

SCHOOLS AS INSTITUTIONS : A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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MANISHA ZUTSHI

ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI -110 067
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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110 067

ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "Schools as Institutions; A Sociological Study", submitted by Manisha Zutshi, is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this University. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university, or any other university and is her own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Sushila Singhal
Prof. Sushila Singhal

Chairperson

Chairperson
Zakir Husain Centre For
Educational Studies
School of Social Sciences II
Jawahar Lal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

K. Chanana
Prof. Karuna Chanana
Supervisor

For My Parents

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(MANISHA ZUTSHI)

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CHAPTER - 1

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INTRODUCTION

This study makes an attempt to critically evaluate the analogy of the school as an institution. The term school is used in a generic sense to denote formal educational institutions, there are two main perspectives on Schools as Institutions, namely, schools as systems and schools as organizations. These approaches will be discussed in the following chapters. Moreover, in the process of determining why and how the biases of the society get reflected in the way schools are organized, this study will raise some questions and link up schools to wider society. A basic premise is that any understanding of the schools as systems and as organizations has to be understood within the wider social context.

As an active agent in both the formation and transformation of social beings, the educational system has been credited with the power to aid economic progress, to alleviate social ills and develop and push forward our cultural heritage while providing for the fulfillment of the individual. In complex societies the task of imparting knowledge and shaping of values is performed by specialized institutions like schools, colleges etc. Thus the aim of deliberate instruction is to prepare the child for the transition to impersonal and more diversified relationships of the larger society. According to Morey (1971), "man's

progress and discoveries are not the result of complacency of contentment with the status quo, but of precisely the contrary. Inculcation of the spirit of free inquiry, search for new knowledge, search for truth, tendency towards specialization are the hallmarks of an education system which every education system seeks to achieve”.

According to Alex Inkles (1964), Durkheim, as long as 1901, said that “sociology can be defined as the science of institutions” (1964:15), and as schools are one of the most important institutions of society, we need to look at them closely. According to Durkheim, the school had a crucial and clearly specified function to perform i.e. “to create a new being, shaped according to the needs of the society” (1961:xiv), he looked at schools as institutions which acted as “Seedbeds for the germination of secular morality” (1961:x). To act morally is to act in terms of the collective interest i.e. the perpetuation of society. This is because each society forms its own ideal of man, it is this ideal ‘which is the focus of education’. The task of the school is to prepare the child for the future struggle for survival. Thus schools, to a large extent, are responsible in directing and transforming the quality of our lives.

As mentioned earlier, there are two main perspectives on the study of schools viz schools as systems and schools as organizations. One of the main theoretical framework which is applied to the study of schools as systems is the functionalist approach, which looks at schools as systems. Some of the proponents of this school of thought are Durkheim, Mannheim, Parsons. Weberian approach is applied to the study of school as an organization and is capable of attending to both micro and macro social processes and of understanding the relationship between them. The new sociology of education which developed in reaction to the tradition of ‘political arithmetic’ and the

dominance of the functionalist approach in the 'old' sociology of education is primarily concerned with the content of education rather than with the 'structure' or 'organization' of the educational system. The proponents of this school of thought are M.F.D.Young, A. Schultz, Esland etc. The modern theory of organization focuses on the informal contacts, interactions and groupings. These influence not only the experience, knowledge, attitudes and emotions of the affected individuals but also their functioning in the formal organizations e.g. schools.

SCHOOLS AS SYSTEMS

The dictionary meaning of a system is that "It is a set of inter-related elements that acquire inputs from the environment, transforms them and discharges outputs to the external environment". The need for inputs and outputs reflects the dependency on the environment i.e. the wider society. Inter-related elements means that people and departments depend upon one another and must work together. Therefore, in order to do this each part in the society has a 'function' to perform. The term 'function' is explicitly adapted from the biological sciences, Where it refers to the 'vital' or 'organic' processes contribute to the maintenance of the organism. Sociologists approach a society as a unit and understand it as a biological organism so they turn it from organic life to social life. This brings us to the concept of 'structure'.

All Human beings are connected by a complex network of social relations and this network is called social structure. The concept of social structure is closely related with the concept of function, both being dependent on each other. If we study a certain number of individual beings in a certain, natural environment we can observe the acts of behaviour of these individuals, including their acts of speech

and past actions. This observation reveals to us that these human beings are connected by a complex network of social relations. R. Brown uses the term 'Social structure' to denote this network of actually existing relations. The perspective which deals with this is called structural-functionalist perspective. So 'Functionalism' is, thus, the study of functions of the parts of the society it assumes that each part is interdependent and no part can exist without each other. Moreover, these functions help to perpetuate and strengthen the society, (to be discussed).

Therefore, it would not be wrong if we say that the "systems theory attempts to unify the biological, physical and social sciences by the postulate that they are all essentially concerned with systems (cells, organisms, atoms, molecules, groups, organizations etc.) and that all systems have similar properties, the most important of which is the maintenance of the system i.e the homeostatic principle" (King, 1967:34).

'Functionalism' has its roots in the last century (1750-1900) in the works of the pioneers of sociology and moral philosophy, such as Comte, Spencer, Montesquie. According to this approach society is a system whose parts are inter-related and interdependent, each part of the system has a contribution to make for the persistent strengthening and expansion of the system. Attempts were made by some theorists like Parsons and Merton in America to refine and develop the functional theory. But Durkheim holds the central place among the sociologists or the proponents of functionalism. Durkheim is not only one of the undisputed founding fathers of sociology but perhaps also the founding father of the sociology of education. In his writings the beginnings of a functional sociology of education are clear. It became the traditional conceptual framework in the study of education (Banks,1952-82:4).

Functionalism is based on the idea of consensus. Consensus means that people agree on the basic values of the society in which they live and recognize its benefits. It is in everybody's interests that consensus exists and therefore, anything which threatens instability must be kept under control. This, according to the functionalists, ensures that the society operates smoothly.

The structural-functionalist tradition dominated sociology in the 1950's. The emphasis in this approach, as mentioned above centered on the function of the various institutions of society and the need of the society that they fulfill. The views of Durkheim on these points were broadly applied by Talcott Parsons in the American context. Parsons in the late 1950's dealt in detail with the functions of education, namely, socialization, selection and allocation. This approach related education to other institutions of society like the economy, the stratification system, the value structure of society etc. It made possible a macro study of educational institutions.

"There are of course, variations among structural functionalists in emphasis and in the completeness of their devotion to an organic analogy of society. The basic perspective of the structural functional point of view emerges in its 'prime emphasis on society' and on the inter-relations of its institutions, rather than on the individual or groups such as the family". The main question to which it addresses itself is this : "How is social life maintained and carried forward over time despite the complete turnover in the membership of society with every new generation?" The basic answer it gives is : "Social life persists because societies find means (structures) whereby they fulfill the needs (functions) which are either pre-conditions or consequences of organized social life" (Alex Inkles, 1964:34-35).

Thus this view provides us with a model of society in which all social institutions including education have specific functions. These institutions are divided into sub systems which in turn are made up of roles. Individuals are socialized into the values of society and into the norms associated with the particular roles to which they have been allocated. By carrying out their roles, members maintain the social and cultural order of society (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:14-15).

Thus, the structural functional approach deals with the way in which the different structures are co-ordinated and integrated to preserve the unity of society as a complete system or organism. This is now carried to an extreme form in a particular brand of functionalism called the technological functionalism. "This theory takes the view that modern society follows where technology leads, and that, as a consequence education has developed in response to industrial and commercial demand. In the modern world, it is said, jobs increasingly require higher degrees of skill for their performance and the function of education is to provide the appropriate training in such skills. As the educational requirements of job increase, more and more of the population spend longer periods of time in formal education. The expansion of education in modern society, therefore, is a direct result of the development of a technological society" (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:322).

Technological functionalism is based on the premise that, the survival of the society depends on making the most effective use of the nation's intellectual resources. This concern with the preservation of human resources marked the particular variety of functionalist theory that was most popular in educational research in the 1950's. According to Burton Clark (1962), due to the rapidity of technological change in society, "Our age demands army upon army of skilled technicians and

professional experts and to the task of preparing these men the educational system is increasingly dedicated" (1962:3).

According to Davis & Moore, seen in this light, 'the expansion and the increasing differentiation of the educational system were inevitable outcomes of technologically determined changes in occupational structure requiring ever more intricate skills. The implication of technological functionalism for schools was that the schools were practical in terms of what was taught and what the schools did for the students. The essence of the theory was that technical change in the system of production provided the impetus for educational change.

The functionalist analysis of the education system relates schooling to the needs of economy. It also argues that "Inequality is a natural feature of society," since people are born with unequal talents (Chapman, 1986). According to the functionalists, the function of schools is geared towards socialization of the children. Today we have an education system that sorts children into a variety of paths along which they will receive education of different lengths and content. The function of the staff is to try to organize the school as a model of what life should be, moral, discipline, hardworking, friendly. The discipline and organization pattern of the children in the schools are, thus, part of this process. Schooling is considered to be helping children to develop and discover their talent so that when they join the workforce, they will enter suitable occupations needed by society, King (1971).

To sum up, the functions of education are socialization, selection and distribution of knowledge. Put differently, education is supposed to inculcate the norms and values of society, to allocate people to their roles and to structure the reality images of the population by the

organization and distribution of knowledge -Blackledge and Hunt (1985). Thus, when functionalists apply their ideas to education they ask :What needs does education satisfy or what contribution does it make to society's stability.

Talcott Parsons views society as a system of interaction. According to Parsons, the school represents a social system in which teachers, principals and students interact with each other as members of the system. The views of Durkheim, Mannheim and Parsons will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Now we will shift our focus to the other approach which regards schools as organizations.

