
UNIT 9 EDUCATIONAL GOALS AS REFLECTIVE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF THE SOCIETY

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9.1 INTRODUCTION

The responsibility of education of child lies with both state and society. School is a unit of society; so mutual co-operation between these two institutions of society is necessary for smooth fulfillment of this responsibility. In democratic countries, the direct responsibility of education is with society and society's influence is seen in many ways on the different units of education through which it manages education. But ultimately it's a responsibility of the state because the state provides resources for the education of its citizens. So in framing the objectives / goals of education, the co-operation of both the institutions is required. Due to this sharing of

responsibility, socio-political ideology influences the process of policy formulation. Policies are guidelines to achieve the objectives of education.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

After having read this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the role of politics in Education;
- explain the relationship between 'Politics' and 'Education';
- enumerate the role of various components of both the systems in deciding the goals of education;
- describe the process of policy formulation for setting goals in education; and
- discuss what should ideally be the relationship between polity and education.

9.3 POLITICAL SYSTEM

To understand the political system of any country there is a need to understand politics, power, and political parties, and how judiciary, religion, business, industry and the political culture of the country influence education system in the country.

9.3.1 Politics

Richard (1991) defined politics as the acquisition and effective use of power – a process of involving interplay among the possessors of political resources and influence. The dynamics of the political process occur within the rules and constraints of the system, but also within those arenas where it is considered legitimate to use power to achieve desired policies and programmes.

9.3.2 Power

Max Weber has defined power as the chance of a man or a number of men to realise their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action

Here we can take an example from the organisational setting in which a manager uses his workforce for fighting the election of the management association. In this case, the manager has power to the degree to which the subordinates comply with his will. Many socialists argue that political sociology is the study of power in its broadest sense. Powse and Hughes state that 'politics' is about 'power' and that politics occurs when 'there are differentials in power'. In term of this definition any social relationship which involves power differentials is political in the study of political sociology. First the emphasis was on the state and other governmental agencies i.e. parliament, judiciary, ministries and other institutions of government. Now the emphasis is not only on governmental machinery, political sociology also examines these institutions in relation to society as a whole.

Now we will examine how power is used by the power holder, whether they are using it for their benefit only or for the whole society. And for this, we have to look into the process of political decision-making. Here, the decision-making bodies are political parties: parties which are in power and the parties which are in the opposition.

9.3.3 Political Parties

Rigg W. defines 'a political party as an organisation which nominates candidates for election to a legislature' competition for office between political parties, provides the electorate with an opportunity to select its leaders and means of influencing government policy.

Political parties in a democratic society represent the public and the public directly influences party policy, since, in order to be elected to govern, a party must reflect the wishes and interest of the electorate in their programmes. Parties are accountable to the electorate and they will not regain power if they disregard the opinions and interest of the public. Lastly, parties cannot simply represent a sectional interest, since, to be elected to power they require the support of various interests in society. Here we will assess the influences of the various other institutions on political parties to take decisions regarding setting goals for education.

9.3.4 Judiciary

Judiciary plays an active role in influencing the education system in the light of policies and programmes fixed by the political party. The court continues to be the centre for many of the conflicts concerning equality of educational opportunity. Whether it is affirmative action programmes to balance gender and ethnic minorities in schools and universities, institutions fixing admission and service quota in educational institutions, equal funding for backward schools and colleges, the judiciary is looking into all matters which are related to providing equal opportunities to achieve all the goals of democracy.

9.3.5 Religion and Minorities

Religious institutions also influence politics and it is the responsibility of political institutions and their representative to raise the issue cited by the particular religion in the society to remove conflicting situations.

Ethnic and minority groups are demanding equal access to education. They had earlier been discriminated against, and prevented from entering the mainstream power structure. Equal funding facilities are available for these educational institutions, while support and help are provided by the government in the upliftment of such groups in society through various programmes for the upliftment of educationally backward classes.

9.3.6 Business and Industry

With the growth in political power and influence of the business and industrial community during the 1980s, educational institutions have come under increasing pressure to meet the "high technology" demand of the twenty first century and to 'catch up with technically developed countries'. Business companies put increasingly more pressure on educational institutions to do something and educate the work force required for technical jobs. The political system serves many important functions for education and must make decisions about the demand raised by society to compete in this global era.

In the more specific realm, it is the political system that sets the overall philosophy of the educational system and decides what values will be passed on to the next

generation. What you want in the state you must put into the school. It is also true that education is responsible for major source of unrest and even revolution in the countries around the world. And this is not the outcome of policies of government. It is due to conflict between the social demand ideologies of the political party in the power.

