UNIT 10 POLITICAL FORCES AS NECESSARY SUPPORTS AND INEVITABLE CONSTRAINTS TO EDUCATION

Structure

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10.1 INTRODUCTION

Education, economy and the political setup are three sub systems of the entire social system and as such interact dynamically with each other. Education and the operant political forces are very intimately related, and different schools of thought have interpreted their interrelationship differently. At one end education is considered “the most important ideological state apparatus” (Altheusser, 1971) devised by the ruling classes to ensure that society largely conforms to their ideologies and interests. On the other hand there are many social scientists, politicians, educationists and planners who consider education as a powerful instrument of social change.
The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) for instance described education as “the most important single factor in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress and in creating a social order founded on the values of freedom, social justice and equal opportunity.”

Though it is true that some of the goals of education in our society are the manifestations of the thinking of the philosophers and social reformers like Tagore, Gandhiji and Zakir Hussain, to name a few, it is equally true that the education system is largely conditioned by the prevalent socio-economic and political power structure. Changes in education are often determined by the changes in this structure, particularly by the changes in the distribution of power — economic, social and political — in society. The educational system which is a social product and a subsystem of the entire social system acquires a collateral relationship with it. But this relationship can never be and never is an exact correspondence and incongruities and conflicts do occur i.e. with correspondence and collateralility there are also contradictions and conflicts.

First the social situation, together with its underlying socio-economic structure and the political power structure is never static.

Second, the educational system like every other sub-system in the general social framework, acquires in the course of its development, certain autonomy and therefore, its own dynamics of development depending on its own contradictions.

Finally, educationalist has a dual character. If, on the one hand, it socializes the individuals to conform to social groups, it also has the capacity of generating a spirit of skepticism or liberating the human mind from shackles of dogma, and thus rebels against social constraints and seeks solutions outside the framework of the established system.

Education can help the process of social change as a necessary and vitally important collateral factor. It can help to stimulate, accelerate and work out that process by disseminating and cultivating knowledge, information, skills and values appropriate to the changing socio-economic and political structure. It is equally true that education itself is greatly influenced by the shifts in the political and economic power structures. Many a times, the desired developments in the educational sphere to bring about the desired social change do not ordinarily take place because of powerful structural constraints prevalent in society. Such is the dynamic relationship between education and the various political forces.

In this unit, we are going to discuss political forces vis-à-vis education. We will begin by carrying forward the introductory discussion and see the relationship of education with various political forces. We will then discuss various constitutional provisions, their amendments and implementations. Subsequently, we will talk about two important issues of education where political forces have played a major role both as support as well as constraints. These issues are quality of educational opportunity and universalization of elementary education. This unit has been prepared to help you in the understanding the role of state as an important component of society as a whole and its relationship with education. It is hoped that this unit will further help you to understand the socio-political dimensions of education.
10.2 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- delineate the relationship between state agencies and education;
- highlight the factors affecting equality of educational opportunities;
- discuss the relevance of constitutional provisions and amendments regarding education; and
- evaluate various efforts of the Government of India for universalizing education.

10.3 THE STATE AND EDUCATION

In broad, general terms, a state is an association of people, a specific organization of society which is responsible for performing political functions, and which possess the ultimate power of coercion and sanction. Without such a "STATE" order and regulation it is impossible for a society to make any concerted efforts at progress. Since education is basically and essentially a social function (Durkheim 1956), everything that in any way pertains to education must be influenced by the State. At the same time, in the larger interests of the society, the State must allow other schools to be opened for which it may not be directly responsible.

According to Durkheim, the role of the state was largely one of outlining basic and essential principles in education, and of ensuring that those were transferred to children in all schools. Such principles include respect for reason, for science, for ideas and for sentiments which are "at the base of democratic morality" (Durkheim 1956) Musgraves was of the opinion that education may not be a sufficient condition for democracy but it certainly is a necessary condition for its survival. Manheim's arguments underline the fact that, whatever political or social ideal we may uphold, an educational system and pattern geared towards that political aim is a necessary condition for its survival.

This raises a very important question as to whether the schooling of children should change with every change in government. Though education must always work in co-ordination with the political system of any country, yet it does not imply that the educational system should be subordinated to doctrinaire policies and the whims of political parties. Government, however, in any country implies control. Of course there must be some central control; there must also be some participation in, or delegation of authority and power in a complex society such as our own. The vital problem is to establish the limits of both control and freedom. Educational goals are often established by philosophers and social thinkers. In our country for instance, Gandhiji's influence on the educational thought of India before and after independence illustrate this point. But, usually it is seen that in practice goals, objectives and structural patterns are largely influenced by the dominant politico-economic structure and the various powerful groups in society. An example of a powerful group in society is the bureaucracy, which has exercised a powerful influence on Indian education.
10.3.1 Bureaucracy

In actual operation of the bureaucratic system it has been shown that in most countries the system works with a decisive social bias heavily in favour of the upper or dominant strata of society. At the same time bureaucracy provides occupational and social mobility to a small number of people from the lower strata. And those people from the lower strata—who in spite of their inherent handicap—make the grade gradually-co-opt into the upper strata so that with this adjustment and accommodation the socio-economic structure carries on more or less on the status quo pattern.

The agents of the socialization process called education include (a) political, administrative and educational leadership (b) the managers, trustees etc. of educational institutions; (c) the teachers; and indirectly (d) the users of the products of education i.e. employers. The goals and therefore the main content of education are usually determined by the thinking and interests of (a) and the classes they represent; and this means they take into consideration the requirements of (d) — the employers. As mentioned earlier, the content, methods and organization of education are often effectively influenced by important pressure groups like the bureaucracy—which is often, as in India, the single largest employer of the product in a developing country. Usually the content of education may also be influenced by the ruling educational ideas, the ideas of prominent educational thinkers and philosophers of the times.

This highlights how powerful a social or political force the bureaucracy is. It is the bureaucracy which determines the relationship of education with society and social change in two ways: first, education in its actual practice cannot transcend the socializing agents taken collectively. Second, the desired social or economic change through education can occur in society only to the extent that the socializers (or the educating agents) intrinsically desire it and not the usually employed pious hopes and rhetoric. This will, therefore, depend on the extent that the change is in accordance with their actual interests.

10.3.2 Political Will

The expansion of education during the post independence period illustrates how economic change and growth, together with political forces and political change, effectively influence and largely determine developments in education. They not only influence the expansion and growth but also indicate the lines along which they will take place, and influence the content of education as well.

The educational system in a modern nation—state largely depends on the polity and power structure in the country. Because the state is the main source of its funds, and even otherwise, it exercises considerable direct influence on how the educational system is organized, run, expanded and developed, on the relative importance and allocation of resources to different stages and sectors of education and on the type of governmental and institutional administration. Even the contents of education and methods of teaching and examinations can all be traced in the last analysis of policy decisions, which are, in essence, political.

