

SECTION OF PSYCHOLOGY & EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

President : PROF. T. E. SHANMUGAM, M.A., M.Lett., Ph.D.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

WAR ON POVERTY—ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

The most important social problem undermining the progress of India to-day is Poverty. While economists and sociologists have made some attempts to understand and suggest methods to tackle it, Psychologists by and large have kept away from this problem. If at all they have dealt with it they have done it halfheartedly assigning it the role as one of the variables. The Survey of Research in Psychology, published by the ICSSR covers publications upto 1969. Including the publications upto August '75, it is found that there are barely twenty two articles referring to this variable, which is needless to say, is very inadequate considering the magnitude of the problem. While Poverty is a problem of the minorities in countries like U.S.A. confined to twenty percent of the population, here in India, it is the problem of the majority embracing about seventy percent of the population (Galbraith, 1958). To tackle poverty, we have got to tap the intellectual resources of the different scientists in the country to devise strategies of research to study and understand it and apply the results to reduce poverty in the country immediately, keeping eradication of it, as an ultimate goal.

THE TERM POVERTY

There are different definitions of poverty and therefore discussions of poverty are sometimes not clear. There is the standard approach of the economists, in which an income level is specified and those below this level are considered as poor. The other approach is known as the relative approach. According to this, specific groups of the population are treated as poor in terms of the location of their residence or caste or community. In our country both these approaches are utilised. For research purposes, particularly in social sciences, the first principle is used. For actual operations the second principle is used. Listing of

certain communities as backward, or adopting ameliorative measures such as the slum clearance movement in Tamil Nadu are examples of the second principle. However, the correlation between these two approaches is reported to be fairly high.

Sociologists distinguish individual poverty from 'Culture of Poverty'. They also argue that studying poor individuals and making generalizations about poverty is fallacious. According to them, culture of poverty is not first a matter of deprivation or disorganization, terms signifying maladaptation of a culture to lead effective living. Oscar Lewis (1969) argues that there is a distinctive 'Culture of poverty' or sub-culture of the poor that is not only sustained by external circumstances—poverty—but also by internal systems of values and preferences and interim personal relationships that have validity and life of their own and that are capable of persisting well after the external circumstances have been modified or changed altogether. This culture of poverty according to Oscar Lewis, is passed down from generation to generation along family lines. The most systematic study using the concept of culture of poverty by a psychologist till to-day is by that of Spinley (1953) who used the participant observation technique and Rorschach Test to study a slum population in the outskirts of London with a matched group of high SES.

There have been criticisms of culture of poverty concept. The most important of them is that if we concede the subculture of poverty, we may have to concede several subcultures within the same society, like 'culture of middle class' 'culture of crime' 'culture of begging' and the like (Rossi and Blum 1969). This may pose difficulties in tackling the several problems particularly in our country, where subcultures may increase in hundred folds. At the same time accepting income level alone as 'Poverty line' and adopting measures to raise people above this level, appear to be naive, as poverty has several dimensions along with the dimension of economics. Psychologists in this country and else where have attempted to combine the approaches of both the economists and sociologists (Kuppuswamy 1962, Pareek and Trivedi 1964, Muthayya 1971 and Sinha, 1974). They combine income, education, and home condition to decide the poverty level of the person or groups. Thus psychologists in general use the term 'low socio-economic status' to refer to poverty and they prefer quantitative methods to classify people into different SES. There have been several studies of effect of low socio-economic status on various psychological aspects of children, adolescents and adults. A brief report of the findings of relevant recent studies in different countries is given below :

STUDIES ON CHILDREN

Studies of children on the following aspects revealed children from low SES differed from children from high SES in cognitive and personality tests. In studying values and need, Bruner and Goodman (1947) found that children from low socio-economic families overestimated coins with high denomination. In language skills (Lacivita, and Yamamoto 1966), Articulatory errors (Adler 1973) Primary Mental Abilities (Cardona *et al* 1973) Intelligence (Rowitz 1973), creativity (Ogletree and ujlaki 1973 : William *et al* 1973), Perceptual motor skills (Greenberg & Atshan 1974 : Carli and Canarecci *et al.* 1974), the children from low SES were found to have performed less well than the children from high SES. There are a few studies of anxiety and adjustment in children. Ziv and Luz (1973) studied 422 children from low SES in Israel using Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS). They found children from low SES scored significantly higher than the children from upper middle SES. In a study of children in Tennessee in U.S.A. Southworth, Lois *et al* (1973) found results similar to those arrived at by Ziv and Luz. Levene (1962) reports summary of the findings of several studies of children of low SES (Disadvantaged communities). Some of the important deficiencies reported are contradictory attitudes towards self and the resultant exaggerated positive and negative attitudes toward others, low level aspiration and motivation in terms of school and social norms, low level academic task orientation and general task involvements; styles and modes of perceptual habitation that does not conform to traditional efficiency; and weakness in the utilization of abstraction with a marked tendency to favour concrete, stimulus bound cognitive processes.

