

## CHAPTER VIII

### PROSPECTS

It has been noticed in the foregoing chapter that the ex-servicemen with higher ranks have a better chance of resettlement than those occupying lower ranks. To recapitulate the point in brief, we have found the supply curve in terms of pension, second-career opportunities and consequent financial returns gradually rising with the higher ranks whereas demand curve in terms of ex-servicemen responsibilities towards wife, children and near relatives, witnesses a downward trend. Thus, higher rank ex-servicemen are doubly benefitted; they get better second career returns against waning responsibilities whereas the lower ranks find zero or poorer returns against rising responsibilities. Besides, we have also seen factors such as year of retirement and state (region) providing greater insight into the problem when qualitative evaluation of resettlement of ex-servicemen retiring in a given period from two unequally developed states (regions) are undertaken.

One can broadly discuss the prospects relating to the resettlement of ex-servicemen in India in two ways. The discussion of first type emerges out of an enquiry which is essentially diagnostic.<sup>1</sup> The questions put are: What is the nature, form and extent of the malaise? How far it is

similar or different from other related problems? While discussing the enquiry of second type an attempt will be made to understand the academic prospects of the enquiry of this type. Thus, the questions emerging from the diagnostic enquiry into the problem are: What is the sociological significance of the problem being discussed? Can the problems of ex-servicemen be viewed along with the problems of several other related social categories? Should the categories that are governed by the conditions of resettlement be studied in discrete manner or can we attain better understanding into the problems once they are studied in an integrated fashion? In other words, is there a prospect or more appropriately academic purpose in studying the resettlement problems in our society under a new title, called Sociology of Resettlement?

The second type of analysis is the discussion of the problem or the issue per se from the management viewpoint. The enquiry is essentially prognostic and the useful questions asked in this kind of inquiry are: What colour the issue will take if it is just ignored for a few years? What tangible benefits can be achieved if such <sup>and such</sup> resources are invested in tackling a specific problem? etc.

Let us now explore the prospects of the problem already discussed both from diagnostic <sup>and prognostic</sup> viewpoint one by one. The premises being offered here are, of course, tentative.

The Prospects of diagnostic analysis

In the present study, we have tried to probe the nature of the problems ex-servicemen face and re-settlement as a method for resolving the same. To make an appraisal of the resettlement process we have also tried to analyse the factors influencing resettlement. While discussing the conditions governing resettlement, we have found that there are several other social categories having similar conditions which govern the ex-servicemen. Therefore, a comparative analysis of two or more occupational categories governed by the conditions of resettlement can be more insightful. Similarly, comparative study of different regions can also throw new lights into this area of research.



Similarly, the study of cultural responses to the process of resettlement can be equally enriching. We have made quick references of longer military traditions of Haryanvis in comparison to Biharis. The longer military tradition of Haryana has reflected itself into folk-songs, stories and dramas. Although the cultural factors work in a very subtle manner, they carry profound impact on the overall resettlement of ex-servicemen. They create culturally favourable environment for them. Therefore, in a familiar and favourable environment, even if an ex-serviceman has to wait for some time in taking up a suitable second career, he does not find himself out of place. Thus, the strains of unemployment are minimised and he feels more

secure than his counterparts living in an environment either hostile or indifferent to their problems.

### The Prospects of prognostic analysis<sup>2</sup>

While considering the prospects of the problem from the viewpoint of social engineering or manpower planning, one has to seek answers to some of the questions in the beginning. These are: Is the problem worth paying attention to at all? If so, to what extent? Further, when it comes to the question of actual formulation of action plan, the question asked is: How to provide, within all constraints, speedier resettlement to the ex-servicemen of the Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks, particularly of underdeveloped regions? Operationally, it means an exercise by the leaders and managers of the state to place the problem in the agenda of their action plan. Prioritisation of problems in the action plan of the managers of the system is usually done after considering what negative consequences the neglect of a problem can bring about rather than counting the benefits accruing once the problem is managed. While justifying the problem and stating various approaches to resettlement, we have precisely discussed pros and cons of giving immediate attention to the problem or hazards involved in ignoring it. It is pertinent to recapitulate here some of the main arguments already advanced with a few additional remarks.