SCHOOLS AS ORGANIZATIONS

Greatly increased diversity of organizational patterns and administrative analysis in almost all educational systems makes it imperative to have a more detailed knowledge of the ways in which schools function as organizations which will facilitate in building a body of knowledge and experiences that can be shared and drawn upon by involved practitioners. Let us begin by defining the term 'organization'.

"A social organization is a continuing system of differentiated and coordinated human activities utilizing, transforming and welding together a specific set of human, material, capital, ideational and natural resources into a unique problem solving whole, engaged in satisfying particular human needs in interaction with other system of human activities and resources in its environment" (Bakke, 1972).

Most people spend a considerable portion of their time in formal organization and at the same time these organizations have to respond

to the pressures impinging on them from the society they exist in and change in different aspects of the society affects organizational operations. Hence schools as organizations are also affected by the external forces.

The modern theories of organization focus on the structure i.e. division of work into units and establishment of linkages among units and systems i.e. specific ways of managing the major functions of the organization such as finance, production, marketing, personnel, information and the relationship with the external environment. Most also have accepted patterns of behaviour, values and traditions and these three elements constitute the organizational culture. Organizations are social entities, which exist for a purpose. Some of the characteristic features of organizations are: standardization, specialization, hierarchy of authority, a large bureaucratic setup, an efficient decision making process etc. which will be discussed later.

According to some researchers educational organizations are very tightly organized. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), as large scale educational organizations develop they take a great deal of control over the ritual classification of their curriculum, students and teachers. This classification is the basic component of the theory of education used by modern societies and schools gain enormous resources by conforming to them, incorporating them and controlling them.

Some compare schools to bureaucratic organizations. Weber (1960) and Davies (1971) have focussed on schools as bureaucracies. Weberian concept of bureaucracy can be seen as an organizational response to an increase in the size and complexity of units of administration. Hoyle (1965) has argued that the two of the most widely used concepts in organization theory are authority and bureaucracy,

both of which stem from Max Weber's treatment of authority in his 'political sociology' (Banks, 1952-82:8).

Bureaucracy is a particular kind of authority found in several types of society but it has acquired specific importance in modern complex organizations. In its most typical form modern bureaucracy is characterized by a hierarchical structure of power, in which each individual in each level of the organization has a clearly defined position and a clearly defined set of duties according to a set of written rules, Banks (1961).

According to Ronald King, weber's theory of bureaucracy addresses itself to both the problem of the changing social organization of modern society and that of the typical features of the formal organization that permeate it. He came to the conclusion that large collectivities confronted by complex and administrative tasks are most likely to become bureaucratically organized. Such formal organizations involved an extensive division of labour with specialized responsibilities being assigned to trained personnel.

"The question as to how far a school as an educational system can be described as a bureaucracy is still an open one, yet it is clear that educational systems do contain many bureaucratic elements, which are increasing in importance in modern societies" (Banks, 1961:8).

According to King, "to explain the organizational structure of a school we must attempt to understand the subjective meanings of the teachers and pupils in the social construction of the organization. Three main reasons are identified (a)Economic- teachers are paid, pupils may hope for a job by passing examination (b)Status- the distribution of social honour; respect among friends and colleagues (c)Power- many

organized relationships are power relationships. Teachers have power over the pupils 'institutionalized domination and subordination" (King, 1983:14-15).

The sociology of education took a new direction in the 1970's. The changes were affected by the failure of the reform oriented educational policies of the 1960's. The inequalities in educational opportunities still persisted. Therefore, functionalist explanations were inadequate and it was increasingly felt that differential educational achievement had roots outside the classroom, especially lying in the home and class background of the pupil. The second source of criticism came from those who applied marxist frameworks to education. They were critical of the role of education as being used by the ruling class for maintaining its dominant position and recreation of the class structure of the society through education, Robinson (1964).

"The functionalists argue that societies are held together by a consensus of values. This view is clearly false if it implies that social stability can not be maintained by other means. A value consensus is, in fact, only one possible solution to the problem of order and it is by no means the most usual. Frequently a powerful group uses the police and army to impose order on the population by terror or threats" (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:98).

Thus the main critique of the functionalist approach of the consensus of values is that it is oblivious to the fact that modern industrial societies are multicultural and are composed of people from a wide range of origins and cultures. Further that there exists a dominant culture and education is one of the means by which this dominant culture is transmitted the neo-marxists substantiated this criticism with evidence that this culture discriminates against pupils

on the basis of class, race and gender.

In addition, functionalism has often been criticized for its inability to deal with the issue of social change. Functionalist idea of society as a stable entity, in which everyone has a clear conception of their role in the various social institutions undermines or ignores conflict.

According to Karabel and Halsey (1977), "political and ideological events, including the intensification of struggles for educational reform and the recrudescence of racially linked genetic theories of intelligence in the 1960's, added urgency to the problem of explaining differential academic achievement. By and large, the macro-sociological approaches, whatever their political and ideological correlates, had proved inadequate to the task and the time was thus opportune for analytical invention", the answer to this was the symbolic interactionism and the phenomenological approach broadly referred to as interpretative approaches and they are associated with the new 'sociology of education'.

'New' sociology shifts the focus from macro to micro sociology. It also shifts from the relation between school and system to the internal working of the school and instead of viewing the relation between the individual pupil and school as a passive and one way relation, it postulates a more active relation. This view lays emphasis on what is happening within the classroom. The focus is more on curriculum, pupil teacher interaction, achievement etc. and the impact of social biases on them. The focus is not directly on the schools as systems and as organizations but indirectly on how the social biases affect the curriculum, the school organization, its goals etc. Davies is one of the 'new' sociologists who critiques the organizational perspective. Apart from Ronald King and Michael Young. Thus these approaches provide

a critique of the functionalist and organizational perspectives.

According to interactionists, social interaction shapes reality and not any external social system. The people are not considered to be passive individuals. They are considered to be actors, playing out a role which they have decided is appropriate to the situation. Schools offer a rich source of illustration of this (Sharp and Green, 1963).

The meanings constructed by teachers and pupils are of immense importance. They also turn their attention to the way organizational aspects of schools shape social reality.

“The interpretative approach has had a generally salutary effect on the sociology of education in Great Britain. Social phenomenologists present themselves as radically opposed to traditional orthodoxies in sociology and make a claim to be holding a humanistic perspective which does not denigrate man’s individuality and spontaneity or reduce actors to the mere passive effects of social structures”, Sharp & Green (1963). These approaches give us insights into the Human actions, and how people attach meanings and make and remake their social worlds.

But the importance of the ‘new’ sociology of school needs to be emphasised as it was to a large extent, responsible, for the development of the sociology of the school. The purpose of the new sociology of the school was to bring together the new and often complex sociological exploration of events in and around the school and its classroom in a way in which they could be understood and made use of by teachers and other professional workers. Sociology of schools has illustrated ways in which individual teacher’s and student’s definitions of situations can influence events, how perceptions of achievement can not only define achievement, but also identify those who achieve; how

expectations about schooling can help to determine the nature and evaluation of schools for instance, the key ideas which Woods focuses on are (1)How the definition of the context of action is defined (2)The frameworks through which people make sense of the world and (3)cultures i.e. the distinctive styles of life including values, beliefs, patterns and forms of understanding etc. He suggests that perspectives derive from cultures and are linked to action through strategies. In the school situation he believes that there is a continuous process of negotiation. This interactionist's approach is not exactly an ideal approach to understand the view of schools as organizations, because this approach is unable to conceive of conflict and lack of integration as a consequence of certain internal phenomena.

Apart from the interpretative paradigms which underscore the social biases, underlying the educational system, sociologists especially the neo marxists have also highlighted them, although differently. According to them, the struggle towards justice and equality has been hampered and complicated by prejudice. There is evidence based on the research of social scientists interested in the sociology of education that there is a restrictive cycle of privilege that operates within the school and this cycle is heavily tilted towards the upper class. This upper class bias manifests itself in many ways. It may be visible in the curriculum choices that are being made. In the schools several unreliable tests and tools are being used. Hence the underprivileged students are unable to identify themselves with them.

In multicultural societies, where there is an existence of a dominant culture and few shared values exist. Schooling is one of the means by which this dominant culture is transmitted and there is evidence to show that this culture discriminates against pupils on the basis of class, race and ethnic origin.

THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to provide a sociological analysis of the 'school as an institution' . As mentioned in the beginning, we will be doing this by looking at schools from two perspectives, namely, schools as systems and Schools as organizations.

ASSUMPTIONS

Whenever there is a system of social stratification there is a corresponding differentiation within the educational system. This, in turn, affects the functioning of schools as systems and as organizations.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Can schools be regarded as systems and as organizations?
- 2) What are the differences between an organization and a school.
- 3) Do the biases of the society which are embedded in schools affected their functioning as systems and as organizations?

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES OF DATA

As this is a theoretical study, it is confined to the review of literature.

In the next chapter, the views of Durkheim, Mannheim and Parsons will be discussed in order to throw light on the view which regards school as a system.

CHAPTER - 2

CHAPTER - 2

SCHOOLS AS SYSTEMS

'No serious outline of the sociology of education could omit Durkheim. Not only was he a founding father of the discipline of sociology but he also devoted his talents to a thorough study of education' (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:1). Similarly, it is important to examine the works of Mannheim and Parsons because they provide several useful insights into the study of schools as systems. 'Parsons was the dominant figure in the functionalist sociology in the 1950's and 1960's. His theories were a required reading for a whole generation of sociologists' (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:1-2). Therefore, in this chapter we will discuss the views of Durkheim, Mannheim & Parsons who look at schools as systems.

Durkheim among the classical sociologists took up the subject of education with special interest, because he viewed education as a process that recreates society and is linked to the survival of society. In his writings education formed part of an institutional analysis in the functional framework that ultimately is directed towards the maintenance of social cohesion and social unity.