A few studies of children in India corroborate the findings from other countries. Rajalakshmi and Sarma (1971) studied Indian children using MAS and compared their scores with the scores obtained from children from America, France and Japan. Among other results they report that children from low SES from India manifested more anxiety than children from high SES in India and in other countries. Sarojini (1971) who studied children from 8 to 12 years using battery of tests, found children from low SES manifested more emotional instability, and more behaviour problems than children from other SES groups. Bagwat, and Verma (1973) found direct relationship between Intelligence and SES. Using WISC and studying 440 children between the ages of 5 and 15, Bhatt (1972) reports similar results. Dave, Dave *et al* (1970) who studied Intelligence and Academic achievement of children from different SES, found these variables were significantly related to SES. There were a few studies (Gnanambal 1967 and Upadhyay 1970) using Bruner

and Goodman's experiments. Generally the results of these studies supported the findings of Bruner and Goodman, namely children from low SES over estimate high value coins.

STUDIES ON ADOLESCENTS

Most of the studies of adolescents deal with adjustment problems. Dembo (1953) who studied 103 English adolescent boys from a slum area, found aggression as the dominant behaviour among them which he attributed to adjustment to low economic class style of life. Frighi, Coppi *et al* (1973) investigated 1538 students referred to the university mental health centre. They found mild sexual problems, depression and neurasthenia among the lower classes and character neurosis among the higher classes.

Studies of adolescents in India also reveal the trend reported by scholars in other countries. Ansari and Ghose (1955) who studied social adjustment among adolescents report that dimension of Independence to be primary in high SES group and dimension of Social Insecurity in Low SES group. Mohan and Singh (1966) studied 2196 men college students using MMPI. They found low SES group showed significantly higher values on the MF scale and Hs, Hy and Pd types of symptoms than high SES group. Srivastava and Tiwari (1967) report significant difference in Need Achievement scores of middle class and low SES students, the scores of low SES students being lower. Gokul's (1970) subsequent study confirms these findings. Kapoor (1968) who studied 'lying tendency of among students reports, low SES group has tendency to 'lie' more than the high SES group. A more systematic study of the effect of low SES on adolescent emotional instability and personality has been attempted by Shanmugam (1957; 1975). Shanmugam found that adolescent boys from Low SES were more emotionally instable than their counter parts from high SES. The important syndromes of emotional instability were hypersensitivity, excitability, anxiety and neurasthenic tendencies. His study of the dynamics of the adolescent personality revealed the important reaction patterns and dominant personality traits. The important needs in these boys were hunger, succourance, and security; the important frustrating agencies were father, teacher and police and important reactions were anxiety, fear and despondancy followed by aggression, hostility and disgust.

Sarojini (1971) in a similar study found the adverse effect of Low SES on intelligence, adjustment at home and at school and emotional stability,

In a study conducted in Madras City involving 48 secondary schools and 2044 pupils, Ramaoji Rao 1975 found that the socio economic status of a pupil was the most important single predictor of academic achievement. The correlation remained high even when other variables such as intelligence and study habits were partialled out. The result was the same both when the SES of the individual pupil was correlated with achievement score and also when the mean SES score of pupils in a given school was correlated with index of performance of that school.

STUDIES ON ADULTS

Studies on adults concern mainly with their adjustment. Kaplan, Reed *et al* (1956), Cade (1956) Goldberg and Morrison (1963) report high incidence of mental diseases, particularly psychoses, in the low SES groups. The studies in different countries, in Norway by Bremer (1951), in England by Stein (1957) and in U.S.A. by Pasamanick *et al* (1959) bring out the same results. Kleiner and Tuckman (1961) report high rates of Psychiatric disorders in those whose educational and occupational levels are low. Warheit and Holtzer *et al* (1973) who studied 1645 adults in Florida, U.S.A. report along with low SES, low level of education to be related to high rates of depressive symptoms. A study in Lebanon by Katchadourian and Churchill (1973) reports high rate of Psychoses in Low SES people corroborating the findings reported above and high rate of neuroses in high SES adults. Miskimins and Baker's (1973) study of adults reveal the presence of maladjustment, culture rejection and unhealthy human relationship amongst the low SES (disadvantaged) group.

