

## Education of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minorities

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### INTRODUCTION

Education in India has historically been the property of the few. Since educational development took place within the framework of a stratified social system, it has always been focused on the needs of the privileged ones. The status of education for various clientele groups is dependent upon their socio-political profile in a given society. The Indian society has over a period of time undergone a process of continuous degeneration, namely, from Varna Vyavastha to the caste system. The present day Indian society is therefore, divided into various caste groups which interact within their own formations with the result that those with a high educational profile continue to be in an advantageous position, and those who were disadvantaged once continue to remain so. Of these the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes form the largest part.

Education is directly related to the development of a country. Efforts are being made both by the Union Government as well as state governments to provide numerous facilities to the disadvantaged groups with a view to bring them at par with the various advantaged groups. Opening of schools in habitations with a higher concentration of disadvantaged population, free education, merit scholarships, attendance scholarships, free uniforms, midday meals, and providing coaching classes to the needy children are some interventions which aim at increasing the enrolment and retention of Scheduled Castes

children in school. Besides the government there are various welfare and non governmental organisations that have also put in significant efforts to raise the educational level of the disadvantaged population.

The Scheduled Castes alone are not the only disadvantaged group in Indian society. Equally important are the Scheduled Tribes who by themselves are a substantial section of our society. Somehow Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are erroneously clubbed together but there is a significant difference between the two. They have in fact different educational needs and educational problems. While the Scheduled Castes have been an integral part of the Hindu system, each Scheduled Tribe has its own unique culture and has been cut off from the mainstream for a long time.

The two groups also differ from each other in terms of group dynamics. Scheduled Castes children, because of their socio-economic conditions, find it hard to be in schools. Though this group comprises about 15% of the country's total population, their proportion among the poverty groups is much higher. About 52% of all Scheduled Castes workers are agricultural labourers, and only 28% are cultivators (mainly small and marginal farmers and share-croppers). In the western part of the country, almost all the weavers are from the Scheduled Castes, even as in the eastern parts, all fishermen are. Unclean occupations like scavenging, flaying, tanning, etc., are almost entirely monopolised by the



Scheduled Castes. In the urban areas, a large population of the poor people like rickshaw-pullers, cart-pullers, construction labourers, *beedi* workers and other unorganised non-agriculture workers belong to the Scheduled Castes. Most of these people survive below the poverty line. This grinding poverty makes them force their children into the job market or engage them in jobs they themselves were doing. Girls in such families are usually entrusted with the work of looking after young siblings while their parents are away at work. All these circumstances have forced these children to remain out of school. The Scheduled Tribes children find their schools 'alien' places which are radically different from their homes and other community places. In their case there is a difference between the language spoken at home and at school. In general, the tribal people have developed apathy towards the education of their children. While the pressures of subsistence economy have been partly held responsible for this indifference, the perceived value of education in the context of the needs of the tribal society, and the incongruence between the skills and abilities nurtured among children in their economic-cultural settings and those imparted in schools seem to be more important reasons. These reasons vary from culture to culture and region to region. The educational programme of the school in a given state is primarily modelled by the predominant culture of the state. Efforts towards modifying the educational programme to suit the needs of the tribal child and the tribal community and, also, the tribal culture is a relatively recent phenomenon. One should not be very surprised to find many schools in tribal regions with very thin or no attendance of students. High rates of absenteeism and drop-out of tribal children at the primary school stage are noticeably evident even in the case of the relatively advanced tribal groups or those which have been in contact with the outside world for a long time. The teacher component in such schools is also a significant component of education which has affected the process of educational development of tribal people. Posting

of non-tribal teachers and non-qualified, non-motivated teachers in these schools has exerted a negative valence on the motivation of the tribal people to send their children of schoolgoing age to the places of learning.

Education is both a tool as well as a factor of production owned and used by individuals according to their ownership intensity both as a means and process. Unfortunately, in education management groups most of the perceptions about Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have not originated on sound information and reliable data. This has further resulted in creating material and psychological barriers in their way to progress. In the case of poor Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes individuals, their economic status, which was as it is very low, transformed their social status making them even more vulnerable to others. To fight the social and economic injustices perpetrated by the advantaged sections of society such individuals need to develop survival competencies. In such a caste-based society, competitive competencies are invariably possessed by the advantaged groups; thus they keep on passing relevant information and knowledge to the advantaged few alone. This type of arrangement therefore institutionalises differentiation between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. This problem is evidently more grave in the case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes girls because they are doubly disadvantaged. Their role in a family's development, in general, and its, economic development in particular, is normally perceived as an appendage to the male efforts; her education has, therefore, inevitably suffered. Of late, education of girls has been of great concern to our educational planners and administrators.

Besides Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, education of the minority groups has also been at the centre of the Indian educational scenario. Contemporary sociologists define minorities as that group of people who are perceptibly differentiated from others in the same society by race, nationality, religion or language, and who, in turn, endorse this perception. They also, generally, lack power, and hence are



subjected to certain exclusions, discrimination and other differentiated treatment. Two important components, of this definition are attitudes; one of group identification from within the formation, and the other of prejudice from, and behaviour of, the self segregated from within, and of discrimination and exclusion from without. Despite this clear-cut definition of minorities, the popular usage of the term solely emphasises on the quantitative aspect. McKee (1969) has laid stress on the participation aspect of minorities when he says that minority refers to "those members of society who cannot participate fully and equally in all phases of social life because of race, religion and/or national origin". Sociologically, it does not make any sense to say that a particular community may not be treated as a minority in case of a particular country because it has a large population, while it could be a minority in another where their population is very small.

It was in Europe that the term 'national minority' was used for the first time to refer to various national groups who were identified with particular territories by virtue of long residence in them but who had lost their sovereignty over these territories to larger groups of a different nationality. Laws were made to regulate the existence of minority groups and the dominant nationality group regarded them with suspicion. But a minority does not have to be a traditional group. Sometimes, a specific occupation, hereditary or otherwise, is the cause of giving the status of minority to a group. Language and religious variations may not even be noticed; they become significant in the wake of frequent political events, and get sharpened in the process.

In the case of India, Marwaris (money lenders) were a minority group until the late eighteenth century on the basis of the occupation they took up. Buddhists in India are another minority group owing to their religion being different from that of the majority. But in the case of the United States there exists no majority group which has a special claim to American nationality; therefore, no minority group can be identified on the basis of its national origin. The minority group in the

USA has not been permitted to assimilate with the mainstream; that is why it is called the minority group. These religious minorities, linguistic minorities and other minority groups are sometimes prevented from exercising the full political privileges held by the majority group citizens and are not given an equal status with the majority in the application of law. It thus becomes imperative to protect their interests *vis-à-vis* the majority groups, and, therefore, attempts should be made to bring them at par with the majority groups even in a secular system. (*International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* 1968.)

The researches done on minorities are of two types. One is the ethnological type of study where the ethnologist is concerned with describing the culture of a specific society where the society is the minority group. Such a study has to consider its subject group living in physical proximity to one or more other groups. On this approach, the institutions, the customs and the daily life of a minority group are considered. The other type of study is sociological, where the attention of the researcher is concentrated on the relationship between the minority and the majority groups, and the relationship between the two is analysed in terms of general processes, such as conflict, accommodation and assimilation. Sometimes this relation is studied as a social problem with special emphasis on the aspects, causes and results of discrimination and prejudice. The largest number of such studies conducted in different countries are of a highly specialised nature, such as studies of history, demography, economic status, political and legal rights, educational attainments or other achievements, etc. There are also studies of prejudice, group identification, social change or other such broader concepts but the sample of the population is usually very small. These studies have been used in different contexts to explain sociological, economical or educational phenomena.

Literacy is one of the basic indicators of the prosperity of any social group. The national literacy rate for the Scheduled Castes, according



to the 1991 Census is 37.41% as against the national literacy rate of 52.21%. The same is the case of the Scheduled Tribes, their literacy rate being even lower than that of the Scheduled Castes, i.e. 29.60%. The drop-out rate of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for the years 1989-90 at the primary and middle stages has been stated as 49.03% and 67.62%, respectively. This figure at the secondary stage is even higher than those at the primary and middle stages, i.e., 79.42%. The drop-out rate for the Scheduled Tribes for the same year, i.e., 1989-90 is even higher than that of the Scheduled Castes. In the report of the Ministry of Human Resource Development for the year 1994-95, it has been declared to be 63.8%, 79.35% and 86.28% at the primary, middle and secondary stages, respectively for the year 1989-90. The drop-out rates of Scheduled Castes for the year 1989-90 at the primary, middle and secondary stages have been reported as 49.03%, 67.62% and 79.42% respectively which are certainly lower than those for the Scheduled Tribes. Since education is an important factor of production, an individual's mental and physical ambience is decided by his/her access to and possession of it. Within these groups, also, the literacy rate of females is lower than that of the males. Even the drop-out rate for Scheduled Castes boys and girls at the primary, middle and secondary stages are different, the difference being 7.81%, 8.81% and 7.59%, respectively. Same is the case with the Scheduled Tribes children. (1991 Census) There are a number of districts in India where the literacy rate for Scheduled Castes girls is below 2%.

Enrolment is also an important indicator for measuring the educational development of the various groups in a society. A study of the enrolment ratio for the Scheduled Castes in the past ten years shows that there has been a considerable improvement in their enrolment. The ratios for Scheduled Castes girls also shows an increasing trend but as stated above there are still a number of districts where the literacy rate for Scheduled Castes girls is below 2%. The total enrolment ratio for Scheduled Castes boys

and girls for the years 1993-94 was 123.33 and 91.15, respectively, for Classes I to V, and 74.21 and 45.01, respectively, for Classes VI-VIII.

