UNIT 11 EDUCATIONAL OPERATIONS AND POLITICAL DECISION MAKING

Structure

11.1 Introduction
11.2 Objectives
11.3 Dependence of Education on Political Decision-making
11.4 Educational Operations: Concept and Types
11.5 Considerations Influencing Political Decision-making in Education
11.6 Political Forces and Major Areas of Political Decision-making in Education
   11.6.1 Educational Funds
   11.6.2 Curriculum and Textbooks
   11.6.3 Establishment of Universities
   11.6.4 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for UEE and Education for All
11.7 Policy-related Decision-making and Educational Operations
   11.7.1 DIETs: Mission and Structure
   11.7.2 Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs)
   11.7.3 Institutions of Advanced Study in Education (IASEs)
11.8 Let Us Sum Up
11.9 Unit End Exercises
11.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
11.11 References and Suggested Readings

11.1 INTRODUCTION

You are aware that education consists of various activities, also called educational operations. These activities have to be planned on the basis of certain decisions and objectives. In a school, the management and the principal take a number of decisions. Some of the decisions lead to relatively long-term educational operations. For example, implementing a certain vision of school education calls for long-term operations. On the other hand, some decisions have to be taken on the spot because of the immediate urgency. The school can be considered the smallest educational unit. State education system and national education system call for certain political decisions from time to time. Thus political decision making at the level of state or central government becomes essential for keeping the educational system ticking, for making it more responsive to the changes in the social system and economy and for improving it to make it closer to the ideal and comparable with the best educational system in the region or the world.
This Unit deals with educational operations and political decision-making. The dependence of education on political decision-making has been discussed first. This is followed by the concept and types of educational operations. Considerations that influence political decision-making have been taken up next.

Political decision-making has a long history. But this Unit deals with political decision-making in education during the post independence period, particularly after the Education-Commission (1964-66). In fact, the Report of Education Commission submitted to the Parliament in 1966 marks a watershed in the history of our national education system. Recent education developments due to political decision-making can be linked with the National Policy on Education 1986, revised in 1992. It is well known that a Review Committee on National Policy on Education 1986 was set up due to changes in the Central Government but the Review Committee Report, submitted in December 1990, was not tabled in the Parliament and consequently no political decision could be taken on it. Therefore, the Review Committee Report has not been treated in this Unit. This Unit ends with a description of policy related decision-making in education and the areas that are impacted by this decision-making.

11.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss why and how education is dependent on political decision-making for its smooth operations;
- analyse the process of political decision-making in educational matters;
- cite examples of different types of political decision-making in education;
- describe major political decisions related to education;
- give examples of various structures established as a result of policy related political decision-making in education;
- critically analyse the expected role of DIETs in the universalisation of primary/elementary education (UPE/UEE);
- analyse various pressures in political decision-making in education; and
- appreciate the crucial role of political decision-making in developments in contemporary Indian education.

11.3 DEPENDENCE OF EDUCATION ON POLITICAL DECISION MAKING

Because education is concerned with knowledge and knowledge-based skills and processes, it is often assumed that it is apolitical and unconcerned with political decision-making. This is, however, not true. Even though education serves the same basic functions in all societies viz. to teach young ones the ways of the society and the skills necessary for society and the individual to develop and prosper, there are different views about how these basic functions should be achieved and in what measure by learners of a particular age. For example, in pre-dominantly agricultural societies, the content and form of education would be different from that in highly industrialized societies. The form of the political system
e.g. democracy, feudalism, dictatorship etc. also influences the aims, content and form of education. The family is the chief stakeholder in the education a child receives. It may view a particular form of socialization as more desirable and this in turn would influence a particular ambience in school and use of certain processes.

In a democratic society like India, the constitution assumes a particular type of citizen more suitable for the society and the political system envisaged in it. The type of governance visualised in and supported by the Indian constitution is geared to the development of a responsible citizens and such a citizenry has certain inalienable rights which are guaranteed under the constitution. Consequently, political decision-making about education becomes extremely important. However, the process of political decision-making in educational matters is expected to provide legitimate space for the family and beyond a particular stage to the individual as well. Thus education can become a complex process dependent upon political decision-making and many other societal institutions. It certainly is not something that takes place in isolation and is unconcerned with the life around.

