CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to examine the educational and occupational situation of a tribal community in the state of Manipur. It also attempts to highlight the extent of educational inequality existing among the different sections of this tribal community.

The tribal communities in India constitute a sizable segment of the country's population. Through the ages, they have formed an integral part of the Indian society. Various authorities have referred to them using different names. For the first time in the Indian census, Sir A. Baines, the Census Commissioner of 1891 had given classified information about the tribal communities under the category of 'Forest Tribes'. Their population during that time was estimated to be nearly sixteen million. In the Census Report of 1901, the tribals were known as 'Animists' and in 1911 as 'Tribal Animists or people following tribal religion'. Again, the Census Report of 1921 classified the tribals under a different name, that is, 'Hill and Forest Tribes', and in 1931 as 'Primitive Tribes'. The Government of India Act 1935 specified them as 'backward Tribes'. However, in the 1941 Census Report, they were simply referred to as 'Tribes'.1
Besides the various terms used by the Census Reports, the tribal communities were also given several other names by different authors. For instance, Sir Herbert Risley and Lacey, Elwin and Thakkar called them 'aboriginals'. G.S. Ghurye calls them "Backward Hindus", while Dr. Des and Das renamed them as 'submerged humanity'. Besides, the tribals are also popularly known as 'Adivasis' as they are regarded to be the original inhabitants of the country.²

Literally, the term 'tribe' has been derived from the Latin word 'tribus' which means "three diversions". This word was first used to imply the three diversions among the early Romans. In English the word was used in the sixteenth century implying the original Roman meaning as used in the Bible and it denotes a group of persons claiming descent from a common ancestor".³ However, in the modern usage, the term 'tribe' generally denotes "a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having a common ancestor".⁴

Various social scientists have attempted to define the term 'tribe' or tribal society. But it is difficult to arrive at a definition which is universally acceptable. W.H. R. Rivers defined tribe as "a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speak common dialect, have a single government and act together for such common purposes
as warfare."⁵ According to Piddington, a tribal represents "a group of people speaking a common dialect, inhabiting a common territory, and displaying a certain homogeneity in their culture. The tribe is never exogamous, in fact, its members marry fellow members more often than they marry outsiders. The tribe is not primarily or usually a kinship group, but in certain cases all members of a tribe claim descent from a common ancestor."⁶ Beteille stated that the term tribe is generally "applied to people who were considered primitive, lived in backward areas, and did not know the use of writing."⁷ And yet, according to Lewis, an ideal definition of tribal societies is that "they are small in scale, are restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal, and political relation and possess a morality, a religion, and a worldview of corresponding dimensions. Characteristically too, tribal languages are unwritten, and hence, the extent of communication both in time and space is inevitably narrow. At the same time, tribal societies exhibit a remarkable economy of design and have a compactness and self-sufficiency lacking in modern society."⁸

In the Indian context too, there has been some controversy regarding the definition of a tribe. Various anthropologists defined tribal society on the basis of certain characteristics which they think constitute a
tribe. In general, kinship ties, common territory, one language, joint ownership and one political organization have all been referred to as the main characteristics of a tribe. The reason why there exists such diversity of opinion is because each anthropologist defined the tribal society on the basis of data with which he was most familiar.

The tribal society in India is not a homogeneous one. There has been great variation among the tribals from region to region and within a region from tribe to tribe. As such, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to define all the Indian tribes in terms of universal characteristics. Therefore, "the working definition of any tribe would depend on the actual tribe studied."

According to Majumdar, the tribal population of India can be broadly classified into three racial divisions - namely, (i) the Mongoloids, (ii) the Negritos, and (iii) the Proto-Australoids or Indo-Australoids. The Mongoloid race is represented by the tribals of sub-Himalayan region, and can be divided into two sub-divisions, viz. Paleo-Mongoloid and Tibeto-Mongoloid. The first type can be found in the north eastern states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, and is represented by tribes such as Khasis, Mizons and Nagas. While the Tibeto-Mongoloid race is represented by tribes in the state of Sikkim and
Arunachal Pradesh, tribes belonging to the Negrito race are found mostly in the coastal region of Kerala, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Kedars, Irulas, Onges and Sentinelese are some of the representatives of this racial group.

