
UNIT 16 SOCIAL DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION

Structure

- 16.1 Introduction
- 16.2 Objectives
- 16.3 Explaining Social Diversities
 - 16.3.1 Meaning and Nature of Social Diversity
 - 16.3.2 Types of Social Diversity
- 16.4 Influence of Social Diversity on Education
 - 16.4.1 Differential Access: Reaching the Unreached
 - 16.4.2 Uneven Participation and Completion
 - 16.4.3 Achievement: Equitable Quality in Education
- 16.5 Recent Challenges of Diversity for Education
 - 16.5.1 Achieving the Unfinished Task
 - 16.5.2 Cultural Nationalism and Nation Building
 - 16.5.3 Globalization and Education
- 16.6 Let's Sum Up
- 16.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 16.8 References and Suggested Readings

16.1 INTRODUCTION

India is one nation, but a plural society. Its plurality is in-built in its geographical, demographic, historical, political, economic and socio-cultural base. Its social diversity has been expressed in various forms such as languages, religions, tribes and castes. While the social diversity is a historical fact, a synthesis has also been consolidating alongside. It goes without saying that Indian society is characterized by 'unity in diversity'. Within the overall national Indian identity, various local and regional identities are surviving. An individual passes through the arena of national and regional identities in one's day-to-day life on regular basis. Too much emphasis on regional, linguistic or religious identities can damage the national fabric and lead them to the path of confrontation, while laying excessive stress on national identity may lead to the monolithic nation state and destroy the cultural heritage of the regional or subnational identities.

Education plays a central role in conserving, modifying and transforming identities. Keeping in mind the heterogeneous character of Indian society, the national policy on education envisages harmonious development of all groups i.e. promoting development and maintaining group identities in an integrated manner. The balancing act of education is well reflected in the constitutional provision. Education being classified under the Concurrent List of the Constitution has given scope for promotion of both national and subnational identities. On the one hand, while the Constitution of India talks of the fundamental duties to be ordained in all types of education in the country, on the other hand under Directive Principles of State Policy, it directs the state to protect and promote economic and educational interests of the weaker sections. It also promotes the education of religious and linguistic minority groups.

This unit addresses several questions such as: What do you mean by 'social diversity' in the Indian context? Which are these groups? What is the educational implication of this social diversity? What roles can education play in providing equal opportunity to these groups and harmonious development among them. The first section of this

unit explains the meaning, nature and types of social diversity existing in India. The second section deals with influence of the social diversity on education system in India. And the third section identifies some of the new challenges to the Indian education system which are on account of the social diversity.

16.2 OBJECTIVES

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

- appreciate the complex nature of social diversity in India;
- develop an understanding of the educational problems faced by different groups; and
- explain the role of education in providing equal opportunity for development and in establishing harmony among them;

Let us begin our discussion by trying to understand the very nature of social diversities prevailing in our society.

16.3 EXPLAINING SOCIAL DIVERSITIES

India has been considered as perhaps the largest and most plural society in the world. In India, people speak an array of languages and use a wide range of scripts. As a country, India has major religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism—living side by side. India is the world's most complex and comprehensively pluralistic society, home to a vast variety of castes, tribes, communities, religions, languages, customs and living styles. It was estimated by the Anthropological Survey of India that there are nearly 4,599 separate communities in India with as many as 325 languages and dialects in 12 distinct language families and some 24 scripts. The mosaic of identities that constitute the meaning of Indianness has been on display on Republic Day every year. Moreover the National Anthem emphasizes diversity in a similar manner with the first verse being a series of names of different geographic regions, ethnicities and cultures.

16.3.1 Meaning and Nature of Social Diversity

By 'social diversity', we mean co-existence of different social groups within a given geo-political setting or in simpler terms, differentiation of society into groups. Other terms such as, 'plurality', 'multiculturalism', 'social differentiation' etc. are also interchangeably used to explain this feature. The diversity may be both functional and dysfunctional for a society depending on its composition. The question that may arise at this stage is 'how much pluralist a society can become without losing its organic unity?' Despite divisions of groups, an underlying unity runs through the whole Indian social system. In order to understand the nature of social diversity in India, it is important to understand the nature of group identities that form the diversity.

16.3.2 Types of Social Diversity

The main sources of social diversity are ethnic origins, religions and languages. According to Sorokin, the social differentiation can be classified into two types: a) intra-group (i.e. differentiation within a group and b) inter-group differentiation (i.e. differentiation among the groups). Further groups may also be classified as: a) unibound (i.e. groups whose members are bound into a solidarity system by one main value or interest such as, race, sex and age; b) multibound (i.e. groups formed by the coalescence of two or more unibound values such as castes, tribes, classes etc.

Intra-group differentiation means a division of the group into subgroups that perform different functions and are not graded superior or inferior to each other. However when subgroups are ranked 'superior and inferior' or 'higher and lower', intergroup differentiation becomes intergroup stratification such as castes in the Indian Caste System.

Language

Language is one of the main markers of group solidarity in any society. The social categorization in terms of languages is much stronger than any other social markers such as religion, class, caste, tribe etc. Group identities are expressed in stronger terms when language identities are combined with other types. India is highly diversified in terms of languages. Despite language based reorganisation of states, India has not been able to solve many language related problems. Under the state reorganisation, only a few major languages have been given official recognition and resource support. The following issues need to be looked into:

Language nationalism operates at the regional level rather than at the national level;

Three-language formula devised for imparting education at different levels is still not fully implemented;

The states have not devised their policy for protecting the educational, cultural and economic interests of the language minority groups who inadvertently have fallen in particular state territory.

Educational implication of the language diversification has not been worked out and incorporated into the education system.

Unity at the national level should have national language component in the policy framework.

The Indian constitution lists 15 languages as major languages. All major languages have regional and dialectical variations. Besides these, 227 languages/dialects have also been recognized as mother tongues making the task of language planning and promotion more difficult. Furthermore, diversification of tribal groups in terms of languages make the situation that much more complicated.

Religion

Religion is an important binding force of social integration among individuals and groups. By religion, we generally mean belief in supernatural being or entities. Religion has been playing an important role in Indian society from the very evolution of human society. It has never been static. India is a multi-religious society. Changes have taken place in religions from time to time. Religious reform movements have been integral parts of India's sociocultural life.

The 1961 Census of India listed 7 religious categories, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, Shikhs and other religions and persuasions. However, there are other religious groups such as, Jews, Zorastrians and tribals which find mention in the 1931 Census. Religion is a complex phenomenon in India. Conservative and progressive elements are found among different groups highlighting intra-religious differentiation.

Religious conversion has been a controversial issue through out the Indian history. It still draws attention even in the contemporary situation. In recent years, religious conversion of tribals has generated a considerable antipathy and conflict. Religion also brings out internal cohesion by cementing internal class, language and other

divisions. Even the introduced religions such as, Islam, Christianity, Zorastrian etc have developed Indian character. Hinduism, the main religion has allowed other religions to grow alongside. It not only affected other religions, but has also been affected by other religions. The Bhakti movement and the Sufi tradition are a testimony to this give-and-take situation.

The Constitution of India considering the country as secular has treated all religious groups on equal terms. It has made provision for freedom to all religious groups to hold and practise their beliefs and rituals. Secularism has been ingrained in the national policies and planning of education and development.

Caste

Caste is a system of social relations. It is an important feature of Indian society based on endogamy, hierarchy, occupational association, purity and pollution, and inscriptive status. Although caste seeks ideological roots in the varna scheme of Hinduism, it is an all pervasive and a very complex phenomenon which holds its sway till today. It has provided internal structure and social base to Indian Society sometimes cutting across religious barriers. The social system that emerged out of social division of labour has received perpetual religious sanction. The caste system has been responding to empirical realities and has been changing. The four fold *varnas* have given ways to several castes often addressed as *jatis*. The inscriptive status (i.e. caste ranking based on birth) has made the caste system a bit inflexible. However despite the inscriptive nature of caste ranking, the caste has never been static. The prevalence of thousands of subcastes, clans and subclans within a caste is a testimony of diversification, differentiation and change in the caste system.

The Indian caste system has also been analyzed from the class point of view by several social scientists. The caste and class debate has arisen to analyze social differentiation within the caste system. According to some sociologists, caste and class are two different forms of social stratification; and changes are taking place from caste (ranking of groups) to class (ranking of individuals). The following need to be taken into account:

Despite transformation and changes, the caste system has persisted as an ideology, social structure and practices;

The caste system inherits problems related to economic, political and social domination and privileges, subjugation and deprivation etc;

The Constitution of India has made special provisions for protection of the deprived castes mainly the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Other Backward Castes (OBC).

Tribe

Tribal people are other important sociocultural groups in India, constituting over 8 per cent of the Indian population (2001 Census). However, given the current classification of tribal groups in India, it is difficult to define the term 'tribe'. In the Imperial Gazetteer, the word 'tribe' has been defined as 'a collection of families which have a common name and a common dialect and which occupy or profess to occupy a common territory and which have been endogamous'.

In fact, with regard to tribal groups, the task has often been to identify the tribal groups, rather than to define them. The academic considerations have not been given due attention in identifying these groups (Betteille, 1986). According to Singh (1994), 'tribe' is an administrative and political concept in India. The categorization of tribal groups has been done state-wise and has not been uniform. There are cases of the groups that have been classified, as scheduled tribes in one state, have not been

categorized as the tribes in other states. The tribal groups are much behind their non-tribal counterparts in terms of their educational attainment. With regard to tribals, the following issues need to be looked at:

The tribal groups differ from other disadvantaged groups in terms of their cultural specificities.

The tribal people in themselves are highly diversified groups. The degree of tribalism varies from the extremely primitive isolated tribal groups located in the Andaman Islands to the modern developed tribal groups such as the Meena in Rajasthan.

The tribal groups are further differentiated in terms of size, territorial locality, racial features, marriage and kinship patterns, languages/dialects, economy, religious beliefs and practices, development and educational attainment etc.

The tribes being a local community perceive their identity largely at the regional and local levels than at the national level. The problems faced by the tribal groups vary from region to region, state to state, and from one tribal group to another.

Gender

Gender is a form of socio-biological difference between man and woman. The sexual difference is socially constructed contrasting characteristics labelled as masculine and feminine. Conceptually the term 'gender' differs from 'sex', as the latter refers mainly to bimodal distribution of biological/demographic characteristics between male and female. In the case of gender differences, it is the socio-biological differences that have been historically conditioned and are accepted as part of the social institutions. The elements of power and control are embedded in the gender difference. Although both sex and gender differences are universal, the nature and degree of difference varies from one social group to another.

The educational development in India is characterized by widening gender gap in education. The picture is dismal, as the female literacy is 54.16 per cent as against 75.85 per cent for males (2001 Census). The gender disparities exist at all levels of education. For example, the gender gap at the primary enrolment level was 22 per cent (Haq and Haq, 1998).

The gender gap in education needs to be understood in terms of disadvantaged position of women in Indian society. Although the Indian women suffer from biases in almost all spheres of their social life, the nature and intensity of this biasness may however vary across different social groups. The problem is intensified further, when gender disadvantage is combined with class, caste, religious and other disadvantages. For instance, the dropout rate at the elementary schooling stage is the highest among rural ST female children (NSS, 50th Round, 1993-94)

Thus, social diversity resulting from social differentiation is characterized by the problems of disparities and disadvantages. Very often, these group disparities get reflected in regional imbalances, if there is concentration of disadvantaged groups in certain pockets or regions. So 'region' although not a social category, shows a certain pattern indicating a particular socioeconomic status, because of certain categories of social groups inhabiting the region. For instance, the northern and eastern regions are backward in terms of educational and economic development, as the regions have higher proportions of the disadvantaged groups. Disparities within and among different groups need to be studied from different angles. The following section deals with the impact of social diversity on education.

Check Your Progress 1

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

1) What is the meaning of the term "Social Diversity"

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2) Identify any three types of social diversity

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16.4 INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL DIVERSITY ON EDUCATION

In the above sections, we have discussed meaning, nature and types of social diversity. The question remains, 'What are the major implications of social diversity for education in India?' or 'What roles education can play in a highly diverse society?' This in turn means examining relationship between education and social diversity. In this section, we have analyzed the influence of social diversity on education in terms of access, participation and achievement.

16.4.1 Differential Access: Reaching the Unreached

Following constitutional commitment of providing education to all, there has been considerable expansion of educational facilities since Independence. A major bottleneck in this respect has been the persistence of group and regional disparities. There are still a large number of accessless habitations most of which belong to the disadvantaged groups. A large number of children are out of school. Besides there is the problem of social access to school, as even in the habitations with school the children belonging to SC/ST and minority groups either do not get enrolled or are not attending the school. The problem of inadequate access, therefore, needs to be studied in terms of groups.

The children from different social and economic groups attend different types of school. While the children from higher socio-economic groups attend good quality schools (i.e. schools well equipped with infrastructure and competent teachers), the children from disadvantaged groups end up in the poor quality schools (i.e. single teacher, multigrade situations, poorly trained teachers). The need, therefore, is to intensify the efforts to make educational facilities accessible to such deprived groups in the deprived regions. This, in turn, means making special provisions to the disadvantaged children such as girls, SC/ST and minority groups. Furthermore this also calls for going beyond the rigid education system and making provisions of non-formal or alternative education for children who either drop out or do not enroll at all. In order to cover the remote and inaccessible areas and groups, the government has adopted two strategies: a) reducing the norms (population and distance) for opening schools in smaller habitations and b) opening various alternative education centers to suit the needs of particular groups.

16.4.2 Uneven Participation and Completion

The children's access to school does not ensure their participation in schooling. The children should stay in the school to complete full cycle of elementary or secondary schooling. By participation, we mean children's enrolment, attendance and completion of the schooling. The problem of differential access is compounded by differential participation. Despite improvement in enrolment rates, the dropouts continue to remain high, and higher among girls, SCs and STs (GOI, 2003). The group disparities are also reflected in regional disparities. One of the immediate tasks for the government is to bridge all gender and social gaps in enrolment and retention within a specified time frame. This also emerges from our constitutional concern as has been expressed in Article-46 of the Constitution of India,

'The State shall promote with special care the *educational* and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, and shall protect them from social justice and all forms of exploitation' (italics added).

