

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION POLICIES & PLAN FORMULATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY

A little peep in to the historical background reveals that in 1935 the 'Govt. of India Act' declared education exclusively as a State matter. A little later after Independence the Central Govt. formed the 'University Education Commission' under the Chairmanship of Dr.Sarvapally Radhakrishan. According the proposal of this commission, the 'University Grants Commission' was formed towards the end of 1950. In 1952 the 'Ministry of Education'; Government of India constituted the 'Secondary Board of Education' under the Chairmanship of Dr.A.Lakshanswami Mudalian to improve upon the rational infrastructure at secondary education level. In the second half of the decade of 1960s the Center held out a still broader perspective under the chairmanship of Dr.K.S.Kothari. After a great deal of important discussions about the method of teaching and course content from primary to post graduate level, Dr.Kothari not only put several proposals at primary level but also proposal the Center's role in providing advice and financial assistance to the State Governments in different spheres including research, technical education etc. Late in 1976 the Central Government included education in the concurrent list through legislation in the Parliament.

8.1: National Education Policy for Primary Level:

There have so far been mainly two comprehended statements of the National Policy on Education viz. those of 1968 and 1986. The former contained decisions of the Central Govt. on the recommendation of the 'National Commission on Education', 1964-66. The latter was a result of the renewed priority assigned to education by the Government. The 1986 policy was renewed by a committee constituted in 1990 under the Chairmanship of Acharya Rammurti. On the basis of recommendations of this committee, certain provision of the 1986 policy was modified in 1992. Besides the above comprehensive policy statements, policy decisions on individual issues are taken from time to time as needed- in the form of resolutions, schemes , guidelines , order etc.. The

'Government of India' accordingly resolved to promote the development of literacy in the country in accordance with the following principles.

Strenuous efforts should be made for the early fulfillment of the 'Directive Principle' under 'Articles 45' of the constitution seeking to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14. Suitable programs should be developed to reduce the prevailing wastage and stagnation in schools and to ensure that every child who is enrolled in school successfully completes the prescribed course. On the other hand, early childhood care and education was introduced in the education policy of 1986 in which a full integration of child care and pre-primary education will be brought about, both as a feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and for human resource development in general. At the same time, the new thrust in elementary education will emphasize on three aspects: (i) universal access and enrolment (ii) universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and (iii) a suitable improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. For this a child-centers and activity base process of learning should be adopted at the primary stage. First generation learners should be allowed to set their own pace and be given supplementary remedial instruction. As the child grows, the component of cognitive learning will be increased and skills organized through practice. The policy of non-detention at the primary stage will be retained, making evaluations as disaggregated as feasible corporal punishment will be firmly excluded from the educational system and school timings as well as vacations adjusted to the convenience of children. Another important criterion of this education policy in provisions will be made of essential facilities in primary schools. The scope of 'Operation Black Board' will be enlarged to provide three reasonably large rooms that are useable in all weather, black board, maps charts, toys other necessary learning's aids and school library. At least three teachers should work in every school the member increasing, as early as possible to one teacher per class. At least 50% of teachers recruited in future should be women. The 'Operation Black Board' will be extended to upper primary stage also construction of school buildings will be priority charges on JRY funds. Here the non-formal education program meant for school dropouts, for children of school less

habitation, working children and girls who cannot attend whole day schools will be strengthened and enlarged.

Modern technological aids will be used to improve the learning's environment of NFE centers. Talented and educated young men and women from the local community will be chosen to serve as instructors, and particular attention should be paid on their training. All necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the quality of non-formal education is comparable with the formal education. Steps will be taken to facilitate lateral entry in the formal system of children passing out of the non-formal system. Effective steps will be taken to provide a framework for the curriculum, but based on the needs on the learners and related to local environment. Learning material of high quality will be developed and provided free of charge to all pupils. NFE programme will provide participatory learning environment and activities such as games and sports, cultural programmes excursions etc. The Government will take overall responsibility for this vital sector, voluntary agencies and Panchayati Raj institutions will take much of the responsibility of funds to those agencies should be adequate and timely.

