification, or can education itself change the structure of power and advantage? The question is not only of theoretical interest. In modern times, education has been
used in many countries as an instrument of social change, for example in pursuit of greater class or ethnic equality, to promote economic growth, and in post-revolutionary periods to foster adherence to the new regime. Moreover, the sheer growth of the apparatus of education since the 1930s has led some, like Dahrendorf, to postulate the emergence of an education class, that is, the collectivity of those with interest based on the education system.

The evidence summarised here admits of only an equivocal answer. Education and stratification influences each other interactively. Nevertheless, the relation is markedly asymmetric. Social stratification has fashioned the size and content of educational provision much more than it has itself been modified by the educational outcome." (Halsey, 1985, p.4646-47.)

A Case for the Present Study:

An eclectic approach to understanding the relation between stratification and education is attempted in the present study. It is assumed that every society is relatively persistent and stable with stratification of its own. The social structure is reinforced by
consensus of values shared by the members of the society. The existing social conditions of the society provide scope and also set limitation to the persistence of inequality among people and pupil in a structured society. It is also admitted that individuals act as creators of meanings and actively participate in the structured society contributing to its sustenance. Social cultural reproduction dominate the education but the domination is resisted by the autonomy of the education system.

The present investigation is confined to studying the possible influence of social stratification in terms of class, caste, rural-urban differences on education in terms of learning behaviour and social behaviour disposition. An exclusively micro-level analysis is attempted in the present study to obtain unambiguous explanation after the phenomena in question. The study addresses the question with reference to Indian setting and particularly the significant variables in characterising social stratification in the present setting. In view of the theoretical analysis and empirical evidences of the interaction between social stratification and education it is possible to conclude that it is plausible that the
social stratification significantly influences the learning and social behaviour disposition among pupils. The present investigation is undertaken to test this plausibility through empirical procedures. Hopefully the findings of the study would clarify the issues pertaining to the influence of unequal distribution of cultural and economic opportunities on the school system. The study attempts to contribute to educational sociology in the Indian context.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

The following are the operational definitions adopted for the purposes of the present investigation.

Social Behaviour Dispositions: Social behaviour dispositions are defined as the eight dispositions identified and described by Stott (1974) in his Children's Behaviour Checklist.

Learning Style: Learning style is defined as the learning styles identified and described by Stott (1974) in his Guide to the Child's learning style.

Academic Achievement: Academic achievement is defined as the average of marks earned by a pupil in all the subjects studied by him in his school in three consecutive examinations. Viz., the Annual,
Quarterly and Half Yearly Examinations, expressed in percentage.

Socio Economic Status: Socioeconomic status is defined as the score of a parent obtained on the Socio-Economic Scale (Vandal, 1981)

Urban Environ: Urban Environ is defined as the area coming under the Coimbatore Corporation for the purpose of civic administration.

Rural Environ: Rural environ is defined as the area coming under a Village Panchayat for the purpose of civic administration.

Tribal Environ: Tribal environ is defined as the area declared as Tribal Settlement for the purpose of revenue administration and welfare.

Scheduled Castes: Scheduled Castes are defined as communities included under XVIII Schedule of the Constitution of India and are recognised as Scheduled Castes by the Government of Tamil Nadu for the purpose of grants, concessions and welfare.

Scheduled Tribes: Scheduled tribes are defined as the communities included under XVIII Schedule of the Constitution of India and are recognised by the Government of Tamil Nadu as Scheduled tribes for the purposes of grants, concessions and welfare.
Backward Castes: Backward Castes are defined as the communities notified by the Government of Tamil Nadu as economically and/or educationally backward for the purposes of grants, concessions and welfare.

Forward Castes: The Forward castes are defined as the communities that are not recognised by the Government of Tamil Nadu either as Scheduled Castes or Tribes or Backward Classes for the purposes of grants, concessions and welfare measures.

Intelligence: Intelligence is defined as the score of the pupil on the Draw-a-Man Test (Goodenough, 1926).