9.3.7 Political Culture

There is a fundamental tension between pluralism and democracy. Democratic society in principle sanctions the rights of ethnic groups to maintain their separate cultures and communities. In most of the democratic societies the bulk of the population is not actively involved in the political process. Milbrath has suggested that members of society can be divided into four categories in terms of their degree of political participation. First, the politically apathetic who are unaware literally of the political world around them. Secondly, those involved in 'spectator activities' which include voting and taking part in discussions about politics. Thirdly, those involved in 'transitional activities' which include attending a political meeting or making a financial contribution to a political party. Finally, those who enter the political arena and participate in 'gladiatorial activities' such as standing for and holding public and party office. This type of political participation is not uniformly distributed throughout the population. But this participation in politics shows the political culture of any country.

The political culture of India has changed after Independence. Indian leader shouldered the responsibility of taking drastic steps to change the Indian society. The major changes in the socio-political structure of our society were:

- 1) The status of the Indian people was changed from subject to "citizens".
- 2) The Indian people were granted a democratic basis of society.
- 3) The state was given a quasi-federal form with strong centre and weak states.

After Independence there was a shift from a highly centralised and elitist political system to pluralistic and participant political system. The elitist theory believes that all societies are divided into two main groups – the ruling minority and the ruled. Pluralism is a theory which claims distribution of powers in society. Most of the members of society are not directly involved in the political arena. Instead their interests are represented by a relatively small number of leaders who actively participate in the political struggle.

Democratic decentralisation is the system followed by the Indian political system based on the panchayati raj three-tier system of government at local level. This system was much appreciated and supported by local leaders and the masses because it enhanced their power and position and made them more conscious of their political rights. Secondly, it increased the interaction between the leaders and the common citizens. Thirdly, it facilitated economic development and provided the opportunity for political mobilisation of the masses, in order to develop their political consciousness and make them more politically aware and committed participant members of the political system.

This form of political structure has two levels in the hierarchy – the first is the level of national leaders and bureaucratic elites and second is the level of local leaders

and common citizens. These national leaders play a key-role in political movement because they are socially higher educated and economically rich. On the other hand local level leaders who may be economically poor and illiterate are mobilised by national leaders, who are considered as cosmopolitan in their outlook. They are guided more by universalistic considerations towards politics and society.

According to Kamat A.R. (1978), in a country like India where there are widespread political malpractices and vested interest in power and politics, the administrative machinery can easily be used by the leaders for their own political interests and for the interests of their ethnic groups and political supporters. The administration today finds itself under certain political constraints because the leaders, by influencing as well as pressurising the administration, tend to maintain their personal loyalties and patronage for political support from the masses. In spite of pressures the administration make attempts to reduce excessive demands for politicians from wider national interest.

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) How are other institutions of society influencing the ideology of political parties for setting the goals of education?

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- 2) Discuss the political culture of India at present and its impact on education.

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9.4 EDUCATION SYSTEM

9.4.1 Education System in India

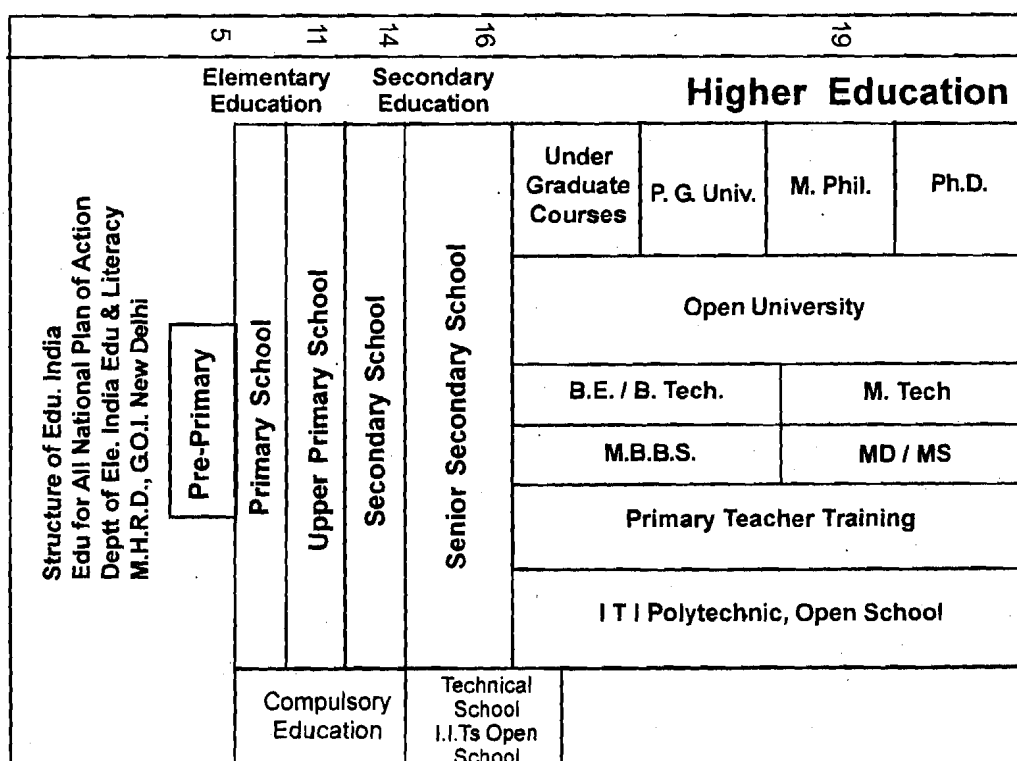
Education as a social system is a unique system and interlinked with other systems, it influences them and gets influenced by them. Many social and political scientists believe that education performs an important political function along with its various other functions. When it is performing an important political function it always remains a major consideration of politics.