The educational system, on the other hand, contributes to and supports the political system in various ways. First, for the very running of the State apparatus,
education has to provide suitably trained manpower in adequate numbers and with appropriate specializations, including political leadership at various levels. Second, education is expected to bring about the right kind of political socialization of the coming generation, to impress upon them attitudes and values which will make them at least acquiescent, if not positively enthusiastic, receive of the dominant politico-economic ideas, the ideas of the dominant classes. Besides these relatively more direct obligations, the educational system also fulfills a more basic task, which is also political in its essence. This is to help, maintain and run the economy. Thus the educational system, both by its ideology and practice, tries to legitimate and strengthen the politico-economic structure in society.

In this section, we have tried to study the relationship between state (and its different agencies) and education.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.
      b) Compare your answer with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Define State.

2) How does bureaucracy influence education?

3) How does education support the political system?

10.4 CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR EDUCATION

The Constitution of India came into force on 26th January 1950. It envisaged a secular socialist democratic republic where the people enjoyed “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.” To uphold these lofty ideals the Constitution made various
provisions to help the people prosper under the banner of the secular, socialist, democratic Republic that India was envisaged to be.

The declarations of the Indian Constitution may be treated as the starting point of India education. The Constitution stated clearly that education was a state subject. However, the 42nd amendment Act of 1976 transferred the subject of education to the concurrent list, which means that both the Central as well as State governments are empowered to make laws on education. In case of conflict or controversy, the Union law shall prevail. The importance of making education a concurrent subject is that now the Centre is in a position to make integrated policy on education and strive for obtaining a uniform standard therein.

Articles 29 and 30 make provisions for protection of natural and religious interests of minorities. All minorities based on religion or language will have the right to set up and administer institutions in their own interest and the government while giving aid to educational institutions shall not discriminate against any institution on the basis of its being set up and administered by a particular religious or linguistic minority (Article 30-2). Similarly, any educational institution receiving aid from the government shall not have the right to deny admission to any person on the basis of religion, caste, race, language or any of them (Article 29-2). These two articles very clearly state that the government shall not impose any language of its own choice on any minority, that the minority status of any group will be determined by its population in the state and that every institution receiving aid out of state funds will have to secure the interests of minorities.

However, according to article 28, no religious instruction shall be imparted in a state run educational institution. At the same time according to article 28 (2), any institution maintained by a trust or religious body can impart religious education, even though such an institution may be aided by the government. But in such an educational institution, children cannot be forced to imbibe such religious education, which may be different from their own faith, unless of course, their parents permit.

These constitutional provisions reflect the secular or non-religious character of India. Article 28 clarifies that in government run educational institutions no religious instruction of any kind be imparted. But those educational institutions which are maintained by a trust or a religious body can impart religious education, even though such an institution may be aided by the government. But in such educational institutions which are maintained by a trust or a religious body, such education may be imparted without any compulsion. Constitutionally, religious belief is purely an individual or personal affair which cannot be turned into a social question.

Provisions have been made in the Constitution for safeguarding the weaker sections against all forms of exploitation and also to provide education to them. Upholding the principle of equality with reference to women and children, Article 15(3) states that nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any special provisions for their education. Similarly under the Directive Principles of State Policy the Constitution, Article 45 stipulated that “the State shall endeavour to provide within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, for free and compulsory primary education to all children until the age of 14 years”. Article 46 states that the state shall protect and promote with special care the educational and economic interests of weaker sections particularly the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and also protect them against all social injustice, and
all kinds of exploitation. Till recently, both these articles were under the Directive Principles of state policy implying thereby that it was not mandatory for them to be fulfilled.

A historic amendment to the Constitution came into effect in 2002. This was the Constitution (eighty sixth Amendment) Act 2002. This made elementary education a fundamental right of every child. This amendment provides for: (i) insertion of a new article 21A that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such a manner as the state may, by law, determine, (ii) substitution of the article 45 that the state shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years; and (iii) amendment of articles 51A inserted therein a new clause (k) after clause (j) that a parent or guardian should provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be ward, between the age of six and fourteen years.

Linked to education is the issue of national language. Article 343 of the Constitution mentions clearly that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script. This is further emphasized through article 351 whereby it will be the duty of the Union to bring about the spread and progress of Hindi, so that it may become the medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India. This has to be done by adopting words primarily from other languages and by integrating into it the style, form and terminology of the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, without however, doing any violence to the originality of Hindi itself. Article 345, 346 and 347 relate to the regional languages and the official language for communication between the Union and the States. Article 345 gives an option to the State to adopt Hindi or any other language or languages in use in the State to be used for official purpose of the state. Article 346 mentions that the official language for communication between one State and another State or between State and the Union shall be the official language of the Union. Article 347 provides that if the President of India is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognized by that State, he may direct that such language shall also be officially recognized in the state.

Articles 343 and 346 made it clear the English shall be used as the official language of the Union for all official purposes for fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution. Besides it shall be used as the official language for communication between States and the Union for the said period. Parliament was empowered to continue the status quo even after 15 years. According to Article 348 all proceedings in the Supreme Court and every High Court and authoritative texts of all Bills and Acts shall be in English until the parliament by law provides otherwise. No limit has been set here for switching over from English to Hindi. The Parliament has been empowered to take an appropriate decision in the matter.

As the situation is today, English enjoys a lot of social prestige and is in fact considered as a passport to upward social mobility. Given this pressure, the government has now implemented the teaching of English from class I in all government run schools. Thus after more than half a century after the adoption of the Constitution, English continues to be used as the official language for
communication between Union and the States and among States also. This will continue to be the status in the foreseeable future of the country.

Two more constitutional amendments deserve mention. The 73rd and 74th amendments empowered the local bodies to evolve and implement educational plans appropriate to their local contexts. This is a significant development with the centre delegating decision making powers to sub national levels. It is one of the various strategies adopted to universalize elementary education.

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<td>b) Compare your answer with those given at the end of the Unit.</td>
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<td>4) What is the importance of the 86th amendment?</td>
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10.5 EQUALITY AND EQUITY

Human beings are not equal in ability and it would not be realistic to expect that any large society in history has ever achieved a situation of equal status or equal rewards for all its members. However, the goal of equality has been acclaimed in a limited way by many societies for particular purposes or areas of life. Religion was probably among the first of the major areas of life where the concept of equality – in the sense of spiritual equality – was propounded. Here too hierarchies exist – as someone being spiritually more or less evolved and thus being closer to or away from God. But the idea that human beings are equal in the present of God has been incorporated by many religions.

Another area of human life where the concept of equality is important is equality in the eyes of the law. This implies the acceptance by society that all its members irrespective of their status, classes or attainments, would be subject to the same law and they would be liable to the same punishments for the same offences. Even though it is quite possible that in the actual implementation of this principle, people find ways in which this principle may be compromised, yet it is a characteristic of many states that they recognize the principle of equality before law.