The majority of the tribal population of India belongs to the last group, that is, the Proto-Australoid or Indo-Australoid. These tribal groups are found in the central region of India such as the Chhotanagpur Plateau, Rajmahal Hills, Aravalli range, Central Vindhyachal, Deccan Plateau and Nilgiri Hills. The Oraons, Gonds, Mundas and Santhals are some of the more prominent tribes belonging to the Proto-Australoid race.

Besides racial differences, the tribes of India exhibit variation in their culture, religion, dialect, etc., which is mainly due to the differences in their surrounding environment and differential exposure to the outside world. For instance, the tribal communities in the central region of India have always been living side by side with other communities and there exists a considerable amount of interaction between the tribals and the non-tribals. As a result of this continued interaction, the tribal communities of this region are greatly influenced by the neighbouring Hindu culture. "Except in a few areas, it is very difficult to come across communities which retain all their pristine
tribal character. In fact, most such tribal groups show in varying degrees an element of continuity with the larger society of India. Moreover, due to the industrialization of this region, many tribals had lost their land and were forced to give up their traditional agricultural occupations and worked in the industries as labourers.

However, regarding the tribes of north-eastern region, the situation seems to be somewhat different. Due to their geographical isolation and late appearance in the national mainstream, they are not much influenced by the Hindu culture. Moreover, the "Inner Line Regulation" which was enforced in 1837 restricted entry of non-tribals into the hill areas of north-east India and thereby enhanced the already existing barriers between the the hill tribes and the non-tribal plainsmen. At the same time it also protected the tribal from exploitation at the hands of outsiders and helped preserve tribal land and identity. As a result, many tribes of north-east region still retain their tribal cultures and are, to a large extent, free from the clutches of landlords and moneylenders.

Commenting on the tribal situation in NEFA in the nineteen fifties, Elwin writes that "in NEFA there are no landlords, no extortionate moneylenders, no liquor-vendors, and there is none of the economic improvisation, the anxiety and the corruption that such people have brought to other
more accessible tribal areas. Here, tribal culture, social organization and traditional institutions are still strong and vigorous. Further, due to the impact of Christianity and the educational activities of the Christian missions, the tribals in the north-east region are found to be educationally more advanced than the tribals of the other regions.

Altogether, there are about 350 Scheduled Tribes living in almost all the states and Union Territories of India. As per 1981 census, the total population of Scheduled Tribes in India was 538 lakhs which comprises 7.85 per cent of the country's population. Of the total tribal population, 85.67 per cent is concentrated in the eight states of central India (namely, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal), 11.10 per cent in the eight states of north eastern India (i.e. Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura), and the remaining 3.23 per cent is scattered in the other states and Union Territories of the north and the south. Madhya Pradesh has the largest number of tribals (i.e 119.87 lakhs), while Mizoram has the highest percentage of tribal population in the state (i.e 93.55 per cent of the total state's population).
The tribal population of India constitutes the deprived section of the country's population. After the attainment of independence, the Constitution of India made special provisions for their social, economic and educational development. As per Article 46 under the Directive Principles of State Policies of the Indian Constitution, 'the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.'

To help the proper and smooth implementation of the Directive Principles contained in Article 46, suitable provisions have been made in the Constitution. For instance, Article 15 prohibits any discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. But clause (4) of this Article empowers the state to make any special provision for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes of the citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. While Article 16(4) makes special provision for the reservation of appointment or posts in favour of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Further, Article 338 makes provision for the appointment of a Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for these communities under the Constitution of India.
Altogether, the special safeguards for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes provided in the Indian Constitution have been spelt out in 24 Articles (including those mentioned above), and two Schedules - namely, the Fifth and the Sixth Schedules.16

Of the various developmental programmes for the tribes, education has been given greater emphasis because it is considered fundamental to the overall development of the tribals, as well as other deprived communities. According to the Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, "The spread of education among the weaker sections of society is an essential pre-requisite to the all-round development, and one of the most important media to assure them benefits of various safeguards provided under the Constitution."17

Consequently, various schemes and programmes have been implemented for the educational development of the tribals. These schemes include the reservation of seats for tribal students in educational institutions, as well as scholarships and other assistance from the primary level to the university stage.