8.2: The National Policy on Educations (1986-1992):

The national policy on education, 1986 as modified in 1992, emphasis three aspects in relation to elementary education – universal access and enrolment, universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. National policy education -1992 emphasizes that education must play a positive and interventionist role in correcting social and regional imbalances, empowering women and is securing a rightful place for the disadvantaged and minorities. Government is firmly committed to providing education for all, the priority areas being free and compulsory elementary education, covering children with special needs, eradication of illiteracy, education for women equality and special focus on the education of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and minorities

The main vehicle for providing elementary education to all children is the ongoing comprehensive programme called 'Sarva Siksha Aviyan' launched in 2001-02. The Goal of Sarva Siksha Aviyan (SSA) are:

- a) All children in school, 'Education Guarantee Center', 'Alternate School', 'Back-to-School' camp by 2005.
- b) Bridge all gender and social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and elementary education level by 2010 and
- c) Universal retention by 2010 and
- d) Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life National Programme for education of girls at elementary level is important component of SSA. NPEGEL provides additional support by way of girl-child-friendly schools, stationery, uniforms etc for girls education in educationally backward blocks (EBB) and in other areas for elementary education of under privileged and disadvantaged section. EBBS are blocks with female literacy below and gender gap above, the national average NPEGEL is also implemented in blocks of but have at least 5% scheduled castes and scheduled tribes female literacy is below 10% and also in selected urban slums.

Other important components of SSA are 'Education Guarantee Scheme' and 'Alternative and Innovative Education' (EGS & AIE). EGS & AIE are specially designed to provide access to elementary education to children in school less habitation and out of school children. It supports flexible strategies for out of school children through bridge courses, residential camps, drop-in-centers, summer camps, remedial coaching etc.

The centrally sponsored 'Mid-Day-Meal' scheme was revised and universalized at primary level with effect from September 2004 to make a provision for providing cooked meals to children studying in Government, government-aided and local-body schools and EGS & AIE centers. Besides providing food grains free of cost to the States or Union Territories, and food grains transportation subsidy, the Central Government provides assistance for converting food grains into cooked meal at a rate of Rs. 1 per child per day.

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) was launched in August, 2004. It sets up 750 residential schools at elementary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities, in EBBS. Department of elementary education and literacy issued orders on November 14, 2005 constituting Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh (PSK) to receive the education less imposed through fiancé (No.2) Act, 2004 PSK is a

separate dedicated, non-lapsable fund to be maintained by the ministry of HRD was launched on May 05, 1988 as a Technology Mission to impart functional literacy to non-literates in the country in the age-group of 15-35 years in time bound manner. This age-group has been at the focus of attention because they are in the productive and reproductive period of life. The NPE, 1986, as modified in 1992, recognized the NLM as one of the three instruments to eradicate illiteracy from the country, the other two being SSA and non-formal education.

NLM's objective was to attain a sustainable threshold literacy rate of 75% by 2007. The 'Total Literacy Campaign' (TLC) has been the principal strategy of 'National Literacy Mission' for eradication of illiteracy in the target age-group. These campaigns implemented by 'Zilla Saksharata Samities' (District Level Literacy Societies) are area-specific, time-bound volunteer-based, cost effective and outcome oriented. NLM has accorded priority for the promotion of female literacy.

Secondary education prepares students in the age group of 14-18 years for entry into higher education and employment as per NSO scanner (55th round 1999-00), there were in equalities in enrolment in higher education across various social groups in rural and urban areas and also in terms of gender. Women belonging to SC and ST and those living in rural areas are the most disadvantaged. A 'Constitution Amendment Bill' has been passed by parliament in December 2005, which manholes the state to make special provisions by law, for admission of students belonging to SC, ST and socially and educationally backward class to educational institutions including aided and unaided private educational institutions, except minority institution referred to in Article 30(1) of the constitution.

8.3: Madrasah Education System in West Bengal:

In recent years 'West Bengal Madrasah Board' has become a symptom of modernization and development. Today, the board is strongly promise-board to the qualitative improvement of education, active participation of both teachers and students in all parts of internal and external programs integration of education and public health related activities and above all, enlightenment of the unlighted section of the society by all possible means. In 1964 the Board was named 'West Bengal Madrasah Education

Board'. In 1994 the Board attained the status of an autonomous body. This is 'Madrasah Education Boards or Councils'. This Board functions according the relevant Act and guidelines of W.B School Education Department.

According to centers of education, Madrasah are of two types (a) Junior and High Madrasah and (b) Senior Madrasah many non-Muslim students including scheduled castes and scheduled tribe ones have been appearing as regular and external students at High Madrasahs are co-educational and numerous girls study in these Madrasahs. The appointment of teachers through 'West Bengal School Service Commission' is praise worthy with one compulsory additional subject; the syllabus is similar to that of 'West Bengal Board of Secondary Education'.

