

## CHAPTER III

### EDUCATION POLICIES IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

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Here in this chapter we will try to concentrate our attention and discuss the educational policies mostly taken and perused in the modern period. The term 'modern', however, is relative. Advent of the modern era is differed from country to country in respect of time. Modern age on the continent is calculated with effect from 1453 A.D. when India was very much medieval. Actually, the concept of modernity depends upon and is characterized by certain social, economic and political characteristics and value systems in our discussion of the major educational policies taken in different times since the beginning of the effort of the varied Christian Missionaries till the latest policy resolution of government of India, the Ashok Mitra Commission Report in West Bengal and the various policy decisions in recent years on education by the Left Front Government.

New elements in education can be traced back immediately with the arrival of different western colonial powers. Christian Missionaries came to India along with the European trading companies. The historians admitted the downfall of the Mughal Empire after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D., the end of medieval period as well as the beginning of modern period in history. The new era witnessed the growth of a new economic pattern, a commercial monetary economy, and the development of new social values, new education and a new political pattern. Missionaries of 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> centuries provided a link between medieval education and modern education and helped the transition from the former to the latter.

The Christian Missionaries were the pioneer in the history of the spread of education in India to direct education with a particular mission and aim to fit in with the emerging and changing socio-economic and political environment. The reason behind coming to India by Christian Missionaries and the imperial powers were more or less the same and

happened almost simultaneously. But their aims and perspectives were not the same. Vasco-da-Gama discovered the sea-route to India in 1498 A.D. It is said, when he was asked 'why have you come to India?' He replied to find Christians and spices'. Although the missionaries and imperial forces were working in India keeping good liaison with each other, but their aims and perspectives were different. The imperial forces tendered their aid to missionaries to fulfill their spicy game and make spicier by getting some Christian friends within the fold of natives. On the other hand, missionaries tried to see more Christians for their ecclesiastical benefit and in their spree of getting to baptize more natives they would get help and aid from the martial power holders of imperial forces. Professor Mohinimohan Pan observed the arrival of the Europeans in his masterly work: Bharater Siksher Itihas in the above mentioned way.

Undoubtedly, the Christian Missionaries and the imperial powers landed on the coast of India more or less at the same time but they had a basic difference in their aims and perspectives. But this does not prove that they did not need each other's absolute help. The martial prowess of the imperialists aided the Christian Missionaries in their zeal for baptizing more natives into Christianity, thus helping the imperialists to have a firmer hold on the natives as a commercial power leading to achieve political supremacy.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a spate of missionary activities. The reason behind this spate of missionary activities throughout the world was due to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation among Christian missionary. The different geographical discoveries brought a new light to spread their dogmas and both the camps staked everything to secure new adherents. Hence missionaries spread out in all directions along with merchant companies.

Thus merchants and missionaries entered into the vast global field and particularly the subcontinent of India. Occasionally they worked together and occasionally they were separated. Yet, successes of one

directly or indirectly helped the other. They were, therefore, mutual benefactors. The missionaries infused a new religion and a new culture. The merchants infused a new economic relationship. Directly or indirectly this process prepared the ground for the establishment of British hegemony in India. The missionaries function as religious and cultural vanguard. The political and economic spearheads upheld the 'Whiteman's burden'<sup>1</sup>.

The merchant ships boarded missionaries apparently to serve the daily religious rituals and also to impart education to the children of the navigators during the voyages. It is hard to believe that this missionary educational endeavour was completely based on immaterial gains. History during this period requires keen attention. It depicts most clearly that the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French East India Companies brought along with them missionaries. These missionaries took extraordinary educational efforts including spread of Christianity among the natives. But the annihilation of their different 'kuthis' made for trade and business immediately resulted into the virtual collapse of their religious and educational functioning in India. It cannot be denied that the French East India Company entered into a political and commercial venture in right earnest with the far-flung dream of a French Empire in India. In their educational enterprise, they imitated the Portuguese by and large. The first mark of the spread of literal education can be found in them.

But the misfortune of the French led to the fortune of the English. The Goddess of Victory favoured the English and of the practical purposes the French had to withdraw. The concept of liberal thinking fully swept the whole of Europe as a direct influence of Renaissance. But the later phase of Indian subcontinent eagerly noticed and experienced the use and misuse of the liberal thinking of the British model or type.

That model of education began with "The Minute of Lord T.B. Macaulay 1835" was accepted by Lord William Bentinck. He endorsed it by writing one line beneath it, "I gave my entire concurrence to the

sentiments expressed in the minute". Professor J.C. Aggarwal commented: "The Resolution of March 1835 eventually determined the aim, content and medium of instruction of India. Promotion of Western Sciences, and Arts was acknowledged as the avowed object of the British Government in India"<sup>2</sup>.

The heydays of the missionaries came to an end after the English Victory in Plassey. Plassey did not lay the foundation of the British sovereignty in India but took the trend of history to the inevitable development. Thus the British Company became highly sensitive not to lead the situation out of their control to invite the French and the Dutch to take the advantage of British predicament. The Company, therefore, began to adopt measures to guarantee that there was no over zeal of the missionaries. The company discarded those functioning of the missionaries who might affect Indian sensitiveness in matters of religion, culture, education and customs. The company, specially, after 1765 wanted to pose as the champion and custodian to preserve Hindu and Muslim culture, education and traditions for their political and economic interests as it is observed by Syed Sahideullah in his work: Siksa O Shreni Samparka. The spate of educational endeavors by the Christian missionaries and the attitude of the British East India Company demands special attention. The attitude of the Company was entirely self motivated. In the ambitious political policies of the British Company, we perceive that they played contradictory role in their attitude toward the Christian evangelist's role. For example, Robert Clive invited Kiernander, who established a charity school at Port St. David, and he was also a S.P.C.K. employee, in Calcutta in the year 1758. Again that company after 1765 deferred and discarded the overzealous missionary activities for the sake of their political benefit and with a mind to perpetuate their same mission in India. Secondly, the far reaching affect of the policies adapted by the early British occupants ultimately influenced the whole educational policies in India during the entire British regime. The Company from the very initial stage avoided to resume direct responsibility to carry out the educational effort rather they encouraged

the missionaries to go ahead with it. Although in the latter half, we find, the Company was taking the responsibility of the spread of education in India, but the amount they were ready to spend was too meager to meet the colossal demands. Although the rules of liberal thinking was prevalent in educational world but where the policy science is concerned it discouraged the primary education for all or mass-education, which the early missionaries tried to spread in all respect. The new policy of the alien rulers gave birth to keeping allegiance with new economic stratification a newly vaunted and enlightened liberal educated elite class. The rest of the history of the educational policies in India is the history of class conflict, explicit or implicit.

The crux of the early educational policy of the East India Company can be aptly put into a nutshell through the views and analysis of a few eminent thinkers.

According to Sayed Sahidullah who said that it is well known that the East India Company did not allow the Christian missionaries in India, nor did they allow them to introduce a modern educational system. But Marx revealed a different light about this policy of the British. The nascent and ambitious industrialists were gradually emerging as a dominating force in England, so they needed Indian raw materials for their industrial productions and the Indian market for their finished products.

To execute the economic and political policy the British imbibed a minimum form of English Education for practical, profitable purpose. In this context the comment of Arthur Mayhew is note-worthy, "There was also the talk of development of the material resources of the country and the training required for the essential western work". Mayhew further says that "the British also introduced a higher liberal, western education to churn out a new clerks and Hakims who would help them in administration and also encouraged primary education to foster the growth of raw materials"<sup>3</sup>.

The famous historian R.C. Mazumdar, citing a few, example of benevolent Europeans in India tried to prove that the mobilization behind the British introduction of the liberal education policy to a certain extent was not solely commercial.

This view cannot be wholly supported because the East India Company in India only executed the formulated policies already adopted by the Board of Directors, seated in London.

Actually, the distinct policy made under the guideline of Macaulay was the famous percolate down theory or downward infiltration theory which sought, to express the content in the language of Macaulay: "To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population"<sup>4</sup>. Syed Sahedullah quipped that "If the system of education bestowed upon this particular section, they would carry out their national role to take education even at the lower strata of the society"<sup>5</sup>. But the motivation of the East India Company can be realized more clearly by Macaulay's Bill Report where he stressed unambiguously: "We do not at present aim at giving education directly to the lower classes... We aim at raising an educated class which will, hereafter, as we hope, be the means of diffusing among their countrymen some portion of knowledge we have imparted to them"<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, directly or indirectly this was also the common attitude of the educated servants among Indians. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar cited the problem of mass-education in this light: "As the best if not the only practicable means of promoting education in Bengal, the Government should, in my humble opinion confine itself to the education of the higher classes on a comprehensive scale"<sup>7</sup>. The emphasis of such argument of spread only higher education as he expressed in his letter to Charles Grant are as follows: "By educating one boy in a proper style the Government does more towards the real education of the people, than by teaching a hundred children here reading, writing and a little arithmetic.

To educate a whole people is certainly very desirable, but this is a task which it is doubtful whether any government can undertake or fulfill...<sup>8</sup>.

An extract from the Report of the Saddler Commission can focus light on the classes who were mostly benefited from the liberal education system, "... It is not yet from the agricultural classes any more from the commercial and petty industrial classes that the eager demand for educational opportunities has come, ... The classes whose sons came and filled the institutions to the brim were the middle or the professional classes commonly known as the *bhadralok*; and it is their needs and their traditions, which have in turn dictated the character of the University development in Bengal..."<sup>9</sup> The German philosopher of Hegelian model ridiculed the Indian emerging middle class educated people as "...As Trietschke, the great German apostle of blood and iron, said a few years back with a sneer: "Clerks of good family are only found in India, if at all..."<sup>10</sup>.

However, although there had been sufficient base for the further spread of elementary or primary education in India, the typical Indian class-structure nipped the scope in the bud. One statistical report from Adams' report shows: "... Burdwan with a population of 81,17,580 had altogether 931 schools (630 Bengali, 190 Sanskrit, 93 Persian, 1 Arabic and 3 English, 4 for girls) with 15,814 scholars including 175 girls studying in them..."<sup>11</sup>

The famous German ideologist Max-Muller also quipped "... Max-Muller on the strength of official documents and missionary report concerning education in Bengal prior to the British occupation asserts that there were 80,000 native schools in Bengal one for every 4000 ..." <sup>12</sup>. The Wood's Dispatch which initiated the destruction of indigenous education system, on the other hand laid finally the foundation stone of imperial administration and economic powers. The reflection of this imperial attitude is quite implicitly available in the confession in the Hunter Commissions Report: "The Government of India warned the Commission that in providing for the extension of primary schools the

limitations upon the action of the government by financial consideration should always be borne in mind"<sup>13</sup>.

## II

By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at this back-drop of Indian education system, the people of India consolidated the struggle against the imperial as well as feudal exploitation and rule in the different parts of the country. At the same time a section of enlightened people demanded for freedom and urged the people and government to come out from the economic backwardness. In a word, the Indian freedom struggle movement was taking its clear shape and language.

Just beside this we find the National Education Movement was spreading. Lord Curzon appointed "the Indian University Commissions in 1902 to enquire into the conditions and prospects of the Universities established in British India. The recommendations of the Commission did not aim at any basic structural change, but merely at the 'rehabilitation and the strengthening of the existing system"<sup>14</sup>. The Education policy of 1904 had rejected the idea of establishing new Universities. Secondary education was brought under more direct control of Universalities. As we have said earlier that the Nationalist movement for freedom gained momentum during the period. It further accentuated with crucial motivation of the Lord Curzon led government to cripple the nascent Indian nationalist freedom struggle. Thus at this period, education was taken as a major issue by the then Indian leaders. Nationalist leaders vehemently opposed the control of Indian education by foreigners. "The exiting system of education was planned to develop loyalty to British rule. The leaders pleaded that education should develop the nationalist character"<sup>15</sup>. The Indian Education Commission of 1903 gave a report on University Education in India. As a result, the Indian University Act was passed in 1904, and the Government of India passed the well-known Resolution on the Indian Education policy in which primary education was bestowed upon the provincial governments; D.P.I. had been made more active and powerful to fix up the educational budget; proposals

were kept to open more libraries, Colleges and to facilitate the teachers' training programmes; it also limited the size of the Senate to elevate the standard of affiliated colleges.