Fulfilling constitutional commitment requires targeting of educational interventions to the needy groups. A number of programmes have been launched for improving the children's participation in school such as midday meal and other incentives (attendance allowance, free textbooks and uniforms), early childhood care and education, ashram schools etc.

16.4.3 Achievement: Equitable Quality in Education

The school education system in India has expanded manifold. This obviously poses a major challenge not only for efficient management but also for mobilizing resources and maintaining a reasonable level of quality. It is recognized that quality improvement in education cannot be carried on a turnkey basis. One of the major challenges of the education system in a diverse country like India is to provide a quality education to all the groups who are at different stages of development.

On theoretical plane, there is an inherent conflict between quality and equality in education. *Quality breeds inequality, while equality hampers quality.* The term 'quality' means excellence. Excessive emphasis on excellence in education may become discriminatory, as the children from various disadvantaged groups who have not been exposed to modern education so far, find it difficult to cope with demands of the education system. The higher dropout rate among the disadvantaged children is also related with learning difficulties due to excessive curriculum load. Treating all the groups at par would, therefore, not be a suitable strategy in this case. On the other hand, if educational standard is set at the minimum for all children by keeping in mind the disadvantaged children, it would go against the children belonging to well educated family. The cycle of deprivation is likely to continue for the disadvantaged children in both the cases.

This dilemma has the implication for a pedagogic strategy sensitive to the prevailing social diversity. Education for social diversity therefore amounts to a carefully programmed induction into the complexity of the society and achieving equitable quality in education. Achieving excellence is the prime objective of education, but the system should create suitable environment for all the members of society. One may argue that in curricular terms, social diversity means diversified approach to knowledge or acquisition of knowledge.

Furthermore, the quality of education in government schools has been deteriorating over the years. The deteriorating condition of government schools has implication for disadvantaged children, as they are the ones who end up with these schools. Evidence shows that it is the poor people who access government schools. The children from

higher income groups usually study in private schools. The dysfunctional schools continue to be an area of concern in the more underdeveloped regions of the country. Recent reports have indicated gender bias in school choice by parents. That is, the villagers send girls to government schools and boys to private schools for two reasons a) they still consider girls as liability and b) girls are entitled to various types of incentives.

On the whole, social groups are at different stages of educational development. This is reflected in their differential responses in the schooling system in terms of access, participation and achievement. The delay in achieving the Universal Elementary Education is related with differential educational development of the groups.

Check Your Progress 2

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

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

3) How does social diversity manifest itself in Indian education system today?

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16.5 RECENT CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY FOR EDUCATION

The concept of social diversities cannot be understood adequately, unless one is able to explain the underlying disparities prevailing within and among the diverse groups. The social groups are at different levels of educational and economic development. We will now look at some of the major challenges currently being faced by the education system:

16.5.1 Achieving the Unfinished Task

The task of providing basic education to all the citizens remains unfulfilled till today. The Article-45 of the Constitution of India set the deadline for achieving the goal of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) in 1951:

‘—The State shall endeavor 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 fourteen years’

In response to the constitutional commitment, several programmes have been launched for educational development. The constitutional goal of achieving the UEE remains elusive even after over 50 years of planned educational development and even now it is the most important challenge for the Indian education system. One of the main reasons of the delay in achievement of UEE is that the disadvantaged groups such as the SC/ ST, minority groups have not been able to take advantage of educational facilities supplied to them. One can visualize this in differential educational development of the social groups in India. That is, educational development is still pursued in supply form. In recent years, various centrally sponsored educational programmes and schemes have been launched for improving the educational conditions of the people. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a centrally sponsored scheme has been launched in all the states to achieve the goal of universal elementary education. Much would depend how effectively the programme is implemented.

16.5.2 Cultural Nationalism and Nation Building

As discussed above, India is highly diversified in terms of ethnic composition, religions and languages. The diversity has both assimilative and fissiparous tendencies. The question that comes up is: 'Is social diversity likely to contribute to the harmonious evolution of society or is it a potential threat to social stability?' Recently, the country has been experiencing social tension and conflict, posing threat to its unity. One of the major challenges for the state is to maintain an integral balance among the diverse groups. Education being an instrument of social stability and change has a vital role to play.

The UNESCO Charter in its opening statement remarked, 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be created'. Education, therefore, can play a vital role in creating conditions of peaceful co-existence among the competing groups. This has implication for pedagogy, teacher training and classroom transaction. One needs to take into account questions such as: How should teachers assist their students to realize their full potential in a highly diversified society like India, or enable them to resolve conflicts arising out of group differences? What guidance can be given to the teachers, parents and others interested in education that will help them to cope sensitively with the educational needs of individuals from different social backgrounds?

Besides teacher training and classroom transaction, curriculum and school textbooks need to be sensitive to the implication of prevailing diversities in the society. By factoring diversity into our curriculum and textbooks, we mean knowing about others and transcending the rigid cultural barriers. The prevailing social and cultural practices and ethos should be reflected in the textbooks. Recent controversies regarding history curriculum and textbooks have brought the agenda of cohesion, peace and harmony to the forefront. Multicultural approach should be adopted while imparting education in a socially and culturally diverse society. This entails upon incorporation of experiences of the diverse groups and promotion of intercultural understanding.

16.5.3 Globalization and Education

Modern formal education is the medium through which globalization is being spread throughout the world. The process is intensified with remarkable progress in the field of information technology. Globalization has strong linkage with education, because the task of transferring ever increasing knowledge and skills is entrusted with the education system. India is not isolated from this impact. The history of educational development in the country shows that education is both the cause and consequence of globalization. In India, the modern formal education was started by the British to serve its global interests. Even today, to a great extent, the ethos and thrust of education remain the same. Both the school education and higher education promote the cause of globalization, as they prepare the learners for outside world by delinking them from their cultural roots.

The process of privatization in all sectors heightens globalization drive. Education is not untouched in this respect. A large number of private schools are being opened in various parts of the country. The phenomenon is also affecting the rural areas. The spurt in the number of private schools is an outcome of unfulfilled educational demand of the affluent sections of society and their dissatisfaction with low quality of education in the government schools. It is most likely that the increasing privatization in education sector will accentuate disparities between the disadvantaged and the advantaged and reduce commitment for quality improvement in government schools.

Globalization promotes individualism, by breaking down the cultural and social boundaries. It makes the task of solving problems arising out of social diversification.

Globalization supports survival of the fittest policy for individuals and intensifies further concentration of prevailing disadvantages in particular groups. One of the impending dangers of globalization is that it would put the disadvantaged groups at the mercy of individual whims and break local indigenous survival networks without providing a viable alternative. This process of alienation is embedded in the education system. Mahatma Gandhi pointed out this danger in his remark that the greatest evil of the present educational system was that it had broken up the continuity of our existence.

Check Your Progress 3

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

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

4) Mention the recent challenges to education in the area of social diversity.

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16.6 LET'S SUM UP

India is a land of diversities. Its diversity is expressed in terms of language, religion, caste, tribes and gender. The diversity is a result of both internal differentiation and external influence. The processes of differentiation and unification have been going on simultaneously. The groups that have been differentiated on one social marker may be seen united on others. For instance, the groups which are divided on religious lines such as the Hindu, the Muslims etc. are united in terms of languages, gender etc. Thus 'unity amidst diversity' prevails in the Indian society. However the balance between diversity and unity is delicate and fraught with several problems. One needs to analyze the power relations between diverse groups.

The major implication of the social diversity for the education system is bringing the diverse groups at par, as the groups are at different levels of educational and economic development. One basic objective of the education system is to accommodate the diversities that exist in the population. However assessment of the educational development indicates that although substantial progress has been made in the field of education during the last five decades, gaps continue to exist between regions, states in terms of gender and social groupings. Despite the constitutional promise of equality in Independent India, the hierarchies in terms of educational access, participation and achievement are getting reinforced between the advantaged and the disadvantaged groups. The tribes, dalits (Scheduled Castes), minorities and girls continue to be deprived and further marginalized.

The education system is facing the major challenges of achieving UEE, bringing the disadvantaged into the national mainstream, and preparing them against the dangers of globalization. One of the major challenges for the education system in India has been to achieve universal elementary education (UEE). The main reason for the delay in achievement of UEE is that the education system has not been able to bring the most disadvantaged, that is, the SC, the ST and girls within its fold fully. These groups are suffering from multiple disadvantages. The education system needs to treat the disadvantaged groups as special focus groups and reform its pedagogy in such a way that the most disadvantaged gets the maximum benefits and support.

16.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Social diversity may be taken to mean the co-existence of different social groups within a given geo-political setting.
- 2) These may include Language, Religion, Caste, Tribe, Gender.
- 3)
 - In terms of differential access amongst various diverse social groups,
 - Uneven Participation and Completion amongst various diverse social groups,
 - Achievement also varies due to inequitable Quality in Education amongst various diverse social groups
- 4)
 - Achieving the Unfinished Task of education for all
 - Cultural Nationalism
 - Nation Building
 - Impact of Globalization on Education.

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UNIT 17 EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Structure

- 17.1 Introduction
- 17.2 Objectives
- 17.3 Equity and Excellence in Education
 - 17.3.1 Equity as a Constitutional Value
 - 17.3.2 Nature of Inequality in India
 - 17.3.3 Inequality in School Education
 - 17.3.4 Equality as a Value in Higher Education
 - 17.3.5 Role of Education in Promotion of an Egalitarian Society
- 17.4 Strategies for Equity in Education
 - 17.4.1 Distinction between Equality and Equity
 - 17.4.2 Strategies in School Education
 - 17.4.3 Strategies in Higher Education
 - 17.4.4 Issues and Concerns in the Reservation Policy in Higher Education
- 17.5 Equality of Educational Opportunity – Concepts
 - 17.5.1 Equality is not Identity
 - 17.5.2 Discrimination Essential for Equalisation
 - 17.5.3 Protective Discrimination Vs Affirmative Action
- 17.6 Logic of Equality of Educational Opportunity
- 17.7 Social Stratification, Social Mobility and Social Change
 - 17.7.1 Sponsored Vs Contest Mobility
 - 17.7.2 Achieved Vs Ascribed Status
- 17.8 Excellence in Education
 - 17.8.1 Concept of Excellence
 - 17.8.2 Meritocracy, Democracy and Excellence
- 17.9 Strategies and Indicators of Excellence
 - 17.9.1 Strategies at School level
 - 17.9.2 Strategies in Higher Education
 - 17.9.3 Indicators of Excellence
- 17.10 Excellence in Education – Institutional Perspectives
 - 17.10.1 Excellence of Institutions — Measures
 - 17.10.2 Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education
- 17.11 Equity and Excellence – A Discourse
 - 17.11.1 Structural Adjustment Policies in India (post 1991) and Relative Significance for Equality and Excellence in Education
- 17.12 Let's Sum Up
- 17.13 Unit End Exercises
- 17.14 Points for Discussion
- 17.15 Answers to Check Your Progress

17.1 INTRODUCTION

Democratic Socialism is the Constitutional philosophy of India. Democracy implies the total freedom of all individuals in a society and that can be possible in a state of equality. Democracy without socialism is impossible and socialism without democracy is meaningless. There is a historically evolved inequality in Indian society

that is associated with caste, land-holding, property possessions, school-facilities, school-participation, access to higher education, health status and occupational status. Education is not only an indicator of the status of inequality in society but is also perceived as a chief instrument of social mobility and of an egalitarian society.

17.2 OBJECTIVES

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

- appreciate the role of education as an instrument for the creation of an egalitarian society;
- differentiate between the strategies adopted at lower and higher levels of education in promoting equity and excellence in education;
- be familiar with the current controversies and debates in employing education as a strategic instrument for promotion of equality; and
- identify and distinguish between the various indicators of excellence and equity in education.

17.3 EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Society and the State employ education to achieve several national goals. Promotion of equality among the people and excellence in economic, social, civic and cultural spheres of life are two significant goals for which education is employed. As of now, a process of globalisation of life has begun everywhere. Indian society is also in the thick of globalisation. To make a mark in this globalising world, there is a need to maintain quality and standards and be in the forefront of competition. Pursuit of excellence is a value in this direction. Just as India marches ahead, there is also a need to carry all cross-sections of society in this globalising universe. Otherwise inequalities in society may increase leading to social tensions and disintegration. A peaceful march towards progress and prosperity is possible with the pursuit of excellence and should be directed along with the pursuit of equity. A student of Sociology of Education should know as to what it means to achieve these ends and how it is done through education.

17.3.1 Equity as a Constitutional Value

The Constitution of India is a blueprint for the creation of a new society that has been nomenclatured as 'Democratic Socialism'. This implies a movement wherein individual interests are treated as of supreme value. Articles of the Constitution guarantee fundamental rights to all individuals. The envisioned society is founded on four fundamental values viz; Justice, Equality, Liberty and Fraternity.

Several policies and strategies have been adopted by the Indian State for promotion of equality. Distribution of land to landless persons, provision of special incentives in agriculture, irrigation, power supply and housing to disadvantaged population, a nation-wide scheme of public distribution of cereals, pulses, oil and kerosene at subsidised rates, fertiliser subsidies, progressive taxation, concession to industrial entrepreneurs in backward regions are illustrative of these policies/strategies. Even educational policies and strategies in India are geared towards the promotion of equality. In fact, education is one of the chief instruments for heralding a new society as visualised by the Constitution. It is a non-violent, peaceful and enlightened strategy for creation of a society based on and leading towards the four fundamental Constitutional values.

Freedom or liberation is the goal of an individual and fraternity is the goal of a society. There is an age-old definition of education in Sanskrit which is stated as 'Sa Vidya, Ya Vimukhthaya' which means that education is that which liberates a person, makes him free from all types of bondage, ignorance, superstitions, prejudices, unscientific and irrational beliefs and takes him towards knowledge, truth and wisdom. For example, all human beings have the same divine, self-propelling spirit in them and hence all are equal as sparks of the divine is a fundamental truth of life which realisation dawns on an individual through the right type of education. Such a knowledge and understanding sets a human being free from ignorance and bondage. Fraternity can be a reality in a society where all individuals are equal and free. Creation of a society of equals and free individuals who live in harmony and peace is the Constitutional goal of Indian society. Education is the chief tool in realisation of these goals.