In his book *Education and Sociology* we find Durkheim's functional explanation of education. Education is defined as 'the

influence exercised by adult generations on those not yet ready for social life'. According to Durkheim, what is taught i.e. the content of education varies from society to society because it depends on the needs of a particular society. Thus the society is the determinant of what kind of education should be provided to its members and education is viewed as a means to an end. The function of education is to develop the potential of the children for the perpetuation of the society. In addition, a certain degree of specialization is required to prepare the young members of the society for the particular milieu for which they are destined'. It is also essential to instill in the children certain basic similarity of thought values and norms among its members (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:13).

'Education's function of fitting people into society is taken care of during the process of socialization. During the socialization process the child is formed according to society's requirements'. In a way, education provides a framework to the child in terms of which the child can come to understand the world. For Durkheim, the functions of education are : 'to preserve society; to socialize and humanize man by providing the normative and cognitive frameworks he lacks' (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:14-15).

He categorizes education as a 'social fact' and schools are regarded as systems which perpetuate homogeneity. According to him society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity and education perpetuates and in achieving this. The cultural transmission is necessary so that people can fit into the existing pattern of life and associate with others in a predictable way.

Durkheim made a metaphorical comparison of society and the

organism (organic analogy). He believed that every part of the society had a social function to perform, e.g. the most important function of education is not to develop the individuals' abilities and potentialities for their own sake, rather it is to develop those abilities and capacities that society needs for its existence and schools act as agencies which inculcate in the students, some basic similarity of thought, values and norms (1985:13).

While commenting on Durkheim's view Blackledge and Hunt state that "education is connected in various ways to the economy, the family, the political and religious systems. Education is also made up of different layers or sub-systems, namely primary, secondary, further education and higher education each of which has its own function to perform within the organized whole. Furthermore these different layers of the educational system are composed of smaller units, such as departments or classes, which in turn are made up of more basic units which we call roles. These roles are analogous to the cells of the human body and like cells, make an important contribution to the effective functioning of the whole system of which they are a part" (1985:65).

For Durkheim, the school had a very important role to perform i.e. 'to create a new being shaped according to the needs of the society' (Durkheim, 1961:13). In *Moral Education* (1961), Durkheim makes the distinction between moral and intellectual education, where the former refers to attempts to create consensus, allegiance to society and to 'appropriate sub-groups' (King, 1983). 'It is by respecting the school rules that the child learns to respect the rules in general, that he develops the habit of self control and restraint simply because he should control and restrain himself'.

"School is seen as an arena where a stable and structured

environment is cultivated, where rules are clearly defined and where conformity to them is demanded by those in authority. Since all are subjected to the school regime, education will build up the necessary consensus for society to continue" (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:15).

If we summarize, three important elements emerge from the discussion of Durkheim's views (1)Consensus (2)Values and (3)Roles are an important building blocks of a system. For a system to be able to sustain itself some basic values or principles that all members of the society share are a must otherwise there would be conflict and chaos in society. The function of the school is to pass on these basic values.

Because schools are frequently trying to transmit values which may not be similar to the other influences on their pupils, they work against, as well as with other agencies of socialization. In order to minimize the level of conflict of values it was suggested by Shipman (1976) that schools should be organized in such a way so as to imitate what life outside school would be.

According to Shipman (1976), there must be commitment to values which will produce efficient working conditions. "In western industrial societies this is an individualistic ethic based on personal achievement. Changing at the communist end of the industrial spectrum into a collectivist ideal. The school reflects this in its curriculum and teaching methods" (1976:16).

Since the social structure consists of the relationships between individuals. Each individual can be said to have a social position i.e. status. When an individual puts 'the rights and duties which constitute status into effect, he is performing a role'. Within a school each member

is performing a role for the perpetuation of the system. It is the institution of the school which offers all its members a particularly early and intensive opportunity for participation in group life and a thorough socialization in collective experiences.

Among the modern Durkheimian's, Hargreaves (1967) has recognized the deeper insights of Durkheim's views. Like Durkheim, he believes that the main function of the school is to promote dignity. The secondary school is viewed as an arena, which develops a form of individualism which is egoistic or anomic rather than moral (1985:27). Hargreaves tries to bring out the tension between the 'needs' of the individual and of the collectivity and suggests ways in which the school could be reorganized for better results (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:28-29).

In Hargreaves (1967) book **The Challenge for the comprehensive school**, education is viewed as a threat to the dignity of several pupils especially the working class. So to resist this threat there is the gradual development of culture. Hargreaves' writings air a concern for and feeling of 'community' and social solidarity. According to him, "Morality and solidarity, are founded on our group experiences and in fact we all belong to several groups, namely, family groups, occupational groups, political parties, religious bodies, leisure groups, ethnic and national groups". "But it is the institution of the school which offers all its members a particularly early and intensive opportunity for participation in group life and a thorough socialization in collective experiences" (1985:29-30).

Though, we need to recognize that society is the term which Durkheim gives to the product of human interaction, we must also realize that the individual is, indeed, shaped by his social environment.



Durkheim, by emphasising this aspect of human life, allows us to understand education in a new way. However, inspite of the immense contribution of Durkheim in the field of sociology of education. Durkheim has been criticized on several grounds.

In his writings, education is seen as transmitting the ideals of man. According to researchers when this is applied to an education system, the ideals which are the focus become very hazy i.e. it is not clear what these ideals are. Durkheim assumes that the educational system is successful in the process of inculcating the values or ideals it attempts to transmit (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:24-25). What Durkheim fails to conceptualize is the fact that there may be a possibility of clash between home and school and the socialization process may not prove to be successful. We also need to ask as to what extent the ideals of education are those of society? Durkheim yet again assumes that there is consensus in society regarding basic values and norms. But it is not possible to generalize and any attempt would prove to be extremely vague. Let us now shift our focus to Mannheim who to a certain extent shares the views of Durkheim.

If we look at Mannheim's background, we find that he was not confined to a particular society, rather he had to spend a considerable period in three different societies. He was born in budapist, Hungary in 1893, had to migrate to Germany in 1919 after both the post war revolutionary regimes in Hungary collapsed. But again he had to migrate to England in 1933 when Nazi atrocities in Germany became intolerable. The role of education in the recreation of an oppressive order came from the Nazi rule in Germany. This disturbed Mannheim and with his socio-historical analysis of the aims and objectives of education he sought education to be helpful for a 'Progressive social change". Mannheim's recognition of social conflict did not prevent

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him from postulating a positive role for education in bringing social integration, Shukla and K. Kumar (1985).

The works and thrust of Mannheim and his colleagues resembled the works of Durkheim and his followers. Both emphasised among other things sociology's vital function of putting education in the context of society and in treating school as a social institution.

We can draw comparisons between the ideas of Durkheim and Mannheim. Like Durkheim, Mannheim views education as a necessary tool for social integration, further, both of them have regarded school as an institution and placed education in the societal context. According to Mannheim (1968), "an individual lives in a large number of groups each of which leaves to a greater or less degree its imprint upon the individual. School is one such institution, which has to deal with a personality structure in its pupils" (1968:1).

Mannheim (1968) has identified three main functions of the schools. According to him, school as an institution primarily concerns itself with 'the presentation of information or data and the second function of the school is to encourage certain attitudes thought to be helpful in getting on with the business of learning'. The third function is to help to prepare the pupil in a number of ways for his later career. Apart from these direct functions, there are also a number of indirect functions. The most important indirect function is to "use the dependent years of childhood and adolescence to 'train' and prepare for adult life", Mannheim & Stewart (1968:135). The other indirect function of school is that it encourages people to believe that education should be equated with the institutions which provide formal instruction of one kind or another. There is then a tendency to think that education is always something provided by experts or at least

people with an appropriate training (1968:135-136).

This brings us to yet another important aspect of schooling i.e. the role played by the teachers. The teacher according to Mannheim, is an institutional leader, due to the status and prestige of the post the teacher holds. The teacher is definitely regarded as a superior in the pupil-teacher relationship. According to Waller (1932), the political organization of the school is one which makes the teacher dominant and it is his business to use that dominance to further the process of teaching and learning. This dominance-submission aspect is a basic condition of the relationship between the teacher and his pupils. The teacher according to Mannheim brings into the classroom his views of his job, his prejudices, personal fears, inadequacies, ambitions and so on, which might have an impact on the students (1968:139-141).

To sum up, in Mannheim's view, school is only one agency in society concerned with education. It also takes its place within the home, the industrial order, the church, the voluntary agencies, the social services, the mass media. While the school exists to serve the society by preparing young people in accepted ways it also has to help in the task of social selection. The schools according to Mannheim, "do not earn their esteem in the society to which they belong simply by their own efforts, important though these are" (1968:1). Often they gain prestige because they prepare for careers, which are much sought after and for which other schools do not prepare. To put it differently, the standing of a school is in part decided by the openings to careers which it can offer, hence its selective function is not simply an intellectual matter by which pupils of a similar level of ability are brought together in one school, it is also a social and economic matter.

Like Mannheim, Parsons also focuses on the social selection

function of education, we will elaborate his views in the following paragraphs. As mentioned earlier, Talcott Parsons' was one of the most influential functionalist sociologist. Parsons has produced a theory of 'society in which culture, social structure and personality are linked together in a logical and a coherent way', (1985:67). Two functions of education have been suggested by Parsons i.e. socialization and selection although there is disagreement about which one is the most important. Parsons, unlike Durkheim and Mannheim, equates explicitly the school, with a system in his article on 'School Class as a Social System. Parson's major preoccupation was with the relation of structure of social relationships with the functions of those relations hence his approach was regarded as structural functionalism '.

