CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

1.0.0 INTRODUCTION

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare it for today”.

Malcolm X

The basic purpose of education is to create skills, knowledge and awareness of our glorious national heritage and the achievement of human civilization, possessing a basic scientific outlook and commitment to the ideals of patriotism, democracy, secularism, socialism, peace and the principles enunciated in the Preamble of our Constitution. The education sector has to produce leaders of society in all areas of activities with a commitment to the above ideals. Education in conformity with our national needs and priorities ensure that our best talents make befitting contributions to societal needs.

Education is the main instrument of social change and national reconstruction. Through education we prepare the young generation of today to reconstruct the nation, the citizen of tomorrow. The schools are engaged in this important task of preparing the future nation builders. On the quality and number of persons coming out of our schools and colleges depend our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction, whose principle objective is to raise standard of living of our people. But traditions of schooling are generally weak among many Dalits, tribals and other deprived social groups and a positive outlook is harder to build. The way the schools function, represent and reinforce,
rather than question, the existing social and gender division make it more difficult to break the vicious circle that keep children away from school in poor families. Poverty and a vulnerable life-situation add to prevalent social practices in keeping these children in no-win situations.

Poverty is widespread in India, with the nation estimated to have a third of the world's poor. According to a 2005 World Bank estimate, 41.6% of the total Indian population falls below the international poverty line of US$ 1.25 a day (PPP, in nominal terms ₹ 21.6 a day in urban areas and ₹ 14.3 in rural areas). According to 2010 data from the United Nations Development Programme, an estimated 37.2% of Indians live below the country's national poverty line. A recent report by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) states that 8 Indian states have more poor than 26 poorest African nations combined which totals to more than 410 million poor in the poorest African countries.

There has been no uniform measure of poverty in India. The Planning Commission of India has accepted the Tendulkar Committee report which says that 37% of people in India live below the poverty line (BPL). A study by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative using a Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) found that there were 650 million people (53.7% of population) living in poverty in India, of which 340 million people (28.6% of the population) were living in severe poverty, and that a further 198 million people (16.4% of the population) were vulnerable to poverty. 421 million of the poor are concentrated in eight North Indian and East Indian states of Bihar, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar
Pradesh and West Bengal. This number is higher than the 410 million poor living in the 26 poorest African nations. Despite significant economic progress, one quarter of the nation's population earns less than the government-specified poverty threshold of 32 rupees per day (approximately US$ 0.6).

According to a recently released World Bank report, India is on track to meet its poverty reduction goals. However by 2015, an estimated 53 million people will still live in extreme poverty. According to S. M. Michael, Dalits constitute the bulk of poor and unemployed. Using the UN definition of poverty, 65% of rural forward castes are below the poverty line. Despite all the causes, India currently adds 40 million people to its middle class every year.

"Constituting more than thirty four percent of the population, the people so categorized have received plenty of verbal sympathy and 'paper' benefits over the years. But in actual terms, most of them continue to be among the poorest. The most neglected and shamefully enough specially the most harassed of our people" Aggrwal A., (1928)

The above remark seems to be cored as despite of being part and parcel of society, poor persons have not been able to claim equality with other communities and have always been hated, oppressed and looked down upon.

Our Constitution assures us of equality in opportunity and status, giving socio-economic justice to all the citizens of India. It is clearly mentioned in the constitutional sage guards
articles 15 and 16(1) that, "The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on
grounds of religion, race, caste sex, place of birth or any of them and there shall be
equality of opportunity for all citizen's in matters of public employment or appointment
to any office under the state." It is further pointed out in article 46 under the directive
principles of state policy that state shall promote with special care the educational and
economical interests of weaker sections of the people in general and of the scheduled
caste and scheduled tribes in particular and shall protect them from social injustice and all
forms of exploitation.

This directive principle make it clear that the authors of the Indian Constitution
were definitely aware of the empowering and instrumental role of education which
impelled them to make a commitment to achieve universal elementary education on a
priority basis. It is provided in the Constitution of India that every child of 6 to 14 years
of age shall be imparted free elementary education by the State. However, there still
exists a wide gap between the goal enunciated in the Constitution, plans and policies on
one hand and the situational reality of the status of deprived on the other hand.

For a society that had lived for a millennium by a value system based on division
and hierarchy, classically manifested in the system of caste-feudal patriarchy, the post
independent Constitutional commitment to social equality and social justice marked a
watershed in its historical evolution. A synthesis of two ideologically divergent principles
i.e. the principle of merit and the principle of compensation – constituted the modern
Indian political discourse on equality and was operationalised in the establishment of
democratic socialism and the welfare state. Along with guaranteeing equality of
citizenship, the state assumed the primary responsibility of compensating for histories of discrimination, exploitation and marginalization and providing special support to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As is well known, the Scheduled Castes (henceforth SC) and Scheduled Tribes (henceforth ST) are not sociological but administrative categories of population identified by the Constitution of India for compensatory discrimination and special protection. They intend to comprise those who were at the bottom and margins respectively, of the Indian social order – viz. caste groups who because of their low ritual and social status in the traditional social hierarchy and tribal groups because of their spatial isolation and distinctive cultures have been subject to impositions of disabilities and lack of opportunity (Galanter, 1984).