Besides educational programmes, various provisions are also being provided for the employment benefits of the tribals. To improve the representation of tribals in the
service sector, the Constitution of India provides for reservation of posts in services under the union as well as the state governments in favour of the tribals. Other special provisions such as age relaxation for five years, minimum qualifying standard and pre-examination coaching facilities are also provided for the tribal candidates.

These special provisions and developmental programmes are expected to improve the overall socio-economic condition of the tribals and bring them at par with the national mainstream. Hence, the problem raised in this context is: How far has education increased for the tribals due to special provisions provided for them, and to what extent education has enabled them to improve their socio-economic condition?

EDUCATION, SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY

The term 'occupational mobility' is derived from the broader concept of 'social mobility' which refers to the movement of an individual or group from one social position to another. According to Sorokin, social mobility is the "transition of an individual or social value - anything that has been created or modified by human activity - from one social position to another."18 Bendix and Lipset also defined social mobility as the process "by which the individuals move from one position to another in society,"
positions, which by general consent have been given specific hierarchy.\textsuperscript{19}

Social mobility can be of two types - horizontal and vertical. Horizontal mobility occurs within a particular social stratum and does not bring any change in the social position of an individual or social object in the social hierarchy. On the contrary, vertical mobility involves a movement of an individual or social object from one social stratum to another in the vertical dimension. This movement may be upward (social climbing) or downward (social sinking). Depending on the nature of stratification, vertical mobility may occur in the economic, political or occupational structure.\textsuperscript{20}

In the modern industrial society where occupation is regarded as one of the most important criterion for social status, the correlation between occupational status and general social status is so high that mobility in the occupational scale is often used as an index for general social mobility.\textsuperscript{21} Occupations are rated in terms of differing socio-economic status, and a shift from an occupation of a lower socio-economic status to one of higher socio-economic status is seen as vertical upward mobility.

There are two main types of occupational mobility. The first, intragenerational occupational mobility, refers
to mobility within a single generation. It is measured by comparing the occupational status of an individual at two or more points of time. The second type, i.e., intergenerational occupational mobility refers to mobility between generations and it is measured by comparing the occupational status of sons with that of their fathers.\footnote{22}

It is generally agreed that the rate of social mobility is significantly higher in industrial societies as compared to pre-industrial societies. In the pre-industrial society, a person's status was largely ascribed and there was a limited opportunity for mobility. But with the coming of industrialization, there has been a steady move from ascribed to achieved status, and education plays an important part in this process. In fact, some sociologists argued that there is a close relationship between education and the economic system. They pointed out that expansion of the economies of industrial societies is accompanied by a corresponding expansion in their educational system. This is because of the needs of the industry for skilled and trained manpower which are produced by the educational system.\footnote{23}

The advanced industrial society is characterized by a contraction of the primary and secondary sectors of the economy, and a rapid expansion of the tertiary sector has been producing an increasing demand for clerical, technical,
professional and managerial skills. And the educational system is seen to be reflecting these changes in the economy. According to Halsey and Floud "the educational system bent increasingly to the services of the labour force, acting as a vast apparatus of occupational recruitment and training."24 Moreover, the economies of advanced industrial societies are "dependent to an unprecedented extent on the results of scientific research, on the supply of skilled and responsible manpower, and consequently on the efficiency of the educational system."25

Thus, educational qualification became one of the most important criteria for the allocation of individual to occupational statuses. The higher the educational qualification of an individual, the more the chances of achieving a higher occupational status. Moreover, since a high level of educational qualification is usually an essential requirement for high technical and managerial positions, only those having high educational attainment are able to achieve this status. Whereas, a person with a low educational attainment do not have any chance to attain these prestigious positions. Therefore, a person's status in the society has become largely determined by his educational attainment.

This view has been supported by the findings of A.H. Halsey.26 Halsey found that the relationship between
education and an individual's occupational status is rising among the lower age groups as compared to the older ones. At the same time he also found that the effects of father's occupational status upon the son's educational attainment is also rising for the younger generation. He, therefore, concludes that education is increasingly the mediator of the transmission of status between generations. Privilege is passed on from generation to generation through the educational system.