Talcott Parson's views society as a system of interaction and the relationship between the members represents its structure. To Parsons, the school represents a social system in which teachers, principals and students interact with each other as members of the system. School is seen as a system of mutually interdependent as well as independent parts. Each part is assumed to have a role to which are associated a set of behavioral expectations. The behavior of each part is viewed in relation to the behavior of other parts. A change in the action of one affects the action of the other. Schools direct their efforts towards the attainment of goals and in the words of Parsons (1956) they "Contribute to a major function of a more comprehensive system, the society". In other words, school is not just a formal institution but a social system or small society.

In the essay 'The School Class as a Social System', Parson's main theme is that education is instrumental in bringing about a social divide, because differences in educational attainment introduce new forms of inequality because education of an individual, to a large

extent, determines the job one gets which in turn determines an individual's, income, status and position in society. But if we look on the other side, education also legitimizes such inequalities. Parson's main contention is that 'Education inculcates the view that inequalities of income and status, which are a consequence of differences of educational attainment, are acceptable; that it is proper for those who do well in education to be highly rewarded' (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:68-71). Education thus helps to spread the ideology of 'equal opportunity' and 'achievement' and this is the basis of common culture which exists in modern societies and is characterized by consensus of values.

He further says that the society which is equated to the school class in his essay can be regarded as an agency of manpower. Therefore, the school and the educational system, 'adapt' to this need of the society. Education 'functions to internalize in its pupils both commitments and capacities of their future adult roles and functions to allocate these human resources within the role structure of society' (King, 1983:19). This perhaps is latency in school leading to goal attainment outside school.

The basic components of the society were identified by Parsons and these components of the society are the cultural system, the social system and the personality system. Since the social system is required to solve four basic problems i.e. the problems of adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency, the role of social system in society becomes very crucial. King (1983), while commenting on Parson's views, says that "These problems exist for all systems from the social system (society) figuratively downwards, so that all structural forms and their functions are basically alike", (1983:18-19). There is a similarity between an educational system, the individual schools, the

classrooms and even the individual teacher-pupil equation.

“We need to describe the nature of these systems. The broad values shared by all the members of society are the most important part of the cultural system. As for the social system, this is made up of social roles and the primary ingredient of the role is the role expectation. Finally, the personality system or individual personality is essentially composed of motives or needs, i.e. ‘need disposition’ and these needs are of two kinds i.e. biological and social. The social needs are acquired during the socialization process (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985:70-71).

Thus, the systems approach provides us with a model of society in which all social institutions including educational institutions have specified functions. But, Parsons has been criticized on several grounds. His theory looks at the relationship between the formal educational institutions and wider society and he is not interested in the internal working of the school except in so far as it helps in understanding how school as an institution is affected or affects society.

Parson’s thesis in ‘The School Class as a Social System’ rests on the fact that all individuals are equal i.e. at least they begin from a basis of equality: this is essential if they are to accept later differentiation as fair and just. But a lot of evidence suggests that there is, in fact, a great deal of difference between social classes in the preparation of children for education and when the children come to school, there is evidence to suggest that pupils are not always treated equally by teachers, whose assumptions and preconceptions may influence their assessment of pupil’s abilities.

The second criticism is based on the fact that ‘achievement’ in

Parson's view is of prime importance it is assumed that there is agreement between the school and the homefront about its definition and meaning. But those who criticize Parsons argue that, it is true by definition that all people value 'achievement', but that it is not self evident that they mean the same thing by it, nor that all people want to achieve the same things (1985:75).

Finally, (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985), dispute the validity of Parson's view that educational qualifications and not market position, determine success in the modern world. A person's socio economic status has been repeatedly shown to be important for success in the educational system. There is also some doubt that educational qualifications are a major determinant of occupational position (1985:75).

Parson's (1965) contribution lies in the fact that he has made specific referencé to schools as systems. But as elaborated in the above paragraphs a number of unacceptable assumptions and logical problems are associated with his views. In Parson's writings, society appears as some sort of entity with its own wants and desires. In the context of schools, "The students are thought of as programmed puppets with no creativity or free will". No recognition is given to the individual's capacity to make himself or to change society.

To sum up, in this chapter the discussion focussed on schools as systems and the related views of Durkheim, Mannheim and Parson's were discussed. Durkheim has emphasized the role of education being a means to an end. The end is the perpetuation of society and education facilitates this aim by socializing the young. He has also focussed on the fact that stability of society is possible if there is a consensus of values and because the human beings need to relate to each other,

they have to accept the rules of the group. School is one such institution which functions like a system of inter-related elements and also stresses the importance of discipline and rules for social order. Mannheim, on the other hand, has stressed the role of education as a means of social integration and the direct and indirect functions of schools have been discussed.

Parson focusses on the socialization and selection functions of education, he conceptualizes society as a system of interaction which solves the problems of adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency.

In the next chapter, the perspective which looks at schools as organizations has been discussed and in doing so the characteristics of organizations will be highlighted and also the views of researchers who do not regard schools as organizations will be discussed.

CHAPTER - 3

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SCHOOLS AS ORGANIZATIONS

Although there have been many studies of schools and colleges using a variety of methods and theoretical approaches, there has until very recently been very little development of a sociology of the school. In particular there has been a very considerable neglect of the school as an organization and the effect of its organizational setting on the educational process (Banks, 1952-82:7). 'Too many sociological studies of schools are, in fact, studies of the social life of adolescents and little account is taken of the more or less tacit demands and pressures of the formal organization of school life and work' (Floud and Halsey, 1958:186).

In the last few years, however, a growing interest in organizational theory in general and the increasing application of this theory to an educational setting has provided us with some of the main dimensions for a framework of analysis (Banks, 1967). Greatly increased diversity of organizational patterns and administrative styles in almost all educational systems makes it imperative to have a more detailed knowledge of the ways in which schools are organized which will facilitate in building a body of knowledge and experiences that can be shared and drawn upon by involved practitioners.

It must also be stated here that though an attempt to construct a general theory of organizations derives initially from the study of industry and the typologies and theories in this area have been developed primarily to explain industrial rather than educational organizations where the kind of task and the type of personnel are very different. Nevertheless, there are certain basic concepts which appear to be useful in the analysis of all types of organizations which will be discussed in this chapter (Banks, 1952-82:8).

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to shed light on certain characteristics of organizations, to focus on schools as organizations, and the differences between an organization and a school and to discuss the interactionist perspective, which highlights the internal life of the school while critiquing schools as organizations. There are divergent views on whether schools can be compared to organizations. While there is agreement about schools possessing some aspects of organizations, opinions vary on other dimensions. Some question the analogy of schools with organizations. The first task that we have in this section is to identify certain characteristic features or dimensions of organizations and see whether the school possesses those dimensions or not.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONS:-

Organization is a multifaceted institution which escapes easy definition. Firth was one of the first few sociologists who studied social organizations. Some sociologists have regarded structure as the cardinal object of interest in social analysis. But according to Firth "Structural considerations are of great importance, but human behaviour is the resultant of many considerations, in which alternate modes of procedure are presented to individuals and in which their

personal choice, decision and adjustment are therefore, also of prime significance. Hence subjoined to the concept of social structure must be another concept, entitled social organization”.

Organizations have been defined as ‘social units’ that pursue specific goals which they are structured to serve (Etzioni, 1964). According to the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences Vol. II, one of the basic principles that governs social life is the ‘formation of collectivities’. So whenever groups of men/women associate with one another social organizations develop among them. So an organization comes into existence when explicit procedures are established to coordinate the activities of a group in the interest of achieving specified objectives. The collective efforts of men and women may become formally organized either because all of them have some common interests or because a sub-group has furnished inducements to the rest to work on behalf of its interests.

According to Banks (1952-82), the typical organizations include hospitals, prisons, armies and churches as well as schools and universities. Every organization has a formally instituted pattern of authority and an official body of rules and procedures which are intended to achieve its specific goals. Alongwith this formal aspect of the organization, however, are networks of informal relations and unofficial norms which arise out of the social interaction of individuals and groups working together within the formal structure.

According to Joseph Schiltz, “Organizations are social entities that are goal directed, deliberately structured activity systems with an identifiable boundary” (1990:18). By social entity is meant that organizations are composed of people and groups of people. The building block of a social system is the human being. People interact

with each other to perform essential functions in organizations. As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, organizations are goal directed in so far as they exist for a purpose. An organization and its members are trying to achieve an end. Organizations exist for one or more purpose without which they would cease to exist.

Joseph Schiltz, further elaborates on the characteristic features that the organizations have one of them being that they are also deliberately structured activity system which means that organizations use knowledge to perform work activities. Organizational tasks are deliberately sub divided into separate departments and sets of activities. The sub division is intended to achieve efficiency in the work process. The deliberate structure is also characterized by mechanisms to coordinate and direct separate groups and departments.

To sum up, while there is no consensus about a definition of an organization there is general agreement that the organizations have the following characteristics i.e. clear goals, bureaucratic set up, standardization... presence of specialized personnel, hierarchy of authority, relationships are formal and there is division of labour.

We will now shift our focus from the characteristics of organizations to whether schools possess these characteristics or not and in doing so, we will first discuss about the works of those researchers who view schools as bureaucracies which in turn would throw light on schools as organizations.

SCHOOLS AS BUREAUCRACY

According to Banks (1976), 'one of the most important aspects of the formal structure of an organization is its system of administration

and in a modern society the typical administrative system is the bureaucracy' (1976:159). 'Complex organizations in American society are bureaucratized'. Corwin argues, 'the schools are no exception'. It is necessary therefore, to consider the concept of bureaucracy and its meanings for the functioning of educational institutions (1976:159).

Weber has discussed as to how far a school as an educational system can be described as a bureaucracy, which is the most widely used concept in organizational theory.

This concept of Bureaucracy stems from Max Weber's 'political sociology'. According to Weber bureaucracy is a particular kind of authority found in several types of society but developing particular importance in modern complex organizations. In its most typical form modern bureaucracy is characterized by a hierarchical structure of power, in which each individual at each level of the organization has a clearly defined position and a clearly defined set of duties, according to a set of written rules (Bendix, 1960).

