

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Need for the Study

Student activism appears to have become universal in university campuses with differences in approach and emphasis. Because of differing societal factors between developed and developing countries, activism also differs in characteristics. In developing countries with greater number of students participation, activism has been more violent and more evenly distributed in academic years in comparison to that in developed ones (Bowling, 1976). During seventies, it has been on decline in the developed countries, but it has shown an increasing trend in the developing countries (Altbach, 1979).

With its long history, and students' increasingly negative attitude towards the system, activism has been gaining momentum in India. Researches have also visualized involvement of greater number of students with greater force at more campuses in future to come.

Along with the belief in the effectiveness of violent methods as a means of social change (Basu, 1977), activism is gaining ground among the students in general. This, in turn, is 'teaching' them to use still more violent methods.

All these suggest the complexities of such activities and need of extensive scientific investigations particularly in the regions which have been frequently under turmoil for a long time. Thus, the investigator has felt a strong need of undertaking this study with the hope of finding some worthwhile facts which may help educators and planners to understand the situation and take some remedial steps.

Problem and Definitions

Because of long history and increasing discontent due to societal factors, students in some regions have been very active. It appears, that activism has been emerging as a distinguishing feature in the universities of some regions.

Generally, studies have been conducted on leaders-nonleaders, activists-nonactivists, but no study has been made, so far, of the common students in this respect.

Statement of the Problem

As pointed out above, to study activism among students in general, the problem is stated as under :

A Study of Student Activism in a University.

Explanation of Various Terms

Definitions of the terms used in this investigation have been given a little later, here an attempt has been made to analyse more than a dozen terms used in related literature, to identify student uneasiness and the resultant activities. A list of these terms has been given in Appendix-G, in alphabetical order. These terms have been used by scholars and researchers almost synonymously but really some of them vary from one another (Tripathi, 1978). Though it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between one another, yet the investigator has felt the need of explaining them for justifying the choice of the terms he has preferred to use for his study.

Internal Tension and External Manifestation

Amin (1967) thought of student unrest and indiscipline as internal and external behaviour. According to him, 'unrest means popular uneasiness' and indiscipline means 'disorderly or chaotic conduct.....'. In view of the above definition, the particular type of activities under study may be the result of dual process of internal uneasiness and external outlet of such uneasiness. The restlessness which students feel in their environment - home, educational institutions, political and economic systems - finds expression in different forms. The terms, like student discontent, student dissatisfaction, student unrest etc. emphasize the internal tension among the students, while student strike, student agitation, student demonstration, student violence and the like describe only the forms of external behaviour, the students manifest as a result of such internal feelings. Hence, it has been felt that the use of any of these terms will be narrow and inadequate for the purpose of the present study.

Various Disciplines Involved

Since different branches of knowledge have made attempts to understand the problem under study, it appears that the terms employed for the purpose reflect their viewpoint

or way of approach. Terms, like student politics, student power, student revolt etc. are related to political science, while student movement, student revolution, student rebellion to sociology; and student unrest, student discontent etc. to psychology. Similarly, student defiance and student indiscipline reflect administrative view point of understanding and dealing with the problem.

Purposive and Purposeless Activities

According to Patel (1967), psychologically, any behaviour is goal oriented. An organism is restless when it is aroused by a drive or a need and after the need is satisfied, it returns to the state of drive reduction. Thus, to satisfy its need the organism manifests certain types of behaviour. But, human being cannot be treated as an organism having hidden or implicit purpose. In human activities motive can be found directly related, not only by implications. If direct relationship between the purposes and activities is sought, then, some of the terms often employed to describe students' agitational activities will not be found ~~to~~ ~~do~~ doing justice. By the use of such terms, as student ~~dis~~ indiscipline the idea of relationship with some purposes is lost. More or less, terms like student unrest (though it is

somewhat wide), student restiveness only psychologically appear purposive, but the employment of these terms, generally, hardly, suggest any purpose behind such activities, while the agitational activities of the students are directly purposeful, not only by implications.