Closely related to this concept is the concept of political equality, or equality in political rights. This facet of equality is a twentieth century phenomenon. Universal adult franchise, for instance, did not include women till the 20th century.
The most recent extension of the concept of equality is the idea of equality of opportunity. This refers generally to opportunity for improving the economic and social status in society. It is natural that this concept has gained importance at this point of time in our history, because this stage of history is characterized by great social mobility in the wake of a change from agrarian to industrial economy.

Equality of opportunity is a compromise between the absolute goal of equality on the one hand and the social necessity of providing unequal rewards for tasks which make unequal demands on the degree of skill, expertise, physical vigour or some other quality. These qualities are not equally available seen in all individuals.

The concept of equal opportunity implies equal access to the channels of social mobility. In modern society, education is a necessary channel for improving one’s social and economic status. Though there is no guarantee that with education one can always move to positions of power and prestige, yet without education chances of such mobility become very remote, if not impossible.

Education can play a role in equalizing opportunities in three important ways:

i) By making it possible for all those who have the ability and desire to be educated, to benefit by that facility.

ii) By developing a content of education which will promote the development of a scientific and objective outlook; and

iii) By creating a social environment in class and non-class activities which will be conducive to development of intercaste, interlingual and interreligious fellowship. An atmosphere of mutual intolerance whether based on religion, language, caste or class preference cannot facilitate equalization of opportunity.

Of course education is not the only channel of mobility; moreover, provision of educational facility will not equalize all opportunities. Parental income, parental education, class and cultural backgrounds are important factors which influence opportunities. However, not all variations in cultural background are necessarily disadvantageous. In a very important sense these variations may turn out to be a source of strength for society.

The effort of a society which seeks to equalize opportunity, therefore, largely takes the form of providing services which compensate for the inequality in economic background through socialized community services and through provisions of educational facilities. Of course, it is very difficult to provide such facilities adequately and universally. Not even the most developed countries would have the resources to provide free education to all those desirous of benefiting by it except at the primary and secondary stages. And developing countries are often unable to provide it even at the primary level. However, since education has been accepted as a necessary condition for upward social mobility, education (and particularly basic education upto elementary school stage) may be seen as a catalyst of social change. The contrasts between different states of India provide ample illustration of this fact. For instance the experience of Kerala powerfully brings out the dialectical relationship between educational progress and social change. The spread of education helps to overcome the traditional inequalities of
caste, class and gender, just as the removal of these inequalities contributes to the spread of education. On the other hand, the educationally backward states of north India have made comparatively little progress in eradicating traditional inequalities particularly those of caste and gender.

Literacy is a powerful tool of self defense in a society where social interactions include the written media. An illiterate person is definitely less capable of defending herself in court, to get a bank loan, to enforce her inheritance rights to take advantage of new technology, to compete for secure employment, to get onto the right bus, to even vote intelligently – in short, to successfully fulfill the demands of modern society. An educated person is less vulnerable and marginalized in modern society, and thus education has a lot of empowerment value in spite of the various shortcomings of the educational system.

10.5.1 Economic Constraints on Equality of Opportunity

The economic system of India also influences the equality of opportunity particularly in the area of educational opportunity. About 50 percent of the Indian population is considered to be living below the poverty line (depending on where the poverty line is drawn).

However, it is a myth to assume that the economic dependence of poor families on child labour is the primary reason why so many children are still out of school. Contrary to this presumption, recent studies of the time utilization of Indian children reveal that a large majority of out-of-school children do relatively little work to be counted as members of the active labour force. Conversely, it has been found that children who are excluded from the schooling system take up productive work (of their own choice or through parental pressure) as "default occupation". Even among children whose income earning activities are essential for the family the time spent on these activities is relatively small and flexible to be able to accommodate school hours.

However, child labour is a crucial issue in itself and may even account for persistence of educational deprivation. There is some overlap between the two problems – child labour and school exclusions – but there is no congruence. Even in other areas household chores and other work responsibilities are a significant obstacle to regular attendance. For instance the eldest child of the poor family (irrespective of the sex of the child!) is often expected to look after the younger siblings. Children of widowed mothers may also be deprived of education especially in villages. It would again be wrong to view the average out-of-school child as the victim of rigid work responsibilities.

Thus the economic factor which affects participation in education is that schooling is expensive. Even through government schools charge only nominal fees (if any) the cost of stationery, uniforms and related items are far from negligible. The poor are so pre-occupied with their economic survival that they cannot think of sparing their children for full time education. Also, they are unable to perceive the returns from education, which in the initial years of schooling consists mainly of acquiring the skills in literacy. Success in achieving education for all necessitates enabling conditions for the poor to be able to successfully face the requirements of schooling.
Adult education faces similar constraints. Many adults have hardly any inclination or time for an education which is not relevant to their day to day experiences. Both the poor situation of the masses and their unfavourable attitude to education are hindering the efforts for achieving education for all.

An important economic issue is that of resources for education. Plans for increasing enrolment and retention in primary schools should also recognize the financial implications. Any significant success in efforts to increase enrolment and control dropout at the elementary school stage would result in the need for far more resources for the school system in the country. If all those who enter school are retained in school until they complete education, will the existing school system of the country have the capacity to take any fresh enrolments? Would not there be a serious problem, if adequate infrastructure were not provided in the situation of sudden substantial fall in the rate of dropout?

The economic factors affect the higher secondary education system also, especially vocationalization. Vocational education is estimated to be five times costlier than general education. The resources currently allocated do not seem to be adequate to vocationalize the plus-two stage in such a way that all those who complete it are equipped to enter the world of work. This is another constraint on education arising out of the economic system, unless the country is in a position to raise the Gross National Product (GNP) (which is currently at 3 percent for education) the plans and programmes cannot be successfully implemented and hence the set targets cannot be achieved. In the absence of required increase in the allocation of funds for vocational education, the way ahead is to device ways of optimally initializing available resources, at the same time building capacities to mobilize resources.

Thus the issue of access to education is concerned with not only access to primary education but also access to appropriate education at the higher secondary stage also.

10.5.2 Female Education

PROBE survey found that almost 90 percent of parents in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (which incidentally are four educationally backward states) considered it “important” for a girl to be educated. This is a very encouraging finding given the fact that traditionally there has been indifference if not active opposition, to female education in these states. It is thus important to understand the social roots of this problem of poor attainments in female education.

Traditionally education in India has been the luxury of the select few. Vedas could be studied only by the sons of the twice-born (i.e. Brahmans) and educating women was a challenge to the social order. This in spite of glorious examples of female intellectuals like Maitreyi and Gargi in the ancient scriptures. Widespread female literacy is a recent phenomenon. In fact, at the beginning of the 20th century, female literacy rate was below one percent in every British province of India and every native state. The exceptions were Coorg, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the states of Travancore and Cochin of present Kerala.