Education was perceived as crucial to processes of planned change. It was seen as the key instrument for bringing about a social order based on value of equality and social justice. Expansion and democratization of the education system sought, the two primary egalitarian goals of which were the universalisation of elementary education and the educational “upliftment” of disadvantaged groups. The State’s special promotional efforts have undoubtedly resulted in educational progress for the SC/ST especially in regions where policy implementation combined with the dynamism of reform, and most crucially with anticaste, dalit, tribal and religious conversion movement.

Contemporarily, the rigors of pollution, social practices of untouchability and social relations of servility vary greatly in different parts of the country. The widespread
upsurge of atrocity signifies continued caste based oppression. Caste and occupation were closely interlinked in the traditional socio-economic order, and the lowest manual and menial occupations were reserved for the SC. The link has gradually been broken but not completely. There have been shifts to caste free occupations. Changes took place with the arrival of new opportunities in rural employment and petty business as well as through education based occupational and social mobility in rural and urban contexts. However, economic exploitation and economic disadvantage and continued concentration in menial occupations continue to sustain and reinforce the degraded social position of the majority of the SC. Rural SC are predominantly landless and impoverished agricultural labor. Women are multiply subordinated.

There is an urgent need for a definite shift in the societal attitudes and cultural practices. Improvement in depriveds’ status in society can be done only by educating them and inculcating awareness about themselves. But bringing children from poor and deprived families to school and making them continue and complete their education is one of the biggest challenges. The constraints that keep them away range from deep-rooted socio-cultural beliefs and notions of unquestioned, established caste and gender roles on one hand, and tough life-situations and a very low perceived value or relevance of schooling for poor on the other. The existing social and gender division make it more
difficult to break the vicious circle that keeps these deprived children away from school in poor families.

**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION**

Etymologically the word deprivation is derived from the verb to deprive which means to dispose or strip (a person or an object) and it implies a "felt loss". It relates to certain features or aspects of the environment that is absent or inadequate in certain degree which causes and impacts on the functioning of the individual.


There are several definitions of deprivation as proposed by different psychologists.
Gordon (1965) has stated that term such as, 'Socio-economic deprivation',
'socially disadvantage' and 'culturally alienated' reflects certain differences in the
stimulus conditions of the childhood.

David Bores (Quoted by spurlock, 1970) has viewed social deprivation as
'Experience where in an individual is deprived of the opportunity to develop his
capacities to work to provide for his needs and enjoy the dignities of life.'

Langmier (1972) has viewed deprivation as a general phenomenon and defined it
as the same as 'insufficient satisfaction of basic needs for a prolonged period.'

According to Misra and Tripathi (1971) deprivation is a dispossess or lack or
loss of physical, social, Psychological and economical facilities privileges, opportunities
for prolonged period which are required to satisfy individual biogenic as well as
sociogenic needs.

**Whiteman and Deustch** (1968) have considered social deprivation as 'relative
term referring exclusive to specific types of environmental factors.' According to them,
environmental factor may be considered derivational when that factor is associated with
certain social grouping such as socio- economic status (SES) or race, and when the
environmental variable is associated with impaired performance.

Thus, deprivation is the insufficiency of the basic necessities for survival of
individual. The degree of deprivation may vary but deprivation is a common
phenomenon which is being experienced by all human beings. Not having sources of
income, assets and ownership of property are some forms of economic deprivation.
Social deprivation, arising out of the ascribed status of caste, tribe or religion, is another form of deprivation, especially in highly stratified rural areas.

This lack of facilities creates, in socially and economically deprived students, feeling of insecurity. Since high or low Level of Aspiration and Academic Achievement depend upon accessibility to resources available within the environment, deprivation can be assumed to shape and channelize their Activism also in significant way.

**STUDENT ACTIVISM**

Historically, in times of crisis, student activism has been a crucial force for social change. Students around the world have been at the forefront of movements to promote democracy and human rights. The demoralization of Indian students may be clearly traced to the states of the colleges and universities. Today we have schools and homes without discipline, parents and teachers without authority, education without knowledge, and examinations without justice. Hence, student indiscipline is a cultural, economical, sociological and educational problem. Student Activism in Education Institute has been a very confusing phenomenon. Although it was there in the institution right from the beginning of modern school system, yet efficient social as well as institutional control kept it under manageable limits.

The most visible student organizations are activist political movements, which received considerable attention in India particularly in 1989 when , Rajiv Goswami, student of Delhi University, threatened self-immolation in protest of the government's actions.
The Mandal Commission in India was established in 1979 by the Janata Party government under Prime Minister Morarji Desai with a mandate to "identify the socially or educationally backward." In 1980, the commission's report affirmed the affirmative action practice under Indian law whereby members of lower castes (known as Other Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes and Tribes) were given exclusive access to a certain portion of government jobs and slots in public universities, and recommended changes to these quotas, increasing them by 27% to 49.5%.