Within the Scheduled Castes group, there exists a wide discrepancy among various sub-castes groups in terms of their educational status. In other words, the Scheduled Castes group is not a homogeneous group; hence, the educational development of various sub-groups has taken place at a varied pace. This difference could be seen in inter-state and intra-state sub-castes groups; for example, the educational status of Scheduled Castes girls in Kerala is likely to be better than non-SC boys in some of the more backward states and districts. As has been said earlier, various interventions planned for the educational upliftment of Scheduled Castes children have resulted in higher enrolment of Scheduled Castes children, specially at the primary stage. The participation of Scheduled Castes children in educational activities is now more or less in proportion to their share in the population at the primary level but the drop-out rate of this population is alarmingly high. The gender disparity within the Scheduled Castes group is also noticeable. The National Policy on Education 1986, provides for many strategies for achieving universal access to education. One such strategy is to shift attention from enrolment to achievement. Recently, one of the main concerns of educational planners and administrators has been to raise the level of achievement of all children, including children coming from the disadvantaged sections of society.

The quality and level of achievement of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children have drawn the attention of both educational planners and researchers. Recently, a series of studies have been conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training to support the preparation of district educational plans under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). All the studies have shown that the achievement and level of achievement of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children have been much lower as compared to those of



other children attending the same school. Even the various interventions planned for them have not been able to bring up the level of their achievement as is shown in a study conducted by Seshadri, C. and Ramamani (1995). The researchers found that the nature and proportion of variations of Scheduled Castes children's home language from the textbook language and the teachers' language affects children's linguistic achievement. The findings suggest that the SC dialect is a cohesive linguistic system with all the necessary linguistic contents, and the study recommends a general approach to tackle the problem of the educationally disadvantaged, advocating "change the child and change the school". Another study by Rath, K.B. and Saxena, R.R. (1995) focused on the difference between SC/ST and non SC/ST students in terms of mathematics and language achievements and identified the pupil and school-level factors contributing to this difference. They found that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students score lower than non-Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Tribes students in both the subjects. Father's education contributes towards improving achievement of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes students. In mathematics, the achievement gap does not vary significantly across schools, but it does in language, both in Karnataka and Kerala. It was also found that testing and feedback provided by the teacher tend to reduce the gap between the achievement of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and non-Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes students in language.

DPEP studies conducted by the NCERT to study the effects of various variables and interventions on the achievement of tribal children also show similar results. Rath, K.B. and Jangira, N.K. (1995), in their study, focused on the school input differences in the primary school and on different levels of concentration of Scheduled Tribes students. The data collected under a base line assessment study of six states (1,502 schools) was analysed. The study found that in some of the states, schools with a high concentration of Scheduled Tribes students had

less of pukka building facilities, availability of furniture and equipment, safe drinking-water and toilet facilities, instructional aids and, pre-school facilities; and more underqualified teachers, teachers with lesser number of days of in-service training, less experienced teachers, and more use of multi-grade teaching. Ambasht, N.K. and Rath, K.B. (1995), in their study titled, 'Effect of Household, Community and School Factors on the Enrolment, Retention and Achievement of Scheduled Tribes Children at Primary Level', studied the effect of the cluster of household and school factors on achievement of Scheduled Tribes children. They also tried to study the inter-state difference in terms of their impact on the achievement of tribal children. The study suggests that suitably designed research is needed to understand the effect of home background factors such as parental attitude, parents, their education, the language spoken at home, and economic condition of the family on the Scheduled Tribes child's achievement, as well as factors like school timings, medium of instruction, and tribal/non-tribal teachers. Another study conducted by the author of this paper (1995) studied 'Effectiveness of Various Interventions for Improving Tribal Education (Enrolment, Retention, Drop-out and Achievement)'. She found that most of the interventions planned for the education of tribal children are welfare measures and are aimed at increasing their enrolment and retention and decreasing the drop-out rate. No specific intervention, except merit scholarships, aims at increasing the level of achievement of tribal children. Only one state, i.e., Madhya Pradesh, has an academic intervention in the form of training of teachers working in tribal areas, which has been planned to increase the level of achievement of tribal children. Reddy, V. Eswara (1995), through his case studies, conducted under a baseline study in Andhra Pradesh, suggests that the various interventions planned for improving the achievement of tribal children need systematic follow up to ascertain their impact on learning achievements. The study of Saxena, R.R., Singh, S. and Gupta, J.K. (1995)



titled, "School Effectiveness and Learner's Achievement at Primary Stage", also found Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children to be lower than non-Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes children in terms of their achievement in language and mathematics.

### EDUCATION OF THE MINORITIES

In almost all the countries of the world, special steps have been taken by their governments to protect the interests of the minority groups, be they linguistic minorities or religious minorities. As has been said earlier, no religious group may be treated as a minority in a country and a non-minority in another country. Muslims (and certain non-Muslims) have already been covered as a religious minority in the trend report written by Prof. Sachchidanand on 'Research in the Education of the Disadvantaged' published in the *Fourth Survey of Research in Education (1991)* and still continue to be the single largest religious minority in India. Their standard of living is much lower in comparison to that of other communities. The educational backwardness of this community was recognised and highlighted by the Aligarh Muslim University Inquiry Committee in its 1961 report. The Committee said that this was due to the community's neglect of modern education. It also noted that Muslims had a violent prejudice against the present day Western education system. The National Minorities Commission recommended that action should be taken to provide adequate opportunities to the minorities for admission in colleges, especially professional colleges. This could raise their level of living.

There are two main programmes of the Ministry of Human Resource Development for the education of the minorities: one, an intensive area approach to education which has covered all the minority concentration districts, and two, the modernisation of *Madarssas*.

Researchers interested in this area have studied the curriculum in the Muslim education institutions of India from the period of the Turks and the Afghans to the modern period. Some

of such studies reported by Khan, Mohd. Sharif (1990) are those of Sufi (1941), Shalabi (1954), Qureshi (1960), Ahmed (1985), and Rizvi (1986). Shalabi (1954), Qureshi (1984), and Rizvi (1986), have also covered the teachers working in these institutions and their methods of teaching. Modernisation and the relevance of Muslim institutions have also been researched into by Saquib (1983), Qureshi (1960), and Rizvi (1986). This continues to be an area which many researchers are still trying to explore with a view to bring about harmony in the various educational systems.

### MAJOR AREAS AND SUB AREAS

Though the educational problems of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are very different in nature, they have been studied together by some researchers with a view to study the educational problems of these two main disadvantaged sections of our society. These researches and researches on the education of the minorities have been conducted for various levels, i.e., D.Litt., Ph.D., M.Phil., or as independent studies. Some of the studies are available in book form. The total number of studies conducted in this area is 93, and the largest number of studies, i.e., 50% of them, were conducted for the award of the Ph.D. degree.

Since most of the studies have covered more than one disadvantaged section of society, it becomes difficult to classify them under Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes studies. Therefore, for the present purpose, these studies have been classified as studies in:

1. Education of Scheduled Tribes (26)
2. Education of Scheduled Castes (8)
3. Education of Deprived and Disadvantaged Groups (8)
4. Education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (10)
5. Comparative Researches on Education of Scheduled Castes and Other Castes Groups (10)
6. Comparative Researches on Scheduled Tribes and Other Castes Groups (14)



7. Comparative Researches on Education of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Castes (7)
8. Comparative Researches on Education of Backward Classes and Other Castes Groups (6)
9. Education of Regional Minorities (4)

### Researches on Education of Scheduled Tribes

The researches conducted on the education of tribals are available at various levels, i.e., D.Litt. level (1); Ph.D. level (14); M.Phil. level (3); and Project Report level (6). One study is also available in the form of a book, and one falls in the category of 'miscellaneous'.

Malhotra, O.P. (1992) studied the impact of education on Nicobarese tribal life and adjustment at the post-doctoral level. This study examined the impact of modern education on the social, cultural, economic, political and religious life of the community, including its family structure and organisation. The sample was drawn from 15 villages of Car Nicobar Island, which included both tribal and non-tribal teachers. The data, collected through questionnaire, interview, observation schedule, Likert's Attitude Scale and case studies, showed that the spread of education has brought about changes in the traditional occupations, in the cultural life, in Nicobarese language (dialect), and in their economy and political consciousness, and has also made them more receptive to new ideas.

Out of fourteen tribal education studies conducted by scholars for the award of a Ph.D. degree, five are on the needs and problems of various tribal communities (Abrol, Prem Chand, 1987; Ramana, G.V. 1989; Ekka, E.M. 1990; Biswal, G.C. 1991; Panda, Bijoy Kumar, 1992); three are on tribals' educational problems, educational opportunities and social facilities and educational and vocational interest patterns (Lakheba, S.K. 1986; Prabhat, Chander, 1990; Gaur, C.B. 1990); two are on personality factors (Reddy, Prafulla, K. 1989; Choubey, Madhuri, 1990); and four are on achievements (Sister Majaw, Julia Narayan, 1991; Santera, S.C. 1991;

Mandal, Prithish Kumar, 1991; Tripathy, Prabin Kumar, 1991).

Abrol, P.C.'s (1987) study of constraints in the educability of three tribes—the Gaddies, Gujjars and Bakerwals in the Jammu region—aimed at identifying the out-of-school and in-school constraints in the educability of tribal children as perceived by the community, the students and the teachers. The sample drawn from three districts consisted of 360 heads of tribal families, 499 tribal students and 252 teachers. The data was collected with the help of questionnaire and interview schedule. The results of the study showed that poverty, poor school facilities, parental apathy and inconvenient location of the school were the major constraints.

