

**EDUCATION FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGIOUS
SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY**

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9.1 Objectives of the Lesson :

After doing the study of this lesson, the student will be able to appreciate the following points :

- (i) To grasp the concept of scheduled castes.
- (ii) To bring out the problem of scheduled tribes
- (iii) Clear in his/her mind about the need of the education for handicapped persons.
- (iv) To understand the importance of education for minorities.

9.2 Introduction :

The problem of socially disadvantageous groups of the society is visible in most of the democratic countries of the world and every country has adopted

different means to deal with them in their own way and manage to educate them in accordance with their philosophy of education. In USA the problem is that white red Indians and blacks. It took more than a century to work out strategies of their development of their education systems to provide them equal educational opportunities, which yet stands not to be totally solved. The blacks in order to get equal opportunities in education, which was granted in their constitution, had to approach the supreme court of that country, a number of times only then their children were admitted in the schools of whites along with their children.

In U.K., the problem again is of Britishers, outsiders and black. Similarly the problem with Newzealand is of Mories, whites and outsiders. However, the problem have different background, social structure and different political, social and legal positions. No doubt the problem exists in India too, but it has a different historical background i.e. based on Manu Simiriti, difficult geographical area, minorities and sex discrimination etc, so it will have to be dealt with them in accordance with their own social and political system. In this lesson we will deal with the problem of education of the socially disadvantageous groups of the society mainly with regard to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and socially disadvantageous groups. These are major visible disadvantageous groups of the Indian Societies, who will have to be provided equal education facilities so as to bring them in the main stream.

9.3 Education for Scheduled Castes : In India this problem is the results of the basic philosophy of Manu Simiriti which divided the peoples as Kashtri, Brahmins, Vash and Shudras. All these sects of the people were to work on the jobs allotted to their castes. With the passing of time after the Vedic Period in the Brahman system of education shudaras were completely isolated and were declared not only uneducated but also untouchable. Their position continued to be rather pitiable even when some religious leaders like Guru Nanak, Mahatma Gandhi tried to improve upon their lot to some extent.

9.4 Position of Scheduled Castes in India After Independence : After Independence India adopted the policy of democracy, the basis of which is to provide

equal educational opportunities to all including scheduled castes which have suffered for centuries due to social and political discriminations. This could be possible only if special efforts were made to provide them with special educational facilities like reservations etc. in jobs and educational institutions as has been made in our constitution which became applicable in 1950's and to provide them free books, clothes, fee concessions etc. Efforts were made in all the Five Year Plan to improve upon their positions, by allotting more funds to them which continued to be improved significantly. In India their strength is 16% of the population. Now no fees are charged for their educational facilities provided to them. The students are to be admitted by merit in addition per their fixed quote by relaxing the minimum mark to a considerable extent, free books are provided to them. Scholarships are also reserved for them. A good many of them have been benefitted as at the time of admissions a good of many facilities are provided to them i.e. like lower percentage of marks for admissions and recruitment. As a good many such persons were not coming forward to enjoy these facilities so a policy was adopted to fill in their vacancies with the general categories of students. To improve upon the situation it was also made difficult to do so only with the sanction of highest authorities and their representation was carried forward to be filled on later on. As a result the policy of reservation, an other log sided development has also come up. Those who grabbed the higher positions were able to enjoy the benefits for their own children and most of the peoples continued to suffer a lot and could not get the benefits. In this way a section of them become of privileged group amongst the scheduled castes. On the whole their educational position has improved a lot, but still most of them continue to suffer deprived sections of the society. All the education commissions appointed in India and all the Education Policies framed in India. This is an all India problem and exists in all the provinces. However, its intensity is different in different parts of the country. However, in Punjab the situation has improved a lot which can a considerably extent to attributed to the impact of Sikhism. After independence have made recommendations for their educational improvement. In addition all the National Policies of Education to stream line the education system have also

recommended to provide them with requisite facilities in a systematic way. Now in most of the institutions of higher learning these unions have been formulated to fight for their interest.

As the things stand now some of the elite families has grabbed such facilities and are enjoying it and also passing it on to their families and the real crunch of the scheduled castes could not get requisites benefits to them. There is a dire need that those who are really deprived because of their lower castes benefits go in for socially the improvements can be observed on many fronts, the tradition of untouchability has also been rooted out, so much so that inter caste marriages also take place.