A decade after the commission gave its report, V.P. Singh, the Prime Minister at the time, tried to implement its recommendations in 1989. The criticism was sharp and colleges across the country held massive protests against it. Soon after, Rajiv Goswami, student of Delhi University, threatened self-immolation in protest of the government's actions. His act further sparked a series of self-immolations by other college students and led to a formidable movement against job reservations for Backward Castes in India. Culturally unique features of the protests and riots were bandhs (a version of a strike), hartals (a version of a municipal shut-down), dharnas (a version of swarming). Incidents of destruction of public property, looting, and intimidation for bandhs, hartals and dharnas were published and listed geographically as travel information in newspaper articles. Articles also highlighted politicians and victims of rioting during the protests. Police prevented extending the range and duration of the strikes, and some strike activity from even occurring. A national state of emergency was largely not declared to mobilize
army units against any one demonstration. The student activism took the form of national problem and it drew the attention not only of authorities but also of researchers and educationists. Now it was the burning issue to be studied

**Student Activism** is work done by students to effect political environment. Historical evidence suggests that the title "student activism" was bestowed upon the works of students in schools, rather than simply youth in communities, for educational, economic, or social change. It has often focused on making changes in schools, such as increasing student influence over curriculum or improving educational funding. The term Student Activist conceptually refers to a student who assumes leadership role in planning, organizing and executing. *Activism* can be “violent or peaceful, noisy or quiet actions taken by groups of people, some small and some huge, [in] attempts to alter society according to the desires of those taking action” (Jordan, 2002, p.8). Activists “desire, demand, and work for change” (Jordan, 2002, p.12) and “includes forms of political behavior that extend beyond voting and include occupationally relevant social action” (Epstein & Reeser, 1990, p.35).

In any discussion of student politics and activism, it is important to remember that only a small percentage of the total student body actually participate in them. Researches conducted in various countries show that the student activists constitute a very small
minority of student population, while the majority of the students are politically passive and moderate in their views.

Initially Student Activism in Education Institute has been characterized as school problem or as problem of indiscipline. But after independence, in our country, it acquired organized momentum in the form of student protest, collective dissent and anti-social group behavior. It was viewed and treated by social scientists as students’ unrest, student dissatisfaction and student protest. These characterization are colored with only one assumption that students are highly reactive towards any and every institution norm that forces them to mortgage some of their freedom. But the deeper analysis reveals that students’ reaction is not against the rules, norms and procedural regulations of an institution, but against their discriminating and highly partial treatment. Some of the common expressions of student activism are violence, clashes with the police, the gherao of vice chancellors, manhandling of teachers and authorities, hijacking of buses, burning and damaging of public property, strikes and demonstrations etc. The sorts of activities are harmful to society, education institute and the student themselves. Campus activism today spans a much broader range of causes, with students organizing around international solidarity and human rights; diversity in higher education and attacks on affirmative action; labor issues and the growing corporate.
LEVEL OF ASPIRATION

“The greater failure is not the child who doesn’t reach the stars, but the child who has no stars that they feel they are reaching for.”

Gordon Brown (2007)

Current government policy, as set out in the Children’s Plan and elsewhere, is concerned with ensuring that young people have high aspirations, not just educationally but in the wider sense, participating in positive and cultural activities that develop their talents, and becoming active citizens. A pupil has some expectation in mind when he attempts a task. He strives to attain what he thinks he can attain. If he attains the expected results he is satisfied, if things work out so that he falls short of his expectation, he experience some degree of failure, which leads to seemingly paradoxical results. Thus level of aspiration may be defined as, “The standard, a person expects to reach in a particular performance.” According to Barrow (1956) level of aspiration depends on several factors like, intelligence, socio-economic status, parent relation and expectation from children.

In setting of Level of Aspiration a person estimates his own level of achievement, experience, success or failures and his own capabilities and limitations. Generally Individuals face a dilemma between moving up to a more advanced level versus repeating the current level for their next pursuit. Choosing a more advanced level often requires the individual to invest more effort, yet it can offer certain benefits (e.g., greater interest). As such, we explore whether the way individuals monitor their current goal— either in terms of remaining actions or completed actions— influences their aspiration
level for their next goal level. Failure to make progress leads to conscious deliberation about increasing effort (Martin & Tesser, 1996; Martin, Tesser, & McIntosh, 1993), because individuals tie the benefits from the goal to attainment rather than engagement (Kivetz, Urminsky, & Zheng, 2006; Locke & Latham, 1990). For example, a student can value making progress on a reading assignment, and a chef can value completing a masterpiece dinner and serving it to the guests. It is notable that stronger goal involvement could potentially increase the satisfaction from the present goal level as well as the motivation to move up to the next goal level.

Young people make choices that influence whether their potentialities are cultivated or remain untapped. These choices are, in turn, partly influenced by their parents, the opportunities available to them, and their own aspirations – to gain qualifications, to get a job, to have a career and to have a family. Yet, understanding what determines aspirations is not a straightforward task: they change throughout childhood and beyond, shaped by the characteristics of young people and their families, peers, schools, and neighborhoods. And it is well known fact that aspirations vary for different sections of the population both in terms of parents’ educational and occupational goals for their children and the ambitions of the young people themselves. Young people need easy access to advice and guidance and the involvement of professionals or volunteers – for example in a mentoring role – when necessary. Involvement in positive activities may also provide important socializing experiences that encourage high aspirations.
As Kimora Lee Simmons in her book, *Fabulous: What It Is & How to Get It*, one of Kimora’s fundamentals in the book is called the “Grand Aspiration Theory” – the G.A.T. – which goes as follows:

- High aspirations breed frustration.
- Frustration breeds motivation.
- Motivation pushes you to action – whether you take tiny baby steps or huge strides.
- Action breeds confidence; you start to feel in control.
- Confidence is cumulative: Once you start acquiring it, you get more and more of it.
- Soon enough, you prove to yourself that you’re a star who can surmount any obstacle and achieve whatever you decide you want to achieve with your life. You’re on a roll!