But the most important side of 1904 Indian Education Policy was that "it emphasized the necessity of adjusting technical education to the need of Indian industry and granting scholarships to the students to undergo training in Europe and America<sup>16</sup>. It was certainly a step forward from the part of the British administration in India to facilitate the industrial growth for the national interest of their own as well as to the rising demands of the nationalist bourgeoisie in India. The opinion of the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1823 was the beginning of this policy. "It wanted to win the confidence of the educated and influential classes, by encouraging the learning and literature that they respected ... it would be best to apply the funds to the higher education of the upper classes as distinguished from the general elementary education of the masses"<sup>17</sup>. Although the nationalist movement gained a new direction as well as a new momentum the nationalist movement had brought the question of mass-education to the fore-front. This national education movement tried to develop the importance of mother-tongue, in place of English, to instigate the nationalistic zeal, demanding education for all, and also demanding for technical education to create among Indians skilled hands for future industrialization. Among the fore-runners of this national education movement were Sri Satish Mukhopadhyaya, Rabindranath Tagore, Arabindo Ghosh, Profulla Ch. Roy etc. They even took the steps to establish "National Schools" too. Names like Jagannath Shankar Seth, Jotiba Govindo Rao Phulle, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Ch. Paul and Bal Gangadhar Tilak are also most important in this respect. The epoch making initiative taken by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, "the outstanding Indian Leader was resolved to force the Government to accept the principle of free and compulsory education"<sup>18</sup>. As a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, "Gokhale moved a Resolution to establish this principle in 1910. That this council recommends that beginning should be made in the direction of making

elementary education free and compulsory throughout and that a united commission of officials and non-officials to be appointed at an early date to frame deficit proposals. Though Gokhale failed to move the Government, he was successful in obtaining the support of the Indians in working for mass-education"<sup>19</sup>. But this noble intention and endeavour was betrayed by a section of people among Indians. Later Lajput Rai wrote in one article: "Universal education should be arranged by the state and education expenditure should be made highest among all the state expenditures"<sup>20</sup>.

The intention of the British Government in funding least for education was not inexplicit. But the support from the one, privileged group of people from among the Indians was also not explicit. Marx wrote "... From the Indian native reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta under English Superintendents, a fresh class is springing, endowed with the requirement for Government and imbued with European Science..."<sup>21</sup>. It is correct that British administration in India, from the very beginning was highly reluctant to spend money. The Hunter Commission Report in 1882 categorically" advocated a policy of gradual withdrawal of the Government from direct enterprise leaving the secondary schools to private agencies..."<sup>22</sup>. The information we receive immediately after the British left the country was utterly deplorable. The opening balance, when the British Government finally left our country, gives us this shabby picture of Indian education. Despite their well-articulated system of education for about a century (1854-1947) and their solicitude for the rapid promotion of education in India, our opening balance, on eve of freedom, in every sector of education was extremely meager and disappointing. Little attention was paid to pre-primary education. The Report said, "For the first time, its importance was emphasized in the Sergeant Report of 1944... It, however, remained only an idea when India became free. The total enrolment in the age-group 6-11 was 141 lakhs, which means hardly 35 per cent in this age group in the primary schools. There were 50,000 secondary schools with enrolment of 8,70,000 or 4 per cent of the children of the 14-17 age group. The 19 Universities and 400

colleges had an enrolment of 2,50,000. The total expenditure was Rs. 57 crores or 0.5 per cent of the total revenue of the government”<sup>23</sup>. The one plus point of the British education policy was that they never hid their motives to spread western liberal education in India. During the tussle between orientalist and occidentalists finally the Company tilted its support for the liberal education policy. Lord William Bentinck’s Government in 1835 outlined the policy of the British clearly: “We want a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinion, in morals and in intellect. The epithet ‘learned native of India’ could only be applied to a person versed in the philosophy of Locke or the poetry of Milton and that the objective of promoting a knowledge of sciences could only be accomplished by the adoption of English as the medium of instruction”<sup>24</sup>. Again while endorsing the views of Macaulay, Bentinck issued a proclamation: “The great object of the British Government would, henceforth, be the promotion of European literature and science through the medium of English and that the government funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone”<sup>25</sup>.

This proclamation had far-reaching consequences. It gave rise to two castes in a caste-ridden society of India – ‘English-knowing caste and non-English – knowing man or people’. Also, knowledge of English language became a prominent cause of the growth of Indian Nationalism. In the words of Mayhew, “it helped India linguistically to find herself. Indians till 1880 or beyond proved themselves on out-Macaulaying”<sup>26</sup>.

We cannot deny that English liberal education, on the one hand, was a key factor of Indian Nationalism. On the other hand, were all the India nationalists on out-Macaulaying’ themselves. Sambad Prabhakar, a leading Bengali newspaper, during that period gave us some flash of editorial comments: “... The responsibility of the agricultural field lies on the ignorant, illiterate and poor peasantry ... They failed to develop the agro-production due to lack of knowledge, lack of education and also lack of fund appropriation ... But unless and until the educated sections of our society will not interfere and involve themselves in this productive

sectors the conditions will remain as same as before ... There is need for scientific knowledge on agriculture and this scientific knowledge should be imparted to sons of educated sections of our society"<sup>27</sup>. It should be noted that the editor suggested imparting agricultural education in place of primary education.

### III

The need for a National education policy was thoroughly ignored almost in all the commission reports. A step-motherly attitude was most convincingly found under Diarchy, "Reserve Subjects" gone under the direct responsibility of the Government whereas education, a "transferred subject" became the direct responsibility of the powerless and penniless Indian ministers specially during the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1929 under the leadership of Sir Philip Hertog a Committee was established. This famous Hertog Committee pointed to the dilution of quality but actually deterred its speed. The subject matter of education was first broadly thought of in national perspective during the period of provincial autonomy. But they could not fortify due to their fractional staying at government (1937-39, 1946-47). The abortive Abbot-Wood Report (1936-37) also suggested about technical education but kept mum on the question of National Education. Although just before the final departure of the British from India the Sergeant Report of 1944 put forth the ideals of Education policy which they never implemented but now at the verge of their final departure they solemnly suggested "It recommended universal, compulsory and free primary education for all between the ages of six and fourteen"<sup>28</sup>.

A pertinent question would certainly come to our minds that in the last education report the British government in India recognized and consented on the universal educational right and free primary education. The Indian Nationalist leaders were also eloquent to this point to implement it. But why did the Government of India showed reluctance and ignore all through to introduce a national education policy?

One section of liberally educated Indian leadership felt for its need in our national resurgence. The demand for 'National Education' in due course got political recognition. In the year 1906 under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak the demand for a 'National Education Policy' was passed by the plenary of the Congress in Calcutta. Gandhiji also took the point of backwardness of education sector in India to the Round Table Summit in 1931 in London. As a result of it politically it got a special importance. In course of time Gandhiji endeavoured to form a plan on Education. "This new educational plan is famous in the name of 'Nei Talim'<sup>29</sup>.

But we should keep in mind that "the suggestions and ideals put forth by different Indian personalities were not alike in their point. And it is a natural offshoot because the interest and specially class interest of these leaders were else not alike"<sup>30</sup>. In 1929 in the discussion on a Bill on Rural Primary Education in the Provincial Legislative Council of Undivided Bengal, a section of Zaminders of Bengal vehemently opposed the Bill. They went against the 'education cesses on Zaminders. That move was basically against the spread of education among the poor peasantry. Some of the proceedings and editorial comments may disclose the strength of the British power in India not to universalize the mass-education rather simply stressed on the liberal ideals amongst a handful of educated people almost all belonging to the upper strata of the society. Bhabesh Moitra has observed in his work: Shiksha Prasange.

Council debates on Bengal Rural Primary Education Bill:

Extract from proceedings 5<sup>th</sup> August to 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1946:

The first move originated from a resolution, on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1946. Maulavi Rajibuddin Tarafdar moved a resolution demanding immediate introduction of Primary Education. Surendranath Ray supported the resolution. Government proposed amendment, suggesting substitution "with as little delay" for "immediately" implementing the Resolution, and ultimately it was passed:

"The council recommends to the Government that steps be taken with as little delay as possible for the inauguration of a system of free and compulsory primary education in Bengal"<sup>31</sup>

The Bill was the Government's response, whatever its character, to the said resolution.

The Congress spokesman quipped "to oppose the motion for the consideration of the Bill and to object to the principle underlying the Bill" said: "We are not prepared until other sources of indirect taxation have been explored to burden ourselves with further taxation and a taxation one-fifth of which is to be paid by poor agriculturists and the entire amount of which are to be paid into the public treasury by rent receivers big on small whether they are able to collect the rent from tenants or not, ... Now, sir, it is quite well known that life in the urban areas is much more strenuous than the simple life in the rural area and there is no necessity to accentuate the intelligence of the boys and girls there ..."<sup>32</sup>.

Sir J.L. Banerjee: "The select committee made a change, they altered the proportions. But the Government's love for the Zamindar is unbounded. It has accepted every other suggestion of the Committee but so far as this most just and righteous proposal is concerned they have turned it down once again and have quietly gone back to the original proposal of 4 piece upon the tenant and 1 piece on the landlord. Some distinguished gentleman of the Swaraj Party have gone even further; they have suggested that even this one piece upon the landlord is too much and that the entire cess must fall on the tenant. Yes, the whole burden must fall upon the tenant for have they not got backs which are sufficiently broad and therefore, fit to be crushed whatever additional taxation may be put on them?"<sup>33</sup>

Shir J.M. Sengupta stated: "It would be a very deplorable state of affairs in the province of Bengal if we have one policy followed with regard to education in urban area and another followed by a different set of man in the rural areas in which case there would be two kinds of children

growing up most probably with perfectly different and opposite mental outlook"<sup>34</sup>.

Shri Ranjit Pal Chowdhury (Congressman, a Zamindar) raising his support of the Congress motion of opposing the Bill, said "... Indeed landed aristocracy notwithstanding all these unwanted circumstances have hitherto stood firmly by the standard of loyalty but I fear they may have to break away essentially if too much stress is put upon them indirectly"<sup>35</sup>.

Mr. Azizul Haq (later member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, author of 'The man behind the Plough') in his speech refers to an educational conference in Bogra in 1908 which 'demanded' primary education for the masses and were even prepared to be taxed for this purpose the mussalmans suggested that even if it were not considered possible to tax the entire community the mussalmans along ought to be taxed - (vide Council proceedings August, 1930).

Shri Sarat Chandra Pal moving that "The collection of any education cess in excess of the cultivating ryot's share shall be illegal" said: "Sir, there are many influential landlords in Bengal excepting some benevolent landlords many of whom are against the imposition of primary education cess and as the Bill is going to be passed into law in the teeth of their opposition it is not unnatural to think that as the landlords are interested with the duty of realizing education cess they or their rent collectors may take advantages of the law and being the protector of the helpless illiterate ryot may realize the whole education cess from them..."<sup>36</sup>.

The reaction of the common masses can also be traced back amidst the additional comments on the subject. In 'Bengal Co-operative Journal' we find some letters. One of such letter depicts: "Primary education in order to be effective, should be free and compulsory ... A large number of students should come from all over the province but students will not be forthcoming if primary education is not made compulsory"<sup>37</sup>.