Choice of the Term

What has been discussed in the foregoing paragraphs is intended to make clear that students' agitational activities comprise of internal uneasiness resulting in some forms of external manifestations with conscious objectives to achieving something. In other words, such acts begin in the mind first and then they are put into action. May be due to certain reasons, some may not allow them to come to manifestation level, but it does not mean that they are not there. What is reflected in the form of outward activities emerges in the mind first. In a nutshell, it can be put, as, 'mind acts and body repeats' (Sinha, 1978).

Keeping in view the above three characteristics - internal involvement, external exhibition and purposefulness - of such activities of students, the investigator has chosen to use the term 'student activism' which indicates some means or methods for realizing something. The other terms, discussed

above, do not reflect the characteristics, while 'student activism', to some extent, does. This is why, a term carrying broader meaning has been employed.

Definitions

A few terms used in the study are defined as follows :

A. Student Activism: According to the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English, the term activism means 'the doctrine or policy of taking positive direct action to achieve an end, especially for political or social end'. The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, by the very term activism means 'the doctrine or practice of vigorous action or involvement as means of achieving political goal'. Page, in his International Dictionary of Education, directs the reader to see 'activism' for 'student activism', while he defines the term activism as 'militancy or action in pursuit of a chosen cause, as in student activism which may lead to demonstration or other forms of dissent'. According to Mishra (1975 a), activism is understood as an activity signifying 'disturbances in the normal functioning of the system' and 'a deviation from the traditional pattern of behaviour'.

In view of the above meanings/definitions, for the purpose of the study the term 'student activism' has been taken

to mean actions and procedures - potential and/or functional - adopted by the student communities for the purpose of fulfilling their demands, redressing their grievance and the like. Such activities may, socially, be approved or unapproved, generally, expressed in the forms of public protest type activities, such as representations, processions, demonstrations, strikes, gheraoes etc., here after referred to as activism also. It may have positive and/or negative effects. The investigator does not include anti-social or gunda activities under the fold of student activism.

B. High Student Activist and Low Student Activist :

Those students who prefer most effective courses of actions for fulfilment of their demands are considered as high student activists (HSAs) and those who prefer least effective courses are considered as low student activists (LSAs). For the purpose of this study, those who scored 100 or above on the activism scale are treated as HSAs and those who scored 60 or below are LSAs.

Objectives of the Study

Along with its long history, activism among the students appears to be emerging as a trait¹ found among all

1. Here trait is considered 'as an individual's characteristics in thought, feeling or act inherited or acquired', (James Drever, A Dictionary of Psychology, Penguin Books, 1972, p.302).

the students in varying degrees. So, the investigator has tried to know about the increasing activistic trend, and its intensity among the rank and file or among the common students in relation to environmental variables. The specific objectives of the study are as follows :

1. To study the trend of participation in political and protest type activities among the students of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) with respect to faculties and both the sexes.
2. To study the intensity of student activism among the students of the Banaras Hindu University with respect to :
 - (a) Personal Variables: Sex, age and ordinal position;
 - (b) Sociological Variables: Marital status, rural-urban background, region, residence during the period of study, religion, caste and family type;
 - (c) Socio-Economic Variables: Parents' educational status, parents' occupation and parents' economic status;

- (d) Institutional Variables: Educational commitment which includes educational attainment, educational pursuit and interest in studying; faculties, levels and duration of stay;
- (e) Students' Perception of Guardians' Political Activities
- (f) Political Variables: Students' association with political parties, participation at secondary level and students' participation in political and protest type activities.

Here 'intensity of student activism' means degree of student activism according to the activism scale.

Delimitation of the Study

As stated earlier, only purposeful agitational activities have been considered under student activism. Such actions as are the results of anti-social thinking and ulterior motives have been ignored. Vandalism and gunda activities are a different category. If one goes by the value judgement, student activism is inclined towards positive side, while vandalism and gundaism towards negative.

Further, the study is confined to the students of the faculties/college/institutes situated in the campus of BHU. The school situated inside the campus and colleges affiliated to and situated out of the campus of the university are not covered by this study.

The study is also delimited only to the faculties of Arts, Social Sciences, Science, Technology and Law, of the Banaras Hindu University.

Methodology

Descriptive survey and correlation methods have been used in the study. The investigator has attempted to develop an activism scale for the study of intensity of student activism. A detailed treatment of the procedure of construction of tools, sampling, collection of data etc. are given in the following pages.