After passing the 'High Madrasah Examination', which is equivalent to 'Madhyamik' and other all India examination students can enroll for NET and National Scholarships besides being eligible for admission to higher educational institutions or professional courses. The number of Madrasah is gradually increasing because of these facilities. In case of syllabus examination etc. at 'Higher Secondary Madrasah' level 'P.W.B. Higher Secondary Council' is the sole authority. The syllabi at primary, Junior of 'Alim' level have been made comparable to those at primary, state boards through necessary modification. The state has been declared the 'Alim' final examination is equivalent to 'Madhyamik' examination. Similarly, the syllabi of 'W.B. Primary Education Board' are followed in classes I to V of senior Madrasah. The Board is examining the possibility of whether external evaluation can be introduced in classes beyond class II at senior Madrasah level in this regard discussion among the State Government, 'Primary Education Board' and other associated institution. At the same time the Board has sent directives to the Heads of all Sorts of Madrasah for the introduction of continuous evaluation in all class. This process will become more forceful as soon as the Madrasah Inspectors join at the Board Office.

8.4: Center-State Ties in Case of Educational Policy:

There are a number of issues concerning educational policies which cannot be easily brushed aside either. At primary and secondary levels, there are, it was admitted, practical difficulties in the way of enforcing a standard pattern of education. The

obstacles are supposedly much less in the undergraduate and post graduate stages as also for vocational training, the need for a uniform system of education was at the same time claimed to be much greater at these stages. The role and function of the 'University Grants Commission' have undergone a perceptible transformation over the years pursuant of this philosophy.

For the past two decades, the 'UGC' has acted as the supreme catalyst, and universities have been argued to standardise their syllabi and courses of studies in order to be able to sure the cause of national integrity as well. Equally remarkably, each time a new Government. has been installed in New Delhi following a general election; it has yielded to the temptation to put together a national policy on education.

The exercise appears to be impractical at first sight, for a senior doubt can be raised in regard to the usefulness of a national policy, particularly on education, in an essentially federal policy. The tension, likely to be generated it all segment of the nation are sought to be put in the straight jacket of a common educational system, might, it can be maintained, do more than good to the cause of national unity.

There is the matter of communications between the 'Union' and 'State Governments'. The issue of education here gets incredibly mixed up with the problem of language. Fifteen languages listed in the 'Eighth Schedule of the Constitution' do not include 'English' and yet to avoid undesirable controversy, it has been considered expedient to continue indefinitely with the constitutional arguments to deploy 'English' as an official language along with 'Hindi'. The picture has been further complicated of late by the clamour to include such languages as Konkani, Nepali and Manipuri in the national languages listed in the 'Eighth Schedule'. The so-called three-language formula, which proposed that school-going children in schools in the states, north of the 'Vindhyas' would learn a southern language and similarly children in the south would learn a northern language in addition to their respective mother tongues and 'English', did not make any headway. Nor has it been possible to introduce 'Hindi' as a compulsory third language, in addition to the mother tongue and 'English', in the primary and secondary stages in different parts of the country.

Here, the 'West Bengal Govt.' excluded 'English' from curriculum of primary teaching in government aided institutions. All instructions, it has been decided, will be

imported as far as possible, through the mother tongue to bring and retain more number of children under the umbrella of primary education. It should be recalled here that 'English' has been re-introduced in the curriculum of primary education. The decision of the 'Central Govt.' in the middle of 1980's to introduce the 'Navodaya Vidyalaya' scheme of education at the secondary level aggravated the situation. This scheme, overly intended to accelerate the pace of social and economic development in hitherto under-developed communities, had two explicit features. First, the intention is to develop a meritocracy - an elite tribe - of students in each backward section and impart to them an education which will in practice make them aliens in their own milieu. The model, the 'Union Government' has apparently in mind, is that of the so-called public schools where children from affluent families are chaperoned through an educational course which, whatever its other merits, set them totally apart from the general mass of the community. Since a state government has a concurrent jurisdiction over education, it would be perfectly within its right to demur with such a simplistic, it not retrograde, philosophy and the model of compartmentalised education - one version for the privileged group and another for the commouners that follows from it.

