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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

I. SCHEDULED CASTES

Scheduled castes are those castes/races which have been or may in future be specified in a list in accordance with Article 341 of our Constitution. The people of these castes are considered outcastes and categorised as untouchables. They remain at the bottom of social hierarchy and have been socially deprived, discriminated and exploited by the upper castes since time immemorial. This is the result of our rigid caste system which divides the Indian society into upper castes and lower castes on the basis of birth. Mythologically, the people of these castes are born impure, culturally they suffer from social disabilities and occupationally they are linked with impure occupation and above all they are exclusively dependent for their survival on the higher castes of the respective villages who have tradition bound attitudes, reflected in the nomenclature, castes etc. The overall lower socio-economic position of the scheduled castes, made the framers of the Constitution, to realize that special attention is urgently required for their development. As a result, some specific provisions have been incorporated in the Constitution to provide social justice to the members of these castes through the policy of protective discrimination. The basic purpose of incorporating these developmental provisions was to change the traditional social structure of our society, which is based upon socio-economic and political inequalities. These special provisions have played an important role in improving the socio-economic conditions and achieving a respectful position to the members of the scheduled caste communities in the society.
Economic growth with social justice has been the major objective of planning process and rural development programmes in India. The government would not only take into account economic goals, but also consider social aspects like providing access to deprived section to participate in the development process. Article 46 of the Indian Constitution imposes the obligation on the government to promote the socio-economic interests of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Both Central and the state governments have implemented various schemes/programmes like Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana, Indira Awaas Yojana and many others for the upliftment of the poor families including scheduled castes that are living below poverty line. Recently, the government has enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2006 to ensure 100 days guaranteed employment to the poor people. In addition to the general programmes for their development, special component plan was introduced during Five-Year Plans to facilitate the monitoring of the development programmes meant for scheduled caste population. The government of India established a National Scheduled Caste Finance and Development Corporation in the year 1989 to provide financial help to the below poverty line members of scheduled castes at the cheaper interest rate to start various income generation activities for their economic development. The government also made efforts to promote education and employment opportunities for the SCs / STs through protective discrimination policies as per the constitutional provisions and through scholarship facilities. Presently, the scheduled castes in India constitute around 16.2 per cent of the total population. They constitute 45.60 per cent of landless agricultural labourers and 20 per cent of the cultivators mostly in the category of small and marginal farmers. Almost one-third of them live below poverty line and do not have access even to the basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter.
They also constitute major part of our labour force and are generally engaged in petty occupations like agriculture labour, construction work, hawking and other low grade jobs. No doubt, since Independence we have made remarkable progress in the fields of science and technology, industrial and infrastructure development. The basic reasons behind their miserable socio-economic conditions are illiteracy, lack of required skill, inequalities in agrarian structure are due to failure of land reforms, lack of income generating assets and ineffective implementation of the welfare schemes. Poverty and social discrimination are the main issues of concern for the scheduled castes presently which need to be given proper attention. Since the early 1990s, there has been greater focus of development, planning towards enhancement of human well-being and reduction in inequities along with growth of per capita income. The concept of well-being would encompass individual attainments in the areas of education, health and amenities like electricity, water supply and sanitation, housing, etc.

Ambedkar had dealt in detail the logic and reasons behind these measures against discrimination and in particular on (a) equal rights, (b) legal safeguards against violation of rights, (c) strategies for fair share and participation, and (d) developmental and empowering measures to compensate for historical exclusion. Ambedkar suggested dual remedies: (i) a set of policies/remedies relating to safeguards against discrimination, and (ii) strategies to overcome deep rooted deprivation caused by historical exclusion and isolation of untouchables. Ambedkar also suggested fundamental measures for addressing the problem of structural inequalities and special developmental measures of equalization, particularly in the spheres of education, and economic empowerment of the historical denial of right to education,
employment and right to property in the past. Ambedkar also suggested constitutional obligations on the State to undertake developmental measures and the participation of depressed classes to influence the Government policies through representation in legislature, executive and public services in the form of reservation policy.

II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTES

The forces of urbanization, social and protective legislations, positive discrimination and other measures taken by the Government, have led to gradual improvement in occupational mobility and living standards over the years, but the living conditions of the majority of Scheduled Castes still continue to show socio-economic backwardness.

Progress during First Five Year Plan (1951-56)

The population of the 779 scheduled castes in India was 498.37 lakhs. This figure does not include backward groups which are not mentioned in the schedule “other backward classes” population was 546 lakhs in 1951. Article 340 of the Constitution has empowered the President to appoint a Commission to determine the conditions of backward groups not included in the schedule of castes who could be considered to be socially, economically and educationally backward. Untouchability, being an age-old institution, has taken roots in the psychology and social structure of certain communities. Its eradication is incomplete so long as it receives a mental recognition and persists indirectly in some form in the social structure. A four fold programme is, therefore, necessary, viz., (i) removal of untouchability by law; (2) removal by persuasive and educative processes through social education; (3) the practice of democratic behaviour in social and recreational life; and (4) opportunities
afforded by the State and private agencies for self-development and expression and for the betterment of health, education, economic life, and living conditions.

The State Governments have been provided a sum of Rs. 10 crore for the benefit of scheduled castes during the period of this plan period. The Central Government has also provided a further sum of Rs. 4 crore for expenditure during the remaining period of the Plan. The general aim is to follow intensive programmes rather than to dissipate the limited resources on loosely conducted activities over a wide area. Provision is made for the more liberal disbursement of money under different heads to institutions working in this field, and an effort was made to improve efficiency by channeling expenditure through effective and well-supervised organisations. Since most of the Harijans live in isolated colonies, they offer good scope for the organisation of community centres. Measures for achieving the welfare of the scheduled castes are circumscribed by the amount of available resources.

Progress during Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)

The welfare of Harijans (scheduled castes) was mainly the responsibility of State Governments. The Constitution provides several safeguards for the protection of the interests of scheduled castes. Development programmes for scheduled castes have been formulated with the object of improving their social status and providing them fuller educational and economic opportunities. The Constitution has abolished untouchability and has forbidden its practice in any form. State Governments and All-India voluntary organisations which get help from the Centre have undertaken extensive propaganda and publicity with a view to mobilising public opinion against untouchability. Nevertheless, the practice still persists indirectly in some form or other although on a greatly
reduced and diminishing scale. With the enactment of the Untouchability (Offences) Act and its enforcement from June, 1955 the practice of untouchability has been made a cognisable offence.

