CHAPTER III

PROBLEM AND METHODOLOGY
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It has been the most promising and encouraging field for social psychologists and researchers in social science when they have been focussing their attention on investigating more closely in the oft-waded area of attitudes, beliefs, opinions, norms, values and ideology, all of which influence to a greater extent the various phases of human behaviour and consequently shape the social, political or religious life of individuals and groups, interacting with one another. Besides these psychological units of higher order organization, a number of other social, educational and demographic variables also play their role in the outcome of complex human behaviour which is not so simple function of reactions to immediate stimuli. In this context it is essential to examine first the factors that contribute to the formation of such attitudes, opinions, beliefs, values, etc. It has been commonly observed that a number of varied factors, such as the existing social structure,
religious institutions, political affiliations, educational level, type of family, socio-economic status, culture, community, caste and company, age, sex and a number of other environmental and organismic as well as intrinsic motivational variables play an important role in influencing the basic perceptions and forming or changing the higher order organizations such as attitudes, beliefs, opinions, values etc. which in turn shape the resulting behaviour patterns and lifestyles of individuals. Sometimes, the picture is not so simple resultant outcome expected from the S-R or S-O-R model of the behaviouristic approach. Because of complexity of interacting and intervening variables, the consequent behaviour happens to be the least expected, especially in social life. For example, it is expected that the youngsters, the less educated those in lower state of society and members of the weaker sex prove to be more prone to suggestions, more conservative, more superstitious and more easily or quickly form or change opinions or beliefs i.e. less stable in their attitudes, beliefs, opinions or values. And yet it has been now-a-days observed from some research studies or in day-to-day life experiences that the young defy more, women are more resistant to persuasion and change, and strangely the higher educated persons in higher strata of society turn out to entertain more superstitious practices and are easily carried away by miracles of so called saints, Sadhus and Fakirs. There has been also a
huge cry now-a-days among the elders (the so-called
safe deposit values of all virtues in the world) that
the youngsters are going astray. This reflects
indirectly the role of generation gap, besides other
factors, influencing perceptions, generating attitudes,
beliefs and values and shaping life styles. In the
opening chapter, these terms have been introduced and
clarified. These have been reviewed just in the
preceding chapter a number of related investigations
carried out elsewhere in this connection.

The present study has been undertaken with
a view to examining more closely and specifically the
role of some of those more important and currently
controversial variables, viz. educational level, socio­
economic status, sex and generation gap in formation of
some social beliefs, opinions on some social issues,
values and life-styles of individuals, studied using
more refined design and statistical techniques.

The importance of such a useful study in
understanding human behaviour needs no mention. The
impact of such research work in developing a new outlook
and in interpretation of social life is immense, with
significant implications for other aspects of dealings
in the family, community and political, religious and
moral life. An attempt has been made in this chapter
to define specifically the problem undertaken for the
present study, to explain its aim and objectives, to
narrate the specific hypotheses formulated and describe the more essential issues of methodology.

3.2 THE PROBLEM AND THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The main problem for the present investigation runs thus as indicated in the title - "An Analytical study of the impact of education and generation gap on some social beliefs, values and life-styles among individuals of varied socio-economic strata". In other words, the present study has been planned with the specific aim to investigate mainly the impact or effect of education and generation gap on some social and personal beliefs, values and life-styles among the individuals belonging to varied socio-economic strata as coming from different castes or communities. More specifically, (a) some social beliefs with respect to social issues, such as, (i) social customs and traditions, (ii) marriage, (iii) widow remarriage, (iv) sex and family planning, and (v) caste system, and (vi) position or status of women in the society, etc.; (b) beliefs with regard to family issues, such as, (i) type or structure of the family, (ii) child rearing practices and discipline in dealing with children or the young; (c) personal superstitious beliefs in general and in specific or day-to-day routine activities and views about miracles and feats of Yogis, Sadhus and Fakirs; (d) higher, moral values in dealings and daily life; and (e) life-styles, some practices, manners or modes
of living, fashions in dressing, etc. - all these have been investigated through an adequate opinionnaire or questionnaire, mainly as a function of or as related to the educational level of individuals and generation gap. The inclusion of subjects of both sexes from families of varied castes enabled the investigator to study also the sex differences as well as caste differences in their beliefs and values. In addition, where and if possible an attempt is also made to study the role of community or caste of subjects included in the sample. Subjects for the study were randomly selected from families and schools or colleges - adolescents (of age level 15 - 20), parents (of age levels 35-45) and grandparents (of age 60 and above), both educated as well as illiterate, from same families as far as available, otherwise of different families, but of same age range, of varied castes and socio-economic status, and such classification enabled the investigator to study the varied variables of the problem.