A second aspect of the 'Navodaya' program is equally disquieting. The children admitted to these schools are expected to forsake their mother tongue and agree to have, both as the medium of instruction and as language courses, only 'Hindi' and 'English' provision will be made for teaching these children in foreign languages, not in their own mother tongue or in any other Indian language. This, to put it mildly, is perversity at its worst. It can only be hoped that good sense will prevail and the centre will retrace its steps on the issue of the 'Navodyaya' program. It is equally desirable that the 'Union Government' process slowly in such matters as the introduction of a 'Nations Educational Policy' on of steam rolling its views through the intermediary of control bodies on which the states do not have any representation. If the 'Navodaya Scheme', for instance is to be made acceptable to the states, its contents should be drastically revised: provision has to be made for inducting the children's respective mother tongue in the curriculum as medium of instruction, and the syllabus should be so drafted as to reflect the realities of the Indian polity and society. In other words, neither in the matter of selection of students nor in the matter of language or course content, the centre should try unilaterally on the

states to impose its ideology and social and economic philosophy. Even at this stage, it would make sense to overhaul the scheme on the basis of the recommendations of a committee which may be set up for the purpose. Such a committee should be sufficiently broad based, and the states must have adequate representation in it.

If perchance the idea of such a committee is not acceptable to the union government it is important that the state government, which refuses to toe New Delhi's line on educational matters beyond a point, is not denied its due share of the center's allocation of funds to the state for raising the level of primary education. A state has the right, at least up to the undergraduate level, to decide on the curriculum, the medium of instruction and the methodology of teaching in the area falling within the administrative jurisdiction of the state. Not to respect this convention would be to activate forces which would work not for national unification, but for national disintegration.

8.5: Implementation of Primary Education Policies by State in North Bengal:

1) The most wide-range change since 1977 in the educational issues in the state have been in the sphere of primary education most of the controversies voiced in the media and other forms have also taken place over the worthwhile ness of these changes.

The transformation of primary education in scenery that has taken place recently in the state in impressive. The state government's determination to bring into the hold of education millions of children belonging to deprived sections, especially in the rural areas, also deserves applause.

Among the other innovation are the decision to do away with the practice of detention and, instead, the introduction of a system of continuous evaluation of change to students joining their primary school and the arrangement for free meal for them. Apparels is also to be supplied once a year to girls students belonging to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes communities on who are otherwise indigent. Mid-day meal program has been introduced to reduce drastically the number and proportion of drop outs. The number of primary school has gone up by at least a quarter and student evolvment by more than 80%, in the distance between primary school and an inhabited

area does not exceed one kilometer in any part of the state. The so-called pre-primary stage of education has been brought under the ambit of primary education. Students do not have to learn two languages and simultaneously at the primary stage 'English' has been excluded from the curriculum of primary teaching in government aided institutions; all instruction, it has been decided, will be on for as possible, through the mother tongue. In effecting this particular change, West Bengal has, however, merely followed the pattern already established in most other states of the country. There is hardly any state where the teaching of 'English' as a second language is introduced before the secondary stage. Be that as it may, a committee under the chairmanship of Shri Himanshu Bimal Majumdar drew up a syllabus which detailed with care the curriculum to be pursued, in classes I to V, with the mother tongue as the medium of instruction and without the insertion at this stage while establishing near primary school to much attention has area with predominance of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population. To further encourage the entry of children from the tribe communities into primary school, the government has actively promoted the script and has announced an ambitious program of hostel accommodation exclusively for occupancy by advise children this is in addition to the proposed scheme to build structures for new school and repair old school buildings with the active cooperation of the 'Panchayet' bodies.

2) It is equally necessary to refer to the overhaul of the organizational infrastructure for primary education: A state level 'Primary School Education Board', for which permission already existed in 'Primary Education Act' of 1973, exercise jurisdictional authority over the 'District Primary Education Councils'; other objective is as much to decentralize as to democratize the primary education system. The number of primary school teacher has increased very significantly. The supply of equipments, such as blackboards, maps, globes etc. has been increased. Extensive school building program has been adopted. The supply of free books at the beginning of each academic year has been ensured, and the practice of supplying new book at some children and old books at some others has been strictly discarded.

The 'Mass Education Extension Departments' implements the literacy programs as formulated by the 'National Literacy Mission Authority' under the Ministry of Government Implementation of Literacy Programs' is carried out in three distinct phases

: (i) Total Literacy Campaign (ii) Post Literacy Program and (iii) Continuing Education Program. In the early 1990s, 'Total Literacy Campaign' in different districts of North Bengal took the shape of a massive social movement which, through passage of time, has naturally weakened and the 'Post Literacy Program' and the 'Continuing Education Program' have suffered a lot. However, steps have been taken and serious attempts are being made to improve the literacy, serious effective implementation, better monitoring and supervision of the programs. For this, number of work shops and seminars at the state level as well as meetings orientation and training programs at the district level are being arranged. At present five district of N.B region except Darjiling are implementing 'Continuing Education Program' of the NLM. To increase the literacy status in the region, presently the issue of motivation campaigns for teacher or workers in the field of elementary education is being addressed by 'Pachim Banga Sarkar Sarva Shiksha Mission' through the 'Bharti Karan Karmasuchi'.

