Chapter-1
The Problem

1.1. Rationale of the Problem

Social change through education among Scheduled Castes is very widely discussed and studied phenomenon all over the country. Indian society is undergoing transformation from the traditional to the industrial mode in different spheres of life. The consequent changes are taking place in its social structure and institutions like educational system, polity, economic organization and in several aspects of culture. The educational development in a society is vitally connected to all other aspects of development. Education also plays a vital role in bringing about a change in the attitudes of both non-scheduled castes and the Scheduled Castes. The effect of education in changing status identities among the Scheduled Castes, specially their engagement in new and secular occupations as a result of growing modern education and their rise in the social positions which are very much observable in the present time.

M.S.A. Rao (1972: 131-132) considers that education is a major and determinant contributing factor in the socialization of the younger generation which influences the values, attitudes and norms of behaviour accepted in the society to which they belong as also by passing on specific knowledge, skills or occupational techniques.

N.K. Singhi (1979: 20-85) observes that education is an important indicator of the social status. Education affects the process of social change in enhancing
the status of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Change in the context of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe categories imply creating conditions through such appropriate means whereby these people do not continue to remain deprived due to their ascribed status nor due to any institutionalized disabilities.

N.J. Usha Rao (1983:149-231) considers that the role of education as a catalyst or agent of social change has been well recognized, education is said to determine the level of aspirations, technology, productivity, efficiency etc. which constitute some of the basic factors in the process of development.

Many such social scientists highlight that the Scheduled Castes are gaining education which plays an important role in getting higher status which thus contributes to social change. The aim of education is holistic development of all aspects of human personality. Development of persons contributes to the development of groups or societies. So education can play an important role in the overall social development of Scheduled Castes. The Indian Constitution and thereby National government and State governments provide special educational opportunities for them. Despite of many studies, they leave scope for further studies on education among Scheduled Castes and consequent social change as some other consequent processes are also going on fast. Therefore to broaden the base of generalization on this issue further and continuous studies are required. Therefore, this study focuses on the impact of education on social change as education being the main factor in determining social change.
1.2. Statement of the Problem

In the light of the above scenario, the present study focuses on the following specific objectives.

1. To study the socio-economic background of Scheduled Castes.

2. To find out the extent of the increase in education among them over a period of time.

3. To find out the impact of education on social life patterns of Scheduled Castes and to analyze change in their inter-caste relations, untouchability and commensality etc.

4. To find out the impact of education on economic life from past to present generation especially occupational change and income categories.

5. To find out the impact of education on awareness about reservation of posts and seats, political awareness, including their participation in voting, the desire to be elected for seats in the political institutions, participation in voluntary and other political organization etc.

For understanding the first objective some specific issues related to the socio-economic background of Scheduled Castes have been studied in terms of sex, age, marital status, family size, family type, education, occupation of the head of household, income and place of living. In the second objective, awareness of educational facilities, sources of information of educational facilities, use of educational facilities, equal educational opportunity given to girls, causes of not
going to school and dropout, education in the past and the present generation and factors of economic upliftment. The third objective related to impact of education on social life has took note of inter-caste relations including commensality with higher, lower castes, friendship and inter-dining with higher castes, consultation for selection of mates for marriage, inter-caste marriage, advantages of education, age at marriage, views regarding family planning, the number of children, attitude towards rituals performance and celebration of festivals. The fourth objective related to impact of education on economic life has been studied to know the occupational change in the past and present generations, awareness of economic welfare, use of State provision of economic benefits, opportunity to female for jobs, equal treatment among colleagues of other castes, further use of facilities/concession after attainment and opinion about further extension of reservation to Scheduled Castes. The fifth objective includes specific issues related to impact of education on political aspects in terms of voting participation, decision of voting, influenced your decision, awareness of policies and constitutional provisions, participation in Scheduled Castes/ voluntary organizations, aspiration to be a candidate in elections and opinion for basis of reservation.

The above dimensions of the objectives have been studied in a rural setting and also in a segment of a city.

1.3. Terms/ Concepts/ Operational Definitions

Education: The transmission of knowledge by either formal or informal method
is education. Education is relatively an important correlate of socio-economic status. Educational requirements are the prerequisites for entry into higher prestige jobs and into higher income categories, because education appears to play the most important role in the advancement of the Scheduled Castes people, as it will be through education alone that the other two disabilities, social and economic will be resolved. The present study has used the term 'education' in terms of transmission of knowledge by formal method. Role of education in getting higher prestige jobs and into higher income categories and advancement of their social, political, economic status has been a crucial factor.