3.3 VARIABLES UNDER STUDY

In other words the following independent and dependent variables have been studied in the present investigation:

A. Independent variables manipulated:

(i) Generation gap at three levels of the generation viz. (a) first generation of school and college
students - adolescents (both boys and girls) of 15 to 20 years of age; (b) second generation of
the parents (both fathers and mothers) of 35 to
45 years of age; and (c) third grandparents (both
grandfathers and grandmothers) of 60 and above
years of age.

(ii) Sex: both male and female in each group,
as stated above.

(iii) Education at three levels; (a) Higher
(college and university) level, (b) School
(secondary and primary) level, and (c) Illiterates.

(iv) Caste at two levels viz. (a) Upper Brahmin,
Bania and Patel, and (b) Backward (other than
upper), as specified in the list of Baxi Panch etc. (Appendix - I).

(v) Socio-economic status at three levels, as
classified in the strength of socio-economic status
scale (Appendix - J); (a) Higher, upper-class
groups, (b) Middle-class group, and (c) Lower,
backward class group.

B. Dependent variables observed (Measures or scored):

(i) Social beliefs on issues described above,

(ii) Beliefs on family issues enumerated above,

(iii) Personal, superstitious beliefs noted above,
(iv) Values as stated above, and
(v) Life-styles practices or mode of living as mentioned above.

C. Other extraneous variables were controlled through matching subjects as far as possible.

3.4 HYPOTHESES FORMULATED

On the basis of the variables under study, the following hypotheses were formulated for being experimentally tested:

(1) Individuals differ in their social beliefs which themselves differ from individual to individual and more so as a result of a varied influence factors under study. The null hypothesis would be: There would not be any individual differences in social beliefs; all are equal with respect to varied social beliefs.

(2) The three generations are likely to differ significantly in their beliefs in various social issues under study. It is expected that the younger adolescent group is likely to be more reformist, modern and adjustable or changing in their social beliefs; the parental group is supposed to be in between the other two. The grand-parental group would be most conservative, rigid and traditional in the approach to social issues. The null hypothesis
would be: there are no generational differences in their views or attitudes towards social issues under study.

(3) Similarly, there are likely to be sex differences in social beliefs; males are supposed to be more reformist than females. The null hypothesis would be: there are no sex differences in social beliefs.

(4) There are likely to be caste differences in social beliefs; the upper caste members are expected to be more reformist than the members of backward caste. The null hypothesis would be: the upper caste members would not differ from the backward caste members in their social beliefs.

(5) There are likely to be significant differences in social beliefs among persons of different levels of education; those with college education are more likely to be reformist in their views on social issues; those with school education are likely to be less reformist than those with college education, but more reformist than the illiterate-group members who are supposed to be most conservative and traditional in their approach. The null hypothesis would be: Education makes no impact or no differences in views or attitudes towards social issues.

(6) It is most likely that, besides the significant differences in the main effects of the above four variables, there would be significant interactions between two or more of these variables under study.
Null hypothesis would be: There would be no interactions of any of the variables.

(7) Finally, the socio-economic status of the subjects would play an important role in the formation of social beliefs; it is expected that the higher socio-economic status group would be more reformist and susceptible to change in their social beliefs than the middle socio-economic status group and far more so than the lower socio-economic group which is supposed to be most conservative.

The null hypothesis would be: there would not be differences in social attitudes as a result of varied socio-economic status levels.

The present investigation aims to test all these hypotheses and arrive at some conclusions.

3.5 TOOLS USED

Following tools were used to gather data on variables under study:

(i) A specially constructed opinionnaire (questionnaire), and later on standardized as "Social Attitude Scale" by Dr. A. S. Patel with different sections in order to measure varied dependent variables or beliefs on issues, as enumerated above (scored per procedure)

(ii) Information on other independent variable such as community or caste, age, sex and education, etc.
have been gathered from the specific record sheet presented to be filled in before the actual opinionnaire.

(iii) A further sheet of specific questionnaire in condensed form was prepared (on line of the socio-economic status scale standardized by Dr. Kappu-swani and also by Dr. A. S. Patel; it was specifically scored as per procedure (Appendix $J$) to classify subjects into three different categories (higher, middle and lower or backward) of subjects in the sample.

3.6 **EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**

In order to study the role of the first four independent variables, viz. generation gap at three levels, sex at two levels, caste at two levels, education at three levels, an experimental Factorial Design $(3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3)$ was used in order to study the main as well as interaction effects of these four factors varied at the levels mentioned, forming in all 36 cells or sub-groups with 30 subjects in each cell totalling 1080 subjects in all as shown below in Table $1$:(i). Besides this, in order to study independently the role of socio-economic status, the data of the subjects of the three sub-groups of socio-economic status in the whole sample of 1080 subjects, were treated for analysis as in a sample Randomized Group Design with unequal number in each of three groups, in view of this additional variable
### TABLE NO. I : (i)

**FACTORIAL EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN (3 x 2 x 2 x 3)**

(A x B x C x D : Generation Gap x Sex x Caste x Education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B₁</th>
<th></th>
<th>B₁</th>
<th></th>
<th>B₁</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D₁</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C₁</td>
<td>A₁B₁C₁D₁</td>
<td>A₁B₂C₁D₁</td>
<td>A₂B₁C₁D₁</td>
<td>A₂B₂C₁D₁</td>
<td>A₃B₁C₁D₁</td>
<td>A₃B₂C₁D₁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n =30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C₂</td>
<td>A₁B₁C₂D₁</td>
<td>A₁B₂C₂D₁</td>
<td>A₂B₁C₂D₁</td>
<td>A₂B₂C₂D₁</td>
<td>A₃B₁C₂D₁</td>
<td>A₃B₂C₂D₁</td>
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<tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D₂</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C₁</td>
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<td>A₁B₂C₁D₂</td>
<td>A₂B₁C₁D₂</td>
<td>A₂B₂C₁D₂</td>
<td>A₃B₁C₁D₂</td>
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<tr>
<td>C₂</td>
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<td>A₁B₂C₂D₂</td>
<td>A₂B₁C₂D₂</td>
<td>A₂B₂C₂D₂</td>
<td>A₃B₁C₂D₂</td>
<td>A₃B₂C₂D₂</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D₃</td>
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<tr>
<td>C₁</td>
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<td>C₂</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gen.Gap : A₁ : Adolescents =360 ; Sex : B₁ : Male = 540 ; Caste : C₁ : Upper caste=540 ; Edu.level : D₁ : Coll.360
A₂ : Parents =360 ; B₂ : Female=540 ; C₂ : Backward =540 ; D₂ : Sch. =360
A : Grandpar. =360 ; D : Illi=360
### TABLE NO. I : (ii)
RANDOMIZED GROUP DESIGN (FOR SES)
(Higher, Middle, Lower) (Total N = 1080)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>E₁ : Higher SES</th>
<th>E₂ : Middle SES</th>
<th>E₃ : Lower SES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE NO. I : (iii)
FACTORIAL EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN (2 x 3)
(C x E : Caste X Socio-Economic Status)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C₁</th>
<th></th>
<th>C₂</th>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E₁</td>
<td>C₁E₁</td>
<td>n = 162</td>
<td>C₂E₁</td>
<td>n = 301</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E₂</td>
<td>C₁E₂</td>
<td>n = 206</td>
<td>C₂E₂</td>
<td>n = 410</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E₃</td>
<td>C₁E₃</td>
<td>n = 172</td>
<td>C₂E₃</td>
<td>n = 369</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|        | n = 540 | n = 540 | 1080 |

Caste : C₁ : Upper Caste = 540  S E S : Higher : E₁ = 301  
C₂ : Backward = 540  Middle : E₂ = 410  
     | Lower : E₃ = 369
not fitting in the above \((3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3)\) Factorial Design with four orthogonal factors, because of insufficiency of number of subjects to form a five-factor -Factorial Design \((3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3)\) with additional factor of socio-economic status at three levels. However, the results on this single variable of socio-economic status treated as in a simple Randomized Group Design would not be as accurate as the results in a Factorial Design, since the error variance in a Randomized Group Design would be far greater than that in Factorial Design, as it includes so many variances from other sources. In view of this, to be a little more accurate, an attempt is also made to treat the same data again as in another Factorial Design, viz. \((2 \times 3)\) Factorial Design with two factors, i.e. caste at two levels and Socio-economic status at three levels, as far as possible with unequal number of subjects in each cell. (Refer to tables I:(ii) & I:(iii) for RGD & \((2x3)FD\) respectively to study role of \((SES)\).

3.7 SAMPLE

In each of the above 36 sub-groups formed by the factorial design of four variables at different levels, thirty subjects \((n)\) were used, thus totalling for the whole sample \(36 \times 30 = 1080\) subjects \((N)\) under study, sampled from a wider sample of different schools, colleges and community, so as to fill in adequately each cell of the design. For this purpose, initially about three thousand subjects were administered the questionnaire & the opinionnaire. Adolescent boys and girls from different
schools & colleges (age level 15 – 20 years), their own parents and grandparents (both sexes) as far as possible as well as cross-sectional parents (35 – 45 years) and grandparents (60 years and above) from the community in general were widely sampled randomly to fit in the required sub-groups under study. A number of answer-sheets with insufficient entries or those in excess for the sub-group were rejected, and finally only a total sample of 1080 subjects with 30 in each of 36 cells of the Factorial Design was retained and their responses were scored and analysed for the study.

3.8 PROCEDURE

As noted above, a Social Attitude Scale (Patel's SAS)—a specially constructed & standardized opinionnaire on beliefs on social issues with a reliability (Test-Retest) index of 0.74/2 and an intrinsic validity index (\sqrt{\text{Rel.}}) of 0.84/5—as well as a questionnaire for background information was administered to a very wide sample, in a group for school and college students and individually in case of parents and grandparents as well as illiterate subjects from the community. For final analysis, the data of 1080 subjects as noted above were analysed.

3.9 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

(i) Responses on different beliefs, values and life-styles, etc. of 1080 subjects forming a (3 x 2 x 2 x 3) Factorial Design were scored as
per procedure (Appendix - B) and analysed by the statistical technique of analysis of variance in order to study the main as well as interaction effects of the four variables, viz. A: Generation gap, B: Sex, C: Caste and D: Education level, as in a factorial design (Procedure illustrated in Appendix - C).

(ii) Further, the data of same 1080 subjects categorized into three groups of three levels of socio-economic status were analysed by statistical technique of analysis of variance to study the differences between means of three groups (analysed in Randomized Group Design), in order to study the contribution of the different levels of the variable of socio-economic status (Procedure illustrated in Appendix - E).

(iii) Finally, as observed in the Section-3.6 on Experimental Design, the same data of 1080 subjects were analysed statistically by the technique of analysis of variance, arranging the data in a (2 x 3) Factorial Design (Procedure illustrated in Appendix - F), in order to study the main effects of Caste at two levels and Socio-economic status at three levels as well as their interaction effects, if any. This analysis would be superior to & more accurate than that in Randomized Group Design, though less accurate than that in a higher Factorial Design with four or five factors, which in this case, is not practical. In short, data have been analysed statistically, using three types of Experimental Designs, revealing the relative efficiency of each.
After such analysis of variance showing the overall differences among the variable levels, the same data obtained were further subjected to another statistical technique viz. a Gap-test, called Least Significant Difference (LSD) test - an extension of t-test - to study the significance of the difference between any two specific groups in a pair formed by different levels of the variable found to be significant by the F-test (analysis of variance). $\alpha \neq D,F,H$.

All these results have been tabulated in appropriate tables and graphs and discussed in the next chapter of the thesis. The last chapter summarizes the work undertaken, along with the main findings, pertaining to the contribution of the factors under study. Some implications & suggestions have also been observed at the end.