The 'Backward Class Welfare Department' has constructed one Eka Labya Model Residential School during tenth five year Plan, especially for SC & ST student. 'Uttar Banga Unnayan Parishad' was constituted in 2000-2001 to formulate and implement schemes for integrated development of the areas of North Bengal through 'Local Self Governed Institution', other Government authorities and Non-Government organizations in North Bengal. The Parishad also mentors planning and implementation of development schemes on education of the area. 'Siliguri-Jalpaiguri Development & Planning Authority', 'Jaigoan Development Authority' are two other authorities constituted to implement the developmental program. Comprehensive Tribal Development Program, know as WADI has been introduced and steps have also been taken for the benefit of ST communities inhabiting the forest villages of Koch Bihar Darjiling, Kurseong, Kalimpong, Baikunthapur and Buaxa Tiger Rescue Forest.

8.6: Implementation of Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Policies By State in North Bengal:

Incase of Secondary Education, the WBBSE has taken a fruitful step for improving class room teaching of students by introducing unit test and 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evolution' (CCE) in classes. In every academic year a student has to go

through five unit tests after thorough teaching. Remedial steps are taken by the teachers to improve the learning level of the students who are not up to the mark. The twin objectives of evaluation are:

- 1) To identify learning achievements and learning gaps through measurement of tests based on prescribed text materials, syllabi and curriculum of various subjects of study.
- 2) To remove learning gaps and inadequacy through remedial lessons and peer activities.

The scientific basis of promotion to the higher class in the summative result of unit tests and terminal or annual examinations that is to say, the evaluation system should help student preparation. Evaluation is generally of two types. The objectives of in-school evaluation are to enable the weak learners to become potential learners, and the potential learners to become sufficiently potential learners.

After measuring the learning competencies through marks (quantified evaluation), the student's achievements are to be classified into certain groups (quality bands) demarcated by letter-graders. The process of learning development is through in-school developmental evaluations in different classes. The holistic graph of 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation' (CCE) helps to project a relative picture as to the stage-end ledge mental evaluation since grades signify qualitative status, formation of such a holistic impression of a learner's achievements, in different classes is facilitated by the 'Grading System'.

At Upper Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary education level the objectives for the 11th plan are: -

To extend support of 'SSA' up to class VIII in all Junior High, Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools including Madrasahs,

To improve the functioning of 'District Institute for Education and Training' (DIETs) so that scope for training of teachers is expanded and improved,

To improve the infrastructural facilities not only at Upper Primary level but also at the Secondary and Higher Secondary levels,

To extend the 'Mid-Day Meal' scheme up to the Upper Primary level at the first instance and then to the Secondary level,

To upgrade Upper Primary Schools and Madrasahs so as to increase the capacity of higher level of school education.

In general school education is made to mainstream alternative schooling facilities like 'SSK', 'SSP' and 'MSK' and reduce the drop-out rate. All out efforts will be continued to construct 'Pucca' school buildings with drinking water and separate toilet facilities for girls and boys. Special efforts will be made to improve the enrolment of scheduled castes or schedule tribe girls. The 'School Education Department' desires to address critical gaps in access to Upper Primary schools. This department is establishing new set up of Upper Primary schools so as to address the critical issues of out-of-school children and children who have dropped out from formal schools in few districts and few sub-divisions of the state. Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar, Uttan Dirajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur of North Bengal region have already got approval. The most important fact of school education of the on going plan would be to introduce vocational training from the secondary level in all schools. The 'Backward Classes Welfare Department' is the nodal department for the welfare of sScheduled castes and scheduled tribes and backward classes. From different surveys conducted by the research wing of this Department, it appears that the basic causes of low literacy rate among SCs and STs are economic hindrances, poor motivation, prevalent labour system either in economic field or in house-hold works, insufficient educational infrastructure and poor educational atmosphere in the house. In order to bring above SC & ST population up to the educational level of general population, this department puts on education by construction or reconstruction of schools &and hostel buildings in villages or wards predominantly inhabited by SC & ST. The department provides hostel facilities to poor SC & ST students. The State Government bears the entire expenses to pay maintenance charges for the SC & ST day-scholars and hostels for the hostellers at pre-metric stage. Ashram Hostels for poor SC & ST students are running under this department. It has also been decided to set up more Central Hostels for SC, ST and OBC boys and girls. Vocational training, job oriented training like 'Apparel Training and Design', 'Diploma Courses' on different engineering facilities, 'Computer Training' etc. are proposed to be provided for SC, ST & OBC youth.