If we examine the major functions of education, we find that all of them are controversy-ridden. Most sociologists hold that education has five major functions to perform which are:

- socialization of individuals
- transmission of culture
- social control and personal development
- selecting, training and placement of individuals and
- change and innovation.

Most societies these days are multicultural and polylingual. India surely is one. Different social groups have different views on what is right and what is wrong; what values should be learnt and imbibed by children and which ones should be shunned by them. The family’s expectations from education in any multicultural society varies across different ethnic groups and socio-economic classes. Modern educational systems, especially those in democracies claim to promote scientific temper, free enterprise and secular outlook. These may differ from or even go against the expectations that a particular society has from education. However, there is broad consensus that education should make every individual a productive member of society and enable one to identify oneself with that society. So far as transmission of culture is concerned, each cultural group fiercely advocates that its peculiar culture, traditions and values must be reflected in school curricula. This struggle for propagating our culture more than those of others often becomes unsavory in the context of ‘national curriculum’. The third function, namely social control involves considerations about discipline, freedom, rights and duties. According to sociologists the nature of discipline differs mostly with the social class, racial-ethnic group and sex. Controversies, are therefore, bound to arise.

The function of ‘selecting, training and placement’ indeed bristles with controversies. “Should the process of selecting, training and placement be entirely merit-based or be geared to promoting and perpetuating class differences or be based on positive discrimination in some measure?” There are no easy answers to these questions. Political power and social hegemony are often seen to influence decision-making in these matters. The recent insistence on ‘sons of soils’ for education and recruitment adds yet another complexity to the issue in our country.
The fifth function of education, promoting change and innovation, is hardly apolitical and free from controversy. Education has to be responsive to its social contexts. If these contexts change, education has to redefine its aims and sometimes change some of its processes. Since change in the educational system can mean a lot more than what appears at the surface level, it is natural for people to read more in political decisions about educational change and innovation than would be warranted. Political groups are quick to react to these changes and innovations and soon various types of pressure groups join the issue. Education is expected not only to change itself over time but also promote change in society. Questions like 'Who would determine the nature of change, its pace as well as direction?' lead to heated debates. Quite often, political decision-making, which is sometimes also seen as 'political intervention' by some, becomes inevitable in deciding the direction and pace of change and innovation in education.

You may have noticed that a new concept "educational operations" has been used in the above para. Let us examine it in detail in the next section.

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) Cite three reasons why education has to depend upon political decision-making.

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2) "Education is essentially concerned with generating and transmitting knowledge. Hence it has to be apolitical." Comment on this statement in 7-8 sentences.

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11.4 EDUCATIONAL OPERATIONS: CONCEPT AND TYPES

The dictionary meaning of 'operation' is 'activity'. Thus educational operations would mean 'educational activities'. However, the concept of 'educational
operations' can be best understood if approached through different levels. One can visualize three levels of educational operations: (a) Level I — classroom based operations; (b) Level-II school based operations which will also include operations that involve community; and (c) Level III — state based operations. Most of you are quite familiar with various classroom-based operations; these include teaching-learning, socializing, disciplining, selecting, innovating, testing and grading etc; School-based operations include school-assembly, envisioning and maintaining a particular school ambience, house-system, sports, activities involving all students, extra-mural programmes including linkages with community and meetings with parents and field i.e., out of school programmes like field visits etc. State-based operations are in fact state-mediated operations. These can be envisaged as macro-level operations. These operations may be initiated by the state government and/or the central government because education is a concurrent list item under Schedule VII of the constitution of India.