Acknowledging the close linkages between education and occupational status, leaders of the modern democratic nations look upon education as an equalizing agent for the removal of the traditional social inequalities. It is believed that equal educational opportunity for all sections of the society can create a more equal and just society. In particular, education is seen as an important factor for the upliftment of the poor and the underprivileged sections of the society. As a result, many nations have adopted the policy of compensatory education for the benefit of the socially deprived groups. The Government of India, after attainment of independence and consequential adoption of welfare state policy, has also made special programmes for the educational development of her more deprived population namely, the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections. It is hoped that education will eventually
minimise the inequalities that exist between the various social groups.

TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AMONG THE TRIBES

Education broadly refers to the method by which a society attempts to direct and accelerate the learning process of its members. Education can be formal, non-formal or informal. Formal education is provided through the school system with the help of a well-defined curriculum. Non-formal education is provided through defined course content in the non-formal education centres and adult education centres. Whereas, informal education emanates from a person's own participation and experience in the social activities of the family and the community.

The present study takes into account the formal system of education among the tribes.

Formal education among the tribal people is of a recent phenomenon. This fact can be seen in the sense that some social scientists had accepted 'the absence of written language' as one of the main characteristics of a tribal society. In the traditional tribal society there is no formal system of education. Knowledge is being imparted through contact and participation in the domestic, social and religious life of the people.
Among certain tribal societies there have been some forms of institutions which have been imparting education to the tribal children and youth. These are the youth dormitories or village dormitories. The dormitories served the purpose of educating the younger generation about the norms and values of the tribal life. It is a training centre for giving instruction in religious, socio-economic and political-administrative spheres of their life.\textsuperscript{31} According to Griegson, "it is a training centre for both sexes, in conjugal and social duties and the lore of the clan."\textsuperscript{32} Some important examples of such dormitories are the 'Ghotul' of the Muria tribe in Bastar, the 'Dhumkuria' of the Oraon tribe in Bihar, and the 'Morung' of the Naga tribes in Nagaland.

The Muria's 'Ghotul' was one of the most well-organized youth dormitories found among the Indian tribes. The Muria boys and girls entered the 'Ghotul' at the age of six or seven and remained there until their marriage. Elwin stated that, "In the Ghotul the children are taught lessons in cleanliness, discipline and hard work that remain with them throughout their lives. They are taught to take pride in their appearance, to respect themselves and their elders; above all, they are taught the spirit of service."\textsuperscript{33} Similarly, the 'Dhumkuria' of the Oraon tribe was also meant for both boys and girls. According to Roy, the Dhumkuria
was "a useful seminary for training young men in their social and other duties." The Naga's 'Morung', unlike the Ghotul and Dhumkuria, was meant only for the men. Women were usually not allowed to enter it. The 'Morung' was a semi-military barrack type and was connected with war, hunting and magic. The young boys were taught the art of warfare and hunting under strict discipline. According to Mills, the Morung takes the place of the father as a disciplinarian.

These youth dormitories played an important role in socialization and learning in the traditional tribal society. Prior to the introduction of formal school system, the dormitories served the purpose of educating the tribal children in the customs and traditions which enable them to live a life suited to their environment. Through socialization, the children were trained and prepared for their future role as adult members. The importance of the youth dormitories as a training centre can be seen in the fact that tribes having this system are better organized than those without. However, due to modernization and increasing contact with other societies, most of the tribals have now abandoned the dormitory system.
FORMAL EDUCATION IN POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIA

Formal education was first introduced among the tribals of India during the nineteenth century. The Christian missionaries played an important role in the propagation of formal education among the tribals. They were the pioneers in tribal education in many parts of the country. Especially in the north eastern region, the Christian missionaries were the chief agents of exploration, establishment and expansion of education among the tribals as well as the non-tribals of the area. They made significant literary contribution to Assamese, Garo, Mizo, Mikir and different Naga languages. They encouraged education in regional languages and also provided facilities for English education. It is through the initial efforts of the missionaries that education has made its first impact on many tribal societies.