Moreover, the 'State Govt.' has introduced educational schemes for the OBCs, more beneficiaries are proposed to be covered under such schemes. There are 6 central sector schemes viz. 'Special Central Assistance' SCSP for SCs and Tribal Sub Plan or Grants under 1st provision to Art 275(1) of the Constitution, VTC, Grant-in-aid to WBTDCC Ltd Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations, Upgrading of merit of SCs or STs, 'Educational Complex in Low Literacy Pockets' and 6 'Centrally Sponsored Schemes', Girls' or Boys' Hostels for SC & ST, PMS for SC or ST or OBC, Grants to CRI, Book Banks, Coaching and Allied Schemes, which are running successfully.

8.7: Implementation of Higher Education Policies by State in North Bengal:

In case of 'Higher Education Section' the efforts will be made to increase the percentage of students to achieve this target, major emphasis also has been given on extending the facilities of 'Distance Educations'. At the same time, several new Degree Colleges offering courses in traditional subjects in 'Science' and 'Humanities' as well as in emerging areas would be set up in especially economically backward areas, and also in areas with large number of SC or ST and minority population. Special efforts have been made to increase the percentage of girl students in 'Science', 'Technology and Professional Courses' by strengthening these faculties in 'Women's Colleges' towards women's empowerment. For strengthening the existing and new colleges offering technical and professional courses, private entrepreneurs would be encouraged to invest in a big way. Development and extension of infrastructural facilities like classrooms, teaching aids, library, laboratory, recreational opportunities students care, linking with neighborhood and community development activities have been accorded priority to ensure 'Quality' assurance maintenance and improvement following the guidelines of 'NAAC'. In fact quality assurance and its enhancement in every sector of 'Higher Education' is a priority task. Efforts will also be made to set up there well-equipped 'Science Center's at 'North Bengal University' along with two other universities of the state. Giving more Social Orientation to Higher Educational Institution is a priority area.

The 'Adult High Schools' provide the facilities for imparting education up to Madhyamik level to the adult learners. The 'Adult High School's are normally located in

the premises of recognised High Schools which are being utilised for running the 'Adult High School's generally in the evening hours without hampering the works of normal schools.

The 'Programme of Post Literacy' or 'Continuing Education' is generally evaluated by 'External Agencies' approved by the 'National Literacy Mission'.

The West Bengal government identified the following thrust areas towards overall development of 'Higher Education' in the state.

- 3) Augmentation of the scope of 'Higher Education' by establishing new colleges in every virgin area.
- 4) Extension of the affiliation of honours courses in all major subjects in colleges, even in those in remote areas.
- 5) Introduction of modern course like, Computer Science, Electronics, Molecular Biology, Microbiology & Tea Technology.
- 6) Restructuring of syllabi, reformation of examination system and improvement of the quality of education through betterment of the academic atmosphere in educational institutions.
- 7) Further development of distance educations systems to reach people who remain un-reached, allow flexibility that does not exist and devise methods of instruction that offers more choices.
- 8) Providing adequate security of service to the teachers and employees of educational institutions.
- 9) Presenting gross privatisation and commercialisation of higher education in the state.
- 10) Special emphasize on development of Engineering, Technological and Management Education Institutions.
- 11) Priority on emerging areas like Information Technology, Computer Science and Engineering, Electronics and Telecom Engineering to produce high quality manpower.
- 10) Establishment of new universities and provision of financial assistance to set up new departments in existing universities.

- 11) Complete eradication of ragging form educational institutions by legislation and other measures.
- 12) Up gradation of the departments in a number of colleges into Post Graduate Departments.

Despite innumerable constraints, every year colleges have been set up to give access of higher education to more number of students, with due emphasis for the students in rural and backward areas.

'Netaji Subhash Open University' has been set up to extend the benefit of higher education to those who are unable to avail of the traditional class room teaching. All the universities are provided with financial assistance under state plan towards execution of different development programs.

One of the most remarkable achievements of the State Government in the field of 'Higher Education' is the setting up of the 'West Bengal State Council of Higher Education'. Keeping in view the guidelines laid down by the 'University Grant Commission', the 'Council' has been established to maintain the standard of teaching, examination and research in universities and colleges in West Bengal and to strengthen the planning and co-ordination of different programs in 'Higher Education'.