Ramana, G.V. (1989), for his study titled, 'Problems of Education Among the Tribal Communities of Andhra Pradesh—A Case Study of Ashram Schools', drew a sample of 187 students from six tribal Ashram schools together with their parents and 31 teachers. The study points out that the infrastructure of Ashram schools is poor, the teaching-learning process not satisfactory, and the absenteeism, stagnation and wastage are high. But the researcher found a perceptible impact of the Ashram school on local communities.

Ekka, E.M.'s (1990) study, 'Development of Tribal Education in Orissa after Independence', is a descriptive study which concentrated on issues related to educational facilities, enrolment, literacy, effectiveness of various welfare schemes and the overall educational development of tribals in Orissa. The study indicated heavy drop-out (73.48% at the primary and 84.11% at the upper-primary school stages), poor retention (12.44% at the primary and 15.89% at the upper-primary level), and low literacy (13.50%). The researcher attributes the low level of education of tribals to their inability to derive benefits from various welfare measures planned for improving their education.

Biswal, G.C.'s (1991) study in the same area, i.e., needs and problems of the tribal community,



was an attempt to study the indigenous educational training practices available in the tribal community with respect to their nature, scope, objectives and usefulness, and also the effectiveness of the developmental programmes undertaken for the tribal community. A cluster of six villages in the Niyamgiri-villages ranges, Koraput District of Orissa, which is predominantly inhabited by Dongria Kandhas, was selected for the study. The sample consisted of 50 students, 110 parents, 19 teachers, 60 adults, 30 non-school goers, 20 officials and 225 households. The study identified various problem areas and suggested that educational development of the community needs to be emphasised so that their socio-economic condition, culture, agriculture, health, and life, in general, are enriched. Another study of the same district done by Panda, Bijoy Kumar (1992) was a socio-anthropological survey conducted to study the functions, organisation and impact of the tribal schools on the community. The study has come out with a comprehensive profile of the tribals living in Koraput District. The results show that in spite of availability of various facilities like inexpensive hostels, provision of free textbooks, uniforms, stationery, etc., these schools are not able to maintain a high retention rate and reduce the drop-out rate. The instructional activities in these schools were found to be monotonous and teacher-centered, which resulted in poor student performance at Class V level. Even the parents' responses to the functioning of the school and its relevance to the community was not positive.

All the five studies mentioned above depict a very sad picture of the academic aspects of school education in tribal areas and suggest need-based measures to improve it.

In all the three studies, conducted by Lakheba, S.K. (1986), Prabhat Chander (1989) and Gaur, C.B. (1990), the researchers paid specific attention to the problems and interest patterns of tribal students and the educational opportunities offered to and availed by them in schools. Lakheba attempted to identify the structural variables which impede the spread of

formal education among the Scheduled Tribes, and also studied the educational problems of tribal children. A sample of 404 tribal students (195 middle level, and 29 secondary level) was drawn through stratified random sampling techniques from the junior high schools and secondary schools of Chamoli. He found that tribal girls faced more difficulties than boys in doing their homework but were found to be more adjusted with teachers as compared to their male counterparts. The low achievement of tribal children was attributed to factors like educational backwardness, unfavourable attitude of parents towards education and lack of motivation. Another study, the 'Educational and Vocational Interest Patterns of Tribal Students and Their Relationship with Intelligence, Socio-Economic Status and Educational Achievement' by Chander, Prabhat (1990) was a descriptive study conducted on 232 tribal students of high schools. The data, collected through Educational and Vocational Interest Inventory, Jalota's General Mental Ability Test and Kaul's (1985) Socio-Economic Status Scale, showed that tribal children were more interested in commerce and the medical stream, and less interested in home science and the arts stream as compared to tribal girls; high-intelligent students were found to be more interested in home science and less in commerce as compared to their counterparts in the low-intelligence group. The researcher noticed that high and low achievers did not differ significantly with regard to their educational interest patterns and also showed high scientific vocational interest. When children coming from families with high and low socio-economic status were compared, children with high socio-economic status were found to score high in music and teaching and less in mechanical and clerical vocational interests. The study suggests that more courses, including vocational courses, should be started in the schools situated in the tribal areas so that students could opt for subjects according to their interests. Vocational Guidance Bureaus may also be opened in tribal areas to find out the interests of students so that they could be guided accordingly.



Another study by Gaur, C.B. (1990) studied the difference between the facilities available and facilities utilised by Scheduled Tribes students of various sub communities of the Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan, between 1984 and 1987. The study was conducted on a sample of 400 Scheduled Tribes students of Class VI who belonged to the Mina, Bhil, Garasia, Damor, Baharia and Bhil Mina tribes. The researcher noticed that the enrolment in the initial classes was high but was low in the subsequent classes. An important finding of the study was the existence of hardly any relationship between the school curriculum and the traditional occupation and culture of the tribal population. Only two-thirds and one-third of the facilities provided were being availed by Scheduled Tribes boys and girls, respectively.

All the three studies mentioned above show that administrative and educational interventions are needed to increase the retention and the achievement levels of Scheduled Tribes students.

Two studies on the personality profiles of Scheduled Tribes students are by Reddy, Prafulla K. (1989) and Choubey, Madhuri (1991). Reddy's study aimed at finding out the differences between the personalities of schoolgoing Khasi children of working and non-working mothers. The sample was 432 Khasi children out of which the mothers of 216 children were working, and those of 216 were not working. No significant difference was found between the personality structure of the children from the two groups. Since families with working mothers were financially more comfortable, their children were found to be more independent and responsible. Choubey, Madhuri (1991) also compared personality factors, academic achievement and scholastic achievement of socially high and low deprived tribal youths of Rajasthan but did not find any difference in the personalities and academic adjustment of these two groups.

The two studies mentioned above are the only ones to study the personality of tribal children. More in-depth studies with scientifically developed research designs, and case studies, are needed to be taken up by researchers working in

the area of education of tribal children.

Four studies related to the achievement and educational performance of Scheduled Tribes children are available. The study by Majaw, Sister Julia Narayan (1991) attempted to ascertain the levels of education and other related factors including exploration of the differences between the drop-outs and non-drop-outs among the tribals of Meghalaya. She found that enrolment was the highest at the primary level and went on decreasing at the middle and high school levels. Though, at the primary level the enrolment of boys exceeded that of girls, but it was higher at higher levels. The school was perceived as being more conducive to realisation of their ambitions by urban children, boys and tribal children as compared to rural children, girls and non-tribal children, respectively.

The study by Santra, S.C. (1991) focused on the 'Self-perception, Parental Aspiration, Ability and School Achievement of Santhal Elementary School-children studying in Classes I to V'. Children studying in the lower classes differed significantly from their counterparts in the higher classes in respect of self-concept, achievement-orientation and intelligence, but the parental life and aspiration were not found to be closely related with these psychological attributes though the self-concept of children was found to be significantly and positively correlated with their achievement-orientation. The study suggests that well-designed enrichment programmes are needed to improve the level of school achievement of Santhal children, which is otherwise low.

Mandal, P.K. (1991) studied the 'Impact of Some Psychological Determinants on Educational Achievement of Tribal Students in West Bengal'. The purpose of the study was to develop a standardised scale for measuring the academic motivation of tribal students and to determine the level of academic motivation of students belonging to high and low-income groups of tribal people. The sample consisted of 570 tribal students of both sexes distributed over 12 schools of 3 districts in West Bengal. Another study in this series by Tripathy, Prabin Kumar (1991) is a comparative study of the cognitive functioning,



affective adjustment and academic achievement of Scheduled Tribes children attending special Ashram schools and integrated upper primary schools in Orissa. The study reveals that the tribal children in integrated schools showed a more field-independent cognitive style than the tribal children in tribal schools. No significant difference in terms of academic achievement was found among the three groups. Various factors like occupation, income, education of family, housing facilities and reading time available were found to be positively related to conservation and cognitive style and academic achievement. This study has implications for educational planners as an increasing number of Ashram schools are being proposed by the states to improve tribal education. More in-depth studies of the academic and instructional programmes of Ashram schools and their relevance to increasing the achievement levels of the children are needed.

The two studies done as part of M.Phil. work are in the area of linguistic and population education. The first study by Reddy, M. Sachadeva (1980), 'Spatial Analysis of the Socio-Economic Structure of Tribal Communities in Maharashtra', addressed itself to the influence of social and demographic variables like urbanisation, literacy and population size on participation rate and pattern of economic participation in different industrial categories. The results showed that it is poverty that compels both tribal male and females to work for a livelihood throughout the year.

Pradhan, N.C.'s (1991) study on 'Metalinguistic Competence of Schooled and Unschooled Tribal Children' was conducted on a sample of 120 subjects, with 40 children (20 schooled and 20 non-schooled) each of 7, 9 and 11 years of age. The study showed that schooling promotes metalinguistic awareness in general and gives rise to 9 global constructs.

It is very encouraging to note that eight studies have been conducted as independent studies in the area of tribal education. Out of these eight studies, two are on education systems for tribal children (Talesra, Hemlata, 1988; Bisaria, S. 1991), one on tribal students (Mehta,

Perin H., Bhatnagar, Asha and Jain, V.K. 1989), two on educational facilities available to tribal children (Bhargava, S.M. 1989; Gaur, Ashwani Kumar, 1989), one on effect of education on tribal people's socio-economic mobility (Awasthi, B.P. 1987) and two on achievement (Shah, Beena, 1989; Lata, Manju, 1992).