In opposition to Modern Review published in the note of Shri Ramananda Chatterjee it has been said by him and other – that as it would not be possible to make the Government of India abstain from swallowing in future what extra-large amount it appropriates from Bengal there is no means left for the Bengalees to get universal education except fresh taxes.... It may be said Bengal may get back her own in some distant or near future, till then, Are the Children here to grow up into illiterate and ignorant masses in the meantime? Not necessarily, if, as Mr. Nazimuddin says, the Bengal farmers and ryots are willing and eager to pay cess for the education of their children why cannot they and their leaders from education committee in each village, tax themselves, collect such tax and have and manage their own school? Such an endeavour would result in those who pay the piper also calling the tune...<sup>38</sup>.

Yet why did the Government through the Sergeant Report give a clear chit for universal, compulsory and free primary education for all between the ages of six and fourteen? The reason does not remain unclear. The motion of G.K. Gokhale in March 1910 in the imperial council had been withdrawn on an assurance from the Government that the demand would be considered sympathetically. But sympathy was never shown. But a strange feeling erupts immediately when in 1944 government suggested the above requirements in the arena of education. The change in the attitude of the Government can be understood to a good extent through some relevant information of Report of the Industrial commissions. Extracts from one of such shows: "Para 142. A factor which has tended in the past to delay the progress of industrial development has been the ignorance and conservatism of the uneducated workmen. The evidence tendered by employers was almost universally in favour of both skilled and unskilled that had at best revived a primary education. This is given in countries with which India will have to compete and is a sine qua non in this country also. This (i.e. providing education) is a duty which, we think, properly developed on local authorities and the government"<sup>39</sup>. In this regards the rapid expansion of primary education, "The decade following year 1921, was a rapid expansion of education,

especially at the primary level ...<sup>40</sup> and also the suggestion of the Hartog Committee of 1929 emphasized on "... the introduction of diversified curricula at the secondary level and placed more emphasis on industrial and commercial subjects... The committee drew the attention of the authorities to the problems of stagnation and wastage, the disparity in literacy between men and women ... lack of industrial and vocational training"<sup>41</sup> so that students could prepare for practical occupation. It was resounded in the Report of the Fiscal Commission 1921-22. It stressed: "Para 122. The Industrial Commission pointed out that 'a factor which has tended in the past to delay the progress of the Indian industrial development has been the ignorance and conservatism of the uneducated workmen and we wish to lay stress upon the indisputable truth of the statement. The quality of Indian labour can be raised by an improvement in the education of the labourer which will lead to a higher standard of intelligence and a higher standard of living. We feel that the type of primary education at present given in India is not always suitable to the development of efficient industrial population. We would suggest that the primary school curriculum should include some form of manual training and that the education system should be devoted for more than at present to awakening of an interest in the mechanical pursuit. If a more practical and industrial turn can be given to primary education, the difficulty to which we have already referred in regard to the supply of industrial labour would be likely diminish"<sup>42</sup>.

But a most pertinent question comes when land-holding sections of our society at that time was very powerful, still how did nascent Indian bourgeoisie able to influence the British administration? The second important question; what was their 'real' "interest in mechanical pursuit in India" and 'actual' image of their economic "difficulty"?

In those period when Bengal Government asked Mr. Bill on 3<sup>rd</sup> August of 1920 to place on the advancement of education. Mr. Bill put forth his report on 31<sup>st</sup> March of 1921 where he mentioned 'the valid' reasons of those who went against the 'too much' of spread of education "it is not necessary to accentuate the intelligence of the rural people".

One of the Bengal Administration Reports said: "If peasantry starts reading and writing and start thinking, then they will be trapped by the immoral propagandist. It would be gross indulgence to foolishness' to agitated proletariat with the agitated middle class". Apart from this Mr. Bliss understood well without quoting French Philosopher Denis Diderot, "to deceive an educated peasant is a more difficult task then deceiving an uneducated one"<sup>43</sup>.

Our conjecture can be substantiated with some relevant references from different countries the stage conducive for elementary education: "... Elementary Education in Britain it was made compulsory in 1870, admittedly to increase the competitive power of British Industry..."<sup>44</sup>.

The introduction of elementary education in Great Britain became prominent in the statement of Sir I.A.R. Marriott. He said in his masterly work "Modern England", "... In 1891 a still greater change was effected. The fees paid by parents were abolished and the state undertook to make good deficiency - Thus elementary education became not merely compulsory but gratuitous ..."<sup>45</sup>. The Historians' History of the World shows: "...The ministry of 1886 which endured till 1892 ... Made elementary education free throughout England. The alliance with the liberal unionists was, in fact, compelling the conservative government to promote measures which were not wholly consistent with wholly conservative traditions or urges..."<sup>46</sup>. The reason for compulsory elementary education and why it was introduced in Britain as a first-forward measure can be identified in Brigg and Jordon's writings. They say: By 1870 the need for technical education was much more urgent than in 1840 and it was obvious that technical instruction could not be given to persons ignorant of the rudiments of a general education.

Moreover, our industrial and economic supremacy was beginning to be challenged both on the continent of Europe and the new World.

Throughout people of all parties and beliefs began to see clearly that it was necessary to educate to some extent at least, if we were to

survive the struggle for existence between nations. These ideas and believes paved the way for national education"<sup>47</sup>.

#### IV

The spear of education is more sharer than the ignorant powerful militia. The spate of the advancement of little Prussia was such an example. "...The noteworthy advance which Prussia, for example, had made since the beginning of the century and her recent success in war against French was attributed as much to her educational system as to her military organization..."<sup>48</sup>. The interesting aspect of the capitalist industrial development is that it never unifies neither capitals nor the capitalists in the broad framework of liberalism. In capitalist development envy is the moot point not the liberal mindedness in the least. The immediate success of Germany under Prussia instigated France to follow the same trend. The trend setter Frederick William I of Prussia "ordered all children to attend school where school existed in 1717..."<sup>49</sup>. An article in the Punch, September 21, 1966 by A.D.C. Peterson on the nature of snobbery in education foretold the French 'Merchants' the need for liberal education. Thus, "The Constitution of 1791 provides that Primary education should be compulsory and free....

The wars of 1866 and 1870 were victories of the Prussian School master and aroused western part of Europe to the importance of popular education. For France the reform of popular education was essentially part of national restoration.

The laws making primary education gratuitous, compulsory and secular are in dissolutely associated with the name of Ferry. The law of 1888 abolished fees in all primary schools and training college, the law of 1882 established compulsory attendance and finally the law of October 30, 1886 enacted that none but lay persons should teach in the public schools all distinctively religious teaching"<sup>50</sup>.

Our attention is drawn to one aspect of Internal Trade. A general question evolves why country exports a particular commodity to other country and also why one country imports one commodity from a

particular country? The answer lies on the "principle of comparative advantage or cost". But this one-time axiomatic theory of International Trade became descended by the rise of Germany and the U.S.A. "To cope with the challenge of international trade with England they were provided appropriate education, provided training to develop skilled manpower which on the turn proved the 'principle of comparative advantage or cost notwithstanding with the changing scenario of modern economy'<sup>51</sup>. The reason behind the introduction of English liberal education in India becomes more explicit in the words of Professor F.W. Taussig. He depicted and analyzed the sufficient cause of the introduction of liberal education in their country and elsewhere as it a subject-matter of world-wide economic phenomenon. He said "... while International Trade is not likely to modify the alignment of grades within a country, peculiarities in that alignment may affect international trade. I will call attention to one or two instance in which this sort of influence seems to have appeared, departing for the moment from the general plan of this book under which illustration and verification have been relegated to the later chapter.

The first illustration comes from the history and position of the chemical industry of Germany. I speak of the situation as it was of 1914-18; what happened in Germany in the years immediately after the war is too confused for the illustration of the forces ordinarily a work in international trade. Before, 1914, as is well known chemical industries and especially those yielding highly elaborated coal for products, were more successfully carried on in Germany than in any other country. Coal for dyes and drugs were supplied to England and the Unites State from Germany; the domestic output in these countries was negligible. Other countries also were supplied by German imports, though not as preponderantly as the two English speaking countries. The Germans evidently had some advantage in making these things. Was it a comparative advantage? Certainly not of a particular kind of labour that of chemists and chemists' skilled assistants. "Germany had a learned proletariat. The excellence and easy access of technological education and the powerful social forces which attracted large numbers from the

middle classes into the learned professions brought about a large supply at a low remuneration of highly trained chemist. Similar excellence of intermediate education supplied to their officers – a capable non-commissioned staff (to use a military analogy) there was a supply of exact careful assistant and workmen also paid at rates low in comparison to those of other countries ... The special cheapness of the types of labour needed an unusual degree in the industry served to give it a comparative advantage – i.e. an advantage in the pecuniary terms which are decisive in the market. And the advantage doubtless was not confined to the coal for other chemical industries. It was probably general. It appeared in scientific industries of other kinds, such as for example the making of optical instruments, surgical instrument's laboratory, apparatus. Not one industry only but a considerable number of German industries similar in character were given a place of their own in international trade because of the especial position in Germany of the grade of labours needed for their products..."<sup>52</sup>.

#### **Analysis of the Educational Policies in the Post-Independence Period:**

"Long year ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of mid-night hours, when the world sleeps, India will awake of life and freedom". With these eloquent words on the historic night of August 14, 1947, Shree Jawaharlal Nehru signaled free India's journey into an unknown future. India stepped out from the old to the new ... The Indian nation long suppressed, "awoke to life and freedom".

"For redeeming the pledge substantially", new objectives and new obligations were outlined – India decided to be an effective democracy. This fact alone underlined the vital as well as pivotal role of education in the national development. "Educate your masters" became the slogan of the resurgent nation. This culminated in making liberal provisions in the Indian Constitution. Syed Sahidullah observed this in his work.

After independence we started with a burst of enthusiasm with the expectation that all our aspirations would be fulfilled and internal and external problems of education will be solved. But, what we inherited and what would be our basic and new objectives?

1. We had inherited a colonial system of education established by the British rulers to facilitate their exploitation and to produce efficient servants of probity. Free India needs to change the very nature and objectives of education in keeping with the national aspiration of a democratic republic advancing with national urge for all round progress.
2. The unscientific curriculum for the then education had no relation with life situation. The methods of instruction were old and traditional. Entire school life, including syllabi, instructions and administration was dedicated by the nightmare of examination. This should be changed.
3. Technical and vocational education had been ill developed. The few institutions that existed had not attained due social status. Individual difference and needs of diversified education were least attended to.
4. There was no state obligation to provide education for all the citizens. Even primary education was not universal or compulsory or free. Expansion of education had been throttled by a thousand devices. Religious, class and caste differences had perforated the educational life of the people. "The entire system was smarted under the domination of English. In fact, there was no existence of a national system of education"<sup>53</sup>. We need to start with an aspiration to build one such education system.

A new constitution for independent Indian became effective from 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950. For the success of democracy and for the spread of liberal ideas the vital role of 'education for all' is no new coinage. To attain this goal the constitution of free-independent India provides 'Constitutional provisions on Education. On our way to discuss the major

educational policies taken after independence by the Government of India we would pick up each of the provisions mentioned in our voluminous constitution, thus would try to light on it from various perspectives.

1. Free and Compulsory Education: Article 45, under the Directive Principles of State policy, lays down: "The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years".

The expression "State" occurring in this Article is defined in Article 12 to include "the Government and Parliament of India and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India.

Therefore, the task of universal elementary education is the joint responsibility of the central government, the various state government and the local bodies, as well as the voluntary organizations. In respect of primary education, the Union Government has some important Functions to perform:

- (i) "acting as coordinating agency; (ii) developing research in elementary education; (iii) starting pilot project; (iv) leveling out the differences between states and ensuring equality of opportunities; and (v) providing financial assistance to the less developed states"<sup>54</sup>.