Given the critical link between aspirations and attainment, researchers have tried to understand the relationship and the impact of multiple characteristics of aspirations. Research has focused on such factors as gender (Mau & Bikos, 2000; Trusty, 2002), race (Kao & Tienda, 1998; Mau & Bikos, 2000), family background (Garg, Melanson, & Levin, 2007; Maijoribanks, 2003), institutional context (Buchmann & Dalton, 2002), parent academic involvement (Hill et al., 2004), and school experiences (Maijoribanks, 2003). In addition, socioeconomic status (SES) has long been examined as a predictor of
low aspirations, though inconsistent results have been noted on whether it functions as an independent predictor or works through mechanisms of parent involvement with a child's education (Trusty, 1998). Low-income students who perceive higher levels of barriers and lower levels of support report lower aspirations (Kenny, Blustein, Chaves, Grossman, & Gallagher, 2003).

Generally it is seen that level of academic achievement is highly co-related with level of Aspiration.

**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

In relation to children's welfare, progress and development, Education is especially a difficult circumstances. The world over, both developed and developing countries, are increasingly becoming conscious and aware of their responsibility towards uplifting the educational attainment of all children irrespective of the circumstances in which they find themselves. India as a country which has ratified the UN convention and adopted the Charter on Children's Rights (1992) has accepted the principle of equal access to education and also strives to provide every opportunity from primary to secondary and higher education. Further it identifies education, as the sole medium through which the potential of a child can be developed to its maximum level signifying his individuality, capabilities, physical and mental abilities. Yet it is of paramount importance to examine to what extent the deprived children in India have been ensured their right to equal education.

In a broader sense, “all changes in the academic level of the student are the academic achievement. It can also be defined as total aggregate school examination
marks converted into percentage. Educational achievement refers to educational or academic performance as a specified level of attainment or proficiency in academic work as evaluated by teachers by standardized tests or teacher made tests or by combination of both.

Particularly, the type of early childhood upbringing, early school experiences and peer relationship play a vital role in deciding child’s Academic Achievement. (Bernard van Leer Foundation; Klein et al, 1996). Ahhunawallia (1985 p.39) has outlined the main determining factors for the educational achievement of the children. These are parents’ education, economic status and size of the family. Similarly Devi (1985) also opines that home environment blocks the achievement of deprived children in the school. Rao (1997) in his study finds that socioeconomic status of students play a greater role in forming and vitalizing the study habits. Chinnapan (1987 p.29) is of opinion that the parental occupational level and educational attainment of children are closely associated. Besides, family environment holds an important position for the educational attainment of the child, as it is a place of secured living and learning for every child. Dave (1988 p.43-44) points out some other problems for the children’s performance at school. He states that students who do not get sufficient time to read due to domestic activities and social environment bring very bad results in the school. He further adds that the problem sometime multiplies for the students due to drunkenness, illiteracy and poor economic conditions of the parents.

1.1.0 EMERGENCE OF PROBLEM
It is now widely acknowledged that human resources are essential component for the human development. With this end in view, education is given an overriding priority to achieve the goal.

Education is an important component of fundamental human right to life. But the early strategies could not make much headway in achieving the goal. Even if the country has already celebrated its Golden Jubilee, nearly half of its population are still illiterate. In the traditional caste-based structure of the Indian society, segmented in four folds, placing the Brahmans at the top and the Sudras at the bottom, there exists another caste known as “Scheduled Caste”. Ghurye (1969 P.306) describes them as “depressed class” and they are regarded as the “fifth order” of the Hindu caste system In spite of various measures, a considerable number of children in 6-14 years continue to remain outside school (the orbit of basic education). The Government of India has developed a multi-pronged strategy for improving the lot of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India. One of the weaker sections, to whom we identify as Scheduled Castes, is drawn from the lowest socio-economic strata. It is an important component of city life, as it fulfills the requirement of skilled and unskilled labor in various sectors.

For the people who are intellectually culturally and economically deprived, the government of India has introduced various welfare measures for their upliftment. In spite of the concerned efforts made at government level, the condition of scheduled castes has not improved appreciably. Majority of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are still living in abject poverty. These scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are socially deprived groups as they are victims of social segregation. They are safely and reasonably
named ‘disadvantaged’ or ‘deprived groups’ (Sharma, 1983). Among them the condition of girl folk is more deplorable. Due to perpetual poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and dependency, they are deprived of even basic needs of life.

The disadvantaged groups of learners from sociological point of view comprise ethnic groups or group based on caste hierarchy in a particular society. In our country students belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward castes are considered socially disadvantaged. **Former Prime Minister V. P. Singh** when asked about similarity between HRD Minister Arjun Singh's move on quotas for OBCs in institutes of higher education and the Mandal Commission set up by him, the former Prime Minister said "when we thought about reservation in early 90s, we decided to introduce it first in jobs and then in education. The doors of top educational institutions are shut for poor students and only the economically sound can get admission into these."

