CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were: first, to examine the role of school education in student modernity; second, to specify those conditions under which it promoted or crippled modernity; and third, to identify those variables which affected modernity in general.

It can be concluded from much of the earlier research that the foreign scholars have been preoccupied with demonstrating the school effects on individual modernity, whereas the researchers in India have mostly concentrated on analysing the impact of higher (college and university) education on modernization. The school-effect studies did not operationalize the school education into different components, and, thus, have failed to respond to the query: What is it about education, which promotes or demotes modernity? Most of these studies have been conducted in the urban or industrial settings or in both, and scant attention has been paid to the rural setting where a comparison group of non-school respondents could be located, and the contribution of education to student modernity could better be examined by comparing the modernity score of school students with that of the non-school respondents. The earlier studies have also not cared to delineate the role of different types of schools in student modernity in spite of their differential potential, as emphasized by various researchers. Further, these studies have usually concentrated on the overall modernity score or level,
and the probe into the various value-orientations as the distinct dimensions of modernity seems to have escaped the attention of researchers. The present study sought to fill in these gaps in the existing research. Accordingly, it was focussed on the following research questions:

1. Whether or not the school-going adolescents are more modern than the non-school adolescents in the rural setting

2. Whether or not the level of schooling is positively related to the modernity score

3. Whether or not all the dimensions of modernity are equally promoted by school education

4. Whether or not the students of an urban school are more modern than those of a rural school

5. Whether or not all the dimensions of modernity are equally promoted by urban schooling

6. Whether or not the students of a high-ranking school are more modern than those of a low-ranking school in the urban setting

7. If yes, what is it about the high-ranking school which makes its students more modern

8. Whether or not the higher modernity score of the students in a high-ranking school is independent of other equally potential modernizing factors, such as the socio-economic status, parental modernity, mass media, etc.
Considering the fact that India is a modernizing society, and no systematic empirical evidence regarding the modernizing effects of school education is available, the study was undertaken in three schools in the Hissar District in the State of Haryana. The main consideration for the selection of Hissar for this study was the higher literacy percentage (22.96) than that (18.14) in the whole of Haryana. Out of the selected schools, two (the Senior Model School, Hissar, and the Jat High School, Hissar) were situated in the urban setting, and the third (Government High School, Sarsod-Bichpari) was located in the rural setting. The choice of the universe and the area was based on three factors: first, the rural area selected was such that it was possible to locate a sufficient number of non-school respondents; second, the rural area of the study had the minimum effect of urbanization; third, different types of schools were located in the urban area.

A population of 1,314 students on the rolls of VIII, IX and X classes in all the three schools comprised the student universe for this study. Considering the requirements of the hypotheses and the population of the school, it was decided to interview all the students in the rural school, whereas a stratified random sample was drawn on the basis of the level of education (VIII, IX and X) and the medium of instruction (Hindi and English) from the urban schools. Based on the above criteria, a sample of 477 units was drawn. It included 119 students from the Government High School, Sarsod-Bichpari;
158 from the Jat High School, Hissar; and 200 from the Senior Model School, Hissar. But the total number of completed interviews was 465, as 12 students of the Government High School, Sarsod-Bichpari, could not be interviewed. It corresponded to 35.39 per cent of the total population. Besides the student sample, there were three categories of respondents. The first category comprised 72 non-school male adolescents which constituted the 'Comparison-group'. This was the total number of male respondents in the age-group 12 to 16, listed in the two villages of Sarsod and Bichpari. They had never attended any formal school. The second category represented the teachers and headmasters working in the two urban schools. Out of 35, complete information could be obtained from 30 teachers and 2 headmasters, and, thus, a strength of 32 constituted this group. The third category included 40 parents (only fathers) of the students studying in the Senior Model School, Hissar (a high-ranking institution).