In the Second Five Year Plan, Rs. 21.28 crore have been earmarked for the welfare of scheduled castes. Besides this, a sum of Rs. 6.25 crore has been allocated for centrally sponsored schemes which include (1) housing, (2) drinking water supply, (3) economic upliftment and (4) aid to voluntary organizations and publicity for removal of untouchability. The special programmes proposed for Harijans are intended to supplement the general development programmes in each State. The special provisions made in favour of backward classes should be so utilised as to enable them to derive the maximum advantage from general development programmes and to make up as speedily as possible for retarded progress in the past. Departments concerned with the welfare of backward classes in States should make special efforts to get all the other development Departments to consider ways by which their programmes can produce marked impact on the welfare of backward classes. They should utilise the resources available to them so that the general and special programmes operated in a manner complementary to one another.

Progress during Third Five Year Plan (1961-66)

The problems of scheduled castes and other backward classes are essentially those of economically weaker sections of the community, who suffer also in larger or smaller measure from social disabilities. Of the outlay of Rs.114 crores in the Third Plan, provided for the welfare of backward classes, about Rs. 42 crores are intended for schemes of educational development, Rs.47 crore for economic uplift schemes and Rs. 25 crores for health, housing
and other schemes. Development programmes for the welfare of backward classes, for which provision is made in the Five Year Plans, are intended to supplement benefits accruing from programmes of development in different fields such as agriculture, cooperation, irrigation, small industries, communications, education, health, housing, rural water supply and others. One of the principal lessons of the past decade is that for a variety of reasons, in the ordinary course, the weaker sections of the population are not able to secure their fair share of the benefits of provisions made under different heads. To enable them to do so, it is desirable that the normal patterns of assistance should provide, wherever necessary, for an element of special consideration for the weaker sections and, in particular, for the backward classes. The Third Plan provided about Rs. 114 crore for the backward classes sector in total and for SCs development Rs.40 crore had been allocated.

Progress during Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74)

In the Fourth Five Year Plan, the emphasis was on consolidation, improvement and expansion of the services so that the process initiated in the earlier plans is accelerated. The objective of integration with the rest of the society is proposed to be related mainly to the equalisation of opportunities for development. Programmes for the welfare of backward classes should be fully integrated with the development plans of the district which would take into account the physical features and resources, the institutional structure and local conditions and circumstances. The large number of individual schemes in States in the backward classes sector need to be woven together and integrated with general development schemes so that the effort will be of a magnitude which produces an impact. Each State should review its legislative and executive measures for providing house-sites to the members of the
Scheduled Castes and other weaker sections and conferring proprietary rights on homestead land already occupied by them. Those members of the Scheduled Castes who are landless should at least be provided with house sites, if resources do not permit the grant of housing aid to them for construction of houses. Mixed settlement of various communities should be encouraged. Adequate funds for this purpose should be provided in the general sector and the programme of housing in the backward classes sector should be fully integrated with the general village planning and layout.

Progress during Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78)

Before the Sixth Five Year Plan no clear strategy for the economic development of Scheduled Caste emerged notwithstanding the fact that formal decisions were taken for earmarking of outlays in their favour in proportion to their population. The only funds available upto the end of 1979-80 for development of SCs were provided under the Backward Classes sector. It has been reported that only Rs. 433.24 crore were set for the purpose. Of this amount, 48% was spent on educational schemes, another 26% on health, housing, drinking water supply and grants-in-aid to voluntary organizations working amongst SCs and STs. The remaining 26% was spent on economic development schemes for the SCs. In other words, only about Rs. 112.6 crore were spent on economic development of SCs upto the end of 1979-80. Since the members of SCs have been too weak to take initiative, it is the State which has to take remedial measures to correct the society's inbuilt discrimination against them. They are trapped in the circle of deprivation due to caste structure. The SCs are usually engaged in unpleasant and menial jobs. Their basic disabilities stem from their low social status and are inter-related. It is in this segment of society that one finds greater illiteracy, poorer health, poorer
nutrition, poorer housing, as well as exploitation by large land-holders generally the upper and middle level castes, money-lenders, village traders and businessmen. In spite of constitutional directives and a number of legislative and executive measures taken by the Government, the situation of the Scheduled Castes did not improve appreciably during the period prior to Sixth Plan mainly due to lack of economic support.

Progress during Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)

Sixth Five Year Plan is the first plan which gave due emphasis for the development of SCs in terms of Special Component Plan. Special Component Plan is a Sub Plan of the Annual Plan and Five Year Plan targeting the SC population especially the proportion among the people below the poverty line in the country, and about 84% of them live in the rural areas. Any programme for economic development of SCs is a very important part of the poverty-alleviation programme. In the Sixth Five Year Plan, the stress has been given through the new strategy of Special Component Plan on providing adequate economic development. The Special Component Plan has been formulated as a mechanism for channelising a due share of benefits in physical and financial terms from the various programmes of every sector in favour of SCs. Realising the meagerness of the flow of funds to the development of SCs compared to the enormity of the problem, the strategy of Special Component Plan has been evolved for earmarking of outlay for the development of SCs by all the sectors in all States and UTs except those which have no or negligible SC population and by all Central Ministries. Emphasis was on the following:

1. Special Component Plans of the States and Central Ministries (SCP)
2. Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Special Component Plan (SCP)
3. Scheduled Castes Development Corporations in the States (SCDC)
The approach in the matter of development of SC families in the Sixth Plan period has been two-fold cluster approach and saturation approach. Although SC population lives dispersed all over, it is still possible to identify and list out villages in a Block, district and State in the order of one size of the SC population in absolute numbers. In other words, the list should include villages in decreasing order of size of the SC population. Those villages having the largest population of SCs should be at the top in the list. The development programmes should be taken up in that priority. For instance, in the State of Gujarat out of a total of about 18,000 villages nearly 1110 villages have about 50% of the total state population of SCs. Hence, executing the development programme, clusters of villages from these 1100 villages should be selected. Secondly, under saturation approach in every village taken up for development among these, all deserving SC families should be covered under one or another suitable programme or a combination of programmes with all necessary linkages and back-up services.