It is a fact that the government is sincere in implementing various ameliorative measures for all round development of socially and economically deprived students but it has been observed that they do not come forward to avail the economic and welfare opportunities open to them. This is indicative of some inhibition in their thinking, probably grounded on tradition or group pressure which needs to be explored.

The SC/STs are the real downtrodden unfortunate souls who for ages have been performing menial tasks. Even today, there are very few SC/STs who are economically sound. This is the situation. Yes, there is a creamy layer among SC/STs but that isn’t thick enough. On the other hand, there is also the other side of the picture. At a convocation address at the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, in August 2001, N
R Narayana Murthy, Chief Mentor of Infosys Technologies Limited, said that there was a need to have a relook at the reservation policy. “While the reservation in admissions to schools and financial assistance for economically weaker sections is desirable for a limited period, there are grave doubts whether economic backwardness should be determined by caste, as is done in India today. No society that has shunned merit has succeeded in solving its problems and it is ironical that people here see sustenance of backwardness as an instrument of progress than turning to hard work.” He further said, “We have become, perhaps, the only nation in the world where people fight to be called backward rather than forward.”

The 1998–1999 National Sample Survey calculated the economic status of forward communities separately for rural/urban areas in various income brackets. It shows

1.1.1 Economical status

- Only 6.4% of forward Castes in rural areas appear in upper income bracket with per capita monthly income stands at above Rs 925 per month.

- 30% of rural population is made up of forward Castes.

- More than 65% of forward Castes per capita income stands below Rs 525 per month.

For urban areas:
• Only 5.6% of forward Castes appear in the upper-income bracket with per capita income at or above Rs. 1925 per month (around US $40).

• More than 25% of forward Castes per capita income stands below Rs. 500 per month (around $10)

1.1.2 Educational status

• More than 30% of forward Castes above 15 years of age are illiterate.

• Only 8% of forward Castes are graduates.

• Around 85% of forward Castes above 15 years of age have done equal to or below secondary education (10 Years of education).

The above statistics indicate that students belonging to upper castes also, if they belong to poor family, form the group of socially disadvantaged. Thus the groups of socially disadvantaged students are most often economically deprived students. These socially and economically deprived students, because of their poor social and cultural background, are not able to make normal progress in their life.

Researches have found that students, from low socio economic status, reduce their frustrations and try to attain independence by releasing their feelings in college demonstrations. The worsening economic conditions emerge as an important source of student unrest, one of them being enhanced tuition fees. Ross gives an interesting example of a strike on this issue. The students showed brilliant tactics and were supported by strong public opinion which resulted in forcing the government to reverse
its decision on fees. This is the power of student activism. These examples paint a picture of students that are certainly a far cry from the stereotype of the next generation as self-centered kids who spend all their time texting each other. Why don't education reformers do more to find out student opinions and take them into consideration?

More often in public discussion and media reports incidents of student unrest are highlighted while the constructive activities of students receive less attention. The constructive role played by students in various activities of student activism has seldom received its due share of approbation.

It is clear that there's an increased student consciousness about education issues, and they want to get involved—and when they do, they have good ideas. Maybe acknowledging the role, students can play as agents of change in their own school communities, is a change that education reformers should make. The importance of activism has perhaps never been greater.

Student unrest was rampant on the Indian campuses in the sixties and several studies have been published which probe into the socioeconomic background of the student leaders, attitude and value patterns among students and leadership styles. Reviewing three works on this subject ROSS, Aileen D., 'Student Unrest in India', Altbach, Philip G. 'Turmoil and Transition : Higher Education and Student Politics in India', and Shinde A.B. 'Political Consciousness among college student', Dr. Prayag Mehta stresses that student activism in developing countries stems from economic difficulties and that it indicates a desire to reform the educational system to bring it in line with socio economic aspiration.
Several Studies on student activism and/or unrest have been published in the last decade. They have tried to understand the socio economic background of student activism, attitudes and value patterns among students, ideological consciousness and leadership styles, particularly in relation to strikes and other forms of student agitation. For example Mishra (1975) found that most Student activists engaged in non political, social and cultural activities came from upper middle class homes. On the other hand, those active in direct action tended to come from lower middle class homes Anderson and Pant (1970) found that three out of four contestants to the key offices of various student unions in Allahabad University belonged to high caste.

Analyzing the causes of unrest, Ross (1969) has concluded that widespread activism is growing in countries with high and low standards of living. A common feature in either case is of many students not finding satisfactory careers. The students suffer from Boredom. Often, they have no clear conception about the meaning of higher education; the Indian student is still part of some what authoritarian and usually large family. He reduces his frustrations and tries to attain independence by releasing his pent up feelings in college demonstrations rather than by challenging the family. The student culture also gives him a much needed if temporary, identification and new loyalty. Comparing the Indian scene with that in some other countries, ROSS concluded that much of the student unrest around the world is leading towards reforms in education.