Even now the fact remains that a good deal of work needs to be done to provide education for the equalization of educational facilities to them so that they all of them become partners in the main stream of population.

9.5 Education for the Scheduled Tribes : India is a vast country and there are the people who live in difficult hilly, Sandy, Sea Coast areas and in many states in India. These areas are generally cut off with the main stream of Indian population. In many cases they have developed their own culture which they do not want to dispense with and become a part of Indian Culture. All of them do not have the same culture but own different Social, Political, Geographical system and traditions. For example in Kalka district of Himachal Pradesh, polyandry system of marriage was in existence. Only the eldest brother of the family is married to a woman, who becomes wife of all the brothers. In the same way there are some tribes in some areas of India where is some tribes where the tradition is that one man keeps good many wives. Similarly in some areas of Himachal Pradesh, there are tribes who do not allow any government servant to be posted into their areas so much so they do not allow to open any school or hospital there. They hold the opinion that they will spoil their traditional culture. In the same way such tribes are located in almost all the states in India, hilly, Sandy and areas located on the banks of sea.

The problem with the democratic government was to merge them in the main stream of India. Keeping these factors in view of about scheduled tribe people were provide some relief in our constitution laid down to take special steps to strengthen

the roots of democratic way of life in India. The framers of our constitution were alive to this fact and laid down in Article 15 and 17 of the constitution to provide the safe good for their upliftment. In this regard Article 15 states :

“Nothing in this article of clause 21 of Article 28, shall prevent the state for making any special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizen or for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes”.

About the equalisation of Educational Policy for them Article 46 lays down about tribes and castes. “The state should promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of scheduled castes and tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. The most effective way to deal with them so as to bring them to shun these uncivilised and traditional life was to provide equal educational opportunities to them by opening more schools in the areas inhabited by these casts tribes and to provide them special facilities like free education, free books, free school uniforms, scholarships and also making reservations for them in all types of services, higher educational facilities along with vocational and professional education institutions also. To give them relaxation age and admission facilities by providing them commissions of different type. All our efforts were made to take actions on the recommendations of all the educational commissions and educational policies appointed by the government after the Independence. Special provisions of spending more money on their educational and welfare activities in all the five year plans for them so as to improve upon their schools. However, the fact remains even much improvement has been made in them by the mode of providing equal education facilities, the fact remains that for the time being it has not been able to remove their isolation and bringing them totally as the main stream of education. However, like the scheduled castes an elite class has been created in them which grab most of their facilities and man in the stream of scheduled tribes has not been solved systematically. Even when the government is taking some such steps, a lot more needs to be done in the front of providing better education facilities of all types to them in their own inhibited areas and expose them to the advanced educational

and vocationally developed areas. The government in order to proceed them special facilities of primary level has relaxed the condition of minimum number students for opening the school and also make efforts to appoint the teachers of their own castes in their schools.

9.6 Education of the Fair Sex : In olden times in India women were treated equal and most of the religious, social and cultural functions were not organised, approved and accepted in the society till equal participation of women were made in these functions. However, it is understandable that the fair sex because of physically incapability were placed in disadvantaged positions and in agrigarian society and domination of the males over the women was established. The positions became so bad that they were treated as material property and their position was reduced to the non entity. This continued to be so in the Muslim period and only a bit better in the British period also.

However, when India become independent in 1947 and adopted democratic way of life along with other special facilities provided to them, it became essential to improve upon their educational facilities. However, some improvement was made in this direction during the British period and some girl institution were opened by them. However, the real extention of girl education was made after the independence. The farmers of our constitutions had conceptualize it and laid down in our constitution in it.

Article 15 (i) provides that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on the ground only of sex.

In the same way Article 15 (3) states "Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any special provision for women and children."

However the fact remains nearly about 50% population consists of the fair sex. Working out that much has not been done in this direction. The National Policy of Education (1986) has laid down, "Education will be used as the agents of basic changes in the status of women. In order to neutridox the accumonated distoration of the past. There will be well conceived edge in favour of women."