## V

### **Pre-Primary Education**

In the modern concept of education pre-primary education plays an important role. The idea of pre-primary education is quite old. Plato, Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Foerbel, the Macmillan Sisters, Robert Owen, etc. all have been the great advocates of nursery or pre-primary education. Pre-primary education is a very comprehensive education which includes parental education, prenatal and school care. It extends from the birth of the child to his entrance into a regular primary school.

To speak about the pre-primary education one of the Macmillan sisters said "The nursery school, if it is a real place of nature and not merely a place where babies are minded' till they are five, will affect our whole educational system very powerfully and very rapidly"<sup>55</sup>. Pre-primary education is needed for the physical, social, intellectual, psychological and emotional health of the child. There are varied types of pre-primary schools – kindergartens, Nursery schools, Montessori schools, Pre-basic schools, Privately sponsored single-teacher, single-room-pre-schools etc.

Dr. Montessori came to India in 1940 and stayed till 1948. She trained a number of group teachers and opened a number of Montessori schools in big cities. Gandhiji also realized the importance of pre-primary education. In 1944, the Sergeant Report called upon the government to provide pre-primary education in the following words: "An adequate provisions of pre-primary institutions in the form of Nursery schools or classes is an essential adjunct to any national system of education ... Nursery classes should be attached to Junior Basic-primary schools ... pre-primary education should, in all cases, be free ... to persuade parents to send their children to school voluntarily ... The main object of education at this stage is to give young children social experience rather than formal instruction"<sup>56</sup>. In India, the Secondary Education Commission Report (1952-53), the Indian Education Commission 1964-66), the Committee of Members of Parliament of Education, 1967, National Seminar on pre-primary education held on 1971, the Study Group on the Development of Pre-school child – 1972 have laid ample emphasis on the provisions of nursery education.

The past three decades have seen a major turn in the history of the pre-school movement in India. "In 1950-51, there were only 303 pre-primary schools with 866 teachers and the total number of children on roll was about 28,000. The total direct expenditure was 1.2 million or 0.1% of the total educational expenditure ... In 1955-56, the number of pre-primary schools rose to 3,500 with 6,500 teachers and the total number of children went upto 75,000.. The total direct expenditure also rose to 4 million or 0.2% of the total educational expenditure"<sup>57</sup>.

It is common knowledge that pre-primary education has not progressed well in our country. Firstly, we should have an Indian system of nursery schools not entirely based on western ideology, unfortunately which are prevalent. Secondly, what position should it be given in the ladder of education is another significant issue. Thirdly, although the education commission a pointer for reform but Pre-primary education is more needed for children of backward families, where parents are illiterate. Still, much step has not been taken in this respect. Fourthly, the slow rate of expansion of pre-primary education has been showed due to expensive rate of fees. There was enrolment of 5% of the children in the age-group 3-5 and over about 5% of children in age-group of 5-6 by 1986. Fifthly, at present, many pre-primary institutions are being set up by private organization and individuals. Almost there is no control of Government on them. Most of the institutions are being run on commercial lines and the education being imported by them is substandard. Some good institutions are there but they charge exorbitantly. Sixthly, selection of curriculum is another important issue in this respect. Proper curriculum is needed to fulfill the objectives of pre-primary education. Seventhly, to uplift the standard of these pre-primary schools there is need for proper training and guidelines. It should be provided with juvenile literature for children and professional literature for teachers is a vital issue. Providing appropriate equipment to the children in these schools is another urgent task. Eighthly, methods and ways are required to create consciousness among the parents to send their wards to these schools. Last but not the least, for quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of pre-primary education, it is essential that special stress should be laid on the development of appropriate programmes of research and experimentation. The Indian Education Commission said: "Every encouragement should be given to experimentation, particularly in devising less costly methods of expending pre-primary education"<sup>58</sup>. The International Commission on Education (1971-72) rightfully suggested: "The development of education for pre-primary age children must become one of the major objectives for

educational strategies in the 1970s", but we should live up with these promise to achieve the coveted goal onwards till every child is provided the facility of pre-primary education.

### **Elementary or Primary Education:**

Elementary education constitutes a very important part of the entire-structure of the society. It is in this stage that the child moves for formal institutions and thus with formal education, begins, elementary education which deserves the highest priority. Because, the education which he/she receives provides the foundation of his physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and social development. To standardize secondary and higher secondary education, highest form of elementary education is required. Thus sound elementary education gives a fillip to sound secondary and higher education.

"The need for sound and compatible elementary education is necessary not only from the pointer of social justice and democracy, but also for raising the competence of the average worker and for enhancing national productivity. Apart from being a Constitutional obligation, the provision of universal elementary education is crucial for spreading mass literacy, which is a basic requirement for all-round economic development, modernization of the social-structure and the effective functioning of democratic institutions. The importance and success of elementary or primary education is more vital as it is considered as indispensable first step towards the provision of equality of opportunity to all its citizens"<sup>59</sup>.

Earlier we have elaborately tried to point almost in depth the causes of the failure in spread of primary education in our third plan period. The Constitution makers wanted to bring all children of the age-group of fourteen under the fold of free and compulsory basic and primary education within 1961. So the modified target became to bring 90 percent of children of this age-group to school by 1971 and 100 per cent by 1971. But the statistics show we have failed to reach the target. During 1965-66 children attending this age-group 76.44%, during 1971-

72 it was 77.3%, 85.3% in 1974-75 and 1978 as figure stood about 90% (Ministry of Education, pp.68-72).

Again wastage and stagnation have been great agents to Indian education. Statistics show that the number of elementary schools have increased from 2,09,671 to 4,66,264 and we have now a primary school within easy walking distance from the home of every child. The enrolments in classes I to V have increased from 191.5 lakhs in 1950-51 to 771 lakhs in 1978-79. In classes VI to VIII, the enrolments have increased from 312 lakhs in 1950-51 to 211 lakhs in 1978-79. The expenditure on elementary education has increased from 85 crores to about 743 crores in 1978. But the literacy rate has not increased much. An all India Survey tried to show the ratio of dropping off of the students. Among the 100 students in class I, the enrolment in class II falls to 66, in class III it falls to 52, in class IV to 40 and in class V to 32.40. This is reduced further to about 25 by the time class VIII or the age of fourteen years is reached. Thus, from the survey report of the Fifth All India Education Survey we gather some startling information about the precarious conditions of the primary education in India. The survey says, (a) "More than two lakhs of primary schools have no pukka building; (b) 71 thousand schools are held under the open sky or under tents; (c) 41.5% of primary schools have no black boards; (d) 4,97,269 schools have less than 5 rooms. Only 46,410 schools have 5 or more than 5 rooms, Smt. K.C. Kochhar aptly said, "...the policy of the Government towards primary education was just like a blind man grinding his food, unaware of the dog eating it away, and the educational machinery, it is like a 100 horse-power engine working with only 24 per cent efficiency"<sup>60</sup>.

In relation to the discussion of elementary education in our country, basic education has been accepted as the official plan for universal compulsory education in the country. Basic Education is the most practical and unique contribution of Gandhiji. He said, "My Plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts is thus conceived as the spearhead of a silent social revolution fought with the most far-reaching consequences. It will provide a healthy and moral

basis of relationship between the city and the village..."<sup>61</sup> He said again, in 1937, "By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and man-body, mind and spirit"<sup>62</sup>, he wrote in July, 1937 in Harijan, it was beginning of the greatest experiment in the theory and practice of education in our country. Similar contradiction can also be found in the English education system in England. H.C. Dent saw a change. "The old prejudices – the false antithesis of liberal and technical education and the groundless suspicions about vocational studies have lost their icy grip; and we can look forward with more hope to the creation of an educational system that will provide much better preparation for life and one more appropriate to this century of change and challenge"<sup>63</sup>.

Late Dr. Zakir Hussain first nurtured elementary education in a Conference at Wardha. Thus, the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Shir B.G. Kher, the Committee emphasized that the scheme was one of education and not of production.

After independence, the Kothari Commission 1964-66 incorporated in his recommendations many of the essential features of Basic Education. Work-experience, community-living and community service, integration of academic knowledge with experiences, respect for all religious and world citizenship, have been recommended by the Commission in the light of what it terms a 'modernism'. Furthermore, National Education Conference was convened by Shriman Narayan at Sevagram in October, 1972, after a lapse of more than three decades. The Conference issued a 'Consensus' statement declining that 'education at all levels should be imparted through socially useful and productive activity, linked with economic growth and development in both rural and urban area'. Once more, the importance of Basic education has been emphasized by the UNESCO Commission on the Development of Education in this language in the title, "Learning to be", that, "... education must cease being confined within school house walls, and many forms of social and economic activity must be used for education

purpose". We would like to go back again to our points of educational reports on the broad based primary education since independence to reach at the core of problems. The extract of the Recommendations of Education Commission shows that it stressed a three-pronged attack – Universal provision, Universal enrolment and Universal retention. The most significant aspects among the suggestions of the aforesaid commission are:

- (i) Five years of good and effective education should be provided to all children by 1975-76.
- (ii) Seven years of such education should be provided by 1985-86.
- (iii) Emphasis should be laid on the reduction of Wastage and stagnation.
- (iv) Unwilling students should be kept in educational system until they complete 14 years and they should be provided with short vocational course of their choice.
- (v) Each state and even each district should prepare a prospective plan for the development of primary education keeping in mind the development already reached and the local conditions and problems.

The other universal recommendations are to establish low budget primary schools even single teacher schools. Attempts will be taken to establish and organize primary school in the remotest part of the country.

## VI

The Government, while declaring the National Policy on Education (p 68) laid emphasis on the importance of Free and Compulsory Education. It recommended that 'Strenuous efforts should be made for the early fulfillment of the Directive Principle under Article 45 of the Constitution seeking to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of fourteen. Suitable programmes should be developed in schools

and to ensure that every child who is enrolled in school successfully completes the prescribed course"<sup>64</sup>.

One Committee was appointed by Mr. Jayprakash Narayan under the auspices of the citizens for Democracy on May, 1978, headed by Dr. J.P. Naik. The Committee suggested that elementary education should be made universal in an intensive and sustained programme which would spread over 5 to 10 years. Special attention should be given to the enrolment of girls and children for the poor section in the society. Multiple entry system should be adopted and part-time education provided to all children who cannot attend on a full-time basis.

Therefore, during the Janata party rule the Draft National Education Policy, 1979 stated that the highest priority must be given to free education for all upto the age of 14. The facilities for formal education in elementary schools for all children should be provided. It also categorically said to stress on set formulation of schemes for non-formal education for dropouts. Thus, the sixth plan had allocated 900 crores for elementary education so that target of 100% elementary education is achieved by the close of the Sixth plan.

To bring a balance with the elementary education and basic education Kothari Commission came to equate the position; it said no particular stage or method of education need be termed as "basic". Productive activity which is the central theme of basic education should permeate the spirit of education at all stages. "Work Experience" is, thus, the Commission's name for productive practice correlated with theory.

Before going to discuss the Kothari Commission Report on Primary Education, we would try to find out and locate the general problems of primary education and, thus, to enlighten us with the Commission's report.

In pursuance of the Directive Principle of State Policy, all states 'have introduced free education for children... except Orissa, U.P. and a few other state'.<sup>65</sup> All states have compulsory education Acts except Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Although in the

1993 Assembly Election of Meghalaya the All India Congress Committee wrote on the wall - decorated, well-published Election Manifesto on February, 1993 that, "In the modern system, education is of primary importance to enable people to absorb the benefits of technology and primary education is the base for further development. Our party have already proposed transfer of primary education to the state government. The Congress is also committed to pursue the matter and ensure that primary education is taken over by the state government and proper policies framed to enable universal primary education"<sup>66</sup>.