After independence, the Government of India also began to lay great emphasis on the educational development of the tribals. This is because education has been accepted as one of the key factors for the development, not only of the tribals, but also of the other communities. The Indian policy makers saw education as an instrument for economic,
political and social change and development. According to the 'National Policy on Education 1986', "Education develops manpower for different levels of the economy. It is also the substrate on which research and development flourish, being the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance. In sum, education is a unique investment in the present and the future."38

The new education policy also lays special emphasis on the removal of disparities and the equalization of educational opportunity for all sections of the society. For this, special attention has been given to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality due to traditions -such as the women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections. The ultimate goal of the policy is to bring the different sections of the society at par with each other.39

As a result of the various programmes made by the government of India, there has been considerable progress in the education of tribals after independence. The progress of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes and other communities between 1961 and 1981 is given in Table 1.1. It can be seen from the table that the literacy rate of the Scheduled
TABLE 1.1

Progress of Literacy Among the Scheduled Tribes and Other Communities during 1961-81

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Literacy Rates</th>
<th>Growth Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>29.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>11.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>14.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC/ST</td>
<td>29.91</td>
<td>33.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Tribes had increased from 8.51 per cent in 1961 to 11.29 per cent in 1971, which further increased to 16.35 per cent in 1981. This indicates a growth rate of 32.00 per cent and 44.82 per cent during 1961-71 and 1971-81 respectively (which is higher than the growth rate for the general population as well as the non-SC/ST communities).

However, when seen in the context of the wider society, the Scheduled Tribes have lagged behind all other communities - including the Scheduled Castes who are also a traditionally deprived group of the Indian society. Moreover, the gap between the Scheduled Tribes and the non-
Scheduled Caste/Tribes communities has widened despite the higher growth rate of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes (i.e. it has increased from 19.37 per cent in 1961 to 24.95 per cent in 1981).

Further, the development of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes has not been the same for all communities. It varies greatly from region to region and within a region from state to state. From Table 1.2, it can be seen that literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes in the north-eastern region is much higher than that in the central region. As for instance, during 1981, the literacy rate for Scheduled Tribes in the central region varied from 7.82 per cent in Andhra Pradesh to 13.96 in Orissa. Whereas, in the north-

### TABLE 1.2

**Inter-Regional Disparity in the Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribes (1981)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Region</th>
<th>North-Eastern Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Literacy Rate (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>7.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>10.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>13.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

eastern region it was as high as 59.63 per cent in Mizoram and 39.74 per cent in Manipur (which, in fact, is higher than that of the national average for the total population). Therefore, the literacy rate of the Scheduled Tribes at the national level may not really reflect the true situation of all the different tribes of the country.

Regarding enrolment too, there has been some improvement in the situation of the Scheduled Tribes during the last two or three decades. Table 1.3 gives a comparison of the enrolment of tribal students during 1960-61 and 1988-89. It is evident from the table that the proportion of Scheduled Tribes at the various stages of education had increased during the given period (with the exception of vocational/technical education where it had decreased from 5.3 per cent in 1960-61 to 3.4 per cent in 1988-89). It is also interesting to note that the extent of coverage for Scheduled Tribes in primary stage had crossed hundred per cent during 1988-89. This indicates that the enrolment rate of tribals in the primary level of education is better than that of the general population. However, the coverage for Scheduled Tribes drastically declines from the middle stage (i.e. 61.7) and is less than fifty in the High/Higher secondary stage. The coverage of Scheduled Tribes is
## TABLE 1.3

### Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes at Different Stages of Education During 1960-61 and 1988-89

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>% Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes</th>
<th>Extent of Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High/Higher Secondary</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational/Technical Schools</td>
<td>5.3*</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Higher Education</td>
<td>1.0*</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Education</td>
<td>0.7*</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data are for 1964-65.

Note: The extent of coverage for 1988-89 are calculated on the basis of the tribal population during 1981 census.

Source: (i) *Education in India 1960-61, vol. I.*
(ii) *Progress of Education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1964-65.*
(iii) *Selected Educational Statistics, 1988-89, Table-VIII, pp.36-45.*

particularly low in the professional and general higher education (i.e., it is 22.8 and 22.9 in the former and latter respectively). This implies that despite high enrolment rate at the primary stage, the drop out rate is very high among the Scheduled Tribes and that they are still
far behind the other communities regarding higher education.

In other words, it may be said that the educational situation of the Scheduled Tribes today is much better than what it was twenty or thirty years ago. But they still have to go a long way to attain parity with the other communities.

