

#### PROEM

Memoir: During the years 1965-67, as a research staff, I got the opportunity to travel most of the districts of West Bengal for collecting data for constructing a Development Norm of preschoolers -- a project undertaken by the National Council of Educational Research & Training (Delhi) and Department of Psychology, Calcutta University. The Supervisor of my present investigation acted as a Team Leader of the said project where I worked under him throughout the term of assignment. By this time we lost two great leaders of our nation -- Jawharlal Neheru (Ex. Prime Minister, India) and Dr. B. C. Roy (Ex. Chief Minister, West Bengal). Their death shook for the first time the post-independence political foundation of our country -- at the central and state level, respectively. By 1968, the ruling political party of our State (Indian National Congress) had to leave administrative control over the State being defeated by the growing Leftist Parties in a General Election, by majority. An United Front Government was formed jointly by the Leftist parties and that lived for a short span and then the State was placed under President's Rule. This was followed by the formation of another United Front Government with eight Leftist Parties to control West Bengal administration and that too lived for a short time and there was President's Rule once again. This enmarked a clear socio-political disturbance

and instability in our State. It was during that period the student unrest problem under the leadership of vandilists shattered the peace and tranquility of the citizens, disrupted the law and order of the State, and charged the environment with spites against administration. This crisis was handled with great caution by our Central Government and there was another General Election, the Leftist Parties were defeated by the Congress once again and as a ruling party took over charges of our State administration; but the volcano of tensions and discontentment of common people with apparent inactivity started frequent outbursting to disrupt the link of national progress in different places of our country, with significant frequencies. Our younger generation became the main medium or carriers of this unhealthy trend, as would be evident in comments of several educationists (page-9, Chapter-I).

At this juncture, all concerned with the student welfare programme observed a grave emergence to prevail upon the student community, as a whole, all signs of 'demoralisation' in social life — a deficit in healthy group-spirit for integrated life and action and self-confidence to steer through for building up a prosperous society keeping pace with national ideology — "lowering the morale" (Chamber's Dictionary, 1952). Everybody concerned became interested to know the exact nature of their attitude about the major issues of their social life, major spheres of their life, that they perceived during social interactions, that they stored in their cognitive frame of reference for, tackling, confronting situations of their social life, as students.

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Obviously, it became a matter of great interest to me and my Supervisor of the present investigation, some of his colleagues, and who thought of conducting an investigation over West Bengal Sample for drawing up a norm and appraising student population of every district in the light of that norm. In the context of that circumstances, I took up the present investigation under the precious guidance of my Supervisor of the present study, considering my advantageous position at that time with a different assignment, as a social science staff, in a Centrally sponsored Rural Housing Project. At that time I had no idea of doing the work for a Doctoral dissertation. I discussed the matter with my controlling officer (Director of the Project) and obtained his kind consent to carry out the present investigation in addition to my work in the Project.

Milestone: I started my present work by the end of 1971. It took a shape by 1973. Then I was encouraged by my Supervisor to submit my plan for Doctoral thesis to the University of Calcutta for approval (page-21, Chapter-II). By October, 1975, I became able to develop the Social Morale Inventory and get that ready for collecting data over West Bengal Sample. The overall situation of our State, rather our country, was maintaining the undercurrent of the same trend in regard to the student population, in particular. I started collecting the data from January, 1975 and completed my work by December, 1975. The major period of my data collection came under National Emergency Period. Fortunately, I got unthinkable cooperation, assistance, and all sorts of facilities from all the Heads of Institutions in all the districts of our State,

whom I found equally interested about the objectives of this investigation.

Acknowledgment: The colourful picture of the pleasant as well as naughty smiles of those students, who gave me best opportunities to know them, flashes off and on in my mind. During collection of data their simplicity, curiosity and inquisitiveness will remain ever fresh in my memory. My sweetest thanks to them for their handful cooperation.

I take the privilege of scyolling my humble and sincere thread of gratitude to my respectful teacher Professor S. N. Roy, Head of the Department of Applied Psychology, Calcutta University, for his blessings and encouragement during the present investigation.

In covering the vast field of my investigation, a host of personalities, officials of the Government, Associations and public bodies I have come across. I must acknowledge my deep sense of gratitude to all, specially to Sm. Amala Saren, Hon'ble Deputy Minister of Education, Government of West Bengal, Deputy Directors of Public Instruction (Secondary Education; Womens' Education; Physical Education & Youth Welfare), Secretary of the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, President of the Headmasters' Association and Heads of the Secondary Schools of all the 16 districts of West Bengal along with the teachers concerned, for their sympathetic cooperation and valuable suggestions, which I shall always count as helpful contribution to my goal.

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I also like to record a sense of debt and thankfulness to Professor T. Moulik of the Department of Mathematics, B.E. College, and Sri N. Deb, Sm. K. Bhattacharyya, Sri M.K. Modaknag, Sri S. Sen, Sri A. K. Bhattacharyya, Sri P. K. Palchowdhary and Sri N. N. Bhattacharyya for their kind help towards the processing work of the dissertation.

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inspiration, his prudential judgement and unstinted support, his persuasive drive and continuous counsels with never-failing smiles, emboldened me to traverse the trials and tribulations in crystalising the multidimensional outcomes of the present investigation. I am humbly aspiring to remain as his student-associate for ever.

With this proem and admitting my limitations of professional knowledge, I am submitting my present dissertation work to my learned examiners for their wise opinion about the fruit of my present endeavour for knowing our school students from a particular angle. I beg to be excused for some unforeseen lacunae or redundancy that may be detected by the learned examiners and other experts while evaluating the merit of this dissertation.

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