17.3.2 Nature of Inequality in India

Promotion of equality presumes an understanding of the nature of inequality. Indian society has been characterised by inequality for centuries. This inequality is both nature created and society contrived. Regional disparities in developmental levels are largely due to asymmetrical distribution of natural resources as well as apathy of organised society towards the same. However, there are several inequalities created and perpetuated by human society. They are related to caste and class. The belief that human beings and groups are hierarchically endowed in regard to their abilities, that those who have superior abilities should enjoy status and wield power over the rest has led to inequalities. Discrimination in regard to sanction/deprivation of privileges, special facilities, access to natural and other resources is borne out of such a belief. Sanctions/deprivations in regard to ownership of property, control of administration, acquisition of learning, marriage relationships, participation in civic/public life have led to unfair and unjust treatment of several groups of human beings in preference to others. It has, in sum, led to injustice in societal organisation and treatment of individuals/groups. This is the society that we inherited at the time of independence and adoption of the Constitution. There is a conscious, deliberate, planned effort on the part of the Indian State to regulate, rechannelise and reform this inegalitarian social structure and lead it towards 'Democratic Socialism'.

17.3.3 Inequality in School Education

One sad feature of the inegalitarian Indian society is the asymmetric distribution of learning levels, exposure to schooling, mean educational levels, access to opportunities and attainments in general as well as technical and vocational skills in the general population. This asymmetry is distinctly observed across caste and sub-caste groups, rural and urban populations, slum and non-slum population in cities and across various regions in the country. The inequalities arising out of this asymmetry is further accentuated in case of girls across all groups and regions. The case of education of girls is one of inequality within inequality. Provision of schooling and other educational facilities for the whole of the Indian population, 'Education for All', is expected to drastically reduce inequalities at least in regard to one basic need of life. Universalisation of elementary education of a given standard and quality all over the country by 2010 AD is a commitment of the State in India under a nation-wide programme called the SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAAN. Universal elementary education is a human right and an obligation of a civil society that can be achieved in near future. This achievement may offset the imbalances in social status among the Indian people and facilitate a more refined day-to-day life. It is noteworthy that universalisation of secondary education is also on the agenda of the State in India.

17.3.4 Equality as a Value in Higher Education

Higher education is not a Fundamental or a Human Right in the sense in which Elementary Education is considered. Article 26 of the Charter of Universal Declaration of Human Rights proposes that "Technical and Professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." Access to higher education and economic ability to profit from professional education in India is highly inequitable. Hardly 8 per cent of the age-group population are in college in India while the average for advanced countries is nearly 30 per cent. Further, the access deprived castes and girls to higher education is quite low.

The significant distinction that needs to be noted herein is that elementary education as an equality-value assumes the status of a fundamental or essential or human right while the equality-value in regard to higher education is a desirable right as per the universal character of Human Rights. Notwithstanding the charter, the Indian State adopted strategies such as the Reservation Policy in professional and other forms of higher education. If school education facilities are not there for the concerned age-group population, it is mandatory for the government to provide it. Alternatively, if higher education facility is not there, it is not mandatory for the government to provide the same. But, if such a facility is available, either in government or government regulated private institutions, it is obligatory for the government to provide reservation to earmarked sections of society.

17.3.5 Role of Education in Promotion of an Egalitarian Society

Education is both an indicator as well as an instrument for the promotion of equality in a society. Literacy level in a society is a crude indicator which is universally employed as an indicator of the spread of education in a society as well as for the comparison of national and sub-national systems of education. Other indicators which are popular are mean level of education, enrolment rates at various levels, retention rates, attainment levels, manpower stocks, teacher-pupil ratios and the like. Differentials between the sexes on all these indicators are used to examine Gender Empowerment Measure.

Literacy and school education, even the elementary ability to register one's signature, elevate the human spirit and endows the ability and feeling to experience the value of equality in daily life. Education liberates a person from bondage. Ignorance, superstitions, poverty, disease, squalor, slavish mentality are all bondages. Freedom from bondage leads to an experience of equality. Inequality is characterised by fear, subjugation, submission, unquestioning loyalty, blind respect for hierarchy and authority, passive acceptance of discrimination and in sum, a loss of freedom. Freedom on the other hand means self-regard, frankness, fearlessness, questioning frame of mind, responsibility and self-discipline. As such freedom presupposes equality. Equality can be there only where there is Justice in society. It is in such a society where there is established Justice, Equality and Freedom that there can be harmony, peace and brotherhood. In this way, education ploughs its path for the promotion of an egalitarian society and creation of democratic socialism through its movement from Justice and Equality towards Freedom and Fraternity.

Social change implies changes in group culture and individual mind-sets which value equality. Achievements in regard to physical quality of life can flow from such reformed mind-set or enlightenment. Education mediates this change. It is the chief instrument for a society in transition from traditional to egalitarian values. National policy statement in education, the National Policy on Education, 1986, reflect the egalitarian concerns of the State.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Name the Constitutional philosophy of India. What is the chief problem of education in the realisation of this philosophy?

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- 2) Identify the articles in the Constitution under which Equality of Educational opportunity is guaranteed in India.

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- 3) State the Constitutional goals of Indian society.

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- 4) Identify the nature of inequality in school education.

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17.4 STRATEGIES FOR EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Equality is a value of democracy. It is based on the assumption that the planet earth and its resources belong to all its inhabitants and they are entitled to a proportionate share of these resources. The consumption, utilisation and absorption of these resources may depend upon various factors including individual abilities which are distributed in a skewed measure across individuals. But there should be no discrimination in regard to the opportunities to access and enjoy these resources.

17.4.1 Distinction between Equality and Equity

While equality is a value, equity refers to the strategies adopted to realise the value of equality. It is through concrete, transparent, physically observable strategic interventions of equity that the value of equality can be realised.

For example, if all children in a school should be treated in a fair, just and humane way is a statement of equality and a value therein, the attention given to individual differences in attainment levels by the classroom teacher/school is a school strategy for equity and the organisation of Remedial Instruction for slow learners is a programme under this strategy.

17.4.2 Strategies in School Education

Even by 2000 AD, as per an estimate of the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), 25 per cent of Indians, 250 million are below the poverty line of income. There is an observed strong association between poverty, illiteracy, non-enrolment in schools and drop-out behaviour. Demand for schooling is very low among Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Minorities and girls among all groups. The Government of India/Governments of the States of the Union have been offering special educational facilities and incentives to disadvantaged sections of society to realise the objectives/dream of universalisation of primary education. Attendance scholarship to children in the form of free uniforms, free textbooks and work-books, mid-day lunch for children, school bags, raincoats in coastal areas, hostel facilities, etc; are given to children to attend schools. Special scholarships are given even to the physically challenged persons.

17.4.3 Strategies in Higher Education

Reservation of seats in colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education (eg: IITs) and award of scholarships to needy and deserving students are the twin strategies for equity in higher education.

Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is a national, Constitutional commitment. Reservation for Backward Castes and Communities is provided by the State Governments as per certain norms set by the Backward Class Commissions constituted by the Government of India. Two Commissions had been set up by the Government of India since independence viz; the Kaka Kalelkar Commission in 1952 and the B P Mandal Commission in 1978. The recommendations of the Mandal Commission provided guidelines for reservation which were not uniformly implemented in the States of the Union. The States constituted their own commissions from time to time. Implementations of recommendations of these commissions by State Governments have often led to civil conflicts, public interest petitions and judicial interventions. The judiciary has addressed itself to problems such as the quantum of seats for reserved groups and the differential fee-structures for professional colleges across social groups keeping in view the highly differentiated paying abilities in the general population. Of all the Supreme Court judgements, the 1993 judgement delivered on a petition by Unni Krishnan, the 2002 October judgement delivered on a petition by Manipal Academy of Higher Education and the 2003 August Verdict on a petition by the Islamic Academy of Education against the government of Karnataka are quite significant.

The Committee reports, judicial pronouncements and cabinet decisions leading to lightning government orders, indicate the difficulties in evolving a universally acceptable and rational policy for reservation of seats in education for the disadvantaged sections of society.

17.4.4 Issues and Concerns in the Reservation Policy in Higher Education

A national programme of higher education through the Distance Education Mode is also a highly useful strategy for promotion of equity. IGNOU is in the forefront of this strategy.

The Reservation Policy in Higher Education in India has attracted a variety of social tensions, civil conflicts, public interest litigations, street demonstrations, strikes and even self-immolations. Colleges and universities have been closed in the past to maintain law and order. The following issues and concerns have been the subject of tensions over time.

- **Time-Frame:** Initially reservation had been proposed for a period of ten years beginning with 1950. This has been extended again and again for a further period of ten years since then. The last extension was given in 2000 AD. Critics have been wondering as to how long reservations will continue in education and employment. When will the State be able to realise the values of Justice and Equality? Is there no need to set a time-frame for realisation of these values?
- **Identification of sub-groups:** Lists of social groups who have suffered discrimination and social exclusion for centuries has been prepared, maintained, revised and used by the Government of India since the adoption of the Constitution. The groups/tribes included in these Lists/Schedules are known as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They are entitled for Reservation of spaces in education. Likewise, the States also maintain lists of backward castes and communities for their use as well as for the use of the Central government. It has been observed that these lists are revised periodically, though marginally, wherein certain groups are either inducted, dropped or reinducted into the list. It is also observed that while some social groups engaged in certain occupations are considered as SC or OBC in one State, they are not considered so in another State. Demands for inclusion of their own sub-groups within the reservation umbrella are frequently made. Sometimes, false certification by competent authorities of scheduled caste/tribe/BC status has also led to tensions. In this way identification of sub-castes, sub-groups and specific tribes has been a bone of contention over the years.
- **State vs Union Lists:** State lists are revised from time to time. Inclusions and exclusions of sub-groups takes place during such revisions. The groups so included/excluded are also eligible/ineligible for reservation in central quota/pool of seats in professional colleges. However, there is always a gestation time between the revision of State and Union lists. Further, groups with same sub-caste/tribe name/identity have differential status across States. For instance, Nayaka in one State may be identified as a Scheduled Tribe in one State while this group may not be considered so in another State. The Central Government will get confused about the inclusion of this group in their list. Hence, it is observed that divergences and inconsistencies between Union and State lists pose practical problems in implementation of the reservation policy.
- **Quantum of Reservation:** Another very significant issue in the reservation policy concerns the quantum/quota of reservation. In the past, the specification

of the quantum varied across regions of India. There is no confusion in regard to the space for SCs and STs as it is a Constitutional Commitment. When it comes to BCs and OBCs, the quantum had been so fixed in some States like Bihar, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu that the total reservation went up to 68 per cent of the total pool of seats. In contrast, West Bengal gave reservation only for SCs and STs for a certain period of time in the past. Ultimately, after several petitions to the judiciary, civil conflicts, violence in streets, self-immolation and the like, the Supreme Court pegged all reservations to a limit of 50 per cent of the total pool. It is in force now. Still, there are tensions in the redistribution of the 50 per cent seats across sub-groups within SCs, STs and OBCs.

- **The CREAMY LAYER:** There is observed a demand for exclusion of certain sub-groups among SCs, STs, BCs and OBCs as they were not only eligible for reservation in 1950s and 1960s but also enjoyed the benefits and have moved up very high in the ladder of social mobility. Though their identity is with the sub-groups eligible for reservation, individually they have moved up very high in their educational, occupational, income and assets status (social sectors). Their children do not deserve any special treatment. They are referred to as the CREAMY LAYER among the sub-groups. Hence, they should be excluded from reservation opportunities even though the groups/tribes with which they are identified are eligible for the same.

CASTE or CLASS: This piquant situation has led to a controversy wherein the question raised has been: Should caste or class be the basis of reservation? While there are strong advocates for either caste or class, there is also a third group which has no objection to retain caste as the basis but would very much want class as a brake, a rider within the caste groups. Proponents would recommend reservation only for the deserving while first generation and second generation beneficiaries to be kept out. The controversy is yet to be resolved. In the mean time, some States have also given a marginal reservation for some groups who are economically poor, known as Backward Special Groups.

Check Your Progress 2

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

5) Distinguish between Equality and Equity.

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6) Identify the issues and concerns in Reservation Policy in Higher Education.

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17.5 EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY – CONCERNS

In recent times, research has demonstrated that the education of women and disadvantaged has personal, family, community and social benefits that make it an important investment for poverty reduction, national development and gender equality. Recognizing the benefits of women's education and as signatories to the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) also of 2000, virtually all governments have committed themselves to working towards ensuring gender equity and equality at all levels of education by 2015. Despite these commitments, the education of women and disadvantaged especially at the higher education level continues to pose major challenges to education systems.

17.5.1 Equality is not Identity

Equal opportunities do not mean identical opportunities. It is not that everyone will be given seats for medical/engineering education. Opportunities are equally distributed and not benefits. Each according to his ability and merit is given opportunities. A quota of opportunities is specially earmarked for the disadvantaged. The best among these sections upto the lower ceiling will get the opportunities. Equal access is guaranteed and not identical results. Rather, some weight is also given to social handicaps in the form of lowering of a marginal percentage of marks at qualifying examinations for eligibility, an increase in age limit for applications etc;. These are considered as compensations for handicaps that could not be addressed through systemic interventions. Once equal opportunities are given through reserved seats, scholarships, hostel facilities, fee concessions, library resources etc;, then the beneficiaries have to compete with the rest and excel themselves.

17.5.2 Discrimination Essential for Equalisation

The term discrimination has negative overtones. The common thinking is that discrimination is undesirable. The disadvantaged sections of society had been *discriminated against* in access to learning, knowledge and education for centuries. It needs to be noted that discrimination is neither good nor bad. The value of discrimination depends upon its purpose. If discrimination is done to protect persons from the risks of social exclusion, then it is valuable. In a society where there is injustice and inequality in the structure of social organisation, discrimination is essential for equalisation. It is essential for compensating persons from social handicaps. There is a well known slogan that "where injustice is the order of the day, disorder is the beginning of justice." Discrimination in favour of disadvantaged sections allows them to compete with others on a level-playing field and renders the competition fair and just. Such a discrimination has positive values and is expected to yield positive results for social harmony and integration.

