CHAPTER - 1

FRAME OF REFERENCE
Scheduled Caste And Education

Women Welfare Hostels in Ananatapur & Kurnool Districts

CHAPTER - I

FRAME OF REFERENCE:

The Indian government has expressed a strong commitment towards Education for all, however, India still has one of the lowest female Literacy rates in Asia.

This low level of literacy not only has a negative impact on women's lives but also on their families' lives and on their country's economic development. Numerous studies show that illiterate women have high levels of fertility and mortality, poor nutritional status, low earning potential, and little autonomy within the household. A woman's lack of education also has a negative impact on the health and well being of her children. For instance, a recent survey in India found that infant mortality was inversely related to mother's educational level.
The Indian government's commitment to education is stated in its constitution with an article promising "free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14".

The National Policy on Education, which was updated in 1992, and the 1992 Program of Action both reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving literacy levels, by providing special attention to girls and children from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Every education, whatever means and methods it uses, aims at fitting the growing individual for his special role and position in society so as to elicit education embraces a multi-process by which culture and values are transmitted from generation to generation. According to a well known sociologist R.K. Mukherjee the best out of him, and at the same time socializing him, through development of proper habits, attitudes and values, so that he enriches and strengthens the cultural pattern.

The most fundamental benefit of education not cited often enough, is its intrinsic value to the well being or effective freedom of a person.
In India, Universalization of Basic Education (UBE) has been recognized as crucial input for nation building since independence. The founding fathers of our Constitution had given a prominent place to educational endeavors when they made provision for free and compulsory education for children up to 14 years of age within a period of 10 years in the Directive principles of state policy. However, this goal has proved elusive so far. Though the country has not realized vision of the constitution, the picture is not all-dismal. Impressive expansions in accessing the infrastructure, and enrolment and equality of opportunity have been achieved. The decade 1990 has seen the issue of universal basic education (6-14 years) in India acquire urgency as never before. A near consensus has built up about the need to ensure that all children attend school and become literate. But this agreement across a wide spectrum of opinion rarely includes a comprehensive and pragmatic strategy. Thus there exists a painful gap in terms of non-enrolment, non-retention (drop-out) wastage and stagnation and gender disparity; and incases to quality and effective schooling.

In this context it may be stressed here that a critical issue for successful and genuine universal basic education is the neglect and inadequate examination of the interaction between socio-economic
context and the school and this reflection is brought out forcefully in the review of literature.

Earlier analyses of educational deprivation in India have often used a demand supply framework to explain the slow progress of basic education. Educational decisions are often made by some persons (e.g., the parents) on behalf of others (the children), a particularly important feature in the case of female education; these interpersonal issues, again, are outside the focus of standard demand supply analysis.

Lack of motivation as a cause of educational deprivation is probably the most contentious and complex, as the issues involved range from the purely economic to broader and cultural considerations, such as those affecting female education and marriage. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that with regard to the perceptions about the value and role of education. The rural situation has altered dramatically over the years, at least for the male child. Female education is still lagging far behind and needs special targeting.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The review of literature suggests that the analyses of educational deprivation in India have often used a demand and supply framework to explain the slow progress of basic education. While it is certainly possible to associate most of the appropriate explanatory variables either with supply side (the provision of schooling facilities) or with the demand side (the utilization of these facilities), the analogy with the standard demand–supply framework is somewhat misleading in several respects. For instance, the demand for education has an important social dimension, which can be easily overlooked in the standard demand, supply framework; like wise, educational decisions are often made by parents on behalf of children, these interpersonal issues again are outside the focus of standard demand supply analysis; further education is not a homogeneous product, quality is a crucial consideration.

The brief review cited above clearly brings forth the critical issue for successful and genuine Universalization of Basic Education is the neglect and inadequate examination of the interaction between school and socio-economic context with reference to Habitate & Home.
Environment and Caste background and the general socio-economic status. To be sure some insights are available but they are inadequate and have not taken into account the emerging rural hierarchy along with the traditional hierarchy. A new hierarchy along the development on modern dimensions is continuously emerging in the rural countryside and this is particularly true with regard to gender dimension. This hierarchy is neglected in educational research very often. Where studies consider the rural socio-economic status they are satisfied with matching with various categories of castes such as SC & ST and general category etc; and as well as size of landholdings. However, a sample clubbing of children for these categories may be of little use. Because the pattern as well as the rigidity and importance of gender hierarchy among communities varies from one region to another and within the region too. Thus particular residential pattern is an important ingredient of the socio-economic status.

Further the opportunity for finding work outside the agriculture sector and schooling also varies by habitate environment, size and its infrastructure.
What is needed is a look at socio-economic contexts and difference as they exist in terms of home - environment and habitat environment in the rural sector. Only then can schooling be understood in relation to the wider context.