Talesra, Hemlata's study (1988) is on 'Tribals and Education: A Quest for Integration in the Regional Mainstream', and was financed by ERIC, NCERT. The study aims at analysing the role of modern education in integrating tribals with the mainstream and also attempts to identify the regional-level areas in which integration of various tribal groups in Rajasthan is required. The study very rightly suggests that there is a need to develop an alternative model for tribal education, which should, on the one hand, help the tribals to preserve their ethnicity, and, on the other, speed up their integration with the regional society. Special courses oriented to technology rather than agriculture and a co-curricular package of activities should be made available to tribal students. The methodology of education in this context requires a wide structural transformation. Bisaria, S.'s (1991) work on 'Need-Based Ecologically Determined and Change Oriented System of Education for a Group of Tribals—the Gaddis of Himachal Pradesh' is a probe into the overall background of the search for alternative systems of education for the tribal population in order to build the educational circle with concentric force applied on diversities for nation-building. The study was carried out in the Chamba and Kangra Districts of Himachal Pradesh. It was found that their culture is undergoing radical transformation under the impact of the dominant culture and the media, and the speed of change is rather fast. Agriculture is no more rewarding for them for many reasons, lack of tradition being one of them, and the next generation is trying to move on to the cities.

A study of 'Home Background and Selected Psychological, Vocational Planning Variables of Tribal High School Students in and Around Shillong' by Mehta, Perin H., Bhatnagar, Asha



and Jain, V.K. (1989) is the only study available in the area of educational and career guidance for the tribal population. A sample of 338 Class XI tribal and non-tribal students (boys and girls) from rural and urban areas was selected for the purpose of the study. The study did not indicate much difference between tribal and non-tribal students of Meghalaya in terms of background and vocational planning characteristics but on general mental ability, socio-economic status and academic achievements, tribal students were slightly inferior to their non-tribal counterparts. As compared to non-tribal girls and boys and tribal boys, tribal girls were found to be more independent in their job values. The basic reason lay in the nature of their society being a matriarchical society. The parents and siblings of such children play a significant role in their educational and vocational planning.

One of the two studies on educational facilities for the Scheduled Tribes of Orissa was conducted by Bhargava, S.M. (1989). It was a survey type of study which revealed that educational facilities were better in non-tribal districts than tribal districts, in terms of school building, number of schools, size of classrooms, literary facilities like libraries, and physical facilities like blackboards. The study by Gaur, Ashwani Kumar (1989) was an ERIC-financed status survey of the special facilities given by the government for the educational upliftment of the tribal population, and it investigated the attitude of teachers and guardians towards this endeavour. The analysis of information showed that the special facilities provided by the government do influence the educational development of tribal children. The teachers covered by the study felt that vacations if declared to coincide with the harvesting season, will bring down the absenteeism in the schools. They also advocated training in self-employment for all tribal students and medical facilities for ailing tribal students.

These two studies have implications for the states of Orissa and Rajasthan so far as planning effective interventions for tribal children are concerned.

Awasthi, B.P. (1987), in his study on the

'Relationship Between Education of Scheduled Tribes and Their Socio-Economic Mobility', selected the sample from Munda, Oraon and Kharia tribes of the Ranchi and Gumla Districts of Bihar. He found that the socio-economic mobility in the Scheduled Tribes increases with the spread of education.

Shah, Beena (1989) explored the educational problems of tribal students and also studied their educational aspirations and achievement motivation. The sample comprised 221 tribal and 116 non-tribal students of Classes VI-XII in Chamoli District. She found that senior basic level tribal students of general schools had more adjustment problems with their teachers as compared to their tribal counterparts. The rate of wastage and stagnation was significantly higher in the tribal group. The facilities in the special tribal schools were also better than those in general schools. One significant finding was that the scholarship money received by the students was being spent by the parents on their higher studies. These findings should be taken into account while planning education for tribal children.

The study of Lata, Manju (1992), entitled 'Academic Achievements of the Tribal and Non-Tribal Pupils of Ranchi City', was aimed at exploring the relationship between the secondary school curriculum and the pupils. A sample of 400 respondents was drawn through the stratified random sampling method from 12 senior schools of Ranchi. (The total number of senior schools in Ranchi was 24). The tribal group consisted of 100 boys and 100 girls, and the non-tribal group also had the same composition. When compared, the two groups showed intra-culture and inter-culture variations in their scholastic achievement. An important finding of the study was that the operating factors behind the scholastic attainments are both cultural and school-environment factors, which are mutually exclusive.

A study of the 'Mishing Tribe of Assam: Some Aspects of Their Primary and Secondary Education' was conducted by Rehman, A.R.M. 1989. This study addressed itself to the



issues of enrolment and drop-out and the relationship between the appointment of teachers and the teacher-student ratio. A sample of 500 families was selected from nine villages of upper Assam selected randomly, and the head of each family was interviewed. The study found that poverty, lack of infrastructure and illiteracy among parents are the main causes of the low enrolment of tribal children in schools. Many students from the tribal community drop-out between the primary and secondary levels and between secondary and college levels. About 22% of the posts of primary school-teachers had also not been filled in.

Das, Achyut's (1991) study on 'Innovative Education in Remote Tribal Blocks: A Search for Contents and Methods' is an innovation which has been carried out through Agradamee in Orissa. It is an experiment in development of education, attempting a pattern of education in the tribal regions of Orissa with community ownership and participation. In these areas, tribal children do not have any access to education and the literacy rate remains abnormally low. The study suggests that community involvement, inculcation of skills, co-curricular activities, local teachers, flexible school timings, teacher training programmes conducted on a regular basis, and an effective supervision are helpful in promoting tribal education.

The research studies mentioned above do not cover all aspects of tribal education. There is a need to identify gaps in these researches so that some more researches could be taken up in future.

### **Researches on Education of Scheduled Castes**

There are eight researches classified under this category, out of which six are at Ph.D. level, one as partial requirement for the degree of M.Phil., and one, a project report. Out of these 6 doctoral researches, one is on the effect of sex, self-consciousness, and variants of feedback, on performance improvement (Srivastava, Neelima, 1992); one on pupil teachers (Sharma, O.P. 1990); one on self-instructional training of SC children

(Rautray, P.K. 1992); and 3 are psychological and educational studies of Scheduled Castes students (Jain, Vidyut, 1988; Singh, Kunwar Harpal, 1989; Aggarwal, Archana, 1992).

Jain, Vidyut's (1988) study of 'Interests and Values of School Students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes' indicated that the correlation between the educational interests of rural and urban students was moderately low. Various caste groups showed very little positive relationship with each other. Variation in sex did not make any difference. Regarding vocational interests, a moderately high positive relationship was found in the vocational performance of rural and urban subjects. The study also showed a significant positive correlation in the values upheld by the Scheduled Castes, the backward classes and the high-castes group but no significant difference was found in terms of values possessed by members of the high-castes and the Scheduled Castes groups.

Singh, Kunwar Harpal (1989), in his study of 'Personality Characteristics and Psycho-Social Problems of Scheduled Castes Students in Rajasthan', used the survey method to collect data on a sample of 450 Scheduled Castes students and 500 non-Scheduled Castes students. The findings showed that Scheduled Castes students were inferior to non-Scheduled Castes students in verbal intelligence, and had more anxiety and less self-control. They were found to be less sober and differed significantly in terms of occupational structure of parents as compared to non-Scheduled Castes students.

'A Comparative Study of Pupil Teachers Belonging to Different Sub-castes Among Scheduled Castes with Reference to Their Achievement, Motivation, Aspirations, Attitudes Towards Teaching and Performance in Training' was conducted by Sharma, O.P. (1990) on a sample of 600 Scheduled Castes pupil teachers studying in seven teacher's training colleges. The researcher found a variation in the pupil teachers' achievement motivation among the nine sub-castes of Scheduled Castes. But the various sub-castes do not differ significantly in their performance in the theory as well as the practice



of teaching. One of the interesting findings was that most of the pupil teachers belonging to the Scheduled Castes aspired to remain in the teaching profession and also engage in social service.

The study, 'Self-Instructional Training of Scheduled Castes Children: A Component Analysis' by Rautray, P.K. (1992), examined the difference in performance of reflective and impulsive Scheduled Castes children on cognitive, problem-solving, teaching ratings of classroom behaviour and reading behaviour, and also the relative efficacy of verbal self-instructional training and the response - cost contingencies, when offered separately and in combination with the remediation of the impulsive cognitive style in Scheduled Castes children. The study also examined the extent to which these techniques could be used to maintain the treatment's effect over time and to generalise across different tasks and settings. The sample for the study consisted of 300 students (195 SC boys and 105 SC girls of Class IV) drawn from 24 rural upper primary schools in Orissa. On the basis of the findings the study concluded that cognitively impulsive children seem to suffer from a high degree of performance deficiency. At the four-week follow-up, both Verbal Self Instruction (VSI) and reinforcement techniques had been found to be effective in maintaining the treatment effects mostly in reading tasks.

Srivastava, Neelima's (1992) study, entitled 'Effect of Sex, Self-Consciousness and Variants of Feedback on Performance Improvement on Three Tasks of Scheduled Castes Adolescents', was conducted to study the effect of these tasks, namely, coding, language and numerical tasks, on their performance. The total number of adolescents selected for the study was 660 (324 males and 336 females). The study demonstrated the salient role of feedback and self-consciousness in bringing about improvement in the performance of Scheduled Castes children. These variables tend to operate more significantly with the increasing complexity of the tasks in the order of coding, language and numerical tasks. The findings also showed a difference in

success rates of these three tasks.