If education is accepted as an instrument for socio-economic development, the development of education among the tribals is also expected to have a corresponding impact on their socio-economic condition. Indeed, the spread of education among the tribals has begun to have its impact on their socio-economic structure. Many educated tribals had left their traditional agricultural and allied occupations and moved to urban and industrial areas for white-collar jobs in public and private enterprises and business. The policy of reservation also helps the tribals in getting employment in the government services. As a consequence, the representation of Scheduled Tribes in the Government services has been gradually improving from year to year. For instance, the representation of Scheduled Tribes in group 'A' services under the union government had increased from 0.27 per cent in 1965 to 0.97 per cent in 1981, and in group B services from 0.34 per cent to 1.10 per cent during the same period. Similarly, the representation of Scheduled Tribes in group 'C' and 'D' had also increased from 1.14 to
3.47 per cent and 3.39 to 4.31 per cent respectively during 1965 and 1981.\textsuperscript{42} These figures indicate that despite the gradual increase in the number of tribal employees, their representation in the various services under the Union Government is still very small relative to their actual strength in the total population (the population of Scheduled Tribes in 1981 was about 7.85 per cent to the total population). Moreover, the majority of tribal employees are concentrated in the low status categories of group 'C' and 'D' services, and their representation is particularly low in Group 'A' and 'B' services which entails higher socio-economic status.\textsuperscript{43}

Hence, in the light of the above discussion, it would be worthwhile to have a closer examination of the existing educational situation of the tribals and see as to what extent education has helped them to improve their occupational status.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study will make an attempt to examine the educational situation of the Hmar tribe in Manipur. It will also examine whether education has provided occupational mobility among the Hmars. That is to say, whether a shift from traditional occupations to occupations in the modern economic sector is taking place among the Hmars who have
availed educational opportunities. Taking the criterion of equality as a central point, an attempt will be made to examine whether there is inequality of educational opportunity among the different section of the Hmar society. Finally, keeping in mind the disparity that exists between the sexes in the Indian society, this study will also try to highlight the extent of male-female inequality among the Hmars on the basis of education and occupational mobility. Hence, the main questions are:

(1) How far does education influence occupational mobility among the Hmars?

(2) Do all sections of the Hmar society have an equal access to educational facilities? If not, who are the deprived groups and who are the more advantaged groups?

(3) Is there male-female inequality among the Hmars? If so, to what extent do the Hmar women lag behind the Hmar men in terms of education and occupational mobility?

Inequality of Educational Opportunity

Inequality of educational opportunity refers to the differential utilization of educational facilities by the different sections of the society. Educational inequality may be of various kinds. It may be that of unequal 'access' to educational facilities or that of unequal 'treatment', or
unequal 'output' or achievement within the educational mainstream.

Tyler (1977) identified six different types of educational inequalities. According to him, the first kind of inequality is that of 'achievement', as shown in different levels of competence or skill in school subjects. The second refers to inequality in family 'background' which may be related to the neighbourhood, father's occupation, the region, or an ethnic group. The third refers to inequality in 'aptitude' or 'ability', that is of potential for learning. While the fourth is that of inequality in the 'school environment' which refers to the type of teaching, facilities or curriculum that the school offers.44

The last two types of inequality are concerned with the outcome of education. The first one is concerned with unequal 'credentials' which are indicated by the level and quality of examination results. While the last one is concerned with inequality in 'life chances' - particularly that of income and status - which are influenced by the type, quality and duration of schooling one has received.45

It is common knowledge that the spread of education is not the same for all sections of the society. Certain groups have been getting relative educational advantages over the others. This problem of educational inequality
between social groups has been a matter of sociological concern since long, and numerous studies have been carried out in this regard. For instance, Boudon (1974) brings together a set of data from Europe and the United States to calculate the relative educational advantages of children from upper class families. He found that in the United States, the chances of upper-class children attending college are about three and a half times greater than those of lower-class children. In Britain, the relative upper-class advantage is about seven times greater than that of lower-class children.46

