CHAPTER XIV
SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

Education broadly defined refers to all those activities which aim at educating and preparing the child for the rational and non-oriented participation in the community. Two types of education which community may provide to an individual are (a) education for socialization or socializing of the individual and (b) formal or academic education. Here we are concerned with the latter particularly the schools, that have been established for educational purposes. The objectives of schools may be defined as to help the individual to become informed and articulate, sensitive to life's values and to be able to think and act as a responsible being. It further aims at to train the mind to be disciplined, curious, rational and skeptical. In other words, education aims at orienting the individual towards better citizenship, for better vocation, and teach him to be a better participant in community life.

School and Community

The achievement of school as above mentioned does not depend upon the educational system but also upon the standard of the school. That is to say, the level of education imparted is an important factor for role determination in terms of specificity. It is because the level imparted determines the age of the knowledge seekers and, therefore, the participants and their ability for participation. The age is an important factor in so far as schools undertake activities for community welfare and students participate in those activities. It is difficult for the primary school children to participate in any activity, in which the community may be interested, at their own initiative. They require guidance for which the interest of school teacher in the welfare of the community will be dominant. He can organize the students in certain programmes such as those of cleanliness campaign, propagating the mass education through processions, mass
mass meetings, dramatic activities, and through encouraging the children to take the charge of beautifying the village school. Another mode of initiating change through school is to influence the community at family level, by making the parents interested in the children's education, impressing upon them the need to provide better care and facilities to the children and through creating an urge among the parents to send their children for post-primary education.

The schools in the village has failed to give such psychological treatment to the community and prepare it for sending the children for high education. No programme of community consciousness, or community solidarity has been undertaken by the school. The school undertakes no activity which may bring the school, man-in-the-street, and parents of the children in close contact. The school teachers took no interest in the life of the community and they delimited themselves within the four walls of the school. At the same time the community too has shown no interest in the welfare of the school. This is evident from the complaints of the school teachers that when they approach the people to send their children for studies they put them off or question the economic utility of the education itself.

Indifference of the people may further be explained by the facilities provided in school building. In each village school has one room and rarely a verandha. This is all the space which accommodates the furniture of the school, the members of the staff and the students from first standard to fifth standard. There is no boundary wall and as such tree plantation, gardening or cleaning is not possible. To see the children sitting in the dust with filthy surroundings is not an uncommon scene. In summer they leave the school and seek the shelter of nearby trees to protect
themselves from the heat of the sun. In the rainy season sometimes the teachers have to suspend the classes and in the attendance registers students are shown as present. The villagers take no interest in helping the school authorities to gain better facilities for their children. This seems quite astonishing when the people are quite conscious of the problems of the school.

Table - 1

Distribution of the respondents by problems, specified by them, due to which school is not in a position to render better services to the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems specified</th>
<th>Distribution by community</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No adequate space for the children to sit.</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No grounds for the children to play.</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate funds.</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate staff</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No problem.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know.</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who expressed ignorance of any problem generally fall in the category of labourers, share-croppers and agriculturalists with poor holdings. They were 84.6 per cent, 83.4 per cent, and 83.3 per cent of the total ignorants in the respective communities. Those who pointed out that the school has no problem do not send their children to school, do
not come into contact with the school teacher and do not appreciate the education itself. The high percentage of respondents specified the lack of residential accommodation. This, however, in no way indicates the higher degree of consciousness for education. On the other hand, this was found to be related with the use of some other places of public utility by the school. The non-availability of a particular place for personal or collective use creates high consciousness regarding the residential accommodation. The use of public places by the school checked the noon and noon gathering of the people. Inadequacy of staff were reasoned problems of the school, and inability of the school teachers to look after a large number of students, children, according to the villagers, even when they cross the primary standard know nothing about the elementary things.

School Teacher and the Community.

When the standard of the school is primary one, the role students in the life is exclusively dependent upon the guidance of the school teacher. The teacher has failed in this regard. Besides, the formal education he takes no interest in the community and bears indifferent attitude. Towards any programme of community welfare, according to the villagers, the school teachers have never come forward with any programme which may promote community consciousness. No efforts have been made by them to make the school a centre for enrichment of the lives of the inhabitants. This indifference is reciprocated by the community which takes no interest in his welfare. Even certain obligatory privileges such as seasonal vegetables, field products and fruits which the teacher enjoyed in the past are not granted to him. Barring the relations with the few individuals of influence both the community and the school teachers live in a closed vacuum. Neither the school teacher comes forward to assist
the people nor the people come forward to win his confidence and cooperation.