**Progress during Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)**

The strategy of the Special Component Plan (SCP) for the development of scheduled castes, which is aimed at their socio-economic and educational development and also at improvement in their working and living condition geared up and intensified. The thrust of the programme was on (a) economic development through comprehensive and integrated beneficiary-oriented programmes for individual families and groups of families of scheduled castes for raising their income and enabling them to cross the poverty-line; (b) Basti-oriented schemes so as to bring about a significant and tangible improvement in the working and living conditions, in the inhabitations and Basties of scheduled castes; (c) liberation of scavenging without reduction of income and
employment of the existing municipalized as well as private sanitation workers; (d) educational development so as to remove the lag in education of scheduled castes at every stage; (e) promotion of occupational mobility of the scheduled castes so that the disproportionate burden on them in occupations like agricultural labour and other unpleasant and strenuous work is removed so that human resources are optimally developed and utilized; (f) elimination of exploitative middlemen-layers; (g) special attention to scheduled castes women and children; and (h) administrative and personnel reforms so as to orient personnel and the delivery mechanism and other public institutions towards the scheduled castes, sensitise them to the problems and needs of the scheduled castes and make them efficient and setting up of a beneficiary participant system with all management skills.

The institutions must be strengthened and used as one of the main planks for the economic development of scheduled castes. In the scheduled caste Bastis, essential facilities like drinking water, drainage, street-lighting, link roads, health institutions, primary and adult educational institutions, where lacking will have to be provided on a priority basis. For scheduled caste families in urban areas, self-employment schedules and schemes for endowing them with assets where they are assetless, should be given importance and institutional finance arranged for them. The degrading practice of scavenging should be eliminated as per a time-bound programme during the Seventh Five Year Plan period by adequately intensifying the programme of conversion of dry-latrines into waterborne ones and, at the same time, ensuring that civic sanitation workers ("scavengers") who are in the employment of Municipal Bodies are retained in employment and given alternative work, while private scavengers are provided alternative employment or self-employment by imparting skills wherever necessary. The States should evolve appropriate
administrative structure and personnel policies for development of scheduled castes. At the district level, the Collectors should be made responsible for formulation and implementation of the Special Component Plan. The implementation machinery should be adequately strengthened to make the delivery system effective. Both in formulation and implementational phases, involvement of representatives of beneficiary-participants should be ensured; in this matter, voluntary agencies working for them were encouraged to associate themselves with developmental programmes.

Progress during Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97)

There has to be an intensification of efforts to bridge the gap in the levels of development of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and other sections of the population so that by the turn of the century these disadvantaged sections of the population are brought on par with the rest of the society in all spheres of national endeavour. Problems of access for Scheduled Castes to programmes and services have to be identified and removed. Elimination of exploitation of Scheduled Castes and removal of all forms of oppression of Scheduled Castes must receive high priority. Untouchability, suppression of rights, land alienation, non-payment of minimum wages, and restrictions on right to collect minor forest produce have to be removed to enable these people to avail of the benefits of development efforts. Problems of Scheduled Castes have to be tackled by suitable streamlining of the mechanism of planning and implementation of programmes of Special Component Plan and the schemes specifically targeted for the welfare and development of Scheduled Castes. The strategy of Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes will be reviewed interalia to make them effective instruments of planning to ensure real and tangible flow of benefits to the target group, both individuals and families.
Re-orientation of administrative structure at all levels for functional coordination, integration and effective delivery of services are necessary. It is essential that planning gives full cognizance to these variations and responds to their specific problems and needs and the socio-cultural values of the community through decentralised participatory planning. Alleviation of poverty through sustained employment and generation of incomes is vital so that at least the basic needs are met. National poverty alleviation programmes will have to ensure that the Scheduled Castes are able to derive adequate benefit. Skill development programmes will be necessary to improve their earnings and help them to diversify into trades and occupations. It will also be necessary to provide assistance to Scheduled Castes in the matter of choice of projects, marketing, procurement of raw materials, and introduction of new technologies. Elimination of scavenging and rehabilitation of scavengers was an important programme in the Eighth Plan. Education, training and other incentives will be provided to children of parents so that they can prepare themselves for occupations, which provide better incomes and a higher social status. Occupations like tanning and leather work would be modernised with improved technology to remove the stigma attached to these professions and to produce goods which have a better market. Voluntary organisations can also help in the training of grassroot level workers and in mobilising community resources.

Progress during Ninth Five year Plan (1997-2002)

While the major objective of sub-plans is to ensure the much needed flow of funds and benefits for the welfare and development of these two categories in proportion to their population, which is now 16.5% in respect of SCs and 8.1% in respect of STs, as per the 1991 Census. The plan extends
financial assistance to States and UTs for filling up of the critical gaps in the family based employment-cum-income generation programmes. The flow of funds during the Eighth Plan under Central and State sectors was to the tune of 27.8% respectively against the target of 16.8%. The Special Central Assistance (SCA) to States/UTs, as an additive to Scheduled Caste Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan, was enhanced during the Eighth Plan so as to strengthen the efforts of States in filling up the gaps under the family-based income generation projects. The budget was enhanced from Rs. 930 crore in the Seventh Plan to Rs. 1125 crore in the Eighth Plan, indicating 21 per cent increase. Despite the fact that the strategy of SCP has been in operation for more than fifteen years, they could not influence all those concerned towards the right perspective. Further, lack of effective monitoring to ensure that all these concerned earmark funds under SCP and that the funds received under SCP and SCA to SCP are utilised both effectively and purposefully is another area of concern in this regard.

**Progress during Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07)**

Funds to the extent of Rs. 1,646.00 crore (10.63 per cent) from 14 Ministries/Departments at the Central level and funds to the extent of Rs. 42,308.97 crore (12.20 per cent) from 22 States/UTs are flowing to SCP. This indicates that efforts need to be made to improve the implementation of SCP at both the central and state levels to reach the expected level.

A quick review of the earmarking of funds under SCP brings forth certain issues like - while some Ministries/Departments being regulatory in nature are not able to earmark funds for SCP, some others having activities which are non-divisible in nature, are finding it difficult to earmark funds under SCP. In respect of SCA to SCP, it was observed that non-release of SCA funds on time by the
State Finance Departments to the State/nodal departments of Welfare has been adversely affecting the smooth running of various income generation programmes that are undertaken for SC families living below the poverty line. Such delays are not only affecting the beneficiary families but also causing predicament to the nodal department, as they are not able to make full use of the allocated funds, and finally resulting in unspent funds. The Committee has reviewed formulations of SCP of the 14 Central Ministries / Departments (Agriculture and Cooperation, Environment and Forest, Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation, Rural Development, Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy, Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Water Resources, Public Enterprises, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Sugar and Edible Oils, Drinking Water Supply, Statistics and Programme Implementation, Food Processing and Power) and advised that all the Ministries/Departments should put in special efforts.

