Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The constitution makers of India envisaged a reordering of their society through the abolition of 'untouchability', a practice rooted in the social and religious life of India. The number of persons affected by this change ranges from fifteen to twenty per cent of the total population that reached the 600 million mark in the seventies.

A variety of terms have been coined over the years to describe this segment of Indian society. Isaacs uses the term 'ex-untouchables' to characterize it because untouchability has been abolished in India by law and many untouchables have been able to rise in social status in Indian society. The British Census Commissioners devised the category of 'Exterior Castes' for Census purposes, while programmes developed to improve the untouchables' lot in life, often, referred to them as 'Depressed Castes'. Gandhi introduced the term 'Harijan' (children of God) in an attempt to avoid the disparaging connotation of such terms as were widely used in daily life. The variety of terms used to designate this segment of Indian society reflects the diversified nature of untouchability as a social and cultural phenomenon and the diversity of groups subsumed under such labels.

Definitions of untouchability are numerous depending

upon the context, but there is a general understanding that
untouchability is a stigma attached to certain people because
of their impure state. As a stigma 'it can never be washed
away by rite, dispensation or individual achievement, its use
is connected with the notion that pollution associated with the
lowest castes is so deep that their touch and proximity must
be avoided'. Defined in behavioural terms, untouchability
refers to a set of practices followed by the caste Hindus to
protect themselves from the pollution conveyed by the untouch-
able.

Untouchability was an important aspect of inter-caste
relations in the traditional village caste system. This was
evident in the occupational specialization, especially for
tasks requiring purity or entailing pollution. There was also
a fairly consensual hierarchical placement of caste groups,
referring especially to the purity-pollution level of the
caste's hereditary occupation to justify its specific rank.
The greater the distance between caste groups, the less the
inter-action permitted between their members. Differential civil
rights excluded the untouchables from residence in particular
areas, worship in high caste temples and the use of high caste

2 Lelab Dushkin, "Scheduled Caste Politics", in
Michael J. Mahar, The Untouchables in Contemporary
India. Tuscan: University of Arizona Press, 1972,
p. 167.

3 Ibid., p. 167.
wells. The practice of endogamy sustained caste boundaries. This meant that marriages were usually restricted to one's caste group.

Although the primary meaning of 'untouchability' is behavioural, evinced in intercaste relations, it is Hinduism that confers moral legitimacy and sacred significance on pollution and hereditary caste hierarchy. Sogule, writing on the caste system, lays major stress on the pollution principle as the basis of hierarchy. He writes, "The common basis is the opposition of pure and impure on the professional level, the specialization of the occupations relevant to the opposition, and that the conceptual reality of the system lies in this opposition and not in the groups which it opposes". Dumont and Pocock point out, "the fear of pollution governs social relations, and hereditary specialization, hierarchical organization and reciprocal repulsion lend a uniqueness to the caste system".

The concern with ritual pollution is not only a reflection of social stratification and the position an untouchable occupies in it, but it is a part of a configuration of 'cultural themes' which sanction the practice of untouchability and account

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6 Morris Opler, "North Indian Themes - Caste and Untouchability", in Michael J. Mahar, ed., The Untouchables in Contemporary India, Tuscan: University of Arizona Press, 1972, pp. 3-16.
II

The concept, notion and practice of pollution are extremely crucial in the determination of ritual rank. But mere ritual ranking is not adequate. The concern with pollution has served to keep the untouchables in an inferior economic and political position. The untouchables owe their characteristic position in Indian society not only to the stigma of pollution they carry but also to their material deprivation and lack of power, thereby drawing a distinction between the ritual and the secular status of the caste concerned.

It is necessary to draw such contrasts if one is to understand the implications it has on social mobility among the Scheduled Castes. In fact an awareness of this distinction has led to the view that the Indian Caste system is subject to dynamic and internal group mobility. One reason why caste was viewed as a static system of stratification was that the possi-

7 Morris Opler has referred to these themes in the North Indian context as involving an inclination for the whole to break into smaller distinct and separate units that are graded. The concern over ritual purity; the ascendency of the male principle which prevents competition (between the principle which prevents competition) between the principles of caste and sex; the precedence of the close kin group over the individual, inhibiting him to strike out for himself across caste lines. For Opler, untouchability is only an extension of caste which must be examined in the light of culturally pervasive themes rather than only in terms of the system of social stratification.

8 These developments have been summarized by Bernard Barler, "Social Mobility in Hindu India", in James Silverberg, ed., Social Mobility in the Caste System in India. The Hague: Comparative Studies in Society and History, Supplement J, Mouton.
bility of individuals being ranked along several dimensions or that they may rank high along one dimension while occupying a lower rank along another, was ignored. It was held that there was no discrepancy between an individual's position in the ritual and secular caste dimensions and thus no alteration of the positions of the individual was possible.

Recent studies, particularly by social anthropologists, have provided a different perspective on caste mobility. Status is now viewed as both 'ritual' and 'secular'. Ritual behaviour in a number of areas, such as the taking of certain foods, the touching of certain objects, and the rules of marriage, is ranked or evaluated along a scale of purity and pollution. Lelah Dushkin argues that secular status is not a status of the caste as such but an aggregate statistical profile of the class characteristics of the caste members at any one moment in history: their actual distribution of occupation and related roles, their positions of political dominance or dependence, their levels of literacy and education, of wealth, income and debt, their health and living conditions, their individual and family prestige. The norms concerned with ritual status are ascribed by birth and cannot be changed, except in so far as the caste itself can change

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9 Ibid., p. 20.
10 Lelah Dushkin, op. cit., p. 167.
11 Ibid., p. 167.
its position relative to other castes.

Among the secular factors of mobility, greatest attention is given to economic and political status. The economic dimension generally refers to the occupational role of the individual and his kin group. These roles determine a great deal of the behavior of the individual, the respect he and his kin groups get, apart from his caste or ritual status. Oscar Lewis notes that, while the landowners are generally of higher status in Indian villages, it is their position as landowners that is more important than caste membership per se.

The importance of political power as an element of secular status is brought out in M. N. Srinivas' study of the dominant caste in Rampura. According to Srinivas, "A dominant caste because of its economic, numerical and office holding superiority has most power even though it may be lower in caste position than some of the others in the village."