It has been said that agriculture is no longer a viable full-time vocation for the majority of ex-servicemen, nor is the pension amount sufficient to meet the rising demands of the family. Therefore, a viable alternative for post-retirement vocation for them must be explored. Self-employment as an alternative is limited to agriculture and allied activities and in some cases transport and agencies run with the support of the government. The study reveals that for several reasons, it is hard to make an entrepreneur out of an serviceman at least from the JCO or OR category. Thus, from the management viewpoint, their resettlement implies a quick reemployment ensuring a salary at least equivalent to the last pay drawn in the army so that they do not experience erosion of status. Consequently, as a strategy for ensuring quick resettlement to the vulnerable and most populous (Other Rank) ex-servicemen, their automatic reemployment in various government agencies in the vicinity of their native place should top the priority list of any strategy formulated for the resettlement of ex-servicemen in India.

Although the lower ranks have shown least sensitivity towards politics, they are the most dissatisfied group among the ex-servicemen. Most logical implication of the trend is that the dissatisfied low ranking and politically sensitive ex-servicemen of a particular region may be instigated to play a vanguard role in any (just or unjust) radical movement. This probability to join such a movement is

strengthened by a variety of reasons: dissatisfaction with their existential conditions, their training in handling arms, their idleness and a state of perpetual unemployment particularly after around 15 years of tight army schedule. Although it is a matter of independent research, the general impression one gets through media reports of the involvement of ex-servicemen in mobilisation and violence of Punjab and Gorkhaland problems cannot be entirely baseless. The large-scale dissatisfaction among the ex-servicemen of Ranchi district, and the indifference of the Zilla Sainik Board and other responsible government machineries in amelioration of their problems may be encashed by the leadership of Jharkhand movement in winning their whole hearted active support. Although we have done a modest study under several constraints, we find ourselves under obligation to caution that if the ex-servicemen of Ranchi district are not resettled properly, in immediate future, their problems may find an easy expression through the Jharkhand movement which is gaining momentum in the region for quite some time.

Nevertheless, a rather positive reason for the immediate attention to their problems lies in the fact that every individual ex-serviceman of lower rank finds a sudden void in his life which persists so long as he is not suitably reemployed during his active life. A well thought out

strategy for their lateral placement in different government organisations will not only free the ex-servicemen from the void that they invariably face, but also that an optimum utilisation of time and money spent on their training can be taken care of.

#### Towards a theoretical pointer

In the resettlement process, we have found that the ex-servicemen enjoy both formal and non-formal support. For example, the Directorate of Resettlement, Rajya and Zila Sainik Boards, All-India Ex-Services League, etc., are the institutions which exist in society to look after the resettlement and welfare needs of the ex-servicemen. We have seen in the second chapter that the armymen have enjoyed non-formal support in society since time immemorial. As a professional category, they have always been treated as most privileged in society. The non-formal support in terms of appreciation, praise, reverence and preference in receiving small socio-economic privileges have have been always reflected through the institutions like family, peer groups, villages, caste, tribe and region. This non-formal support gets accentuated and most generalised in times of war in the form of sympathetic public opinion of the entire nation-state towards its defence personnel. During war, serving and retired services people are revered alike, in fact they become charismatic objects. What ex-servicemen have

complained as the erosion of their izzat in recent time is essentially the comparison of a peace time public attitude towards them as against the mass euphoria of war-time. No society can afford to disrespect its defence personnel. They are the ultimate sanction of the state. Ex-servicemen, therefore, enjoy both formal and non-formal support in society in their resettlement process. Apart from family, peer group, village, caste and tribe, even the cultural elements of a particular region, such as folk song, dance and drama work in close harmony with non-formal institutions to emotionally "resettle" the ex-serviceman who returns home after retirement.<sup>3</sup>

#### The three Ideal Types

It is clear, therefore, that the victims of resettlement can get both formal and non-formal support in the resettlement process. We have also seen in the first chapter that the ex-servicemen are not the only social category who are governed by the "conditions of resettlement". Thus, based on the nature of resettlement support and conditions of resettlement we can arrive at a typology of resettlement, which is given in Chart 8.1.