Most of the countries believe that there is a relationship between education, economic development and modernisation. They invest in education and thus education reflects the political philosophy of a country, and the goals of the group in power. Many governments have the power to adopt and reject educational programmes or even totally revamp the education system, as in China and Cuba during the communist revolutions. If the government establishes certain priorities for the society the education system is likely to reflect these in curriculum, texts and other aspects of the programmes.

Many comparative educationists advocate new programmes of education based on the needs of countries, not on the political ideology and values of the party in power.

Education was seen as a way to unify and give identity to the nation and states, needed for individual and national progress. Globalisation has created pressure on all nations to organise education systems in similar ways leading to the universality of state schooling and similarities between systems. Pressures from developed world have caused newer nations to commit themselves to state funded mass education model as a part of national building. The worldwide growth of uniform education systems is seen in increased enrolments, establishment of educational ministries, compulsory education laws, increasing state funds, educational opportunities for all including women and minorities and school serving the purpose of socializing agents. Each system brings its own unique national culture into the system, even though education may be influenced by world trends.

In India, major categories of educational institutions are financially supported by the state and the central governments. It is entirely the governments' responsibilities to decide what the total financial support to education should be at all the levels to achieve the objectives of national development. Guidelines are formulated by the government for the distribution of funds for different levels and types of education. The present structure of education in India can be seen through this diagram.



9.4.2 Components of Education System and Political System

Educational Goals as
Reflective of Socio-political
Ideology of the Society

Now after going through both the systems we can identify the components of the educational and political systems which are as follows:

Education System

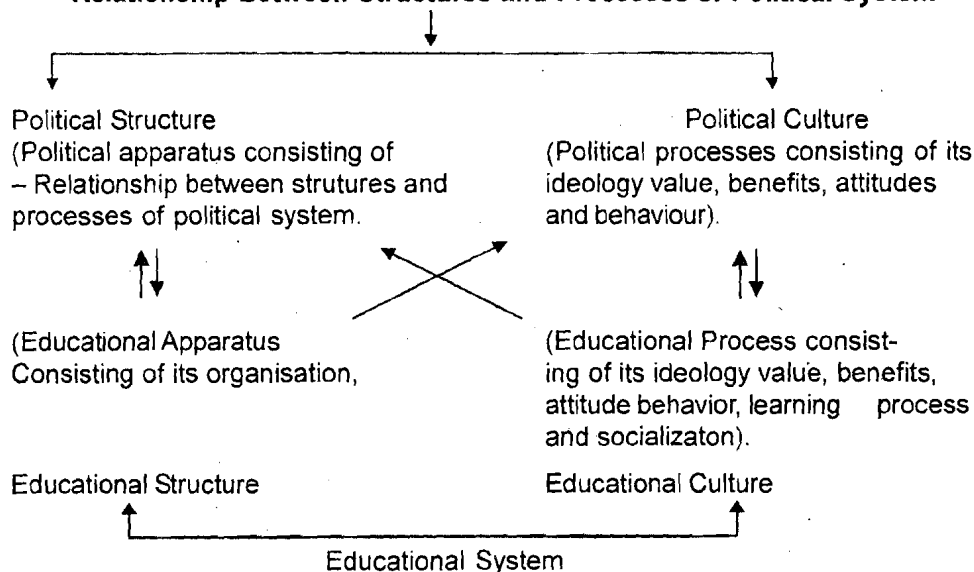
Levels of Education
Curriculum
Purposes/Philosophy
Progress of Study
Administration
Teaching
Pedagogical Method
Teaching Learning Materials
Organisational Structure
Administrators
Teachers
Students
Parents/Community
Co-curricular activities