Perhaps the depth study of Miller and Mishler (1964) should be mentioned a little elaborately at this stage. They studied the five percent sample of all the households in the metropolitan area of New Haven, Connecticut which had a total population of about 236,940 persons. This New Haven population was classified into five classes on the basis of the family position, determined by the score of the head of the family on a weighted 'Index of the social position', based on the area of residence, occupation and education. Accordingly Class I-upper class constitute 3% of the population who live in the most exclusive residential areas; family head is the college graduate who is an executive of a large firm or a professional; Class II, upper middle class, constitute 8.4% of the population occupationally of the managerial or professional groups; Class III-lower middle, 20% of the population; about half are salaried white collar workers and the remainder either own small business are semi-

professionals, foreman or skilled workers; Class-IV, Working class, constituting 49.8%, half of the group is semi-skilled; a third skilled or about a tenth in white collar employments; Class-V lower class, 18.4%, made up of unskilled and semiskilled workers of low education. Miller and Mishler's findings were: (1) psychiatric patients increased from 1% from class I to 40.1% and 38.2% in class IV and V respectively and (2) Neurotic illness equally distributed though slightly more in classes I and II, specifically character neurosis and obsessive—compulsive variety, whereas antisocial and phobic reactions were more in classes II and V. These findings of Miller and Misler were corroborated by Langer *et al* (1963).

There are only two studies in India in recent times which are worth mentioning here. One is by Sharadamba Rao (1966) on mental patients. Her conclusion is that patients from low SES are mainly schizophrenics. Another study by Satischandra Prasad Singh (1969) of 2012 patients reveal that low SES patients are prone to extreme aggressive behaviour or withdrawal behaviour and the onset of mental illness is earlier in this group than in the high SES group.

It was also found that the effectiveness of treatment is related to the SES of the patients. For example, in treatment of depressives, chemotherapy was found to be more effective with high SES patients than with low SES patients (Largi, Renato *et al* 1972), the alcoholics from high SES were found to respond to psychotherapy better than those from low SES (Edwards, Elspeth and Nicholls 1974). Different kinds of therapy therefore are recommended for patients from different SES. In the case of patients from low SES, combination of modelling, role play, social reinforcement (Goldstein 1973) and family therapy (Samuel 1974) are recommended. According to Slipp (1974) poor patients often come from diorganized families and are hostile and cynical and often they have sexual role conflicts. Two other aspects which have been intensively studied are relation of low SES to mental retardation and delinquency and crime. The studies of mental retardation in children generally attribute mental retardation to low nutrition in diet because of poverty. Prevalance of more children with mental retardation in low SES is another evidence (Indira Mahadevan 1962; Stein; Susser, *et al* 1972, Kaplan 1972, Shneour 1974).

There are innumerable studies relating low SES to delinquency and crime in this country and elsewhere which are summarised by Shanmugam (1973). Though there are contradictory interpretations, the weight of evidences is in the direction of support of the relationship between

low SES and delinquency and crime. In this connection the recent studies of Bandura's social learning theory (1972) and Eysenck's account of criminal personality (1964) are worth mentioning. Both stress the effect of social environment in habit formation—social and antisocial.

The different studies of children, adolescents and adults in this country and elsewhere indicate clearly the adverse effects of low SES on the cognitive, affective and motivational aspects of the persons. The similarity of results are striking because the criteria used to classify SES groups, sampling techniques, and tests used are not identical and the investigations carried out were in different countries.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFINITION OF POVERTY

To the Psychologist the concept of poverty of both the economists and sociologists are unsuitable. However he cannot reject them outright. To satisfy survival needs, like hunger, thirst and shelter, economic approach is necessary. Again though he may not agree to the concept of culture of poverty, the reaction patterns of the individuals exposed to poverty appear to be same all over the world. This may suggest that poor are fixed homogenous group that share a common outlook. On the contrary they are those who lag behind the rest of the society in terms of gratification of one or more needs of life. Human individual at birth has only physiological needs. With his growth and development and with interaction with the social environment he derives several needs, which in due course become more potent and demanding than the physiological needs (Allport 1937 Murray 1938). Some Psychologists, even speak of hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1954) with physiological needs at the base and self-actualization need at the top of hierarchy. There are no empirical evidences to support Maslow's concept of hierarchy of needs. But evidences that deprivation of the needs-physiological and psychological— affect the personality of the individual are numerous. Therefore we have to speak of poverty at different levels, economic level, social level and psychological level (not in Maslow's sense).