As regards social characteristics of the student sample, it was dominated by males (78.28 per cent). The age-range varied from 12 to 16 years, and the majority of the students (130/465 = 27.96 per cent) comprised the 14-year age-category. In terms of religious affiliation, a vast majority of the families of respondents (435/465 = 93.33 per cent) professed Hinduism. The caste-composition analysis revealed that the majority of the respondents (264/465 = 56.77 per cent) belonged to the middle castes, followed by the high castes (160/465 = 34.41 per cent). It will be in order to give a
description of the Jat and the non-Jat composition of the study sample in the Jat High School, as it has a denominational character. The data showed that a larger percentage (48.73) of the students represented the Jat community. In respect of the family status, it was noticed that the larger percentage (55.48) of the students came of high socio-economic background, and out of their total strength of 258, a very large number (190/258 = 73.64 per cent) were admitted to the high-ranking school. The data were collected through the 'modernity scale', five-interview schedules and the 'School Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire'. The interview schedules were meant for the school students, non-school adolescents, teachers and headmasters, parents (only fathers), and the office superintendents in the urban schools. The interview schedules for the students and for the non-school adolescents had several indexes in addition to those pertaining to the independent and the intervening variables. In the students' schedule, for example, were included the indexes of extra-curricular participation, socio-economic status, urban exposure, and media exposure.

The data were collected in the beginning of the academic session of 1979-80. Then, after preparing the code design, a separate code-card was prepared for each respondent.

The data were analysed through the 'comparison-group' (non-school baseline) and the 'cross-sectional' approaches. The confidence limit for testing the hypotheses and the level of significance of the error of estimate were set at 95 per cent.
and 5 per cent respectively. The *t*, 'Z' and the chi square tests were used for assessing the significance of difference, whereas Pearson's 'r' and the 'lambda' tests were used to measure the significance of association.

Findings

The study shows that the school-going male adolescents were significantly more modern than the non-school male respondents in the rural setting (t = 10.66, p < .001). When the students of the rural school were compared with those of an urban school, the latter emerged to be significantly more modern than the former (t = 2.72, p < .01).

On comparing the students of the low-ranking urban school with those of a high-ranking urban school in the same urban setting, it was observed that the students of the latter school had scored significantly over the former with respect to modernity (t = 10.06, p < .001).

Keeping in view the denominational character of the low-ranking urban school (the Jat High School), the mean modernity scores of the Jat students were compared with those of the non-Jats in both the urban schools. The data suggested that there were no significant differences in the scores between the Jats and the Non-Jats in the low-ranking school as well as in the high-ranking school, whereas both the Jats and Non-Jats in the high-ranking school were significantly more modern than their counterparts in the low-ranking school.
It clearly indicated that it was not the denominational character, but the school rank, which brought about differences in the modernity score of the students.

The level of education was positively related to the student modernity in all the three schools, irrespective of the setting (rural or urban). The average yearly gain in the modernity score was larger (+3.13) in the case of the high-ranking school than that (+1.85) in the case of the low-ranking school.

This correlation between the level of education and the student modernity was independent of the intervening variables, such as sex, age, domicile, socio-economic status, urban experience, and media exposure.

The dimension-wise analysis showed that education was a good promoter of the universalistic and civic dimensions, whereas it was not so conducive to the development of the secular and independence orientations among the students both in the rural and urban settings.

Out of the five indicators of school rank - the dues at the time of admission, the monthly tuition fee, the teacher-pupil ratio, the medium of instruction, and the annual examination results - the first two were found indirectly related to modernity, i.e. through the father’s economic status. With respect to the teacher-pupil ratio, our assumption of inverse association between the teacher-pupil ratio and the student modernity could not be substantiated by the data.
The medium of instruction was found to be significantly related to the student modernity, with the English-medium students scoring over their Hindi-medium counterparts. The results of the annual examination of an institution were indirectly indicative of the students' academic achievement or performance in the examination. A significant positive association was noticed between the student's academic performance (achievement) and his or her modernity score, thus meaning that the brilliant students were significantly more modern than the mediocre students and the dullards.

Out of the other two components of education, viz. the extra-curricular programme and the school organizational climate, the former was found positively associated with the student modernity score at the 2 per cent level of confidence in the high-ranking school. The category-wise analysis showed that it was not the participation in all the extra-curricular activities, but only the participation in the academic (debates and declamation contests) and the cultural activities (music and dramatics), was conducive to a significantly higher score. The school organizational climate was found 'open' in the high-ranking school, whereas it was 'closed' in the low-ranking school. The dimension-wise analysis of the school organizational climate threw light on the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the teacher in the school context.

Among the three sets of intervening variables, viz. demographic (sex, age and domicile); familial (father's
socio-economic status and its indicators - education, occupation and income, the mother's education, the parents' English-medium schooling, and the father's modernity); and developmental (mass media and its channels - newspapers, magazines, the radio and the movie); only the sex out of the demographic set, and the father's income and the parents' English-medium schooling among the familial variables were found to be significantly related to the student modernity. The boys were found more modern than the girls. The father's high income and the parents' English-medium schooling were associated with the students' higher modernity score.