Despite the irrelevance of the Indian Education system, it is interesting to find some students perceiving it as an instrument to secure social and economic mobility. Probably this aspiration is shared by the students initially. However, as they come in
contact with the hard reality of educated unemployment and other difficulties, they come to realize that education does not lead them anywhere certainly not towards lucrative careers. This may be more true of students from middle classes who might aspire more than students from poorer classes. The latter category of students might perceive education as an instrument for social and economic advancement. Growing unemployment among the educated is bound to change this aspect when more and more students join the ranks of unemployment. The growing economic difficulty and the broadening social base of higher education is highlighted in DiBona’s study (In Altbach’s Book -sTurmoil and Transition : Higher Education and Student Politics in India) of Allahabad University. While more Students from socially and economically weaker sections are entering universities the new entrants still belong the upper strata of the society. University students are largely drawn from middle and upper middle classes. It is a difference matter that the middle class as a whole is getting popularized.

In recent years, researchers have shown considerable interest in the study of Psychological characteristics of socially disadvantaged groups of students. A lot of researches have been conducted on socially and economically deprived students which are as follows-
**Table No. 1.1**

**Researches carried out on deprived undergraduates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Research Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>B.P. Verma</td>
<td>Value orientation of Sociality Disadvantaged Adolescents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Ramesh Chand &amp; Sudha Nautiyal</td>
<td>Self Concept of students Living in Destitute Homes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>B.P. Verma</td>
<td>Self Concept as a function of caste Affiliation and Rural-Uraban Residential Back ground.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>J. Uma Chitra, A.P. Thagarajan &amp; S.Krishnan Sanathana</td>
<td>Psycho-Socio-Educational Factors of Scheduled caste Students in Higher Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Archna Agarwal</td>
<td>A study of some Educational Problems of Schedule caste Students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Subhash Chandra Agarwal</td>
<td>A comparative study of Adjustment among Schedule class, Backward class and General.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Geeta Shukla &amp; B. Nigam</td>
<td>A study of the Effect of Socio-Economic Status on Personality Traits of Accepted and Rejected children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Alka Katiyan &amp; Pushpa Chauhan</td>
<td>A comparative Study of Personality traits of adolescent girls from high economic status and Low economic Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>N.N. Pandey &amp; K. Singh</td>
<td>A comparative study of Attitude Towards Education of Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribe Students</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Tulsi Acharya &amp; Deepak Kumar Bahera</td>
<td>Factors Influencing the educational Achievements of the scheduled caste and general caste students of Cuttack municipality corporation, Orissa</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Mukti Mishra, Vaishali Rao and Gautmi Bhatpahari</td>
<td>Deprivation Among Tribal College boys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Joyti Jha, B. Suman Jha, Kishor Kumar and Jyotsna Kumari</td>
<td>A study of Motivational Functions of Deprived caste Women.</td>
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From the above researches whereas Dr. B.P. Verma concluded that caste affiliation has a significant effect upon students’ self-concept, Thagarajan and Uma Chitra found that Scheduled caste students did not differ from non scheduled group in personality (Introversion and Extroversion). Geeta Shukla through her study showed that partial influence of socio-economic level was seen on the personality traits of girls and boys and the result of Subhash Chand’s study showed that there was a significant difference in adjustment of scheduled caste- general and backward class-general students.

Despite the efforts in independent India to educate the masses, in particular, the socially disadvantaged groups, they have not been attracted to and avail the opportunity provided, due to inherent constraints of the socio-cultural milieu. Research literature indicates that a large number of studies conducted in India have reported that social & economic disadvantages have adverse effect on achievement (Ameer Jaan, 1986) personality patterns (Srivastava, 1982), self concept (whiteman an and Deutsch, 1968).
Ahunawallia (1985: 39) has outlined the parents’ education, economic status and size of the family as the main determining factors for the educational achievement of the children. Similarly Devi (1985) also opines that home environment blocks the achievement of Scheduled Caste children in the school. Rao (1997) in his study finds that socioeconomic status of students plays a greater role in forming and vitalizing the study habits. Chinnapan (1987 p29) is of opinion that the parental occupational level and educational attainment of children are closely associated.

Consequently, the structure of the family has considerable influence on the children acquiring the fruits of education. Krishna swamy (1998 p.68) rightly remarks: “people have to get out of the mindset that children of plumbers can be nothing but plumbers”. The educative role of the family can never be neglected (Majumdar and Madam, 1962 p.5) Sachchidananda and Sinha (1989 p.155) observed that economic condition of the family into consideratiois an indispensable element in educational attainment of a child. Similarly Khan and Chopra (1964) examined and emphasized the relation between the social status and educational achievement.is an indispensable element in educational attainment of a child.

### 1.1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This report seeks to answer the following questions.

- We know that poverty impacts on the school and social lives of teenagers and leads them to exclude themselves from some school experiences (Ridge, 2002). To what extent, if at all, does poverty impact on the activism and level of aspiration of young generation going to college?
We know that children from better-off families are more likely not to get into trouble at school, to stay on at school and to gain qualifications but the poor children do. Now the question arises, do these differences effect the academic achievement of youth living in low-income families and those living in better-off circumstances even at college?

Government has introduced a range of policies, to try to break the link between poverty and social injustice. To what extent have these made a difference to the student activism of college going adolescents from families experiencing poverty?

Do the government policies have any positive effect on their psycho-constituents? Do the students from socially and economically deprived families now protest against any injustice in society? Does socio-economic status hamper or promote activism?