Table 8.1: A Typology of Resettlement

Typology	Resettlement Support		Social Category Re- quiring Resettlement
	Formal	Non- Formal	
EBR	+	+	Ex-servicemen
NFR	-	+	Migrant Labourers in the cities
FR	+	-	Refugees, Hardcore party workers, vic- tims of accidents and natural calamity, prisoners of war, freedom fighters

EBR = Evenly Balanced Resettlement

NFR = Non-Formal Resettlement

FR = Formal Resettlement

#### The NFR model

It has been discussed above and in the preceding chapters how ex-servicemen as a social category are governed by the conditions of resettlement and how they get both formal and non-formal support in the resettlement process. Thus, EBR typology applicable to the ex-servicemen is the one in which both formal and non-formal support is available in the resettlement process.

In the NFR model of resettlement, whereas the non-formal support is available to the concerned group, formal support is unavailable. This is largely because the concerned parties of resettlement of their type do not earn their livelihood under any formal institutional

arrangement. They are the daily wage earning migrant labourers in the cities, selling their labour as and when there is demand for the same. They are not employed in strict sense of the term. They are either the artisan migrants selling their traditional skills in the cities on individual basis or selling their labour as menials, household servants, rickshaw pullers or the contract workers in the low paid urban trade and industry. Examples of the first type are the Chamars (cobblers), the Dhobis (washermen), the Nais (barbers), the Kumhars (potters), etc. The examples of the latter type are rickshaw pullers, newspaper vendors, fruit and vegetable sellers, coolies and construction workers, etc. The latter type therefore engages itself in the non-traditional profession in the cities.

The daily wage earners as stated above have low and precarious income. They invariably live in inhuman and unhealthy conditions of city slums. Majority of them return home in their middle age because by then they are physically exhausted which make them unfit for physical toil in the cities. Since they are no longer productive, they cannot sustain themselves in the cities. Therefore, they must go back to the village home for rest and care preferably after planting their growing unemployed son(s) in the city.

In the NER model, the jerk of deprivation is to be borne solely by the members of the primary group to which

an individual belongs. In the EBR model, the depriving institution, (for example, the state in case of ex-service-men) takes up the formal responsibility of the deprivations suffered in course of employment and thus formally lends its support in the resettlement process wherever necessary. In NFR model, on the contrary, those who deprive disappear from the scene - but for whom the deprivations were suffered still exist and inexplicitly liable to lend the resettlement support. A tacit understanding develops between those undertaking deprivation and for whom deprivation is undertaken. That the latter will take care of the former when he comes back to his village home fully exhausted in his middle age, both physically and emotionally.

The non-formal support of NFR model also gets expression in folk songs, dance, drama, etc. The problems faced by the migrating labourers of the Bhojpuri belt of North India was beautifully captured by Bhikhari Thakur, a gifted Bhojpuri poet and artist as noted earlier.

The work of Bhikhari Thakur is a representative pattern of numerous popular folk-traditions which manifestly entertains its clients and particularly satisfies all those who suffer deprivations of common nature in the process of their emigration and stay in the cities and expect resettlement in their respective villages. Cultural responses to the process of resettlement emerges out of the inevitability of the city

migrants to come back to their home villages. The time when a migrant decides to resettle in his village is the culmination point of his socio-psychological estrangement as well as physical incapacity to work in the city any further.

#### The FR model

In the FR model it is evident that the formal support is available but non-formal support is lacking. The FR model includes all resettlement processes where the deprived persons or their representatives directly seek compensation from the depriving institutions. The non-formal support of the family, etc., is not available as the victims join the depriving institutions without the approval of the family or the general public opinion. For example, if a young boy or girl becomes hard-core party member/wholetime of a party contemplating radical changes in the system, he/she usually does so only after revolting or disappointing his/her parents. Since victims of the FR model do not identify themselves with the primary group, the latter is not under obligation to support such persons in their resettlement process. They usually expect support from the institutions they served and also get it.

For example, the hard-core and dedicated rank and file of any organised political party are the youth in their teens and twenties. Only few remain as wholetime party workers for their life time. Most of them after putting in

5 to 10 years of their youth get dissatisfied and disillusioned because upward mobility in any political party is extremely difficult at least for the ranks. Consequently they want to settle down in their life; they want to live in a family and aspire for a regular source of livelihood. The depriving institutions do take care. The fellow party workers and comrades cooperate among themselves so that a hitherto dedicated worker leads a satisfied life outside and remains useful and faithful to his party throughout his life.