Instrumentation

To achieve the objectives mentioned above and to know scientifically, the intensity of student activism and its relationship with other variables, three tools were prepared by the investigator. Besides, some informal individual and group interviews were also taken. The tools are :

- (i) Activism Scale, (Appendix B)
- (ii) Questionnaire, (Appendix A)
- (iii) Interview Schedule, (Appendix C)

Activism Scale

As pointed out under the objectives of the study, the investigator has thought of activism as a trait and assumed its normal distribution among the students. It has been observed that activist responses made in a particular situation differ in intensity from student to student. In the same situation, every member of a group of students may not react alike. According to the content of the situations, intensity of reactions may vary. Such reactions may be distributed on a continuum from mild through moderate to violent. A student may be mild in one situation, but violent in the other. Thus, there may be different responses differing in intensity made by different students in a particular situation. For convenience, they may be grouped in three categories - mild, moderate and violent. Some examples of such responses are presented in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Some Examples of Three Categories of Responses

Mild	Moderate	Violent
indifference, helplessness, persuasion, tolerance, keeping mum, etc.	discussion, representation giving moral support, making complaints, showing gesture, etc.	demonstration, walkouts walkouts, creating scenes, organising strike, gheraos, boycotts, etc.

The group of mild responses appears to be non-involving, but it may be so only at manifestation level, at mental level, one may be involved in activism but because of certain reasons his involvement may not be displayed. However, it is difficult to draw a clear cut demarcation between the above mentioned categories of responses. They may overlap.

A. Rationale for the Scale: In terms of objective 2 of the study for measuring the activist tendency among the common students, a scale was required. The very assumption of normal distribution of activism among students also demanded a scale which can measure activism according to the assumption. Further, the scale was supposed to be helpful in discriminating HSAs and LSAs on the basis of their scores on it.

B. Developing the Scale: A scale for measuring activism of college students was constructed by Reddy (Pareek, 1974) in English. Keeping in view the objectives of the study and previous scale, the investigator developed his scale in Hindi. The scale describes various hypothetical situations related to in campus and out of campus problems, grievances, issues etc. These situations are such as can elicit responses reflecting agitational tendencies among the students. So, every situation has been provided with three alternative reactions of varying degrees of involvement - mild, moderate and violent.

The students were asked to encircle any one of these three types of responses which they generally make in such or similar situations, or will make if they are faced with such a situation. The idea behind it has been that left in a particular situation, a student reacts in a mild, moderate or violent manner. These responses are given weightage, i.e. mild-1, moderate-2, and violent-3. Forty such situations have been included in the scale. The summative scores on 40 responses will indicate the activism score.

C. Item Collection: Items included in the scale describe situations related to the problems generally faced by the students. These problems are of varying nature. Since the students hail from different segments of the society, join different courses and offer different curricula, care has been taken that the problems be of general nature as faced, almost, by all the students. For the purpose, the investigator had to plan a pilot study in which he had discussions and interviews with the students, teachers and non-teaching employees belonging to different faculties of B.H.U. Related literature and Reddy's scale of activism (Pareek, 1974) and other psychological tests have been helpful in developing the activism scale. Special efforts were made to find out those grievances of the students of Technology and girl students which they had in common with

the students of other categories. The interviews held with the students of different categories and courses - professional and general - led to the impression that difference in views and responses with regard to activism has somewhat narrowed down among different categories of students.

Thus, in the beginning about eighty five items were selected. After careful editing they were reduced to seventy four. This draft was given to ten experts to check its contents, language as well as feasibility. Valuable suggestions were received and incorporated accordingly and three more items were added to the second draft raising the number of items to seventy seven. It was cyclostyled and sent for trial with appropriate instructions.

D. Aspects of Student Activism: While selecting the items for activism scale, care was taken ~~taken~~ that variety of problems and grievances be reflected. Even out of campus issues of common interest, which often attract and involve students were taken into consideration.