When one's social and economic positions are dependent upon and entailed by the ascriptive caste position, then what obtains in effect is a summation of statuses. Studies show that in traditional India, the Brahmins monopolized education, owned most of the land in the village, exerted great influence in the

12 Ibid., p. 168.
affairs of the village and enjoyed ritual and civil privileges. Conversely, according to Srinivas, "there is a congruence of economic, ritual and political statuses in the case of the untouchables. The untouchables are the most destitute people, the least educated, and the most dependent politically. Even though it is generally held that a low secular status follows from a low status in the caste hierarchy, it is the unequal distribution of economic and political power that sustains the caste system and gives the privileged castes a vested interest in preserving the caste system.

III

The congruence between secular and ritual statuses among the Scheduled Castes is most clearly brought out in the particular association between their occupation and their position as a polluting caste in traditional India. According to one school of thought, the caste system not only prescribes for each person a hereditary occupation but also discourages his attempts to overcome the occupational barriers existing for the group. Many castes were correlated with particular occupations;


for instance, castes such as Chamar, lohar, Shrimpi, Shangi, Chuhra, were also occupational groups. These specialised skills brought small returns and often carried the caste stigma of 'unclean' occupations. But not all Scheduled Castes were occupational groups and certain occupations like agriculture were open to all castes irrespective of whether they belonged to the higher castes or the polluting castes. In fact, a large majority of the Scheduled Castes depend directly on agriculture for their living. According to the 1971 Census, 79.7 per cent of the total workers in the Scheduled Castes communities are engaged in agriculture.

The close association between caste and occupation, which was probably strong during the early development of caste, has in recent times become weak. Data from the Census of India for 1931 reveal that only half of the male workers were engaged in occupations traditionally associated with their castes. Surveys conducted by Gist and Driver also show that a high proportion of the respondents of each caste including the Scheduled

18 India, Government of India, Census of India 1971, Special Tables of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Table C-VIII, Part A, Series 1 of 1975, Delhi: Manager of Publications.


Castes, in their samples deviated occupationally from their fathers.

The correlation between caste and occupation in terms of rigidity on the one hand and flexibility and facility for occupational mobility on the other must be seen in relation to particular caste groups. There is a difference in the degree of correspondence between caste and traditional occupation at various levels of the social hierarchy. Such links have been rigid for the Scheduled Castes who are at the bottom of the caste hierarchy. The norms governing occupations are particularly rigid in the case of the Scheduled Castes.

The Scheduled Castes are sufficiently concerned with their caste/ritual rank to make attempts to raise it but in the eyes of the higher castes these attempts have not markedly changed their relative position in the caste hierarchy. Sanskritization as a means of 'symbolic justification' has seldom worked for the untouchables who are below the ritual barrier of pollution. For example, according to F. O. Bailey, the 90th outcastes of Bisipara despite economic success were unable to overcome the restrictions imposed on their ritual position in the context of


the local hierarchy. The local community is highly resistant to claims to higher ritual status and will grant a higher status only when presented with commensurate resources—wealth or capital or political power. On the other hand, the Bisiyara distillers were able to convert their skill of distilling liquor into cash which was used to buy land. In the absence of appropriate conversion of skills which are thought of, by the local community, as symbols of status, no amount of rise in ritual status can press forward claims to high status.

In Rowe's study the economic variable in social mobility provided a mechanism which allowed the Noniyas to reduce the discrepancy between ritual and economic hierarchies. Scheduled Castes have also resorted to political means to enhance their status. The Jatavs have taken to political means to improve their status. The Jatavs, in Lynch's study, have switched from

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26 Bailey, op. cit.


a rejection of caste mobility through sanskritic behaviour to mobility through political participation. The Jatavs seek their ends through political tactics of pressurizing the government and other castes to enforce the principles of secularism and freedom set down in the Constitution. Universal adult franchise has meant giving a greater voice to each segment of the electorate, and as a result of this there is greater recruitment of Scheduled Castes at various levels. Reservations of constituencies and government posts have created a further demand for mobility.

The lower castes realize that in the absence of power-economic or political, emulation of the higher castes is futile. Hence sanskritization was rarely attempted and was even less frequently successful. It was only when 'power' was more equitably distributed that sanskritization was attempted in order to reduce cultural differences. The Chamars case in part of Aggarwal's study clearly shows that in 1947, when the Chamars were given land by the government they abandoned their traditional occupation and refused the acceptance of food from the Meos of the village; they also began to treat the Bhagnis as more inferior and impure than themselves.

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Factors responsible for a disassociation between caste and occupation among the Scheduled Castes are several, but those that are most often cited are, migration, urbanization, industrialization, factory employment and constitutional changes. Geographic and spatial mobility have been mainly responsible for occupational mobility among Scheduled Castes. An untouchable could not change his occupation within a rural setting. Migration to towns and cities enabled him a certain measure of change in the occupational pattern. Two tendencies in occupational mobility are exhibited by the Scheduled Castes in an urban context. Firstly, castes which have been performing menial tasks tend to discard such jobs in cities upon migration. Very often, those occupations are discarded because they are irrelevant in an urban setting or they are unable to provide a caste with adequate employment. A second trend may be observed in a situation where a Scheduled Caste may not change his traditional occupation because it is not economically profitable for him to do so. This

(also show that sanskritization among the underprivileged has been a common phenomenon in post-independence India. See for example the case of santals in Martin Orans, The Santals: A Tribe in Search of a Great Tradition, Detroit: Wayne State University, 1965; See also Bernard Cohn, "The Changing Status of a Depressed Caste", in Village India: Studies in the Little Community, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1955.


Ibid., p. 203.

See, for example, Owen Lynch, 1969, op. cit., p. 33-35; also see, Sunanda Patwardhan, 1973, op. cit., p. 72-76.

(previous footnote contd.)
trend is aided by fewer and less rigid structural and ritual restrictions that bind a caste to its hereditary occupation in an urban situation. The latter trend shows that the urban situation by itself cannot lead to a disappearance of all traditional occupations. But it is only in the urban area that more shifts from traditional occupations to modern occupations are expected.