Scheduled Castes: The constitution does not lay down any specific principles or basis for scheduling. However, it indicates that these will include social groups that are educationally, economically, socially and politically backward. The untouchability of caste is applied as the basis to determine the castes to be included in the list. Those castes that have remained educationally, economically, socially and politically backward due to the operation of the custom of untouchability are included in the Scheduled Castes. As the custom of untouchability is prevalent only among Hindus, only those Hindus castes which are regarded as untouchable are included in this schedule. Thus, in the present study the castes constitutionally listed as Scheduled Castes have been included.

Social Change: A society may be stable, with little change, or may be dynamic, characterized by extensive change. At no point of human history, society had
education and social change among Scheduled Castes, structural-functional approach appears to be helpful. Thus, in this present study structural-functional approach has been used to observe the background and impact of education and social change among Scheduled Castes in terms of economic, occupational, educational and political aspects of Scheduled Castes. The rural-urban continuum perspective has also been used in the study. All these aspects have been studied in a rural and in an urban area, thus the study has made use of comparative approach as well.

1.5. Area of Study

For the purpose of present study an urban setting i.e. a Moholla namely Shergarhi situated near Shastri Nagar of Meerut city in western Uttar Pradesh has been taken up. It is situated towards the eastern part of Meerut city. The population of this area according to 2001 census is 8436, among which 8086 belongs to Scheduled Castes. Scheduled Castes of this Mohalla have shown progress in economic, occupational, political and educational fields. The Sabhasad of Municipal Council of this area belongs to Scheduled Caste.

For the purpose of comparative study a rural setting (a village) situated at about 10 km. from the city has been selected. Such a village namely Hasanpur Qadim is selected for study. Its approximate population is 3065 among which 1325 belong to Scheduled Castes. Pradhan of the village belongs to Scheduled Caste. Thus, here also the Scheduled Castes have shown some change
in their social position.

1.6. Universe and Sample

From the selected area where a number of Scheduled Castes have shown social change, at the first stage some case have been identified who have shown social, occupational, educational and political change in the region (exploratory study has indicated such social change through education, Hemlata Sharma: 2002).

At the second stage, specific intensive field work have been undertaken in the proposed village and the urban area, about 100 families and three case studies in each setting have been selected for the study. Thus, total 200 families and 6 case studies have been from the two selected areas.

1.7. Methods of Data Collection

Empirical data have been collected with the help of specific research techniques like observation, interview, personal records and secondary records. Secondary records have been consulted from the local, Block and District head quarters and other government’s records. Quasi participant observation and case study methods have also been used for collecting first hand data. Primary data from approximately 200 households in the urban and rural area have been collected by using observation, interview and interview guide/schedule.

1.8. Methods of Data Analysis

For the purpose of data analysis and interpretation, two methods namely -
been completely static, “Social change occurs in all societies as a continuous process which is manifested by alterations in social relationship” (Shah and Shah, 1998: 297)

K. Davis (1948:6-22) has defined, “Social change means only such alternation as occur in social organization that is the structure and function of society.”

Social change means changes in the structure and function of society. The present study has used the term social change, in terms of change in social life patterns, education, economic aspects, occupation and political aspects of Scheduled Castes. In the present study, the change as an impact of education has been understood as change in social life patterns in terms of commensality with lower, higher and same castes, rituals performance and celebration of festivals etc. Consequential change of education has been observed in terms of land holding in the past and the present; achieving Government and private jobs in the past and the present; educational change itself over the two generations at least; participation and achieving political positions at the local, regional or state level over the generations. These have constituted the operational dimensions of education and social change.

1.4. Perspectives/ Approaches

To study historical and educational background of Scheduled Castes, historical approach has been used. To analyze the consequences or impact of
qualitative and quantitative have been used. The facts collected through observation, interview and case studies have been analyzed through qualitative method of analysis. The findings drawn from it were presented in ascending order related to the proposed objectives. Data collected with the help of observation, interview and interview guide/schedule from two hundred households have been analyzed through quantitative analysis. Simple classification, tabulation, proportions have been used to arrive at the findings.

The findings of both qualitative and quantitative analysis have been matched and supplemented by each other to arrive at the final findings.