Of the Union Territories, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh and Delhi have such legislation. However, even where such legislation exists, penal clauses are seldom enforced because of socio-economic reasons. The state governments are the ultimate authority, the administration is decentralized in differential degree in all the states. The administration is stratified at District, Tehsil, Town and Panchayet units differ from state which we have mentioned earlier.

Primary education in India has innumerable problems, with slight variation from state to state. A mini list of them will be like this: (1) The objective of primary education is not as progressive, dynamic and practical life-centric as it should have been; and it could encourage the parents and children with its ability; (2) The curriculum is not scientific yet, (3) Defects in curriculum and syllabus is squarely reflected in the text books and in misdistribution of them, (4) It is still suffering from lack of uniformity on language policy, (5) The yard-stick is yet to find out how to differentiate between the elementary and basic education (6) Despite emphasis on newly developed scientific techniques most of the 'free' schools moves with traditional one, (7) Most of the schools are not equipped with necessary furniture, equipment and training aids, (8) Co-curricular activity is but an idea (9) Total absence of child guidance (10) Traditional pattern of "Examination" and 'promotion" system (11) The problem of teacher recruitment and training is complex (12) child health is rarely cared for. The absence of requisite land, buildings and provisions of games and physical education is almost shameful. And last

but not the least, (13) in these age of rocketing price-hike, the provision of finances fall far short of the need. Thus, it requires a bit of analysis. The causes of failure are basically socio-economic, political and pedagogic in nature.

1. The social causes include the age old backwardness of certain communities, castes and tribes created by a long history of exploitation and sub-human existence. Illiteracy of parents, conservative social usages and customs, discrimination against girls also intensify the crisis, "Population has been growing 1% a year" while educational provisions are staggering behind. The physical problems created by lack of roads and transport in the rural areas and the mental reservation against co-education are no less responsible. Statistical returns show that while the average percentage of children (boys and girls together) receiving education in India is about 90, the percentage of girls is as low as 60.
2. The pedagogic failures should be squarely admitted. Primary education must be integrated with the life of the people. The absence of such integration leads to absence of urge. This together with economic and social causes leads to huge wastage and stagnation. Moreover, Primary education should be integrated with environmental socio-economic life. In this respect the failure of our rigid curriculum is vitally responsible.
3. The most tragic failure on the economic front is that budgetary provisions have been meager. While primary education has the biggest claim to public finances, very often funds earmarked for primary education were diverted to other purposes. Budgetary cuts have been a regular feature. The local bodies did seldom exert themselves for the proper assessment and collection of education cess and never took initiative to augment resources by other means. Budgetary grants were considerably consumed by building or other non-recurring activates. Furthermore, the growing cost of living, in addition the incidental costs in education has been

adversely affecting not only the paying capacity but also the spirit of the poor. Moreover, the problem of child labour makes the problem of primary education more critical.

4. Socio-political causes are no less responsible for the sad state of affairs. Compulsory education acts have not been enforced even in states where they are on the statute-book. Employers in industrial and commercial undertakings have not been forced to do anything for the education of their employees' children. Inspection and administration represent unrelenting bureaucracy. The pre-Independence urge for 'education' has been evaporated. Those values are lost. In this respect Prof. J.P. Banerjee wrote in 'Education in India - Past: Present: Future. "The only ray of hope, however, is that we have theoretically accepted the principle of common school (though its application is far away) and the concept of 'education for all' has replaced the concept of 'education for the few'<sup>67</sup>.

A vital principle has been incorporated in the constitution and directly or indirectly the state is responsible in the ultimate analysis. In British period they poked the local authorities to undertake it avoiding the direct responsibility. In our age the central put the responsibility to the states. Suggestions for the solution of the problems are implicit in our analysis of problem. On the background of our successes and failures we should discuss the future prospects as they have been depicted by Kothari Commission.

#### **Extract of Kothari Commission on Primary Education**

The Commission has divided the whole primary education in two halves. It has also suggested along with quantitative expansion the qualitative improvement. Accordingly if the lower primary education must be immediately 'free', while a time-bound programme may be adopted for Upper Primary education and vocational education should be attached with it.

The aim of primary education would be to lay a good foundation of life as a responsible citizen. Simultaneously, effort must be guaranteed that no child leaves school without completing lower primary education and at least 80% complete the 7 year school course. Along with 3 RS there should be phenomenal social environmental and health subjects. Basic emphasis should be upon language. The curriculum must be freed from pedantic matters. According to the variations of the region, the mother language of children will get preference as medium of instruction.

The pace of mental growth of all children at the primary school age being unequal, the commission has not favoured the pre-fixation of a common standard for all. All examinations should be internal and evaluation done in grading system.

The commission proposed 'social service' with the object of imparting social consciousness through living corporative community living, looking after cleanliness and decoration of the class-room, acquaintance with rural society, participation in community development work, helping the old etc. 'Work Education' plays a pivotal role in primary education. According to the commission these are the subjects to the basic education. It has three (3) characteristics: (a) Productive work, (b) Integration of creative activity and environmental life with curricular studies (c) close relation between school and society.

At the upper-primary stage teaching and learning process would be more extensive. Along with three language formulae all the subjects like Arithmetic and Algebra, History, Geography, Civics, Physics, Zoology and Earth Science in VI and in class VII Astronomy will take place in against the earth science, social service and work experience will also be included in the curriculum. Written examination followed by an oral testing will be conducted. Meritorious students will be provided scholarships.

The commission also suggested like "A" course in England, the meritorious students will be provided a superior syllabus and for those who would not go for above mentioned syllabus would follow the formal secondary education; provisions should be made for part time vocational

course. Apart from these attachments and suggestions, the commission has stated that the problem of providing the necessary number of Upper Primary Schools would be much more strident than the same at lower primary stage. Many new schools would be required. Therefore, the Commission phases the admission programme as follows:

	1970-71	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86
Lower Primary Class I-IV	92.0%	100%	-	-
Upper Primary Class V-VIII	50.7%	68.2%	82.3%	90.0%

As discussed earlier, elementary education is intended to provide the minimum essential. But before prepared for life a child's education ends at the age of 13 or 14, it will be like laying foundations of a house and stopping before completion. In fact, secondary education is that stage of education which helps children to become complete members of a complex society.

The term secondary education is simple yet means different things to different people. To Professor S.K. Kochhar, "Secondary Education is really the nation building education and maintenance of good quality therein is of tremendous importance"<sup>68</sup>. It develops to the highest potential of a person's ability, his aptitudes, his interests and qualities of characters. It thus, enables the individual to enter life as a knowledgeable, active-minded, sociable individual.

In the words of Prof. S.N. Mukherjee, "it stands or has, at different times, stood for three things – a stage, a type and a standard. As a stage, it stands for what comes next to elementary education. As a type, it stands for something that, though related to a certain intelligible classification of things to be learnt, is constantly being modified and enlarged, but the fundamental of which can be expressed only by a still more elusive name, humanism or liberal education. As a standard, it aims at that measure of eradication of which Universities can take cognizance ... these three meanings have been brought into harmonious relation with one another"<sup>69</sup>.

In the search of a definition Prof. J.P. Banerjee wrote, "The phase of secondary education is the middle stage of full-length formal education. At the end of the stage, section of student may pursue vocational courses, a second section may proceed to higher education, and rest may not pursue an educational career at all. Hence, secondary education should be planned as terminal education imparting an amount of knowledge and skill which would enable the students to proceed to the next higher stage of education or to the employment market"<sup>70</sup>. Our modern system of education was planted by a foreign ruler. As a distinctive element of colonial-type education, secondary education was made bookish and academic and examination dominated. The periods of development of the secondary education in India can be divided conveniently into major five hands:

1. From the earliest days of British rule to Wood's Despatch in 1854.
2. From Wood's Despatch (1854) to the Indian Universities Commission (1902).
3. From the Indian Universities Commission (1902) to Montford Reforms (1921).
4. From Montford Reforms (1921) to Independence (1947).
5. Post-independence period (1947) till now.

With regards to secondary education in India, the first signs of change were reflected in the recommendations of the Hunter Commission. But a really rebellious attitude was exhibited during the National Education Movement. The Sadler Commission's Recommendations represented a further change in outlook in favour of a longer complete secondary education of a diversified nature. This trend was further strengthened by the Hartog Committee, the Abbot-Wood Committee and the Sargent Committee.

## VII

After independence the question of reforms becomes a real issue. The Mudaliar Commission recommended a type of secondary education as it

thought best for an independent, democratic, developing country. A fresh review was made by the Education Commission of 1964-66. Thus, the concept of Secondary education in our country also advanced in a process of evolution. From the beginning till the early part of the present century it had been theoretical, monotype, humanistic and liberal education for the few. Thereafter, the ideas got fastened to democratic ideals and recognition of the need for meaningful education. In the present phase, we have accepted equality of opportunity and providing vocational education as one guiding principle. The concept of education having changed, the aims of education also changed from phase to phase as required by socio-economic changes.

Internationally secondary education also passed through several experiments. Thus, "A balance now has been struck that the aims should be (i) attention to health, (ii) command of fundamental processes, (iii) capacity to live an effective family and social life, (iv) to exercise of intellect, (vii) aesthetic taste and emotional balance, (viii) education for productive use of leisure, (ix) character formation. Advance countries, however, place different kinds of emphasis upon particular aspects of these aims as demanded by their states of things and their needs"<sup>71</sup>.

Naturally aims of education in India under British rule had been narrow. The Secondary Education Commission in post-independence period proposed the aims of (i) preparing citizens of a sovereign democratic republic (ii) preparation of individuals with integrity and personality, (iii) character formation of the adolescent, (iv) production of citizen with vocational skill, (v) Training of middle grade cadre for economic enterprises.

Thus, lastly the Indian Education Commission proposed that the aim would be the training of productive and creative citizen, material values being combined with spiritual values. Acquaintance with predictive work and social life together with acquaintance with science, mathematics and social sciences will create inspired contributors to national development and social integration.

The aims of secondary education must control the secondary curriculum. The stability should take into consideration the needs of the individual student as well as the needs of the society. Prof. T.P. Banerjee said, "The curriculum must not be over burdened with theoretical bookish knowledge. The values of subjects should be assessed. The subjects of study must help the conservation of heritage while simultaneously they must have utility value in social and national life. The curriculum may be diversified and more vocational bias may be infused, but this is no stage for extreme specialists"<sup>72</sup>.

Secondary school curriculum in India upto 1956 had been narrow, bookish, one sided and academic in nature. It had not recognized the fact of individual differences. In spite of many a reform and improvements, the overall picture of secondary education during the British rule was not satisfactory. H.V. Hampton gives a lucid sketch of secondary education. He writes: "it seems reasonable to conclude that the secondary school suffers from arrested development; it has failed to keep pace with the changes social and political, economic and industrial - which have gone to the making of modern India, and it has failed to keep abreast of the latest development in educational theory and practice. Courses are bookish and theoretical and provide little to attract pupils with a practical turn of mind: the excessive use of English as the medium of instruction, places a severe psychological burden on both pupils and teachers - it stifles individuality; encourages memorization and makes instruction lifeless and mechanical; scientific and practical subjects are neglected and inadequate provision is made for outdoor games and other recreational activities. The whole school system is rigid and inelastic and is characterized by a dull and monotonous uniformity"<sup>73</sup>.

The first Committee of experts to talk about secondary education after independence was the Tarachand Committee (1948-49). This committee suggested 5 years primary education, 3 years pre-secondary education (or Senior basic) and 4 years secondary education i.e. 12 years before admission to University courses. It also suggested diversified courses and one terminal examination. Contemporaneously with it, Ray

Choudhury Committee in West Bengal suggested reformation of Secondary Education. The Universities Commission, 1948-49 (Radhakrishnan Commission) also made illuminating remarks on Secondary education.