The resettlement process of the whole-timers in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) may provide an interesting example of the FR. To become a Pracharak (propagator, canvasser) in the RSS, a faithful Swayamsevak (volunteer) must be a bachelor having done second year of Officers Training Course (popularly known as OTC). He can remain Pracharak as long as he is faithful to the 'Sangh' and observes celibacy. Some of the Pracharaks observe celibacy for the whole life. But quite a few want to marry and lead a settled life. Those wanting to marry and find a job after relinquishing the post of Pracharak, find themselves in a very difficult situation. They must get some support for their socio-economic resettlement. Although the RSS does not formally take up the responsibility of its ex-Pracharak resettlement, usually he gets support from the Swayamsevaks of the 'Sangh' rather than his ex-non-formal associations.

### Reference Groups of the Ex-Servicemen

Through a typology of resettlement one can grasp the kind of resettlement processes operating in society. Consequently, one can make a comparative judgement of the quality of resettlement of a particular category in terms of others living in analogous conditions. But operationally, a subject of resettlement confronts and compares himself with persons of different social groups in his resettlement process. They are the reference groups of the social category to which he belongs. Reference groups determine the psychological state of an individual and the potential collective action of the group with which he identifies himself. Although it was not intended to focus upon the reference groups of the ex-servicemen and their responses towards each of such groups, in course of our field-work and research such groups have spontaneously surfaced. We find it pertinent to make a note of these points.

It has been observed that an ex-serviceman is confronted with essentially three types of reference group: (i) the young job seekers intending to get the jobs which the ex-serviceman aspires, (ii) old friends of his age group who took up civilian employment near about the time when he joined the army and finally (iii) old retired civilians leading relatively peaceful life after fulfilling most of their responsibilities as against the hard and difficult

cases of old ex-servicemen still finding difficulties in fulfilling their responsibilities. An attempt has been made in Chart 8.2 to suitably present the three reference groups of ex-servicemen:

Chart 8.2: Reference Groups of Ex-Servicemen and Types of (Negative) Responses

<u>Reference Groups of Ex-Servicemen</u>	<u>Types of Responses (Negative)</u>
1. Young job-seekers intending to get the jobs which ex-servicemen aspire	AGGRESSION
2. Old friends of the same age-group in Civilian employment	DEMORALISATION
3. Old retired civilians leading relatively peaceful life after having fulfilled most of their lifetime responsibilities	DISSATISFACTION

It can be seen that once an ex-serviceman is confronted with the members of each group, his responses towards them vary. Nevertheless, all the responses are negative in their character and in the process of self-evaluation with the members of these groups he is bound to experience psychological strain. Given the age and added family responsibility he finds helpless in making use of such strains to his favour and advantage. He finds himself in great difficulties in taking up the challenge of post-retirement career all alone and look forward to institutions, associations, friends and relatives to extend him helping hands.

No doubt, the ex-servicemen have some sour experiences when they come across persons of their reference group. But they are far better than those placed in various social categories having conditions analogous to the ex-servicemen. One of the main purposes of formulating a typology of resettlement has been to have a correct appraisal of the problems of ex-servicemen. The fact that they are placed under 'evenly balanced resettlement' (EBR) category should provide them with some stimulus for self-introspection.

Notes & References

1. For a detailed discussion on diagnostic research, see Ramkrishna Mukherjee, What will it be? Explorations in Inductive Sociology, New Delhi, 1979, pp. 206-29.
2. The diagnostic research is important and inevitable for prognosis. No prescription for the solution of a problem can be given unless it is well diagnosed. However, without entering into the debate of scope of Sociology, we firmly believe that prognosis of the social problem is as much a concern of Sociology as its diagnosis. The belief not only asserts the fact that there must always be a clear purpose behind a sociological study but also the fact that the one who can grasp and analyse the problem is in a better position to recommend its solutions.
3. The folk literature of Haryana is full of songs, dances and drama with the soldier or soldier's wife as its main theme. See Raja Ram Shastri, Haryana Ka Lok Sahitya, 1984, Lok Sampark, Haryana, Chandigarh. Popular Bhojpuri Skit called "Loha Singh" by Rameshwar Singh Kashyap can be seen as a cultural response to the chequered and belated military tradition of Bihar.