CHAPTER VIII

STAGNATION

From what has been said in the chapters on apparent and clear wastage it follows that there is a considerable number of students who, although prevented by one reason or the other from graduating in the normal period of four years from the faculty of first registration, eventually graduate from the same faculty with a delayed progress of one or more years. This delayed progress is the effect of two factors, failure in the examinations and interruption of studies. In this chapter a study will be made of the extent of stagnation in both the faculties under survey and of the respective influence of failure and interruption in stagnation in college.

Stagnation in the Faculty of Arts

The Arts students who graduated with a delayed progress of one year constitute 18 per cent of the total entry. Broken down by sexes the figures are 17 per cent of the men and 25 per cent of the women who enrolled for the freshmen course. The students who graduated with two years delay constitute 9 per cent of the total entry (9 per cent men and 2 per cent women). And those who graduated
with three years delay were 8 per cent of the total entry (all men). Thus at the time of closing the enquiry 30 per cent of the total entry had graduated with stagnation of one to three years. It should be noted parenthetically that this total is not the arithmetical sum of the partial percentages mentioned as it has been calculated separately for the sake of accuracy. There was an additional 8 per cent students of the total entry still enrolled in the various colleges out of whom some would eventually graduate. Thus the total figures of students who graduate with stagnation could be placed at 35 per cent of the total entry of Arts students. The figures just given show a great difference between sexes. While most of the women who graduate with retarded progress do so in five years, a good number of men take six and even more years to graduate in Arts.

Factors influencing Stagnation in the Faculty of Arts

Failure. Failure in the examinations occurs at every stage of the Arts course. However, the number of failures in the Junior B. A. will not be considered here as only one such failure was reported by the respondents to the questionnaire. Table 63 shows the percentage of students of the total entry who failed in the first attempt in the various examinations of the B. A. course. These
figures are only an approximate calculation, as the data of the questionnaire had to be elaborated as has been done in previous chapters.

TABLE 63

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ENTRY OF ARTS STUDENTS WHO FAILED IN THE FIRST ATTEMPT OF THE VARIOUS EXAMINATIONS HELD IN THE FACULTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cases reported</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Cases reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7.38</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter Arts</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>28.98</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Examination</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>11.70</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many more failures in the Intermediate Examination than in all the others of the Faculty of Arts. The reason for this difference is that during the period of time covered by the enquiry the Inter Arts Examination was the first one conducted by the University, the First Year Examination being still held by the individual colleges. The difference between the sexes is also very noticeable, the rate of failures in Intermediate among women is nearly one half of that of men. But in the degree
examination both the sexes get the same proportion of failures. The difference observed in the F.Y. Examination is worth considering. It is a well-known fact that men freshers do not take studies very seriously and enjoy to the full the freedom of the new life. Women, however, study more seriously only because — as one young man put it — custom does not permit them such freedom of movement as the men enjoy. By the time students have reached the degree examination both sexes seem to take the same interest in studies.

Failure in at least one examination accounts for 72 per cent of the total number of cases of apparent wastage in Arts. The total number of failures take place in the following proportion: first year 24.35 per cent; intermediate 60.26 per cent and degree examination 15.37 per cent. Many students failed a second time either in the same examination or in subsequent examinations thus delaying their progress towards graduation by two years. The total number of these repeated failures occurred in the following proportions: after failure in first year 20.47 per cent; after failure in the intermediate 64.57 per cent and after failure in the degree examination 14.96 per cent of the total second failures. The parallel between these two series of percentages is very striking and it seems to point out that whatever the reasons responsible for the
first failure, they were still at work when the second one occurred.

**Interruption of studies.** Students of the Faculty of Arts interrupt studies at all stages of their college career. Already in the first year, shortly after registration, there occurred 16 cases of interruption among the respondents to the questionnaire. After passing the first year there were again 25 cases and 6 other cases took place after passing the Intermediate Examination. All these interruptions occurred without previous failure. After failure in First Year there were 13 cases and after failure in the Intermediate 32 more cases of interruption. These figures suggest that interruption of studies is independent of performance in studies as the number of cases of interruption both without failure and after failure are approximately equal.

Again, students interrupt studies for one or more years. The questionnaires report cases of interruption in which the period of interruption ranges from one to six years. The numbers of such cases given here in this order from one to six years of interruption are: 25, 20, 15, 7, 4, and 1 cases.

