

The School as a Social System - A Review

M.V.V. Sekhar Reddy¹, M.A., M.Ed., M.Sailakshmi², M.A., M.Ed., Net & Set

¹(Department of Political Science, CSSR & SRRM Degree & PG College, Kamalapuram, Kadapa Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India.)

²(Department of Economics, CSSR & SRRM Degree & PG College, Kamalapuram, Kadapa Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India.)

Corresponding Author; Sekhar Reddy

Abstract: Social progress is not always so simple. It usually comes about very gradually. But the gradual evolutionary pace of social progress is not fast enough. As a social system the school aims to prepare the students to occupy social roles according to their capacities after leaving the school. The technical schools transmit knowledge concerning so many traits an important function of education is the development of the individuality of the students. While in the outer society culture is transmitted without much change and refinement, in the school particular attention is given to transmit refined elements of culture. The most important task of the social organisation is socialisation. The school is an important centre for promoting social mobility. The extent to which society can play an active part in making the school a powerful and effective medium of purveying education is evident from the impact it has on the school. It is clear that society has great responsibility in this direction. A school is thought of as a social system, with its characteristic institutional functions, roles and expectations. Regarding Indian schools prof. K.G. Saiyidian opines, "In our schools of today, only formal education of geography and science is imparted to children. Some schools are much below the standard where the initiative and enthusiasm for the students for work is crushed".

Keywords - School, Socialization, Education, Sociology, Students.

Date of Submission: 25-08-2018

Date of acceptance: 08-09-2018

I. Introduction

Social progress is not always so simple. It usually comes about very gradually. But the gradual evolutionary pace of social progress is not fast enough. The demand for accelerated social change may also arise on more theoretical grounds. Sociology of education may be defined as the scientific analysis of the social processes and social patterns involved in the educational system. According to sociologists education is a social procession which helps in the eliminating the defects in the society and many perpetuate desirable institutions and group activities. The school is the one of the formal agencies of socialization. It has acquired importance because of its sociological changes and influences. The school is a formal agency of education imparts the maximum knowledge of the subjects required for necessary living of a useful and successful life. Social systems theory has been a sound perspective to explain the working of schools. Sociology of education particularly studies the school as a social system. The social organisation in the school consists of different roles and statuses for the educator and educand. Among the teachers also there are different statuses and roles according to their seniority, qualifications, special skills and the position of the hierarchy of the school. The headmaster in every school occupies a pivotal position, more responsibility, more administrative power and therefore the most important role. Similarly, among the educated also different students occupy different stages and roles in the schools according to their seniority, special skills and allotted responsibilities etc. For example, the chief prefect is overall in charge of the discipline among the students. Similarly, there are so many prefects who maintain discipline in the school. Every class has a monitor who maintains law and order in the classroom in the absence of the teacher and complains to the teacher about the defaulter student.

As a social system the school aims to prepare the students to occupy social roles according to their capacities after leaving the school. In India, most of the rural youths finish their studies after high school. Some of them do not go beyond the middle schools. Therefore the functions of middle schools and the high schools in transmitting knowledge, skills and socialisation are very important. As a social system the first function of the schools is to impart to transmit knowledge and skills to younger generation. The technical schools transmit knowledge concerning so many traits. The agricultural institutions tell the sons of cultivators about better means of cultivation. All the schools impart knowledge of 3R's, reading, writing and arithmetic. This is necessary in order to help every male and female to skillfully manage the household affairs and also matters concerning everyday life. The younger generation learns future roles by means of perception and identity formation both in the family and in the school. Extra-curricular activities in the school are important to develop individual differences and

particular skills of the educands .Thus,some of them may develop social leadership qualities ,other political leadership traits and so on.

An important function of education is the development of the individuality of the students.This individuality is developed by the development of individual skill and the allotment of roles and ststuses according to it .This should not be based upon favours and prejudice .As a social system the school is the best place to teach equality, liberty, and fraternity to the younger generation .It is the best around for practice of Democratic traits in the wider social situation.

II. The Culture Of The School

Each school has a particular culture .This can be noticed in the comparison in the private and public schools, the rural and urban schools ,tue schools in tye tribal areas ,the boys and the girls schools etc.Culture is constituted of the norms ,customs ,tradition,rules of behaviour , attitudes etc. All these are reflected in the social life of the school. While in the outer society culture is transmitted without much change and refinement, in the school particular attention is given to transmit refind elements of culture .This is done through various means of socialisation and the allotment of different roles to different students.

The School As A Social Organisation

Social institutions are integral part of a human society .Society is a system of usages, authority and mutuality based on “We” felling and likeness. Differences within the society are not excluded. These are, however, subordinated to likeness. Inter-dependence and cooperation are its basis. It is bound by reciprocal awareness. It is essentially a pattern for imparting the social behaviour. Social organization is a network of statuses and roles .In a school the headmaster is at the top of hierarchy .His word is the law .He delivers the goods. He is responsible for the smooth functioning of the school .In other words he is the head of the government of the school.Should he decide to act as an autocrate ,the school will not develop democratic traits among the students. Usually the actual power of the headmaster is exercised through teachers and responsible students. Every class teacher wields authority in matters concerning his class. He is helped in the process by the monitor, the perfect and other teachers. Thus the social organisation of the school should be dynamic and well- adjusted .The extra curricular activites are very for all-round development of the school as a social organisation.The school management consists of representatives of the public who help the headmaster and the teachers to carry out various functions in the school as a part of general community. If the parents are invited to the school function, the cooperation between the school and the community as limbs of social organisation increasae.This is particularly necessary at the nursery and the elementary level.

