CHAPTER-III

ATTITUDE-THE FORMATION AND THE VARIABLES OF RELIGION AND UNTOUCHABILITY

(1) The formation of attitudes-General aspects: To predict the behaviour of people over prolonged period of time and to control their actions, one should know about the process of the formation and change of the attitudes in general.

In this chapter, the factors which determine the development of attitudes, and the resulting pattern of attitudes which we find among individuals and group of individuals shall be examined. Besides, it will be prudent to deal with socioeconomic family characteristics of the students and their background of attitude formation, and also how these factors are correlated with the background of attitude formation amongst college students towards religion and untouchability. Among the determinantion of attitudes are: The individual's wants; Informations received by the individual; Group affiliation and Personality

(a) Want satisfaction and attitude formation:

The individual develops attitudes in order to face different problems in process of satisfying his wants. He develops favourable attitudes towards objects and people that satisfy his wants: final goal objects will be favorably
evaluated (being alive is good), and goal objects will also be seen in a favourable light (The patient has a positive attitude towards his doctor). The individual develops unfavourable attitudes towards objects and persons that block the achievement of his goals" (Krech et al; 1962). For example a student may acquire a favourable attitude towards caste system because like family, caste is an institution which provides a sense of security essential for bearing the responsibilities of life. On the other hand, some students may develop negative attitude towards caste system because it is against social equality.

One important factor in the formation of attitudes is want satisfaction. Not only do attitudes give meaning to the individual's world, they also serve in his attempted achievement of various other goals. "Any given attitude may serve various goals, and different wants can give rise to the same enduring attitude."

"The functional character of attitude is well demonstrated by the manner in which racially prejudiced attitudes reflect the individual's wants having to do with pathological hostility, aggression induced by frustration, socially disapproved goals and activities,
repressed impulses and defense of self” (Krech et al., 1962).

(b) Information and attitude formation: Attitudes are not only developed in the process of want satisfaction, but are also formed by the information which the individual gets. For example a newspaper publishes a series of factual articles against the practice of untouchability and religious intolerance. Through reading these articles, many people learn about evil effects of these practices and may develop a negative attitude towards racial prejudice and religious conservatism, and side by side may also develop a strong positive attitude towards caste equality and secularism.

Information, however, is rarely a determinant of an attitude formation except in the context of other attitudes. New information is frequently used to form attitudes which are congruous with preexisting related attitudes.

Many of the attitudes which people possess are not valid simply because the facts upon which they are based are not sufficient. Thus for example, to know that, on an average, scheduled caste students score low in intelligence tests than the other students, is to know a fact. However, one may not know some of the other essential
facts, such as children of scheduled castes receive very little schooling and educational surroundings at home, where as higher castes are well provided. Lack of knowledge of such related facts can lead to a completely incorrect interpretation of the fact known to the person. The misinterpretation may support his racial prejudice.

1. Sources of informations: In connection with the formation of attitudes major point to be noted is, that why so many of us unite incorrect facts into our attitudes. The answer is that the world in which we live is very complex and rapidly changeable, specially, in respect to the nature of the sources of our facts.

There are two sources of getting facts to form attitudes.

A. Authorities as a source of facts: No single individual alone can collect facts about certain events and objects. One must necessarily depend upon some "experts" to tell him. "For the young child, the experts are mainly his parents, for the students they are his teachers and the writers of his books, for the religious persons they are his priests, ministers, for the scientist they are other specialists in his field. For all individuals the facts are frequently administered by other people as authorities, and the amount of discrepancy between the facts and the
individual's beliefs will be dependent upon the validity of the assertion of the authorities. The authority may be correct, the authority may be honestly mistaken, the authority may deliberately falsify the facts for its own ends" (Krach, Crutchfield and Ballachy, 1962).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study type of families students belonged has also been taken into account and the students were enquired about the nature of the ideas their parents and grand parents have.