**Relative influence of failure and interruption on Stagnation.** The questionnaires show that of the 501 students
who failed at least once in the examinations 155 (or 30.94 per cent) eventually graduated and that of the 121 cases of interruption 37 (30.57 per cent) also graduated. On the strength of these figures it may be deduced that stagnation in the Faculty of Arts is caused equally by failure and by interruption of studies.

However, the question still remains as to how many of the students who stagnated for one reason or other, and had not yet graduated after three years delay, would eventually do so in the course of time. This question cannot be answered on the basis of the data available. Data covering a longer period of time would be required for this purpose. Some illuminating facts, however, can be obtained if the percentage of clear wastage after failure (31.94 per cent) is compared with the corresponding percentage of clear wastage after interruption (13.22 per cent). From the figures just given it can be concluded that by the time of closing the enquiry a larger number of students who failed had already abandoned studies, thus giving up all hopes of graduating, while a larger number of students who interrupted studies stayed on, presumably to graduate some day.

Stagnation in the Faculty of Commerce

The Faculty of Commerce of the Gujarat University
holds every year in the month of October another examination for the students who either could not appear at the degree examination in March, or had failed in it. Many students avail themselves of this opportunity and graduate. But the immense majority of the students who graduate at this second examination are those who had failed at the previous March examination. Because of their numbers, these students who graduate with only six months' delay have been calculated separately. Otherwise students who graduate in October with a delay of one and half years or longer have been calculated as graduating with a delay of two years or longer, and so on as if they had graduated the following month of March.

The percentage of students graduating with a delay of six months is 10.72 of the total entry. This represents the highest figure of students graduating after stagnation, the students who graduated with one year's delay were 7.63 per cent of the total entry, and those who graduated with two and three years' delay were 8.44 per cent and 3.56 per cent respectively. Adding these figures to those of the students who graduated in the normal progress the total percentage of Commerce students who graduate is found to be over 46 per cent. If it is presumed that more students would eventually graduate with more than three years delay the final figure would be nearly 50 per cent of the
Factors influencing stagnation in the Faculty of Commerce

Failure. Out of the 515 respondents of the Faculty of Commerce 502 (97.48 per cent) reported failure at least once in their college career. These failures are distributed among the various examinations in the following proportion: 18.84 per cent in the first year; 53.40 per cent in the intermediate and 25.24 per cent in the final degree examination. These percentage are based on the total number of respondents, but as nearly all of them, 502 out of 515 respondents, had failed, there seems to be no need to calculate what percentage of the 502 failures had failed in each examination. If these percentages were calculated they would almost coincide with those given above.

A good number of students of this faculty failed a second time either in the same or in other classes. Thus a total of 162 Commerce respondents failed a second time during their college career. 21.60 per cent of these failures occurred after failure in the first year, 53.67 per cent after failure in the intermediate and finally 24.69 per cent after failure in the B. Com. Examination. A comparison between these percentages and those given above reveals a very striking similarity.
The data in the questionnaires show that nearly one half of the students who failed at least once in the B.Com. Examination, graduated later on. The percentage of students who graduated after having failed in the Intermediate and First Year are 11 per cent and 7 per cent respectively.

**Interruption of studies.** Very few Commerce students interrupted their studies. The total number of cases reported was 31. When compared with the number of failures this figure fades into insignificance. For this reason no calculation has been made to find out the influence of interruption on stagnation.

**Comparison of Stagnation in Arts and Commerce**

Stagnation on account of failure is higher in Commerce than in Arts. The respective figures given above are 97.48 per cent in Commerce and 72.07 per cent of the total of apparent wastage in the respective faculties. If the percentages of failures in the various examinations of both the faculties are compared it can be seen that almost the same proportion of failures occur at each one of these examinations of the two faculties.

Arts and Commerce students who stagnated graduate eventually in almost equal proportions. But the percentage of graduates decreases year by year both in Arts and Commerce.
Interruption of studies, which is a very common factor in Arts is rather rare in Commerce. The reasons for this difference would have to be studied in later chapters. It is also interesting to note, that many of the Commerce students who interrupted studies, did so after their transfer to the Faculty of Arts.