Aggarwal, Archana (1992), in her doctoral research entitled 'Social, Psychological and Educational Study of SC Students Studying in High School of Lucknow City', studied the socio-economic status, academic achievement, intelligence, self-concept and occupational aspirations of Scheduled Castes students. The sample consisted of 225 Scheduled Castes students (150 boys and 75 girls) studying in the secondary classes in Lucknow city. The reference group consisted of the same number of non-Scheduled Castes students. The study found Scheduled Castes students to be inferior to non-Scheduled Castes students in terms of socio-economic status, self-concept, occupational aspirations and academic achievement, but the SC students did not differ from the non-SC students in terms of their intelligence. On socio-economic status, self-concept and academic achievement, Scheduled Castes girls were found to be higher than their male counterparts. Only the occupational aspiration of SC girls was lower than that of their male counterparts.

The study conducted by Mishra, Subodha Chandra (1991) examined the relationship between the education and the social status of Scheduled Castes students of Cuttack District in Orissa. The study attempted to identify the possible factors affecting the social status of Scheduled Castes graduates in Orissa State. It also studied the effect of the changed economic condition on the social status of Scheduled Castes groups as well as the extent to which the attitude of Scheduled Castes groups towards 'self is changed as a result of education'. The researcher found that a larger number of Scheduled Castes respondents were in arts and less in commerce and science as compared to non-SC students, which was attributed to their limited aspirations. Education has a considerable impact on their economic condition, but due to limited aspirations, job insecurity and poverty, the majority of the Scheduled Castes respondents are not encouraged to opt for higher education.

The study conducted by Gaur, J.S. Thukral, C.M. Jain, V.K. Malik, J.P. Ghosh, Papia, Kaur,



Narender and Sharma, Sunita (1988) of the Department of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Guidance of the NCERT, was supported by ERIC. In their study, which is entitled 'Psychological Bases of Educational and Vocational Development of Scheduled Castes Students', the researchers found that non-Scheduled Castes high schoolboys were higher than Scheduled Castes boys in their self-concept as well as intelligence. These differences were more glaring in rural groups. Urban non-Scheduled Castes as well as Scheduled Castes high schoolboys were higher on career maturity as compared to their rural counterparts.

### **Researches on Education of Deprived and Disadvantaged Groups**

Some researchers dissatisfied with limited sampling tend to select larger target groups for their research. The researches reported in this section belong to this type. Researchers like Venkataramana, M. (1988), Pal, Kalyani Rani (1990), Srivastava, S. (1990) Bhargava, Sunita (1992), Srivastava, Anju (1992), and Pal, S.K. and Mishra, K.S. (1991) decided to study both disadvantaged as well as deprived groups in a single sweep. While the disadvantaged sections of society tend to develop competitive skills, the members of the deprived sections struggle to acquire survival skills which are imperative for their very existence in a highly stratified society.

Three studies (Venkatramana, M. 1988; Pal, Kalyani Rani, 1990 and Srivastava, S. 1990) ascertained the vocational needs and occupational choices, social life adaptability and value patterns and self-esteem of students of socio-economically deprived and disadvantaged students. Venkatramana did not find any difference in the vocational needs of pupils coming from disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged families. The sex of the students did not have any influence on their vocational need patterns. Pal, Kalyani Rani (1989-90) found that social adaptability skills were impaired under the influence of the socio-economic deprivations of children who were residents of the State Welfare

Homes for destitute children. This results in the children being handicapped in certain aspects of personal-social development. Srivastava, S. (1990) found non-deprived students to be higher on value patterns and self-esteem.

In another research, using the projective technique (Rorschach test) for the study of individual differences between, and the socio-psychological aspects of deprived adolescents, Srivastava, Anju (1992), found significant differences between the personality traits of low-deprived and high-deprived adolescents. She also noticed that boys perform better in comparison to girls on fifteen personality traits in the extreme groups of deprivation. Bhargava, Sunita (1992), in another study of deprived adolescents, found deprivation playing an important role in determining the locus of control and creativity. Both these studies once again establish the negative impact of deprivation on various aspect of the personality of the individual. All the studies mentioned above were carried out at the doctoral level.

Pal, S.K. and Misra, K.S. (1987-91) took up a research study on 'Cognitive Processes, Academic Motivation, Social Behaviour Patterns and Moral Judgement of Adolescents from Deprived Ecologies', which was financially supported by the University Grants Commission. The sample of the study consisted of 525 students (male and female) of Class VIII of fourteen schools in Allahabad. The study sought to find out the effect of sex and ecological deprivation on the four variables mentioned in the title of the study and also whether deprivation and ecological deprivation are related to these variables. The social behaviour patterns of adolescents from different ecologies were also studied. The results showed that students from deprived and semi-deprived ecologies did not differ in terms of academic motivation. Another noteworthy finding was that ecological deprivation affected all the thirteen constituents of the cognitive processes. This has implications for child-centered teaching and the instructional programme for children of the deprived sections, which demand a different teaching-learning methodology. Ecological



deprivation was found to be negatively related to cognitive processes, academic motivation and moral judgement, but positively related to compliance, dependence, power assertion, ingratiation, social conversation, social passivity, aggression and withdrawal.

Such studies need a very carefully drawn sample as the disadvantaged or deprived section of the Indian population consists of various sub-groups. More studies on the personality interests and cognition of such populations are needed to help educational planners develop need-based instructional and vocational programmes.

### **Researches in Education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**

As has been mentioned earlier, the educational problems of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children are anthropologically very different between the two groups yet both these groups continue to be the largest ones among the disadvantaged groups. The researches mentioned earlier have been conducted exclusively either for Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes but this section deals with researches which have been conducted for these two groups together and which have sometimes attempted to study the differences between the two.

Among the available researches, three fall in this category. Mishra, P.K. (1990) studied the 'Status of Harijans in Tribal and Caste Context'. The study attempted a comparative evaluation of the status of Harijans (Pana and Ganda) in two sub-central regions of Orissa. The study showed that the status of Harijans has changed towards some respectability; they no longer suffer from humiliation, nor are they treated with contempt by their Savarna neighbours in the interactional settings in public life. This could be the cumulative effort of the government and non-government efforts to bring about equality in our society, which is very encouraging. But the results of this study could not be generalised as the study was confined to only two villages.

The results of two other studies undertaken

at the doctoral level, which attempted to study the personality traits and cognitive aspects of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, are available. Bej, Jayprakash (1991) conducted a descriptive study of the general intelligence and creativity of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students on a sample of 492 students (246 Scheduled Castes and 246 Scheduled Tribes, including boys and girls) of Classes V-VII. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students of the higher classes were found to be superior to their counterparts in the lower classes on both the dimensions. Scheduled Castes students were found to be superior to their Scheduled Tribes counterparts in creativity but these two groups did not differ with each other in terms of general intelligence. This could be attributed to the social environment of the Scheduled Castes students. Another study, 'Frustration Tolerance Among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Students with Reference to Some Personal, Educational and Family Related Variables', was conducted by Manharlal, Rajyaguru Balkrishna (1992). He found that boys were more conformative than girls, and all those Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students whose father's educational qualification was higher than SSC were more conformative than their counterparts. He also compared the various groups with each other on other variables.

A study conducted by Elangovan, P. (1989) for his M.Phil. degree is in the area of higher education. The researcher tried to study the problems faced by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in pursuing their higher studies. He found that the factors related to teachers, parents, community, students and economic status, and also other factors come in the way of their academic career. The students did not perceive their teachers to be sympathetic to them at all. They also felt that communal clashes in colleges and hostels and late receipt of scholarships are some examples of the various constraints that they have to face. Venugopal, S. (1989) studied the participation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the adult education programme. The results showed a



significant difference between Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes groups regarding the following factors: psychological, economic, instructional, teaching-learning materials, and miscellaneous.

An independent study taken up by L.R.N. Srivastava (1988-90) was an evaluative study of the 'Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme meant for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Students'. The results showed inter-state variations. The common finding was that not only was the amount of scholarship inadequate, it was not even disbursed in time. It was also found that the money received by the students was spent for purposes other than educational.

A cross-cultural study of 'Reasoning Among Socially Disadvantaged Groups of Children of 0-14 Years' was done by Bhat, Vasant D. (1992). 372 Scheduled Castes (8 to 14 years) and 178 Scheduled Tribes (9-14 years) children studying in Classes III-IX were selected for the study. A Piagetian paper pencil test and Menon's (1986) test of process of scientific inquiry were used. He found that the children of both the disadvantaged groups were lagging behind in logical reasoning abilities but Scheduled Castes boys seemed to be generally ahead of Scheduled Castes girls in this regard. This was not true for the Scheduled Tribes group. Bhargava, S.M. (1988) did a sample study of educational facilities for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan. The study was confined to two districts of Rajasthan, i.e., Bharatpur and Dungarpur. A set of four tools was used to collect information. He found that in spite of the availability of various facilities, participation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children in general and girls in particular was very low.

Sachchidananda and Sinha, Ramesh, P. (1989) conducted a study of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with a view to find out how the educational facilities have been used by the target groups and what types of problems are faced by them in the process of education. A questionnaire was used to collect information. The study suggested reframing of the strategy for the education of the Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes, diverting 50% of the scholarship amount for strengthening school education, making appointments of teachers from the same community in case the school population has more Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students, ensuring availability of facilities to the most disadvantaged ones, and laying emphasis on education of the 'educationally most disadvantaged communities'. The study is now available in the form of a book.