17.5.3 Protective Discrimination Vs Affirmative Action

Administration of justice and promotion of equality is there both in India and in advanced countries like the United States. In India it is called as protective/positive discrimination while in the US it is called as Affirmative Action. There is a difference between the two. Protective discrimination is a strategy in India to protect the disadvantaged from economic and social handicaps arising out of a discriminatory, hierarchical social structure and regional disparities in provision of facilities. Access to good quality schooling, guidance from parents for learning in school, language development at home, learning atmosphere at home, quality of peer group influence and competitive environment, physical facilities at home and school are distributed in skewed and assymetric forms in the general population. Quality of schools is quite poor in rural areas, tribal pockets and urban slums as compared to urban self-financing (private unaided) schools. Results of school final examinations reflect unequal social structures. Children of poorer strata of society, low caste groups, rural areas and urban slums find it hard to compete with the rest. Hence, the government discriminates in their favour so as to protect them from unfair competition.

In the U.S., quality of education is not highly differentiated for Blacks, Hispanics and coloured persons as against those for the white. School facilities are of comparable standards. Everybody completes a minimum of 12 years of education. Hence, there is no need for protection of persons from any type of handicaps. However, at higher levels, if there is a tie between a Black and a White person in a competition for a seat in a professional college or a university, then the university/college would award the seat to the Black. This measure is treated as Affirmative Action. By doing so, the university/college/government affirms its faith in justice and equality. In this way, the US Society pursues the values of equality of educational opportunity and equality.

Check Your Progress 3

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

7) Define the term Equality of Educational opportunity.

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8) What is Protective Discrimination Policy?

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9) Distinguish between Protective Discrimination and Affirmative Action.

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17.6 LOGIC OF EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Several theories/justifications have been advanced for granting equality of educational opportunity to the disadvantaged sections of society.

- One of them is the Theory of Redistributive Justice (RAWLS). According to this theory, there is inequality in the distribution of natural resources and social sanctions, social privileges that are integral to natural and social evolution. There is a need to redistribute these resources for achieving an economic and social equilibrium, for harmony and peace in society. Such a thinking is also borne out of a principle called the Hicks-Kaldor Compensatory principle which is intended to realise an economic equilibrium wherein there is optimum social welfare. It is more from the point of view of optimisation of social welfare function that equalisation is desired than from the perspective of individual interests.
- There is a debate regarding the relative values of power and resources as instruments of Equality. Power includes control over resources. When people are empowered, they can control resources and use them for advantage. They are given reservation of seats in parliamentary/legislative/panchayath elections so that they can participate in power politics and regulate the flow of resources to their advantage. They can oversee that poverty among disadvantaged is alleviated in a planned way and educational facilities are provided to them. The disadvantaged will use all these benefits and become competitive in life. This in brief is the approach/Theory of Empowerment of the people. However, this is a long drawn, time-consuming process. Rather, it would be to their benefit that resources are directly granted to them. In the context of education, seats in institutions of higher education constitute the resources. Across generations, they will elevate their educational/occupational status and pull up their dependents and kinship members. In this way, the whole social group comes up in life. This is the assumption underlying the Theory of Entitlement (A.K. Sen).
- There is also a theory known as the Doctrine of Natural Rights (Rousseau). According to this theory, 'man is continuous with nature'. Nature is a common property of all the organisms of the natural/biological universe. Every inhabitant on the planet earth has an equal claim on the resources of the planet. A variant of this thinking in modern times is the Theory of Human Rights. Right to get equal treatment by society/State is a human right, a basic/essential/fundamental right. Hence, equality of educational opportunity gets attention as a human right.

Check Your Progress 4

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

10) Identify the theories/justification for provision of equality of educational opportunities.

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17.7 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION, SOCIAL MOBILITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Social inequality is an aspect of virtually all social processes. A person's position in the stratification system is the most consistent predictor of a person's behavior, attitudes, and life chances. Social stratification, however, links almost all aspects of society together. A study of social stratification should help us understand a wide range of other changes in society. Stratification on the other hand is a social division of individuals into various hierarchies of wealth, status and power. There is no unanimity on how to describe stratification systems with some sociologists favoring the concept of class while others discuss status differentiations.

17.7.1 Sponsored vs Contest Mobility

It is common knowledge that the provision and utilisation of educational opportunities would enable the beneficiaries to move up the ladder of social status. Such a movement is facilitated through two approaches. In the first approach, the State regulates the movement of individuals by controlling and distributing the facilities/opportunities. This is also popular in India wherein reservation facility, scholarships, hostel facilities and fee waivers are given on priority basis and within a quota system. Mobility that takes place under this approach is known as sponsored mobility. Alternatively, the State leaves everything to the market and the private sector without any regulation. Aspirants for professional education/higher education compete with each other and the best among them will get opportunities according to availability. This is known as contest mobility. There have been debates in educational literature/larger society regarding the relative merits of Sponsored vs Contest mobility (J.B.Sprott). The debate is centred around the relative efficiency and quality of graduates who move up the social ladder under the two approaches.

17.7.2 Achieved vs Ascribed Status

Persons who move up a social ladder through education and related occupation will also get a commensurate income. Depending upon their education, occupation and income levels, they get respect, authority, power, prestige, social acceptance and privileges which in sum constitutes their social status. If the status of a person is the result of facilities/opportunities accorded/conferred because of special provisions, reservations by the government then it is known as 'ascribed status'. It is ascribed by a society because of the deprivations and discrimination that they had been

subjected to for centuries. Likewise, if the status is achieved by a person through open competition in market contexts, then it is known as 'achieved status'. There is observed a hidden conflict and tensions between colleagues with ascribed and achieved status in functional contexts, working environments and social situations. In some societies, even departmental promotions in government and career opportunities are also distributed on the basis of ascriptions. This is true of Indian society. It is believed that over a period of time, the tensions get resolved and there will be social harmony and integration as status differentiations diminish in society.

Check Your Progress 5

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

11) How does equalisation of educational opportunities bring about social harmony and integration?

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17.8 EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

17.8.1 Concept of Excellence

The pursuit of excellence, standards and quality in a society is very essential to be on top of the world in a competitive global environment. This is possible when the mind-set of the people is tuned to healthy competition. Their hardwork, discipline, sincerity of purpose, integrity, honesty and concern for efficiency in work should characterise this mindset. Resource use should be guided and directed to achieve excellence in product quality, that is the mindset of the students. Such a mindset is possible through habit-formation at formative stages of life, as well as fostered and nurtured at higher levels of learning. That is, one of the objectives of education should be the pursuit of excellence.

There are several constraints in a developing country like India for pursuit of excellence. There is considered to be operating a Law of Averages operates here which brings down everybody's ability and performance towards the mean, unless, special efforts are adopted to facilitate those who have the ability and motivation to excel in whatever they do. Special efforts are needed to bring out the latent talents and abilities of individuals. Excellence in the context of individuals means that everybody in society is provided with opportunities to achieve the best that they are capable of. Their inborn potential should only be the limiting factor and not constraints in the environment. Rather, the environment should be able to overcome the constraints, if any, and bring out the best in everybody. Education has the responsibility and duty to promote excellence among all individuals and thereby in a society.

17.8.2 Meritocracy, Democracy and Excellence

There is a debate regarding the relative significance of merit, ability, competence among individuals vis-à-vis the government policies and strategies to provide equality of educational opportunities. There is a section of population, mostly those who do not get the reservation benefits, who are critical of the policy as they think that it

brings down overall efficiency in the system of life and economy. Persons with low abilities and efficiency in work are preferred over persons of merit. They will become our engineers, doctors, scientists and managers. Since their ability and inborn competence is low, they would not be able to pursue excellence in their work. Society would ultimately suffer. 'You cannot entrust the construction of your house to an engineer or get treatment from a doctor for your chronic illness because of your respect for the value of equity ignoring the competence of the engineer/doctor. Pursuit of excellence cannot be reconciled with democratic values'.

Alternatively, votaries of democracy and equality question the concepts of merit, ability and competence. Giving importance to marginal differences in achievements between the well-to-do/higher strata of society and the disadvantaged sections would be erroneous and sinful. Achievements of disadvantaged students in trying, challenging and depressive environments with almost nil or poor facilities at home and in schools/colleges carry a premium which is quite high and get traded for superior hidden abilities and merit. Efficiency/in-born competence of the well-to-do are myths and irrational beliefs of persons prejudiced against equality and democracy. Excellence depends so much upon sincerity, hardwork, discipline, work-culture and goal orientation as on intellect and ability. Hence, equity strategies are quite valuable and worthy of pursuit.

Check Your Progress 6

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

12) State your understanding of Excellence in Education.

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17.9 STRATEGIES AND INDICATORS OF EXCELLENCE

17.9.1 Strategies at School Level

There is a clear difference between urban/rural and private/government (Corporation) schools in identification and fostering of excellence. Normally, better-off sections of society prefer to go to self-financing schools mostly located in urban areas which are perceived to be quality schools. The highest strata in Indian society attend residential Public schools that are located in metropolitan centres as well as hill stations. A student of sociology of education must be concerned with the Government/Corporation schools which serve the masses of Indian population. Strategies for excellence in these institutions are of significance.

There is a strategy for identifying talent in the country and fostering the same called the National Talent Search scheme. Students at the high school stage appear in competitive tests/examination. Those who qualify at the State level are given scholarships for higher studies at the State level. There will be a follow-up inter-State competition at the national level. Those who qualify at the national level shall be eligible for scholarships of a higher value for higher studies throughout their study-period. The NTS examination is organised, conducted and managed by the NCERT.

Good schools do ability-grouping of children. Children considered to be of superior abilities are given special coaching to facilitate them to excel in school final examinations. Even the school system, in informal ways, identifies persons who have special competencies in music, drama/play-acting, painting/drawing, debating, elocution, athletics, field-games, aquatics and other sports, organises competitions as part of co-curricular activities and creates space for the nurturing and flourishing of talent among children. It is to be noted that excellence should not be confined only to scholastic subjects. Excellence should comprehend life in its entirety and variety.

The Government education department or the consortium of schools organise science exhibitions, humanities-fairs, literary mahafils and quiz competitions to identify, foster and nurture talents among students. Prizes are awarded to the best students. Competitions are organised from Block level through District and State levels to national levels. National level programmes are quite rare.

Good schools organise clubs to nurture talents among students. Science clubs, clubs for language development, numismatics, mathematics, nature-study, geography, philately, are illustrative in this regard. Some of the schools also set up natural history museum, art galleries, geology museums and the like. Such measures contribute to the flowering of talent in children.

Teachers are periodically given in-service training in school subjects and other educational concerns to keep them updated in knowledge and pedagogy. Pursuit of excellence requires competent, excellence-friendly teachers and heads of institutions.

17.9.2 Strategies in Higher Education

Centres of excellence have been created as well as fostered by the government for promotion of excellence in higher education. A chain of Indian Institutes of Technology had been set up at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kanpur and Khargapur in the late 1950s. Of late two more ITTs have been set up. University Departments in different subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics, Economics, Education, etc; have been identified across the country for special grants as Centres of Advanced Studies. For instance, the Department of Education at Baroda University is considered as Centre of Advanced Studies in Education. There are also advanced centres for research and knowledge-dissemination for different subjects. The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, the Central Food & Technological Research Institute, Mysore, the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, the Tata Institute for Social Science Research, Mumbai, the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad are all illustrative of national institutions. Excellence is promoted by the government of India through umbrella organisations as CSIR, ICSSR, ICAR, ICHR, ICPR and the like.

Teachers in colleges/universities are trained/refreshed periodically through a chain of Academic Staff Colleges all over the country as well as through advanced centres of learning. Best teacher awards are given both at State and National levels right from primary school stage onwards which is limited upto higher secondary stage.

17.9.3 Indicators of Excellence

An indicator is a summative measure which gives information between two or more than two variables. This information would be useful to assess progress, compare groups, monitor standards and evaluate programmes. Indicators reflect the pulse of an organisation or a process.

There are varieties of stakeholders in education. The students/parents, teachers/headteachers, community members/leaders, employers, educational administrators are some significant stakeholders in education. Their expectations from the system is

also varied. In so far as excellence is concerned, parents would like their children to be in the top brackets in Board/competitive examinations. While admitting their children to schools for the first standard, parents look to the school final results of the schools including ranks obtained and proportion of students with distinction. Some parents may also look to the school's performance in sports, games and other co-curricular activities in comparison with other schools/colleges.

Managers of educational institutions and head teachers look to the overall performance of the school as well as the proportion who get distinction and ranks in Board Examinations. The teachers would monitor results in this way in their own subjects. The community members/leaders not only look to the results but also to the quality of discipline in schools, personality make-up of students and teachers and the variety of activities/functions/celebrations organised by the school. The District/State level administrators look to the overall percentage in Board examinations, proportion of first classes, distinctions and ranks and proportion qualifying under NTS. The employers look to the on-the-job competence of their employees. The level of competence reflects the quality of their schooling.

Check Your Progress 7

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

13) Mention the strategies employed by the schools to promote excellence.

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17.10 EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION – INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

17.10.1 Excellence of Institutions—Measures

When excellence in an educational institution school/college has to be measured, then several variables need to be considered. Quality of physical infrastructure is the first among them. Number of classrooms as against standards/sections, sitting space for children/size of rooms, availability of playground, laboratory and library facilities, seating arrangements, facilities for staff, sports and games equipments, furniture and their quality constitute the physical infrastructure. Efficiency in utilisation of resources is also a useful indicator of the quality of a school. Use of charts, maps, specimens, laboratory equipments, library books need to be examined. It is no use in having stocks without using them. Quality of the curriculum, organisation of programmes and activities, the internal monitoring of progress of students within a school, supervision of the quality of work of teachers and head teachers, the periodicity of evaluation of students' performance and the feedback given to stake-holders, maintenance of variety of records in the school, the upkeep of the school including hygienic standards maintained, health check-up organised for students, the organisation and functioning of alumni association are several indicators to judge the quality of a school.