Progress during XI Five Year Plan (2007-12)

In the Eleventh Plan, a Commission on Land Reforms were set up which specifically looked into issues of: (i) continued possession and effective uses of land distributed earlier to SCs under various programmes / legislative interventions; and (ii) availability of land for distribution to SCs / STs / landless families. In all these, care will be taken to ensure preferential/joint ownership by women. Special programmes of employment are necessary for increasing employment among SCs. Priority needs to be given to SCs in the Employment Guarantee Scheme with proper monitoring of coverage. The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) on Employment and Unemployment Situation among Social Groups in India in its report (61st Round, July 2004– June 2005) brought out that the proportion of persons in the labour force was the highest

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among STs followed by SCs, OBCs and others. The labour force participation rate for these groups were 51%, 44% and 40%, respectively. Those belonging to the SC communities suffer from very high incidence of poverty and need to be provided with job-oriented training to enable them to have better opportunities. Such training will be provided under the Apprentice Act. There is a need to restructure the schemes so that they become more 'sustainable'. The corporations need to be thoroughly professionalized so that programmes financed by them help develop entrepreneurial skills of the loanees. Based upon the effective performance of the Finance and Development Corporations, the capital available at their disposal may be increased substantially to provide support to SC/ST businesses.

III. PROBLEMS OF SCHEDULED CASTES

The problems of Scheduled Castes are as follows:

a) Problem of untouchables (pollution)

The Scheduled Castes had to perform such unclean occupations as carrying night soil and dead animals, cleaning urinals and cattle shed, washing clothes and performing certain duties at places of cremation. These occupations were treated as polluted or impure. So, people performing these occupations were treated as untouchables. On account of the practice of untouchability traditionally the Scheduled Castes had to suffer from the following disabilities.

1. **No physical contact:** The persons belonging to untouchable Scheduled Castes did not participate in village meeting and worship. They lived in a separate hamlet. The children did not attend school and play with children of higher castes.
2. **Ban on the use of common wells and tanks:** The members belonging to Scheduled Castes were not allowed to use common village wells and tanks for fetching water. They dug separate wells and ponds or depend on the courtesy of some persons.

3. **Prohibited from entering the Temple:** The Scheduled Caste persons were not allowed to enter the temple for offering worship. They were not supposed to hear religious discourses, offer prayer and study religious texts.

4. **Did not receive service from other occupational castes:** Priests, artisan castes, dhobi (washer man) and dom (death ritual performer) did not render their services to the persons of untouchable castes i.e., Scheduled Castes.

5. **Non-acceptance of cooked food:** The food cooked by Scheduled Castes was not accepted by higher castes. Water from the hands of Scheduled Castes was also not acceptable.

6. **Status incongruence and dependence proneness:** Persistence of stigma of untouchability and the Constitutional status of scheduled castes were not congruent. They were dependent upon others for livelihood and survival. The Scheduled Castes were deprived of their economic rights. So they remained poor and dependent upon others.

7. **Material Deprivation:** The Scheduled Castes were not allowed to have house, land, animals, ornaments, etc. So, they were deprived of material possession.
8. **Landlessness:** The Scheduled Castes did not own land for the purpose of residence and agriculture. They lived in huts erected on the land of the master and worked as agricultural labour.

9. **Educational backwardness:** Due to deprivation and poor socio-economic conditions, the Scheduled Castes did not attend school and remained backward educationally. After independence, schools have been thrown open for them. But it has not been possible to enroll all children of SC's in schools.

10. **Employment and Government Service:** After independence, some of them have been employed in government jobs like sweepers, watchman, peons etc. Now, some of them have received higher education and are well placed. But majority of them survive as agricultural labourers, where they are exploited in the payment of wages.

11. **Indebtedness and Bonded labour:** A majority of families of Scheduled Caste are not in a position to take two meals daily. So they have to take loans for the purposes of consumption. Banks do not give them loan for it. They have to take loan from their employers at a high rate of interest. Because of their indebtedness, their inability to pay the capital with interest, they end up their life becoming bonded labourers. They lose freedom of all kinds and receive nominal wages.

12. **Health and Nutrition:** The house of a SCs may not have window, urinal, latrine and drain. They live with cattle in the same room. They throw cow dung, ash and domestic waste in the street. They do not have pucca wells and hand pumps for drinking water. They live in unhygienic conditions. Because of poverty, they are often victims of malnutrition and undernourishment.
13. **Atrocities**: The Scheduled Castes have to face problem of atrocities. Their houses are burnt; they live in poverty, women are subjected to humiliation. They are beaten mercilessly. They are also murdered and killed in groups. These are the forms of atrocities to which they are subjected to when they dare to resist and demand their social, economic or political rights.

IV. **SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

Social transformation is the process by which an individual alters the socially ascribed social status of their parents into a socially achieved status for themselves. It also refers to large scale social change as in cultural reforms or transformations. The first occurs with the individual, the second with the social system. Social transformation focuses on how an individual can alter the class culture to which they feel aligned. One socially transforms in three steps: by associational embracement, associational distancing, and the distinct presentation of self. Social transformation is considered as an interpersonal negotiation because it requires that the individuals have their social position be validated by others for transformation. It is a reciprocal relationship in which people have to be embraced and correctly identified with the cultural expectations of their particular class membership. This is the only way that persons can move from their own ascribed status to a new achieved status. Rural transformation is a multi dimensional phenomenon. It involves not only growth but development with distributive justice. Rural transformation involves a complex process of changes in rural sub-systems and their interaction, leading to desired improvements in rural income and employment opportunities and other aspects of rural life. It should be pertinent to remember that rural transformation cannot be achieved simply by the maximum influx of resources into rural communities without proper response or broadly based community
initiatives of institutional change. An equitable way of social transformation means basic needs of people are placed before predatory pursuits of economic growth. It recognizes that health, well-being, security of people depend upon fair distribution of resources and power. It involves peoples' participation in decision making concerning their lives.