 Besides migration and urbanization, constitutional abolition of untouchability in 1965 has been an important factor in the non-operation of sanctions binding an individual or group to a particular occupation. For instance, the higher castes cannot force the lower castes through sacred, moral or legal sanctions to perform polluting occupations. Legal enactments have withdrawn the power of the higher castes to debar the lower castes from doing certain menial tasks. While this is true, and legally there is no stigma attached to any particular profession, many occupations are still inferior, menial and polluting. Sweeping of roads, scavenging, making footwear, and other such roles, continue to be attached to certain caste occupations and performed by those from the untouchable castes themselves. However, the anonymity of an urban background provides the overall social and ideological climate for occupational mobility. The carryover of polluting occupations to cities sometimes is advantageous to the castes concerned because there is not much competition from other castes for whom such occupations are precluded because of pollution they carry.

33 Owen Lynch, op. cit.
The disassociation between caste and occupation among the Scheduled Castes is also brought about by opportunities open to them through industrialization and factory employment. "The sociological essence of the industrial revolution," according to Gould, "was the removal of occupations from the context of kin groups and their relocation in bureaucratic groups". In the urban industrial setting population sorting by occupations could proceed in accordance with 'demonstrated abilities' or "performance qualities". It was in this sense that the state system 'opened up' and allowed for greater social mobility facilitating the movement of people from one occupational role and stratum to another in a system of non-hereditary occupations.

V

Occupational mobility and the growing disassociation between caste and occupation are important features of Scheduled Castes who are under the influence of urbanization and factory employment. Much emphasis has not been given to the importance of education in their occupational mobility. One reason for this could be that it was only after independence in 1947 that Scheduled Castes were being absorbed into institutions of higher education. Secondly, earlier studies on Scheduled Castes concentrated on inter-caste relations in a village where the impact of

education was not greatly felt and the establishment of schools and institutions of higher learning was slow. Furthermore, in village studies attempts to achieve a higher social status were influenced by economic and power relations. Education, in most of these studies, has been cursorily treated, as an outcome of political pressure or movements among the Scheduled Castes. While mobility in the domain of politics and economic success confers immediate gains in status, education is only a means for occupational success (as distinguished from economic success). However access to and success in the realm of education ultimately determine the 'range' of mobility, the degree of mobility gets multiplied with the sanctions of higher education because the opportunities then are of a different order.

The proposition that education leads to greater occupational mobility cannot be of equal validity to all sections in a modernizing country like India. The correlation is even more complex with reference to the former polluting castes: (a) edu-

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cation is often not sufficient in itself to make mobility possible (b) the degree to which mobility is desired by members of subordinate groups cannot be taken for granted but must rather be regarded as problematic. (c) higher castes and upper classes dominate and control institutions of higher learning to the virtual exclusion of the lower castes and classes.

A universal finding of all studies is that access to institutions of higher education is a strong function of socioeconomic background. Several explanations are offered for this. The cost of attending college is more prohibitive for lower class than upper class children regardless of the anticipated utility of acquiring college education. Apart from economic costs there are also social costs, such as undermining kinship ties etc. Evidence from studies of the family origins of persons is presented in Table 1.1. The proportion of persons in higher education whose fathers had college and more education ranges

37 Sunanda Patwardhan, op. cit. For the Mahars the abolition of 'Maharvatan' which rendered them no roots in the village was another factor besides education which was decisive for their occupational mobility.

38 The Mahars, for example, express a positive, conscious desire to education which is not felt or seen among the other Harijan castes. See also Shukla S, "Strategy for Social Change: A Comment", Economic and Political Weekly, 4, 1969, p. 853.

### Table 1.1: Upper class and Caste Dominance in Higher Education in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Father held High occupation</th>
<th>Father had college education</th>
<th>High income</th>
<th>Urban background</th>
<th>High Caste</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. V. Shah (1964)</td>
<td>Male students of M.S. University of Baroda</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>45.6⁺</td>
<td>36.5⁻</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>38% Janias</td>
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<td>26% Patidar</td>
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<td>24% Brahmins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report of the Education</td>
<td>All students entering the IITs (6)</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>2,574</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>58.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission (1966)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rajagopalan and J. Singh</td>
<td>Students entering IIT</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>57.8⁺</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>(1968)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Di Bora (1970)</td>
<td>Students in faculties of Arts, Commerce and Law of Allahabad University</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>53.3</td>
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<td>Source</td>
<td>Study Details</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karuna Ahmad (1974)</td>
<td>Undergraduate women in colleges in Delhi</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>183</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.2%</td>
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<td>97.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharma, B. R. (1976)</td>
<td>Students in all professional institutes in India</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1,674</td>
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<td>58.6%</td>
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<td>69.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. Jayaram (1977)</td>
<td>Higher Professional education in Bangalore</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>344</td>
<td></td>
<td>34.6%</td>
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<td>27.6%</td>
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<td>85.2%</td>
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<td>60.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

+ 'employees' in government industrial corporations and professionals
+ Includes families with one or more members who are graduates
+ Includes high administrative, business, professionals, armed forces
+ The percentage is 63.6 for those respondents who were in relatively more prestigious colleges
+ Includes businessmen, senior government officers, and professionals
+ Includes executives, professionals, landlords, and big businessmen

Source: Compiled from studies mentioned in column 1. Although rigid comparisons may not be possible due to socio-cultural and regional variations, it serves the limited purpose of illustrating upper class and caste dominance of higher educational institutions all over India.
from 36.1 per cent to 68.7 per cent, reflecting variations in populations studied. The occupational origins also indicate that a very high proportion of persons in higher education have fathers who have held high occupations. The range is from 39.2 per cent to 84.6 per cent, again the lower proportions reflect undergraduate levels of higher education. On the other hand status or class stability is greater for persons in higher professional education. Table 1.2 gives evidence from studies of family background of Scheduled Castes in higher education. The proportion of Scheduled Castes in higher education whose fathers had college education ranges from 0.9 per cent to 5.0 per cent. The occupational origins also indicate that a very small proportion of Scheduled Castes in higher education have fathers who have held high occupations. The range is from 13.8 per cent to 25.4 per cent, the higher proportion reflects the more broad ranged 'service' category which includes low status, low income occupations.

Whatever the precise proportion, it is clear that unless one is born into a high socio-economic status family, the prospects for entering higher professional education or even colleges for general education is statistically remote. Studies also indicate that of the remaining positions open to lower socio-economic groups, these are generally filled by members of groups already close to upper class status.