The cumulative effect of these developments was the institution of the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) i.e. Mudaliar Commission to make recommendations on all aspects. On the basis of their recommendations the Higher Secondary Scheme was introduced in 1956.

The Government of India appointed a Commission on September 23, 1952 under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. Lashmanswami Mudaliar, the Vice-Chancellor of Madras University. The Commission suggested on their Report in June, 1953 three major reforms in the Secondary Education.

1. Re-organization of the educational pattern of education;
2. Diversification of the Secondary curriculum; and
3. Reform in examination system.
  - a. The structure of School Education would be: 5 years primary education, 3 years Lower Secondary followed by 4 year Higher Secondary stage i.e. a total 12 years school education.
  - b. First degree course should be of three years' duration after higher secondary.
  - c. There should be multipurpose schools at higher secondary level and students should be encouraged to join professional and technical courses after higher secondary and guidance of master will be there to guide the student to pick up the most suitable vocation.
  - d. The regional language mother-tongue should be made medium of instruction including three language formulae.
  - e. Activity method should be adopted.
  - f. Reform of examination to make it a real evaluation and thereby reduce University mindedness.

- g. Service condition of teaching personnel should be improved by raising pay scales, uniform procedure for the recruitment of teachers in all schools and by extending retirement age to sixty.
- h. A Board of Secondary Education in each state with D.P.I. as Chairman should be constituted. State Advisory Boards of Education should guide and advice the education department.

As a result of recommendation, high schools were upgraded to higher secondary schools and some high schools were converted into multipurpose schools. The recommendations were incorporated into the successive Five Year Plan and began to be implemented both at the Centre and in the States.

To point out the evils of haphazard implementation of the recommendation, Mrs. Kochhar writes: "The haphazard implementation of the Secondary Education Commission's proposal has left a trail of problems, and some of these problems have bedeviled the reform and reorganization of secondary education till today"<sup>74</sup>.

The aims of Secondary education according to Kothari Commission to provide a solid basis of general education for democratic citizenship. Through this education individual would be able to proceed to (a) higher education (b) education for specialization (c) various forms of technical and vocational education and (d) employment for living.

The integrated total period of secondary education may be advantageously divided into two inter-related sub-stages - (a) Lower Secondary State (class VIII/IX and X) and (b) Higher Secondary Stage (Class XI and XII).

The curriculum of Lower Secondary Stage:

1. Three languages;
2. Physics-Chemistry-Zoology and Botany;
3. History-Geography-Civics;
4. Physical and Moral education;
5. Any fine Art

6. Provision for Social Services (Community Development and work experience (wood work, leather work etc.) i.e. production oriented and directly linked with farm or factory work.

Higher Secondary Education: The objective at this stage would be to enlarge and strengthen the foundation of general education together with an orientation of specialization. It believes in two (2) languages and suggests for three (3) elective subjects. But it was also against complete specialization and suggested to abolish the stream of Mudaliar Commission. The selection would not be limited to either art or science. Free selection would be permitted. Liberal arrangements should be made for the study of science subjects in conformity with rural and urban environments.

The commission recommended a rapid expansion of secondary education so that children of lower secondary age group might be provided with attendance facilities by 1985. Such expansion would require 75000 additional teaching posts per year. Hence Teacher Training should have a considerable priority in education budget.

Secondary education in India is infested with many problems, a few of which may be discussed here.

- A. Policy regarding language selection has given the birth of two facet problems.
- B. Language as medium of instruction and languages that should find place in the curriculum. The first question has by now been solved in favour of the Mother Tongue.

It should be noted that English medium secondary education was now more prevalent and extensive than it had been under British Raj. Commercial value and job accumulating ability of English, advantageous position of English in higher education of a technical nature; facilities of foreign tours with a command of English are some of the reasons thereof. Class distinction in education has made English a medium of education for the better off classes. It has become an insignia for social status.

“English Education” has acquired more of an economic value than a cultural value.

The second question is related to the determination of the number of languages to be learnt and selection of those languages. During the British rule, English had been the medium of instruction. The mother tongue and classical languages had been given the second and third position respectively. By the time of provincial autonomy, the Mother languages were given the first place, English the second, classical language the third. Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, “Although mother language was made the medium, the importance of English remained as before”<sup>75</sup>.

Independence of India failed to bring any abrupt revolutionary change, only situation was slightly altered. The claim of an All India State language was added to the claim of the earlier three. Controversies took no time to ensue and generate sufficient heat.

The Mudaliar Commission recommended a three language formula for secondary education i.e. (i) Mother tongue (or the Regional language). (ii) English and (iii) Hindi. A Classical language could also be taken on elective basis. This formula in general terms, had been applied with subtle amendments in different states.

The Kothari Commission recommended a new and improved three language formula with mother tongue, Hindi and English (a) Only mother tongue (or regional language) at the lower primary stage, (b) Addition of Hindi or English at the upper primary stage. (c) Mother tongue, Hindi or English and one modern Indian language (apart from mother-tongue) or any modern European language at the lower secondary stage, (d) Mother tongue and one of the other language listed in (e) at the higher secondary stage (f) classical language might be electively taken from class VIII.

This formula, after being discussed at the State Education Minister’s Conference, Central Advisory Board of Education Committee of the Parliament, was incorporated in the National Policy Resolution of Education with the suggestion that apart from Mother Tongue and English, the third language should be Hindi in the non Hindi regions and

any other modern Indian language (preferably a southern one) in the Hindi speaking regions.

The constitution of India had made one categorical provision for the development and propagation of Hindi as a national language. But the propagation of other Southern languages were not made. Although "The Draft National Education Policy - 1979" had provided a three language formula, Mrs. Kochhar wrote, "The formula will prove useful both for its practicability and integrative value"<sup>76</sup>.

Article 351 of the Indian Constitution states: "It is the special responsibility of the centre to develop the national language i.e. Hindi so that it may serve as a medium of instruction for all elements of the composite culture of India"<sup>77</sup>. But to propagate a southern language no measure was taken so far. But to keep in mind the question of national integration, in a multi-faceted cultural country like India, the need for a constitutional provision for a suitable southern language was highly necessary.

To avoid the problem of language learning Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Language learning need not be frightful if the proper method of effective education in all the subjects, all the stages, be available and followed"<sup>78</sup>. He said with all emphasis, "The crisis in our country may be greatly relieved through standard text books in the regional languages and if such languages are given due recognition in all official and non-official purposes and for all economic and social intercourses"<sup>79</sup>. The Bosenstine famous national Professor Satyendranath Bose and his tryst with development of science in Bengali language may be remembered and Central Government should take necessary measure in this respect.

Problems of curriculum and teaching personnel are no less acute. A difference had crept into social valuation between secondary and higher secondary education. Technical and Agricultural streams never found roots. Most of the higher secondary schools offered only those subjects related to humanities, and that too with a few subjects for individual selection. Lack of proper integration between academic and

vocational courses is glaring everywhere. And the absence of counseling service is no hiding fact.

Uniformity in pattern of schooling is an urgent task. Education Commission (1964-66) even pointed out, "In our country, where the different states are at unequal level of development, a uniform pattern might be above the resources and real needs of the backward areas and below the capacity and requirements of the advance areas as might operate to the disadvantage of both"<sup>80</sup>. Now with the introduction of 10+2+3, there is a hope of achieving that ideal of having uniform pattern throughout the country - if the states care to introduce it.

While recommending the increase in the period of schooling, the Education Commission recommended that +2 classes should not form a part of University work. According to the Commission's suggestion  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the secondary schools should provide education till class X, the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  should be higher secondary schools providing education upto University entrance.

The location of +2 system is likely to prove beneficial to high/higher secondary schools as Prof. S.N. Mukherjee wrote, "...It will enable them to employ good teachers and provide better facilities for students. It will also prevent young adolescent from entering Universities at a too early age". He also said, "Instruction will prove more fruitful as the students will learn through school techniques and not through methods of higher education which are beyond their capacity and more suitable mature student"<sup>81</sup>. In this regard Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Higher Secondary Education of a good standard required the services of academically proficient teachers, particularly teachers for scientific and technical subjects .... But the problem of recruitment was infested with problems of competition in the employment market. Recruitment of efficient personnel demand the payment of handsome salaries"<sup>82</sup>.

Another problem raised by Professor S.K. Kochhar that so far as education consideration goes, the +2 stage needs to be located in schools. It is the higher secondary stage; inevitably it needs to be introduced in a

higher secondary school. Prof. Ranju Gopal Mukherjee, who was once President of W.B.C.H.S.E., said in an interview: "The lecture method of Colleges is not suitable for the students of Higher Secondary. They need care and home-task like the school children. To make higher secondary syllabus and course effective, it requires separate institutions"<sup>83</sup>.

Once again the Education Commission 1964-66 and the draft national educational policy have recommended that education of the two year secondary stage at 10+ should be divided into the academic and vocational streams, and only those who gain entry into the academic stream by virtue of demonstrated aptitude, should eventually go up for the three year degree course. This approach is intended to provide the country with the technical skills it surely needs and also put a brake on the scandalous proliferation of Universities which have deteriorated into large scale factories churning out semi-educated graduates who have been swelling the ranks of the unemployed and the under employed.

As a theoretical framework, this policy sounds very good. But the rule is that it is too idealistic to stand up to the realities of the situation. Professor S.K. Kochhar reacted to approach and observes: "Considering the prevailing social attitudes, would an IAS officer reconcile himself to the idea of his academically inept son going into the vocational stream and becoming a leather worker"<sup>84</sup> thus, her most pertinent queries are: 'where are the resources to provide training to the boys and girls who would be expected to enter the vocational steam? The Vocationalisation of education presupposes huge resources and an attitudinal change, both of which will take a long time to come"<sup>85</sup>.

The lack of attention to the secondary education due to the administrative none functioning has ultimately disgruntled the whole purpose of education as a linkage between schools to University.

Our Constitution is a federal one. It has divided powers in the Centre and States and described some powers as concurrent. There are 66 items in this list, two pertain to education. Secondary education is a state subject, although in these days of planning the Union Government's

indirect role has to be recognized. At the State level, it is a joint responsibility of the Board and the Ministry. Local Bodies play a minor role. Impacts of social forces help the solution of some problems while they gave rise to new problems.

Some expansion has been achieved, but plan targets remained always unattained. 'Craft', 'Social Studies' and 'General Science' as had been adopted in the H.S. Curriculum remained unproductive. The goal of equal opportunity and Common School is far off. Difference between urban and rural facilities, between schools for the rich and the poor are wide. Secondary Education has not been integrated with the life situation of the pupils, or with the economic life of the community. The problem of land and building - both in rural and urban areas, problems of girls' education, problem of backward communities and tribes, and problems of teaching aids still continue unabated.

Article 15(1) provides that the state shall not discriminate any citizen on grounds of ... sex.

Article 16(1) provides equality of opportunity for all citizens - men as well as women, in employment or appointment of any office under the state.

"It is obvious that the constitution has given women absolute equality with men. So Prof. S.K. Kochhar deemed, "This can go a long way in achieving the target of 100% literacy. Also, the spread of education among women will improve their status, which in turn will help in educational, social and economic development"<sup>86</sup>.

<b>Projected areas</b>	<b>Rate of Women's literacy</b>	<b>Rate of Men's literacy</b>
Whole India	23.82	8.079
Rural India	17.92	
India's	12.00 below it	
District's 81	5.00 below it	
District's rural literacy rate 171 Dist.	5.00 below	
SC/ST/ literacy rate		86 <sup>87</sup>

**Source:** Paschim Banga, 19/2/93.

Apart from many of these minor problems have their roots in financial stringency. The Eight Plan highlights on education were that, "Education is an investment in development. The target is to make all the people - some 110 million - in the age group of 15-35 years literate by end of the Plan period. This is to be achieved through involving people at all levels in literacy programmes. Special efforts to be made to spread literacy among rural women; also special programmes to be taken for educating the tribal people, universalization of elementary education, Diversification of vocational programmes; spread of computer literacy in schools; improving higher/technical education"<sup>88</sup>.