V. **EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

The ultimate function of education as a social institution is what happens to the individual learner and the larger society in the long run as a result of education. It is dependent on the nature and extent of the learner achievement, which is the outcome of the teaching-learning process. Three interrelated individual functions (or what the individual learner is expected to gain from education) can be identified. These are the formation of the social personality, social placement and social mobility. In so far as education provides the individual with the contents of learner achievement that enables her/him to internalise the values, norms and patterns of behaviour institutionalised in society, it contributes to the formation of personality. Learner achievement in knowledge and skills necessary to assume adult roles in family and community, and acquisition of human values and attitudes to be responsible citizens are part of the formation of personality. Social placement refers to assumption of the role of earning or gainful employment. Much of learner achievement, especially at the level of vocational, higher and professional education, is meant to equip an individual for social placement. Social mobility (improvement in one's social position) is attributed to education as its function in so far as education provides an individual with the knowledge, skills and behaviour patterns that are necessary for placement in a higher occupational position. The distinction between the three individual level functions of education is made for analytical purpose. In reality, they all go together and complement one
another. What contributes to social placement continues to remain functional to social mobility. In a real situation, one may find what is functional to personality development to be functional to social placement and social mobility as well, and vice versa. Three interrelated societal level functions, parallel to the individual level functions, are attributed to education. These are social stability, division of labour and social change. The societal level functions of education may be seen as the ultimate outcome of learner achievement, which is the result of the teaching-learning process in the educational system. They are realised when the contents of learner achievement are reflected in the real-life situations of individuals. When human life in society is characterised by the ideologies, values, norms, attitudes and behaviour patterns institutionalised in the society, it contributes to the stability of the society as a whole. Every society expects the educational system to ensure learner achievement in the value and normative systems institutionalised in the society, and exercises different forms of regulation in determining the contents of education. This societal function of education is parallel to the individual function of personality formation. Often the contents of education for social stability and personality formation converge in so far as both these functions are dependent on learner achievement in the same contents of knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviour patterns.

Division of labour, another societal function expected of education, refers to the distribution of the different tasks in society to individuals who are competent to execute them. The different tasks in society require persons of different capabilities. Society expects the educational system to produce an adequate number of qualified human power for filling the positions of different tasks within the society. The educational system, on its part, performs this function when individuals are enabled to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour patterns appropriate for the respective positions. The societal function of division of labour is parallel to the individual function of social
placement. Both these functions flow from the success of the educational institution in its task of producing the quality and quantity of human power required by the society. It is when the individuals get into positions that are commensurate with their educational achievement that the function of education towards the division of labour materialises. The educational system is considered to have the potential to bring about changes in society. In fact, education may be expected to perform this function in certain situations. For instance, today developing societies rely heavily on education as an agent of social development (social change to a desired goal). It may seem paradoxical to speak of social stability and social change as functions of education. When new values, ideologies, attitudes and behaviour patterns, which are consonant with the social order that the society aspires for as more desirable, are successfully inculcated, the educational system performs its function towards social change. The societal function of social change, transformation at the societal level, is parallel to the individual function of social mobility, alteration in the social position of the individual. Large-scale social mobility of individuals belonging to certain groups, like the minorities or disadvantaged sections, can bring about social change in so far as it raises the position of a minority or disadvantaged group and contributes to change in the inter-group social relationships in the larger society. Similarly, spread of basic education for the masses in an educationally backward society may contribute to gradual changes at the societal level as utilisation of the knowledge by the people affects the quality of their life in the course of time.

VI. ADULT EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

The social impact of adult education may be understood as the outcome, other than the immediate objective of achievement of literacy skills on the part of individual adult learners. Adult education may have immediate and ultimate
social impact. Any programme of education, including the one for adults, can have the ultimate function of social development in terms of the improvement in the quality of human life. This of course would be the ultimate social impact of adult education. The immediate social impact of adult education may take place at the individual and community level. Immediate social impact at the individual level includes the knowledge, skills and behaviour patterns (other than literacy) acquired by the individual adult learners. Social impact at the community level may be understood in terms of the changes in the human relations or interaction accompanying or immediately following the process of adult education. The contents of most programmes of adult education in India after independence consisted of literacy as well as other knowledge and skills considered necessary or useful for adults. Thus, the notions of functional literacy, functionality, social awareness and education for development were associated with the programmes of adult education in India. For instance, the policy statement on adult education clearly mentioned functionality and social awareness as components of the programme other than literacy. Adult education, therefore, was expected to have individual level social impact, viz. acquisition of knowledge and skills other than literacy. However, adult education in India in its implementation was on the whole confined to imparting literacy skills. Hardly any attempt was made to impart the knowledge and skills that enable adults to know and deal with their social and physical environment. There are several reasons for this neglect. First, it is possible for adults to acquire some knowledge about the environment from the process of socialization within the community, while literacy cannot be acquired without a deliberate learning process involving a literate teacher. Second, a large number of teachers in the adult education programme have been students who lacked the knowledge and experience to impart to adults anything other than literacy skills. Third, there must have been fears that any knowledge other than literacy
(such as the situation or practices of inequality, injustice, exploitation and discrimination) could become controversial and thereby be detrimental even to the programme of literacy. Thus, in the total literacy campaign the unwritten understanding seemed to concentrate on literacy and to leave matters of functionality and awareness to the post-literacy phase of adult education of total literacy campaign and continuing education.

Although there were hardly any deliberate efforts at imparting functionality and social awareness in the actual teaching-learning process of adult education, participation in a programme of this nature has had its own impact in terms of the knowledge and awareness derived from personal experience in a social context. The activities of environment building, voluntary participation of the people in a collective programme and individual experience of deliberate learning in an adult group situation have been avenues of adult learning that would not have come through from the process of simple socialization within the community. The knowledge and awareness gained by the adult learners from the very participation in the adult education programme have found their manifestation in various forms of social impact at the level of the community. Any educational programme of the people has its own social impact at the level of the community. This is especially true of adult education and the total literacy campaign in particular. Much of the social impact of adult education has resulted from environment building activities. Revival and wider dispersal of the folk media of songs, dance and other cultural activities have been an obvious outcome of the environment building activities. Environment building in adult education has been a source of encouraging in varying degrees artistic creativity among the ordinary people and promoting their folk culture. Another noteworthy social impact of adult education, brought about by the environment building activities, is the assumption of collective accountability for basic education in the community. The total literacy campaign brought
together individuals and groups of different interests, persuasions and backgrounds for the purpose of eradicating illiteracy. Environment building activities played an important role in effecting this collective responsibility for literacy education in the community. Raising the demand for elementary education of children has been another social impact of adult education. Notable increase in the enrolment of children in primary school has been observed in places that experienced the adult education programme. It indicates that, despite the neglect of functionality and social awareness in the programme, an increase in the awareness of the community in general about the need for basic education seems to have taken place. This could be the outcome of largely the environment building activities and partly the experience of those adults who participated in the learning exercise.