Political System

Government
(i) Centre
(ii) State
(iii) Local
Legislative Branch
Executive Branch
Judicial Branch
Political Parties
Social Class
and Group
Minorities and
Ethnic groups
Business /
Unions

There are two broad components within both the systems. The political system gets structural and cultural supports from within and from its outer environment for its maintenance and change. The education system both structural and cultural support to the political system through political socialisation of learners between education system and political system. There is also a reverse, relationship in which an educational system is supported by the political system. We can observe the reciprocal relationship between them through this diagram. The diagram shows that these two systems are very closely interlinked.

Relationship Between Structures and Processes of Political System



9.4.3 Education – Responsibility of State

The formulation of a national education plan and its successful conduct is the most important duty of the state. The educational plan should be such as to employ the interests of all the classes of society. Such a plan is beyond the capacity of private educational institutions. Education begins in the family and continues through at the schooling of the child. It is the duty of the state to see that proper education of the child take place both in the family and school. If the family and school do not fulfill their responsibility properly, it is the duty of state to make proper arrangements for the education of the child. For these it should make proper rules and regulations and create such circumstances that the family and schools are forced to fulfill their obligations in this regard.

The education of a citizen is necessary for the success of democracy. The reason is that in democracy the administration of the country is handed over to the elected representative of the people for a limited period. If the people are educated and have wisdom, reasoning power and feeling of independence, they will elect good representatives and after assessing their activities upto the specified period, re-elect them if they come up to the expectations otherwise and if not would not re-elect the same persons. For electing effective candidates the citizens should be educated, otherwise they may elect the wrong candidate. Consequently, neither the interests of the people will be safe guarded nor will it be good for the nation. We have adopted a democratic system in India, so it is necessary for the Indian public to be educated. In a poor/developing country, the public can be educated only when there is compulsory and free education and education takes a universal form based on high ideals.

The basis of administration in a democracy is the co-operation of all the classes. So it is natural that in a democratic system every person should co-operate in the formulation of educational goals and their fulfillment. Every person is free to express his/her ideas on education. Besides the general goal of education it has some specific goals also. It is very necessary to obtain the confidence of the public for deciding the goals of education.

9.4.4 Goals of Education

It is the goal of democracy to provide food, clothing, education and vocational facilities to all. Formulation of educational goals are also the responsibility of the political system. In democracy it is the responsibility of every person to co-operate according to his/her capacity in the formulation of educational goals and its implementation too.

The importance of educational goals is emphasised by philosophers and educators through all stages. Education, which is very much a planned activity, loses much of its significant meaning and faith if put into action without clear-cut goals. This means, a system of education which is not clear about its goals or which works towards undesirable ends is bound to fail. Each stage of education has its own specific goal. Here we will consider education as a whole and discuss goals of education as recommended by the National Policy on Education (1986).

National Policy on Education (1986): The *Draft* National Policy on Education (1986) captures the spirit of the time when it says:

“Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the time. There are moments in history when a new direction has to be given to an age-old process. That moment is today.”

The Draft Further reads:

“The country has reached a stage in its economical and technical development when a major effort must be made to derive the maximum benefit from the assets already created and to ensure that the fruits of change reach all sections. Education is the highway for the goal.”

It was with this aim in view that the National Policy on Education (1986) was given final shape.

Education – A Unique Investment

The cardinal principle on which the National Policy on Education has been based is in regard to education as a unique investment. It is so because education develops human power for different levels of the economy. It is also the sub strum on which research and development flourish, being the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance.

Moreover, education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit. This is desirable for achieving the goal of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our constitution.

The National Policy on Education, 1986 enshrines the following *goals of education in India*.

Creating a National System of Education

N.P.E. envisages a national system of education. This implies that upto a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. This is just reminiscence of the Common School System recommended in the 1968 policy.

N.P.E. and Aims of Education

A Common Educational Structure: A common educational structure has to be adopted. This will naturally be 10 + 2 + 3 structure which has since been adopted in all parts of the country.

Need for a National Curricular Framework: The national system of education shall be based on a national curricular framework which contains a common core along with other components that are flexible.