At the primary level, standards of achievement have been set by the Government of India. They are known as Minimum Levels of Learning. A minimum quality of learning is to be ensured by a school for all children. Minimum is not maximum. It is the threshold level of competence to be reached by all children in a school.

The Department of Education, at school and collegiate level, practice a system of recognition of schools. There are guidelines for recognition which refer to maintenance of standards and quality on several variables including physical infrastructure facilities. At university level, colleges are granted/denied affiliation on the basis of adequacy and quality of infrastructure facilities.

17.10.2 Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education

There are several institutions that maintain and monitor standards in higher education. The Medical Council of India/MCI, the Dental Council of India/DCI, the All India Council of Technical Education/AICTE, the National Accreditation and Assessment Council/NAAC for colleges and universities, the National Council of Teacher Education/NCTE and the Distance Education Council/DEC are institutions for setting standards and monitoring quality in their respective institutions. The NAAC is only a quality grading institution while the University Grants Commission gives recognition and support to the universities.

Check Your Progress 8

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

14) Identify the institutions for higher education in India for maintenance of standards.

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17.11 EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE – A DISCOURSE

17.11.1 Structural Adjustment Policies in India (Post 1991) and Relative Significance for Equality and Excellence in Education

The Government of India adopted a new economic policy in June 1991. The policy envisaged structural adjustments in economy, society and polity. It is popularly referred to as a transition to a process of liberalisation of controls, privatisation of enterprise and globalisation of trade, investments and services.

Since the adoption of this new economic policy huge investments came to India in the form of grants and loans from global financial institutions like the World Bank. Facing criticisms in the initial years that this structural adjustment policy does not have a human face, the government earmarked funds for social sectors known as the National Renewal Fund, in 1993. A Social Safety Net (SSN) was created for additional expenditures on sectors like education and health. A nation-wide strategy for quality improvement of primary education keeping also in view the interests of disadvantaged

sections and backward regions (literacy rates) was launched in 1995. This programme, popularly known as District Primary Education Project, DPEP addressed in an equal measure the concerns of equity and quality. The DPEP came to a close in 2003 and got merged with a national programme in school education for promotion of equity, quality and other concerns. This is known as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan/SSA. This programme is expected to have a smooth sailing as universalisation of primary education and expansion of secondary education is on the top of the agenda of educational reform in India.

Several new challenges to higher education are on the anvil from the perspective of equity and excellence in education. The emphasis today is to reduce government participation in financing and management of education. Private sector will not be as much concerned with equity as is the government sector. Already, the Supreme Court, considering the demands of the private sector, has earmarked a higher proportion of seats in professional education to be retained by the private colleges (vide judgement of August 2003). As such, privatisation may favour excellence and standards at the cost of equity if it is in the hands of purely intellectual type entrepreneurs. Alternatively, private enterprise may sacrifice both excellence and equity and favour commercialisation, if it is in the hands of purely materialistic entrepreneurs. There is also a Private Universities Bill pending for a few years in Parliament for adoption. If this bill becomes an Act, there may be an explosion of private enterprise whose effects/implications for equity and excellence are not clear, as of now.

Globalisation is another process being experienced by India in higher education today. As of now, it is observed, that universities from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.K. are advertising for admissions to higher education institutions open for Indians in their respective countries. This process may reduce the demand for higher education at 'Indian' Institutions especially from well-to-do strata of society. This will reduce capital formation within Indian society, in the university sector. A few more dangers are on the anvil as perceived by a section of critics. The Indian government has signed the WTO (World Trade Organisation) agreements. One provision relating to trade in services has included higher education as a service that should face global exchanges. After 2005 AD, higher education is open for global competition. Any country can set up higher education institutions within India. The Government will have to provide license and permits and facilitate this process. How will it affect demand for higher education in India will be a matter of speculation. It may also have positive effects in the sense, that Indian colleges/universities have to gear up their quality to stand out in competition. Alternatively, given the poor infrastructure facilities, they may also get lost in the competition.

As of now, there is enormous demand from several Asian countries for higher education in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There is a very rich market for higher education in Asia. India is in an advantageous position to capture this market especially in areas like Information Technology, Bio-Technology, Space-science, Electronics, Pharmaceuticals, Gemmology, Oceanic studies, Management and similar subjects. If Indian higher education institutions can pursue and maintain standards, quality and excellence, then all the Westward demand can get diverted to India as education in Indian universities of comparable standards will definitely be cost-efficient and cost-effective. Some of the existing constraints have to be overcome if this is to happen. For example, regionalism should be properly managed. A trend is growing towards demand for transmission and production of knowledge in regional languages as against English. This will detract foreign students on Indian soil. Reconciliation of regionalism with globalisation in higher education will be a challenge of the times. Excellence will be watchword in a globalising world village. India needs to meet this challenge if it has to stay in competition. If it succeeds in maintaining institutions of excellence and attract capital from Asian countries and English speaking African countries, then it will have adequate resources to carry all sections of society and satisfy the demands of equity.

Check Your Progress 9

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

- 15) Identify the challenges for equity and excellence in education in India in the 21st Century.

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17.12 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit, we have discussed the need for promotion of equity through education that is a constitutional value and the need for promotion of excellence that is essential to survive and succeed in a globalising world. We familiarized ourselves with the nature of inequality in India and its reflections in the system of education. Elementary education in India for all is a fundamental right that is justifiable. Several strategies are followed both in the field of school and higher education for promotion of equity and excellence. Of all the strategies the Reservation Policy has experienced certain controversies. The Indian State follows reservation policy as an instrument of protective discrimination. It facilitates social mobility of the disadvantaged and catalyses a transition from an unequal society to a society of equal and free citizens.

Several strategies are also being adopted to promote excellence in school and higher education. Excellence shall be the watchword under the Structural Adjustment Policy adopted by the Indian State since June 1991. Higher education can take advantage of this policy which opens the curtains for globalisation and competitive environment. If higher education in India can attract foreign investment through pursuit of excellence, then it will have adequate resources to meet the demands of equity. The need of the hour is to meet the challenges of globalisation by pursuing excellence and still protect the Constitutional value of equality.

17.13 UNIT END EXERCISES

- 1) Exercise your memories of your school/college life and list out all those activities that in your opinion contributed to the promotion of (a) equity and (b) excellence.
- 2) Visit a nearby government/municipal school and check on the facilities/incentives given to school children.

17.14 POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) Collect literature on the Reservation Policy in higher education and critically examine this policy using this literature, in the form of an essay.
- 2) Examine the dangers and opportunities for education in a globalising world.

17.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Democratic Socialism is the Constitutional philosophy of India. The chief problem of education herein is to realise the relative demands of equity and quality.
- 2) Articles 14, 15(1), and 29(2) of the Constitution of India guarantee equality of educational opportunity.
- 3) Creation of a society of equals and free individuals who live in harmony and peace is the Constitutional goal of Indian society.
- 4) Caste and class based inequalities and regional disparities in development are two types of inequalities. Discrimination in regard to sanction/deprivation of privileges, special facilities, access to natural and other resources are characteristic of this inequality.
- 5) Equality is a value of democracy. Equity refers to the strategies adopted by a government to realise the value of equality.
- 6) Need for the specification of a time-frame; proper identification of sub-castes, sub-groups and specific tribes; divergence between State and Union lists of disadvantaged who are eligible for reservation; fixing the total quantum/quota of reservation as well as redistribution of this quantum across eligible sections; removal of creamy layer from the reservation net and indecision regarding the relative merits of caste or class as basis for reservation are the issues and concerns in the Reservation Policy in Higher Education.
- 7) Equality of educational opportunity means the provision of incentives to school children and special facilities and provisions in professional/university/higher education so as to compensate for the social and economic handicaps faced by disadvantaged sections of society.
- 8) It is a policy of the Government of India to give protection to the socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society from the risks of competition with the advanced strata of society. It is intended to create a level playing field and overcome unfair and unjust competition.
- 9) Protective discrimination is a policy in India to promote justice and equality among the disadvantaged and protect them from risks of unfair competition while Affirmative Action is the policy in the US to prefer Blacks and other disadvantaged sections over the Whites when both of them are of equal merit and attainments.
- 10) There are three theories justifying equality of educational opportunity. They are: the theory of Redistributive Justice; the theory of Entitlement; and the theory of Human Rights
- 11) It is difficult for disadvantaged sections of society in an unequal society to move up the ladder of social status through market competitions and contests. If their movement is sponsored through regulation of educational opportunities by the government, then they will acquire education, get commensurate occupation and income and eventually a better social status. Equalisation of social status will lead to social harmony and integration.

- 12) Excellence means the facilitation for every student to realise his/her full potential and bringing out the best. It is also the development of a mind-set which is characterised by concern for efficiency and quality in work.
- 13) Ability-grouping of children for special attention, organisation of co-curricular activities, organisations of science/humanities exhibitions, formation of school clubs are illustrative strategies adopted by schools to promote excellence.

Ranks, distinctions and proportion of first classes in Board examinations, awards/cups/medals in sports, games and other competitions, personality and behaviour of students, competence in work-situations are indicators of excellence in education.

- 14) The MCI, DCI, AICTE, NAAC, NCTE, DEC, the UGC are institutions monitoring standards in higher education in India.
- 15) Privatisation and Globalisation are the challenges for higher education. While privatisation may specifically affect the value of equity, globalization will throw up challenges for excellence in higher education in India in the 21st Century.

UNIT 18 ALTERNATIVES IN EDUCATION

Structure

- 18.1 Introduction
- 18.2 Objectives
- 18.3 Alternatives in Education: The Concept
 - 18.3.1 Need for the Alternative Education
 - 18.3.2 Difference between Alternative Education and Traditional or Mainstream Education
- 18.4 Theoretical Perspectives
 - 18.4.1 Philosophical
 - 18.4.2 Spiritual
 - 18.4.3 Sociological
- 18.5 Alternative Educational Practices
 - 18.5.1 Non-formal Education
 - 18.5.2 Non-formal Adult Education
 - 18.5.3 Non-formal Education for Prisoners
- 18.6 Open Distance Learning Systems (OLS) as an Alternative to Education
- 18.7 Let's Sum Up
- 18.8 Unit End Exercises
- 18.9 Answers To Check Your Progress
- 18.10 References and Suggested Readings

18.1 INTRODUCTION

Our challenge is not to educate the children we used to have or want to have, but to educate the children who come to the schoolhouse door.

—H.G. Wells

The above quote highlights the challenges of schools and communities to reach and educate all. But, you will agree that by and large the traditional school environment has its own limitations in terms of not able to meet the diverse needs of all students, especially those students who are at-risk, vulnerable, marginalised and disengaged. How to reach them? Certainly alternative means have to be developed for them so that they can also take active participation in the nation building. We have to first clarify what we want to have alternatives to. Is it alternative to formal education or conventional education or is it a different stream altogether? In this present unit, we will try and develop an understanding about the concept. We will discuss the meaning of alternative education, the concept will be strengthened further by differentiating with the traditional education system. In this unit, you will also analyse the development of alternative education. Finally, this unit will discuss the various forms of alternative education.

Too often we as teachers as well as parents and researchers know little about the diversity of educational choices available. This unit will also help you to offer both an initial synthesis and exploration into educational alternatives that exist today and also the variants in the existing mainstream education and culture.

18.2 OBJECTIVES

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

- understand the concept of alternative education;
- differentiate between the alternative and traditional education;

- understand the need for the alternative in education;
- analyze the philosophical and sociological development of alternative education; and
- discuss various forms of alternatives in education.

18.3 ALTERNATIVES IN EDUCATION: THE CONCEPT

Dewey claimed that 'the educational process has no end beyond itself' and he went to make the point that the education is an enterprise that can supply the conditions of growth throughout the lifespan. For Dewey, it is a process of supplying the opportunities for the individuals to learn so that they may grow and develop in whatever manner they desire so. As society develops, it becomes imperative that the cumulative experiences and the knowledge should be passed on to the new generations, or to people who need this knowledge. You as teacher or even as a responsible member of the society, would always want that your learner becomes a lifelong learner. The concept of **Lifelong learning** means that "It's never too soon or too late for learning". Its literal meaning suggests it should include the whole of education and training, from pre-school up to university level and informal as well as formal and non-formal learning.

But, if you go back to history of education, which you might have already read during your graduation course, you would agree that the earlier education was for the privilege group or elites, which means various other sections of the society were deprived of it, which included girls, lower classes and geographically separated groups too. Also, there was another group of disabled members. As a result, there was a disproportion, which occurred in the society on the basis of education.

Now, education is a right of all, it becomes a problem to provide uniform kind of education to all, as the needs of the various groups in the society are different because of the disproportion as discussed earlier. But you also know that Education is the most important element for growth and prosperity of any nation and India is in the process of transforming itself into a developed nation by 2020. Yet we have millions of people who need literacy and many more who have to acquire employable skills to suit the emerging modern India and the globe which is the major challenge in front of us.

For obtaining the vision of 2020, Education must be available to all without discrimination. Besides that, Education is also an enabling right, a right that facilitates children and adults access many of their other rights throughout their lifetimes. This underscores a commitment to reach out to those that have been traditionally unreached including the poor, girls, working children, children in emergencies, the disabled, and those with nomadic lifestyles. It is not merely a concern with quantity but of a quality education that will serve as the basis for lifelong learning.

In view of such critical issues and their importance, and also to break out of our historical mindset, an effective and self-renewing education system is therefore need for the survival and growth of civilization. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 recognized that the formal schools could not reach all children and a large and systematic programme of non-formal education would be required for school dropouts, for children from habitations without schools, working children and girls who could not attend whole day schools.

With the development of the society, the social problems such as drug abuse, HIV/ AIDS infection also became prevalent among the children. These categories of students also need to be mainstreamed. But with all the diversity existing in the society it becomes difficult to engage them in the traditional school system. Therefore, we have to think about the various alternatives to engage all the members of the society in education.