8.8: Educational Policies & Plan Formulation for North Bengal:

Economic Backwardness of North Bengal is a chronic problem ever since independent of the country in 1947. This Economic backwardness has continually perpetuated, although the degree of backwardness decreased gradually over time during the plan period. The economic backwardness of North Bengal is predominantly the outcome of broadly two set of factors. The first set include its geographical location at the foothills of the Himalaya and further south, its isolation not only from the southern counter part of the state but also from the rest of the country, its proneness to frequent flood almost every year, its relative inaccessibility not only from the rest of the country but also from its southern counter part, natural hazards in the form of floods, land slides, earth quake etc. The second set of factors include mainly the demographic factors including the predominance of backward communities like SC, ST, OBC etc, occupational structure, low level of literacy etc. Of these two sets of factors the first set

is much less likely be moulded or changed to improve the economic status of North Bengal region. That is say man's role in changing the physical set up of the region with a view to ameliorating its economic backwardness is limited. Therefore whatever effort can be made to improve the economic condition of North Bengal will mainly be restricted to the demographic set of factors. That is the reason why 'Educational Development' has been given priority in the amelioration of economic backwardness of the region.

From the previous analysis at different levels it appears that the 'Secondary Education' has a profound influence on the 'Economic Development' of the region. Categorically it may be pointed out that at district level, 'Number of Higher Secondary Schools Per Lakh Population' influences most the 'Economic Development', whereas, at C.D.Block level the 'Density of Higher Secondary Schools Per Ten Square Kilometers' also influences the 'Economic Development' of the region. In other word, at both district and C.D.Block level the 'Number of Higher Secondary Schools' as well as the 'Density of Higher Secondary Schools' play a dominant role in the 'Economic Development' of the region.

In the forgoing discussions it has been observed that in Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur districts 'Number of Higher Secondary Schools per Lakh Population' is low and the 'Density of Higher Secondary Schools per Ten Square Kilometers' is low again in Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur districts. It is therefore suggested that the 'Number Higher Secondary Schools per Lakh Population' as well as 'Density of Higher Secondary Schools per Ten Square Kilometers' be increased so as to improve the 'Educational Infrastructure' in these districts, which in turn will help in 'Economic Development' of these districts.

If we now turn our attention to the interrelationship between different rates of 'Literacy' and 'Economic Development' it again becomes apparent that 'Rural Literacy Rate' plays a vital role in 'Economic Development' of the region at both district and C.D.Block level. However, at village level 'Male Literacy Rate' comes into prominence as a determinant of 'Economic Development'. At municipal level however, a completely different picture comes out in which the role of 'Total Literacy Rate' and of 'Female Literacy Rate' is crystal clear. As a matter of fact, 'Female Literacy Rate' exerts a profound impact on the 'Economic Development' of different wards of Siliguri

Municipal Corporation, Jalpaiguri municipality and Raiganj municipality. In English Bazar and Koch Bihar municipalities on the other hand, 'Total Literacy Rate' has the upper hand against all other 'Literacy Rates' so far as 'Economic Development' are concerned. Thus it is established beyond doubt that different rates of literacy play their respective roles in 'Economic Development' at different levels in North Bengal. It has been noted earlier that among the districts of North Bengal, Uttar Dinajpur and Maldah districts have low 'Rural Literacy Rates'. Similarly, it has been further observed that sixteen out of sixty nine C.D.Blocks have low 'Rural Literacy Rates'. It is therefore imperative that in these districts as well as the C.D.Blocks 'Rural literacy Rate' should be improved. As a matter of fact the emphasis should be placed on those blocks having 'Rural Literacy Rates' as well as being included in the districts having also low 'Rural Literacy Rate'. That is to say instead of taking into account the entire district as a whole, attention should be paid only those C.D.Blocks which have low 'Rural Literacy Rates' in the district. Thus the C.D.Blocks demanding attention for improvement of 'Rural Literacy Rate' in different districts may be listed as follows:

Districts and C.D. Blocks having Low Rural Literacy Rate

<i>Districts having Low (42.90% – 51.57%) Rural Literacy Rate</i>	<i>C.D. Blocks having Low (24.25% - 39.20%) Rural Literacy Rate</i>
Uttar Dinajpur	Chopra, Islampur, Goalpokhar-I, Goalpokhar-II, Karandighi, Itahar.
Maldah	Harishchandrapur-I, Harishchandrapur-II, Chanchal-II, Ratua-I, Ratua-II, Habibpur, Maldah(Old), Manikchak, Kaliachak-I, Kaliachak-II.