Do adolescents differ in their level of achievement? Do the students from socio-economic deprived families differ from students from non-deprived families in their activism and achievement?

Is there any role of socio-economic status in deciding the level of aspiration of college going students?

Though in this area, a lot of researches have been done but they are not able to answer the above questions. Activism of socially and economically deprived students has not been touched. Specifically, no study, to the best knowledge of the researcher, has been conducted on Activism, Level of Aspiration and Academic Achievement of socially
and economically deprived undergraduates. Therefore, the present study has been proposed by me as an attempt to unveil some hidden corners of the reality in this respect.

1.2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A Study of Activism, Level of Aspiration And Academic Achievement of Socially And Economically Deprived Undergraduates.

1.3.0 DEFINITION OF THE TERMS USED IN THE STUDY

1.3.1 DEPRIVATION

The term “deprivation has been equated with failure to provide opportunity to have experiences”

Hunt

Operational Definition

Deprivation’ stands for the dispossession or loss of opportunities, privileges etc. that i.e. lack or insufficiency of the basic necessities for survival of the individual. The notion of deprivation is used to refer to a variety of states or conditions.

a. Social deprivation
Social deprivation refers primarily to the separation of persons and the avoidance of contact. It is an institutionalized form of social distance expressed in physical separation.

*Operational Definition*

Social Deprivation indicates a person or group lacking position of respect, prestige and influence in the social structure. Since a large population of SC and ST have a culture of their own which differ from GEN category groups, they are not enough privileged to enjoy maximum resources of development and hence found to be more deprived socially.

**b. Economic deprivation**

Economic deprivation is deprivation of those minimal level of health, housing food, education and recreation compatible with the contemporary technology, beliefs and values of a particular societys a specific locality.”

*Straus*

*Operational Definition*

Economic deprivation is the condition of lacking full economic access to fundamental needs such as source of income, ownership of property and both.

1.3.2. *ACTIVISM*

Activism is demand for change in some aspect of social order.

*Joseph Gusfield*
**Operational Definition**

Student activism is work done by students to effect political, environmental, economic, or social change. It includes all possible areas of students’ reactions as the deeper analysis reveals that students’ reaction is not against the rules, norms and procedural regulations of an institution, but against their discriminating and highly partial treatment. Here this term covers intra as well as extra institutional factors of student activism.

**1.3.3 LEVEL OF ASPIRATION**

The level of aspiration is an integral part of his/her self picture for it represents him/her not only as he/she is but also as he/she would like to be.

*Bonner Hurbert*

**Operational Definition**

Level of aspiration implies what an individual wants to do in near future. It is the setting of goals on the basis of knowledge of past performance in a familiar task.

**1.3.4 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Academic Achievement is the total of marks obtained by student at his/her academic examinations or it is the teacher’s estimate the level of success or total Marks attained by the students in their effort to grasp their curricular goals in their examination.

*Dictionary of Education*
Operational Definition

In the present study level of academic achievement will refer to the total of marks obtained by the undergraduate girls in 12th standard.

1.3.5 UNDERGRADUATES

A student in higher education who is enrolled in degree credit coursework below the level of the bachelor’s degree and who has normally not yet received a bachelor’s degree.  

Encyclopedic dictionary of education

Operational Definition

In the present study the students who have taken admission at graduation level in colleges after passing 12th exam of Board are considered undergraduates.

1.4.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Objective Related to Independent Variable

1. To identify socially and economically deprived undergraduates.

1.4.2 Objectives Related to Dependent Variables

2. To study the activism of socially and economically deprived undergraduates.

3. To study the level of aspiration of socially and economically deprived undergraduates.
4. To study the academic achievement of socially and economically deprived under graduates.

5. To study the interrelation relationship between dependent and independent variables (Deprivation, Student Activism, Level Of Aspiration and Academic Achievement).

1.4.2.1 Subsidiary Objectives

2. To compare the activism of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates.

3. To compare the activism of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived male and female under graduates.

4. To compare the activism of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates from different categories (General, OBC and SC/ST).

5. To compare the level of aspiration of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates.

6. To compare the level of aspiration of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived male and female under graduates.

7. To compare the level of aspirations of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates from different categories (General, OBC and SC/ST).

8. To compare the academic achievement of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates.
9. To compare the academic achievement of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived male and female under graduates.

10. To compare the academic achievement of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates from different categories (General, OBC and SC/ST).

### 1.5.0 HYPOTHESES

1. There exists no significant difference between socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates in relation to their activism.

2. There exists no significant difference between male and female from socially and economically deprived group in relation to their activism.

3. There exists no significant difference between activism of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates from different categories (General, OBC and SC/ST).

4. There exists no significant difference between socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates in relation to their level of aspiration.

5. There exists no significant difference between male and female from socially and economically deprived group in relation to their level of aspiration.

6. There exists no significant difference in level of aspiration of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived under graduates from different categories (General, OBC and SC/ST).
7. There exists no significant difference between socially and economically deprived and non-deprived undergraduates in relation to their academic achievement.

8. There exists no significant difference between male and female from socially and economically deprived group in relation to their academic achievement.

9. There exists no significant difference in academic achievement of socially and economically deprived and non-deprived undergraduates from different categories (General, OBC and SC/ST).