VII. AN OVERVIEW OF ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

Education today is indispensable, and is obviously a challenging task. It has become a matter of growing national debate and concern. The need for education continues to grow is evident from the increasing investment in educational programmes and corresponding demand for it. Every country develops its system of education to meet the challenges of times. Thus, the developing educational system must build upon the gains of the past and the present for a better future and indeed, of mankind. The very aim of education is to develop an integrated personality, suitably stuffed and equipped from all dimensions, viz., physical, mental, moral, emotional and vocational. Education does not mean imparting verbal knowledge. The knowledge that is gathered should be capable of being used for all life situations, service to society and helping to improve the deplorable conditions of one's own country. Therefore, there is a need to reshape and change the attitude of masses through education and training.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>(5 years &amp; above)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>7.16</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>15.59</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>24.95</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>24.02</td>
<td>34.44</td>
<td>12.95</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>29.45</td>
<td>39.45</td>
<td>18.69</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>46.89</td>
<td>24.52</td>
<td>(5 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>52.11</td>
<td>63.86</td>
<td>39.42</td>
<td>(7 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>65.38</td>
<td>75.85</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>(7 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>74.04</td>
<td>82.14</td>
<td>65.46</td>
<td>(7 years &amp; above)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A glance at the table reveals that the growth of literacy rate has been slow up to 1951 and it has been rising at a faster level later on. Due to effective implementation of several literacy drives after independence considering the strengths and weaknesses of the programmes and by introducing better strategies the results are satisfying. However, there is a lot to be done in this direction. The literacy rate as per 2011 census is 74.04 per cent. The growth of literacy among men is better in relation to that of women and by 2011, the rate of literacy among men is 82.14 per cent and among women it stands at 65.46 per cent at national level. Regional disparities, linguistic variations, social and
economic aspects—all these are accounting for variations in the growth rate of literacy in our country. As per 2001 census, the literacy rate among scheduled castes in India is 54.69 per cent, among males and females it status at 66.64 per cent and 41.90 per cent. The respective figures for Andhra Pradesh are 55.29 per cent, 63.51 per cent and 43.35 per cent. The literacy rates for SCs and STs for 2011 Census are yet to he finalized.

AN OVERVIEW OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Social Education Programme

In India, the government has given special attention to adult education after Independence. Several programmes were formulated to combat illiteracy. Social Education Programme was taken up during 1949-50. The objectives of the programme are as follows: a) To instill a consciousness of the rights and duties of citizenship and foster a spirit of service to the community. b) To develop a love of democracy and impart an understanding of the way in which democracy functions. b) To disseminate knowledge of the outstanding problems and difficulties facing the country and the world today. c) To develop pride in our cultural heritage through the knowledge of our history, geography and culture. d) To teach the simple laws of personal and community health and develop habits of hygiene and cleanliness. e) To foster the growth of the co-operative spirit as a way of life. f) To provide training in crafts both as a hobby and as a means to economic betterment. g) To provide cultural and recreational facilities by way of folk dances, drama, music, poetry, recitation and other ways of spontaneous self-expression. h) To provide through these various activities as well as through reading and discussion groups, an understanding of the basic moral values. i) To acquire reasonable mastery over the tools of learning, reading, writing, simple arithmetic and to create an interest in knowledge. j) To
provide facilities for continuation of education through libraries, discussion groups, clubs and institutions like peoples colleges. It may be noted that due to lack of proper planning and implementation the programme could not become a success. The participation of learners was poor and the emphasis was only on imparting of literacy. The instruction was based on formal methods and supervision and monitoring were not properly planned.

Gram Shikshan Mohim

Movement for literacy in the rural areas began in 1959 in Satara district of Maharashtra and was later extended to other parts of the state. The programme aimed at imparting basic literacy skills within a period of four months. By 1963, it spread to all the districts of the state. The programme, however, suffered from lack of systematic follow-up and consequently relapse into illiteracy was massive. The strengths and weaknesses of the programmes were taken as the basis in designing the further programmes.

Farmers’ Functional Literacy Programme

Farmers’ Functional Literacy Programme (FFLP) was taken up during 1966-67 with the objective of extending education and training facilities to farmers with a view to raise agricultural production. It was felt that farmers training would become meaningful, if it is treated as an essential input of programmes (along with knowledge of fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, high yielding varieties of seeds, multiple cropping, intensive cash crops and intensive cattle development programmes). In order to make FFLP effective, the following strategy was formulated. Farmers’ education and training programmes should be co-ordinate so as to achieve quick production. All government and non-government agencies should organize their programmes according to
production requirements and cropping. The education and training should result in the acquisition of skills for the adoption of new practices and use of inputs. At some point, there should be connection between the supply of inputs and the imparting of training. Demonstration in the use of these skills should be an essential element of training. There should be two-way communication between the participating farmers and experts. This means that farmers should be able to address their enquiries to experts of a level higher than the average level extension worker and get replies in writing. The radio programmes should be drawn according to the progress of the crop season and the education and training should be provided at the demonstration camps. Every aspect of the extension and education programmes should revolve around the agricultural production programmes. The programme was successful due to participation of target group (farmers), usage of need based primers and administration of the programme. However, lack of effective post-literacy and continuing education activities and their monitoring were the main problems of the programme.

Education Commission

Constitution of Education Commission (1964-66) was a significant event in the history of education in India. Among several measures, it recommended that high priority be accorded to ending illiteracy. It urged that adult education be promoted both through "selective" as well as through "mass approach" and stressed the active involvement of teachers and students and the wider use of the media for the literacy programme. The Education Commission also stated that in the world of science and technology, the main objective should be to relate it to life, needs and aspirations of the people so as to make it an instrument of socio-economic and political change. The suggestions offered were quite worthy for implementing the future programmes.
Non-Formal Education

In the beginning of the Fifth plan, a programme of non-formal education for people falling in 9-14 and 15-25 years age group was launched. Although the scope, content and objectives of the non-formal project were clearly spelt out, its understanding in the field was very limited and the programmes actually organized were indistinguishable from the conventional literacy programmes.

Polyvalent Adult Education Centres

Workers social education institutes and polyvalent adult education centres were reviewed by a group in 1977, which recommended adoption of polyvalent adult education centres in the adult education programme for workers in urban areas. In pursuance of the decision, Shramik Vidyapeeths were set up in the states. The programmes were mainly limited to urban areas and could not reach majority of the neo-literate groups.