After analyzing the level at which educational operations may be initiated and implemented, it would be worthwhile to remember that in this unit, we are concerned with educational operations at Level III only because of the theme of this Unit. We may now examine what the various educational operations that would be subsumed at this level. Since level III agencies have legislative powers, they may initiate and approve policy decisions that may direct the shape of the education system and its structures and processes. They may also create new structures to implement various policy decisions and to achieve goals. Besides, the central government may direct the concerned apex institution to develop National Curriculum Framework and textbooks and other instructional material to help achieve the goals envisaged in the National Curriculum Framework. Thus educational operations at level III may be in the form of policy, plan(s) of action, creation of new structures both within the existing education system as well as in addition to what exists. These may include agencies for effective regulation and control. Level III educational operations may also concern new inputs, and processes as well as monitoring mechanisms.

The concept 'structure' needs to be understood in detail. Structures are part of an education system. New structures created by the state or the central government also become a part of the existing education system. Structures can be described and analysed. All educational institutions, organizations and societies whether created by a group of people, or the state, whether government or non-government are educational structures. These structures are created for attaining various sets of goals and they consist of people who act. Without educational structures, we cannot think of an educational system and of educational processes. Schools and universities are educational structures, educational committees set up for accomplishing certain tasks and various task forces are also structures though these may be temporary. Professional bodies too are educational structures. Regulatory bodies like National Council for Teacher Education, Distance Education Council, etc. are also structures. These various structures interact with each other and make the education system open, dynamic and vibrant. Interaction among various educational structures may create controversies and conflicts that have often to be resolved. Their resolution is often through administrative action but sometimes political interventions too become necessary.
Check Your Progress 2

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

3) Describe the concept of 'educational operation' (in two sentences).

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4) Describe why education is a complex activity dependent upon other societal organizations and political decision-making.

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5) Describe the concept of 'educational structure' and cite three examples.

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11.5 CONSIDERATIONS INFLUENCING
POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING IN EDUCATION

India is a democracy and because of this, the process of political decision-making in India is very different from that in other political systems. It is said that democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. While this may not be literally true, yet this description of democracy expresses its essence. In India the elected political representatives whether in the state assembly or in the parliament are considered to be in touch with the ground realities in their constituencies. They are expected to know the needs and aspirations of their people and their community and district specific problems and they try to legislate accordingly.

The parliament is supreme so far as legislation and governance are concerned just as the state assembly is all powerful in the context of state matters. But above both these viz., the Parliament and the State Assemblies, is the constitution of India. It is from the constitution that all organs of the state derive their powers as well as functions.
The four values enshrined in the Preamble of our constitution (viz., justice – social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity, and to promote it among them all; and fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation) are supreme and non-negotiable. Political decision-making in educational matters is not expected to violate various provisions and the spirit of our constitution. Secondly, these decisions should promote the welfare of all sections of society. Thirdly, political decision-making in educational matters should be progressive rather than retrogressive. Fourthly, political decision-making should result in decisions that are practical and can be implemented. There are the chief considerations that influence the process of political decision-making in the field of education.

These considerations were best expressed by the Education Commission in its Report in 1966 in their proposed programme of educational reconstruction which resulted in the first National Policy on Education (1968). The following three considerations guided the Education Commission (1964-66) in their work:

- internal transformation of the educational system so as to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the nation;
- qualitative improvement of education so that the standards achieved are adequate, keep continually rising and in a few sectors become internationally comparable; and
- expansion of educational facilities broadly on the basis of manpower needs and with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities.

To take another example, National Policy on Education 1986, revised in 1992, was formulated with a view to

a) addressing the problems of access, quality, utility and financial outlay;

b) checking the danger of erosion of our long-accepted values;

c) reducing rural-urban disparities and promote diversification and dispersal of employment opportunities;

d) ensuring reduction in population growth through spread of literacy and education among women;

e) developing and promoting the ability to internalize new ideas creatively among the young; and

f) emphasizing the Indian conception of a human being as a positive asset and a precious national resource that deserves to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness, care and dynamism.

All these considerations are significant and matter a great deal in national development and promotion of the feeling of national pride and multi-culturalism. Besides, the considerations that influenced the Education Commission (1964-66) and which are reflected in the National Policy on Education of 1968 and that of...
1986 further reveal that while some of the considerations that affect political decision-making in education are more or less permanent, others are topical and related to the problems of the period.