According to Boudon, inequality of educational opportunity is produced by a 'two-component process'. The first component - i.e. 'the primary effects of stratification' - involves cultural differences between social class which are produced by the stratification system. He argues that differences in values and attitudes between social classes produce inequality of educational opportunity. However, he said that the 'secondary effects of stratification' which stem from a person's position in the social structure is more important than the 'primary effects'. Even if there were no sub-cultural differences between classes, the very fact that people start at different positions in the class system will produce inequality of educational opportunity.47
Coleman (1966) also brings to light the educational inequality that exists among the different social groups in U.S.A. According to him, the type of school facilities have relatively little effect on student achievement. It is the family background that leads to differential educational achievement among school children. The influence of family background and home environment on educational achievement has also been highlighted by other sociologists such as Douglas (1964), Bernstein (1961), and Jackson and Marsden (1962). They all agreed that the working class children are educationally disadvantaged relative to their middle class peers due to various environmental and socio-economic factors.

In India, due to historical and sociological reasons, there has been tremendous educational inequality among the different sections of the society. The tribals who constitute the deprived section of the country's population are at the bottom of the educational hierarchy. Even within the tribal society, there exists an inequality among the different sections. It has been found that the economically better-off sections are monopolizing the educational facilities provided by the government, while the poorer tribals are unable to avail of these facilities. In this
context, the present research will study inequality of educational opportunity among the Hmar tribe on the basis of:

- Differential access to educational opportunities - i.e. differential enrolment of children in the school going age group by each section of the Hmar society.

- Differential level of achievement within the educational mainstream i.e. (i) enrolment of members for higher studies and (2) levels of education attained by the adult members.

Objectives

The main objectives are:

1. To examine the growth and expansion of education among the Hmars.

2. To examine inequality of educational opportunity between different sections of the Hmar society.

3. To see as to what extent education has influenced occupational mobility among the Hmars.

4. To examine inequality in terms of education as well as occupation.
Sample

The sample consists of three Hmar dominated villages in Manipur South District. Keeping in mind their differential exposure to their surrounding environment, one village (Sielmat) is selected from the urban area, Saidan from the urban periphery and Pherzawl as a relatively isolated village.

Methodology and Tools

A village survey was first conducted in the three sample villages during the later part of 1989. The topic covered in this survey was mostly on the socio-economic condition of the villagers as a whole. A more intensive field work was conducted in the three villages in the early part of 1990. During this time, an attempt was made to contact all the heads of households. Those who could not be contacted after two or three visits were not included in the sample study. The final sample includes 320 households. The head of household of each of the 320 sample households were interviewed with the help of both closed and open ended questionnaires. The questionnaire focuses on the education and occupational background of the respondents (i.e. heads of households) and that of their family members (See Appendix A).
Organization of Chapters

This study will be broadly divided into seven chapters. Introduction forms the first chapter. Second chapter presents a review of literature on tribal education.

Chapter three provides an outline of the educational and economic situation of Manipur. It gives an account of the Scheduled Tribes in Manipur and also describes the socio-economic background of the Hmar tribe.

Chapter four provides the profile of the sample villages and the respondents. Chapter five examines inequality of educational opportunity among the different sections of the Hmar society.

Chapter six deals with education and occupational mobility, while chapter seven examines male-female inequality in terms of education and occupation. Chapter eight gives the summary and the conclusions.
NOTES


4. See the meaning of 'Tribe' as defined in the Oxford Dictionary.


9. For instance, see S.C. Dube 1977, Tribal Heritage of India (IAAS, Delhi), and T.B. Naik, op.cit.


20. Sorokin, op.cit


22. Sorokin, op.cit.

23. For example, see A.H. Halsey and F. Floud, 1969, Education Economy and Society (Free Press, New York).

24. ibid., p.2.

25. ibid., p.1.


29. For example, see the definition of 'tribe' by Beteille and Lewis given above.


36. For instance, Parry 1932, observed that the Lushei tribe who have a dormitory system are better organized than the Lakhers who do not have dormitory, *The Lakhers* (London).


39. *ibid.*

40. The Extent of Coverage of Scheduled Tribes is defined as follows:

\[
\% \text{ enrollment of STs to total enrollment} \\
\times 100 \\
\% \text{ of STs population to total population}
\]


42. *Report of the Commission of SCs and STs, 1980-81*, (Third Report), (Govt. of India, New Delhi).


45. ibid.


47. ibid.