The common core will include the history of India's freedom movement, the constitutional obligations and other contents essential to nurture national identity. Moreover, all obligations and educational programmes will be carried on in strict conformity and secular values.

World view of Peace and Understanding: The National Policy on Education recommends that education must strengthen the world view of peace and understanding among nations. Education must motivate the younger generations for international cooperation and peaceful co-existence.

Promoting Equality through Equality of Educational Opportunity: To promote equality, it will be necessary to provide for equal opportunity to all not only in access, but also in the conditions for success. Besides, awareness of the inherent equality of all will be created through the core curriculum. This will help in removing prejudices and complexes transmitted through the social environment and the accident of birth.

Developing Diverse Cultural and Social System: The National Policy on Education recommends that a minimum level of learning be laid down. Steps should be taken to foster among students an understanding of the diverse cultural and social systems of the people living in different parts of the country. Besides the promotion of the link language, programmes will also be launched to increase substantially the translation of books from one language to another and to publish multi-lingual dictionaries and glossaries.

Facilitating Inter-regional Mobility: In higher education in general, and technical education in particular, steps will be taken to facilitate interregional mobility. The universal character of universities and other institutions of higher education is to be understood.

Strengthening Areas of Research and Development: Areas of research and development shall be streamlined. Education in science and technology shall be promoted. Special measures will be taken to establish network arrangements between different institutions in the country to pool their resources and participate in projects of national importance.

Life-long Education: Life-long education is a cherished goal of the education process that presupposes universal literacy. Opportunities will be provided to the youth, housewife, agricultural and industrial workers and professionals to continue the education of their choice, at the place suited to them. The future thrust must be in the direction of open and distance education.

By now you might have realised the importance of the goals of education. After having read the goals recommended by the National Policy on Education (1986), we can categorise the goals of education into the following groups: -

These aims are very important in the field of education. All the persons concerned with this field and politics who are responsible for deciding the aims of education should have the knowledge of these aims. The individual should understand his social responsibility. This further includes social adjustment and working for social progress.

Modern Indian society based on democratic, socialistic and secular values has entered in the national system of education. The structure of first national system of visualized Education by Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), then by Indian Education Commission (1964-66) and finally given shape and meaning by National Policy on Education (1986) and Programme of Action (1992), is already on the move. With the help of the determined force of educationists and support of the government at the back, the national system of education is fast covering national life to promote its unique socio-cultural identity.

The concept of the National System of Education implies that, up to given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex have access to education of a comparable quality.

Goals of Education

**Educational Goals as
Reflective of Socio-political
Ideology of the Society**

Self-realisation	Human relation	Economic Self Sufficiency	Responsible Citizen
i) Education for all competence in	i) Establishing successful friendship	i) Higher efficiency in one's field	i) Stability of faith in social justice in different human situations.
ii) Expressing ideas	ii) Desire for cooperation	ii) Knowledge of different vocations	ii) Ability to understand different social activities.
iii) 3 Rs.	iii) Good behaviour	iii) Talent for selecting good work for oneself.	iii) Improving unsatisfactory conditions.
iv) Development Audio-Visual Power	iv) Knowledge of the importance of family in society.	iv) Vocational competence	iv) Liberality, tolerance
v) Knowledge regarding routine health	v) Establishing mutual good relationship	v) Providing competence for buying good things. Spending according to one's income and preservation of interest.	v) Ability to take right decisions in the midst of different arguments.
vi) Recreation			vi) Protecting
vii) Feeling social health service			vii) Utilization of science for social progress.
viii) Utilisation of leisure			viii) Faith in democracy
ix) Aesthetic Competence			

The National System of Education will be based on a national curricular framework which contains a common core along with other components that are flexible. All educational programmes will be carried on in strict conformity with secular values.

If we analyse all the major reforms in the history of Indian education, all of them support secular values in the education system. In spite of this, the politics of recent times, has been defined as "who gets what, when and how" and getting a privileged position in the society. Power plays a major role in deciding that gets what, when and how. And power, as is well known, respects no value and moral law.

9.5 EDUCATION AND POLITICS

9.5.1 Relationship Between the Two

The primary goal of every society is to survive. This is also true of any individual group or sub-culture. Secondly, society is concerned with the quality of life, which is dependent on the degree of health, stability, change and justice desired by the society. In order to continue to exist, there are minimum requirements for survival, which can be further explained as follows:

- 1) For continuity's sake population has to be reproductive otherwise the group will become extinct.
- 2) To carry forward the socio-cultural values and norms, children must be educated and trained in the values and skills needed to function as effective adults.
- 3) Goods and services have to be produced and distributed.
- 4) For the sake of peace and proper development, society must develop a mechanism to maintain order internally and externally.
- 5) Health services should be provided and maintained at reasonable levels for the well-being of the individual, both physical and mental.
- 6) Society members must see enough meaning and purpose in life to be motivated to perform their various tasks.