Sharma, C.K. (1991) studied the adjustment problems of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by selecting a sample of 100 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes boys and 100 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes girls of Udaipur. Questionnaire and Personal Adjustment were used to collect the data. The study revealed that girls, and not boys, face adjustment problems in the emotional and academic fields.

More cross-cultural studies and case studies are required in this area. The problems of high drop-out and low achievement of both these groups are still alarming though the problem of low enrolment has been solved to some extent. Studies on the academic and cognitive aspects of learning of these children could also be taken up.

### **Comparative Researches on Education of the Scheduled Castes and other Castes Groups**

This section consists of researches done on Scheduled Castes children and children belonging to other castes groups. Some of these studies have attempted to compare various groups in terms of personality traits, cognitive abilities and achievement. The two studies conducted in the area of creativity have compared Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes students in terms of their creativity. These studies have been described in this section little later.

A comparative study of the academic achievement of Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes students in relation to self-concept and locus of control was conducted by Vyas, Uma (1992) at the doctoral level. She



selected 400 cases of Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes students in Classes XI and XII. The results showed that the two groups differ significantly in terms of academic achievement but not in self-concept and locus of control. The high self-concept group Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes students differed in their academic achievement.

Das, S. (1992) studied the differential ability pattern of advantaged and disadvantaged children, particularly in respect of Level I and Level II abilities of Jensen's model, for his Ph.D. degree. He drew his sample from Brahmin and Harijan primary school-children belonging to restricted and enriched home environment. The socially advantaged children showed better performance in both Level I and Level II tasks.

Two studies were conducted in the area of creativity, values, attitudes and aspirations, at the doctoral level. Singh, S. (1990) compared low and high Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes creative students in relation to their level of aspiration, field-dependence/independence and study habits. He selected 160 Scheduled Castes and 447 non-Scheduled Castes students from Classes XI and XII studying in 15 secondary schools of Rohilkhand region. He concluded that creativity does not influence the level of aspiration. In the case of Scheduled Castes students, on verbal creativity the urban Scheduled Castes science students excelled significantly as compared to their rural arts groups counterparts. Besides, urban Scheduled Castes students were found to be significantly better in picture creativity as compared to their rural counterparts. The difference shows the effect of social environment on an individual's picture-creativity. In another study, Gautam, Rajni (1990) compared Scheduled Castes students with non-Scheduled Castes students in terms of creativity, values, academic achievement and attitudes towards education. The sample included 270 Savarna, 270 Scheduled Castes and 270 backward classes candidates. The various groups were found to be significantly different from each other in personal values, teaching attitudes, achievement and creativity. Another

doctoral research by Gaur, Yashoda (1989) was aimed at comparing personality needs, self-concepts, intelligence and academic achievement of Scheduled Castes and backward classes girls. 272 Scheduled Castes and 272 backward classes girls studying in graduate and postgraduate classes were tested with the help of four instruments. She found that Scheduled Castes and backward classes graduate and postgraduate girl students were lower in intelligence, less aggressive and less dominant than their non-Scheduled Castes counterparts and non-backward classes students. Though they perceived themselves as more confident, they had a feeling of inadequacy and inferiority, and were also found to be emotionally unstable. A significant finding was that Scheduled Castes and backward classes (BC) girl students differed from non-Scheduled Castes and non-backward classes students in all the dimensions of self-concept except in achievement and aspiration. The educational system could make use of their achievement and their aspiration level for promoting their education. Another personality study of Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes students conducted by Mittal, Sadhana (1990) found a significant difference between the two groups in terms of the feeling of inadequacy but on the other dimensions of self-concept there was no significant difference between the two groups. These groups also differed from each other on five factors of personality but not on the other personality factors. The findings of the studies by Mittal and Gaur are in contradiction to each other so far as self-concept is concerned. This area needs further exploration.

In another study on the 'Personality Characteristics and Educational Problems of Scheduled Castes Students', Kakkar, S.B. (1990) found that Scheduled Castes students have all those personality characteristics which are needed for progress in life; rather, they were higher than their non-Scheduled Castes counterparts in vigour and ascendancy; equal to others in cautiousness, personality relations and responsibility; and lower than others in original thinking, emotional stability and sociability.



Regarding the educational problems faced by the Scheduled Castes students, the researcher has suggested that teachers be trained in methods of teaching so that they could benefit by the training.

The only study available in the area of teacher education attempted to explore the relationship of teaching attitudes to intelligence, values and sex among Scheduled Castes, backward classes and other teacher trainees (Maheshwari, P.C. 1989). A total of 426 teacher trainees (233 from the general category, 95 from the backward classes and 97 from the Scheduled Castes) were selected from 10 degree colleges of Rohilkhand University. Maheshwari found that teacher trainees from the general category scored significantly higher on teaching attitudes than the ones from the other two categories. High positive correlation was obtained between intelligence and teaching attitudes between; teaching attitudes and theoretical, economic, social and political values. In the case of teachers from the general category, a positive relationship was found between teaching attitudes and theoretical and economic values while in the case of the backward classes teacher trainees a significant positive relationship existed with all the four types of values.

Moneyamma, V.G. (1991) took up a study to look into the causes and correlates of wastage among Scheduled Castes pupils at the primary stage. The main study was carried out on 260 drop-outs, 260 parents of drop-outs, 200 repeaters and 400 primary school teachers. The data was collected with the help of questionnaire, semi-structured interview schedule and information blank. The enrolment of Scheduled Castes pupils was lower and the drop-out rate and repeater percentage higher than those of other community pupils. The causes and correlates of wastage and stagnation were found to be the same for both the groups.

Gupta, B.S. (1988) conducted a comparative study of educational achievement of Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes students of Class X of Uttar Pradesh. The sample was drawn from 10 Intermediate colleges from 10 districts

having the highest enrolment of Scheduled Castes students. The Scheduled Castes literacy rate in seven out of the 10 sampled districts was found to be lower than the national Scheduled Castes literacy rate, but the Scheduled Castes female pass percentage rate was higher than the overall female pass percentage. In general, non-Scheduled Castes students had performed better than the Scheduled Castes students.

A study of 'Values, Career Maturity of Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Caste High School Boys' was conducted by Gaur, J.S.Thukral, C.M. Jain, V.K. and Sharma, Sunita (1989). Thirty-three schools from four districts of Haryana were selected for the study. The two groups did not differ from each other in terms of either values or the career-maturity scale. The results of this study are in contradiction with the results of the study of Gautam, Rajni (1990), who found a significant difference between the two groups in terms of values.

The differences in the findings of the various studies of attitudes, personality and values may be ascribed to the exposure and educational development of sub-castes. Certain sub-castes within the Scheduled Castes are more advanced than others. The benefits of various welfare measures have also been utilised by them with the result that they have become advanced. The overall development of these castes has also resulted in a higher socio-economic status. In the process of development they have also succeeded in acquiring the characteristics of other non-Scheduled Castes. Sachchidanand in his trend report on Research in the Education of the Disadvantage (*Fourth Survey of Research in Education 1991*) has very rightly suggested in his study that the benefits of the various welfare measures should reach the most backward classes within the Scheduled Castes.

### **Comparative Researches on Scheduled Tribes and Other Castes Groups**

This section reviews the work of researchers who have carried out comparative studies of Scheduled Tribes and other castes with reference to cognitive areas, personality, attitudes,



adjustment and skills.

Two researches conducted at the doctoral level are available in the area of cognitive development. Kharakwal, Meena Kumari (1988) in her study of 'Formal Operational Thought in Tharu and non Tharu Boys', carried out on a sample of 240 subjects (120 Tharu and 120 non-Tharu), found that the development of Formal Operational Thought is affected by the level of I.Q. The Formal Operational Thought scores of non-Tharu subjects were found to be significantly higher than those of the Tharus. This difference was not found in the age-group of 11-12, 13-14 and 15-16 years. The second study, conducted by Mishra, H.C. (1989) aimed at studying the impact of bilingual experience on, the cognitive skills, metalinguistic competence, coding processes and educational achievement of children in a tribal setting of Orissa. The sample consisted of 360 children of the Kond tribe. A number of sophisticated instruments were used for the study. The study found bilingual superiority in respect of abstract and verbal logical reasoning, concrete operational thinking and general memory proficiency and strategies, and also discovered that bilinguals clearly differentiated themselves from unilinguals in the use of two information processing strategies, namely, simultaneous and successive with differences in simultaneous processing appearing relatively earlier in the developmental period. Bilingualism was also found to promote children's metalinguistic competence including their analysed knowledge of and control on a language. On the basis of the research findings it was concluded that the additive bilingual experience was found to be associated with subtle metalinguistic, academic and intellectual benefits for the biligual chilren.

Three studies of achievement and academic motivation were conducted, two in Orissa and one in Rajasthan. (1). Mohanti, S.L. (1989) compared tribal and non tribal children in terms of their intelligence, perceptual, motor and achievement motivation and training. The research consisted of three studies with a 2x2x2 design, having two cultures, two grades (III and

V) and two groups (experimental and control) with 40 tribal and 40 non tribal children. It was found that short-term intelligence, language and motivational training resulted in positive gains but the tribal children's disadvantages of deprivation are so prolonged and the training was so short and inadequate that too much gain could not be expected. Nayak, B.P. (1990), in his study of 'Achievement Motivation and Level of Aspiration of Tribal and non Tribal Children (7-11 age group)', found that, in general, both the groups had a low level of aspiration as compared to their achievement level. The non tribal group was found higher than their tribal counterparts in achievement motivation and level of aspiration.