In order to give a push to its programmes like Sarb Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and alternative and Innovation Programme (AIC) extra care has been taken for the benefits of girl education at elementary level. The Mahila Samakhya Programme Education for the women Equality is the programme for maligned group has been 53 districts in the country. The objective of the scheme is as follows :

- (a) To enhance the self image and self confidence of the women to create an environment where women can seek knowledge and information which enables them to play positive role in the society.
- (b) To establish a decentralised and participative mode of management.
- (c) To enable Mahila Sanghs to actively assess and monitor education activities in villages.
- (d) To provide opportunities for women and adolescents girls and to bring about women participations in both formal and non-formal education programmes. Reservations are now been made for women in parliament, assemblies municipal corporations, panchayats etc. to bring them at par with the men folk.

The findings of the research are that more advanced and educated are the women of a country, more developed is that nation as the quality and quantity of human resource development in almost doubled as compared to under developed nations. The contribution of all these factors as a result of much improvement has been made in this aspects. They have grabbed all types of jobs which were at first reserved for men only i.e. police, army, engineering, agriculture and driving heavy vehicles at all ranks in addition they are driving sea ships and aeroplans also. Different states have provided special type of facilities to enhance their education free for all levels. Some have given them scholarships and some have provided them facilities to appear in the examinations as private candidates and aquire degrees (J and K).

The result is that in all types of educational institutions now fixed a lot of girls studying in them.

However, the fact remains that they are yet lagging behind men in almost all spheres of life. The social discrimination, the lower status given to them and cultural drawbacks do stand in their getting equal rights. Here again there is a section of people who are hesitate to send their girls to school. It is more so in backward states. However, all round efforts are made and laws framed to enhance their educational status. In good many universities departments of Women Studies have been established to work out their problems and find their solutions. In order to enhance their status and provide them more facilities separate police station and branches of banks maned by the women have also been opened. Separate police section has been created to deal with the violence against them.

As a result of efforts of the providing better educational facilities to the fair sex some higher positions in all the developments of the Government i.e. directors, magistrates, are being held by them so much so that they had become ministers, prime ministers and speakers of parliament and perform them well. However, the fact remains that there are only a few examples. Much needs to done to provide equal education abilities to men folk that all of them become active partners in the economic and social development of the social set up. As the things stand now even in the most mature democratics like U.S.A. a lot of discrimination against female can be traced, which is neglible. However the position in multi religious, multi lingual and multicastes the equality for them to the USA is a distant dream. In spite of all this situation it is expected that both quality and quantity of educational facilities will bring its fruit in the time to come.

9.7 Education for Minorities : India is the largest democracy of the world inhibited by almost all the religious castes, races and communities of the world even when many of them are in minorities . It thus needs to be ensured that the interests of minorities is ensured. Our frames of constitution were alive to this situation and had this laid in Article 30 & 29 of the constitution.

- 1) All minorities whether based on religion or language will have the right to establish and run their own institution.

2) Article (29.1) lays down, "Any section of citizens language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same".

They are not to be discriminated for making grant in aid to them. An officer will be appointed that spirit of the Articles of the constitution are applied appropriately.

3) The Programme of Action of the National Policy of Education (1986) has confirmed that (i) Education of backward communities is to provide basic educational infrastructure and facilities in the area of concentration of educational backward communities which do not have adequate provision for elementary and secondary schools. In this scheme cent per cent assistance will be given to the new primary and upper primary schools, non-formal education centres, residential multistream higher secondary school for girls belonging to educationally backward communities.

9.8 Modernisation of Madras and Maktabas

Modernisation of Madras as and Maktabas will be made to introduce science, mathematics, social studies and English in their curriculum. Accordingly cent percent grant is to be given for the appointment of teachers appointed to teach such subjects.

However, on the ground realities these Articles of the constitution and recommendations of the National Policy of Education not being implemented in some of the states. Punjabi is the mother tongue of the most of the areas of Haryana and newly merged areas of Himachal, but such facilities are not been provided in these states, rather the fact remains that efforts are full to uproot it. It is helped that things will improve in these provinces are applied sincerely. The position is the same in most of the states with regard to the education of minorities.

In the same way backward classes people, economically weaker sections of the society and other low caste people in provinces and other such sections need to be provided equal education facilities so as to make them alive and equally competent members of India. Not much has been done on these fronts, even when efforts have been made to do so on official level.