Another consideration that influences political decision-making in education has not been mentioned so far; it concerns the future of the political party in power that spearheads the process of decision-making. No political party would like to destroy its political future especially its chances of winning at the next polls. This consideration often compels the political party in power to arrive at workable compromises, thereby diluting principle(s) - based decisions. Some would call it a limitation in political decision-making in education in a democracy. On the whole, political decision-making on educational matters in democracy, in spite of its various limitations, is better than in other political systems because of its greater acceptance and people’s willingness and cooperation to implement these decisions successfully.

Political decision-making in education is of two types: (a) Ideological decision-making and (b) Operational decision-making.

a) **Ideological Decision-making**

Ideological decision-making affects policy formulation. Various issues raised and dealt with in the National Policy on Education 1968 and that of 1986, revised in 1992, illustrate the ideological nature of the recommendations. Policy guidelines, perspective papers on various educational issues etc., are other examples of ideological decisions. Various task groups and advisory committees and think-tank groups consisting of experts from the discipline of education and ideologues provide necessary inputs in order to facilitate such decision-making. The recent decision to make education a fundamental right through a constitutional amendment is a good example of ideological decisions.

b) **Operational Decision-making**

Operational decisions are concerned with the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of providing resources, structures and other inputs e.g., funds, curricula, text books, teacher guide books, etc.

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**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.

6) List any three considerations that influence political decision-making in education.

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11.6 POLITICAL FORCES AND MAJOR AREAS OF POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING IN EDUCATION

In Unit 10, you learnt about how political forces provide necessary support to education and also how at times these forces become an inevitable constraint too. Almost all areas of education are impacted by political forces and political decision-making. The major areas of education influenced by political decision-making are the following:

11.6.1 Educational Funds

It is well known that money makes the mare go. This is true of education too. For example, India’s track record in the context of universalisation of primary/elementary education remained unimpressive for almost fifty years after independence. Paucity of funds and lack of political will were considered to be two major causes of non-attainment of targets. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan launched in 2002 has shown how availability of funds and political determination to write a success story can make tremendous difference. Similarly the scheme to set up National Science Centres on campuses of selected universities across the country with adequate fund corpus can herald a new era in advanced studies and research in sciences. Likewise making additional funds available to selected universities through UGC, and prescribing assessment and accreditation by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) as a compulsory stipulation can promote excellence and make higher education in India globally competitive in the near future. One may conclude that the quantum of budget allocation to education is a reliable indication of the importance a nation accords to the education of its people.

11.6.2 Curriculum and Textbooks

Various political forces and parties are based on and act according to different political ideologies. It is, therefore, natural that the party in power may try to promote its ideology through education. Because of this, educational curriculum invariably becomes a battlefield for political forces to assert and impose their ideology. This is often seen in the case of school curriculum because (a) at this stage, the students are young, their minds more impressionable and much less
(b) school education impacts the life of every citizen especially an educated one; and (c) its role is relatively more significant throughout a person's life. Higher education curricula are more diversified and much more fact-based and research-oriented. These curricula are, therefore, less susceptible to political influences. Political forces nevertheless influence higher education curricula but much less than they impact school education curriculum. The recent debate about National School Education Curriculum Framework (2000) especially in languages and history had more politics than academics in it. Some political parties called it 'wholesale saffronisation' of school education. Incidentally, the nature of a discipline can also make it much less or much more open to the influence of political forces. For example, subjects like mathematics and natural sciences do not provide much scope for political forces to influence them. On the other hand, social sciences and languages would have what many call 'more controversial curricula'. Since social sciences, especially history, are largely 'interpretive' disciplines, they witness more controversy. Historical facts can be interpreted differently from different ideological stances, hence history invariably invites controversy and becomes relatively more debatable.