The most important task of the social organisation is socialisation.This socialisation requires acting according to allotted roles and statuses.The schools provide scope for the development of leadership qualities among the students particularly through the extra-curricular activites .Under the supervision of the teachers,they gradually learn to carry out responsible activities. The headmaster and the teachers should allow more and more freedom to the students and it makes them more responsible.They should follow the principle of least interference in the social relationship among the students .They are responsible for the socialisation of the students towards the community .They should impart the knowledge of social customs and traditions and develop values of society among the among the students .The school is an important centre for promoting social mobility.It represents an example of fulfilment of soci justice .it is a place where every social custom and tradition is analysed, evaluated and even questioned before acceptance is granted to it. Therefore the social presents the forum for bringing about desiarble social changes .If the new generation learns the defects of the pernicious customs and traditions, it fights for their change and replacement in the wider society this is particularly true about the school.

III. The School And Society

Society is a system or organisation of mutual relation between human beings ,implicit in certain communities and institutions .The school is a group and education is an institution .Evidently the school is an important part of society .Here we means a specific society ,not the general concept of the society ,which is an abstract notion. And a specific society implies a group of human beings living within the limits of definite country and which is charecterised by a specific culture.The school is related to this specific society .It is for this reason that different educationists have defined the objectives of eduaction differently fir different nations. Explaining the intimate relationship between society and school,T.P.Nunn,the famous educationists writes ,”A nation's schools,we might say ,are an organ of its life,whise special function is to consodilate its spirtual strength ,to maintain its historic continuity,to secure its past acheivement ,to guarantee its future.Through its schools a nation should become consicuous of the abiding siurces from which the best movements in its life have always drawn their inspiration,should come to share the dream of its nobler sons,should constantly submit itself to self-

criticism ,should purge its ideaks,should re-inform and re-direct its impulses”.This comment clearly indicates that the relationship between society and school is charecterised by the following elements:

- ❖ Schools keep the moral power of the society secure, and also maintain the social heritage of society.This social heritage is handed on by the schools to the following generation.
- ❖ Schools also protect the historical continuity of society.Schools perform the function of acquainting the new generation with ancient myths and legends, maintaining the patterns of behaviour in the form of traditions and customs.
- ❖ Schools also help to keep alive the society's acheivements in the past, and transfer it to the younger generation through the teaching of history and social science.
- ❖ Schools are the guardians of the society's future, because educands are the future leaders of the nation. Schools shape the future of the country and history by acheiving the complete development of these leaders .It is for this reason that the eduactor is often refered to as the architect of the nation.
- ❖ Through the medium of the school, the members of society are acquainted with those motives and inspirations which formed the basis of all literacy acheivements of the past.This is achieved through the teaching of literature.
- ❖ Schools also encourage considerable discussion and exchanges of opinion on the functioning, methods of working customs, and traditions existing in various parts of the society.These elemenrs are analysed and subjected to criticism in order to decide whether they should be retained or thrown out. In this way, schools are the source of social change.
- ❖ Through the medium of the school, leaders in various spheres such as engineering, medicine, legal profession, teaching, literature, etc.are trained.In these sense the progress of society depends upon the progress of the schools.

It is evident from the foregoing account of the intimate relationship between society and school that development and progress of school is essential for the progress of society.Before introducing any change in the society on a large scale, it can be exoarimented within the school and its nature and consequences observed .It can then introduced in to society.

IV. Impact Of Society On School

It is evident from the intimate relationship that exists between society and school that both influence each other. The various points to be noted in the impact of society on school are as the following:

- ❖ All the individuals, educators and educands, found in schools come from society, hence it is only natural that their thinking should influence life in the svhool.It is generally accepted that the kind of family an efucand comes from can be judgef from his conduct in the school.
- ❖ Society is a dynamic and changeable structure .One can see the effect of various social changes on schools.
- ❖ Social conduct, or conduct in society, also has an influence upon the conduct of educand in schools.If social conduct deteriorates, there is no way of sheilding the students from this deteroitation and consequently conduct in school will also reflect a fall in standard.
- ❖ The curriculum of the school is determined according to the needs of the society, because parents always send their children to school in order to prepare them for society.They are given education so that may become useful members of the society.
- ❖ The life of the school is profoundly influenced by all the major institutions of society, such as family, religion and economic institutions .From this standpoint one can compare the schools in communist Russia with the schools of democratic America.
- ❖ All the education that the educand imbibes in school through books and lectures, actually emanates from society.Because books are little more than the accumulated experiences and through of the greatest figures in society.