Against this historical background, the spread of female literacy in the 20th century and particularly in the post independence period is a positive development.
However, there is no reason to settle into a self-congratulatory complacency. In spite of these big strides, India's performance in comparative international terms is dismal.

The poor functioning of schools is one reason for the persistence of endemic female illiteracy. One should keep in mind that the brunt of the failure of government primary schools has been borne mainly by female students, especially in rural parts of the country. Where schools have been dysfunctional or poorly run, it is common experience for parents to send boys to schools in other villages or to private schools. Parents are often reluctant (for very valid reasons) to send their girls to distant schools or bear the fees of privately run schools to educate their daughters.

Poor functioning of dysfunctional schools are not the only reason for poor participation of female students in the schooling system. Otherwise too, male participation in education has been usually better than female. Apart from poor functioning of schools the very low level of parental motivation for sending girls to school which is a problem singular in itself.

The low value attached to female education by many Indians is very intimately linked to the status of females and gender relations in Indian society. Three of these links have been usually observed: first, the gender based division of labour along with the patrilineal property rights tend to reduce perceived benefits of female education. Most of the girls in rural India spend most of their adult life in domestic work and child rearing and perhaps some forms of agricultural labour. In such a lifestyle, formal education has little or no meaning in their own eyes. Of course, education for the girl can be an asset even if her career is limited to domestic work and child rearing, but these intangible benefits usually do not receive adequate recognition.

Second, the norm of patrilocal exogamy (requiring a woman to settle in her husband's village/house after marriage and to sever most links with her own family) prevalent in India acts as a demotivator for parents to invest in a daughter's education. There are two related reasons usually given for this attitude. One that the benefits of the parents' investment will be reaped by other households - a girl child merely being a "sojourner in her own family"; and two that the money they would spend in her education may as well be saved for her marriage.

Third, the practice of dowry and the ideology of hypergamous marriage whereby it is advisable that a woman should marry "up" in the social scale - can turn female education into a liability. In communities with low levels of male education, educating a girl may diminish her marriage prospects considerably. Even when basic education may improve a girl's chances of marrying, an "over educated" daughter may be more difficult and more expensive - to marry off.

Given these links between female education and gender relations it is not surprising that twentieth century progress in female education has been particularly slow in certain areas of the country. The bright side is that advancements in female literacy rate have been comparatively rapid in regions where gender relations are less patriarchal. Kerala may be the obvious example, but even states like Meghalaya with its overwhelming tribal population show no gender bias in school attendance. Similar is the story of states in the Himalayan region in the north and
northeast including Himachal Pradesh, Uttranchal, Mizoram, Sikkim and Manipur. Patriarchal norms tend to be less rigid in these areas than elsewhere. Himachal Pradesh is a particularly striking example.

In areas where patriarchal society is prevalent, factors affecting decisions are markedly different for boys and girls. In the case of educating boys, the economic incentives are strong because improved education improves employment prospects, and economic benefits also inter alia ensure an old-age security for parents. These same concerns – economic returns and parental self-interest – on the other hand provide very weak incentives for educating girls. Parental concern for the well being of a daughter in her own right, and recognition of the contribution education can make in the quality of her life (and of those around her) are more important motivations.

An important lesson of the 1990's is that parental commitment to female education can change very substantially over a short period of time under the impact of economic change, public action and social movements. For instance, the provision of mid-day meal in local schools has been found to reduce the proportion of out-of-school girls by much as 50 percent. Even in states such as Rajasthan where gender bias in education and related gender inequalities are extremely large, there have been effective initiatives in this respect during the ‘90’s leading to a major rise in female school attendance from 41 to 63 percent between 1992-93 and 1998-99 according to the National Family Health Survey.

10.5.3 Educational Attainments of Himachal Pradesh

According to the 1961 census the literacy rate in Himachal Pradesh was 11 percent, much lower than the corresponding national average in every age group. Himachal Pradesh was in fact one of the educationally most backward states of the country. However, by the time the 1991 census was conducted the literacy rate for girls in the age 15-19 age group alone shot up to 86 percent. In 1998-99 school attendance in the 6-14 age group was 97 percent for boys and even higher for girls. In this respect Himachal Pradesh has caught up with Kerala, and was well ahead of all other states.

Comparing Himachal Pradesh with Kerala we may safely say that the progress from mass illiteracy to near universal elementary education is more spectacular than the situation in Kerala. First, sustained educational developments had started in Kerala from the 19th century onwards, whereas it has been achieved in about 3 decades in Himachal Pradesh. Secondly educational expansion in Himachal has been based almost entirely on government schools with very little contribution from private institutions, missionary and related institutions. Thirdly, Himachal Pradesh’s topography and settlement pattern is not favourable to expansion of public services in rural areas. This feature is very unlike Kerala where rural settlements are highly accessible. Finally, child labour used to play an important role in Himachal Pradesh’s economy, partly because of the dependence of many households on environmental resources and also (in the case of girls) the fact that a high proportion of adult women work outside the household.

Broadly speaking, the schooling revolution in Himachal Pradesh may be explained in terms of a vicious circle of state initiative and public response. Thus massive provision and expansion of schooling facilities provided by the government have been actively utilized by the populace and demanded further state investment.
Social development in Himachal Pradesh particularly as also in other parts of the Himalayan region has been brought about by a relatively favourable social context. Social disparities are not very pronounced but a tradition of local cooperative action is. This has been a great catalyst for the educational development in the state in at least 4 ways:

First, social equality has facilitated the emergence of consensual social norms in educational matters. In fact a striking feature of parental motivation for education here is that it cuts across the barriers of caste, class and gender that have been so pernicious elsewhere in the country. In Himachal Pradesh the notion that education is an essential part of every child’s upbringing has acquired the character of a widely shared social norm.

Secondly, social equality has brought about cooperative action for the provision of local public services including educational facilities. A successful schooling system depends a great deal on cooperative public action, including cooperation between parents and teachers (to ensure regular pupil attendance) cooperation between parents (to ensure regular teacher accountability) and cooperation between teachers and management (to effectively implement pupil incentive schemes). The PROBE survey suggested that cooperative efforts of this type were more common in Himachal Pradesh than elsewhere in north India. For instance, in many of the villages selected as samples, parents had collaborated to build an extra room for the local school or supplied wood in winter or leveled the playground. The rapport between parents and teachers was found to be more cooperative than in other states where there was mutual indifference or, worse, antagonism.

Third, social equality helped to generate a demand for quality education and of course other public services also. In most Himachal Villages, the local school was a “common school” where children of all social backgrounds study together. Thus the entire village community had a stake in effective functioning of the school. It has been observed that villagers in Himachal Pradesh rarely put up with a non-functioning school. This kind of community membership is important to ensure equality of schooling opportunity.

Related to this is the fourth factor which is that the close school community-relationship resulted in better school functioning. School-community relationship is closer in the villages of Himachal Pradesh as in the rest of North India.