The statistical data show: "The First Plan allotment for secondary education had been Rs. 20 crores, which rose to 51 crores in the second plan and 103 crores in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plan. This amount was 21.6% of the allotment for education". Let us see another information about the rate of literacy and plan expenditure in education by the seven sister countries of SAARC:

	<b>Rate of Literacy</b>	<b>Expenditure in Education (G.N.P., in terms of %)</b>
Bangladesh	26	1.7
Bhutan	10	
India	36	3.0
Maldives	82	
Nepal	19	1.9
Pakistan	24	1.9
Sri Lanka	80	3.9 <sup>89</sup>

**Source:** Yozna, Sept.90.

The situation may be partially relieved by adopting the following measures:

- (a) Acquisition of land of school by Government notification
- (b) Construction of School buildings by the P.W.D.
- (c) Supply of aids and appliances from nationalized industries, and establishment of other factories for the same.
- (d) Production of school books with Government subsidy.
- (e) Augmentation of funds by taxation, by freezing the black money of income tax dodgers etc.

Our problems are many, and there could be no progress without solution of the problems. On the background we must organize our secondary education systematically. The educationists, the educational administrators and teachers should shoulder this responsibility. Whatever the political party in power, the system of education, once adopted, should continue. We have had enough of experimentation.

Just on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1993 inaugurating the Bengal Engineering College at Sibpur as a Deemed University, the President, Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma, urged industrialists to donate generously for the development of advance academic institutions such as Universities and to take full advantage of income tax relief in this context<sup>790</sup>.

Certainly, it is thus said by the President, Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma, to boost up the total education system in our country. At the same time, does it not reflect the idea the President of India who is also an eminent scholar has lost his faith on the central government in regard to spread and successful implementation of educational policy? In the remaining discussion we will try to search out the above query.

Since Independence vigorous efforts have been made in India to reorganize and reform the system of education to make it respond to the needs and aspiration of its people. Changes have been introduced in the form, structure, content and techniques of education.

In comparison to Primary or even Secondary education, Higher education made rapid progress, particularly in regard to quantitative expansion in course of the last 100 years. F.J. Mowat, Secretary of the Council of Education in Bengal Presidency had proposed the establishment of a university. The same demand was repeated in 1852 by Mr. C.H. Cameron, President of the Council. By that time, however, the objective situation had prepared the ground and the Despatch of 1854 proposed the establishment of Universities at Presidency Head Quarters, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay Universities were born, and 1857 became a year of importance also in educational chronology. The functions of the university were kept very limited and its administration was also very

loose. But some academic directions that had been incorporated in the dispatch of 1854 were not actually implemented. The University's functions were practically limited to affiliation, construction of syllabuses, examination and certification.

Still, substantial development can be cited in higher education in the next three decades. During the period of 1857 to 1871, one statistical information shows, the number of Colleges rose to 12 in Madras, 4 in Bombay, 17 in Bengal, 9 in U.P. and 4 in Punjab.

Calcutta and Madras Presidency Colleges, Tinnevely College in Madras, Canning College at Lucknow were Products of this spurt. More colleges grew up in the next decade, namely Allahabad and Aligarh College, Vidya Sagar and City College in Calcutta. A few native princes established their Colleges. However, Indian languages were utterly neglected in these institutions of higher learning. The Bombay University had provided no room for Indian languages on the curriculum. But, it was abandoned in 1862 under the directions from the D.P.I. These Colleges were basically 'Arts' Colleges and that was natural in their conditions.

The Indian Education Commission (Hunter Commission) paved the way for Indian private enterprise. It leads to the further expansion of higher education consequent upon the spread of secondary education. As a result of it, while in 1881-82, there had been 68 colleges, in 1901-02 the number of Colleges increased to 179.

It should be noted that it happened because many a nationalist leaders with a stature like Tilak, Agarkar and Surendranath Banerjee etc. took ample endeavour in the field of education. The spread of higher education naturally enhanced the number of Universities. Lahor University (1882) and Allahabad University (1887) were established during the second spurt. Hunter Commission had recommended alternative courses in higher studies.

But it cannot be avoided that the above noted growth was single-track expansion, Rapid expansion undoubtedly increased the number of

students in the quantitative term, but also quality went sharply down with standards. Rapid production of graduates sharply increased the index of the unemployment suddenly very high even in those days. But it is noteworthy that under the impact of national consciousness, the demand for proper status and role of Indian languages made headway. Bombay University, out of this pressure, included again the Indian languages in the curriculum. Thus, teaching began to be a direct undertaking of the University.

With the University Act of 1904 University educational development coincided with Governor-Generalship of Lord Curzon. Some positive development can be traced back during this period on higher education.

- (a) Teaching became a function of the University particularly the University of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.
- (b) There was sufficient expansion of studies in Law
- (c) The system of extension lectures was introduced
- (d) The curriculum was enriched by the inclusion of Economics, Ideology and Science subjects.
- (e) Research became a part of University activity and
- (f) Scholarships were granted for studies in U.K. and America.

Due to the effect of partition of Bengal, nationalist movement was also at its peak-form. Thus the National Education Movement gave a fresh spurt to University education. Between 1913 and 1919 Varanasi, Mysore, S.N.D.T. Osmania, Aligarh Universities were established.

In spite of these developments, the growth occurred particularly in the study of 'Arts' subjects only. It had also given birth to numerous administrative problems. The Calcutta University Commission recommended reforms and establishment of new type of Universities.

The recommendations of the Sadlar Commission were but partially implemented. Meanwhile, our attitude changed substantially. The second phase of the national education movement (1920-22), the

beginning of technical education and effect of the first global war influenced the quantitative and qualitative aspects of higher education in India. In respect of qualitative progress the most significant feature was the acceptance of 'Advancement of Learning' as a practical proposition and also the acquisition of teaching responsibilities. Absolutely new courses in Indian educational field like study in technology, agriculture, sciences and professions were introduced. In respect of quantity, the number of College increased from 231 in 1921-22 to 933 in 1946-47. This way higher education progressed till 1947.

### VIII

Immediately after independence, assessment was first made with regard to higher education. The Universities Commission headed by Dr. Sarbapally Radharshnan was in 1948. The Commission redefined the triple aims of higher education:

(a) General education with a suggestion to replace the prevailing 10+2+2 pattern by a 10+2+3 one.

(b) Education for liberal idealism with introduction of and stress on higher education, viz., literature, scientific, technical and professional.

(c) To stress on education for professional skill technical and professional courses had been introduced. 'it reviewed the system of University education and recommended that the universities must provide leadership not only in politics and administration but also in the various professions, industry and commerce'<sup>91</sup>. It has also suggested that the University would fulfil the growing demand for skill in literary, scientific, technological and professional callings. 'It would also provide education for manhood' (influence of Swami Vivekananda). Emphasis should be placed, therefore, upon technological and agricultural studies equally with 'general' studies. It said, "Improved collegiate education is possible only on the basis of a good education from 14+ to 18+. Secondary schools should produce the human materials of a high caliber for the University to fulfil the demand for the employment market"<sup>92</sup>. For a higher standard

of College education, the Commission proposed a 3 year Degree Course. In short, the commission recommended 'simultaneous attention to quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement.

The commission felt that there is a need for more Universities. But it was against the idea of the establishment of affiliating the Teaching Universities only. In its place Federal, Unity and residential type were suggested. They suggested for improvement of internal administration of Universities. It recommended formation of a 'University Grant commission' with the responsibilities to determine principles of higher education, improvisation of standards, foundations of new Universities, relation between Government and University etc., they also made suggestion for qualitative improvement through tutorials, students' welfare co-curricular cultural activities, solutions of the student unrest with a sympathetic attitude towards the youth.

The most noteworthy recommendation of the commission deserves special mentioning. The commission proposed a new attitude, a total outlook and an integrated plan of rural education. The Commission opined that the modern system of education in India was never integrated with rural life. As a result of such design of education caused desertion of the village by the educated rural youth. Town Centric industrialization caused urbanized education'. The Commission proposed equalization of education opportunities by removing the differences between education in urban and rural areas. It offered a positive plan for rural higher education totally integrated with rural life.

The Commission's report was an example of betwixt and between, the amalgamation of the idea of Danish Peoples College and Gandhiji's scheme of basic education. Considerable number of Universities came into being including residential and unitary types, after the Commission's work. Many of the higher institutions that had been established during the national education movement was statutorily recognized as Universities. A University Grants Committee had been formed in 1945 to control the than Central Universities. In 1953 it transformed into the

University Grants Commission with an extra-ordinary change to look after the higher education in the country.

To comment on the Radhakrishnan Commission Prof. S.K. Kochhar said, "Barring a few academic exercises on the subject, nothing concrete happened"<sup>93</sup>. In pointing out the concept of rural higher education Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "... the Commission's plan for rural higher education was implemented in a changed and truncated fashion, thereby defeating the very purpose. According to instruction of the Commission some institutes were started with certain off-the-beat subjects like Rural Economics, Co-operative, Rural Sociology, Community Development etc. Evidently these Institutes were not elevated to the level of University and their diplomas were not considered equivalent to University degrees. Thus, these institutes neither implemented the Radha Krishnan Commission's report nor could employ the modern concept of techniques and technology of agricultural education"<sup>94</sup>.

Quantitative expansion of higher education has been undoubtedly achieved. In 1948 India had 500 Colleges and 18 Universities:

University	1950-51	1955-56	1960-61	1966-67
Colleges for Special Course	27	32	45	64
Arts, Science, Commerce Colleges	542	772	1123	1400
Professional + Vocational Colleges	208	346	852	1077
Research Institutes	18	34	41	44 <sup>95</sup>

**Source:** U.G.C. Annual Report (1966-67).

In the above statistics we have dealt with the number of different College since 1950 to 1967, because; (i) it shows a study of a decade; and this decade is marked with uniformity in political process in India. During this time there was the presence of Congress hegemony in India both at the Centre and the states. The dominance of one party rule in both the administrative levels and its reflections can be found on the higher education policy perception as manifested through the apex body - U.G.C.

Increase of different College during 1980s to early 1990 as it stands:

Course of Study	Number				
	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90
Arts, Science and Commerce	4132	4354	4488	4547	766
Technical/ Professional Break up	655	695	723	742	766
(a) Engineering/ Technology	242	253	260	263	268
(b) Medicine / Pharmacy / Ayurveda / Nursing / Dentistry / Homeopathy	320	342	364	376	392
(c) Agriculture	63	67	66	69	71
(d) Veterinary Science	30	33	33	34	35
Law	199	202	210	217	223
Education + Physical Education	441	479	488	495	500
Oriental Learning	321	720	714	714	716
Music / Fine Arts	68	62	66	69	70
Total	6816	6512	6689	6784	6949

\*Excluded Junior Colleges and Colleges having only diploma/Certificate Course.

**Note:** Data for the year 1988-89 and 1989-90 are provisional.

**Source:** X/XII U.G.C. Annual Report for the year 1989-90<sup>96</sup>

Appendix - X/VII/Distribution of College according to Course Study.

Our failure in attaining the objective of higher education is very prominent. Expansion of knowledge by research and experimentation has always been the aim of higher education. "The objective is current in most other countries. According to a statistical report Argentina, U.S.A., Japan, Germany, Russia and Cuba the ratio of illiterate is less than 5 percent", whereas in India the expected number of illiterate will be 50 per cent of the total illiterate of the world after this century. Actually, we have accepted the concept of Advancement of Learning. But more opening of new windows to knowledge would not be productive. Knowledge must be disseminated. Thus, "creation of new knowledge, dissemination of highest knowledge, improvement of the cultural heritage of the nation, production of know-how and solution of socio-economic problems constitute the basic aims of higher education"<sup>97</sup>.