B. Inherent traits: The individual does not digest facts as offered by authorities wholly and blindly. There are too many factors which determine what facts will be accepted by the individual. Two of the basic factors are included. Individual's wants and who will and who will not be accepted by the individual as an authority or reliable source of information.

In a study by Cottrell and Eberhart (1948), an attempt was made to discover something about people's source of information about the atomic bomb. Among the finding were the following: (1) The number of sources of information a person had was closely related to his education and income; (2) People with better than average income tended to consider magazines their most trustworthy
source; (3) the poorly informed tended to trust the radio more than the newspapers, whereas the well informed trusted them equally; (4) the radio was trusted because it reported the news quickly and magazines because of their detailed accounts.

In the present study too education is taken as one of the determinants of students attitude towards religion and untouchability.

When the individual finds no facts about object or person (either from authorities or at first hand) for the development of attitudes, he invents "facts".

(ii) The group affiliations and attitude formation: This is an observed fact that the members of a group tend to hold generally similar attitudes.

(a) Group beliefs: "The uniformity in attitudes among the members of a cultural group is due, in part, to the fact that the members of the group come to hold common beliefs about objects, people, events, issues etc. The differences between the attitudes of different culture groups result, in part, from the fact that their beliefs are different" (Bogardus, 1946).
The scheduled caste students, as an example, acquire certain beliefs about the Brahmin caste and their attitudes towards the Brahmin caste rest upon these beliefs. They learn a different set of beliefs about the Brahmin caste and their attitudes will reflect his understanding or knowledge, though it will be different to what the other persons of scheduled caste believe.

(b) Group values: Group values are one of the important determinants of attitudes. The relation between the values of the individuals and attitudes is not a simple one. The degree to which various value systems of the individual shape the development and organization of his attitudes depend upon the centrality of the value systems. For example all the individuals possess the value that all men are equal and should receive equal treatment and equal opportunity. If for an individual, it is central value, his attitudes towards lower groups will be egalitarian. If for him it is not a central value he may show discriminatory attitudes towards the members of the lower caste and other religious groups.

This is why for the purpose of the present study education is taken as one of the major variables. It is an established fact that education broadens the outlook
of the individual and creates higher value of life.

As stated, relation between values and attitudes is not direct and simple one, sometimes same value may give rise to different attitudes among different individuals. "The functional relation between a single value and the attitudes of the individual is influenced by all his cognitions by his wants and by his group affiliations" (Krech et al., 1962).

(c) Group norms: People are rewarded if they act according to the group norms or in other words if they behave correctly and have right attitudes otherwise they meet social disapproval. To conform with the social group norms is great requirement of the society, therefore, attitudes develop according to the group norms.

In this study also, the castes and religions to which the student belong have been taken as two important determinants of attitudes.

(d) Group influences in attitude formation: Primary group has a major role in development of attitudes. Primary groups include face to face groups like families and friends etc.

The membership of the particular group, influences the formation and development of attitudes only so far as individual identifies with it.
In this relation, Stouffer and his associates (1949) advanced the hypothesis "one factor which hardly would have failed to enter to some extent into the judgment of an officer in selecting a man for promotion, was his conformity to the officially approved Military mores". Three different studies were carried out to test this hypothesis. It was found that when the men in the three samples were rank ordered according to their scores on a scale of attitudes of conformity, "the men whose attitudes were most conforming were the men most likely to be promoted subsequently."

As Merton and Kitt (1950) point out, the norms of the enlisted men were often at odds with the official norms of the Army. This means that conformity to official Army norms represented nonconformity to the norms of the group of enlisted men. "The early adoption of the norms of a status groups to which the individual aspires aid the rise of the individual to that group. To anticipate the beliefs and values of the group, one aspires to seem to help one achieve membership in that group. This is the results of the Army studies which were examined. Anticipatory socialization (Merton's term) is a means for moving up in the status system."
For example, the son of labourer who wants to move up to middle class status, will be inclined to accept middle class, values and attitudes, will adopt the outlook of middle class about such objects as sexual practices and political issues.