These survival tasks are carried out by social institutions, the family, the educational system, the economy, the polity, the health and welfare system and the religious and moral systems. Each of these social institutions is a major area of organised social activity required for social continuity. Although each of these institutions influences the cognitive and affective 'maps' of all members of a society, their greatest impact is on the society's younger members – children and youth. Sociologists refer to this pervasive process of initiation and conditioning as socialisation.

"Education represents both a struggle for meaning and struggle over power relations.... Education is that terrain where power and politics are given fundamental expression."

(Henry Giroux, 1985)

This statement shows two compelling positions on the relationship of education and politics. The scholars have always been concerned with the question of how education can be related with political institutions and processes which are the two basic components of the political system. This shows the influence of political ideology on education. On the other hand, education also plays an important role through its function of political socialisation. Plato and Aristotle were the philosophers who first drew attention towards the vital link between education and the state. Later, many scholars have stressed upon the importance of education in providing services to the state for bringing change and development. The ideology of the political party, which is in power, has a special role in deciding the educational goals, which in return, provide benefits to the political party. So we can conclude here that in a democratic society, both subsystems of the society i.e. political system and education system influence each other.

The basic characteristics of a democratic system are its egalitarian values, right to freedom and its decentralised structures operating from micro to macro institutions of governance. Here arises the need to develop educated, matured, conscious and learned citizens. Such citizens cannot be produced in a short time. A prolonged and well planned process of citizenship training is required from early childhood. And for this, a well-defined policy of education is required which should be based on the global demand and maximum development of child and nation both. The

present situation in Indian society seems to be alarming because both the systems – educational and political system seem to be broken down and degenerated as reflected in corruption and malpractices. It seems there is no order and harmony. Therefore, the questions to be asked are: First, what the political system should do to improve its performance? Second, how can the educational system produce good citizens and third, what would ideally be the relationship between polity and education?

Nicholas A. (1970) argues that it is obvious that any social institution that performs such a significant role is not going to be allowed to roam freely within the political structure. Groups and individuals, which possess the resources of power and influence, exert, or will exert when they feel the occasion demands, tremendous efforts to shape and mould the system to suit their way of thinking and tailor the curriculum to meet their special technological and scientific needs. Both the systems are linked with each other and influence the fate of each other. It is very much evident on the basis of information we receive through media that political ideology is playing a major role in the educational system of India. To analyse these influences, first, we have to study both the systems in detail.

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) Carefully examine the goals recommended by National Policy on Education 1986 and failure in achieving these goals in stipulated time.

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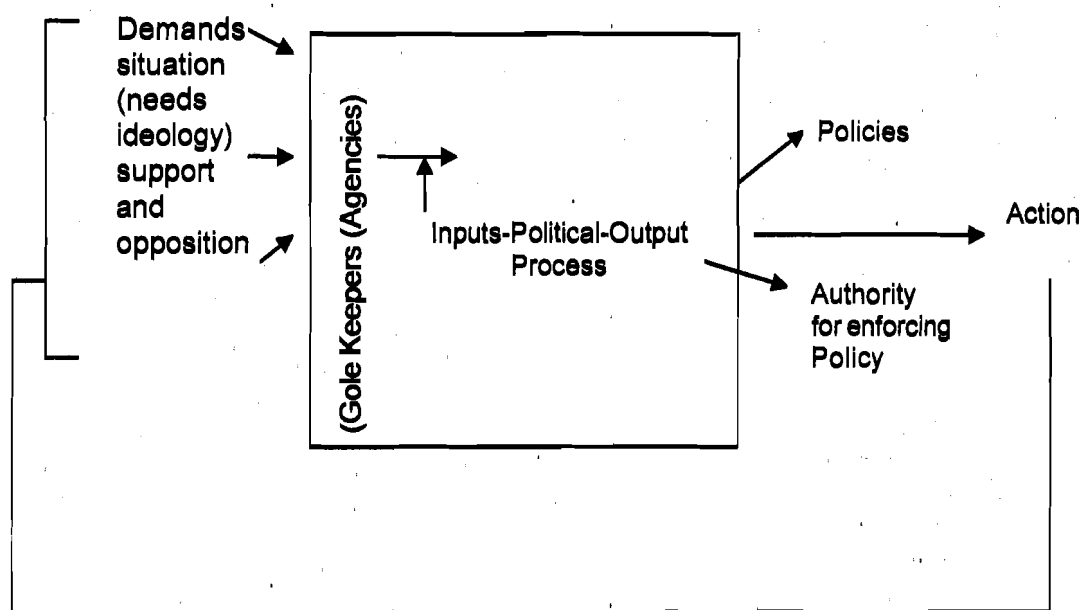
9.5.2 Educational Politics