According to Musgrave, "Schools today have most of the salient characteristics of bureaucracies as described by Max Weber (1973:163). "The complex nature of the activities carried out by schools demands, it is argued, both the efficiency and rationality initially claimed by weber for this form of organization. In order to achieve its goals, the activities of the school must be regulated by an impartially applied consistent system of abstract rules and that the duties of members of staff must be officially prescribed, a division of labour maintained and a hierarchy of authority, resulting in a clear delineation of states and function between the various positions in the hierarchy, established" (Musgrave, 1973).

To sum up bureaucracy is characterized by a high degree of specialization; a hierarchical system of authority; explicit rules which define the responsibility of each member of the organization and the coordination of different tasks; the exclusion of personal considerations from official business and impartiality in the treatment of subordinates and clients; recruitment of experts and the existence of a career (Blau, 1956:32).

Clearly all of these characteristics are present to some degree in education, just as they are in political and military organizations, churches and industry. According to Banks (1976), schools increasingly employ specialized personnel recruited on the basis of expert qualifications and the level of formal education and training is high.

They have to varying degrees, a hierarchical system of authority involving specific lines of command from the school superintendent or director of education downwards. At the same time there is considerable standardization with respect to such matters as text books, courses and examinations, although the extent to which the behaviour of the teachers in the classroom is routinized varies considerably from one educational system to another and between different parts of the same system. Moreover, wherever rules exist the teacher is expected to apply them with strict impartiality.

According to Ronald King (1983), Weber's theory of bureaucracy addresses itself to both the problem of the changing social organization of modern society and that of the typical features of the formal organization that pervade it. He came to the conclusion that large collectivities confronted by complex and administrative tasks are most likely to become bureaucratically organized. Such formal organizations involve an extensive division of labour with specialized responsibilities

being assigned to trained personnel.

According to Weber, 'the organizational structure of a school consists of those social relationships between the totality of members which are arranged or are allowed by those with the power to do so' (King, 1983:14).

To explain the organizational structure of the school we must attempt to understand the subjective meanings of the teachers and pupils in the social construction of the organization. As mentioned in the first chapter three main reasons are identified (a)Economic (b)Status (c)Power over the pupils ' (King, 1983:15).

Weber made the use of class, status and prestige to explain the organizational structure of the school. According to him the subjective meanings of the teachers and pupils in the social construction of the organization can not be ignored. The position of the teacher needs to be looked at critically. It is a truism to say that the attitudes of teachers influence their students. But the nature of the influence is not so obvious (King, 1985:15).

According to Weber, the subjective meanings that the actors attach to the situations leads to variations in actions and motives. This leads in turn to dilutions of the messages intended for the subjects, this may be due to variations in the social backgrounds. This subjective aspect makes schools quite different from the organizations.

Corwin (1965) has suggested some of the conditions favourable to the development of bureaucracy in education. "These include population explosion, urbanization, increasing mobility, knowledge explosion and the growing economic importance of education", (1965:5).

According to him the professionalization of teaching has also done much to encourage bureaucratic tendencies by its "promotion of policies with respect to qualified entrants, security of tenure, career opportunities and the pressure for control by the expert rather than the layman or amateur", Banks (1967).

The question as to how far a school as an educational system can be described as a bureaucracy is still an open one, yet it is clear that educational systems do contain many bureaucratic elements, which are increasing in importance in modern societies, Banks (1952-82:294). Now we will shift our focus to another aspect of the organization i.e. clarity of goals.

SCHOOLS AS ORGANIZATIONS

As large scale educational organizations develop they take a great deal of control over the ritual classification of their curriculum, students and teachers. This classification is the basic component of the theory of education used by modern societies and schools gain enormous resources by conforming to them, incorporating them and controlling them (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).

As mentioned earlier where the organizational aspects of the school have been considered, 'the researchers have attributed to them features such as clear goals, identifiable personnel, a relevant and explicit technology and relationship based on positional rather than personal factors' (Bell, 1980:4). These structural features are thought to produce predictability, consistency and stability. Taken together the extent to which a school organization is thought to exhibit these characteristics indicates something about the nature of its authority and control structure.

According to Parsons (1964), it is the "primacy of goal orientation" that provides the main feature for distinguishing organizations from other social structures. In an organization there is clarity in terms of the purpose for which the organization exists.

Olive Banks also reinforces the Parsonian position. Thus basic to the idea of any organization whether it is a school, a prison or a large corporation is the idea of a means-end relationship of the formal social arrangements to the goals of the organizations. Organizations themselves are assumed to have a relatively high level of predictability, stability and consistency. This is thought to be as true as schools as of other organizations.

This view is echoed by Musgrave (1968) and Shipman (1975). The latter, pointing out that schools are established to achieve definite ends, argues that four fundamental organizational goals can be identified for schools, although he does indicate that there may be a difference in emphasis between different types of educational institutions. The former states that schools can be viewed as organizations in some way akin to factories (Musgrave, 1968:67).

The goals of education it is argued, penetrate down to the classroom and influence the work of the teacher. This suggests that such factors as the division of labour, power and communication in the school are deliberately planned to facilitate the achievement of the school goals. Lambert, Bullock and Milham (1970) in similar vein, have developed a practical manual for the study of schools as organizations. They place their emphasis on instrumental, expressive and maintenance goals and produce an analysis which presupposes that such goals attract a degree of consensus, can be identified and related to structures intended to achieve them. Therefore, it is in order

that having discussed the similarities between schools and organizations, we will move on to discuss the differences.

SCHOOLS ARE DIFFERENT FROM ORGANIZATIONS

Due to several properties of educational organizations, schools are viewed differently by researchers. March and Olsen (1976) and Weick (1976) apply the term 'loosely coupled' to educational organizations. Cohen et al (1972) viewed schools as 'anarchic organizations' whereas according to some other researchers educational organizations are very tightly organized.

According to Etzioni (1969), "The universities, colleges, research organizations, therapeutic hospitals, the large general hospitals and social work agencies are professional organizations". The status of its members is very high because of the specialized training (status legitimized), their right to privileged communication is established.

According to Etzioni (1969), "There are professions which claim a high status but the training is shorter their status is less legitimated, their right to privileged communication less established and there is less of a specialized body of knowledge and they have less autonomy from supervision or societal control than 'the professions' and such organizations are called semi-professional organizations (1969,v)". One such profession is teaching and the most typical semi-professional organization is the primary school.

Etzioni further says that public schools unlike major universities, have no legally based 'senates' or similar arrangements for collective participation of its members in the overall operation of the organization then how does integration of purpose take place? According to him

there is a very flimsy base for the analysis of public schools as well integrated systems or organizations. There is a pressing need for working models which generate hypothesis and originate questions. So schools according to him are regarded to be less formalized and less specialized institutions in contrast to the organizations.

Corwin (1965) takes a different stand from Etzioni. According to him "It is possible for an extensive division of labour to be implemented by relatively unspecialized personnel; assembly lines for example require very low degree of specialization, whereas highly specialized personnel, such as lawyers can function outside of complex organization". So according to him teaching is a specialized profession.

According to Stinchcomb (1954:153), "Ambiguities in the position of the elementary teacher today are rooted in the organizational history of schools; control by laymen, lack of clarity in colleague group boundaries, limited prestige and money income and feminization have taken place. This makes schools very different from organizations.

Another important variable which needs to be highlighted is standardization. The process of "bureaucratization also carries with it consequences that run counter to the conceptions of the teacher role held not only by the teachers themselves but by many other educators". For example the standardization inherent in a bureaucratic system comes into inevitable conflict with the ideal of individual attention to students and pupils which is basic to most current educational thinking (Banks,1967). By standardization we mean the extent to which similar work content is described in detail, so similar work is performed the same way across departments or locations.

Within school the standard rules and procedures are used,

seeking order and consistency among subordinate units. Standardization may have side effects. An index of standardization might include measures of compliance with standard lesson plans and curriculum guides and the uniformity of tests and text books in use in the system due to lack of autonomy it might lead to deviations (Sieber and Wilder, 1973:166).

Davies (1970) questions those who believe that in school there is clarity of goals. According to Davies, students may have very different motives from the other members of the institution. What constitutes motivational goals for the students, teachers etc. can not be assumed to be the official aims of the school which leads to vagueness, ambiguity and conflict of goals (1970:256).

Davies (1970) further suggests that the major problem in discussing organizational goals is that of identifying how goals are set and whose goals count as the goals of the organization. This focus on goals tends to suggest that schools are highly effective goal seeking organizations. Yet schools certainly can be regarded as operating adequately when official goals are not reflected in the real state of the school. Davies frequently attempts to identify the organizational goals of schools produce an analysis which is at such a high level of abstraction as to defy specification (Shipman, 1976). This in turn may be the result of wide variations of goals between schools, the difference between schools themselves and the difficulty in obtaining any real consensus of what the goals of schools are and ought to be, let alone how such goals might be achieved. Perhaps, therefore, the analysis of schools as organizations should reflect this situation and recognize the essentially problematic nature of goals in the organizational structure of the school (L.A. Bell, 1980:4).

In an organization the process of the formation of the end product is very different, i.e. it is carefully planned, mechanical and the product is an inanimate object which does not have a will, mind, character which is quite unlike the end product in a school.

The point of difference between a school and organization is that, in an organization one can predict about the end product, but the same can not be said about schooling, because an individual is the focus and he/she is highly adaptive, creative and flexible in order to react to constantly changing situations which can not be predicted.

There may be strong pressures within the educational system working for what Bidwell (1965) has called de-bureaucratization. Moreover, is necessary to look more closely at research on the school as an organization in order to determine the effect of these conflicting pressures on the teacher's role and the teacher's performance.