Source: Prepared by the Author

Table Number: 8.1

At village level, the analysis has been carried out on the basis of sampled villages out of the list of villages provided in the 'District Census Hand Books' of different districts of North Bengal according to 2001 census. For these purpose, slightly more than 10% of C.D.Blocks were sampled from which again 1% of villages was sampled, resulting in eighty three villages included in the sample. In the analysis it has been

observed that 'Male Literacy Rate' dominates over all other 'Literacy Rates' indictating the 'Economic Development' of the villages. Rural economy is mainly primitive economy involving gathering, grazing and domestication of plants and animals that require physical labour. Therefore the role of male members of the family in its economic status is vital. However, so long as the economy of a village remains primitive its 'Economic Development' remains stagnant. Therefore economic enlistment of any village requires transformation in the occupational structure of the males, which in turn demands education. Therefore it is suggested that at village level emphasis should be laid on improvement of 'Male Literacy Rate'.

So far as the impact of 'Literacy Rates' on 'Economic Development' at municipal level is concerned it has already been pointed out the 'Female Literacy Rate' dominates in Siliguri Municipal Corporation, Jalpaiguri municipality and Raiganj municipality. In urban areas female members of the family obtain ample opportunities for earning from different sources other than being in service. Therefore female education unfolds ample scope for being engaged in different types of activities, which in turn results in economic prosperity of the family. The municipality wise numbers of wards are as follows that require upliftment of 'Female Literacy Rate'.

Wards having Female Literacy Rate below the Municipality Average

<i>Name of Municipality</i>	<i>Ward Numbers having Female Literacy Rate below the Municipality Average</i>
Siliguri Municipal Corporation	1, 4, 5, 7, 18, 20, 28, 34, 35, 42 & 46.
Jalpaiguri Municipality	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 18, 21, 22 & 23.
Raiganj Municipality	1, 3, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15 & 20.

Source: Prepared by the Author

Table Number: 8.2

In the remaining two municipalities i.e. Koch Bihar and English Bazar 'Total Literacy Rate' dictates their 'Economic Development'. Therefore it is recommended that over all 'Literacy Rate' should be improved in the following wards (*Table Number: 8.3*) of two municipalities.

Wards having Total Literacy Rate below the Municipality Average

<i>Name of Municipality</i>	<i>Ward Numbers having Total Literacy Rate below the Municipality Average</i>
Koch Bihar Municipality	2, 6, 12, 13 & 19
English Bazar Municipality	1, 2, 8, 9, 13, 15, 23 & 25.

Source: Prepared by the Author

Table Number: 8.3

Against these backgrounds it is now appropriate to identify the gap between 'National' and 'State Educational Policies' and their implementation. Broadly speaking, the larger the gap between the formulation of policies either at central or at state level and their execution the smaller the 'Educational Development' and vice-versa. So far as the 'Mid-day Meal' program as concerned it has been executed in almost all the schools of North Bengal up to class VIII level. It is recommended that this upper limit may be extended at least up to secondary level taking into account the extreme poverty of the region as well as the possibility of attraction more boys and girls to school education through such ventures. Similarly, 'National Literacy Mission' has not been implemented uniformly throughout North Bengal. It is observed that these program be specifically intensified in Jalpaiguri and Maldah district. The worst condition however is noted in case of 'Eklabya Model School' because out of 69 C.D.Blocks in North Bengal only one C.D.Block, namely, Mirik of Darjiling district one such model School has been established. Not to speak of 'Secondary Education' only even in 'Primary Education' 'Anganwadi' project has been implemented in some percent of villages. It is worth mentioning here that at C.D.Block level 'Rural Literacy Rate' is highly associated of 'Number of Primary Schools Per Lakh Population. That is to say for 'Anganwadi' project to implemented properly, 'Number of Primary Schools per Lakh Population' in respected to C.D.Blocks should also be increased accordingly. Another important point to mention here that a large number (9.88%) of populations of this region are 'Scheduled Tribe' having their own tribal language face a lot of difficulties to read in Hindi, English or Bengali medium schools as these are not their mother tongue. Specially, the primary students can not get any help form their illiterate parents. To eradicate this problem books

should be published in those languages at least terminology of tribal languages should be given in Hindi, English or Bengali books should be published by government.

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