Textbooks are instruments for concretizing curricula. Therefore controversies related to school education curriculum invariably spill over to textbooks. Writers of textbooks are human beings and they too subscribe to political ideologies. As a result, the process of selecting writers for textbooks on social sciences and languages also becomes controversial. Many see the choice of textbook writers more as a matter of convenient political ideology of the person than as one of his/her expertise. The same holds goods for the selection of reviewers of textbooks.

11.6.3 Establishment of Universities

The National Policy on Education 1968 accorded high priority to agriculture and technology. One of its recommendations was to establish at least one agricultural university in every state. It further recommended that an agricultural university may have constituent colleges on different campuses. Because of this, a string of agricultural universities was established across the country. Both the green revolution and the white revolution were made possible by this measure. The Education Commission's recommendation to promote technical education with practical training in industry led to the establishment of Indian Institutes of Engineering (IITs) and Regional Engineering Colleges in various states. These institutions made it possible for India to emerge as an information technology giant and to become the second country in the world with the largest number of professionals and technologists. The recommendation in the NPE 1968 on part-time education and correspondence courses ushered in a new era in higher education. Many universities established a school of correspondence and continuing education on their campuses. Later on, this led to the establishment of open universities and distance learning as an alternative to traditional face-to-face mode of higher education under the NPE 1986, revised in 1992. While NPE 1968 promoted the 10+2+3 structure leading to graduation, NPE 1986 Recommended broad based educational operations. With a view to reorganizing elementary education, it recommended the use of a child-centered approach in elementary education, improvement in school facilities and use of non-formal education for dropouts and those unable to attend school. Besides it focussed on Early Childhood Care and Education. These measures led to the laudable work of non-governmental
voluntary agencies like Eklavya, Prayas, Pratham, and Digantar, to name a few.
The urge to achieve universalisation of education led to two notable developments in Rajasthan viz., the Shiksha Karmi Project and Lok Jumbish, both of which were funded by donor agencies, especially the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The Shiksha Karmi Project is now in its third phase. The reach of this project can be well assessed from the fact that in September 2001, it was functioning in 31 districts, 146 blocks and 2710 villages of Rajasthan and was serving the educational needs of 2.17 lac children. The Lok Jumbish Parishad, a registered society under the name of “Lok Jumbish Parishad – Association for Advancement of Basic Education for All in Rajasthan” is another success story, currently in its third phase. These new structures for the spread of universal basic education could not have been possible without appropriate political decision-making and support at the right time. Policy recommendations related to technical management education in NPE 1986, revised in 1992, and greater focus on computer as part of professional education led to establishment of new colleges and institutes including technical universities in some states. Private initiative in higher education led to availability of quality higher education at more accessible places. Some of these institutions established their extended campuses at many places. The recommendation about strengthening Indira Gandhi National Open University which was established in 1985 and further development of open distance learning institutions led to the creation of Distance Education Council as a regulatory body.

The focus on development and strengthening of non-formal education as an integral component of the strategies to achieve universalisation of elementary education (UEE) led to Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovation Education (EGS & AIE). Both these schemes were made operational by the Ministry of Human Resources Development on 1st April, 2001. Incidentally, EGS started initially in Madhya Pradesh and produced good results there. The central government sponsored EGS & AIE is now being run in eight states viz.; Andhra Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal. In 2001-02, Madhya Pradesh had the maximum number of EGS & AIE centres (20,378) while Uttarakhand had only 373 centres. The total number of EGS & AIE centres till 31st March 2003 was 51,917.

11.6.4 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for UEE and Education for All

This discussions would be incomplete without Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which can be directly linked to NPE 1986, revised in 1992 and the revised Programme of Action (POA), 1992. POA (1992) provided for the launch of a National Mission for achieving UEE with the central objective of mobilizing all resources – human, financial and institutional – under SSA. The six goals of SSA are:

- to bring all children to school, EGS centre, AIE school or Back-to-school camps by 2003;
- to enable all children in the 6-14 year age group to complete five years of primary education by 2007;
- to ensure that all children in the 6-14 year age group complete eight years of schooling by 2010;
Education and Socio-political Supra-System

- to keep focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life;
- to bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and elementary level of 2010; and
- to achieve universal retention by 2010.