In another study, academic performance was found significant but negatively correlated with self-concept and level of aspiration but no such relationship was observed between academic performance and academic motivation except on one of its dimensions, i.e., desire for self-improvement (Tripathi, Suresh Kumar, 1990). But this relationship was positive in the case of tribal high achievers. The study also found the tribals to have low academic performance, low self-concept and low level of aspiration as compared to their non tribal counterparts. The study was conducted on an Oriya tribal and non tribal population.

Two studies which focused on a comparison of the mental abilities, occupational aspirations and interest patterns of tribals and non tribals were conducted by Gharmode, K.V. (1990) and Rawat, K.S. (1991). The non-tribal students were found to be significantly higher than tribal students in logical ability and mechanical interests. The tribal students were higher in scientific and outdoor interests. Among the high occupational aspirants, the tribals were high in numerical ability, scientific and outdoor interests, and the non tribals were high on mechanical and clerical interests; among the low occupational aspirants, the tribals were higher in verbal ability and scientific and outdoor interests than the non-tribals.

In a differential study of the scientific aptitudes of the tribal and non tribal pupils in



Chhatisgarh (Sharma, Pushpalata, 1988), the researcher found the tribal pupils to be significantly inferior to the non tribals on a comprehensive scientific aptitude test but significantly superior to them on accuracy of observations at both levels of educational status. However, the non tribals were superior to the tribals on direction of inconsistencies or illogical conclusion, the ability to deduce conclusions at the HSS level, on experimental bent, accuracy of interpretation and caution and thoroughness at the college level. The sample consisted of 200 urban (130 boys and 70 girls) and 200 rural (130 boys and 70 girls) pupils at secondary schools and 50 girls and 150 boys from the Oraon tribe at the college level.

Two attitudinal studies conducted on tribal and non-tribal students are available (Kumar, Nagle Yashwant, 1988; Kumar, Yogesh, 1989). Kumar, Nagle's study aimed at studying the 'Difference in Attitudes Towards Non-Violence, Creativity and Conformity of the Scheduled Tribes and High Castes Students'. It was conducted on a sample of 400 students of Class X who were selected for correlational purposes. Another 100 students of the same class were selected for experimental purposes. The high castes students were found to be superior to the Scheduled Tribes students on verbal creativity and non-violence. Male students were superior to female students on verbal creativity and figural creativity. Kumar, Yogesh selected the adjustment, attitudes, interests and levels of aspiration variables for his study. He concluded that the pattern of vocational interests among tribal and non-tribal students found in the study suggests certain trends with educational implications. There is a need to create interest among tribal students in science and technical subjects.

Two studies are available on the vocational and professional aspirations of tribal and non-tribal adolescents (Jain, Kalpana, 1988; Das, D.G. 1991). Das's study showed that non Scheduled Tribes students were very high in respect to educational aspiration and vocational aspiration levels as compared to Scheduled Tribes

students. Male students were found to be having a higher aspiration level than girl students. Jain, Kalpana found that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes adolescents were comparatively less intelligent and emotionally more unstable, expedient and tense than upper-classes students. The rural students, in general, were dominating, enthusiastic, happy-go-lucky, tough minded, circumspect and individualistic. Within the Scheduled Castes groups girls were found to be better in their intellectual capacity.

A cross-cultural comparative study between 'Tribals and Non-Tribals of First Generation and Traditional Learners in Relation to their Social Maturity and Educational Adjustment' was conducted by Agnihotri, C.S. (1991). He found the tradition of learning to be a contributing factor to social maturity. The tribal group also had more problems of emotional adjustment than the non-tribal group. Sinha, Durganand and Jha, Tantreshwar, (1990) conducted a study of 'Invariance of Mass and Number Among Tribal and Non-Tribal Children: Influence of Age, Sex, Culture and Habitation'. The sample was drawn from tribals and non-tribals hailing from two groups (120 children from each group), who were further equally divided into two sex groups, three age levels and two habitations. For the conservation of mass, clay balls (250 gm) were used, and for number conservation, 14 (2.54 cm × 2.54 cm) wooden cubes were utilized. Ten questions were put to the subjects. It was found that sex and culture did not affect the performance. The performance of children of both groups was quite low. Maturation and environmental factors were found to be complementary in the process of the growth of conservation concepts. The performance on tasks related to mass was better than that on tasks related to number.

Most of these studies have found the tribal child to be in a disadvantageous situation. Some studies, while giving a statistical interpretation, shy away from discussing the reasons for that. No case study of tribal and non tribal students or adolescents is available.



### **Comparative Researches on Education of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Castes**

This section deals with studies which have been conducted by researchers on samples having all the three groups of subjects, i.e., Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Castes. Such studies present a complete picture of a society. Out of five such studies, two were done at the M.Phil. level and three as independent studies.

Warudkar, D.S. (1988) attempted to identify barriers in the participation of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women, in the national adult education programme. Thirty adult education centres from nine colleges in seven tehsils in Dhule District were selected for the study. The study showed that inconvenient time (late evening hours), improper physical arrangement, lack of learning materials and use of the standard regional language instead of the mother tongue/dialect were the main causes of non-participation of women and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes learners. Lakkamma (1990) studied the problems of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and non-Scheduled Tribes high schoolgirls in relation to their traditionality-modernity. The researcher found that the recreational problems of the non-Scheduled Tribes girls were more than those of the Scheduled Castes girls, and the Scheduled Castes girls had more such problems than the Scheduled Tribes girls. The group of girls with high modernity had more intense problems, and the urban girls also had them more than the rural girls. The same was the case with the girls with high traditionality also.

Deshpande, L.V. (1989), in his study of 'Teaching Population Education to Students of Standard IX Through Their Syllabus and Study of its Effectiveness', found that most of the students were ignorant of population education concepts and gained knowledge through the programme. He also found that teaching population education through school subjects is effective in enhancing knowledge of population

education concepts.

A study by Goyal, J.C. and Chopra, R.K. (1989) in the area of teacher education was aimed at finding out whether there is a relationship between psychological variables and the achievement of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and non-Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes student teachers, and determining the predictive efficiency of these variables. The study was financed by ERIC, NCERT. Though there was no difference in their total self-concept, the non Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes student teachers had higher self-concept, better social adjustment and higher achievement. Within the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes groups, females had better total self-concept but males were higher than them in self-concept, total social adjustment and total achievement. Worthiness, emotional maturity and emotional adjustment seemed to predict achievement in the case of non-Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes student teachers to a significant level.

Murthy, Venkatesha C.G. and Panda, Subhash Chandra (1987) carried out a study of differences between different groups, i.e., Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and non-Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Tribes, in relation to their intelligence, socio-economic status and birth order. The three groups were found to be different with regard to their intelligence. The Scheduled Tribes children were found to be more intelligent (on non-verbal test) as compared to their Scheduled Castes counterparts. Socio-economic status and sex were also found to be related to the level of intelligence. The impact of socio-economic status on intelligence has already been demonstrated by some studies mentioned earlier in this paper.

### **Comparative Researches on Education of Backward Classes and Other Castes Groups**

The research studies conducted on the backward classes and other castes groups are not many as these classes/groups do not suffer on account of any social distinction made between them and other castes. Six studies conducted on backward



classes and other castes groups are reported here.

The only doctoral-level research in this area is a study entitled 'A Treatise on the Education of backward Classes in India since Independence with Special Reference to West Bengal', conducted by Bandyopadhyaya, K.L. (1992). This was a study of 1,360 households of 48 villages. The results of the study showed that universalisation of elementary education among the backward classes is yet to be achieved. He also found that the enrolment of boys in these classes was found to be higher than that of girls. Absenteeism, wastage and stagnation were found to be greater in the case of girls than that of boys. An important finding was that education of the backward classes had a positive effect on the development of social and national integration against disruptive forces, caste-based communalism and religious fundamentalism.

A study of the 'Effect of Facilities Given by the Government to the Backward Classes Pupils in Primary Schools in Devgad Taluka of Maharashtra' was carried out by Kamble, P.R. (1992) as a part-fulfillment of requirements for the M.Phil. degree. He conducted his study on headmasters and teachers of 25% primary schools of Devgad Taluka. Questionnaire and rating scale were used to collect data. Kamble found that the facilities provided to students of the backward classes improved their attendance and pass percentage and reduced the drop-out rate.

Three independent researches were conducted to study various aspects of education for the backward classes. Barua, A.P. (1989) studied the causes of large scale failure in the HSLC final examination in Assam. A questionnaire was used to collect information. He found that inadequate number of teachers, teachers' inefficiency in teaching, non-existence of any incentive for good teachers, inadequate school inspection, and teachers giving more importance to tuitions, were among the causes which related to teachers. The pupil-related causes were found to be neglect by parents, no specific study hour at home, promotion to next class with grace marks (non-attention), irregular

attendance, and various other distractions.

Thanvi, Daulat Raj (1992) took up a research project entitled, 'A Study of the Changing Social, Economic, Cultural and Political Situation of the Weaker Sections in Indian Society due to the Welfare Programmes of the Government', which was financed by the ICSSR. 271 students from the government senior higher secondary schools of Jodhpur District and 224 students from Jalore District were selected as the sample. The study shows that welfare programmes could change the social, economic, cultural and political condition of only 33% youths of the weaker sections of the Indian society. Since social change is a slow process, even this 33% achievement could encourage others to change for the better.