As mentioned in Chapter two, four types of causes of student unrest were identified by Upadhyaya (1975). Out of these four, the investigator clubbed socio-economic, and political together and reduced them to three. Further, he added three more areas - police clash, student amenities and students'

union - raising the number of areas to six. Thus, the rearranged areas in alphabetical order are - Academic (Ac), Administrative (AD), Police Clash (PC), Socio-Economic and Political (SP), Student-Amenities (SA) and Students' Union (SU). It is difficult to draw a clear cut division between these areas and they may overlap.

E. Item Analysis: The scale was tried out on a sample of 158 students selected from a similar population. The scoring was done giving weightages to encircled responses (as described under item collection) and the summation of these weightages formed the activism scores. Later, the coefficients of correlation between the scores of an individual on a particular item, and his total score on the scale was computerized. Such seventy seven coefficients of correlation have been given in Appendix-E. They vary between .05 and .57. Seventy two correlations^{Coefficients} were found to be significant at .01 level with df 156.

F. Item Selection: The two criteria described above, i.e. aspects of activism and coefficients of correlation were taken into consideration for selecting a particular item. The items showing no significant correlation were rejected out right. Aspect-wise items showing higher correlation were selected and are given in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Aspect-wise List of Items of the Activism Scale

S.No.	Aspects of Student Activism	Serial Number of Items in the Scale	Total No. of Items
1	Academic (AC)	4, 6, 13, 16, 27, 28, 34, 39.	8
2	Administrative (AD)	3, 5, 9, 19, 22, 24, 25, 35.	8
3	Police Clash (PC)	8, 30, 32, 37.	4
4	Socio-Economic and Political (SP)	2, 10, 12, 15, 18, 20, 21, 23, 31, 40.	10
5	Student Amenities (SA)	1, 11, 29, 38.	4
6	Students' Union (SU)	7, 14, 17, 26, 33, 37	6
Total			40

In all, forty items were selected. Number of items in an area was determined taking into consideration the importance of the area.

G. Reliability and Validity: Students scores on these forty items were calculated and reliability of the scale was

computed by split half method. Splits were made taking into consideration the aspects or areas of activism. Since each area was represented in the scale by even number of items, the items were divided into two halves setting 20 items in each split-A and B. A list of these splits is attached in Appendix F. The numerical value of reliability obtained by the above method was found to be .96, which is highly significant.

Validity of the scale was also established. Its content validity was checked by the experts. Since items were selected on the basis of their internal consistency, the internal validity was taken care of by item analysis itself (Guilford, 1975). Experimental validity was established by computing coefficients of correlation between the scores obtained on the activism scale and teachers' rating of students regarding latter's agitational activities. The teachers were asked to rate the students in five categories according to latter's involvement in protest activities. On a sample of 113 such validity was found to be .51, which is substantial. Further, the discriminating power of the scale was also found out by computing difference between the mean scores of high student activists and low student activists, identified by the teachers. The difference was found to be significant at .01 level. Again activism scores were correlated with students own evaluation of their participation in protest activities on a five point scale, thus confirming the validity of the activism scale.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was also developed to achieve first objective of the study. It was also helpful for the second objective. It has seven parts as shown below :

A. Personal Variables: Information from the students was sought regarding their sex, age and ordinal position. Questions 3, 2 and 10 respectively are concerned with these aspects.

B. Sociological Variables: Marital status, rural-urban background, region, residence during the period of study, religion, caste and family types are the variables included in this group. Questions 4, 5 Ka, 5 Kha, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the questionnaire seek information regarding them. Students were asked to state their home district along with the state under this group. Later, the regions have been classified in different groups.

C. Socio-Economic Variables: Socio-economic variables included in this study are parents' educational status, parents' occupation and parents' economic status. Questions 11, 12 Ka, 12 Kha and 13 of the questionnaire seek information on these variables. Information regarding parents' education was sought separately for father and mother on a six point scale.

Similarly, two questions were put regarding parents' economic status - one on a three point scale asking fathers' occupational/vocational/professional status and the other on a six point scale asking monthly income of the family. Further, the summative scores on parents educational status and economic status were considered under parents' socio-economic status (SES). Another question was put for seeking information regarding occupation/profession of father/guardian.