The main features of SSA are the following:
- adoption of mission approach to achieve targets in a given time frame;
- use of community-owned and village education plans;
- focus on districts with low female literacy among the SCs and the STs;
- priority to community monitoring, transparency in programme planning and implementation;
- focus on capacity building at all levels; and
- channelising SSA funds to states through registered societies.

SSA can indeed be called an all out campaign to eradicate the scourge of illiteracy in our country.

It may be pointed out that all these educational operations would not have been possible without insightful and need-based political decision-making by the states and the central government.

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.

8) Briefly describe why school education curriculum is more likely to be influenced by political forces and ideologies.

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9) List any three structures that were established in higher education sector due to NPE 1968.

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11.7 POLICY-RELATED DECISION-MAKING AND EDUCATIONAL OPERATIONS

Political decision-making in various spheres of education needs comprehensive inputs based on experts' advice. This was best reflected in the resolution of the Government of India for setting up the Education Commission on the 14th of July 1964. This resolution highlighted the need to develop "a national system of education rooted in the basic values and cherished traditions of the Indian nation and suited to the needs and aspirations of a modern society". It was felt that if a new social order based on freedom, equality and justice is to be created, then the traditional educational system, revolutionized in terms of its content and extent can prove to be a powerful instrument of social and economic transformation of India. For this, the Education Commission was to "advise the Government on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects". The Education Commission proposed a scheme for re-structuring of Indian education and submitted its Report on the 29th of June 1966 which led to major policy initiatives for transforming our education and through these, our society.

After 1947, political decisions were taken from time to time regarding our educational system. Chief among these are the following:

1) Setting up of University Education Commission in 1948;
2) Setting up of the Secondary Education Commission in 1952;
3) Setting up of the Education Commission in 1968;
4) Formulation of the first ever National Policy on Education in 1968;
5) Setting up of Review Committee on the Curriculum for the ten-year school, 1977;
6) Setting up of National Commission on Teachers in 1983;
7) Formulation of National Policy on Education in 1986 and development of Programme of Action 1986;
8) Formulation of Programme of Action in 1992;
9) Approving the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993; and establishing it in August 1995; and
10) Launching of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2002.
All the above initiatives were taken by the Central Government. The State Governments also took important decisions whenever needed. It was as a result of these decisions that a number of agricultural universities and technical universities were established. Besides various important schemes were launched by State Governments to promote the spread of literacy and education. Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan, Education Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh and People’s Education Act are excellent examples of these. Recent establishment of University for Journalism is yet another example of state initiatives in the field of higher education.

One of the major initiatives in teacher education based on the National Policy on Education 1986, revised in 1992, was the Centrally-Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education in 1987 which led to the establishment of new structures viz.; Institutions of Advanced study in Education (IASEs), Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs). While IASEs and CTEs were upgraded versions of existing teacher education institutions, DIETs were totally new structures. Each of the structures had its peculiar set of functions and yet there was a hierarchical relationship among them. These structures are briefly described below:

### 11.7.1 DIETs : Mission and Structure

A DIET is a grassroots level institution, with the district as the basic unit for educational planning, for evolving strategies for catering to district level specific needs. A DIET’s mission is “to provide academic and resource support at the grassroots level for the success of various strategies and programmes being undertaken in the areas of elementary and adult education”. DIETs have been assigned a pace-setting role in two aspects viz., (a) excellence in the Institute’s own work; and (b) helping the elementary and adult education systems in the district in achieving excellence. The three main functions of a DIET are:

- training (both of induction i.e. pre-service level and continuing i.e. in-service level);
- resource support (extension/guidance, development of materials, aids, evaluation tools etc.) and
- action research.

Besides, a DIET has to devote its primary attention to the promotion of education among (a) girls and women, (b) Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes, (c) minorities, (d) the handicapped, and (e) other educationally disadvantaged and marginalized groups like working children, slum dwellers etc.

With a view to enabling a DIET to attain its mission and fulfill its assigned functions, it comprised the following seven branches or units:

a) Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE) Branch to provide induction level training;

b) Work experience (WE) Branch to cater to the need for vocationalisation of education and to provide a variety of work-experience related inputs;

c) District Resource Unit (DRU) to assist education authorities in planning and coordination of training programmes for Alternative Education/Non-formal
Education personnel throughout the district and to provide necessary support to such programmes organized outside the DIET and to act as a nodal agency in this area;

d) In-service programmes, Field Interaction and Innovation Coordination (IFIC) Branch to identify the needs of elementary teachers in the district and to organize programmes for in-service training to assess the quality and efficacy of such programmes within as well as outside the DIET, etc.

e) Curriculum, Material Development and Evaluation (CMDE) Branch to develop curricular units, techniques and guidelines for continuous and summative learner evaluation, tests, scales and other instruments for diagnostic testing and remedial programmes, etc.

f) Education Technology (ET) Branch to develop simple, effective and low cost teaching aids for elementary education and elementary teacher education; and

g) Planning and Management (P&M) Branch to maintain an appropriate database for the district for planning exercises for attaining goals related to universalisation of primary and elementary education, and national literacy mission etc.

Necessary resources for setting up DIETs, recruitment of staff and providing various necessary resources including infrastructure were made possible because of political decisions at various levels including the highest level. It was necessary that for achieving the educational reconstruction envisaged in the National Policy on Education 1986, revised in 1992, DIETs should not only be established but also facilitated to play their assigned roles and accomplish their mission. Without the cooperation of State Governments and timely political decision-making, DIETs could not have played their expected role.

11.7.2 Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs)

Colleges of Teacher Education are expected to play the twin roles of providing education to secondary school teachers as well as of elementary teacher educators. Based on a set of criteria, some teacher education institutions were selected, upgraded, and re-designated as CTEs. CTEs have been assigned the following seven functions:

1) To organize pre-service education programmes for secondary teachers:

2) To organize subject-oriented in-service teacher education programmes of upto 3-4 week duration for secondary stage teachers;

3) To provide extension and resource support services to secondary schools, school complexes and individual teachers;

4) To conduct experimentation and innovation in school education;

5) To provide training and resource support for new areas of educational concern e.g. value oriented education, population education etc.

6) To provide support to professional bodies; and

7) To encourage community participation in teacher education programmes.
These functions of CTEs clearly bring out their role in strengthening elementary education and making the community a major stakeholder in quality teacher education. Each CTE has been provided necessary additional financial support on recurring basis to enable it to play its expected role in planned reconstruction of our educational system.

11.7.3 Institutions of Advanced Study in Education (IASEs)

Each IASE is mandated to perform all functions of a CTE. Besides, it is expected to:

- conduct programmes in secondary teacher education and prepare secondary stage teachers;
- conduct M.Ed., M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes in Education and prepare elementary and secondary stage teacher educators and researchers. Besides, some IASEs may organize 4-year integrated programme for secondary school teachers.

Need-based norms in respect of recurring and non-recurring expenditure were approved by the Central Government so that CTEs as well as IASE may play their expected roles in bringing about quality revolution in school education and teacher education.

Till September 2001, 461 DIETS, 85 CTEs and 37 IASEs were sanctioned across the country. Besides, the Centrally-sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education has been extended in a somewhat modified form during the Tenth Five Year Plan period. During the current plan period another 100 new CTEs and 20 IASEs are to be established.

Check Your Progress 5

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

11) List the names of two important groups that were set up by the Central Government between 1947 and 1964 to facilitate political decision-making in education.

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12) How was the National Council for Teacher Education set up? When? And what for? (Answer in about 50 words)

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13) Setting up of District Institutes of Education and Training has been possible because of
a) the initiative of the Central Government;
b) the support of the Central and the State Governments;
c) pressure exerted by various educational and political groups.

Tick mark (√) the best response.

14) What pace-setting roles have been given to the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs)?