Before understanding the concept of alternative education and various alternatives in education, first it is important to understand what alternative means to education.

Carl Rogers in his terminology referred alternatives as 'person centered approaches to education'. It is also known by different terms by different authors such as non-traditional, non-conventional, or non-standardized, authentic, holistic, and progressive education. In U.S.A, it implies schools for "at risk" youth or students whose needs cannot be met in the traditional school such as underachievers who do not qualify for special education only which is a very narrow approach to alternative education. Rather, it is much wider. Students who may benefit from an alternative education include those who are pregnant/parenting, truant, suspended or expelled, returned dropouts, delinquent. It is important to understand that the alternative education is meant for all students of any age from infancy to adulthood studying at any stage of education but at the same time who can't learn at the same rate and in the same way as others do.

Alternative education originated as a result of various educational reforms, which took place due to strong scholarly, or philosophical orientations or sometimes due to dissatisfaction among students and teachers with certain aspects of mainstream education. Therefore, this makes it obvious that philosophies of alternative education would be fundamentally different from those of traditional education. It will be discussed in the later part of the unit.

Based on different philosophies, different kinds of schools came into existence: *alternative schools*, *independent schools*, *home based schools* etc. These schools follow their own philosophies developed a number of approaches to teaching and learning which differentiate them from the traditional public or private schools. This will also be discussed in detail in the later part of the unit. But the fundamental belief of any alternative school is that all students are of value, and they need guidance to find and develop the positive qualities they possess; despite that many will have histories of failure in the 'traditional' educational system.

An alternative school, sometimes also referred to as a mini school, or remedial school, is any public or private school having a special curriculum, especially an elementary or secondary school which is offering a more flexible program of study than a traditional school. The schools imparting alternative forms of education emphasize the value of small class size, close relationships between students and teachers, and a sense of community.

Before, you move to differentiate between the traditional and alternative education, it is important to understand the need of alternative education.

18.3.1 Need for the Alternative Education

- Diverse needs of the learners arising due to various reasons.
- Criticism about the lack of commitment to academic excellence.
- Bringing about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole.

18.3.2 Differences between Alternative Education and Traditional or Mainstream Education

In order to have a better clarity it is important to understand the difference between the terms. Let us understand how alternative education is different from the traditional education.

Firstly, Traditional private and public schools are remarkably similar in many aspects such as methods and approaches to learning and teaching based upon the same educational philosophy but in case of institutions providing alternative education, they are based upon different beliefs and philosophies. Therefore, in alternative education, diverse methods of teaching and learning are used depending upon the learning needs of the child. For example, if there are two schools which are helping the gifted underachievers and street children differently, they are catering to the children who have different set of needs hence, they are different from any traditional system of education. Simultaneously, it cannot be denied that both would also be using different methods of teaching to suit the needs of the students in their schools.

Second aspect which distinguishes the alternative education from the traditional or mainstream education is the curriculum, which is taught within their respective settings. While imparting the alternative education the traditional subjects such as languages and mathematics are integrated into overall learning rather than taught as a separate subject as in the case of the traditional learning. Whereas some subjects such as environmental education, ecology, or spirituality that are not found as a part of the curriculum in the traditional education system are very much an essential part of alternative education. And also the academic staff is given a great deal of autonomy in developing curriculum and establishing rules with the active participation from the community and students.

Thirdly, the major goal of alternative education is to provide learning opportunities for the students who do not succeed in the traditional classroom setting. Therefore academic and vocationally oriented education programmes are generally provided through the alternative education. Keeping in mind the variety of learning styles among students, various means are used such as small groups vocational training and internships for the community-based outreach program. For example, vocational training institutes for physically challenged. Hence, it is clear that the alternative school programmes stress individualized academic education, career development, and personal growth.

Lastly, the schools that run alternative education program keep their student/teacher ratio low, which allows for more individualized and personalized instruction but in spite of all efforts the traditional system is not able to maintain such a low teacher-student ratio.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) What is the need of alternative education?

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2) Differentiate between the traditional and alternative education system.

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18.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Education has always been provided in the traditional ways and it is also often suggested that the education of young people should involve much more than simply moulding them into future workers or citizens. The thought behind these alternatives is the belief that each child is special, and deserves special attention. The whole person must be addressed, not fragmented parts. Also, freedom to have his or her own creative and independent thinking should be given, so an individual can contribute constructively to the society.

The founders of progressive education John Dewey and Francis Parker, and other educational pioneers such as Maria Montessori, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, insisted that education should be understood as the art of cultivating the moral, emotional, physical, psychological, and spiritual aspects of the developing child i.e. overall development of the child. Let us now briefly review the philosophical and sociological history of alternative education in Europe and the U.S and India.

18.4.1 Philosophical

One of the founding fathers who brought alternative tradition in education was philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In *Emile* (1762), Rousseau argued that education was instilling intellectual and social discipline in the child; rather he viewed that education should seek a harmony between the needs of child development and the demands of social life. He also observed that young children do not learn or reason in the same way as adults, therefore he advocated a different approach which can help the young learners to develop to their fullest capacity. His belief was that it can be done by criticising the rote memorization and harsh discipline and by nurturing the human spirit

Swiss humanitarian Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) applied many of Rousseau's ideas at his boarding schools for orphans, and strengthened the views of Rousseau that an alternative, holistic education is needed. During the same time, another resistance was made by Bronson Alcott in the U.S.A against the rising impulse to mechanize learning. Instead he believed that all the practised pedagogies must be based on authentic, caring relationships, freedom of inquiry, and the innate human quest for meaning and purpose.

Simultaneous to the movements in USA, Friedrich Froebel in Germany, and Montessori and Waldorf fuelled the great deal of success to the leading alternative movements in education. Maria Montessori proclaimed the child to be a "spiritual embryo"—a mysteriously self-forming being whose inner needs must not be thwarted by the self-interest of adults. Montessori's approach encourages children to work at their own pace, either individually or in groups, while developing uncommon levels of concentration and self-direction.

Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner founded Waldorf education in 1919. He believed in seeing human life as essentially the spiritual journey of personal souls, therefore he designed the Waldorf approach to nurture the intuition, imagination, and spiritual capacities of the child. Steiner asserted that true education is not the inculcation of socially approved facts and skills into a passive student, but is "an art of awakening what is actually there within the human being." This art of education also develops healthy social community and helps in eliminating competition.

With the rise of Progressive Education between the 1840s and 1910, Dewey produced his classic work in educational thought. The word "progressive" became associated with forms of declaring the individual as the most important feature in understanding

society. For Dewey, it was vitally important that education should not be the teaching of mere dead fact, but that the skills and knowledge which students learned be integrated fully into their lives as persons, citizens and human beings. He argued that the truest, most meaningful learning occurs through purposeful activity rather than passive reading, memorizing, and reciting. He called for schools to become experimental communities where children can learn about society's needs and occupations by actively participating in constructive group projects.

18.4.2 Spiritual

There are also educational alternatives rooted in spiritual or religious teachings. One example that comes to mind are schools founded by the Quakers—a small but influential group of liberal Christians—who place a strong emphasis on equality, justice, and personal discovery of truth. Another example is the schools based on the teachings of Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti.

Here, when we talk about these alternatives, it does not mean that the education, which rooted in spirituality, would in doctrine the followers into a specific religious sect. 'children... must be educated rightly... educated so that they become religious human beings' (Krishnamurti 1979). Which means that the teaching process holds a deep respect for the mysterious, unseen potentials within the soul of each child, and aims to cultivate the basic goodness, intelligence, compassion and love that are believed to exist at the very core of our human identity.

Krishnamurti's view that a human has both a brain and a mind but one has to know the difference between them. Let us simplify the difference as follows: the brain is the material centre of the nervous system responsible for co-ordination of the senses, memory, rationality, intellectual knowledge, etc. Therefore, in his view, the brain is the slave of knowledge and is limited, finite, fragmentary whereas the mind is not material and is related to insight (non-visual perception), compassion, and profound intelligence and has its own immense energy, which is free and everlasting. He stressed that it was the mind not the brain that must be trained, as it is everlasting.

In his view, Modern education offers knowledge about the theories and facts i.e. brain is being conditioned, without bringing about the understanding of the total process of human existence. He viewed that the harmonious development of an individual is when both the inner and outer worlds of an individual also develop, which is possible through the integration of the mind and heart in action. Krishnamurti often stated that the purpose of education is to bring about freedom (i.e. freedom of the psyche, conditioning and the spirit), the inner liberation, love, "the flowering of goodness" and the complete transformation of society.

If you summarize the Basic aims of education according to J. Krishnamurti, they will be as follows:

- To understand life is to understand oneself (self-knowledge) and, the deep understanding of the total process of oneself.
- To discover a natural and unique vocation for an individual i.e according to child's own aspiration and not according to the plans of the parents or society.
- To educate the whole person (all parts of the person) within a whole (as part of society, humanity, nature, etc.)

Contrary to the perspective that has shaped much in conventional education, Jiddu Krishnamurti felt that people need to explore and reveal themselves rather than be

shaped into something by others. This is not a new perspective, and again has links to the educational theories of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Fröbel, and Montessori.

Around 1980, a perspective known as "holistic" education began to explore the common foundational elements of these different strands of radical educational thought, which have been discussed so far in this section. Holism is a worldview that tries to understand the interconnections and relationships among all phenomena in the cosmos that give meaning to any situation, rather than solving isolated problems. The human being is a marvelously complex organism engaged in many layers of meaning, many connections to the living world. Therefore, holistic education is concerned with more than vocational training or moral discipline or intellectual development; it aims to cultivate the emotional and spiritual life of the growing human being, and to deepen the young person's awareness of his or her place in nature. Maslow referred to this as "self-actualization". You can say that Education with a holistic perspective is concerned with the development of every person's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual potentials.

18.4.3 Sociological

Even the social critics such as John Caldwell Holt, Paul Goodman, Frederick Mayer and Ivan Illich have examined education from more individualist, anarchist, and libertarian perspectives. They criticized that the conventional education subverts democracy by moulding young people's understanding. Other writers, from the revolutionary Paulo Freire to American educators like Herbert Kohl and Jonathan Kozol, have also criticized mainstream Western education.

Paulo Freire in his famous work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), had criticized the banking conception of education. By conception of education, he has pointed out that the educator thinks that the learner listens passively and follows teacher's prescription. Hence, banking education aims at maintaining the division between those who know and those who don't know, i.e. between the oppressors (teachers) and the oppressed (students). He also felt that because of this banking conception, the learner's mind is not stimulated intellectually; instead, it kills curiosity, creativity and any initiative spirit in the learners. Paulo Freire asserted that the education must liberate the child from the clutches of ignorance by the process called concientization. Concientization was also another important concept given by him; he called it as a liberating process to get rid of the influence exercised by the dominating consciousness. Therefore, you can very well understand that the ultimate goal of education is to liberate the minds; this thought paved the way to think about the various alternatives in education.

Simultaneously, Ivan Illich also proposed for "Deschooling" the society, because in his view compulsory schooling is a form of social control that creates a society with many more school failures and dropouts than successes. He argued that a good education system must provide access of all the resources to all at any time to make it possible to share knowledge. For the facilitation of his view of sharing the knowledge he proposed the development of educational webs or networks. Further Deschooling of the society implies a new approach to informal education, 'non-formal' approaches and with experiments in 'free' schooling.

In the 1970s, inspired by the writings of Ivan Illich and John Holt, a new movement, called "homeschooling" or "unschooling," began to attract thousands of families, especially in the U.S., Canada, and Great Britain, who came to believe that authentic community and meaningful learning simply could not occur within the formal and artificial institutions of schools.

Check Your Progress 2

Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

- 3) In Dewey's views, what was the philosophical need for having 'alternative education'.

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- 4) What do you mean by the 'Deschooling of the Society'?

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18.5 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

We have seen that our society have diverse population with diverse needs and mere reliance on the formal system of education cannot cover all the educational needs. By formal system of education, we mean basically an institutional activity, uniform and subject-oriented, full time, sequential, hierarchically structured, leading to certification of degrees, diplomas and certificates etc.

You would agree that it is quite clear that today's formal system of education is disproportionate both to the growing needs and increasing demands for the greater relevance to the education. Therefore, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) proposed the following recommendations:

- 1) The exclusive emphasis on the formal education system should be given up and large number of non-formal education alternatives should be introduced.
- 2) Multiple entry and programmes of the part-time and correspondence education have to be adopted at all the levels of education.
- 3) Programmes of Adult education are of great significance for the success of the programme of the universalization of primary education as well as securing the intelligent participation of the people in the all the programmes of national development.

Keeping in mind the recommendations given by CABE, we will now explore different alternatives to formal education.

Non-formal education is intended to provide access to education to all sections of the society –children, youth and adults, working men and women, unemployed, literate and illiterate.

Non-formal education also acknowledges the importance of education, learning and training, which takes place outside recognized educational institutions. Fordham (1993) suggests that in the 1970s, **four characteristics came be associated with non-formal education:**

- Relevance to the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- Concern with specific categories of person.
- A focus on clearly defined purposes.
- Flexibility in organization and methods.

Non-formal education has become an accepted alternative channel of education for children who cannot attend full-time schools due to various socio-economic constraints.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Non Formal Education (NFE) was introduced in India in the year 1979-80 on a pilot basis. It aimed at providing education to all children up to the age of 14 years, who have remained outside the formal system. These include dropouts from formal schools, children from habitations without schools, working children, children who have to remain at home to do domestic chores, and girls who are unable to attend formal schools for a variety of reasons. But later on these non-formal education programmes were developed for all levels of education and for all learners.

The Government of India has laid down the following as the objectives of NFE –

- 1) To motivate the dropouts or such children who have not gone to primary school.
- 2) To develop in children various linguistic skills and enable them to listen, speak, read and write properly.
- 3) To promote expertise in children in regard to the work experience and the occupations in which they are engaged in their community, so that their productivity can be enhanced or they may be self-sufficient.
- 4) To develop in children the skills, habits, attitudes necessary for healthful living.