NATURE OF THE LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP

As Oscar Lewis (1966) remarks the values and character structure of the individuals belonging to low SES are different. Chronic unemployment and underemployment, low wages, lack of property, lack of savings, absence of food reserves at home and chronic shortage of cash imprison

the family and the individual in vicious circle. Thus for lack of cash the slum household make frequent purchases of small quantities of food at higher prices. The slum economy turns inward. It shows high incidence of pawning of personal goods, borrowing at unusual rates of interest and use of second hand clothings and furniture. Adults in this society fight and curse as a matter of course and consider school and intellectual matters unimportant to their future or unattainable. They live on day to day basis and if the future is considered at all it is regarded with apathy and fatalism. In view of such beliefs, they have no confidence in themselves and see little point in making efforts to prepare themselves to improve themselves for future success. Social life for them often takes place in the street and at street corners. Home plays relatively less significant part. Their child rearing practices are unique. This has been brought out in many studies, too numerous to be mentioned here. For example Prothro's study (1966) in Greece revealed that low SES parents demanded immediate obedience in children, gave little affection or reward if child performed tasks, believed in physical punishment and spanked children often ; parents were inconsistent in their demands and were authoritarians.

The environment of the low SES has its own effect on the intellectual, motivational and emotional aspects of the children. The children have adults as 'models' and tend to follow the same line of behaviour and opinion. They also have the tendency to follow the norms of their social group. Classical experiments of Sheriff (1936) and Asch (1958) on conformity to group norms may be mentioned in this connection. In the context of the life of low SES, it is realistic, adaptive and socially acceptable. When these children enter school, they enter a different environment which demands higher or different standards of behaviour, and may look down and frown upon their behaviour. They may be branded by the teachers as delinquent and their lack of interest in book, a sign of low intelligence.

In this connection it is worthwhile considering 'Stimulus deprivation theory' of Piaget (1956) and 'Incongruity—Dissonance principle' of Hebb (1946) and Hunt (1963) in explaining the results obtained from various research studies cited earlier. Piaget says that a child from any circumstances has been deprived of substantial portion of variety of stimuli which he is maturationally capable of responding to, is likely to be deficient in the equipment of learning. In addition to restriction in variety from the low SES environment, the segments of stimuli made available to these children tend to have poorer and less systematic ordering of their sequences, thereby, they become less useful to the growth and activation of cognitive potential.

Stimulus deprivation is found to have effects on both the formal and the contentual aspects of cognition. By 'formal' is meant the behaviour by which stimuli are perceived, and responded to. By contentual is meant the actual content of the child's knowledge and comprehension. Formal equipment would include perceptual discrimination skills, the ability to sustain attention, and the ability to use adults as sources of information and for satisfying curiosity. Also included would be the establishment of expectations of reward from accumulation of knowledge, from task completion and from adult reinforcement and the ability to delay gratification. Examples of contentual equipment would be the language symbolic system, environmental information, general and environmental orientation and concepts of comparability, relatively appropriate to the child's age level. The growth of a differential attitudinal set toward learning, according to Piaget, may be the resultant of the interaction between formal and contentual levels. Extreme case of stimulus deprivation causes temporary and permanent disorganisation of Child's personality (Solomon *et al* 1961).

The whole issue of adult child dynamics in establishing a basis for the later learning process is the ability of the child to use the adult as a source of information. In low SES groups free adult time is greatly limited, homes are vastly crowded, economic stress is chronic and the general educational level is very low. In addition to these the adults are aware of their inadequacy of their education. Therefore questions from children are not encouraged. Moreover they are too preoccupied with the business of just living and surviving.