He is involved in the community to the extent his own interests are involved. So long as students keep coming to the school he is sure of his pay and allowances and he is not worried about community. Proximity of his interaction in the community is limited to the directives given to him from above. For example under the state policy of compulsory primary education school teacher is supposed to visit every house and ask the people to send their children, within the age range of primary schooling, for education. This is the occasion of relationship between the school teacher and the community.

Remuneration in cash and white clothes have special appeal for the village people. In fact to them, a well dressed person is a man of good economic resources with good earning therefrom. So is the impression which the villagers carry regarding the school teacher. When respondents were asked if the school teacher was properly paid, 91.8 per cent, 91.9 per cent, 92.2 per cent and 91.7 per cent of them in respective communities answered that he is well paid and is leading a luxurious life. The rest of the respondents were either themselves in state service, or had their children in one service or another or had their relatives in service or had some knowledge of the jobs. They specified that he is just managing to live from hand to mouth. His well washed dress was interpreted by them as a functional necessity of his profession and subsequently of his status.

The important conclusion which may be drawn from the above analysis is that besides imparting of the formal education, the school and school teacher are not undertaking any activity which may be conducive for community welfare.
Community development has played an important role toward the initiation of education. Much credit goes to the programme under which a fixed amount was set aside for the construction of a village school. Leaving aside the controlled community, in all the communities grant was given and with the voluntary contribution of labour of the people one roomed school had been provided. Different aspects of national planning which are the part of their learning are imparted to the students through the media of books. But their understanding of these aspects is limited to their ability to pass the examination. Beyond this the books have no significance for the students. The teacher, as a trainer of the young mind, takes no pains to make them realize the significance of these plans nor does he encourage them to propagate them at home through their constant reciting to their parents. For these reasons, he has failed to help the people to recognize the importance of education in their day-to-day life. The result is that post-primary is not popular in the village.

Planners in the community development programme rightly visualized the focal position of educating the youth and thus to make the school vital centre of community education. It was realized that it will not be possible for the village to have a competent teacher until the teacher can be better paid and appropriately housed, and the village provides more attractive surroundings and facilities and elevates the teacher to the position of respect within the village. On the other side, the best of India's young men and women will not look at the teaching profession as a career unless and until they can be assured of being better paid, better housed, and provided with challenging opportunities to effectively serve the village in its development1. It was emphasized that the external agents should

persistently guide the people to see the problems of village education in its broader perspective and orient the villagers to give the teacher the proper recognition and respect as person with professional training who has dedicated his life to the village people. The people lack both of these orientational aspects. The non-recognition of the teacher and his non-participation in the community life explain his inability to propagate the programme.

Whereas the school teacher has failed to play the role of a social educator, the external agents have failed to train and orient the teacher to assume such a role so that the teacher could arouse the interest of the pupils, and through them of their parents. The teacher can inspire such confidence only if he assumes the leader's role. For this purpose he, therefore, should win the people. It seems that external agents have failed to make the school the centre of activities and thus to train and help the villagers to strive for progressive village life marked by democratic ideals and cooperative way of living. They, further, have not succeeded to infuse in him the dignity of labour and to assume leader's role. On this account working of the schools has not proceeded beyond their four wall development.

On social frontiers, however, even this humble beginning has certain specific consequences: The low caste people who were denied the facilities of education have started to avail of them. Thus new educated elite is in the process of formation among the hitherto illiterate masses. This process, as we/seen in an earlier chapter, is characterized by great unevenness in different villages. In the educational ladder the distance between high castes on the one hand, and the low castes on the other is still very wide.
Economic factors appear to be of increasing importance in determining educational progress among persons within the same caste as well as among those belonging to different castes.

Consequently, for further progress of education in breadth and depth, acceleration of the tempo of economic progress, embracing the majority of persons, within each caste group has to accompany the efforts at expanding educational opportunities. It is here where external agents have failed. They have not guided the people to send the children beyond primary level nor have facilitated the educational opportunities. In the absence of this, it is feared that education may only promote the elite-mass hiatus in different degrees within the group and among the groups.