Adult Education for Women

The Government of India has launched a number of adult literacy programmes, which also cater to literacy of adult women. However, a scheme of functional literacy for women (1975) has been brought about as a high priority programme of the Department of Social Welfare. The scheme is being implemented by the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) project. It focuses attention on adult women in the age group of 15 to 45 years. It (a) helps women to acquire skills through functional literacy classes, (b) imparts information on modern methods of health and hygiene and the importance of nutritious food and balanced diet and (c) provides need-based training in home management and child care.
National Adult Education Programme

National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) was inaugurated on 2nd October, 1978 with literacy as an indispensable component, for approximately 100 million illiterate persons in the age group 15-35 with a view to providing them skills for self-directed learning leading to self-reliant and active role in their own development and in the development of their environment. Preparatory action aimed at the following areas: 1) Creation of an environment favourable to the launching of NAEP. 2) Preparation of case studies of some significant past experience, particularly those where the failures or successes have a bearing on the planning and implementation of NAEP. 3) Detailed planning of the various segments of the programme by appointment of experts groups. This would include preparation of detailed plans for each state and union territory. 4) Establishment of necessary structures for administration and co-ordination and necessary modification of procedure and patterns. 5) Identification of various agencies, official and non-official, to be involved in the programme and taking necessary measures to facilitate the needed level of their involvement like Government Agencies, Universities, State Resource Centres, Voluntary Organizations etc. 6) Development of capability in all states for preparation of diversified and need based teaching / learning materials for the programme. 7) Development of training methodologies, preparation of training manuals as well as actual training of personnel at various levels to launch the programme. 8) Creation of a satisfactory system of evaluation and monitoring, post-literacy as well as the required applied research base. In addition to organizing a massive programme for adult illiterates, it was felt necessary to provide special programmes for special groups based on their special needs.
Adult Education through Universities and Colleges

Adult Education and extension through Universities and colleges was taken up under Point No. 16 of the New 20 Point Programme in 1982-83. The major aspects include the following: 1) Teaching, research and extension are the three basic objectives of university education and equal importance should be given to them. Extension activity should be an important dimension of higher education. 2) A single mechanism needs to be created in the University system whereby all activities like adult literacy, NSS, NCC, Continuing and Extension programmes etc., are organized under one umbrella. 3) Institutions of higher education must participate in programmes of adult literacy and contribute to the educational and other development needs of the under privileged sections of the society. 4) Point No. 16 of the New 20 Point Programme also relates to the spread of universal elementary education. The students could motivate children who are not going to schools. The university / college students from the NSS could be helpful in locating the non-school going children and getting them admitted in other primary schools or non-formal education centres. They could also organize remedial coaching classes for the needy and academically under privileged children of the society.

Rural Functional Literacy Project

This was a major centrally sponsored scheme started in 1978 in rural areas as part of National Adult Education Programme. The erstwhile 144 farmers functional literacy projects and 60 non-formal education projects were merged into it. Furthermore, new projects were added bringing the total number of projects throughout the country in 1987 to 513, each having upto a maximum number of 300 adult education centres and each centre having 25-30 learners.
State Adult Education Programme

The States also similarly took up centre based projects under the State plan funds on the lines of RFLPs. SAEP and RLFP were part of the major National Adult Education Programme.

Adult Education through Voluntary Agencies

In order to ensure greater participation of voluntary agencies, the central scheme of assistance to voluntary agencies was revived in April, 1982. Under this scheme, registered societies were sanctioned the centre-based projects for functional literacy and post literacy, and were allowed to run projects in a compact area. The programmes became successful in a few areas but documentation remained as improper and follow up activities could not be organized effectively.

Mass Programme for Functional Literacy

Mass Programme for Functional Literacy started in 1986 aimed at involving high school and college students in imparting literacy to their illiterate relatives, parents and people residing in nearby areas during summer vacation. Mass Programme for Functional Literacy was started with the objectives of making literacy as a people's mission, harnessing all agencies for the mission and posing mass literacy programme as a challenge for the youth. Achievement of these objectives involved: 1) Stressing functional literacy in National Service Scheme (NSS); 2) Increasing coverage of student volunteers; 3) Emphasizing study and service viz., specific project taken up by the students as part of work experience for social national service which should be reflected in their final result; and 4) Provisions for institutional incentives for eradication of illiteracy.
There was no adequate preparation for the programme. It ended up to motivating the students and the follow up activity was not there. Though there were significant contributions in some pockets yet they did not receive proper attention. Monitoring and evaluation and maintenance of records also did not receive proper attention.

National Literacy Mission

National Literacy Mission was launched on 5th May, 1988 to equip all citizens of the country with functional literacy. In quantitative terms, the mission seeks to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate persons in the 15-35 years age group by the end of 1995. In quantitative terms, functional literacy implies (a) Self-reliance in 3 R's, (b) Participation in development process, (c) Providing skills to improve economic status and general well-being and (d) Imbibing values of national integration, conservation of environment, women's equality and observance of small family norms etc.. National Literacy Mission lays major emphasis on rural areas, particularly women and persons belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes who constitute the majority of the illiterate segments. Further, NLM aims at i) Involving voluntary agencies in a big way in the task of achieving literacy and other programmes of continuing education. ii) Providing facilities for post-literacy and continuing education and short duration vocational training courses through the establishment of Jana Shikshana Nilayams (JSNs). iii) Strengthening and improving the status of the ongoing adult education programmes viz., Rural Functional Literacy Programmes, Programmes of Shramik Vidyapeeths. iv) Restarting of functional literacy programmes for women as an integral part of Integrated Child Development Scheme. v) Making systematic efforts to secure people's participation through media and communication, creation of local
participatory structures, taking out of jathas, mass rallies and training of cadres of youth. vi) Undertaking technology demonstration in 40 districts for development, transfer and application of techno-pedagogic inputs. vii) Reducing the span of control of supervision from 30 adult education centres to 8-10 adult education centres.

Total Literacy Campaigns

With the introduction of total literacy campaigns (1989-90 onwards), the literacy scenario in India has undergone a notable change totally deviating from the traditional approaches and radical changes were made in the implementation strategies of literacy programme, the dominant strategy being the campaign approach. The campaign is based on area specific, time bound, volunteer based and cost effective approaches. Through this new approach more than two-thirds of the districts in India have been covered by total literacy campaigns in a short period of five years. Among these, majority of the districts have already progressed from basic literacy phase to post-literacy phase and many are now on the threshold of third phase i.e., continuing education. With this, a situation is fast emerging whereby millions of illiterates are acquiring basic literacy skills and joining the class of neo-literates each year.