10. There exist no significant relationship between activism and socially and economically deprivation of undergraduates.

11. There exist no significant relationship between level of aspiration and socially and economically deprivation of undergraduates.

12. There exist no significant relationship between academic achievement and socially and economically deprivation of undergraduates.

1.6.0 COVERAGE

1. The study was restricted to six degree colleges of Agra city affiliated to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University.

2. Students who were appearing in the first year of graduation were considered as undergraduates.
3. Socially and economically deprivation of the students was determined through administrating the Socio-economic Status Scale (SESS) constructed by Rajeev Lochan Bhardwaj.

4. The study was limited to the students who have passed 12th from U.P. Board.

1.7.0 VARIABLES

Dependent variables: 1. Student Activism
2. Level of Aspiration and
3. Academic Achievement

Independent variables: 1. Social deprivation
2. Economic deprivation
3. Gender
4. Caste

Controlled variables: 1. U.P. Board Pass out Students
2. Students from Agra University

1.8.0 SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

A sample of 1281 units (610 Male and 671 Female) from the group of I year undergraduates was selected from six institutions of Agra city. The selection of institutions was done through purposive sampling. The selection of students was done through systematic random technique.

1.9.0 METHOD
Keeping in view the nature of the study, the *Descriptive Survey Method* was employed.

### 1.10.0 TOOLS

To furnish the data in detail various suitable and standardized psychological tools was used. By observing the nature of the study following tools will be preferred.


2. **Sharma Student Activism Scale (SSAS)** - by Dr R. R. Sharma. (1988)

3. **Level of Aspiration Measure (LOA)** - by Mahesh Bhargava and Late Prof M.A. Shah (1996ed.)

### 1.11.0 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

To analyze and interpret the data, Mean, S.D., C.R. values and Coefficient of Correlation were used.

### 1.12.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Man is a complex and integrated whole of body, mind, soul and social self. Therefore, uplift is necessary for the all round development of a child in mental, physical,
economical and socio-cultural aspects, which are inter related to each other. All these aspects influence the children to improve and get a respectable identity for playing multiple roles in the family and in the society effectively.

Time is pushing young generation to equip themselves to face challenges of the new millennium, to share additional responsibility to improve their social and financial position and to come from the backseat to frontline. What needs to be decided first is whether their participation is required to simply fill in the quantitative or qualitative participation. It is not adequate to have youth for their mere presence. However, they need to prepare themselves to assert their rights and compete so as to improve living standard. Improving the Activism, Level of Aspiration and Educational Achievement are the only answers to oppression, exploitation, injustice and other hazards in the society. Understanding what supports high aspirations may help poor youths to succeed despite considerable barriers.

The reviews of the disabilities and constraints, which stem from socio cultural institutions, indicate that the majority of children are still very far from enjoying the rights guaranteed to them by Constitution. Clearly, one of our challenges is to revive Indian Education. The key is not how much we spend, but spending smarter. If we don’t, India will find itself falling further behind those countries that can and do properly educate their children. There needs to be a sense of urgency here.

Undergraduate students are passing through adolescence which is the time for building personality and planning for future goals. Since the adolescents, who are going to collegiate education come in contact with other and get broader exposure, if we know
the level of Aspiration and Activism of deprived students, we may help them in designing their educational, emotional and social skills for building a strong personality and future orientation.

Deprivation influences the personal, social and economical growth of an individual. It means that individuals from two different social groups will be different in terms of deprivation. The race-age-sex groups, built by socio cultural forces on such biological bases, reinforce enormously the influence of these bases and continuously affect personality from the cradle to the grave.

Socially and economically deprived people are oppressed and denied respect and equal opportunity in society. Education for these people is not a kind of social service. Nor is it merely a status symbol or ornament as with certain sections of our society the higher university degree have come to be associated with a higher status. It is a type of investment for these groups to enable them to cross the social, psychological and economic barriers under which they have been laboring for centuries. Denying this basic input to the members of these communities is a denial of the very right to participate as an equal partner in the national life. People’s representatives, particularly from tribal areas, have been drawing our attention towards the adverse effects of imbalances in social and economic investments.

Being the most dynamic section of our population, young people are the most valuable human resource. To optimally tap their constructive and creative energies, it is essential to develop youth participatory programmes in all our development activities. As our Ex President Mr. Abdul Kalam Ajad has said, “The country is at the vital stage of
transforming the population of youth into productive human resource in the march of India towards an economic superpower by 2020.” This is possible only if we fulfill the legitimate aspirations of the youth and empower them as the active and constructive agents of positive change. So the present study which is based on activism, level of aspiration and academic achievement of socially and economically deprived undergraduates will help to all concerned persons to understand some psychological aspects of deprived undergraduates.

We dream of an equitable society. Together with adolescents we can bring about a change in their lives. Adolescents learn social responsibility and social skills through interaction with their families, peers, mentors, and communities. It is equally important that the adolescent knows their contribution is important. This can only occur when youth are allowed to make meaningful contributions to their communities and to other human beings. Therefore it is the need of hour to map out whether the facilities provided by the government to Socially and economically deprived have made any contribution for uplifting the activism, level of Aspiration and Academic Achievement. This will help in program formulations and implementation of suitable ameliorative measure so that they may come to the mainstream of the society.