V. Impact Of School On Society

Society is influenced by the school in as great a measure as it itself influences schools. In the respect, the following points are to be considered:

- ❖ Schools produce the future leaders for all the spheres of society .It follows that the type of school will determine the calibre of leaders, and their calibre in turn will determine thenature of society that they will create.
- ❖ The school like the family, institution which socialize the individual and provides him some experience in social control. Therefore, the individual will learn to accept the accept kind of social control that is imposed on him in school,and will also demand similar social control from society.For this reason,there is a great insistence in democratic so taht the educand can get used democratic norms of social control.

- ❖ It has already been stated that the school plays an important part in social change because it subjects all the customs ,traditions ,mores ,practices,etc.of society to continuous criticism.As a result of this criticism some of these are maintained and others rejected.This determines the direction of future social change.
- ❖ It is the function of society to provide to provide useful citizens to society, and if society wants to do independent, it is necessary that the school should provide it with citizens who are capable of being independent and self-reliant.
- ❖ By exercising their right of criticism, the educands eliminate the weakness of society and thus prepare a blue print for its future reformation and improvement.

Responsibility Of Society In Making The School Effective

The extent to which society can play an active part in making the school a powerful and effective medium of purveying education is evident from the impact it has on the school.It is clear that society has great responsibility in this direction .The following points should be in this connection:

- ❖ Society should undertake to construct appropriate buildings for schools and also provide for their decoration and maintenance.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of society to see that educators get respect in society and their needs are well looked after.
- ❖ When invited by the school, various members of society should attend the school functions and take an enthusiastic part in it.
- ❖ The society should not hesitate in providing any and everything which the teacher demands as essential to the complete development of the educand.
- ❖ Society should also look into the examination stream the curriculum, etc., of schools should subject it to criticism should examine it from the stand point of contemporary needs of society and should suggest changes if necessary.

VI. Conclusion

A school is thought of as a social system, with its characteristic institutional functions, roles and expectations. As an institution it has the function of socialization. There are various incumbents in it who have to play the roles expected of them. In the social system of a school the goal behaviour is achieved through the integration various institutions Social systems theory has been a sound perspective to explain the working of schools.Comparing the traditional and progressive schools according to the criteria explained above, we find a number of drawbacks in traditional schools of our country .Regarding Indian schools Prof. K.G. Saiyidian opines, "In our schools of today ,only formal education of geography and science is imparted to children. Some schools are much below the standard where the initiative and enthusiasm for the students for work is crushed". Thus for Indian schools also applies the same thing what had been said about the non-government schools of India, by H.G.Wells. If you want to feel the generation rushing to waste like rapids, you should put your heart and mind into a private school".

Reference

- [1]. Ben-Baruch, E. (1983). Schools as social systems. Beersheba: Ben Gurion
- [2]. University.http://www.academia.edu/8973126/SOCIOLOGY_OF_EDUCATION <https://apessay.com/order/?rid=cc49f4f3231bb03f>
- [3]. Getzels, J. W., Lipham, J. M. & Campbell, R. F. (1968). Educational administration as a social process. New York, Harper & Row.
- [4]. Glassman, R. B. (1973). Persistence and loose coupling in living systems. Behavioral Science, 18, 83-98.
- [5]. Gouldner, A. W. (1959). Organizational analysis. In R. K. Merton (Ed.), Sociology today (pp. 400-428). New York: Basic Books. (As cited by Scott, 1998).Greenfield, T., & Ribbins, P. (1993). Greenfield on educational administration. London: Routledge.
- [6]. Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1978). The social psychology of organizations (2 ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- [7]. Kinsler, K., & Gamble, M. (2001). Reforming schools. New York: Continuum.
- [8]. Kowalski, T. J. (2010). The school principal: Visionary leadership and competent management. New York: Routledge.
- [9]. Luhmann, N. (1995), Social systems. Stanford: Stanford University Press.Parsons, T. (1951). The social system. New York: Free Press.
- [10]. Administrative theory in education. Chicago: University of Chicago. (As cited by Getzels, Lipham, & Campbell, 1968).
- [11]. Parsons, T. (1960). Structure and process in modern societies. New York: Free
- [12]. Press.https://www.jstor.org/stable/2777763?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
- [13]. Scott, W. R. (1998). Organizations. (4 ed.). New Jersey: Prentice
- [14]. Hall.https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266082312_School_as_a_Social_System
- [15]. Senge, P. M. (1990). The fifth discipline. New York: Doubleday.
- [16]. Spillane, J. P., & Healey, K. (2010). Conceptualizing school leadership and management from a distributed perspective. The Elementary School Journal, 111(2), 253-281.
- [17]. Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems. Administrative Science Quarterly, 21(1), 1-19<http://www.preservearticles.com/2012011220558/is-school-a-social-system-and-what-are-the-important-elements-of-a-social-system.html>

Sekhar Reddy "The School as a Social System - A Review "International Journal of Engineering Science Invention(IJESI), vol. 7, no. 8, 2018, pp. 74-77