Post-Literacy and Continuing Education

Relapse into illiteracy is a serious problem in adult education. This is due to lack of adequate usage of the limited skills acquired by the learners in their daily lives. The learners who attend the literacy programme for a shorter duration and pay less care to retain literacy skills will be relapsing into illiteracy. It is necessary to cultivate and continue reading and writing on their part so that the initial achievement may not be lost in course of time. This requires development of proper reading materials for the neo-literates and sufficient
practice of literacy skills acquired by learners in varied domains of life. The materials may include simple posters, pictures, folders, pamphlets, books, periodicals, newsletters, etc. Continuing education is a process of learning that continues throughout life. Continuing education facilities have to be provided on a permanent basis. The main aim of continuing education programme is to ensure that a comprehensive range of appropriate opportunities are available for lifelong learning. In operational terms, continuing education includes post-literacy skills, continuing learning beyond elementary literacy and application of this learning for improving their living conditions. Continuing education includes all the learning opportunities people want or need outside the basic literacy education and primary education. In continuing education, human resource development becomes the focus of attention. The beneficiaries of continuing education programmes are: neo-literates of total literacy campaigns, pass-outs of non-formal education, primary schools, school dropouts and other members of the community interested in lifelong learning. The main objectives of the scheme and the activities taken up under continuing education include the following: 1) Provision of facilities for retention of literacy skills and continuing education to enable the learners to continue their learning beyond basic literacy. 2) Creating scope for application of functional literacy for improvement of living conditions and quality of life. 3) Dissemination of information on development programmes and widening and improving participation of traditionally deprived sections of the society. 4) Creation of awareness about national concerns such as national integration, conservation and improvement of the environment, women’s equality, observance of small family norms, etc., and sharing of common problems of the community. 5) Improvement of economic conditions and general wellbeing as well as improvement of productivity by organizing short duration training programmes, orientation courses for providing vocational skills and by taking up linkage activities for
establishing direct linkage between continuing education and development activities. 6) Provision of facilities for library and reading rooms for creating an environment conducive for literacy efforts and a learning society. 7) Organization of cultural and recreational activities with effective community participation.

Jana Shikshan Sansthan

The first Shramik Vidyapeeth was established in Mumbai in the year 1967 and gradually the number increased to 17 upto 1983 and to 58 by the end of Eighth Five Year Plan i.e., 1996-97. Later, the scheme of Shramik Vidyapeeth as been renamed as Jana Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) - Institute of People's Education. Under the new scheme 33 more JSS were sanctioned and the number is increased to 91 by the end of October, 2000. These institutions have already proved to be one of the best vocational adult education centres in the country and the courses offered by these institutions are in popular demand. Now, JSSs offer around 225 different types of vocational training programmes ranging from papad making to computers. Men and women belonging mostly to the unorganized sector living in urban and rural areas and people who had been migrating from rural to urban settings are expected to derive benefits from this scheme. The Jan Sikshan Sansthan are expected to adopt continuing education centres and organize academic courses and income generating programmes for the benefit of neo-literates.

Saakshar Bharat Programme

Literacy is central not only to 'Education for All' goals, but also to the Government of India's overall philosophy of 'inclusive' growth and national aspiration for global leadership in the 21st century. All policy interventions, including poverty alleviation, gender parity, women empowerment, and higher
GDP growth aimed at achieving these objectives, presuppose high levels of literacy, especially amongst women. There is a growing realization that leadership in the 21st century world, which is fast emerging as a conglomerate of knowledge based economies and informed societies, will vest with literate democratic societies. ‘Saakshar Bharat’ will be a national response to the development of quality human resource to meet the demands of a fast changing ‘Bharat’ as well as challenges of globalization. It creates a nationwide framework of life long learning that promotes a literate society through a comprehensive adult education programme by building environment that fosters literacy amongst adults, particularly women, in the age group of 15 years and beyond. The Government meets the entire cost of imparting literacy under this programme. “Saakshar Bharat’ strives to create a literate environment that bolsters and sustains a Literate Society and provides ample opportunities for continuous improvement in the levels of adult literacy, specially belonging to Focus Groups and in focused Areas. It also works towards raising the overall literacy rate to 80% and reducing the gender gap in literacy to 10%, besides minimizing regional, social and gender disparities in literacy levels throughout India.

VIII. THE PRESENT STUDY

Education whether formal or non-format plays a pivotal and strategic role in holistic development of individual personalities, communities and the nations at the large. Indeed, there is a dawn in the world history with rise of the concepts of democracy, equality and fraternity. Social scientists pioneered these concepts to every corner including education. The inequalities in formal education were questioned. Sincere efforts have been initiated by educationists and social scientists to find out the ways and means to provide equal opportunities in education for aged and who lack social awareness and
functional skills required for their development. Today universalization of education is an emerging concept to realize democracy and equality and overall transformation of society. What we wish to emphasize is its urgency. Thus, there is an imperative need to explore the methods of improving literacy rate through systems other than formal education. These efforts have led to the idea of concepts and practice of non-formal, adult and continuing education. Poverty, illiteracy and ignorance are the basic problems of the third world countries in general and India in particular. These are the root causes of all the global problems stagnating and degrading both the development of the country and the individuals of the society. One the side, illiteracy leads to ignorance and exploitation and on the other side, poverty under constant stress and strain of economic and social and cultural degradation.

In the context of India, education plays an important role as nearly 26 per cent of its population are still illiterates and deprived of the world knowledge and education. Added to this, socio-economic disparities, ignorance, superstitions, lack of awareness about their fundamental rights and privileges, resistance to change are some of the vital factors that have constrained and refrained them not able to avail the benefits of formal education. However, with the introduction of Adult education on one side and Total Literacy Campaigns, under the National Literacy Mission, the literacy scenario in India has undergone a notable change. As a result, majority of the districts have already progressed from basic literacy phase to post-literacy phase and many are now on the threshold of third phase i.e. continuing education. Continuing education process is a learning the continues throughout life. Its aim is to ensure comprehensive range of appropriate opportunities made available for life long learning retention of literacy skills, application of learned knowledge for
improving living standards and conditions of people, creating scope for application of functional literacy for improvement of living conditions and quality of life, dissemination of information on developmental programmes, creation of awareness about national concerns such as national integration, conservation and improvement of the community, providing vocational skills and organization of cultural and recreational activities with effective community participation. Against this backdrop, the present study aims to analyse the impact of continuing education on social transformation on selected dimensions among the Scheduled Caste communities in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh.

IX. AN OVERVIEW OF SUCCEEDING CHAPTERS

In the second chapter, the Review of related Literature is presented. Chapter three deals with Statement of the Problem, objectives and hypotheses whereas chapter four concentrates on Methodology of investigation. In chapter five, Results and Discussion is presented. Chapter six presents Summary of Findings and Conclusions.