In the previous section, we discussed female education and various factors that influence it. It is worthwhile to see what the gender roles and relations in Himachal Pradesh are as well as their contribution towards the improvement in overall educational standards in the State.

Just like social disparities are blurred in general in the state, so is the gender bias. Himachal Pradesh is not as rigidly a patriarchal society as are the other north Indian states. The female labour participation rates are quite high here. Thus women in Himachal Pradesh are less dependant on men economically, have bargaining power and enjoy their individuality.

This has highly positive repercussions on participation levels of girls and women in the educational process. First a large member of women in the workforce raises economic returns to female education. Since employability of females is quite
high, young girls tend to have ambitious career aspirations. Secondly, parental decisions for education/schooling tend to be less male-centered. Thirdly, society as a whole accepts, pays attention to and in fact encourages female education with women being more involved in the public sphere. Fourthly, since more women are a part of the workforce in general, more are also found in the teaching profession. The number of female teachers (about 40 percent) in Himachal Pradesh is much higher compared to the rest of north India (about 20 percent, on an average). Thus girls are naturally motivated to come into the fold of education and stay there. Fifth the presence of women in the labour market encourages girls to attend schools at a distance from their habitations. Thus, over all, the presence of women in the workforce develops positive attitudes of the society towards female education.

Other aspects of gender relations also tend to be more favourable in Himachal Pradesh. As a result girls can continue their education beyond adolescence also. It is also socially acceptable for girls to be better educated than their husbands. Thus the fear that a well educated girl will be difficult to marry off does not bother Himachali parents.

However, we should bear in mind that on its own, community motivation could not have brought about this revolution without an equally committed government. Particularly since the 1960’s, successive governments have concentrated on developing rural infrastructure especially roads and schools. Spread of elementary education has been a priority as is reflected by the high per capita expenditure (which is double of the India average) on education.

The combination of the state commitment and community involvement have succeeded in preserving some accountability in the schooling system. As a result, the school register is accurate; pupil attendance is carefully recorded and inquiries are made about non attending children; formal tests are held at regular intervals with a Board Examination at the end of class V. Most importantly, school hours are spent in active teaching. None of this can be seen in a typical government school of Bihar or Uttar Pradesh where apathy and disorder reign supreme.

There are many lessons to learn from the experience of Himachal Pradesh. Of course historical and social factors are different in other areas but this state has shown that a proactive community can be a major catalyst in social, economic and educational development of the masses.

**Check Your Progress 3**

**Notes :**

a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with those given at the end of the Unit.

5) **What are the three areas where some amount of equality can be achieved?**

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6) In what ways can education help in equalizing opportunities?

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7) What are the three factors responsible for low rate of participation of women/girls in the schooling system?

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8) The progress of Himachal Pradesh towards the target of universalization is more impressive than that of Kerala. How?

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10.6 UNIVERSALIZATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

By the time the constitution of India was drafted and implemented in 1950, India as a nation was fully awakened to the importance of an educated populace. Apart from idealistic and social welfare reasons of helping the backward sections improve their lot, an educated electorate is essential for the success of a democracy. Investing in the education of masses is beneficial for economic development and hence for the social and political stability of the country. Thus the constitution envisaged the achievement of universal literacy by 1960. As J.P. Naik was to observe later, this constitutional target was unrealistic to begin with: almost 84 percent of the country was to be educated with highly depleted human, material and monetary resources. However, there have been various efforts to achieve the target of universalizing elementary education.

Article 45 of the Constitution states, “The state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.” This was subsequently amended and according to 86th Amendment Act, 2002, elementary education is a fundamental right of all children. There have been various attempts by the successive governments - along and subsequently in collaboration with other agencies - to fulfill this constitutional directive. Various efforts have been made to improve access to schooling facilities. Hence by 1996 almost 95 percent habitations had a primary school within the walking distance of
1 km. By 1996, India had one of the largest networks of primary schools in the world: 5,77,000 schools with almost 100 million children on roll.

These developments were mainly a result of the National Policy on Education 1986, and Revised Policy Formulations – 1992. Moreover, since the NPE 1986, there has been focus on improving the quality of education also: for instance, teaching learning materials like science kit, mathematics kit and mini tool kits were provided under the Operation Blackboard scheme. Under this scheme minimum essential facilities were also provided to schools. Teacher’s skills were also provided to schools. Teacher’s skills and competence were also enhanced and upgraded by the formation of IASEs. The National Council for Teacher Education NCTE was established as an autonomous agency to look into the quality issues in teacher education programmes.

The NPE 1986 sought to achieve UEE in terms of universal endowment, retention and achievement. Moreover it aimed at qualitative improvement of the schooling experience for the learners.

Also by the time of the Sixth Plan period the government had realized that the government alone may not be able to meet the demand for achieving the target for UEE. Thus at the beginning of the Seventh Plan in 1986, the government decided to involve the non governmental organizations in its attempt to achieve the target. Another major strategy was to actively seek cooperation from international development assistance agencies like the World Bank and the U.N. Agencies.

### 10.6.1 International Co-operation

After the NPE, 1986, and particularly after the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) held in Jomtien 1991, there has been a spurt in activities, programmes and projects initiated to provide quality education at the elementary school stage. After the Delhi Declaration (1993) during the Conference of E-9 countries, the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) in its 50th meeting (1994) resolved to strive for Education For All with the cooperation of international development agencies.

International Cooperation has been sought in the area of primary education. The Indian National Commission for Cooperation (INC) with the UNESCO is the apex advisory, executive, liaison, information and coordinating body at the national level. Cooperation in the field of education is sought to support not only the achievement of the national goal of universal elementary education but also address specific target groups, like women and backward castes and issues, like improving social and economic activities for accessing education.

UNICEF works in close collaboration with the MHRD, NCERT and NUEPA as well as with concerned departments in the states selected for implementing various programmes. UNICEF's role is primarily in the areas of promoting and planning education for all at the district levels. UNICEF has provided technical and financial support to implement projects related to MLLs, projects for evaluation and documentation of Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs): for developing literacy and post literacy materials, innovative media activities such as Project Radio Education in Adult Literacy (PREAL) and production of weekly broadcast for neo literates.
Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP)

The APPEP was launched in 1989 with assistance from the erstwhile Overseas Development Authority (ODA) now renamed the Department for International Development - DFID – representing the UK government. APPEP covered all the primary schools of Andhra Pradesh; the objectives being firstly to enhance the professional competence of primary school teachers and supervisors while focusing on child centered learning, and secondly to help in school building construction.

The project was implemented essentially at the district and Mandal levels (Andhra Pradesh had 23 districts and 1104 Mandals). Detailed implementation plans (DIPs) were made district wise. These plans indicated the number of Mandals to be covered in the year and mandal resource persons, supervisors and Teacher Centre Secretaries to be trained. Moreover, schedules for all trainings and Teachers Center meetings were drawn up in detail.