Lastly, every individual affiliates with a number of groups like social, religious like primary and secondary which may approve many appropriate and inappropriate attitudes. Thus, the effect of group influences on the formation of attitudes is indirect and complex.

Berrien and Bash (1957) have related attitudes to the experiences of membership in the group. A particular compound of attitudes helps the individual belong to the group. Attitudes of the individual are governed by the membership of his group for the following reasons.

(1) The individual's own experience is limited whereas the group teaches a wider vision of beliefs.

(2) The group satisfies some of the individual's need and his attitudes are formed from the groups interaction.

(3) The group membership is indispensable, therefore, the individual has to adopt the beliefs of the group or face expulsion from it.

Various groups have their established pattern of attitudes and individual has to adopt it to get social accommodation.
(iii) **Personality and attitude**: The individual has a tendency to accept those attitudes which suit his **personality**. This is true of many attitudes as ethnocentrism, religious attitudes, political attitudes and attitudes towards foreign affairs. "The personality of the individual, however, is not a perfectly intergrated system and the individual may take over attitudes that are inconsistent or contradictory because of the different teachings of his authorities in different areas, because of conflicting group affiliations, and because of conflicting wants. Man can and does serve many master" (Smith et al., 1956).

Thus, attitudes are shaped by the individual's wants, information, group assignment and personality. Social reformers, politicians and academicians are all interested in knowing how to develop new attitudes and how to strengthen or weaken the existing ones. The present study is also an attempt in this direction.

As a permanent system of behaviour, attitudes remain with the individual and he uses them in solving numerous problems. For example, a boy may acquire a **favourable attitude** towards religion and caste, merely to please his family members or to solve his daily problems or to secure material help or helping other people.
The attitudes of the individuals play a major role in their life adjustments. For example a liberal attitude of the individual towards untouchability and religion may encourage a boy for the inter-caste marriage or to engage in any occupation and to develop religious tolerance.

Tracing the origin of the attitudes is very difficult. It is clear that attitudes are not inherited; they are formulated though some attitudes are established very early in life. By the process of differentiation and integration, specific attitudes are established. The process is directed by experiences with maturity. Gradually, each person the child knows will be associated with some attitude. Attitudes are developed slowly from a series of experiences.

Attitudes develop through the identification process. When the child grows he picks up the attitude of his parents, then he identifies with others such as slightly elder boy, central characters in stories, teachers and others whose behaviour matches with his own self concept.

Emotional effects of certain kind of experiences elicit feelings that become attitudes associated with the idea of pleasantness and unpleasantness and with the tendency to accept or reject.
Through traumatic experiences, a child may develop a permanent negative attitude only after one experience. For example being treated cruelly by caste Hindus, a student of untouchable caste may develop a permanent negative attitude towards that group.

Numerous studies by Psychologists and Sociologists, as stated, have shown most of motivational attitudes are the values and norms of the groups to which he belongs.

David Riesman (1950), a social scientist at Harvard University, had described a personality type which he believes more and more common in the upper middle class of urban America. "What is common to all the other directed people is, that their contemporaries are the source of direction for the individual. This source is of course "externalized" in the sense that dependence on it for guidance in life is implanted early. Of course, it matters very much who these "other" are : whether they are the individual's immediate circle or a higher circle or the anonymous voices of the mass media, whether the individual fears the hostility of chance acquaintances or only of those who 'count'. But his need for approval and direction from others and contemporary others rather than ancestors—goes beyond the reasons that lead most people in any era to care very
much what others think of them. While all people want and need to be liked by some of the people some of the time, it is only the modern other directed types who make this their chief source of direction and chief area of sensitivity approval itself, irrespective of content, becomes at most the unequivocal good in this situation: one makes good when one is approved of. Thus all power, not merely some power, is in the hands of the actual or imaginary approving group, and the child learns from his parent reactions to him that nothing in his character, no possessions he owns, no inheritance of name or talent, no work he has done is valued for itself, but only for its effect on others. Making good becomes at most equivalent to making friends, or at any rate the right kind of friends. To him that hath approval, shall be given more approval" (Riesman, 1950).

Riesman's analysis has been criticized by some Psychologists and Sociologists as an over generalization based on impressionistic data. Two further cautions are in order. First social historians tell us that conformity behavior is not unique to this era or to urban American society. Second, every average has had an effective number of persons who have held and acted on attitudes that are there, in some studies, to indicate the other directedness,
is for some persons an important factor in the development of attitudes.

Individual's attitudes reflect his belief, values and norms. From this study it is concluded that the individual must have the support of likeminded persons.

A study was done by Bogardus (1928) and Hartley (1946) to find out that the uniformity in attitudes among the members of a culture group is due, in part, to the fact that the members of the group come to hold common beliefs about objects, people, events, issues etc.

"The common beliefs of the American people about ethnic and minority groups support common and relatively stable prejudices." A study that demonstrates the communality and stability of the order of preference for ethnic groups among Americans was done by Eugene Hartley (1946), a social Psychologist at the college of the city of New York.

Using a slightly modified form of the Bogardus social-distance scale, Hartley (1946) determined the racial preference of students from eight different colleges and universities chosen because of the diversity of the backgrounds, ethnic stock, socio-economic status, and professional interests of their students. These institutions were Bennington college, Columbia University, college of
the city of New York (Arts), college of the city of New York (Business), Howard University, Princeton University, a state Normal school, and a state teachers college. A comparison of the results obtained from these different groups indicate high agreement in their social distance placements, the correlation coefficients ranging from 0.63 to 0.95. In other words, the boys at Princeton at C.C.N.Y. at Howard University, and at Columbia, display the same pattern of racial preference as do the girls at Bennington, the students at the state normal school and teachers college, and Commercial students at C.C.N.Y.

The stability over time, of the pattern of racial preferences is indicated in Hartley's (1946) comparison of his results with those of Bogardus (1923) obtained about two decades earlier. Bogardus obtained the preference ratings of a sample of 1725 Americans, representing a general cross section of the country for 40 different nationalities and races, including 26 of the groups used in Hartley's study. Hartley has computed that the percentage of students unwilling to admit each of these 26 nationalities to citizenship correlates ($r=0.78$) with the comparable index from the Bogardus study. This is the "American Dilemma" as described by the Swedish social scientist,
Gunnar Myrdal: the American creed of equal opportunity under the law on one hand, the existence of widely spread discriminatory preferences on the other.

It is, thus, clear that the numerous studies by psychologists and sociologists have shown the sources of the attitudes are the values and norms of the group.

(iv) Socialization of the attitudes: Socialization begins early in life. Parents are probably the first socializing force for the child, especially at an early part of a child's life. Parents are extremely influential for their children. The parents are likely to be the only people whom the child trusts. Unquestionably, there at an early age, the attitudes of the parents are adopted almost directly by the child.

As the child becomes older, his range of associations also increases. The child at this stage develops attitudes and behavior similar to those held by his playmates. Later in life, schooling with all the associations made there, has influence on the child's attitude.

"Opportunities and experience are an integral part of socialization and may help to develop attitudes. However, opportunities may not produce the expected attitudes" (Kaluger and Unkovic, 1969). For example, child reared in a
religious atmosphere and forced to worship at an early age, may develop an unfavourable attitude towards religion. The reverse is also true. Similarly, a child reared in an educated and modern family may develop favourable and liberal attitude towards untouchables.

Self and socialization: A most revealing conception of the socialization process is Charles Horton Coley's theory (1964) of the "looking glass self". This three stage process consists of the child's imagining how he appears to others, imagining the others judgement of his appearance and the resulting feeling about his self. This process enables the infant to acquire a concrete and enduring image of the sort of person he is, as others "define" him.