In general, what information we have about the authority structures in schools suggests that teachers have very little control over important decisions. Corwin (1965), for example, argues that the participation of teachers in the decision making process is usually limited to either 1) interpretation of established policy, 2) advice or 3) the execution of established policy. This aspect makes a school different from an organization because centralization is an important feature of any organization which refers to the hierarchical level that has authority to make a decision. When decisions are delegated to the lower organizational level the organization is decentralized and when the decision making is kept at the top level it is centralized. Thus schools from this point of view give very little power to its principal actors. Thus, schools are not organized on rigidly bureaucratic lines. In practice as Corwin points out that, there are certain areas in which authority

must be delegated, especially when the knowledge of an individual teacher in a particular field is greater than that of the school principal or head. In a school the legitimation of the authority is in terms of rank and deference. According to Banks (1967) 'obedience is due from those of lower to those of higher status in the organization, whereas among the professionals deference is due only to competence or expert knowledge', (1967:28). As school systems become larger and more influential, as pressures for more efficient decision making increases, the vertical division of responsibility the hierarchy of authority or the chain of command becomes more pronounced. According to Sieber and Wilder (1973), the official authority system is an organizations moral spine. Before work can be coordinated and before outside changes and pressures can be accommodated, at least the blue print of the authority system must be established.

This in turn enables people having authority to impose one's will upon the behaviour on other persons, Bendix (1960) and in this general sense power is an aspect of most social relationships. The power which is derived from established authority is, however, of a very special kind, arising as it does from the authoritarian power of command.

There are several other points of difference between the school and the organization. For instance people do not behave like parts in a machine. The expectation that individuals will act like automations in an impersonal organizational environment is quite unrealistic. The emotional composition of human beings is such that personal feelings always interfere with the attempt at completely rational behaviour, Champion (1968). Besides, every school has its own unique flow, an identity. To understand the functioning of schools we must understand the processes that people undergo there i.e. the motivational,

interpersonal and emotional factors involved in motivating human effort for common purpose.

Weber's analysis indicated a smooth running of the organization, but conflict is likely to be an element in the relationships constituting the organization. Conflict is also part of the competition for scarce resources. For example, pupils may compete among themselves for marks and examination success which they hope not only will gain them high formal status at school, but also success in the pursuit of economic and status interests in the job market (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985).

According to Tyler (1977), teachers often hold certain stereotypes of what is valuable knowledge and what constitutes an ideal pupil. They apply these stereotypes, often unconsciously to discriminate against pupils who do not fit their model. Since there is nothing inherently 'deficient' in the child from a poor background it must be the teachers who are teaching her/him to 'act dumb' and consequently to fail. So in this context the subjective meanings that the actors attach to the situations lead to variations in actions and motives. This subjective aspect forms the central concern for the symbolic interactionists and its near relative social phenomenology. These perspectives are associated with the 'new' sociology of education. Social phenomenological approach is mainly derived from the writings of Alfred Schutz (1899-1959). In Schultz's writings on inter-subjectivity, mutually understood, negotiated, shared definitions.

Individuals make sense of their experiences through constructs which are learnt and to some extent pre-existent. Using this perspective Dale (1974) points out that 'the school' is a social construct. Teachers and students do not necessarily hold the same constructs about the school.

The interactionist perspective also provide useful insights to be applied to the school in this context. For example, King (1973) cites a case where in a school most head teachers of secondary school defined the activities constituting a school assembly as promoting consensual, community sentiments but pupils commonly defined it as a waste of time.

The question that we have tried to answer is that whether we can regard schools as organizations and on what basis we can make the analogy between the two. The fact that there is no universal agreement about the features of the organizations that the schools posses have also been discussed at length. Some of the similarities between the two have also been highlighted.

The organizational context can not be seen in isolation. The reality of the school keeps evolving, we must situate the study within a social context because the external factors effect the internal organization. Since schools specialize in the output of people processed overtime and are linked to the wider society, the schools are unable to disregard pressures emanating from their wider environment. Schools can be regarded as an organization to the extent that the organizations are even less in command of the outside pressures and for the reason most of their problems concern ways of accommodating to and resisting social forces that eventually impinge upon them. In the next chapter, we relate the school to the wider society.

CHAPTER - 4

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SCHOOL AND THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Modern industrial societies are multicultural, composed of people from a wide range of origins and cultures. There are very few shared values but the emerging nations have sought to impose value systems on culturally diverse societies. Schooling is one of the ways or means by which the dominant culture is transmitted and there is evidence to show that this culture discriminates against pupils on the basis of their background. Some scholars agree with Bottomore (1964) in saying that "wherever there is a system of social stratification in the society, there is a corresponding differentiation within the educational system" (Bottomore, 1964:248).

Schools act as socializing agencies, the schools not only pass down the cultural values but biases as well. The biases of our society are embedded in every element of schooling. Due to class and racial prejudices, permeation of knowledge is limited to the upper strata of society. Even the quality of schooling varies for the children from the upper strata of society and the lower strata of society.

Despite the manifest aims of the governments to provide equal educational opportunity it is obvious that the promise of change in educational and social opportunity can not be so easily realized because

the initial selection and subsequent channeling of students are influenced by the ascribed status. In addition certified levels of educational attainment and type of specialized training received become the vehicles by which people are channeled into the existing social structure. The role played by school in this can not be undermined.

Thus, the aim of this chapter is to focus on some of the significant factors that are responsible for the differential access and treatment of the children to all kinds of education in schools. These factors intertwine and in combination with other factors affect the functioning of schools as systems and as organizations thereby enhancing or inhibiting children's subsequent opportunities.

These factors will be discussed in order to highlight the fact that it is not only the disadvantaged children who are unable to cope with the formal schooling, but in addition the school system of which they form a part is unable to assimilate and reduce the increasing gap between the higher and lower class groups in achievement, aspirations, in cognition and learning skills because of the inherent biases of the organization of the school.

According to Willis (1975:42), 'the organization of schools and the quality of education imparted is a result of purposing, of careful study, of choices being made, of goals being set and also of thoughtful execution'. But one may ask whose values are perpetuated by the system and whose ends are kept in mind? The schools can not be seen as islands, because they are part of society. In other words society may interfere with the processes going on within the schools and vice versa.

We will explore the point that, schooling as a process is not

neutral. It could be argued that far from schools promoting achievement, they actually reduce the aspirations of some pupils such as those from the working class, ethnic minority groups and girls.

According to Schwartz (1975), the schools have not done more to equalize opportunities is due in large part to the fact that the quality of available schooling is often related to the pupil's home background. Children from low income families attend schools that provide them with fewer educational resources, than do those attended by children from moderate income families. As a result their initial handicaps are compounded.

It has been discussed by several researchers, that the extent of schooling, quite apart from pupil background, can increase or decrease the opportunities that pupils will have eventually. School factors that are most related to school success and therefore to subsequent opportunity include who one's classmates happen to be. Moreover, class, race, ethnic background and gender of a particular student are closely interlinked to the process of schooling.

"The purposes and structures are defined and institutionalized in the rules, norms and ideologies of the wider society. The legitimacy of school and their ability to mobilize resources depend on maintaining congruence between their structure and these socially shared categorical understandings of education", (Dowling and Pfeffer 1975:72).

Let us now examine each of the factors responsible for the biases to creep in the school. It may be mentioned that these factors overlap to a great extent, just to give a few examples, students from lower class would have a language handicap as will be discussed later. Again, poor children from ethnic minority groups will suffer more drawbacks

than the poor students belonging to the majority community. Nonetheless it is possible to view these factors separately for purposes of analysis. We give examples of class, race, gender and ethnic background to illustrate our point. It may also be mentioned that these factors have direct and indirect effects e.g. in U.S.A. black children are more likely to come from poor homes than the white children. They also suffer from language handicap because, the teachers are likely to be white and middle class. The latter also tend to discriminate against the black students thereby affecting their performance and the ultimate goals of schooling. Teachers are in fact quite central in subverting or in promoting the functioning of the schools as institutions.

CLASS

There is overwhelming evidence to show that several children are at a disadvantage within the schools and that all students are not treated equally. There is data based on the research of social scientists interested in the sociology of education that there is a restrictive cycle of privilege that operates within the school and this cycle is heavily tilted towards the upper class. This upper class bias manifests itself in many ways. It may be visible in the curriculum choices that are being made, unreliable tests and tools that are used in the schools to evaluate the children may be drawn from the familiar grounds of the upper class culture and lower class children may be unable to identify themselves with them.

Halsey, Floud and Martin (1956) in their article "Social Class and Educational Opportunity" focus on the fact that children from working class homes face clash of cultures which arises when a child enters the middle class environment of the school. This may be due to several reasons. According to Schwartz (1975), some of the most

intractable educational problems originate in disaccord between the expectations of home and school e.g. educational objectives that seem easily attainable for most middle class white children often are never accomplished by children from low income and racial minority groups, because the children may acquire perspectives about themselves and the world around them which influence in some way most of what they do in later years and the environment in the school and the home is partially responsible for this. The second reason is related to the medium of instruction used in schools, which may act as a barrier in the assimilation process, a point we discuss later.

Douglas (1964) lists a range of factors which influence school achievement. One of the factors that he discussed was related to the conditions prevailing in the school, the larger the class, the lower were the test scores and the second factor was that streaming on the basis of subjects reinforced the process of social selection and the children from lower classes were socialized away from high achievement areas and these were the spheres which determined future employability options. Since the middle class children were found in streams which were regarded as prestigious from the status point of view and job point of view, they definitely had an edge over the others due to their superior class position and all that went along with it i.e. cultural capital, according to Bourdieu (1973). This point is also discussed below.