Teacher training and material development was the central part of the project. This was managed through a rolling cascade programme of training. The training programme within Andhra Pradesh was organized in 3 groups of districts. Group 1 with 9 districts began training teachers and staff of centers in 1989, Group 2 with 8 districts in 1990 and the teacher training of group 3 with 6 districts began in 1991. The staggered start to the programme meant that the project would be completed in a seven year period. All APPEP trainings were based on the following six principles:

- The development of activity based learning
- The use of practical work
- The use of small group work as well as whole class teaching.
- The recognition of individual differences in learning.
- The use of local environment for teaching materials and as teaching context and
- The display of children's work and creation of an interesting classroom environment.

In addition, the regular inspections by the mandal education officers were to advice on how to continue to develop varied pedagogic approaches within the APPEP range. The entire project was thus a complex range of initiatives based around the in-service training of teachers.

APPEP being launched, prior to WCEFA and Delhi Declaration, its scope was limited and did not include aspects like demand generation, focus on girls and non-formal education. It, however, introduced an innovative strategy of organizing in-service teachers’ training programmes at sub-district levels.

Bihar Education Project (BEP)

When the BEP was launched in 1991, almost all educational indicators in Bihar were negative: lowest enrolment ratios, highest dropout rates in the country, large scale teacher absenteeism, degraded educational infrastructure, mismanagement of adult and non-formal education programmes and general administrative apathy.
Bihar Education Project represents the first major attempt in India to include the broad range of national EFA concerns, issues, approaches and strategies in one large scale operational Programme. This project launched in 1991 jointly by the UNICEF, federal government and the state government of Bihar, took a holistic view of primary education, especially with regard to the above mentioned indicators.

Under BEP, teacher training was conducted on the principle of "Teacher first". *Ujalal* the training package for teachers was designed by the BEP to tackle problems pertaining to poor motivational level of teachers, work conditions like inadequate supervision and guidance, apathetic community, insufficient teaching-learning materials and poor linkage of the Education Department with the schools and teachers which are not conducive to learning.

Apart from teachers, trainees included district Superintendents of Education (DSEs) and Block Education Officers (BEOs). The main objective was to orient teachers to the importance of primary education, gender issues, depressed classes, their role in bringing about awareness and social changes, ways to generate community participation as also preparation and use of teaching - learning materials using resources for their immediate environment, and making classroom transactions child centered.

The result of all these activities was an increase in the enrolment and retention in the schools, higher motivation and participation level of teachers, enhancement of their professional competencies, and more important, according to Rao (1996) is that teachers organizations were willing and motivated to work for an improvement of the education system.

**Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project (UPBEP)**

The Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project – UPBEP – was the first major primary education project funded by the World Bank in India. As in BEP, a state level participative autonomous society was set up to look into its management. The UP Education for all Project Board was established in 1993 under the Societies Registration Act to oversee, guide and co-ordinate overall project implementation, allocate funds to approved programmes, maintain project accounts, co-ordinate procurement and monitor implementation progress.

The UPBEP strategy recognized the importance and need for capacity building. The project had two dimensions: a) strengthening of relevant institutions and structures and (b) improving the flow of information for decision-making.

The project implemented in 12 districts of UP had one control district – Barabanki – and had established an elaborate network of decentralized machinery up to the village level. However, as in BEP and similar other projects, it was at the district level that the administrative machinery was most elaborate to support and monitor the sub district level educational administration.

Project activities at the district level took place under the overall guidance and supervision of the District Education Project Committee – DEPC. Similarly the District Project Officer – DPO implemented, coordinated and monitored all activities.
programmes in a Project District. DIETS were developed under the project to shoulder the responsibility for improvement of the quality of education and also to serve as the professional support agency for the schools. The effectiveness of DIETS was strengthened through the establishment of an Academic Resource Group (ARG) in each district under the Chairmanship of the Principal of the concerned DIET. The infrastructure built by the project in DIETS was utilized to implement, supervise and monitor the quality-based aspects of the project.

With reference to UPBEP, DIETS were assigned the following responsibilities:

- Academic and resource support to basic education systems in the district.
  - Trainings
  - Resource persons
  - Induction training of newly appointed teachers
  - In-service training of primary and upper primary school teachers
  - NFE (Shiksha Ghar) instructors and ECCE (Shishu Shiksha Kendra) workers.
  - VEC members

- Development of region-based instructional materials.

- Building up database of local facts, folklore, dialects etc.

- Close relationship with Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Nayay Panchyat (Cluster) Resource Centres (NPRCs), to monitor and supervise activities at these centers.

- Action research and experimentation to deal with specific problems in the areas of basic education.

- Development of locally relevant teaching-learning material.

- Analysis of EMIS and micro planning data to plan and suggest appropriate interventions for quality improvement of basic education.

A Cluster Resource Centre or the Nyaya Panchyat Resource Centre (NPRC) had been established of the 1747 Nyaya Panchyats covering 10-15 schools in each project district. The centers managed by a coordinator of the level of primary school headmaster, had a critical role in the EFA strategy and the NPRCs were to be the hub of all the educational and co-curricular activities of the area. They were used for teacher support activities, monthly meetings and trainings. SCERT was strengthened and motivated to initiate and sustain a variety of interventions to improve the quality of basic education in the state.

Revamping and strengthening school management was central to affecting a transformation in the prevailing environment. School managers received inputs for school management. To increase community involvement, VEC members were trained. Awareness building and regular interaction with teachers and school managers were features to bring school and community together.
The following steps were undertaken to improve school management in project districts: activation of VECs to take up responsibility of school functioning; broad-basing of VEC by increasing the number of members; establishment of three tiered, DIET / BRC / NPRC academic support to provide help and guidance to school teachers in project districts; establishment of SIEMAT to improve management and administration of basic education by providing training to educational administrators and managers undertaking research studies in the field of basic education; creation of 12,728 additional posts of assistant teachers for schools where enrolment necessitated more staff and 4291 posts of additional teachers were proposed; ensuring a minimum of two teachers per school; upgradation of 2262 posts of assistant teachers to head teachers for such schools which did not have them; and providing general maintenance grant to all primary and upper primary schools which was to be utilized for purchase of goods and materials.

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

The programme of action (1992) called for an integrated and decentralized approach to the development of primary education with focus on building capacities particularly at district and sub district levels. DPEP emerged in 1994 as a result of this policy initiative.

DPEP built on experience gained from implementation of various externally aided projects in India. Important projects undertaken till 1993-94 included UNICEF assisted BEP, USBEP with IDA, APPEP with the assistance of DFID, Shiksha Karmi Project with SIDA and Mahila Samakhya and Dutch Assistance. The DPEP was approved as a centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Government of India with the following objectives:

- To reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than five percent.
- To reduce overall primary dropout rates for all student to less than 10 percent.
- To raise the average achievement levels by at least 25 percent over measured base line levels and ensure achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40 percent achievement level in other competencies by all primary school children.
- To provide according to national norms, access to all children to primary education classes (I-V) i.e. primary schooling wherever possible or its equivalent non-formal education.