The language symbolic process plays an important role at all levels of learning. Language development evolves through the correct labeling of the environment. In this use of appropriate words for relating, combining and recombining of the concrete and abstract components in describing interpreting and communicating perceptions, experiences and ideational matter is important. Though Piaget has not stressed the importance of the language as an area sensitive to the impact of the multiplicity of the problems associated with the stimulus deprivation, Vygotsky (1962), Luria (1969) and others in the Moscow school of Psychology have stressed this aspect and language has been given the pride of place in their school curriculum from preschool level itself.

Children from low SES are definitely handicapped at the point of entry into the formal learning process. These children, who from the time they enter school are exposed to assumptions about them derived from the experience with the middle class children, have few success

experiences and much failures and generalized frustrations and consequent anxiety. The results of various studies quoted earlier, may be seen to, fit in with this line of interpretation.

The motivational and attitudinal factors also may be explained in terms of the stimuli from the social environment. This is best done by the application of Incongruity—Dissonance principle of Hebb and Hunt. Dissonance principle considers individual organism as an information processing system which operates like an error actuated feedback. The error is derived from the discrepancy between receptor inputs of the present and the residues of the past experience which serve as the basis for anticipating the future. What is considered as motivation and attitude are the products of current sensory inputs interacting with residuals of earlier experience. The earlier experience residuals are thought of to gain sequential organization. Grossly incongruous inputs disrupt this organization, while slight degrees of incongruity lend interest and are stimulating. What is seen as no motivation and negative attitudes in children from low SES are instances of new environmental encounters which are grossly incongruous with residuals of their prior experience in their home and community environment. Review of the studies of adolescent and adults reveal serious adjustment problems of those belonging to low SES. Subjects belonging to low SES seem to be victims of more serious diseases like psychosis and they are more prone to antisocial behaviour.

There are many possible reasons cited. Among them negative evaluation of those from low SES by the society which is decidedly middle class oriented may be cited as an important reason. The mass media, the journals and novels portray the persons from low SES either problems or as comical characters. A second way is by the process of designating them as poor and hence a problem. The special provision for backward and scheduled castes and tribes in by itself places them in a special category, which brands them as less than equal. Another important aspect of negative evaluation is the discrimination. Those from the low SES are treated differently at the main points of contact at the shopping centres, police stations, hospitals and schools. It is well known fact that third degree methods are adopted by police on people from low SES only.

Merton (1957) suggests modes of behaviour of negatively evaluated poor. He speaks of two goals; mobility and wealth to which different people react. According to him those who reject the goals but accept the means are rejecting them in a ritualistic way; those who accept the goal but reject the legitimate means are deviants; those who reject both as

'retreatists' and finally those who reject both and substitute alternate goals are characterized as 'rebels'. The apathy and withdrawal tendencies in extreme form in schizophrenia of the poor, resemble Merton's 'retreatist' reaction. The ritualistic reaction resembles the quiet desperation of the poor but honest, who outwardly conform to the society, who has given up any hope or desire to attain success. The antisocial reaction of the poor may be explained in terms of the 'deviance' postulate applied to the structural position of the poor. This aspect has been effectively dealt with by Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960) in their theories of delinquency. Support for the above view has been found in the studies of Irelan (1967), Liebow (1967) and Seeman (1969).

The mainpoint to be made here is that our society creates a situation in all individuals and subject them to positive or negative evaluations depending on the degree of achievement. This process of evaluation is one that rewards some and punishes others, generating in turn different reactive processes in class differences. It is to this sources probably we may attribute their apathy, withdrawals, their insecurity and powerlessness.

Discussion of poverty, thus far may be summed up. The children from low SES chronically suffer from 'stimulus deprivation,' which leads them to relatively slow cognitive development, causes anxiety in school situation and ultimately make them adopt retreating or rebellious behaviour, not being able to achieve the goal set by the school which maintains middle class standard. In addition to these by virtue of hailing from low SES, they are denied of gratification of physiological needs and psychological needs, which in extreme cases cause maladjustment in them. Same thing may be said of Adolescents, who at the time of puberty and subsequently have both the physiological and psychological needs intensified with no adequate social facilities for gratification leading to behaviour problems, neurosis, psychosis, and delinquency. In the case of adults too, same social conditions prevail in addition to their being chronically underemployed or unemployed, with the responsibility of heading the family. The stress of these conditions lead quite a few to succumb to varieties of psychological illness.

STRATEGY FOR POVERTY REDUCTION:

Inspite of many attempts at the definition of the concept of poverty, it sill remains vague and therefore strategies adopted to tackle it remains unsatisfactory. One thing is clear, that is poverty is a multifactor pheno-

menon. Isolating the different factors of Poverty is an important area of research, to which psychologists are ideally suited. Immediately the definition of poor as those who lack the minimum requirements of food, clothing, shelter, health and educational facilities arrived at the Seminar of social scientists from southern universities held in Hyderabad in April, 1974, may be accepted. It is easy to arrive at the minimum requirements for the different categories. Thus, minimum food requirements may be stated in terms of calories; minimum education as study upto fifth standard etc. By assigning necessary weightage, it is possible to identify the poor grade into different levels of poverty; and obtain the profile of the poor. Any remedial measures must be directed at all these categories simultaneously. It should be noted, change and shifts in one dimension need not produce changes in other dimensions. For example, economic gain does not ensure automatic attainment of other goals. By and large, the programs at ameliorative measures at present are directed towards one aspect. For example programmes aimed at children and youth by establishing boys clubs and youth welfare centres miss the vital aspects of their lives. Improvement of them without improvement of their families; improving their education without improving the schools they attend will be ineffective. This point has been lucidly dealt with by Moynihan (1969) in his edited book 'On understanding Poverty' Moynihan writes that the vicious cycle in which poverty breeds poverty occurs through time. There is no beginning to the cycles, no end. Therefore, there is no one "right" place to break into it. Increasing opportunities may help little if health, educational attainments and motivation are unsuitable, making more education available may bear little fruit unless additional employment opportunities exist; altering adverse environmental factors may not be feasible or effective unless access to education and ultimately job opportunities is enhanced.

Moynihan has suggested developing programmes to attack the three principal stages in the poverty cycle at one or more of three levels (1) Prevent the problems from developing (2) Rehabilitate the person who has been hurt (3) Ameliorate the difficulties of persons for whom prevention or rehabilitation are not feasible. Each type of 'treatment' is associated generally with a separate stage in the life cycle. Prevention of poverty calls for attention principally children and youth and their parents in so far as parents attitudes and values affect the children. Rehabilitation of those missed by preventive efforts or for whom these efforts were ineffective, seems best designed for adults in their production work years. Amelioration of poverty since called for in the case of aged, the physically and mentally disabled and those for whom prevention and rehabilitation are not effective.

Children and youth from low SES suffer from stimulus deprivation at home as has been mentioned earlier. To compensate for this schools may be improved. But this may not be adequate. Developing hobby centres in the line of Pioneer places in U.S.S.R may be thought of. Immediately existing mass media particularly television should be utilised to their maximum, to this end. Psychologists with knowledge in the laws of learning and skill in the technique of persuasive communication are better equipped to look after this aspect. Recently there has been some loud thinking about two types of schools to cater to pupils of different levels of achievement, which in essence would mean pupils of different socio-economic status. Though this would in reality amount to rationalising the existing state of affairs, would perpetuate the class differences forever. Instead, enriching and strengthening non formal education with the help of mass media, hobby centres and the like, advocated above and through the existing boys clubs strengthening them adequately, will be more effective. As indicated earlier improving or ameliorating the conditions of children alone will not be effective, members of the social environment, particularly parents should also be brought under the scheme of nonformal education, through mass media.

The main stumbling block to social change is our tradition, which with years has gathered many superstitious beliefs around it. Is not poverty itself deified as *Daridra Narayana*? This tradition has been a stumbling block to family planning measures, which aim at population control, which in turn is related to reduction of poverty. The tradition has also been perpetuating beggary and extolling joint family system. For example studies of members of the nuclear and joint families have revealed that the members of nuclear families have high level of aspiration and also higher level of achievement than the members of the joint families, who remain dependency prone (J. B. P. Sinha). Education by itself is not found to be very effective in breaking the hold of tradition. There are strong psychological forces resisting social change. Some knowledge is available but it is inadequate. Research in this area is important

All along, I have been concentrating on the adverse effects of low SES, which may mislead one to think, that there is nothing that is positive; healthy and desirable in the low SES people. This is far from truth. There are positive aspects of people from the low SES, which should be taken into account in any poverty eradication programme. They are: selective motivation, creativity and proficiency; functional computational skills; accuracy of perception and generalisation; capacity for

meaningful and loyal relationships ; and ingenuity and resourcefulness in the pursuit of self selected goals ; and in coping with difficult conditions of life peculiar to them.

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