After independence, Radhakrishnan Commission proposed the Triple Objectives of (1) good general education, (2) scientific and liberal ideological preparation, (3) preparation of professional know-how. The

Commission expected the University to lead the nation in all fields of life. Thenceforth, our political and academic leaders explained the role of the University in various terms. But tangible effects were little palpable.

And finally, the Indian Education Commission (Kothari Commission) enunciated a few basic objectives of University education – (i) Acquisition of new knowledge, pursuit of truth, reorientation of old knowledge in the light of the new, (ii) preparation of leaders for different fields of national life by searching out the talented youth and helping their mental, physical and moral development and instilling in them the proper attitude and ideals; (iii) preparations of skilled and socially conscious youthful leaders for the nation's agriculture, Arts, Sciences and Technology; (iv) Removal of social and cultural inequality by expanding education; (v) creation of socially oriented robust values by the corporate efforts of teachers and students.

The Commission also suggested some immediate objectives viz. to ensure unity in the diversities of national life by encouraging tolerance and rousing the conscience of the people; to conduct adult educational, part-time education and correspondence courses; to help the secondary school to attain a better standard; to expand and improve the standard of teaching and research; and to raise at least a few institutions of higher learning to international standards.

Still, after 67 years of our independence probably we have failed to raise any national conscience and consciousness. Dissipating and vociferous forces are active everywhere disgruntling the basic structure of unity in the name of racism, religion, casteism and terrorizing the whole atmosphere. It is needless to cite any example.

The University Grants' Commission or U.G.C., the prime and pivotal organization in determining higher education shows that substantial measures had been taken during the last few years for the growth of population education. The Annual Report of the U.G.C. 1989-90 wrote, about population education and Jan Shikshan Nilayams that "With the adaptation of Area Based Development Approach the

Commission approved upto 1989-90 various programmes numbering 17,560. Adult education Centres, 862 continuing Education Courses, 1331 Population Education Clubs plus population education activities in adult Education Centre and 1056 Jan Shikshan Nilayams in respect of 92 Universities and their 1278 Colleges as per new guidelines framed in 1988. As in previous years, the Commission continued to provide funds to University departments/ centres for adult and continuing education and extension of the extent of Rs. 50,000 towards the purchase of audio-visual equipment..."<sup>98</sup>.

On the same section of "Adult, Continuing and Extension Education and Distance Learning", the Report wrote, "Distance Education / Correspondence Education, essentially based on the supply of instructional material for home study, is supported and supplemented by personal contact programmes, radio programmes, audio-visual aids etc."<sup>99</sup>. The broad based objectives of such courses are, (i) to meet increasing demand for education by utilizing alternative systems, and (ii) bring about equalization of opportunities by providing facilities in backward regions, to weaker sections of the community who have to take up jobs owing to their pecuniary circumstances and to women who find it difficult to go to a college as they belong to traditional families and communities. Correspondence course was being conducted by 38 Universities / Institutions during 1989-90.

In a stratified male-dominated society the most affected and backward sections among all are female and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people. With regard to them Indian Constitution has given safeguard. Articles 15,17 and 46 look after the educational interests of the weaker sections of the Indian Community, i.e. socially and educationally backward classes of citizens and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

#### **Article 46 under the Directive Principles of State Policy States**

The state shall promote with special care the educational economic interest of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular of the

scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all form of exploitations.

With regard to women's educational spread the Constitution under Article 15) says that state can make special provision for the education of women and children. Article 15(1) provides that the state shall not discriminate any citizen on grounds only of ... sex. Again, Article 16(1) provides equality of opportunity for all citizens – men as well as women, in employment or appointment to any office under the state.

Thus, it is obvious that the constitution has given women absolute equality with men. This can go a long way in achieving the target of 100 per cent literacy. Also, the spread of education among women will improve their status, which will further help in educational, social and economic development. Before going to discuss elaborately about the subject in later chapters, we are mentioning here the provision of U.G.C. for the weaker sections of our society for the total upliftment of them in terms of socio-political and economic elevation. In section – 14 of the Annual Report of U.G.C. 1989-90, it is mentioned "The Commission has over the years made special efforts for providing facilities to persons belonging to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities in Universities and Colleges. These include reservation of seats in various courses offered by universities and Colleges, reservation of recruitment of non-teaching posts and posts of lecturers, and reservation of seats in hostels. The commission has also made provisions of reservation in various scholarships and fellowships awarded by it and initiated a number of schemes for the advancement of persons belonging to these communities"<sup>100</sup>.

Underlying the importance of Women Education U.G.C. said, "There has been tremendous expansion of educational opportunities for women in the field of higher education – both general and technical"<sup>101</sup>. "There has been remarkable growth in the numbers of women enrolled in institutions of higher education, form a mere 0.40 lakhs in 1950-51 to 13.67 lakhs in 1989-90, recording an increase of more than 34 times

over the forty years period. The number of women enrolled per hundred man enrolled during this period has gone up more than three times from 14 in 1950-51 to 47 in 1989-90. The enrolment of women as percentage of total enrolment increased progressively from 27.2 per cent in 1980-91 to 29.6 per cent in 1989-86 and 32.2 per cent in 1989-90<sup>102</sup>.

For the attainment of these objective the Commission suggested – raising the standard of higher education (b) expansion of higher education in keeping with popular urge on the one hand and manpower planning on the on the other and (c) improvement of University organization and administration.

The imbalance between educational expansion and manpower planning has ultimately accelerated the speed of unemployment in our country. The Seventh Plan gives us an extra-ordinary statistic of overwhelming picture of educated unemployment:

The picture of Educated Unemployment in India (1990) (Unit – 1000)

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Reserved Human Resource at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>On Profession</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>
Engineer	454.4	395.3	59.1
Physical	302.4	263.1	39.3
Nurse	505	5.4	0.1
Veterinary Doctor	23.4	29.1	5.3
Agricultural Graduates	162.8	127	35.8
Science Graduate	1339.4	1044.7	298.70
Post-Graduate in Science	419.7	327.4	92.3
Graduate in Arts	3169.6	2472.3	697.3
Post-Graduates in Arts	1955.1	521.9	429.2
Commerce Graduate	1590.6	1240.7	349.9
Post-Graduate in Commerce	302.7	236.1	66.6
Education	1379.4	1075.9	303.5
Diploma Engineer	734.8	639.3	95.5
Madhyamic / Higher Secondary	52400.1	31964.1	2043.6
Total Educated	68389.2	41455.0	22934.1 <sup>103</sup>

**Source:** 7<sup>th</sup> Plan

The inability to pursue and attain the real aims of higher education Prof. J.P. Banerjee said, "Truth is that the Universities all over the world have always experienced a conflict between conservation and progress. Yet Universities reformed themselves in response to popular demands and national needs. Now Universities of new types were established to feed ever growing needs. It cannot, however, be vouched that the requirements have fully been met. Moreover, the present world is rapidly changing. It necessitates further changes in the aims, organization and administration of higher education, traditional inertia to keep pace with time led to explosions of student's rebelliousness of many countries"<sup>104</sup>.

The condition of higher education is worse still. Our higher education is still heavily laden with one way liberal courses. The entire field of higher education is dominated by Pedantic theorization including Sciences and Technology. Provisions and basic standard of research still lag behind. Moreover, there is an immense time gap between the advent of new knowledge and our student's acquaintance with it. It is away from the life, our Universities have no direct links with industry and agriculture still, we cannot say that the role of the University in adult and population education and total national improvement is sufficient. It is an undeniable fact that the expansion of higher education is very limited and there is scanty provision for aesthetic and spiritual education. The most glaring truth is that universities are almost silent observers of a battle between national integration and national disintegration. Furthermore, the students' welfare programmes are limited in nature and the role of the University administration is often undemocratic and infested with other age-long diseases. Thus, it may be cryptically remarked that we are yet to get ourselves free from traditional back-pull.

Defects in organization and system are no less glaring, (i) Despite the expansion of Universities we cannot demand that the growth of higher education is matched with total population, (ii) The Universities are still dominated by humanistic studies and questions of proper teaching staff equipment and local needs were not properly evaluated.

Furthermore, the influence of tradition and vested interests play to inhibit modernization of knowledge and acquaintance with the latest thoughts. Again (iii) The University's role in technical and vocational studies fall short of expectations. Very little direct link has been forged between the University and the productive world as President S.D.Sharma mentioned in his call to industrialist in B.E. College (deemed University) convocation as mentioned earlier. Despite the recent initiative of the U.G.C. the link between the University and the adult world of illiterate is very limited. (iv) Defects in examination process have been plaguing our Universities. And last (v) but not the least, recently the questions of finance and the poverty of Universities have been featuring prominently. Equitability of financing procedure is also doubted. (LIV/Summary of Plan Expenditure 1989-90 including XL/Appendix XIV/Governments paid to Universities during 1989-90 (Major head-wise) under Plan and Section III, need special mention).

It is not unnatural that the cumulative effect of these inadequacies and incongruities is reflected in students' unrest. A former Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University admitted in a convocation address that the root of 'students' unrest lies in economic crisis and unemployment'. As a matter of fact, "in the absence of other avenues before them, the students flock to the Colleges and Universities mostly come to kill the time. Even while pursuing the higher courses they find no ray of hope. They could not be what they hoped to be. In fact, the present system of higher education can not invest the pupils with a purpose and an ideal. Indiscipline is but a method to give vent to their feelings, however, undesirable it might be",<sup>105</sup>, as Prof. J.P. Banerjee observed.

There is no panacea to solve these acute problems of higher education. It is so thoroughly diseased that at best our remedial suggestions are implicit in our diagnosis of the problem. First of all we need more Universities, but simply multiplication of Universities without local needs, incidence of students population for proper feeding of the institutions and without provision of 'effective teaching and financing mechanism' is not worth-while. It will be rather infested with new

problems. Secondly, time has come to pay attention to the feasibility of more single institutes providing technological and professional specialisation. Thirdly, the University curricula should be so modified as to forge a link with practical life-situation. Fourthly, seminars and tutorials should foster self-activity of students. The necessary teaching staff should be provided. Fifthly, the area of research provisions needs to be expanded and improved with all facilities. Sixthly, the standard of University Education should be so raised as to weed out the incompetent and undesirables as well as to establish parity with the Universities in advanced countries. Therefore, students-counselling is an essential need. Seventhly, the need for instruction in mother tongue should be accepted too. Eighthly, need for extensive provision of Welfare services for the students to meet the immediate and internal causes of resentment. Again, ninthly, only academic and teaching qualifications should guide teacher recruitment. And finally, University administration should be streamlined and University finances strengthened and University professor from the home-University needs to be recruited to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor post.

The University Grants Commission has been statutorily formed, which we have hinted earlier, with the responsibility to:

- (a) Make decisions on the establishment of new University,
- (b) Disburse Central Grants for Higher Education
- (c) Foster specialization in different Universities,
- (d) Improve the general tone of University Administration,
- (e) Improve the student welfare activities,
- (f) Improve libraries and research facilities.

Some sparing marks of improvements have been made in the field of curricular organization. It has drafted a 'model curricular act' in 6th Inter-University Board, Conference of Vice-Chancellor, Seminars and Refresher and Orientation Programmes. The mother-tongue has been

accepted as a matter of principle, students participation has been admitted to the administration of certain Universities<sup>106</sup>.

But concrete work and actual achievements lag much behind 'talks and discussions'. In the opinion of Professor J.P. Banerjee 'a conflict between tradition and progress is clearly evident'. But his concern reflected through his word about the future of University as well as higher education in India when he cautioned: "But the whole edifice will crumble down if reasonable progress is not made in the immediate future"<sup>107</sup>.

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