Sharp and Green (1975) studied three infant classes, the teachers and parents in a progressive school in a homogeneous working class area. They found that at the latent level schooling not only led to the 'social structuring of the pupils' but a process was taking place within the school where opportunity was offered to some and closed to others. Thus increasing the disparity between the groups. This selective

character operated not only through families with economic and cultural resources but also through schools where the varying levels of ignorance are being transferred. Thus leading the perpetuation of the class structure.

Teachers often hold certain stereotypes of what is valuable knowledge and what constitutes an ideal pupil. They apply these stereotypes, often unconsciously to discriminate against pupils who do not fit their models. Since there is nothing inherently 'deficient' in the child from a poor background, it must be the teachers who are teaching her/him to 'act dumb' and consequently to fail, by imposing middle class values because teachers are themselves products of the evaluation system whose aim is to transmit the culture of the ruling class. Ronald King (1967). Besides, other mentioned reasons the medium of instruction used may also hamper the narrowing of the gap between the higher and lower classes. Bernstein (1950's) produced a linguistic theory of failures. According to him the working class child was limited to the 'here and now' by his linguistic experience (restricted code), while the middle class child could rise above his immediate situation and reflect on the underlying principles and remote patterns of causation (the elaborate code). These codes consist of meanings, symbols and relationships expressed through language. When the language is dependent on the context in which it is spoken it is particularistic (restricted code). When language is context independent it is universalistic (elaborated code). Bernstein argues that working class children do less well in schools than middle class children because, "the school is necessarily concerned with the transmission and development of universalistic orders of meaning... educational transmissions... are based on performance rules which the middle class child embryonically possesses. Class regulates the elaborated codes of education and the family" (Bernstein, 1973).

According to Bernstein, this linguistic theory has serious implications for education i.e. working class language is inappropriate in schools. If working class children want to do well, they must adopt a linguistic code which devalues the family experience from which they come. Thus we see how language in association with class can become a barrier.

Let us now shift our focus to how cultural capital and values prevalent in a society lead to perpetuation of inequalities within a school. According to Bourdieu (1973) parents transmit to their children cultural capital as well as material conditions. 'Cultural capital is a system of deeply internalized values which determine attitudes towards educational institutions'. According to Bourdieu, these values determine behaviour in school and the level of educational attainment. "Schools play a role in the perpetuation of inequality by penalizing those who do not conform to the middle class standard of behaviour, while setting criteria of achievement which favours children using middle class 'cultural capital'.

The effect of this imposition is that ruling class culture is the only legitimate one in schools and defines what constitutes 'knowledge' and 'intelligence'. Children in schools are assessed according to how well they have absorbed the dominant culture. If they possess cultural capital which corresponds to the demands of the school they will be rated as 'intelligent'.

It may be inferred thus that 'educability is passed on through a cultural code', or a message system. The culturally privileged children internalize this code and consequently do well at school and in later life. Whereas the poor are kept in their position because their children learn a culture of failure by adapting to patterns of thought and

language which prevent them from fitting into the school and thence into the mainstream culture. There is variation in the social backgrounds, values, attitudes and aims due to which the messages received are varying, which in turn lead to cumulative disadvantages for some and advantages for the others.

GENDER

Apart from the dimensions mentioned above, the gender dimension also holds a central place while discussing how the biases of the society are mirrored in the schools.

Perceptions of the society as to what the appropriate roles of men and women determines the kind of education offered and the levels one can achieve. A pattern of outcomes and experiences for the sexes is easy to observe. Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963) present evidence that it is the social class and gender of pupils that determine the course of study to which they are assigned in American high schools.

In recent years, feminist theorists have tried to extend their approaches to illuminate the role of school organization in the reproduction of gender relations. Bryne (1978) shows that many training programs in the further education sector that lead to skilled manual jobs in technological areas require examination qualifications that are usually acquired in secondary school in subjects that girls are unlikely to have studied. Certain other subjects popular with girls have relatively few applications outside the domestic context e.g; boys are more likely than girls to follow courses in physics, chemistry, engineering and other technical subjects. Thus curricular specialization of the sexes in school perform a latent function in society i.e. to reinforce that certain types of knowledge and skills are more appropriate for one gender than another.

According to McDonald, there are other ways in which school experience may pave the way for a sexual division of labour in adulthood. Children become 'boys' and 'girls' for registration, seating and queuing purposes (Gender codes). There is a widespread assumption that parents and schools socialize girls towards traditionally feminine personality characteristics such as compliance, nurturance and dependency, traits which lead to restricted vocational choices and prevent significant public career success in adult life.

Several feminist theorists, have also looked at how schools shape female identity and encourage subordinate roles for women. Apart from this, they also emphasize two additional elements, namely, lowered self esteem and acceptance of inferiority as derived from women's school experiences and men's control over and definition of 'knowledge' itself (Acker, 1966:74). It may be that women believe and internalize these messages about their own inferiority.

In Britain, studies have been conducted on mixed sex classrooms and they have come to the conclusion that, "In a mixed sex classroom, boys get a greater share of teacher attention than girls". Researchers have also reported that classroom projects are designed with the interest of the 'boys' in mind and that teachers tend to impute/explain 'girls' academic achievement as due to hardwork rather than talent (Acker, 1984).

There is some evidence that suggests that differences in female access to education among ethnic groups are a function of government policies that either favour or discriminate against a given ethnic group or race in education and employment. Kelly, 'provides ammunition against defeatism about the social, cultural and religious pressures', (1984:25). According to Kelly, the situation can be altered if the will is

there. Hamid Don in the years book of education, documents the tremendous increase in educational opportunities for girls in Malaysia since independence.

RACE

In the article entitled 'Education For Some' Eggleston, Dunn and Anjali (1968) studied the educational and vocational experiences of 15-18 years old pupils of minority ethnic groups. They found that the black pupils, commonly find themselves in some of the least favourable positions in the labour market and the object of study was to search for reasons, including why the school attainment and paid employment opportunities of black adolescents were overall markedly inferior to those of their white peers.

Many of the findings confirmed and add extra emphasis to what was increasingly suspected, that low achievement of black pupils is very frequently a consequence of the social system of which schools are an important element. It is, to a large extent, the result of the biases of the teachers -i.e. teacher's behaviours that tell students that some pupils are better than others because of their skin colour, class, gender or ethnic origin which proves to be subtle and damaging to the black pupils. An experiment was conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) entitled 'Pygmalion in the class room'. The Findings of this experiment indicated that children were equal at birth and that their ability was largely determined by the labels they acquire at school. It was claimed that these will tend to have the effect of a 'self-fulfilling' prophecy, for example, the black pupils in this study generally tended to internalize messages of subordination. In part, this was due to the racist attitudes expressed on the part of the teachers and administrators. Even where these expectations were not implicit, they were sometimes

deeply embodied in the 'hidden curriculum' of schools and this could be seen in the surprised manner with which teachers and heads spoke of the achievement of some of their black pupils implying that this was so unusual as to be worthy of special mention.

This research has brought to the fore the point that it is within the school system that we should look for reasons due to which students of particular race or ethnic origin are considered to be less motivated and a need to investigate the reasons for low attainment may have its origin within the social structure of the school itself.

A study conducted in 1966 describing the status of equal educational opportunity was conducted by James S. Coleman for the U.S. Office of education. It involved over 9,00,000 children of all races from every section of the country. It documented that racial segregation in education was nearly absolute in the south and very high nationwide. It also concluded that achievement in school was affected most by the educational backgrounds and aspirations of other students in the school. These findings provided a rationale for active integration efforts based on the idea that black students would benefit from attending school with achievement oriented white students.

But within the schools, there are several processes which lead to a cumulative cycle of disadvantage because these factors overlap, as mentioned earlier. Language poses problems for non-mother tongue English speakers who tend to be subtly exploited because of lack of familiarity with the language of the majority, which is generally the medium of instruction.

Further, the low expectations of disadvantaged ethnic group students by teachers lead to the teachers putting in less effort. Secondly,

the use of inappropriate materials, due to which the students are unable to identify themselves with the processes taking place in the class. This leads in turn to the displacement of the goals of education.

In addition, alongwith the official curriculum in schools there is a hidden curriculum too. The goals of the hidden curriculum have been identified as the allocation of values, political specialization, training in obedience and docility and so on. This 'hidden curriculum' favours the children from superior class backgrounds and demotivates the children from lower classes, ethnic minority and racial groups which are discriminated against in schools.

This creeping in the bias within the school does not go uncontested i.e. we can not undermine the role of conflict within schools to cope with discrimination. There are pupils for whom definitions of situation varies and the pupils devise different strategies to cope. According to Lacey, who studied a group of girls (Black girls) in a London comprehensive school came to the conclusion that as a group of individuals develop or acquire a sense of common purpose, so the sets of strategies adapted by them acquire a common element. It is this common element that enables the common perspective and goal to emerge from within the framework of school.

Thus, we see how the school is affected by the processes taking place in the wider society. There are various subtle and not so subtle processes that lead to the social structuring of pupils, their motives and desires, which have been dealt in detail in this chapter in order to demonstrate that the critiques of the system and organizational perspectives and their applications to schools overlook these crucial factors. These factors affect the functioning of schools as systems and as organizations because they impede the achievement of systemic

and organizational goals. They provide cumulative and additional handicaps e.g. children from working class home are not only poor and cannot afford schooling but also have capital. Further, the role of the teacher is very crucial in all situations.

Thus, the social dimensions of the schools as institutions can not be ignored because the wider society impinges on them in several ways. Heuristically, it may be possible to conceptualize schools as systems and as organizations but one can not ignore the fact that they are embedded in the wider society and that society and the school interact and react at different levels. Therefore, while the two perspectives help us in conceiving of schools as institutions, provide focus on their social functions and also isolate them for purposes of analysis of their expected goals and functions, they only serve a limited function. Beyond that, the social context impinges on them in such a manner that any evaluation of schools as institutions has to take account of social reality.