The privileged position of children of upper socio-economic groups summarized in Table 1.1 makes it difficult for children with low socio-economic status to acquire higher education.
### Table: Social Origins of Scheduled Castes in Higher Education in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Father held high occupation</th>
<th>Father had college education</th>
<th>High Income</th>
<th>Urban background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kusum K. Premi (1974)</td>
<td>Institutions of Higher education, Chandigarh,</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>25.4 (service)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men's Polytechnics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suma Chitnis (1975)</td>
<td>Students of 15 colleges in Bombay, ranked from</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>17.0 (officer, businessmen,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more prestigious to less prestigious</td>
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<td>self-employed professionals)</td>
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<tr>
<td>V. P. Shah &amp; Tara Patel (1977)</td>
<td>Post-matric Scheduled caste scholars in Gujarat</td>
<td>1967- 2,511</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>1,618.6</td>
<td>39.8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1971- 5,694</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>1,890.6</td>
<td>47.7</td>
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</tbody>
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contd....
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>18-0</th>
<th>3-0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soma Chitnis</td>
<td>Scheduled Caste high school and college students, all India</td>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>3,253</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheo Kumar Lal</td>
<td>Undergraduate students of faculties of Arts, Commerce and Science in Rajasthan</td>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhu Singh</td>
<td>Employed Scheduled Castes 1978-79 with a minimum of high school education</td>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- *Soma Chitnis' study however shows that 45 per cent of the respondents had fathers who were middle to high school. This as she points out 'supports the impression that education is largely confined to the more privileged among the Scheduled Castes'.

- **This refers to the present study.**

Source: Compiled from Studies mentioned in column 1.
Jayaram who has examined the pattern of 'occupational in breeding' has found that 61.6 per cent of the medical students have a relative who was a doctor or surgeon. In all, 123 students have a total of 323 relatives within 4 degree in the medical profession. In view of 'anticipatory socialization, it is much easier for children and close kinsmen of doctors to seek, pursue and succeed in medical education. They not only draw upon the experience and awareness of their close kin, concerning the steps to entering the medical profession, but also gain later the necessary social and economic support. A. D. King found in his study of 117 students that urban origins, public school education and high family income proved to be of definite advantage to students in the institute under study.

At the micro-level, exclusion of lower castes and classes from institutions of higher education can be studied in the context of selection procedures used by professional institutes. J. R. Sharma found that a disproportionate share of

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40 Jayaram, "Higher education as status stabilizer: Students in 'Bangalore', Contributions to Indian Sociology (NS.), vol. 11, no. 1, 1977.


44 Ibid.
of seats in the IIM (Indian Institute of Management) went to the rich candidates from urban backgrounds despite the fact that there was not much difference in performance between the rich and poor candidates in school and college education. This he attributes to differences in performance in the two written tests—the quantitative and English tests. The tests were conducted in English and therefore proficiency in that language played a decisive role in determining the level of performance in them.

Very few studies have questioned the purpose of higher education. It is taken for granted that the sole purpose of higher education is to provide cognitive and technical training for entry into the job market. However, other products such as values, personalities, ideologies and solidarity have received, by comparison, only scant attention. The assumption that cognitive training is a central function of higher education, including that for the upper class, is plausible but unfortunately remains largely unverified particularly for the Scheduled Castes. Moreover, equally plausible alternative functions of upper class education can be hypothesised, such as the inculcation of upper class values and personality traits and the creation of upper class cohesion. Only through research on these aspects further understanding can be attained of the continuing low educational achievement of Scheduled Castes.

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Change among the Scheduled Castes can only be initiated through the spread of education. I. K. Oommen, while subscribing to the theory of "cumulative causation" as postulated by Gunnar Myrdal, feels that it is nonetheless necessary to locate the strategic point of entry in order to squash the vicious circle of lowliness. Oommen's data shows that education is the most change-prone area and that the spread of education among untouchables is least resisted by the upper castes and hence we must seize upon this favourable factor while planning for social change. Education is by far the most important factor which facilitates the untouchables to go up the economic ladder. To a large majority of middle level Harijans, political activity is unattractive. And even those who do participate in the political process, do so only through the vote and even that is often due to mobilization by outsiders in support of the latter's interest. Their participation in the more potent political acts is low.


47 Some of the reasons for low political activity among the Scheduled Castes are (1) the Harijans are divided into bounded caste groups among whom the struggles for relative status continues. Harijan leader of one caste is not accepted by another Harijan caste group; (2) employment in the government service provides a form of power that can outlast reserved seats in the legislatures; (3) educated untouchables are little concerned with bettering the lot of their less fortunate caste fellows. Their major preoccupation appears to be with meeting the needs of immediate family and kin.

In the absence of any kind of potent political activity among the large majority of the Scheduled Castes, education is an important means through which entry to new occupations can be made. Such occupations are assigned a higher social standing and in some cases are rewarded with higher income as well.

VI

The growth of secular modern education among the Scheduled Castes must be reviewed in the context of their position in the traditional hierarchy and the special relationship of religion with education. They not only occupied positions, at the bottom of the traditional hierarchy but due to the religious and ritual character of education, they were denied access to schools.

During the period of East India Company rule, education was mainly designed for the upper classes while vernacular education was imparted to the lower classes. This led to the continued dominance of upper castes who had access to western education. The officials of the East India Company did not pay any attention to forming schools which could be attended by all sections of the society including the untouchables. A conse-


quence of this was that a number of sectarian, caste and religious educational institutions were set up in the country which were also upper caste dominated. However, in 1857, after a Mahar boy was refused admission to a state-owned institution, the Court of Directors stated that "the educational institutions of Government are intended by us to be open to all classes, and we cannot depart from a principle which is essentially sound and the maintenance of which is of first importance."

The fear that some schools might be deserted by the upper class was felt. In spite of this the state was determined and the Education Commissioner of 1851-52 extended the provision to schools aided from state funds. Yet the students of Scheduled Castes did not come forth in large numbers to join existing schools. This was because Christian Missionaries were encouraged to open separate schools for them. Even the State encouraged separate schools to be opened in areas where these castes were


52 Ibid. "It is not impossible that, in some cases, the enforcement of the principle may be followed by a withdrawal of the scholars but it is sufficient to remark that those persons who object to its practical enforcement will be at liberty to withhold their contribution and apply their funds to the formation of schools on a different basis", p. 176.

53 N. Shary, op. cit., 1924. He writes: 'the earlier effort to introduce any form of education beyond the indigenous system expanded from missionaries, private societies and individuals whether officials or others.
substantial in number and where the facilities were inadequate.