'A Study of Bright Underachievers Among the Socially Backward: Counselling and Remedial Measures' by Lidhoo, M.L. and Khan, Mahmood Ahmed focused on children studying in Class IX in two rural tehsils of Pahalgam and Bijbehara in district Anantnag. The students who received counselling showed considerable improvement in their performance, and the difference between the control group and the experimental group was significant at 0.05 level. Some of the non-cognitive factors responsible for the underachievement of the bright students were: low need-achievement, sick home background and poor study habits.

In a paper based on the study of Reddy, N.Y. (1991) entitled 'Psychological Strategies for the Emotional Development of Socially Disadvantaged Groups', the researcher concluded that psychological strategies need to be evolved for the education of socially disadvantaged groups, along with the development of social welfare programmes to improve their achievement.

A comparative study of 'Child-Rearing Practices of Mothers of High and Low Achievers in Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups' was carried out by Kaul, Venita; Ramachandran, Chitra and Gupta, Mukesh (1991) on a sample of 26 mothers of high achievers and 25 mothers of low achievers, with 13 mothers of boys and 13 of girls in each group. High and low achievers



were identified from boys and girls schools and matched on intelligence and socio-economic status. Mothers of these 26 pairs thus identified constituted the sample. Parent-child interaction was found to be the most significant variable in this study. Parents' attitude toward school and the play facilities available to the children were also found to be important. Mothers of high achievers were found to attach value to the education of their children.

With the government priority to universalise elementary education in India and with the steps taken to provide more facilities to the backward classes with a view to promoting their education, it is obligatory to conduct in-depth studies on cognitive processes, attitudes and personality of the students of these classes. Only then can effective planning for their education be possible.

### **Researches on Education of Regional Minorities**

Education of the minorities is one of those areas which has been perceived as an area of significance for quite some time. The issues related with education of the minority groups have already been discussed in the beginning of this paper. Minority education acquires a special significance in a democratic country which has substantial minority population, be it a linguistic minority or a religious minority. It is very disheartening to note that only four studies had been conducted during 1988-92 on education of the minorities. Government efforts, be they educational or welfare, aim at eliciting more participation by these groups in the social, educational and political activities so that they acquire a sense of belongingness in the society. Non-government efforts are also important in this context. The findings of the four studies conducted in this area are discussed in the following section.

Joseph, Shaju V. (1989) conducted a study on 'Education and Politics Among Depressed Class Christians of Central Kerala' as an M.Phil. dissertation. Information collected through secondary sources was analysed. An interview

schedule was also used for the purpose. Joseph concluded that depressed-classes Christians, who had embraced Christianity to release themselves from the bondage of caste, could not observe the ideals of equality fully. The sub-castes feeling was so strong that they could not appreciate movements like Tennindia Suvishesha Sangham, the Pratyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha and the Separate Administration Movement. Both the Syrian and the depressed-classes Christians, who were studied, continued to accept casteism and only highly publicised and highly liberation conscious individuals could delink themselves from this.

Jain, R. (1992) explored minority rights in education in Bombay. The results showed that the minority educational institutions may instigate communal feelings as they are vulnerable to communal pressures. Such institutions were found to be contributing towards attainment of the national goal of universal literacy through mobilisation of community resources.

The study of 'Developmental Implications with Special Reference to Indian Muslims' (Kareem, Abdul P. 1991) used secondary sources for collecting relevant information. A sample of 200 Muslims was drawn from 5 districts. The general economic and educational backwardness of Muslims were found to be the causes of their educational backwardness. A positive relationship was found to exist between education and the socio-economic advancement of the area.

Mondal, Rahim (1992) studied the state of education among the Muslims of West Bengal. The objective of the study was to study the attitudes of Muslims in West Bengal towards education, to identify the factors responsible for it, and to suggest remedies. The average literacy rate of Muslims in the six villages selected for the study was only 32.27%, which is very low; the female literacy rate (22.89%) was even lower than that of males (40.87%). Nearly 64% guardians expressed their desire to educate their children up to the secondary standard, while 1% showed their willingness to let their children study up to the university level. Illiteracy and



drop-out among children were very high and the enrolment very low, but children of educated parents were enrolled in schools. The main reasons for the backwardness of the Muslims were ascribable to their social milieu and to other factors like situational, cultural and economic, as well as social behaviour (the *purdah* system), the traditional value system and the style of living.

It is evident that few attempts have been made to research the different aspects of minority education. The field needs to be further explored in depth by researchers.

### GAPS

A review of the researches mentioned above reveals that in all the three areas, i.e., Education of the Scheduled Castes, Education of the Scheduled Tribes and Education of the Minorities, the studies conducted have been confined to a few variables alone and have a restricted geographical coverage, e.g., there are some studies which are confined to a few schools or to a small population of one or two villages or at most a few tehsils only. The findings of such studies though helpful in planning education at the local or village level or even the tehsil level, do not seem to have much utility when planning for a district or a specific tribe. There is, therefore, a need for in-depth research studies, surveys and case studies in all the three areas of education of the disadvantaged. Some such problems and areas which need greater attention from researchers are discussed below.

#### Education of Scheduled Tribes

The researches conducted in the area of Education of the Scheduled Tribes are of two types: education of Scheduled Tribes community and its members, and comparative studies of education of the Scheduled Tribes and other communities. Both these types of researches are useful in several ways but they should not be mixed up with other variables. Most of the researches conducted under both the heads belong to the areas of educational aspirations and

achievement, general interest and vocational interest patterns, attitudes, intelligence, self-concept and educational problems. No study is reported either of the special schools provided for tribal children i.e., Ashram schools, or of the effect of various educational and welfare interventions on the achievement of tribal children. Most of the states have already adopted the Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) approach and, therefore, have either already revised their primary-level curriculum or are in the process of doing so. The modification or modernisation of the curriculum followed in tribal schools has not caught the attention of the researchers. This also raises the issue of effectiveness of the Ashram schools and the specific role played by them in attaining universal elementary education which needs immediate research attention. Under the state plans for the District Primary Education Programme, almost all the states have proposed opening of more Ashram schools and tribal hostels.

The role of various non-governmental organisations, specially missionary schools, and the efforts made by the different missions are yet to be studied. The education of tribals in the districts and places where missions have been operative has been noticeably high. Even their general socio-economic condition has witnessed improvement.

Teacher training and teacher preparation for tribal areas is another area where not much work is available. Both the process and the content of the teacher training programmes have to be studied in-depth in various formats.

Language is another important area for intervention research. In most of the tribal schools, instruction is usually provided through the regional language which is different from the language of communication of the tribal child, with the result that the child finds it difficult to comprehend any knowledge. Such situations also affect concept-formation in the tribal child. Linked with this is the issue of development of tribal-culture-specific learning material. In fact the whole process of teaching-learning needs in-depth studies.

Inter-disciplinary researches, case studies



and sociological researches on causes, variables, factors and situations responsible for the low status of education of the Scheduled Tribes in India need attention. The process of social change itself needs research.

Non-governmental innovations and the contributions of non-formal education to the education of the Scheduled Tribes are other areas where the efforts made have to be ascertained and assessed.

These points are merely illustrative of the areas which need immediate attention of researchers. Some of these areas have already been mentioned by Sachchidanand in his paper dealing with the education of the disadvantaged and published in the *Fourth Survey of Research in Education*. One may endorse them once again, as they continue to be ignored.

### **Education of Scheduled Castes**

The Scheduled Castes being an integral part of Indian society have been covered under the general population for the purpose of study, be it baseline or achievement oriented. A few of the sub-castes within the Scheduled Castes fold are, relatively speaking, educationally developed. The studies of such sub-castes and their findings cannot therefore be generalised and made applicable to the rest. Some of the studies mentioned above have revealed areas of such development but have not attempted to go into the dynamics of such development. All this, along with the process of social change, demands early attention.

There are even now numerous districts and pockets where the Scheduled Castes female literacy rate is below 2%. The causes of such low literacy rates need to be immediately explored.

Recent reports on crimes against Scheduled Castes women, and the Scheduled Castes as a whole, are a sociological phenomenon which seeks rectification on a priority basis. The remedies for this problem may come up through research. Many Scheduled Castes people

undergo conversion but they continue to suffer from the ills of casteism. Inter-disciplinary researches to look into their educational and social development may come in handy in this regard.

With vocationalisation of education at the +2 level, it has been suggested that efforts should be made to develop such vocational courses which interest the Scheduled Castes. For this end, more researches on their interest patterns with sophisticated research designs could be planned. Lack of researches with sophisticated and well-planned design in the area of education of the Scheduled Castes is a major handicap in arriving at meaningful conclusions.

### **Education of Minorities**

As stated earlier, education of the minorities is an important area of research, especially in a country like India, where a large number of linguistic and religious minorities have to be taken care of. The studies mentioned above are in no way representative of the researches required in this area. The status of education of the minorities in India, the academic gap between the education imparted through religious organisations and the government-assisted bodies, the relevance of the curriculum and the instructional materials for modernisation, the role of non-governmental agencies in the universalisation of elementary education, the roles of different types of agencies in promoting national integration and communal harmony, and resource development in institutions run by the minorities (both human and educational resources) are some of the neglected areas which require probing. In this context, the language issue also becomes important once the products of such institutions (run by minorities) want to shift to some other institutions.

There are in fact more areas than researchers to explore them. Merely listing the left-out areas may be a good academic exercise. But is it enough? Perhaps not.



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