This conception of socialization process is applicable in understanding the interpersonal relationship between lower class and upper class. The study of Sharif, White and Harvey (1955) of the University of Oklahoma, suggests the nature of the interaction between the established status of a person in his group and the reinforcing cues he gets from others who judge him.

The study indicate that high status persons tend to get cues from others that further enhance their high status; low status persons tend to get cues from others that further
depress their low status. The self of a high status person is reflected from a magnifying looking glass, that of a low status person from a reducing looking glass.

Thus, it can be said that in the process of self appraisal by the individual, there is importance of his accurate perception and interpretation of the reactions of other persons towards him.

This factor of determining the interaction process between the members of lower castes and other religions was noted by observation method.

The attitude formation is a very complex system of behaviour and many factors interplay in its formation. "As man in his finite world is repeatedly forced to cope with the same objects, the repeatedly evoked cognitions, feelings, and response dispositions become organized into a unified and enduring system. This entire package of particular beliefs, feelings, and response tendencies is hence forth always there, on the ready, whenever the individual is confronted by the appropriate object. In other words, he now has an attitude toward the object" (Krech et al., 1962).
And as the individual acquires more and more attitudes, he "assimilates" more and more objects in his world. His actions become stereotyped, predictable and consistent and social life becomes possible.

The study of attitude toward religion and untouchability amongst college students, is a subsystem of the entire system of attitude formation. Therefore, for this study in the construction of the scale, background information of attitude formation for each respondent was also obtained such as student's age, sex, education, father's income and membership of the religious group. Other informations about the attitude formation towards religion and untouchability were taken through naturalistic observation and interview technique.

In order to ascertain the extent of correlation needed calculations have been done.

**TABLES OF BACKGROUND INFORMATIONS OF RESPONDENTS**

**Table - 3**

**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO AGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in years</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 to 19</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>44.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 21</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>35.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 and above</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that majority of students are in age group 17 to 19 years followed by age group 19 to 21 years of age.

Table - 4
DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 150 respondents were selected from each sex on the basis of random sampling from the roll call register of the two colleges.

Table - 5
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>91.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the respondents under study were unmarried. Only 26 respondents out of 300 were married and percentage of married respondents was 8.66%.

Table - 6

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.A., B.Sc., B.Com.</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>57.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A., M.Sc., M.Com.</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>42.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed., LL.B. &amp; others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the respondents under study (172 out of 300) were the students of B.A., B.Sc. and the percentage was 57.34%, followed by the number of respondents who were the students of M.A., M.Sc. and M.Com. (percentage 19.66). The rest of the respondents (24) were the students LL.B. and others and their percentage was eight.

Table - 7

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO RELIGION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Religion</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>82.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the total sample selected for this study of majority of the students were Hindu religion, out of 300 respondents Hindus were 82.33%, followed by Muslim 8.34%. Others were Sikhs 6.33% and Christians 3%. Amongst Hindus 14.33% were from the lower castes.

Table - 8

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO MONTHLY INCOME OF THE FAMILY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income groups</th>
<th>No. Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400 to 800</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>42.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>801 to 1200</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>31.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1201 and above</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evident from the table that the distribution of the respondents according to their income has minor variations in each group.

Table - 9

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO FATHER'S/HUSBAND'S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>79.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variations in status and in the standard of living are associated with occupation as measured by income.

From table 9 it is evident that majority i.e. 79.34 percent belong to service class followed by business class who were 13.66% and amongst the rest 5.66% belonged to agriculture group and only 1.34% were engaged in other occupations.

Some data regarding the student's background information of attitude formation is gathered through the observation and interview technique. It was found that 66.66% of the respondents were from nuclear family and only 33.34% respondents were of the joint family. Moreover, only 19% families of the respondents were joint in the sense that their grandparents were living with them. Other points like values and norms of the families of the respondents, their schooling etc. were also enquired.

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