The programme was also to strengthen the capacity of national, state and district level institutions and organizations for the planning, management and evaluation of primary education.

With these objectives it was initially launched in 42 districts of seven states: Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Later it was extended to Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan apart from Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttrakhand. The programme covered 18 states and more than 270 districts in 2002. The criteria for selecting districts under the DPEP were that the district should be educationally
backward with female literacy below the national average of 39.29 percent; and districts were the TLC had generated demand for elementary education. Out of the 536 districts of the country, TLC Programme covered 450 districts as on 31st March 1999.

DPEP was different from earlier schemes in several ways: (a) DPEP adopted a holistic approach from the schematic to be integrated, with emphasis on convergence of existing programmes and resources. (b) It adopted area specific approach with district as the unit for planning and implementation. The key strategies of this district specific planning were to retain the contextuality and sensitivity to local conditions. This implied that plans were tailored to the specific needs of the districts. (c) Corollary to the area specific approach was decentralized planning with disaggregated target setting. (d) Consistent with the philosophy of decentralization, plans were prepared at the districts through a participatory process involving district and sub district functionaries, teachers, parents and community members (e) DPEP had a marked focus on sustainability, sustaining the benefits beyond the project period. (f) Equity was a major concern in DPEP. ALL plans, strategies and interventions were made to address the specific needs of disadvantaged groups such as SCs / STs, minorities, girls and disabled. (g) The programme stressed community participation and community ownership. (h) DPEP which adopted innovative practices and approaches, was a “home grown idea”. It was managed by educational administrators who also happened to be a part of the educational system. Capacity building through training, extension and other means was given priority. (i) DPEP resources were additional to the existing budgetary provision for education. A basic requirement for DPEP was that at least 1991-1992 levels of expenditure on elementary education should be maintained in real term over the project period. (j) The programme finally encouraged convergence of services in education, health, NFE, ECCE rather than replicating them.

The DPEP relied heavily on the formulation and implementation of district educational plans. It envisaged that all DPEP districts would be able to prepare annual work plans which would be reviewed at the national / state level and approved for implementation.

The DPEP guidelines also provided for systematic monitoring of the district plan implementation.

To improve pedagogical skills and teacher competency DPEP relied on the state resource group (SRG), District Resource Group (DRGs), Regional Institutes of Education, DIETS, SCERT, at the state level and NCERT at the Central level. The Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and the Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) were established at the block and cluster levels respectively to provide training and support to teachers.

Janashala Programme

As part of the efforts to universal agencies: the UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO and UNFPA collaborated with the Government of India in 1997-98 to provide financial and technical support for community based primary education programme called the Joint Government of India - UN System of Education Programme or the Janshala Programme. The Janshala which means community school, aimed to support on-going efforts of the Government of India towards
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UEE, with special focus on problem of girls and marginalized children. UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA provided the financial grant and UNESCO and ILO technical support in the fields of multigrade teaching, teacher training and developing strategies for mainstreaming of out – of school children.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, as the executing agency, has overall responsibility for implementing the programme.

Janshala Programme was launched in the nine districts of Uttar Pradesh, Jharkand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Those low female literacy level and high SC/ST concentrated blocks where child labour was prevalent were selected where the DPEP had not been implemented. The blocks were selected by the respective states on the above criteria.

By 2003, it had covered 139 blocks with approximately 20,000 habitations, 3 million children, 58,000 teachers and 18,000 schools.

The main aims of the programme were to enhance and sustain community participation for effective school management. Secondly, it aimed to improve teacher performance in the use of interactive, child centered and gender sensitive methods of teaching especially multigrade classrooms. Finally it aimed to redress social constraints which affected attendance and performance of children, usually girls.

Janshala had taken a conscious decision to work at the district and block levels with the existing administrative setup of the Education Department. It sought to involve functionaries of the Education department in planning and implementing the programme. Janshala conducted trainings for them and provided external technical support. Thus programme officials at the district and block levels were the officials of the Education Department. They were supported by resource persons at the district level and Block resource centers (BRCs) with a coordinator and resource persons at the block level.

Some of the major activities included training of teachers, setting up alternate schools in small, remote habitations, conducting camps for identification of children with disabilities and the necessary strategy for the rehabilitation and therapy and setting up of block and cluster resource centers. By 2002-03 Janshala had set up over 2000 alternative schools and conducted more than 1000 bridge courses. These covered 100,000 children.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan began in 2001 and was expected to take off from where the DPEP left. Like other projects and programmes which preceded it, this Abhiyan too was an attempt to universalize quality basic education through community ownership of schools. This programme was also to be implemented in a mission mode.

The SSA is to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children upto 2010. Thus this programme has a clear time frame for achievement. Secondly, it aims to provide social justice by bridging social and gender gaps with active community participation in school management. The SSA is also an effort effectively involving the PRI’s School Management Committees (SMCs), VECs, PTAs,
Mother-Teacher Associations (MTAs) as well as the Tribal Autonomous Councils. Moreover, since the SSA is an expression of the political will for achieving UEE, the aim is to achieve a healthy partnership between central, state and local governments at the same time providing the states the autonomy to develop their own vision of elementary education.

Thus specifically, the objectives of the Abhiyan are that by 2003 all children should have been enrolled in any educational institution - formal schools, EGS, AS or "Back-to-School" camps. Secondly, by 2007 all children should have completed five years of primary schooling and eight years of elementary schooling by 2010. The focus has to be on a satisfactory quality of education (SSA Draft Plan 2000). Thirdly SSA will bridge all gender and social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary stage by 2010. Finally SSA aims to achieve universal retention by 2010.

The SSA also recognizes the central role of teachers and advocates a focus on their development needs. Thus under SSA, BRC and CRCs have been set up. The programme focuses on recruiting qualified teachers and aims to provide opportunities for their professional development through participation in curriculum related material development. Human resource development among teachers is also aimed at by paying attention to classroom procedures while training them and also by organizing visits for teachers to different schools. It plans a 1:40 teacher pupil ratio and at least two teachers per primary school.

As per the SSA framework, each district is expected to prepare a District Elementary Education Plan reflecting all the investments being made in the elementary sectors with a holistic and convergent approach.

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**Check Your Progress 4**

**Notes:**
- a) Write your answers in the space given below.
- b) Compare your answer with those given at the end of the Unit.

9) What were the two objectives of APPEP?

10) In what major way was the BEP different from the APPEP?