D. Institutional Variables: All together six variables are included in this group. They are level, faculty, educational attainment, educational pursuit, interest in study and duration of stay in the university. Respondents were asked to fill in the entries regarding level and faculty given on the top of the first page of the questionnaire for the purpose. Information for the rest of the variables was sought through questions 15, 16, 17 and 24 Ka. For educational attainments, one question was put asking division/class obtained by the students at their final examinations. Summation of scores on all the examinations divided by number of examinations formed scores on educational attainment. Two questions, one each for educational pursuit and interest in study were put on six and five point scale respectively. These three variables - educational attainment, educational pursuit and interest in study-are the indicators of

educational commitment for the purpose of the present study. The scores on them were clubbed together to form the scores on educational commitment.

E. Students' Perception of Guardians' Political

Activities: Two questions regarding the students' perception were put. One, with respect to guardians' reaction towards students' participation in active politics and the other, relating to guardians' own participation in active politics. Questions 19 Ka and 19 Kha sought information in this respect on five and three point scales respectively. The summation of the scores on above two scales formed the scores on students' perception of guardians' political activities.

F. Political Variables: Political variables related to the students were included in the study. This part of the questionnaire was so designed that it provides information with respect to the first objective and scores to be used along with the activism scores with respect to the second objective of the study. This includes ten questions with parts in them. Information regarding various aspects of politics and protest activities, such as opinion regarding participation in politics, interest in politics, active participation in politics, opinion regarding participation in protest activities, efficacy of

protest activities etc., was sought for. All this information has been classified under three indicators which are students' association with political parties, students' participation in movements at secondary level, and students' participation in political and protest type activities. Question 23 Kha supplies information regarding students' association with political parties and question 21 for students' participation in movements at secondary level. Questions 18, 23 Kha, 23 Ga and 23 Gha seek information regarding students' political activities and questions 20 Ka, 20 Kha, 22 Ka, 26 Ka and 27 seek information regarding students' protest type activities, generally on three and five point scales. The scores on students' political activities and protest type activities are combined together to form scores on students' political and protest type activities.

G. Miscellaneous: Besides, five questions, one each asking-reasons from the students for joining the university, occasions when students found protest methods successful, frequency of participation in protest activities, types of movements students had participated in, and reasons for participating or not participating in protest activities were put in the questionnaire. Questions 14, 22 Kha, 24 Kha, 25 and 26 Kha of the questionnaire seek information in this connection.

Reliability, validity and feasibility of the questionnaire were established on the basis of expert opinion. It was tried out on some students to determine its feasibility.

Interview Schedule

For the purpose of collecting detailed and indepth information about some extreme cases of HSAs and LSAs an interview schedule was also developed by the investigator. This information was related to the issues like - meaning of student activism, positive and negative effects of student activism, control of student activism and future of student activism. This was a semi-structured tool. The reliability and validity of the schedule were established by the expert opinion.

Sample and Sampling Technique

As stated earlier under the head delimitation, the study has been conducted on the students of BHU. The student population of the university presents various demographic and sociological characteristics. These characteristics of the population are reflected in the present sample. Briefly, these are described here. The study includes both the sexes - male

and female. The students of different age groups, levels, rural-urban backgrounds of U.P., Bihar and other States of India, have been included in the sample. The age level of these students is such that a sizable number of these students may be married also. In north India particularly in U.P. and Bihar, three caste - levels - upper, middle and lower (schedule) - exist. Because of socio-political awareness and constitutional concessions boys and girls from middle and lower castes are also entering the university for higher learning. These three levels, further, consists of sub-levels and differ much in their awareness, particularly the middle and scheduled castes. These students differ among themselves in respect of socio-economic background, i.e. parents' education, occupation and income. These characteristics of the sample have been treated as variables for the purpose of the study.

Both the sexes of the students have been considered suitable for the study. But in those faculties in which number of ~~jan~~ girls was very small, the latter have been excluded. Because a small number in the sample would not have served any purpose instead it would have imposed certain limitations.

Thus, incidental-cum-purposive technique has been followed for drawing the sample. The available sample, which could serve the purpose of the study, has been selected. This technique is a judicious combination of both the methods - incidental and purposive. This technique was considered suitable and was found to draw nearly representative sample and to yield normal distribution by about ten researchers, Joshi called it an incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique (Pandey, 1968). The number of students included in the sample is 520. Sex and faculty-wise break up of the sample has been given in the following chapter. Care within resources and limitations has been taken to make the sample representative.