Let us now discuss in brief the programmes launched to achieve these objectives of NFE.

Primary Education in the Age Group of 6-14 Years

Since 1986 there has been a growing National concern for achieving Basic Education for All in the shortest possible time. We have already discussed that there is a great heterogeneity among 'out of school' children, as it includes children belonging to remote school-less habitations, working children, street children, deprived children in urban slums, bonded child labourers, children of sex workers, girls belonging to the minority community, girls involved in domestic chores or sibling care, children who are engaged in cattle grazing etc

Therefore, the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the Programme of Action, 1992, recommended for a large systematic programme of Non formal Education (NFE) as an integral component of the strategy to achieve universalisation of

elementary education. Various voluntary organisations have also added to its credibility and acceptability.

The non-formal education meant for out-of-school children at the elementary level, provides part-time education for about two hours a day through flexible school timings and innovative teaching methods in an informal environment. It is particularly targeted at children whose parents are unable to send them to school or are forced to pull them out because of economic compulsions.

It was also recommended that talented and dedicated young men and women from the local community would be chosen to serve as instructors, and particular attention paid to their training.

Various programmes have been launched to achieve this target, which are being discussed as follows:

a) ***Lok Jumbish Project (LJP)***

This project was launched in Rajasthan in the year 1992 to achieve the aim of Universalisation of Elementary Education through a community based and decentralised approach. The first phase of the project was for a period of two years from 1992-94, with the expenditure shared between Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Government of India and Government of Rajasthan. A Norwegian grant of Rs. 200 million is also available.

Putting together government agencies, teachers, NGOs, elected representatives and the people to promote universalisation of primary education formed an interactive group. The seven guiding principles of Lok Jumbish are:

- A process rather than a product approach;
- Partnerships among government agencies, teachers and NGO's;
- Decentralized functioning;
- Participatory learning;
- Integration with the mainstream education system;
- Flexibility of management; and
- Creating multiple levels of leadership committed to quality and mission mode.

b) ***Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP)***

Shiksha Karmi Project was the Centrally Sponsored NFE scheme and was launched in 1987 in Rajasthan state again with the assistance of SIDA. This project aims at universalisation and qualitative improvement of primary education in the remote and socio-economically backward villages of Rajasthan, with primary focus on girls. Since teacher absenteeism has been found to be a major obstacle in achieving the objective of UEE, the project uses the novel approach of substituting absentee teachers with Shiksha Karmis. These Shiksha Karmi are chosen from the local community and are provided with rigorous training and supervisory support. Like, LJP, this project also uses the participatory approach by choosing the shiksha karmi from the community.

Other noteworthy features of this scheme are:

- Use of condensed version of school text-books;
- development of curriculum of each semester, on the basis of minimum levels of learning;

- availability of teachers guides to enable Shiksha Karmis to handle multi-grade classes;
- continuous efforts to encourage children to enroll in day schools;

Shiksha Karmi Project has experimented with the concept of Aangan pathshalas (APs) i.e. Courtyard schools for young girls who cannot travel long distances to attend either day school. A local person, preferably a woman, is selected to run an Aangan Pathshala in her own home after necessary training and provision of other inputs.

c) *Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS & AIE)*

But apart from so many efforts, the findings given by Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of the Planning Commission indicates that the implementation of the Scheme has not been satisfactory. The main findings indicated that:

- 1) Insufficient involvement of the local community, the Village Education Committees (VECs) and the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
- 2) The absence of linkages for entry at different levels into formal schools and for tie-ups with the National Open School.
- 3) The notion that the alternative system is inferior, second-rate and second-grade, both qualitatively and quantitatively.
- 4) Insufficient flexibility. NFE needs to recognise that different children's groups have different educational needs and modify itself accordingly.
- 5) Lack of success with girls. The attendance at girls' centres and the number of women functionaries in the programme have been noticeably low.
- 6) Low overall coverage of the scheme. It covers less than 10% of the out of school children.
- 7) Delay in release of funds at all levels.
- 8) Poor completion rates for the primary level by children studying NFE centres. Very low transition rates to the formal system

By now, you have understood that the main aim of the NFE was to decrease the disparity, in a way that the deprived sections can also take part in the formal system of education. But, results have shown that NFE for 'out of school' children has developed a 'parallel track' approach to the formal system with an underlying assumption that for 'out of school' children the only option is part-time, non-formal education. Therefore, the EGS & AIE scheme was launched to ensure the participation of all 'out of school' children

For achieving such target, it was proposed that EGS & AIE would formalize by using three broad kinds of strategies:

- 1) Setting up of schools in school-less habitations (EGS) within 1 km in with at least 15 children of 6-14 years of age not enrolled at school.

For mainstreaming the 'out of school' children, various interventions such as bridge courses, back to school camps etc would be organized. About the duration of the bridge course, it was recommended in the scheme that it would depend on the age of the children and their prior education. The bridge courses could be residential or non-residential, could be organised in the community or as part of the regular school itself.

- 2) Other specific strategies would be designed for very specific, difficult groups of children who cannot be mainstreamed.

d) ***Primary Education Enhancement Programme (PEEP)***

Till now, we have discussed programmes, which are meant for the Primary education. There is another innovative programme called Primary Education Enhancement Programme. This programme is supported by UNICEF Association for India's Development (AID) and National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA). This project targets the underprivileged children of age group 0-5 years in urban poor communities in need of special protection. This programme aims at:

- Personal grooming of the child
- Enrollment of drop outs in the formal schools.
- Preparation of child for admission in formal schools.

You can learn more about this programmes by logging on to <http://www.indcare.org/html/education.html> & http://www.unicef.org/india/education_2935.htm

18.5.2 Non-formal Adult Education

Adult education is the practice of teaching and educating adults. This often happens in the workplace, as an extension activity. These type of programmes are useful for those who are engaged in the economically productive occupations and are illiterate. The educational content that is taught to these people is related to the needs, interest and environment of the persons, so that it can become functionally relevant to the learners. Various schemes, which have been started by the government, let us discuss them as follows:

For Women

The NPE (1986) recognized that "the empowerment of women is possibly the most critical precondition for the participation of girls and women in the educational process". Woman is the most elegant resource of a society and is the dynamic source of power to the family. But, despite many international conventions affirming women's human rights, girls and women are still much more likely to be poor, malnourished and illiterate than men and they have less access than men in many ways. Government of India has implemented various policy measures to promote and accelerate women's education in India. Some of them have been discussed here:

a) ***Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)***

This scheme was launched on 15th August, 1999, with the objective of the holistic empowerment of women: to literate them and to develop entrepreneur spirit in them. The All India Handicrafts Board and the All India Village industries Board provide facilities for training women in various types of industries especially cottage and small-scale industries and handicrafts.

Women are also trained for carrying out work for rural development; the trained women are called gram. They help in running of village welfare centers, which include children's homes, basic education centers, maternity homes, dispensaries & leprosy relief centers. They also organize programmes for education, recreation & training in handicrafts.

b) ***Mahila Samakhya Programme***

the Mahila Samakhya programme was launched in 1988 for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically marginalised groups. One of the characteristic features of this programme

was the formation of *Mahila Sangha*, which provides the space where women can meet to analyze the problems and decide collective action. Mahila Samakhya (Education for Women's Equality) was launched as a pilot project in 10 districts of Karnataka, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh in 1989 with Dutch assistance. The project was extended to Andhra Pradesh at the end of 1992 and to Kerala in 1998-99. In 2002, after the bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh, a separate Programme was located in Uttaranchal. From 2003-04 the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam have also been brought under this scheme.

The main objectives of the programme are as follows:

- 1) To provide women and adolescent girls with the necessary support structure and an informal learning environment to create opportunities for education.
- 2) To create an environment where women can seek knowledge and information and thereby empower them to play a positive role in their own development and development of society.
- 3) To set in motion circumstances for larger participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education programmes, and
- 4) To create an environment in which education can serve the objectives of women's equality.
- 5) To enable Mahila Sanghas to actively assist and monitor educational activities in the villages - including primary schools, AE, NFE/EGS/AIE Centres and facilities for continuing education.
- 6) To enhance the self-image and self-confidence of women and thereby enabling them to recognize their contribution to the economy as producers and workers, reinforcing their need for participating in educational programmes.
- 7) To establish a decentralized and participative mode of management, with the decision-making powers developed to the district level and to Mahila Sanghas, which in turn will provide the necessary conditions for effective participation.

You can read more about these schemes by logging on the website <http://www.education.nic.in/ms/ms.asp>

Other programmes like national literacy mission, literacy campaigns and operation restoration are some of the other programmes, which are helping in decreasing the illiteracy among the adults.

18.5.3 Non-formal Education for Prisoners

Till now we have discussed the programmes under NFE for the people who are living freely in the society but there have been interventions made for illiterate prisoners so that they can read and write. Since they cannot be accommodated in the mainstream education system, so IGNOU study centre was set up in 1994 at Tihar Jail. The study centre provides an opportunity to the inmates to pursue higher education and be a part of the national mainstream. Training is also provided to the adolescents in vocations such as bookbinding, file cover making and repairing radio and TV sets.

So, you can understand that these alternatives to the mainstream education provide an opportunity to all to get education.

Check Your Progress 3

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

d) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

- 5) Why are the non-formal programmes categorized as the alternative education programme?

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- 6) List the various programmes for the women in the non-formal education system.

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18.6 OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEMS (ODL) AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO EDUCATION

It is a popular system of education worldwide and now you are also the part of the same. In the Indian context, the ideas of democratization of education have strengthened the base of ODL. It started with the setting up of the School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education (Delhi University) in 1962.

Distance Education has come a long way in India and has moved from single print-mode to multi-channel mode. Later generation distance education has incorporated many more alternatives to impart education, including electronic and satellite based communication.

The Distance education has an advantage to overcome the limitations of age, geographical area and it provides flexibility to learner to learn at the convenience and requirement of the learner and therefore it can act as an alternative to education for many who want to continue their studies. Disadvantaged learners like rural learners, first generations learners, learners of disadvantaged societies, gifted learners from rural schools and women learners can greatly benefit from open distance education system of our country.

At school level, Open Schools are also helping in the expansion of education by providing alternative schooling to neo-literates who have acquired functional literacy, so that they can continue their education at their own pace. The National Open

School (NOS) and the State Open Schools (SOS) provide alternative means to acquire secondary-level education in a flexible manner.

The Open School was established by the CBSE in 1979 to impart secondary, senior secondary and basic education in the country through the use of distance learning techniques that include education through print media, personal contact programmes and other supportive services. These institutes play a vital role in enabling people in rural areas, urban poor, women, working adults and school-drop-outs to avail themselves of flexible schooling that permits them to learn at their own pace, time and convenience.

The open universities are also not far behind in reaching out to the various members of the society. Indira Gandhi National Open University at the national level and other state open universities are accommodating the learners with diverse needs. IGNOU has a diverse nature of programmes which attracts a significant group of learners from amongst the disadvantaged. With its wide network, it has managed to reach a large section of the society. However, a significant cross-section of people still remains outside its reach but the university is mandated to reach them.

Specific efforts have been to provide access to education and equity in opportunities to women, people living in rural areas, geographically remote terrains and tribal regions, differently-abled, and socially and economically weaker sections of society. Different programmes are being designed for the gifted students special need of the focussed target group. Various Extension education programmes to promote local integrated development and create self-employment for poorer people and those living in rural and backward areas have also been designed at IGNOU.

So, now you might have got an idea that all the alternative channels in Education are directing towards one goal i.e. to make education available to every individual.

Check Your Progress 4

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

d) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

7) How is ODL acting as an alternative system of Education?

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8) List the groups, which are catered by the ODL?

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18.7 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed an important area: the alternatives in education. Too often teachers as well as parents and researchers know little about the diversity of educational choices available. This unit will also offer you an initial synthesis and exploration into educational alternatives that exist today. In this unit, we have also discussed how the alternative education differs from the mainstream education. Various channels such as non-formal education, adult education, education for the disadvantaged group have been discussed. In this unit we have also discussed the role of Open Distance learning as an alternative to education.

18.8 UNIT END EXERCISES

- 1) Discuss the importance of various schemes for the Women in the light of an alternative to Education.
- 2) Analyze the role of open distance learning systems as an alternative system of education.
- 3) Differentiate between the alternative education and mainstream education?

18.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Alternative Education is a kind of education, which is meant, who are not able to follow the mainstream education because of various reasons. The alternative education is meant for all students of any age from infancy to adulthood studying at any stage of education.
- 2) Alternative system of education differs from the mainstream education in terms of the clientele group, modes of instruction and sometimes in curriculum too.
- 3) His view was that the alternative Schools must be "child centered" with the curriculum and instruction tailored to facilitate the development of the individual.
- 4) Deschooling society it implies a new approach to informal education, 'non-formal' approaches and with experiments in 'free' schooling.
- 5) Because non-formal education caters to all categories of people if and when they need education.
- 6) Mahila Samakhya, Indira Mahila yojana
- 7) The Distance education can overcome the limitations of age, geographical area and provide a system flexible enough to be accessed at the convenience and requirement of the learner, therefore it can act as an alternative to education for many who want to continue the education.
- 8) All the disadvantaged groups including women, SC's ST's, unskilled labourers etc.