11) In what areas of implementation did UPBEP liaison with the DIET?
12) What were the major objectives of the DPEP?
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13) Highlight the significant features of SSA, which were not in the earlier projects?
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10.6.2 NGOs and Primary Education

Though the NGO and governmental relationships have for a long time been distant if not actually conflictual, yet during the last two decades a diversified range of non governmental organizations have emerged which have had a profound effect on development approaches and practices. Some of them are specialized in advocacy studies while others are fully action oriented. The small NGOs are heavily dependant on resources from bilateral and multi lateral government agencies, while others are big and mobilize their own funds. There is a new partner emerging in the drive of universalizing elementary education – the corporate sector.

Azim Premji Foundation

In 2002, the UNICEF signed an agreement with Azim Premji foundation to jointly support universal primary education programmes in the country.

It began functioning in the following 7 areas of Karnataka: Yadgir, Shapur, Jewagi, Gulbarga Rural, Aland Taluk, Devdurga Taluk and Maddur Taluk with the objective of supporting the Government’s Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme and promote UEE. The organization would focus on improving the quality of learning in schools, and the school environment including sanitation, developing models of community processes that support community groups and utilization of technology in elementary education. It was estimated that in the first phase of the programme approximately 20,000 students would be benefited which would subsequently be replicated to reach a larger group.

Children’s Hope, India

Children’s Hope is an American NGO involved in various issues related to education, health and care of children. In India, the NGO supports different programmes: it supports 2 units of 30 balwadis each and hence 60 balwadis for providing free education for pre-school children. These balwadis are run by Pratham, a Public Charitable Trust.

Salam Balak Trust operates shelters for street children in several cities. Children’s Hope has funded drop-in shelters for older boys and a medical centre which looks after the health of homeless children, many of whom inhabit the Delhi Railway Station.
Finally, it supports the organization 'Sisters of the People' in New Delhi which provides kindergarten education for children of slum dwellers, along with a mid-day meal, simple civic lessons and some opportunities to play in their balwadis.

**Pratham**

Pratham was established with assistance from UNICEF and Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation in 1994 to help the achievement of UEE in Mumbai by creating a societal mission.

Beginning from Mumbai it successfully spread to other parts of the country like Ahmedabad, Vadodra, Bangalore, and finally Pratham – Delhi was launched in 2000.

The project works in Municipal Schools with cooperation from the concerned headmaster / Headmistress of the school. Pratham appoints Balsakhis who teach the students lagging behind in the class and thus assist in achievement of quality primary education.

The balsakhis are selected and trained by Pratham official. The strategy was to select a girl from within the locality and give her intensive training and continuous support and monitoring to enhance her potential as a teacher.

### 10.7 LET US SUM UP

There is a dynamic relationship between education, economy and polity of any society; each influences and in turn is influenced by the other. Education may be used as a tool of state control and it may also be used as a tool for liberating human kind from the bondages of tradition and orthodoxy. Changes in education are determined by changes in the socio-economic and political power structure. Education has the power to bring about social changes. It is equally true that education itself is greatly influenced by the shifts in the political and economic power structures. Many a time the desired developments in the educational sphere to bring about a desired social change do not take place because of powerful structural constraints prevalent in society. Such is the dynamic relationship between education and the various political forces.

There are powerful political forces at play in educational decision-making, and also in deciding the course educational developments would follow. Two important forces are the bureaucracy and the political will: one executes the legislations made by the other. Together these two forces determine the content, methods and organization of education. Education in its turn challenges the establishment. On the other hand, it also legitimizes the existing power structures. It therefore, becomes important to balance the freedom and control of these players in the social set up.

The issues of equality and equity are essentially issues of access to education. Access may be seen in both physical and social terms. As far as physical access is concerned almost 95 percent habitations had a primary school within a walking distance of 1 km by 1996. Social access is a challenge the country is still struggling with. A major disadvantaged group is girls who are still lagging behind in literacy attainments. However there is hope and some states like the Himachal
Pradesh have done commendable achievement in improving female participation in education.

The final section of the Unit deals with the issue of universalization of elementary education. The government policy underwent a major change from the mid-eighties onwards. Many strategies were adopted to achieve the target of UEE in a mission mode. Collaborations with international development assistance agencies was taken up in a big way and various projects were implemented, the latest being the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The government also realized and tapped the potential of various NGOs in this changed policy of achieving UEE.

### 10.8 UNIT END EXERCISES

a) Visit 5 families of class IV Government employees in your neighbourhood and try to examine their views on education of girls in their families. What do you attribute their views to?

b) Comment on the finding that child labour does not necessarily result in educational deprivation.

c) Discuss the state of female education in your state.

### 10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) A state is an association of people, a specific organization of society, which is responsible for performing political functions and has the legal right to use force.

2) a) Content, organization of education is determined by the bureaucracy.

b) Bureaucracy determines the extent of its influence.

3) a) Education provides required manpower.

b) Education helps in political socialization of the masses.

c) Education maintains and runs the economy.

4) The 86th amendment makes education a Fundamental Right and makes it obligatory on the state to ensure education of the people of India.

5) a) Religion

b) Law

c) Politics

6) a) Providing facilities

b) Developing scientific temper

  c) By developing a classroom climate which facilitates development of a spirit of mutual tolerance.

7) a) Gender based division of labour

b) Patrilocal exogamy i.e. settling in the husband's village after marriage.
c) Dowry and hypergamous marriage i.e. marrying in a socially superior family.

8) a) It has been achieved in about 4 decades. In Kerala efforts for mass education began in the 19th Century.

b) It is based almost entirely on government-run schools

c) It has been achieved in spite of adverse topography and habitation pattern i.e. small and scattered habitations in hilly areas.

d) It has been achieved in spite of the fact that child labour plays an important role in Himachal Pradesh's economy.

9) a) Training teachers with focus on making learning child-centered.

b) Developing school buildings.

10) BEP was the first major attempt by the Government of India to include EFA concerns, issues, approaches and strategies like demand generation, gender issues, improving teacher training for better primary education and involving community as a proactive participant.

11) a) Academic and resource support to the basic education system in the district.

b) Development of region-based instructional materials.

c) Building up a database of local facts, folklore, dialects etc.

d) Close relationship with Block Resource Centres (BRCs) Nayay Panchyat (Cluster) Resource Centers (NPRCs) to monitor and supervise activities at these centers.

e) Action research and experimentation to deal with specific problems in the areas of basic education.

f) Development of locally relevant teaching learning material.

g) Analysis of EMIS and micro planning data to plan and suggest appropriate interventions for quality improvement of basic education.

12) a) To reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than five percent.

b) To reduce over all primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10 percent.

c) To raise the average achievement levels by at least 25 percent over measured base line levels and ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40 percent achievement level in other competencies by all primary school children.

d) To provide according to national norms, access to all children to primary education classes (I-V) i.e. primary schooling wherever possible or its equivalent non-formal education.
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13) a) It has a specific time frame.
   b) It provides for social justice.
   c) It is a reflection of the political will to establish healthy partnership between Central, state and local governments.
   d) It provides autonomy to states to develop their own vision of elementary education.

10.10 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS