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11.8 LET US SUM UP

On the basis of what you have read so far in this unit, you must have realized that the task of conceptualizing, planning, implementing and monitoring education in a vast country like India is no easy task. Different religious and cultural groups, political parties, unions and power elites compete with each other to influence political decision-making in education so that education may promote their interests. Political decision-making in educational matters is essentially a matter of exercising power with a view to achieving certain ends, and to secure control over educational operations and sometimes over funds. These days, the power to take political decisions in educational matters have increasingly become concentrated among fewer persons and groups. Various lobbies-educational, economic, cultural and of course, political – try to exert diverse pressures and influence decisions. However, education has increasingly come closer to the life of an average Indian and has equipped people with knowledge and skills in keeping with the changing needs of the times. It has now been realized that if India is to attain ‘Vision 2020’, political decision-making in educational matters, especially proper shaping of educational operations, will play a key role. The ‘Right to Education’ as a fundamental right is indeed a momentous decision to achieve this goal. Political decision-making in educational matters nevertheless does provide political parties a platform to promote their ideology and this will continue to be so in the future too. It is indeed a matter of great satisfaction that political decision-making in educational operations during the last four decades has made Indian education increasingly more developed, and more responsive to national as well as global challenges and brought it within the reach of the largest number of people than ever before in our history. The role of open-distance learning systems in making this possible has indeed been that of an effective catalyst.
11.9 UNIT END EXERCISES

1) “Potential forces influence education through Curriculum”. Comment on the statement.

2) Reflect upon the hierarchical inter-relationship among various structures resulted out of NPE 1986.

3) What are the contributions of SSA and UEE programme in broadening the scope of education?

11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) a) Functions of education are controversial because different groups want their interests to be promoted through these functions.

b) National or state level education system has to be regulated.

c) Constitutional provisions apply to education as well and these must not be violated.

2) This statement is too simplistic to be true. Education is no doubt concerned with generating and transmitting knowledge but that does not mean education is totally free from politics. Educational systems these days are mostly created by the state and these have to be regulated by the state. In a democracy, different groups compete with each other to promote their culture through education. The state is a chief stakeholder in the proper education of its citizens. Hence education cannot be an apolitical activity.

3) ‘Educational operations’ are essentially activities related to and at various levels of the education system. Educational operations may be classroom-based (level-I) or school-based (Level II) or state-initiated and supported (Level III).

4) The basic functions of education in modern societies are characterized by controversies because most societies are multicultural and multilingual. Each group of people would like education to promote its culture and values. This creates controversy and at times conflict. The state is also a primary stakeholder in education. Thus education becomes a complex activity and dependent upon various societal and political institutions.

5) “Educational structures” are part of an education system. Educational structures may be created by people or the state. Educational structures have specific goals and they consist of people who act with a view to attain its goals. Examples of educational structures are professional bodies, educational institutions and regulatory bodies.

6) a) that values enshrined in the constitution are not violated;

b) that political decision-making in education does not harm the welfare of any section of society;

c) that political decision-making in education is progressive i.e., it improves education system and is not retrogressive; and
d) that political decisions in educational matters are practical and can be implemented.

(Any three in any order).

7) Any three of the six considerations that influenced the NPE 1986, revised in 1992.

8) School education curriculum is usually an arena for various political forces because each political party would like to promote its ideology through school education. School education impacts the life of the largest number of citizens. During this period, the learners are young and their minds most impressionable.

9) a) Agricultural universities in various states.
b) Indian Institutes of Technology and Colleges of Technical Education;
c) Schools of Correspondence and Continuing Education.

10) a) Use of child-centered approach.
b) Improved school facilities
c) Use of non-formal education for drop-outs and children unable to attend school.

11) a) University Education Commission in 1948; and
b) Secondary Education Commission in 1952.

12) The National Council for Teacher Education was set up through an Act of Parliament passed in 1991. The NCTE started functioning in August 1995. Its major function is to regulate teacher education in the country and ensure its proper development.

13) b) Support of the Central and State Governments.

14) a) Excellence in the work of the DIET; and
b) Helping the elementary and adult education systems in the district in achieving excellence.

11.12 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS


Govt. of India. (1986). *Programme of Action 1986*. MHRD: Department of Education.

