

CHAPTER I

THE PRESENT INQUIRY

INTRODUCTION :

Development of educational institutions does not occur in a vacuum. It occurs in the midst of the total social environment and along with other social institutions - economic, political, religious etc. and like other social systems, educational system is also related to the wider society.

Here in this inquiry, we observe the growth of secondary education in one of the districts of Central Gujarat - Kaira, in relation to its social environment. The formal educational system is composed of its formal components in the shape of educational institutions such as schools, their organization and management as well as their human components such as the students, teachers and guardians. In this inquiry we shall observe the spread and

development of secondary education in Kaira district in relation to its social environment. But our main object behind this inquiry is to observe the student who is an integral part of the formal education system, in the light of his social background. Hence we shall observe some personal features of the student, his attachment to his family, and his behaviour and ideology and find out whether they are related to some of their sociographic characteristics.

We have selected the students' learning in standard X (pre S.S.C. Class) and XI (S.S.C. Class) for observation in our inquiry.

The students studying in the above classes is a section of an age-group, mainly forming 16 to 18 years of age. It is our presumption that the above age-group will play an important role in society than the others of the same age-group who have not received secondary education. Therefore they have been selected for our inquiry.

Girl students are not taken for investigation for obvious reasons. Firstly, the number of girl-students is comparatively less. Secondly, their role in the social life would be quite different than that of the boys and this requires altogether a different approach to the problem.

The specific points of our inquiry can be mentioned as under in the following four heads :

- i) Spread and development of secondary education in Kaira District in light of some factors of social surrounding of Kaira district

ii) Student in the family :

So far as students in the family is concerned, our interest rests in observing the student's attachment to his family and his inter-personal relations with the members of the family. We shall thus inquire

- (1) Student's participation in work around home,
- (2) Whether the student thinks to run away from the family,
- (3) Student's relation with the guardian and other members of the family.

iii) Some personal features of the student and the student's behaviour and ideology about certain matters bearing a social significance.

As regards personal features of the student, we shall observe his age, civil condition and quality in respect of his study.

As regards behaviour of the student, we shall mainly inquire about his daily life, his friendship, his cinema-habits and habit of reading newspapers and periodicals and his relation to his teachers. As regards the ideology of the student, we want to observe mainly his ideas about the place of dwelling, about the guardian's occupation and the occupation that he would like to follow, his future plan after passing the secondary school certificate examination, about the education that he receives and about the "culture" of his parents.

iv) To inquire the students (matters related to him as shown in (ii) and (iii) above) in the light of some other parts of the society. One or more of the following factors shall be observed while inquiring

about the students :

- (1) Caste of the student,
- (2) Rural or urban residence of the students,
- (3) Guardian's occupation,
- (4) Income of the family,
- (5) Guardian's education.

We may add one more factor namely study-quality of the student which may be useful in understanding certain facts about the students.

The development and spread of secondary education in Kaira district observed in light of social surrounding, will enlighten ~~betwe~~ us as regards the relationship between the educational system and the social system, so far as the spread and development of the secondary education in Kaira district are concerned.

Observation of the student in the family would reveal his attachment to his family and his interpersonal relations with the members of his family.

Observation of some personal features of the student, such as age, civil condition and quality in light of social factors will enable us to understand how they are related to the social setting.

As regards some aspects of behaviour and ideology of the students, our inquiry bears the sociological significance as under :

The student's liking or disliking for the native place and if disliking, the reasons for the same would reveal what sort of physical and social surroundings does the student like as regards the place of his habitation. An inquiry as regards where the student would like to settle viz in a town, village, both or cannot say, we may

be enlightened about the student's preference for the his future habitation. This will reveal his aspiration as regards his future habitation.

Guardian's occupation and the occupation of the student's choice bears a sociological significance as it pours light upon the future trend of occupational migration in a social system. Future plan of the student and if a student is to prosecute his study after passing the secondary school certificate examination, would also reveal indirectly the future trend of occupational mobility.

What change is found by the student in himself on account of education would show the effect of education upon the student, according to the student's point of view. This may be compared with the criticism made by the parents and others, about the student.

Whether the student thinks that he is 'advanced' in culture than his parents reveals the tendency of the present generation towards a passing generation.

Guardian's knowledge about the student's progress and his touch with the teacher would show how the guardian is interested and is aware of the student's progress in the school. Guardian's dislike for the student's learning would show the attitude of guardian towards the present education.

Discipline in the school, to a large extent depends upon the healthy relations between the student and the teacher. An inquiry as regards the disliking of the teacher for the student and the reasons that the student thinks for the same, will reveal relationship between the student and the teacher.

By observing friendship of the student, we can get

an idea of what the student values or cherishes in his intimate social relationship.

Student's dress, his reading of news-papers and periodicals, his participation in drama and other extra-curricular activities of the school, his hours for study in morning and evening, his taking of physical exercise and his visit to a cinema house, all the above reveal habits of the students. What type of cinema picture is liked by the student and how he decides to go to cinema, would show his ideology, as regards cinema pictures. How would the student like to spend a free evening also suggests his liking.

The inquiry is made about the above points because they in general are indicatives of the student's attachment to his family, his personal characteristics, behaviour and his ideology.

Our inquiry regarding the above would state certain facts about the student. But this would be of little importance except, when they are viewed in the light of certain aspects of the social surrounding. Hence we would observe these facts in relation to certain variables such as caste of the student, his rural or urban residence etc., shown in (iv).

We may deal with the significance of these variables.

(1) Caste of the student : It is true that secondary education is open to all who aspires to it, irrespective of caste, religion, sex etc.. However, every caste has its own historical background and its tradition. Some castes may have a tradition of education and some may not; some

may be educationally, economically and culturally backward than the others. Some may be traditionally enjoying a higher social status than others in the total social system. Till the advent of the British rule, India was an agricultural country dominated by a total acceptance of joint family and caste system wherein education was confined to Brahmins only. Barring them, only the trading castes were permitted to have some rudimentary education. It may be that though the portals of education are open to all, the upper castes may be dominating in the student composition, school organization and management. Besides, the different economic, educational and cultural backgrounds of different castes may have their effects on the personal characteristics of the student viz., his age, his civil condition and his quality. They may have bearing with behaviour and ideology of the student.

Caste hierarchy is prevalent in the Hindu Society and it is likely that in case of the students, friendship might have some relationship with the caste-status. Friendship in case of upper and lower castes might be confined to their respective caste groups.

Caste and the choice of occupation of the student, may be related. For example a large majority of Patidars in this area, are engaged in agriculture and most of the Baniyas in business and services. It is likely that the proportion of the students in case of Baniyas might be higher for showing preference for business or service than Patidars and in case of Patidar students, choice for agriculture might be more than the same in case of Baniya students.

Caste may be related with the difference in valuations of the student and his parents. In the case of lower castes

the student who has received some secondary education may think that he is higher in culture than his parents who might be illiterate or who might have received little primary education. Again particular personal behaviour of the parents might not be liked by the students. And these sorts of instances might be more among the lower ^{castes among} than the upper castes.

Thus, the caste of the students may be related in many ways with the student.

(2) Rural-Urban habitation of the students :

For our purpose, we have regarded rural and urban area as defined by the Census Report of India, 1951. According to the report, areas having a population of 5000 persons and more and having some characteristics are regarded as urban areas and the areas having a population below 5000 persons are considered as rural areas. Places which constitute rural area and those which constitute urban area, according to the Kaira District Census Hand-book 1953, have been respectively considered so in the present inquiry. (Table No.3 shows the strength of population in the rural and urban areas of this district.)

Rural-urban habitation has a significant sociological significance. The facilities for secondary education are higher in the urban-area, hence comparatively the proportion of the students belonging to the urban-area would be higher. The number of girl students also might be higher in the urban area. There is higher scope for civic amenities and comforts in the urban area, hence the liking of the student for the urban area might be more. Rural-urban habitation might be related with the quality of the student.

Facilities for cinema are mostly in towns. Hence, it is possible that the frequency of visit to cinema-houses may be more in the students belonging to such places. Rural-urban habitation may be related with the size of the family of the student. Rural-urban habitation may be related with the guardian's profession and education, and these in turn are related with the student. Just as with caste, average age of the student might be related with his rural-urban habitation. Daily routine of the student may be related with his habitation. Students' attachment to the family might have some bearing with the rural or urban dwelling.

There may be local and non-local students in schools and they may have relation with rural and urban area. Non-local students have to spend some extra time in coming to school and going back as they reside 3 to 4 miles away from the school. It may be therefore that the quality of the student may be related to whether the students are local or non-local students. Non-local students would get less time. Hence their participation in the extra-curricular activities of the school would be less. Content of the criticism of the students may be different in rural and urban areas.

(3) Guardian's Occupation : Guardians are engaged in a number of occupations. As 71 % population of the district is dependent upon agriculture, we may classify guardians' occupations in, two broad categories viz., Agriculture and non-agriculture.

Among those depending upon agriculture, there are persons (i) mainly tilling their own land, (ii) mainly tenant cultivators, (iii) land-less agricultural labourers

and (iv) non-cultivating landlords depending upon agriculture.

Guardians depending upon non-agricultural occupations may be classified as depending upon (i) services, (ii) enlightened professions, (iii) business, (iv) artisan castes' occupations, (v) unskilled labour, (vi) Miscellaneous occupations such as Yajmanvritti, jyotishi etc.

Some occupations have low social status, while some have higher social status; some occupations are economically less advantageous while some are economically more gainful.

In occupations which are economically more advantageous and which have higher social status, the demand for secondary education would be high. Hence, like caste, occupation of the guardian may be related to the composition of the students in secondary education. Student's attitude towards guardian's occupation and his aspirations as regards the line he wishes to join after passing S.S.C. Examination as well as his preference for occupation may be related to the occupation of the guardian. Student's participation in the family-work may be also related to the occupation of the guardian.

But it is important to note that occupation of the guardian and his caste have co-relationship as economically more advantageous occupations and occupations having higher social status are dominated chiefly by the upper castes.

(4) Income of the family : ~~Income-level~~ of the family would throw light upon the student's entrance in secondary education, student's quality, his future plan after passing S.S.C. examination, his preference for the place of settlement, his participation in work around home, his wish to run away from the family etc. But it is difficult to ascertain

the income-level of the family as 60 % of the students reported that they did not know the income of their families. However, most of the students have answered the question viz. how does the student think the economic condition of his family - (i) very good, (ii) good, (iii) ordinary, (iv) medium and (v) poor. Though the students' estimates of the economic conditions of their families cannot be much relied upon, we may observe it in relation to the quality of the student, student's feeling of running away from the family and such other matters.

(5) Guardian's education : Education of the guardian has been categorised as under :

- i) Illiterate,
- ii) Primary
- iii) Vernacular final passed,
- iv) Secondary school education upto Matriculation or S.S.C. examination,
- v) Matriculation or S.S.C. examination passed,
- vi) Under-graduate and diploma holders,
- vii) Graduates and above.

Education of the guardian may be related with the quality of the student. Whether the student thinks himself advanced in ' culture ' than his parents may be associated with less or more education of the guardian. Guardian's education may have bearing with the decision of the student's future. plan after passing S.S.C. examination. Criticism of the students by the parents may be related to the guardian's education. Disliking for the student's learning may have relation with the guardian's education.

Quality of the Student :

Quality of the student, as seen previously, may be

related to caste, rural-urban and local non-local habitation and education of the guardian. Quality of the student in its turn may be related with the student's decision regarding what to do after passing S.S.C. Examination. It may be related with the choice of line the student would like to follow after S.S.C. examination. Quality of the student may have relationship with the age of the student. Quality of the student and dislike of the student by the teacher may be related. Cinema-habit of the student and the student's thinking of leaving his home may be seen in the light of his quality.

Our ultimate problem, thus, is to observe the growth of secondary education in Kaira district and to observe some aspects of the student's behaviour and ideology and to see how they are related to some factors of the social setting.

The Procedure of Inquiry :

It would be proper here to discuss briefly the procedure by which the field under inquiry has been observed.

The inquiry was conducted among the secondary High School students in Kaira district in the year 1954. A draft questionnaire was tried on some students and the time taken by them to complete it was recorded. It was then decided that distribution and collection of the questionnaire forms should be carried out in September and from 10th November to 10th December.

The schools began their work in the second week of June. If the work of the inquiry were conducted in June or July the students would have been too fresh in their new classes to represent the standard. In the first week

of October, terminal examinations were conducted and thereafter Diwali vacation began, ending in first week of November.

After 20th December, preliminary examination of the students studying in S.S.C. class began and thereafter generally the schools arranged annual sports, social functions etc. Hence in the first term, the month of September and in the second term the period between 10th November to 10th December were most suitable for conducting the inquiry and accordingly the questionnaire forms were distributed. Fortunately no difficulty was experienced in fixing a suitable time for each school as the Headmasters generally consented the time that was suggested by the sponsor. The schools tried to give every facility to the sponsor and he in his turn tried to cause the minimum inconvenience and disturbance to the schools. Excepting one school, work was finished by 10th of December, 1954.

(a) The Universe under observation :

The universe from which the sample was drawn consisted of the students from 50 High schools, which were teaching upto XI standards (schools eligible for sending students to secondary school certificate examination.)¹

When the inquiry was made there were 52 High Schools in Kaira District teaching upto XI standards. Out of them 3 were girls' High schools which were not taken into inquiry as the present inquiry is concerned with male students only. In Balashinor taluka, when the inquiry was conducted there was only one High School, and this High School was not taken into inquiry. Hence, the sample consisted of students belonging to these 48 High Schools. But the sample is not drawn from all the students in these schools. Only the students of standard X and XI are included in the sample.

¹ Two High schools one at Chaklashi and the other at Jalsan did not impart education for XIth class. But they have been included.

Standard XI is the final standard in the secondary school and the students in this standard appear for the secondary school certificate examination conducted by the Bombay State.¹ This examination, in general, is equivalent to Matriculation examination that was conducted by the Bombay University. We may refer to the students in standard X as pre S.S.C. and those in standard XI as S.S.C. students.

The total number of students in standard X and XI in these 59 High Schools in Kaira district, according to the school registers, during September to December, 1954, was 5,436 exclusive of girl students. Of them, 3295 belonged to standard X and 2166 to standard XI.

(b) The sample :

A ten per cent sample of the universe mentioned above is taken for inquiry. Some schools have more than one division in each standard. Every school maintains a register of attendance of students for each such division. The names of the students in this register are generally arranged in alphabetical order of caste and names of the student. There is no selective order maintained in the names in the register. In few schools where the names were not alphabetically arranged, the sponsor arranged them so for the purpose of taking sample. It was considered convenient and statistically harmless to select the students in the following order 1, 11, 21 and so on from each division. If the student whose name was selected was absent, a student next to him in the register was taken up. But the number of absentees, fortunately, was insignificant.

The total sample consists of 580 students. Out of them 355 belong to standard X and 225 belong to standard XI.

1 From October 1960, S.S.C. Exam. in Gujarat will be conducted by the Gujarat State.

(c) Distribution and Response :

The students who were selected to answer the questionnaire from one school were made to sit in one class in that school. The inquirer himself distributed the forms to them and explained the purpose and importance of the inquiry. Throughout the time that the students wrote the questionnaires the inquirer was present in the class-room in order to clear any doubts that arose from the questions.

After completing the form, a student was allowed to go. The time taken to complete answering the questionnaire depended upon the quality of the student. However, a large majority of the students completed their work within forty-five to fifty minutes.

Care was taken to see that the students did not consult one another. In two places, where the number was high, the inquirer took the help of his friend who was a teacher, to assist him. Care was taken to put the students at their ease and they were not required to write their names on the forms. After observing the students while they were writing and after observing their completed forms, the inquirer is of the opinion that the students have shown conscientiousness in their work.

(d) Questionnaire :

The aim of this inquiry is to know some personal characteristics of the student, his attachment to the family and some aspects of his behaviour and ideology and to see how they are related to some factors of his social setting. Taking these in view, the questionnaire was prepared which is shown in Appendix 'A'.