Educational politics is that process by which educational resources are distributed among various types of education within a society, by the legitimate uses of power, through governmental actions. Keeping in view the values of education, the government has to decide curricula context, minimum age of a child and minimum qualification for hiring teachers, provisions for education of various educationally backward classes of society, sources of finance to operate schools and the formulas for tax payers and formula for mix and match grants for various programmes under the plan period for education. Determining policies, for education system of country, requires extra attention or consideration. The legitimate use of power means the use of ethical means or practices to arrive at educational decisions. Ethical practices are those consistent with the values of democratic society.

Education is now a concurrent subject in India. There are definite laws to guide government institution of education. Education in the private sector is run without any regard for norms etc. There should be a uniform pattern of education in all the institutions whether private or government. The 42nd amendment provides more powers to the Union Government to bring uniformity throughout the country in the sphere of educational standards. Now we can say that both systems influence each other. The influences of political system can be seen through the processes of policy and planning of education.

Policy may be defined as the framework for the accomplishment of intended objectives. Policy is very essential in administration for it gives a concrete shape to political and social objectives, which the government lays down in the form of law, rules, regulations, etc. The main agencies responsible for policy formulation are the legislature, cabinet and the concerned ministry. In the case of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development and state departments of education are the main agencies. There are other agencies which guide the legislature and executives in the formulation of policy i.e. Planning Commission, National Development Council, National Council of Educational Research and Training, Central Advisory Board of Education and the University Grants Commission. Besides there are advisory committees at all levels, commissions appointed from time to time, pressure groups, political parties and professional associations. We can explain the process of policy formulation through a diagram. These agencies are responsible for policy formulation within the Union and State Government in their respective jurisdictions.

How political parties are influence Policy of Education



Process of Policy Formulation

Process of Policy Formulation

The inputs are needs, and ideology includes the need of the people and the prevailing values. Demands presented to the system include support and opposition

to the system which will be taken care of by the various agencies supporting the need, ideology and demands, because proposals are made with the help of these agencies. Political process indicates the discussion on proving the worth of decision taken by the political party in power. After going through this process policies emerges with plan to implement it. Now action will be taken up in the area.

We have seen the process of policy formulation, and the roles of the political party in power and the parties in the opposition and their support in the policy formation. Outside the political parties, groups of people belonging to different political parties are there in almost every educational institution. Their linkages make not only the political system active but also structure the process of policy formulation and the type of relationship that exists between agencies helping in the formulation of proposals for policy and the political party in power/government. It can reveal the influences of the ideology of political parties on education. The kind of values to be incorporated in the curriculum, the kind of thinking and personality to be developed, the kind of consciousness and awareness to be promoted and the kind of behaviour to be expected of the functionaries, of the system are all decided directly or indirectly by the government and its sponsored bodies.

The parliament in 1986 while approving the National Policy of Education, chose to approve the following formulation of targets: It shall be ensured that all children who attain the age of about 11 years by 1990 would have had five years of schooling or its equivalent through the non-formal stream; likewise, by 1995, all children would be provided free and compulsory education up to 14 years of age. It became apparent very soon that the targets set for 1990 would not be achieved. It appeared that these targets were high targets and unrealistic and unachievable, they do not lead to the kind of motivation and resource mobilisation required. The right approach, therefore, is to set realistic targets – realistic can be defined here as easily achievable with conceivable maximum input of meticulous planning and providing resources financial as well as human for implementation of policy.

We have seen that the concepts of the political system and education are interlinked and influence each other. Political interference and influences can be seen over a short period of time and the influences of education on politics become apparent after a longer period of time. Here we can conclude that political decisions are authoritative decisions which are legitimate.

It is the responsibility of the state to formulate the plan but not in the interest of a particular political party. It should be based on the ideology which can safeguard the interest of all the communities in the society.

National education system should be such that it safeguards the interests of all the classes of society. There should be no distinction of caste, colour or creed, rich or poor and men and women. The plan should also aim at the development of youth and adults according to their age. The educational plan should include all influences national, cultural and philosophical that is present in country. It should also include the emotional integration of the nation. In a big multiracial and multilingual country like India the national education plan should incorporate national emotional integration in it. The goals of education should be based on clear beliefs of our society and these merit be based on real life and ideals, great educationist and philosophers should voluntarily contribute to it.

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.

- 4) Discuss the relationship between education and politics. How can we make this relation advantageous for education system as well as for the policy?

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9.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed the primary goals of the society i.e. survival and quality of life. To meet this requirement, six social institutions are functioning in society. We have focused only on the educational system and political system in society. Under these two social systems, we covered all the components of systems which are responsible for the functioning /processes of these systems. The relationship/interlink ages between the two systems have been identified through their components. And lastly, influences of politics on education were highlighted by discussing the process of policy formulation for education. We concluded with the point that there should be a balanced relation between polity and education and political influences should ensure the progress and development of the nation as well as the members of society.

9.7 UNIT END EXERCISES

- 1) Describe the important characteristics or features of goals.
- 2) Explain the different components of the education system.
- 3) What are the various organs of the political system?
- 4) Discuss the different stages of policy formulation.
- 5) A policy should be uniform in its application. It must be fair to all, offering equity and justice to those who are affected by it.
- 6) Power plays a major role in deciding who gets what, when and how. And power, as is well known, respects no values and moral laws.
- 7) Relationship between education system and political system both are influencing each other. Political influences can be seen in a short period of time while influences of education can be seen over a longer duration of time.

9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Other social institutions like religion and minorities, business and industries, and judiciary hold power due to concentration of economic resources, votes and power of law. These instruments are basic for existence and identity definition of any political party; thus affect their ideology.

- 2) Political culture in India at present is characterized by distribution of power among masses, that is, by democratic decentralization. But, alongside, it is also characterized by political malpractices and vested interests of few in power and politics. And education is used by the political system to fulfill these interests.
- 3) For bringing integrity, preservation of national identity and to promote equality, peace and mutual understanding, NPE-1986 mainly concerned with implementation of common school system, development of National System of Education and strengthening research and development in its recommendation.

The failure of achieving these goals in stipulated time mainly can be attributed to lack of co-ordination and gaps between state (Government), apex bodies in education and amongst agencies at implementational level.

- 4)
 - a) Both are social systems aiming at making members productive (Education) and for applying order to the society (politics).
 - b) Political ideologies provide goals and direction to education while education functions as means to political socialization and democracy.
 - c) Any democratic society has egalitarian values, value for right to freedom and value for decentralized authority.
 - d) Inculcation of these values requires prolonged training that can be given through education.

Policy can provide these values as direction to education while training in these values would enable the individual to support the democracy by making meaningful and fruitful policies when enters into the system.

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

Structure

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Objectives
- 10.3 The State and Education
 - 10.3.1 Bureaucracy
 - 10.3.2 Political Will
- 10.4 Constitutional Provisions for Education
- 10.5 Equality and Equity
 - 10.5.1 Economic Constraints on Equality of Opportunity
 - 10.5.2 Female Education
 - 10.5.3 Educational Attainments of Himachal Pradesh
- 10.6 Universalization of Elementary Education
 - 10.6.1 International Co-operation
 - 10.6.2 NGOs and Primary Education
- 10.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.8 Unit End Exercises
- 10.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 10.10 References and Suggested Readings

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” (Althusser, 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 collaterality 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 the 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. Mannheim'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, receivers of the dominant politico-economic ideas, the ideas of the dominant classes. Besides these relatively more direct obligations, the educational system also fulfils 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 legitimize 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.

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2) How does bureaucracy influence education?

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3) How does education support the political system?

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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 such education may be imparted. But in those 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.

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.

4) What is the importance of the 86th amendment?

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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, Uttanchal, 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

(BEP Report 1990). Bringing positive change in such a scenario was the challenge before the project.

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". *Ujala* 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 class room 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 upto 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 Samakhyas 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 Uttranchal. 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 where 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 Janashala Programme. The Janashala which means community school, aimed to support on-going efforts of the Government of India towards

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.

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?

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

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11) In what areas of implementation did UPBEP liaison with the DIET?

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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.

- 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.

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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
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- 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 citizenary 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) emphasising 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.

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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- 7) List any three considerations that influenced National Policy on Education 1986, revised in 1992.

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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

critical, (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 Uttaranchal 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;

- 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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- 10) List three priorities highlighted in NPE 1986, revised in 1992, for reorganizing elementary education in India.

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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 DIETs 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 data-base 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

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