In the meanwhile there was a concerted effort to implement the recommendation of the 1931-32 Education Commission report, abolishing restriction on Scheduled Caste children in state-aided schools. In villages, low caste students were made to sit separately from the upper caste students.

The former princely states made no serious attempts towards the welfare of backward communities. However, some facilities were offered to these communities by the Maharajas of former Travancore, Cochin, Mysore and Baroda states. In these states, work relating to amelioration was entrusted upon some official head, for example, the Registrar of Co-operative Societies (Travancore) or the Director of Public Instructions (Cochin) administrative arrangements were made by setting up separate departments and constituting advisory bodies. Besides this, educational facilities were also provided in the form of fee concessions, scholarships, board grants, organisation and running of schools, grants for collegiate education, etc. In Baroda, separate schools were abolished in 1931 causing much resentment among the caste Hindus. The credit for the high educational standard of Scheduled Castes in Kerala and former


Laroda states, compared with other states, must go to the Maharajas in the matter of their uplift especially in the field of education. Among the other states, and provinces, Bombay comes first in the matter of ameliorative measures undertaken before independence, for it constituted its Backward Class Department as early as 1931. In Tamil Nadu also, the Commission of Labour was appointed in 1926 to encourage the education of the Backward Class people. However, much of the work for educational development of Scheduled Castes was done by Christian Missions and voluntary organisations. In Bengal the rural Primary Education Bill was passed in 1930. However, the bill was opposed by the members representing caste-Hindus in an attempt to deprive the lower castes and Muslims from the benefits of literacy. As a consequence of acute forms of discrimination, the Scheduled Castes could not make much headway with regard to literacy.

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56 Ibid.
57 Ibid. Among the voluntary organisations in Tamil Nadu, the services of the following are mentioned in the Report: Depressed Classes Union; The Poor School Society; The Social Services League; Arcot Mission; and The Depressed Classes Conference. The Arcot Mission started an Agricultural School for the benefit of Scheduled Caste children. The organisations were formed and conducted by M. C. Sajja, Rao Sahadur Kothamalai Sreenivasan, Swami Sahajananda.
58 According to the 1931 census report, the total Exterior Castes including Scheduled Castes in India, was 5,01,95,770 and of them, only 1.5 per cent were literate. The highest literacy was in Cochin State (357 per mile were literate), followed by Trivandrum (289 per mile were literate) and Baroda (10.3 per cent). The lowest literacy rate was in Jammu and Kashmir (0.5 per cent) and Bihar, Orissa, and Hyderabad and Punjab.
The impact of western humanitarian, liberal and rational ideas stirred several Hindu reform movements beginning about the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1852 Jyotirmo Phule of Pune was the first to challenge the Brahmans by opening a school for non-Brahmins in Pune. The nationalist pressure brought about significant reforms by the British in the Constitution of 1919, i.e., representation to various groups in India through separate electorates and the grant for the first time of some political representation through nomination to various bodies. Hindu nationalist pressure grew with the advent of Gandhi. Gandhi held that rather than being essential to Hinduism, the practice of untouchability was a violation of its basic spirit. During the mid 1920's, Ambedkar appeared on the scene - a leader from the untouchables themselves. In the beginning, he confined his influence to the Mahars but as his influence spread he soon won several concessions to the demands he made for the untouchables. Ambedkar's ideal for the depressed was to raise their educational standard so that they may know their own conditions, have aspirations to rise to the level of the highest Hindu and be in a position to use political power as a means to that end. Ambedkar's


commitment to education as a major means for Untouchable advancement led him to initiate in the 1920's a programme for the creation of hostels for untouchable students. This effort resulted in the development of a system of colleges organised by the People's Education Society founded by Ambedkar in 1946. Another result of the effort of social reformers was that for the first time in 1944, provision was made in the Central Budget for the grant of scholarships for education of Backward communities including Scheduled Castes.

Planned efforts to improve the social condition of the Scheduled Castes were made only after Independence in 1947. The Constitution of Independent India embodied the principles of socialism and equality. One of the directive principles of State Policy in Article 46, holds that '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. The underlying spirit of all these constitutional safeguards is that, the Scheduled Castes and other backward class communities who suffer social injustices and are also socially, economically and educationally backward, shall be brought to the level of the advanced communities.

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61. See Maya Parasmal Committee Report, 1969, op.cit. This grant was restricted to 'British Indian' subjects and annual grant was only Rs.3 lakhs for a period of five years, beginning from 1944-45. During the Five Year period, 2,236 scholarships for study in India and 22 Scholarships for study abroad were awarded to Backward Class students including Scheduled Castes. The total expenditure amounted to 17,41,760.
Constitutional and legal provisions which remove discrimination against the Untouchables and grant them the same legal rights as other citizens, is but one of the three ways in which the government attempts to deal with the problems confronting the Scheduled Castes. There are also general development, welfare programmes to aid landless agricultural labourers and other low income groups which benefit the Scheduled Castes, since, they are found in large numbers in such populations. In these programmes the criteria of eligibility of benefits vary with the kind of benefits involved. To such criteria the third criterion of eligibility - caste membership - protects the Scheduled Castes interests by making other persons ineligible. Because of this protective character, the system is called 'protective discrimination'. The benefits under this system of protective discrimination may be classified under two main types: reservations - applied to political representation, government employment and higher educational admissions - and financial assistance, administered through a wide variety of welfare schemes. In higher education the main educational facilities and privileges are:

(a) Financial assistance in the form of stipend, free tuition, refund of admission and examination fee, book loans, assistance to stay in hostel and free coaching facilities.

(b) Reservation of seats in professional institutions (Engineering and Medicine) for the Scheduled Castes in proportion to their population.

(c) Relaxation in admission criteria where the same are prescribed, i.e., 5 to 10 per cent relaxation at the time of admission.
VII

Increasing number of Untouchables view formal education as the only avenue for upward mobility. The all India enrolment of Scheduled Castes has increased since Independence.

The extent to which this development is due to government scholarship support is difficult to determine as the rapid expansion of institutions for higher education has increased educational opportunities for all strata of society.

Several studies have been carried out in order to show the extent to which Scheduled Castes are aware of educational

62. Total enrolment of Scheduled Castes in various types of recognized educational institutions increased from 49.7 lakhs in 1960-61 to 103.49 lakhs in 1974-75. The girls enrolment included in the total, however, increased from 11.8 lakhs to 30.58 lakhs for the years in consideration.

63. The number of scholarships has increased from 41,922 in 1960-61 to 1,71,794 in 1970-71. The expenditure increased from 167.83 lakhs to 821.00 lakhs in 1970-71.

64. The number of universities increased from 55 in 1963-64 to 95 in 1973-74. The number of colleges increased from 2,111 in 1963-64 to 4,308 in 1973-74. The total enrolment in higher education has registered an average annual compound rate of increase of 10.1 per cent during 1963-64 to 1973-74.

facilities; studies have also demonstrated the differential capacity to utilize government assistance in education. However, the effect of increased educational enrolment and the utilization of educational facilities is little known for want of systematic follow-up studies on what happens to high school and graduates upon completion of their studies. The present study, therefore attempts to track Scheduled Caste students into their careers in order to determine how much occupational mobility has actually occurred through higher education and at what levels of the occupational hierarchy they get incorporated.

66. Vimal P. Shah and Tara Patel, (1977), *Who Goes to College?* Ahmedabad: Rachna Prakshan. See also, Asghar, F. C. & Ashraf, S. (1977), *op. cit.*; Patwardhan, S. (1973), *op. cit.*; Chitnis, S. 'Education of the Scheduled Castes', *Journal of Higher Education*, New Delhi, Vol.1, No.2. Autumn 1975 pp.167-178. For Suma Chitnis, differential capacity to utilize educational facilities is assumed to be related to the privileged few. Patwardhan identifies factors for differential response as being those of political consciousness, urbanisation, nature of caste occupation. Shah and Patel focus on contextual factors as being responsible for a differential capacity of Scheduled Castes belonging to different sub-groups and different districts to utilize government assistance. Total and female literacy, the enrolment of all students in institutions of higher learning, the proportions of urban population among different districts, are factors that explain variance in the utilisation of post-matric scholarships.

67. *India, Government of, Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.* Delhi, Manager of Publications. The progressive representation of Scheduled Castes in relation to the total number of employees in Central Government Services and Public undertakings is estimated. But nowhere is occupational data related to the educational levels of the Scheduled Castes. See also Madhu Singh, *Education and Occupational Mobility among the Scheduled Castes,* Unpublished M.Phil dissertation, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1977.
Occupational mobility: A review of studies in other societies

Sociological researches on social mobility started during the liberal period at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The pioneer lead of this era was taken by P.A. Sorokin. Sorokin, presented a comprehensive detail of the study of social mobility. Taking the intensity (vertical social distance) and generality (number of individuals vertically mobile) of vertical mobility, he made several propositions within the frame of 'social space' - a universe of vertical and horizontal dimensions. However, he proposed to restrict his analysis of social mobility to the shifting of the population along vertical dimensions of economic, political and occupational stratification, within social structures of different heights, profiles and degrees of differentiation.

According to Sorokin, in every society there is a mechanism which controls the process of vertical circulation. 'This control seems to consist in the first place, in testing individuals with respect to their suitableness for the performance of definite social functions; in the second place, in the selection of individuals for a definite social position.'


69. Ibid.
In other words, a stratified society is treated as a collection of individuals with various characteristics, processed by a series of orientation agencies, such as the family and the school. Sorokin reiterates,

The school and the family are the machinery which tests principally the general qualities of individuals necessary for a successful performance of a great many functions. (SIC) It is easy to say that in a perfect society all its members should be placed in such positions as correspond to their abilities. But it is difficult to decide whether one has a definite ability of not, whether he has it in a greater degree than another man. Under such circumstances society had to adopt an indirect criterion for discovering and ascertaining the abilities of its members. One of the most important criterion for this purpose was found in the character and the social state of a family in which an individual was born. Parents who were clever and of high standing were accepted as proof of an offsprings superior intelligence and suitableness for a high social position; Thus arises the institution of inheritance of the social position of the parents by the children. One who is born in a family of high standing deserves to be placed also in a high strata. (SIC) the School is the next agency which restests the 'decisions' of a family. The essential social function of the school is not only to find out whether a pupil has learned a definite part of text book or not, the school is primarily a testing, selecting and distributing agency. The intensity of this function naturally depends on the extent to which the testing and the shifting of individuals is carried out by other institutions and especially by the family.70

Sorokin's paradigmatic approach has greatly influenced 71 later researches on 'equality of social opportunity' (social

70. Ibid.

mobility) as Boudon would put it. The core structure of Boudon's basic model is: fathers of unequal social status produce sons through a family socialization process evidencing inequality in access to educational opportunities; the differentially educated sons.

The field of social mobility has almost come to be defined in terms of the movements of individuals along a single vertical dimension of overall social status, in which a man's status is almost always assessed in terms of the occupation he pursues. Studies have attempted to give a firm empirical foundation to the status of occupations by ascertaining first the esteem in which various occupations are held by a cross-section of the public; then rates of social mobility are established with reference to these 'known' prestige rankings. The first such study was made by D.V. Glass of the London School of Economics. The work of Blau and Duncan may be cited for their socio-economic index of occupational status.

Very briefly, the socio-economic index for an occupation is a single score between 0 to 96, which may be described as a weighted average of (a) the proportion of men in the occupation with incomes above a certain figure, and (b) the proportion of men in the occupation with more than a certain amount of education, the relative weights being determined by (c) the proportion of people who said that the occupation had 'good' or 'excellent' general standing in the community.

Mobility involving only a change in an individual's

72. D.V. Glass, op. cit., 1964
occupational position, has come under severe criticism. Most of these criticism indicate that studies of mobility tend to concentrate on movements in occupational position. This emphasis neglects other dimensions of mobility: movement in economic and/or political power movements in social positions in the community.

According to S.M. Lipset and Hans L. Zetterberg, the more interesting aspects of mobility are connections among various systems of the community; does, for example, an improvement in occupational position inevitably lead to a change in one's relations to others in the community? Many of the dynamic aspects of the effects of mobility upon behavior depend upon the character of such relationships. More recently, K.U. Mayer, argues that a generalized one-dimensional concept of social mobility presupposes either common value orientation in the population to which it is to be applied, or, a stratification system which is organized according to one specific dimension of social inequality and has such a great impact that people have no other choice than to define their life goals and concerns in terms of this structure.


The fact that occupational mobility predominates sociological research should lead us to closely examine it as an indicator of mobility. Firstly, statements on whether mobility is high or low requires criteria to which one can relate mobility. The construction of such criteria involves conceptual and mathematical operations.

In order to study trends in mobility, one must isolate the causes of mobility. J.A. Kahl lists your causes of mobility, these are: (a) Individual mobility. Some people slip down and make room for others to move up. (b) Immigration mobility. Immigrants will cause mobility if they do not enter the system at all levels in proportion to the men already there. (c) Reproductive mobility. The men at the upper levels of the system tend to have small families than those at the lower levels, thus making room at the top. (d) Technological mobility. Technological change is constantly altering the shape of the occupational distribution by creating new jobs at the upper levels. As the industrial system becomes more complex a higher proportion of men work as technicians and

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77. The Goldhamer-Rogoff approach looks at mobility in terms of the opportunities for it offered by the occupational structure. The raw rate of mobility is adjusted for the rate of mobility attributable to changes in the occupational structure. The residual is the mobility which is not due to the exigencies of occupational change. Read, N. Rogoff. Recent Trends in Occupational Mobility. New York: Free Press, 1953; An alternative of this approach has been the more commonly thought out question: how much mobility would one expect of a class group if its sons had access to positions equal to that of the sons of upper groups in societies. See for instance, D.V. Glass, op. cit., 1964, pp.194 ff.

administrators and a lower proportion as unskilled labourers. Lipset and Bandix have also discussed the several processes that have a direct effect on the rate of social mobility: (a) changes in the number of available vacancies; (2) different rates of fertility; (3) changes in the rank accorded to occupations (4) changes in the number of inheritable status positions; and (5) changes in the legal restrictions pertaining to potential opportunities.

Much research on occupational mobility has concentrated on international comparisons. The classic studies under comparative research analysed rates of inter-generational mobility, at different time periods, and in different nations basically by means of the father-son turnover table. The Class study provided the first British national estimate of occupational change between two generations. Lipset and Bandix in analysing comparative international research on social mobility cast doubt on the validity of a number of widely accepted generalizations relating to social mobility: (1) that there has been substantially less mobility in Europe than in the United States (2) that social mobility tends to decline as


80. D.V. Glass, op. cit., 1954 Comparative data may be deemed as benchmarks of mobility, used in viewing rates of mobility in a society of similar or different characteristics. The comparative method approximated and experimental method. Does a particular form and level of economic activity produce higher mobility than another? Does a particular form

Industrial societies mature. The authors support the major thesis that social mobility is an integral aspect of the process of industrialization and that there is relatively little difference in rates of social mobility in the United States and Europe as measured by the shift across the manual-non-manual line. They suggest that it is necessary to differentiate between actual rates of mobility and the prevailing beliefs about the equal or unequal distribution of opportunities. Apparently the same rates of mobility are compatible with quite different subjective appraisals of the available opportunities.

**Issues in Scheduled Caste Occupational Mobility:**

In every society, some occupations are rated as possessing higher status and prestige while others are regarded as lower in-grade. The system of values and pattern of stratification are responsible for creating such grades and hierarchies. In traditional Indian society, for example, most occupations were graded in terms of the purity-pollution entailed in the performance of their tasks. On the other hand occupational status in the modern context is determined by income education.

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For the purposes of an analysis of mobility, the system of social stratification will be viewed as 'the formation of clusters of individual occupational roles into a ranked system of work categories.' A proper study of Indian society and the position of the Scheduled Castes in it can only be possible if the stratification system is viewed in terms of occupational categories. The stratification system is essentially an 'outgrowth of the need to classify a multiplicity of discrete occupational roles which in traditional India tended to be transmitted intergenerationally via the descent system'. This gave the system an ascriptive oriented character where the role and the role occupant tended to be merged into a single qualitative entity. With industrialization and urbanisation, occupational roles are transferred from the context and control of kinship groups to the control of bureaucratically integrated productive groups set in the operational context of factories, administrative enterprises, service enterprises. In these contexts, a distinction is made between the occupant of the role and the role itself.

In the analysis of mobility among the Scheduled Castes there has been a pre-occupation with caste and the 'ritual rank-fixing relationship' to the neglect of occupational


84. Ibid.
categories. The applicability of the former model to the study of social mobility among the scheduled castes in large cities is problematic. Urban stratification takes the individual and not caste as a unit of society and of mobility. When individual scheduled castes pursue their personal advantage by using the institutions of the city, state and nation, such as schools, colleges and administrative posts, they weaken the internal homogeneity, cohesion and solidarity of their castes.

This is not to say that caste is irrelevant to individual mobility in India. Rather it is to say that the functions which caste performs for the individual are becoming fewer.

85. The observed processes of fission and fusion has broken down castes into new sub-units, and there has been at the same time amalgamation of analogous castes for the acquisition of social, educational and political benefits under the system of 'protective discrimination'. Various levels of segmentation within scheduled caste groups are meaningful for different purposes. According to Fardgrae, 'caste as a primordial tie persists in the midst of change, retaining its traditional endogamy as the basic primary unit. However, class divisions assume increasing importance and as occupation becomes more behaviorally distinctive, the bonds of caste are crossed, linking comparable class segments across caste lines on the basis of common occupational interests.' See, R.L. Fardgrave, 'Caste; fission and fusion'. Economic and Political Weekly, 1968, Vol. III, Nos. 26-28, Special No. According to Milton Gordon, each ethnic group may be thought of as being divided into subgroups on the basis of social class and that theoretically each ethnic group might conceivably have the whole spectrum of classes within it, although in practice, some ethnic groups will be found to contain only a partial distribution of social class subgroups. This is what Hollingshead describes when he speaks of the development of 'parallel class structure', within the limits of race, ethnic origins and religion. Milton Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964; August S. Hollingshead, 'Trends in Social Stratification: A Caste Study in American Sociological Review, Vol. XVII, Dec. 1952, p. 682.

and weaker. In sociological terms these new secular institutions are functional alternatives to traditional caste institutions. The process of mobility among the Scheduled Castes must therefore be seen in the total process of change in which the more vital factors are the demand for secular education and employment in urban areas. 'The rewards which the society in an urban situation offers through education and occupational opportunities will therefore increasingly determine the trend in their social mobility'.

Occupational mobility will cover both inter-generational and intra-generational occupational mobility. In inter-generational mobility, an individual's occupational position is compared with that of his father. Inter-generational mobility data are of two kinds: Measures of inter-generational mobility seek to determine the influence of parental standing - occupations...

87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
90. It has to be kept in mind that occupational mobility is only part of social mobility. Sometimes the distinction between occupational mobility and social mobility is ignored. While occupational position correlates to an extent with changes in income, social position and political power, it cannot be taken as a reliable indicator of such changes in all contexts.
91. One issue involved is, at what points to compare the older and younger generations. For the present analysis the 'major' occupation of the father is compared with the son's first and current (held at the time of interview) job.
and education - upon the children's mobility or lack of it.

Inter-generational mobility also refers to occupational distributions and demographic shifts of grouping treated as a whole; what proportion of persons of occupational stratum X, enter occupational stratum Y.

In inter-generational mobility, an individual is compared with himself at another point of his career. Has he moved into a higher or lower position? The first job will be treated as the point at which the individual enters the labour force. The significance of entry into the labour force lies in the variations among men in their life cycles, in the levels of the occupational hierarchy they enter, in the level of educational attainment, in the nature of job involvements (regular, permanent or temporary, part-time or daily wages etc.), in the type of organization they get work in and in the modes through which their jobs are obtained.

'Occupational mobility' will be distinguished from 'occupational deviations'. Even though sons deviate from their father's traditional or non-traditional occupations, they may nevertheless remain within the same occupational class, occupying about the same general social position and perhaps doing similar types of work. To what extent inter-generational

92. Which points in his career should be compared? The first job or the first regular job after completing education, with the end of the career or the height of the career? For the present analysis, first job is compared with the current job.
and intra-generational mobility are taking place between occupational class will be the problem at hand. Similarly, in the case of intra-generational mobility, minor changes in the life-time of an individual's career, may result in movement from, say, a lower divisional clerk to a higher divisional clerk. However, the scale is large when, the individual moves from one occupational class (Clerical) to another (high administrative e.g. section officer).

Occupational mobility is very often taken to be a final product of certain factors, and its processual aspect is ignored. It is fruitful to dissect the process of occupational mobility by decomposing this concept into its constituent elements by examining how social origins (father's occupation) and family structure, influence later occupational status and then proceed to investigate how several antecedent conditions like, level of educational attainments and first job affect later occupational attainment.

The issues of relevance and of research interest are:

(1) To what extent does father's occupational status influence son's level of educational attainments.

(2) What is the correlation of father's occupational status and sons occupational status. This will allow us to assess the extent to which fathers pass on occupational advantage or disadvantage to their sons.

(3) How is social origin as measured by father's occupational status, mediated by educational attainments of sons.

(4) What is the association of son's first job and his current occupational status.
Apart from the socio-economic level as measured by father's occupational status, a man's educational and occupational attainment is affected by the family structure - size of family, his position among his siblings - and, educational climate at home. Sociologists have long asserted that families are the basic units of our stratification system. Family like the school is an orientation agency that processes certain characteristics in individuals. The transformations affected by the family and school, thought of as 'operations' in modern systems theory, can generate new characteristics in individuals e.g. cultural capital. These characteristics then may unstably feed back on occupational status.

The family of origin is one of the few ascriptive groups to which members of society belong and as such it is believed to have consequences throughout one's life. The general position of the family in all known societies is so strategic in the socialization process as to influence the behavior of the individual in or out of the family context forever afterwards. The nature of socialization process determines the complex of motivation and resources needed for

93. Other strategic aspects of family structure are (a) size of membership (b) age composition and relationship of the membership through time (c) composition by sex (d) generational composition (e) number of marital pairs.


occupational mobility. The possibility of giving greater material advantages to a smaller number of children is cited in several studies. Besides material advantages, higher educational and occupational attainments in families with fewer children results in a higher standard of living for them.

The Sample

The Universe of this empirical study are the Scheduled Castes of Delhi. Their total population is 6.35 lakhs. Of these 5.3 lakhs live in urban Delhi (83.4 per cent). Of those living in urban Delhi, 1.9 lakhs are educated till matriculation and above. Since the prime concern of the present research is to investigate what happens to the thousands of Scheduled Castes who have completed high school and have gone "rough college, we have restricted our sample to those who have a minimum of high school education and are employed. Four castes have been selected for the present study because they constitute a high proportion among the Scheduled Caste population and also because they have a sizeable proportion of persons who have a minimum of high/higher secondary school education. The castes are, Chamar, Balmikis, Khatik and Julahes. The four castes selected for the study constitute 60.4 per cent of the total Scheduled Caste population of Delhi, and 64.4 per cent of the total Scheduled Caste persons who are matriculates and above.

Having identified the castes for the empirical study, the respondents were selected on the basis of purposive
sampling. Each caste to be studied constituted a cell and for each cell the quota of respondents was fixed on the basis of the proportion of matriculates and above in their population. From the total of 220 persons interviewed, 11 female respondents were excluded from the final analysis because they did not make up a large category for reliable conclusions to be drawn. The final sample of male employed respondents consisted of 75 Chamar, 68 Balmikis, 34 Khatiks and 35 Julahas.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The selection of respondents was made on the basis of convenience sampling. The respondents were selected largely by use of what is called 'the snow ball technique'. This is a method of contacting respondents where the informal contacts of the respondents interviewed were relied upon to identify new respondents. After an interview, the respondent was asked to name some other Scheduled Caste person belonging to his community who had a minimum of high school education and was also employed.

Plan of the thesis

In this Chapter I have dealt with the importance of studying mobility among the Scheduled Castes in the context of the secular dimensions of education and occupational categories. I have also dealt with the theoretical focus with special reference to issues involved in the study of their occupational mobility.

In the chapter to follow census data etc. has been used to highlight the caste-wise distribution of Scheduled
Castes at various levels of the educational system, their enrolment, their literacy, and the nature of their occupations. Chapter 3 gives the characteristics of the respondent's and their siblings. Chapter 4 pertains to the educational attainment of the respondents and their socio-economic background. Chapter 5 and 6 deal with inter-generational and intra-generational mobility. Chapter 7 gives the extent of influence of family structure and familial educational climate on son's educational and occupational attainment. Chapter 8 with the help of path analysis or regression technique, investigates how socio-economic origins influence later occupational achievements and then proceeds to examine how other antecedent conditions - educational attainments and first job - affect later occupational status. Chapter 9 deals with the question of what happens at the level of values and attitudes to those Scheduled Castes who experience occupational mobility.