Recognizing the Vulnerability of Scheduled Castes, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh has opened up welfare hostels to overcome the poverty, home and habitat environmental constraints in accessing basic education. However, there is no literature on the role of these welfare hostel in accessing basic education to different communities of Scheduled Castes in general and particularly the girl child and the wider socio-economic context in relation to Home and Habitate environment of the inmates of welfare hostels. Such an understanding is necessary and would help in surmounting the bottlenecks to realize the goal of Universalizing Basic Education and the Vision of Education for All.

Hence an attempt is made in the present humble study to address these issues in the context of Rayalaseema, a backward and chronically drought prone region of Andhra Pradesh.
METHOD OF STUDY:

The issues raised in the statement of the problem are pursued in meaningful and scientific study by formulating the following objectives.

Objectives:

Our first objective is to profile the status of school education in the study region namely Anantapur and Kurnool districts located in The chronically backward region known as Rayalaseema region in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Our Second objective is to examine the status of school education in Andhra Pradesh particularly with reference to the provision of infrastructure viz. Institutions and services (eg. No. of school & Teachers); and enrolment trends.

Our third objective is to evaluate the status of school education in India during the 20th century (1901-2001) particularly with reference to policy orientations and quantitative and qualitative changes.
The Fourth objective of our study is to examine the Socio-economic status of the Scheduled Caste girl students who are residents of Scheduled Caste Welfare Hostels.

The Fifth objective is to analyze the habitate environment factors related to school participation of the resident students of Backward Class Welfare Hostels; and

Our last and Sixth objective is to examine the home-environment factors of the students under reference with reference to home environment related constraints like involvement in domestic chores, decision making, reasons for joining the hostel and the role of welfare hostel as a critical intervention.

THE UNIVERSE:

The objectives of present study are pursued in the context of resident girl students of Scheduled Castes Welfare Hostel in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.
The Study Sample:

Keeping in view the time and monetary constraints a manageable and representative sample of resident girl students of Scheduled Castes Welfare Hostels in Kurnool & Anantapur were chosen to constitute of our study sample and the total size of our sample is 300 resident students (Hostlers). The details of sampling procedure is described below.

Sampling:

The study sample was drawn by adopting multistage random sampling technique.

Rayalaseema region comprises four districts viz. Anantapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, and Kurnool districts. Of these four districts, two districts which have lower literacy rates than the state average literacy rate and as well as lower literacy rates among the districts of Rayalaseema were considered. Since the study is on school participation and access to basic education, it is assumed that the districts with lower
literacy level will reflect the socio-economic factors and constraints in accessing the basic education more realistically.

Accordingly Anantapur and Kurnool districts were chosen to represent the study sample as they have lower literacy rates than the other two districts in Rayalaseema, and as that of well as that of Andhra Pradesh (see table-1.1).

At the second level 12 percent of scheduled caste Welfare Hostels run by Social Welfare Department are chosen randomly from each district. Anantapur district comprises 76 scheduled caste Welfare girls Hostels and Kurnool district has 63 girls Hostels; from these a total of 18 hostels were selected randomly by adopting lottery method.

At third stage 15 percent of resident students from each hostel were selected by using hostel attendance registers. Thus a total of 300 students were selected from 18 Backward Caste Welfare Hostels representing Anantapur & Kurnool districts; and the study sample was confined to only Boys.
TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTIONS:

The primary data was collected with the help of a structured interview schedule. The schedule covers information pertained to Socio-economic status, Home environmental factors like, constraints of schooling, decision making and discouragement; and Habitate environmental factors like size of habitate, infrastructure of the habitate, distance to school etc; and the role of hostels with reference to need and retention. In addition a few Focus Group Discussions were held with hostel Wardens, teachers and parents to elicit further information.

The secondary data pertained to statistical information concerning school enrolment trends, institutional infrastructure such as number of schools teachers were collected from the published official reports and relevant census reports.

Analysis:

The collected data were processed in accordance with the stated objectives and are presented in two-way variable tables With reference to such background variables like caste, parent’s literacy, levels of income land holdings, parent’s occupation and housing conditions etc.
The independent variables considered for analysis and presentation are class of study, caste category; Simple statistical tools such as percentages, averages were employed to explain the data.

**Reporting:**

The study is presented in Ten Chapters.

The First chapter FRAME OF REFERENCE gives an introduction and statement of the problem of study and method of study.

The second chapter presents a review of literature. The third chapter portrays the Study area: Rayalaseema and School Education. The fourth chapter analyses Status of School Education in Andhra Pradesh with reference to enrolment trends, access to basic school education.

The fifth chapter SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA presents an evaluation of School Education in India during the 20th Century (1901-2001).
The sixth chapter The Scheduled Caste Girl child examines the socio-economic status characteristics of the resident students of Scheduled Caste Welfare Hostels.

The Seventh chapter presents home and HABITATE ENVIRONMENT FACTORS of the resident students of Welfare Hostels.

The eighth chapter examines the SOCIAL EXCLUSION FACTORS of the hostlers.

The ninth chapter presents motivational factors and the role of welfare hostels.

The tenth and Last chapter present FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS of the present study.

The References and the Select Bibliography is appended at the end of the Thesis.