**Discussion**

The data substantiate the basic hypothesis of positive association between the secondary school education and the student modernity in the Indian context. Apparently, this finding properly fits in with the established conclusions in the literature on modernization that education is a powerful and independent predictor of student modernity, although there are a few exceptions (Saunders, 1969).

The level of schooling was found positively associated with student modernity in all the schools, irrespective of the surroundings (rural or urban). But the education in the high-ranking school earned a higher premium (+3.13) as an average yearly gain in the modernity score of the students in comparison with that (+1.85) in the low-ranking school.
It means that both the level of education and the school rank affect the modernity score. This finding is in disagreement with the observations of Feldman and Newcomb (1969) who, while studying the educational effects in America, have laid emphasis on the level of schooling for marking differences on all sorts of personal qualities to the negation of the contribution of the type of schooling. It also rejects the conclusions of Himmelweit and Swift (1969), and Kerckhoff (1975) who have noticed marked differences in outcomes for similar British students between grammar and secondary modern schools, thus suggesting the effect of the type of schooling only to the neglect of the level of schooling achieved. The dimension-wise analysis suggests that the school education was a good promoter of the universalistic and the civic dimensions of attitudinal modernity. The reasons for the promoted dimensions are explicable in terms of the rules and regulations, and the system of schools: first, generally no discrimination is made in the schools among the students on the basis of caste, creed, colour or birth. They all sit and read together, and participate in the school activities as a corporate group; second, the education imparted is information-loaded; third, the students are likely to be more exposed to the press and other channels of mass media, because such facilities are available under the school system. So these factors are likely to promote the universalistic and the civic dimensions among the school students.
The study further indicates that the teacher's overall modernity was ineffective in inculcating higher modernity in the students. The reasons for this ineffectiveness may be attributed to the conditions prevalent in the school system, and they are as follows: first, the contact between the teacher and the pupil is limited only to the area of intellectual development in a given subject, rather than to the sphere of all-round development of the personality of the latter; second, the relationship between the teacher and society has become contractual, and he is also like one of the other employees, thus affecting the change in his status which might, in turn, have made him indifferent towards the role of character-building of his wards; third, the accentuation of emphasis on the certification aspect of education, has made the teacher examination-oriented. Some more reasons to be enumerated for the ineffectiveness of the teacher are the loss of traditional esteem, the discrepancy between the status and the role, the persistence of authoritarian orientation, the impersonal character of the teacher-taught relationship, the lack of creative participation by the learner in the teaching-learning process, the lack of involvement of the teachers in designing the courses and the curriculum of studies, the burden of extra responsibilities, such as the collection of fees, the issuance of receipts, the marking of attendance, the preparing of progress reports, the supervision of extra-curricular activities, etc., and the teacher's individualism, the lack of touch on the part of the teacher.
with contemporary science and knowledge, the inadequacy of the old methods to handle the new and complex situations.

The dimension-wise analysis of school organizational climate has indicated that the causes for the teacher's ineffectiveness lie in the faulty mode of the selection, based on favouritism, and in the induction of such persons into the teaching profession as have no aptitude for teaching. The medium of instruction had a greater relevance to modernity, as the English-medium students had significantly scored over the Hindi-medium students on modernity. It is explicable in terms of the importance attached to English. It is regarded as an international language, and is extensively used all over the world as a means of communication. It is known for its liberal character and a great treasure of knowledge, both scientific and literary.

After dealing with the indicators of school rank, the effect of other components of education was examined. The study suggests that the extra-curricular participation had a restricted relevance to student modernity, as only the participation in the academic activities (debates and declamation contests) and the cultural activities (music and dramatics) was conducive to higher modernity score.

But the finding of a positive association between these two categories of extra-curricular activities and modernity loses much of its importance as the number of active
participants in these categories is very small. If a large proportion of the students is apathetic to the extra-curricular participation, it is indicative of a lack of built-in emphasis on extra-curricular activities in our educational system. In addition, it also indicates that we lack a tradition of positive valuation of such activities.

Getting on to the other factors of student modernity, out of the demographic variables, only sex was found to be significantly related to modernity, with the boys having scored over the girls. This difference in modernity score is understandable in view of the socio-cultural context of the Indian society in which there is a sharp distinction in the roles of the two sexes. Women, in general, are not encouraged to get education equivalent to that of men. They have even been accorded a status inferior to that of men for their being confined to the four walls of the home, attending to domestic chores.

Out of the familial variables, only the father's high income and the parents' English-medium of education were significantly related to the student's higher modernity score in the high-ranking school. The positive correlation between the father's income and the student's modernity is explicable in terms of the dues and the monthly tuition fees. It may be recalled that the amount of dues and the monthly tuition fees were much higher in the high-ranking school than those in the
low-ranking school, and, thus, only the parents with higher income could afford to send their children to the former type of schools. It means that neither it is the dues nor the monthly tuition fee which accounts for the higher modernity score of the student; rather, it is the father's economic status which is positively correlated with the student modernity, as it helps the admission of a son or a daughter to a high-ranking school. Similarly, the parents' English-medium schooling facilitates the child's admission to the high-ranking institutions by providing such a congenial atmosphere at home as may help the students to obtain proficiency in speaking English fluently, and such students are usually given preference for admission to the high-ranking schools over the other categories of applicants.

Taken together, it can be inferred that when the parents' overall modernity does not affect significantly the student's modernity, it is obvious that the familial variables only facilitate the entry of the child into the high-ranking schools.

Among the developmental variables, neither the mass media (composite) nor any of its four channels (newspapers, magazines, the radio, and the movie) was significantly related to the student modernity. The ineffectiveness of the mass media in inculcating higher modernity in the students may be attributed to the governmental control, through censorship
of these agencies. They usually propagate the policies of the government and try to justify its claims. Thus the individual is deprived of many other penetrating and fact-revealing viewpoints. These constraints are likely to impede the development of a rational and independent outlook - a core of attitudinal modernity - in him or her.

**Theoretical inferences**

It can now clearly be gathered from the findings of this study that it is not the family, but the school which is a more powerful predictor of student modernity. The theoretical inferences which can be drawn on the basis of the observations of this study are as follows: first, the educational variables are more powerful predictors of modernity, whereas the familial variables are subordinate to the educational variables, as they prepare the ground for the student's entry into the school; second, the school education does not promote all the dimensions of modernity equally. It is more conducive to the promotion of the universalistic and the civic dimensions, and is less conducive to the development of the secular and the independence orientations; third, it is the rank of the school and not its denominational character which effects differences in the modernity score of the students.
Policy implications

The findings of this study indicate that education up to the secondary stage is positively associated with student modernity. Hence the government should allocate larger funds to promote secondary education and sincere efforts should be made to bring it within the reach of every eligible child. Second, the study shows that education does not promote the secular and the independence orientations as efficiently as it promotes the universalistic and the civic orientations, thus calling for a change in the value-content of the educational system. It should be modified in such a manner that it may be equally conducive to the promotion of the secular and the independence orientations along with other psycho-social dispositions, and, in the long run, may serve as a medium of character transformation. Third, the study suggests that the students in the high-ranking school are significantly more modern than those in the low-ranking school, and the English medium has been found as a powerful predictor of student modernity. It should be the duty of the government that it should go in for quality rather than for quantity. There should be a ban on the haphazard growth of schools, and the high-ranking schools should get preference over the low-ranking schools. Even the former type of schools can be opened in a planned phase, depending upon the availability of funds. Fourth, the conclusions indicate that extra-curricular activities, especially the academic (debates and declamation contests) and the cultural
(music and dramatics) categories have a potential for inculcating higher modernity in the students. It calls for the incorporation of such values in the educational system as may encourage the students to participate in extra-curricular activities without any inhibitions. Fifth, the study shows that the teacher, a key figure in the educational system, is ineffective in infusing modernity among the students. The main reasons for this ineffectiveness are attributed to his indifferent attitude towards the students, which, in turn, has arisen from the faulty methods of selection and from the induction of persons who are not dedicated to the profession of teaching on the basis of access to dignitaries and the consequent favouritism. The government should formulate such a policy of selection as may ensure the recruitment of genuinely deserving and thoroughly dedicated persons to this profession. The criteria for selection should be purely the merit and the teaching aptitude of an applicant. The teachers are likely to be more dedicated if they feel that their voice carries weight in the formulation of courses as well as in governing the schools. A dedicated teacher is also likely to regain his lost esteem.

The teacher can also prove to be an effective tool of change if he feels a sense of job-satisfaction and
need-satisfaction. Therefore the headmasters should try to create such an atmosphere in the schools as may be conducive to these conditions. These conditions can better be created in the 'open' school organizational climate rather than in the 'closed' one.