An other sample of HSAs and LSAs has been drawn out of the above sample. The basis for their selection has been their scores on the activism scale. After the scales were returned by the respondents, they were scored. Those students whose scores were above 100 or below 60 have been considered as HSAs and LSAs respectively. Such 20 extreme cases have been selected for the purpose.

Collection of the Data

As mentioned earlier, three tools were employed for the purpose of collecting the data for the study. The

questionnaire and the activism scale were administered to the students in the classes selected through incidental-purposive technique. The investigator had obtained the permission of the respective deans/heads for administering the above tools in the class and again with the consent of the teachers concerned the questionnaire and scale were presented to the students in the classes. Necessary instructions were printed in the tools, students did not feel almost any difficulty in responding to the questions. The investigator was very particular in checking whether all the items had been attended and if any left out, the student concerned was requested to complete. In the case of undergraduate female students the respective teachers shared the responsibility of getting both the tools administered in the classes.

The teachers and students were responsive and cooperative in general. But it was observed by the investigator that Law students are sociable; science, responsible; technology, avoiding; and Arts-Social Science, a little careless. Some of the students were really very eager to know the results of the study. A few complained of *lack* of making responses due to limited choices in the activism scale.

Informal individual and group interviews were also held with a variety of campus people. Apart from that, 20 extreme cases of high and low student activists were also interviewed. These interviews were taken at the convenience of the students with the help of an interview schedule.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

The data, thus, obtained have been analysed and presented in the next Chapter. The whole analysis has been divided into three sections - A, B, and C. In section A, the data are mainly in the form of frequencies. In section B for measuring student activism and its further study, statistical techniques have been used. Significance of HSAs and LSAs has been discussed in Section C.

A. Scoring: As discussed earlier under the heading instrumentation, the activism scale contains 40 situational items. Every item has been provided with three possible alternative reactions - mild, moderate and violent - put in the same order. These alternatives have been allotted 1, 2 and 3 scores respectively. The encircled or ticked responses in the scale have been awarded scores, as mentioned above, such scores on 40 responses have been summated and have formed the total score of respondent on the activism scale. These scores vary from 40 to 120. These scores have been used for different purposes.

The questionnaire contains questions on different groups of variables. Some of these SES, educational commitment, guardians' ^{political activities and political variables} have been allotted numerical values. Responses to these questions have been scored according to the scheme attached in appendix-D.

B. Analysis of the Data: In section A, to find the trend of students' participation in political and protest activities, frequencies have been converted into percentages and later these percentages have been rounded to the nearest number as the rounding up would not affect the data significantly. The interpretations have been made on the basis of these percentages.

In section B, techniques like Mean, SD, analysis of variance, t-test and product moment correlation have been employed. To find out the significant difference between two groups, t-test, and in case of three or more than three groups, analysis of variance have been used. If F-ratio was found to be significant, the t-test was used for finding significance of difference between various combinations made out of these groups. The word group has been used to indicate the collection of different identities forming one of the levels of a variable. These techniques were used with respect to the scores related to the sex and ordinal position under personal variables;

sociological variables; occupation among socio-economic variables; level and faculty among institutional variable and students association with political parties among political variables. There are certain other variables with the help of which, relationship with student activism scores have been studied by means of product moment correlation. They are age, SES, educational commitment, duration of stay, students' perception of guardians political activities, students' political and protest activities. The interpretations of all these techniques have been given along with tables in Chapter IV.

C. Interpretation of the Activism Scale: As pointed out earlier, scores on activism scale vary from 40 to 120 on a ϕ continuum. Intensity of student activism has been studied on the basis of comparison between means of various combinations of groups. If 't' between two group means has been found to be significant, the group with greater mean has been interpreted as having high intensity of student activism in comparison to the group with lower mean.

The interview schedule has been analysed and interpreted, without awarding any numerical values. On the basis of analysis and interpretation, conclusions have been drawn in a manner so that an integrated picture of the study may emerge.