9.9 Education for the Physically Handicapped and Intellectually Deficient People

Some of the children are born with some physical deficiency, a good many are rendered handicapped because of some deficiencies in accidents or illness etc. They cannot be blamed for any such fault of their own justice demands that they should be provided with adequate and proper educational facilities in ordinary schools or some special schools should be opened to provide them education, so that as far as possible they can be made to live comfortably with the people of mainstream. The problem is becoming more important as due to the industrialisation. The number of accidents are increasing throughout the world leading to different type of physical handicaps. It is more so with advanced countries of the world because of the maximum use of the machinery in production and transportation. For example we generally read in the newspapers in India so often hear the news of the accidents of two vehicles. However, if such an accident takes place in USA, UK or Germany and two vehicles are involved in some accident it leads to a good number of vehicles jamming in one or the other because the traffic is so much and runs at such a speed that it involves so many vehicles and a good many deaths and injure people.

The fundamental findings of the research are that at first efforts be made to provide education in the ordinary schools, which mostly can be done for minor defects and make them satisfied to merge into the main stream of the people for acute cases such as blind, deaf and dumb and limb defective a special schools be made operative for this purpose.

In advance countric free transport facilities, free education, scholarships and also teacher aids are provided. In India no doubt this type of programme are being organised, but these are only the fraction of what needs to be done at advanced level. An other step taken to merge them in the main stream of peoples is to reserve some types of jobs, relaxation in minimum marks for getting admission or jobs along with age relaxation. It is also being done in our culture, which needs to be expanded considerably. In advanced countries the facilities are excellent and praise worthy. A

study has also reported that resource full parents in India, migrate to countries like U.S.A., Canada, U.K., Australia and New Zealand to help their deficient children to grow in a healthy atmosphere and become normal citizen.

In the same there are a good number of mentally deficient children either seriously or moderately deficient. Some of these are so deficient that with special efforts of education and medicine they can be made fit to go in for some labour. Those who can be made to live with others and are only limitedly deficient are to be educated and made to get education in ordinary schools by providing remedial education to make them efficient members of the society. For such peoples the concession which are provided to the physically handicapped are also applied.

In India such facilities are available only to a limited scale which needs to be enhanced to a greater extent, so as to make maximum people to live a normal life with the main population with the help of educational efforts.

9.10 Summary

God has created all men as equals but genetic and social types of discriminations have generated different types of inequalities amongst the masses. It is almost a universal problem in most of the countries of the world. Every democratic country has worked out its own way, but it might has been reduced to a considerable extent, but remains alive with them too. India has tried to solve them in the articles laid down in the Constitution Education Commission, National Policies of Education 1986 and by taking consolidated steps in all the five year plan and have achieved it to a considerable extent only. No doubt, social, religious, political and ethics play an important role in this regard, but education has to play a very important role in it, which is being done. The things have improved to a considerable extent only. It is hoped in India also education will to play the major role in tackling the problem of the socially disadvantages sections of the society in a very fruitful way. No doubt, education is expanding a lot in terms of quantity at all levels and take special care to provide it to socially disadvantageous sections of the society but much needs to be done in this aspect so as to provide equal educational facilities to them.

In our country mainly the socially disadvantaged groups are scheduled castes; scheduled tribes, females, economically weaker sections of the society, lower castes, religious minorities, physically handicapped and mentally deficient groups of the people. Our constitution recognise this factor and laid down efforts to be made to provide them educational facilities so as to bring them at par with the main stream of the masses. A lot of efforts are being done to improve upon the situation. It is creating some other problems such as creation of the creamy lower amongst them. Needless to say that much needs to be done to make them stand on equally social footing of the general categories. More concentrated efforts need to be done by the government to strong the democratic ethics.

9.11 Questions for Self-Evaluation

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| (i) | Slow intellectuals, need not be educated. | (Yes/No) |
| (ii) | Physically handicapped are unfortunate. | (Yes/No) |
| (iii) | The women must be educated to get employment at homes. | (Yes/No) |
| (iv) | Minorities should be provided special concessions in the schooling process. | (Yes/No) |
| (v) | There is no justification to relax norms for opening new schools in the area of scheduled tribes. | (Yes/No) |

Answer Key : (i) No (ii) No (iii) Yes (iv) Yes (v) No

9.12 Suggested Questions

- Bring out the need for providing the concession to be provided to the scheduled castes. Give examples to support your point of view.
- What do you understand by providing equal education opportunities to the depressed sections of society? How will you deal with it in India.

9.13 Suggested Books

- Dr. T.S. Sodhi and Dr. Harinder Kaur Sodhi : Philosophical and Sociological Foundations of Education
- Sawroop Saxsena : Philosophy of Education