CHAPTER - 5

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SUMMARY

In this dissertation we have examined the principal sociological approaches to the study of schools. These two views are schools as systems and schools as organisations. We have also considered the criticism that have been made of these approaches.

To sum up, the systems view reinforces the the analogy of the society as a biological organism, which ensures the continuity of the institutions of the society. Hence, school is seen as a system in which the essential units are connected in an integrated whole. This forms the social structure which is derived from different parts or elements arranged in a specific order. According to Durkheim, the function of an institution of society is the correspondence between the institutions and the needs of society. Thus, school is performing the function of socialization of the young and hence fulfills one of the important needs of the society.

The structural-functionalist approach is one of the macro sociological approaches, this approach has been criticized on the ground that human creativity is ignored and that it fails to grasp the reality of life in schools and does not help us understand what makes the teachers and pupils interact in a particular way within the confines of

the classroom.

The twin problems of unacceptable assumptions and lack of relevance have led to the development of 'micro sociological approaches. According to researchers who believe in this school of thought, everyday activity is the building block of society. If we want to understand the processes of schooling, we must begin by looking at everyday activity. We also need to understand the aims and intentions of human beings will enable us to reach the objective reality. This would be possible if the daily interactions of human beings in an institutional setting are carefully studied and interpreted. According to the new sociologists, schools are institutions where 'what is to be educated' is 'socially constructed'. In addition, 'the forms of knowledge that make up the school curriculum are related to the interests of particular classes and professional groups, or, more directly, of how the curriculum is product of pressures from certain vested interests'. (Blackledge and hunt 1985; 291)

On the other hand, Weberian sociology concentrates on the processes of conflict and domination in society. It sees social life as an arena in which various groups struggle with and try to dominate each other in an attempt to obtain wealth, status and power.

In King's view (1983), comparison of schools as organization is adequate unless the subjectively meaningful action of individuals is examined. We have to consider how social actors see the situation, what they are trying to achieve and the consequences of their actions. According to him (1983), Weber provided ways of studying and explaining the nature of society which admits fundamental duality in being constructed and maintained by the actions of people but also puts constraints upon their actions. This concept is applicable to schools as well.

Thus, the Weberian perspective looks or takes into account the purposeful action and social relationships of those involved in the educational system.

The use of the Weberian approach would help to increase the humanistic element in a field dominated by abstract and reified models only tenuously related to what happens in schools, (King, 1985)

Since organisational research examines how people behave in their organisational roles and how organisations behave as collective units, the insights of the interactionist approach through its links between individual strategy and organisation structure cannot be neglected.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Therefore, as seen in the above paragraphs the choice of approach to the study of schools at first sight appears to be quite bewildering. Historically, there have been successive schools of thought which have partly converged but which also partly live on in sectarian separation (Scott, 1964). The divisions reflect to a very large extent, the historical divisions within sociology, the unrecalled differences between conflict, social action and systems approaches, between rational change and natural growth, power and consensus and so on.

The conceptual, theoretical, empirical and even ideological obstacles to the study of schools as systems or as organizations are, therefore, real though probably no greater than those existing in any other area. If instead of simply seeking to bludgeon educational facts into the shape of typologies and concepts derived from elsewhere one attempts to remain as fully aware as possible of the crucial differences

between schools and other institutions, there may be a great deal to be gained from them. There are certain ground realities which make the situation very complex and it may not be the way it seems to be. According to some researchers what applies to industrial and business organizations applies to schools. They may assume several things, which may not be in consonance with the manifest or latent aims of the educational institutions e.g. one of the characteristic feature of organizations that has been discussed in the earlier chapter is the primacy of goal orientations, but what has been overlooked is the fact that the goals in educational organizations are not as clear cut, but that they are rather diffuse, overlapping and contradictory since pupils have aims and objectives just as staff have them. But what constitutes to be the motivational goals for either the students or the teachers may not be assumed to be the official aim of the schools which leads to vagueness, ambiguity or conflict of goals.

Invariably there are obstructions in the path leading to the goal attainment. So in such a case, the schools will chart out strategies to overcome the handicap. According to Davies (1970), the major problem in discussing organizational goals is that of identifying how goals are set and whose goals count as the goals of the organization and how does the integration of purpose take place. For any organization to be meaningful, integration of purpose is a must. a well integrated system radiates a sense of oneness, learning outcomes and student achievement which to an extent depend on how well the system is integrated.

As far as pupils are concerned, definitions of the situation vary and pupils devise different strategies to cope. According to Lacey 'As a group of individuals develop or acquire a sense of common purpose, so the sets of strategies adopted by them acquire a common element. It is this common element that enables the common perspective to

emerge from within the framework of school.

While the comparison of the formal structures of the schools with organizations has problems, one of the severe limitations of the organizational analysis is that it does not take into account the informal structures, which are equally important for shaping the goals, aims and ideology of an organization. School has an informal structure as well, which is created and is sustained alongside the formal structures. The thrust of the informal structure is on the relationships, values, norms in shaping the reality of the school. These may not be prescribed structurally or normatively by the official goals of the organization but which may still have effects on these goals.

The presence of informal social systems within the schools wield influence within the school setup. The informal social system can be defined as the pattern of norms, values and relationships not prescribed structurally or normatively by the official goals of the organization, but which may still have effects on these goals (Davies, 1970:298). This aspect has not been given its due place in the research literature which is related to schools as systems and as organizations. The informal social systems are extremely important because the norms of the informal system will govern not only pupil's behavior within it but also the extent and degree to which pupil roles may be taken up in the formal system, Hargreaves (1967).

Schools in which the pupil society is characterised by a high degree of pervasiveness, consensus and informal control may be said to have a strong informal social system -Davies (1970). Four ways have been identified by Davies, whereby the informal pupil systems relate to the formal system of the school.

- 1) Supportive -Although the extent and degree of commitment to particular goals will vary, overall general commitment to formal goal is high.
- 2) Manipulative -When the informal system uses features of the formal social system for its own ends e.g. when immigrants form a cohesive sub-group in a school, they may challenge the staff with accusations of racial discrimination when reprimanded.
- 3) Passive -Informal system may ignore the aspects of the formal structure.
- 4) Rejecting -This is where the pupil's informal social order rejects the goals of the formal system (Lambert, Bullock, Millham :304).

The informal system may sometimes even be passive or may ignore the goals of the formal social system. So the reality of the school keeps evolving. What must be kept in mind is that each individual is born with a certain relatively constant capacity or intelligence. The educational system should be so designed to remove external barriers of an economic and/or geographical nature that prevent able students from the lower classes taking advantage of the inborn intelligence which entitles them to due social promotion. But how far have schools been able to achieve this.

In the case of India, the manifest aim of the educational system was to provide equal opportunity to all irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex. The equal opportunity was not only in terms of access but also in terms of success but there were several obstacles which needed to be handled carefully.

We need to address the question: are the schools promoting equality? One can begin by appreciating the efforts taken by the government since independence. One cannot deny that there has been considerable progress in the educational facilities and with the development of village schools and of educational opportunities for children of lower castes, there is substantially more equality of access to education.

Unfortunately, however, though the education policy has been benevolent enough to offer equal opportunity of education to all and the constitution also provides a legal right to education, it would not be too much of a strain on our imagination to see reality around us. Till this day, there are cases of brutal beatings inflicted on aspiring Harijan students, wishing to join the village level school. There are some very recent examples of caste discrimination in some schools in Bihar, where the lower caste students are made to sit outside the class room; the general explanation being that otherwise the upper caste parents would threaten to withdraw their wards.

Though education has been used as a vehicle for social mobility, its major function has been to prepare a person for membership of a particular group in the social hierarchy. The education policy claims to emphasize the aspect of social mobility while formulating its policies. But then one may ask, if this was truly so, then how come English as a language is taught from class six in all government schools while the other public schools teach from class one onwards and especially when English still remains an important language in the official context. It is surely a handicap to start so late and which goes on to remain a handicap later. Similarly, the resources that are available to the Govt. schools are not distributed in an equitable way, which leads to cumulative disadvantages for the students.

If the government just pauses to take a look at the inbuilt contradictions in its policy, it could then rectify and take some positive steps to keep mobility as a major determining factor in its policy making. One can sum up by agreeing with Bottomore that as long as there is freedom of educational selection, privileged groups will always be emerging within society and that only deliberate policy and connivance will succeed in maintaining a rough equality.

We also need to highlight the fact that the resource distribution affects the quality of schooling, it will in turn affect the functioning of schools as systems or organizations. It is a fact that the educational institutions are by and large dependent upon the state for funding and hence are vulnerable despite their professed autonomy, to the forces which have control over the state's resources. According to Sinha "By their very nature, the boundaries of educational institutions are far more open than say industrial organizations and consequently, a variety of desirable and not so desirable external influences percolate into the system. This inverse flow tends in many cases to dilute the purpose and to distort the functions of higher education", (1994:11).

This in turn has a bearing on the functioning of the school, as vested interests take over. The resource distribution may not be equitable which in turn leads to a cumulative cycle of disadvantage for the children of the lower classes. This may in turn lead to significant differences in the behaviour and attainment of pupils in the different schools. This points towards the differences in the schools themselves as being the main factor for differential performance and behaviour.

Pessimistic though this may seem, the overwhelming evidence presented by the sociology of education is that social inequality continues to reassert itself in each new generation of school pupils.

Education is not a major force for social change, neither it is instrumental in bringing about equality.

Thus, we see that the way ahead for the study of schools therefore, appears to be through a cross fertilization of various approaches and what appears to be needed to restore the conception of the school as a social agency evolved to enhance the process of socialization, social role selection, education and custodial care and above all the conception of the school as a social entity whether seen as a system or organization is a framework which amalgamates the best and positive aspects of the sociological perspectives of schools.

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