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UNIT 19 RECENT TRENDS IN INDIAN EDUCATION

Structure

- 19.1 Introduction
- 19.2 Objectives
- 19.3 Privatization
 - 19.3.1 Private Sector in Education: Types of Ownerships
 - 19.3.2 Need for Private Sector Involvement
 - 19.3.3 Factors Leading to the Growth in Private Participation
 - 19.3.4 Concerns Regarding Privatization
- 19.4 Globalization
 - 19.4.1 Apprehensions Regarding Globalization as a Trend
 - 19.4.2 Benefits of Globalization
- 19.5 Sustainable Development
- 19.6 Other Modern Trends in Education
- 19.7 Let's Sum Up
- 19.8 Unit End Exercises
- 19.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 19.10 References and Suggested Readings

19.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous unit provided you with an idea about the alternatives in education. In this unit we shall bring forth to you a discourse on the recent trends in Indian education. A trend implies a particular tendency or a movement or even a bias towards a certain issue. For instance following colonization, Science as taught in the western world and the English language became integral parts of the school curriculum in India. Later on these changes developed into certain major trends. Thus, trends in education appear, may become popular, may stay or even disappear. This is because the concept of 'education' is dynamic and its form changes with the changes in the societal philosophy. Indian society too is undergoing transitions in some areas. For example the liberalization of the economy and its becoming a part of the global economy is one such transition. As a result today there is an increasing presence of the private sector in many areas including education. The ongoing phenomenon of globalisation too has a significant impact on the Indian society and in turn on the educational scenario. There is another new thought process, which is leading to the realization that development has to be sustained. Bringing about sustainable development is one of the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations and we know that education is the key to attain it. Apart from privatization, globalisation and education for sustainable development, there are many new trends in education such as technology mediated education, lifelong education, distance education, inclusive education, education for peace, etc. and all these trends are the consequences of the contemporary thoughts and practices.

We see that new developments in the society lead to new demands on the educational system that are reflected in the new trends. Therefore, it can be said that the genesis of a particular trend is in a contemporary social issue. Recent trends as you now know are many but in this unit we shall limit our discussion mainly to those related to privatization, globalisation and sustainable development and discuss a few others briefly.

19.2 OBJECTIVES

Following a study of this unit, you should be able to:

- know about certain modern trends in education;
- comprehend the genesis of a trend in education;
- understand the impact of privatization of educational institutions;
- comprehend the impact of globalisation on education;
- discuss the role of education for sustainable development; and
- critically evaluate the trends discussed in this unit.

19.3 PRIVATIZATION

You may be aware that ownership is mainly of two types namely private and public. Expressed in simple terms, the former implies that ownership rests with an individual or a group of individuals while the latter implies that the government happens to be the owner. A third type of ownership is however now becoming popular, the public-private joint ownership. In India, education like many other services was earlier largely controlled by the government but of late privately owned educational institutions have been growing in number. However, privatization in the field of education has been different from that in other fields. As you know, several public sector undertakings underwent disinvestment following liberalization of the economy and the ownership was transferred from the public sector to the private sector thus leading to privatization. But in the field of education, 'privatization' as a trend was not the consequence of disinvestment. Rather, this trend owes its growth to the amazing growth of private organizations in the field of education.

Following independence, education became an area of priority for the nation and initiatives were taken by the government to provide education to the masses. Areas catering to the masses like elementary education are still mainly under the government. Regarding private institutions there was a feeling that they take care of the quality aspect in a better way but are meant mainly for the elites rather than the masses. But now at the school level, the demand for private educational institutions is on the rise, cutting across classes. This is mainly because limitations of the government in providing quality education to the masses are surfacing. Private institutions offering higher and professional education are also getting popular due to the limitations of the public sector in fulfilling the needs in this area.

19.3.1 Private Sector in Education: Types of Ownerships

You may be knowing that Participation of the private sector in the field of education is not a new phenomenon and there have been different types of ownerships of such institutions. Some of these are discussed below:

- **Individual owners and Trusts:** It was common for the wealthy people of the society to patronize educational institutions. Even today there are many educational institutions that are run by such individual(s). Some educational organizations are owned and controlled by trusts that have been created for educational purposes by individual(s), corporate houses, etc.
- **NGOs (non-government organizations):** These organizations are active in providing education. Many of them are playing a special role in providing education to the marginalized sections like women, those differently abled,

rural people, tribal belts, etc. The Azim Premji Foundation, Akshara, Pratham are some NGOs active in the field of education.

- **Religious bodies:** Since historical times religious organizations have been active in promoting the cause of education. Buddhist monasteries, madrasas, vidyapiths as centers of education used to flourish in the past. The Christian missionaries have been in the field of education since a long time. The Khalsa group, Arya Samaj, Ram Krishna mission, and many other such organizations are also contributing greatly towards the cause of education.
- **Corporate houses:** Many corporate houses are actively involved in providing education. Renowned industrialists like the Tatas, Birlas, the Reliance group, and many other such business houses have made forays into the field of education.

As underlined by Verma (1984) people in their individual capacities as well as groups, as organizations, societies, communities have been promoting the cause of education. The presence of the private sector in the field of education is thus not new. It existed in the past and does so now. But earlier it was mainly active in providing education at the school level. Later its presence started to be felt even in the field of higher education, But since the last decade there has been a boom in the participation of the private sector in education. There has been a phenomenal growth in the number of schools, deemed universities and institutions offering professional education. Southern India took the lead and a number of institutions offering professional education were established within a short period of time and now this trend is perceptible at the national level. This indicates an astonishing scale of de-facto privatization of elementary as well as higher education.

19.3.2 Need for Private Sector Involvement

In this section let us discuss the need for private sector in education. Some of the needs are the following:

- The government on its own cannot shoulder the responsibility of providing quality education to the masses. The constitutional provisions make the government responsible for providing elementary education and hence it is felt that the government should allow the private sector to handle higher and professional education. This had been voiced even during the British period. In 1882, Hunter's Commission recommended that there should be a careful withdrawal of the government from the field of higher education, which should be taken over by the private enterprises while the state paid more attention to primary education (James and Mayhew, 1988). The government has to concentrate its efforts in developing educational areas such as elementary education, vocational education, non-formal education, etc. so as to build the basic foundation of the educational system, while vertical growth upon an expanded foundation thus built may be through the private sector.
- In the field of higher and professional education there are many private institutions that offer quality education. Recently concern has been expressed by a body of surgeons as to the deteriorating quality of surgical education in the government medical colleges in comparison to the private ones (Falaknaz, 2005). Therefore, private professional institutions that can afford better infrastructure, try out innovations in curriculum, provide research facilities are needed for quality education. Many corporate houses are

maintaining better standards in their educational institutions as there is a strong linkage between their professional educational institutions and the industries. At the school level it has been accepted that private schools take care of the quality aspect in a better way. The Universities Grants Commission (UGC) encourages self-financing private institutions offering higher and professional education by conferring upon the promising ones the provisional status of deemed universities. Thereafter these institutions can apply for the status of deemed universities. This encourages the private sector to function as centers of excellence and provide quality education.

- Another reason for the private sector to come forth and provide quality education is that on account of GATS, foreign entrepreneurs will flood the Indian educational scenario. The government institutions on their own may not be able to compete with them as there are only handful of institutions offering quality professional education. These institutions accommodate far less than that required. On the other hand there are thousands of aspirants who can afford high expenses and avail foreign educational services. This phenomenon will have two major effects. First of all, educational services on being imported will lead to a drain of finances and also of student population. The second impact will be, education thus provided may not address the local needs and concerns. To stem the outflow of resources and inflow of foreign education providers, in addition to the government institutions private institutions, are also needed (Bose, 2006). As underlined by Gautam, 2000, India has been a heavy importer of foreign educational services but to encourage export of education, private educational institutions are being empowered to operate multi campuses and open foreign campuses so as to enroll foreign students.

Thus we see that the private sector is indispensable to bridge the gap between the demand and supply for education.

19.3.3 Factors Leading to the Growth in Private Participation

There has been a sudden spurt in the number of private institutions. What could be the reasons?

Liberalization: In the last decade with liberalization policies being implemented, the field of education too witnessed the entry of private sector on a large scale and in order to support the initiatives of the private sector in the field of education, many educational institutions under private management are aided by the government. Thus private participation in education has been encouraged.

Changing Social Needs: We know that our economy presently demands educated and skilled manpower. The numbers graduating from government institutions is nowhere near the numbers required. Also with globalization, economies of the world are getting interlinked and hence, people with professional education are in demand abroad too. Such growing need of manpower could not be met by the public sector alone and this led to the need for private participation.

Quality of Education: In spite of the government pouring in resources for the cause of universalization of elementary education, it is a well known fact that the quality of education offered by government schools does not match that of private schools. Hence, the craze for private schools and the consequent increase in their number. It is indeed an ironical situation as huge financial investment is being made in government schools through the SSA programme while parents prefer to pay for private schooling.

where the learning has been found to be of better quality. In several states a sizeable portion of urban children are now in private schools. As per Pratham and certain other sources private elementary schools ensure greater proficiency in the basic skills (Patnaik, 2006).

Investment in Education Leading to High Returns: From a healthy growth of private institutions, mushrooming of certain types of private institutions is being witnessed. Earlier the motive to provide education was only philanthropic but now it is alleged that it is linked to profiteering. It is well known that investments made in educational institutions are rewarded with high returns. This is true not only in India but all over the world and business in education involves trillions of dollars. For instance, it is a common knowledge that teacher-training institutions are being established in huge numbers by private players. Private schools are being opened by the rich and affluent to multiply their income. The sizeable student population in a population of over a billion people makes the market for education very big and lucrative. This is leading to a steady inflow of entrepreneurs providing educational services even from across jurisdictional boundaries

19.3.4 Concerns Regarding Privatization

We have been discussing so far the need for the participation of the private sector in the field of education. Although it is the need of the hour, nevertheless there are certain concerns regarding the rapid growth of educational institutions under private management, which in some cases verge on mushroom growth. Recently numerous universities, some of which operated even from single room premises in a particular state, were shut down following judicial interventions. This is just one incident that reflects the sordid state of affairs in some areas. Let us now discuss some of the major concerns.

Under Representation of the Weaker Sections

Expansion of educational facilities has to be holistic and cover wider segments of the population. There are allegations that growing educational opportunities through the private sector are not quite inclusive. The marginalized sections still struggle for an entry into these institutions. Women's participation is still below fifty per cent at all stages of education and in institutions offering professional education it is no better and this is so in spite of a significant expansion of educational opportunities through private participation. When private institutions exclude the meritorious but poor, education once again becomes a privilege enjoyed by the elites.

Quality of Education

Although the private sector is often credited for ensuring quality, allegations abound as to the quality of education provided by many of them. While, it is generally held that private schools offer quality education, in the field of higher and professional education such generalization does not prevail. There are private institutions that offer quality education but seldom they are the first choice of those who top the merit lists. Rather they would opt for the government-run centers of excellence like the IITs, IIMs, AIIMs, etc. It has been alleged that in the field of technical education and engineering the amount spent per student per annum by the IITs is satisfactory, that spent by the regional colleges are comparatively less but do not violate the AICTE norms in this regard. But the amount spent by several self-financing institutions is much less than that stipulated by the AICTE. Such institutions have failed to enhance the quality of professional education and the growth in the number of such institutions could result in serious decline in the educational standards (Ragesh, 2003).

It is a well known fact that rich farmers, traders, contractors and other moneyed people today prefer to invest in the field of professional education because of the promises of heavy returns. In many of these institutions teachers are compensated inadequately, hired and fired at will, those without proper qualifications are recruited and money is extorted from the students on various pretexts. Education is thus sold and the students become the customers. In the recent past provision for providing teacher education through the correspondence mode was especially misused and the process was akin to selling degrees. These malpractices take a heavy toll on the quality. There is presently a ban on the charging of capitation fees by private institutions and profiteering of any sort is also unacceptable. The generation of surplus funds by these institutions is allowed but on the condition that it would be rolled back i.e. applied for the upgradation and development of the organization.

Many private educational institutions charge hefty fees while students do not get the full value for their money. This is because they compromise on infrastructure and faculty and may devise commercially profitable procedures such as mass admission without ensuring requisite facilities /services for imparting sound education (Anand, 1997). Such educational institutions are thus mainly for minting money.

To counter the above allegations aborting the growth of self-financing private institutions would be akin to throwing away the baby with the bath water. Instead the professional councils have to monitor them effectively. You may feel that there are many government institutions with insufficient faculty strength, infrastructure in shambles, an archaic curriculum and thus with dismal state of affairs. Hence, it is unfair to criticize the private institutions for any compromise in quality. But we have mentioned earlier that the latter has to shoulder the responsibility for higher and professional education and relieve the government of this burden. Moreover the expansion of the field of higher and professional education is mainly due to the private sector. The private institutions today outnumber the government institutions in many areas. Therefore lowering of standards by these institutions will adversely affect the concerned area. It has been rightly pointed out by Mukhopadhyay (2000) that the biggest challenge for the private sector and the biggest reason for it to enter the field of education are not merely to deal with the huge number of aspirants but mainly to provide quality education. It is quite natural that the expectation from the private sector is more.

19.4 GLOBALIZATION

Now let us discuss another major trend: Globalisation. The Post-Cold war scenario since the 1980s has been marked with nation states coming closer. The growing realization that more can be achieved by opening up than by functioning as individual closed systems has been leading the world towards globalisation. It is generally said that globalisation is a relatively new concept barely a few years old but is it a totally new idea? Nalanda and Taxila were the centers of learning that attracted students from abroad. At VishwaBharati, Tagore had envisaged an educational and cultural space where boundaries between nations would dissolve. Even before that Swami Vivekananda had vouched for accumulation of the best educational practices of west and east. However, today with treaties and agreement for open trades and services and especially due to advanced ICT facilities the idea of globalisation is being translated into practice in the field of education. It has resulted in not only the free flow of trade, financial services and labour across the world; it has also led to free flow across jurisdictional boundaries of **ideas, information, new technologies and skilled manpower**. Therefore, knowledge is considered as a universal asset and as rightly mentioned by the President of Massachusetts Institute Of Technology regarding their open courseware, 'knowledge is a public good for the benefit of all'. This

philosophy has to be the basis of globalisation in education. Also, internationalization of education necessitates education with broader perspectives. During schooling itself the foundation for internationalism is to be built by imparting relevant knowledge about various cultures, history, skills for communication at a global level and the necessary attitudes.

Globalisation is undoubtedly the consequence of the political stand adopted by the government of different countries to liberalise and open up their economies. However, the process is being catalyzed by the rapid advancements in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which is compressing the dimensions of space and time. The world is becoming a global information society with round the clock access to vast resources of information. To give shape to plans for globalization certain agreements and treaties have been signed by the member states. One such agreement is the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) that came into effect in 1995 to create among the member states an open, global market for trade in services including education by removing barriers in the form of government regulations regarding cross border trade. Hence, education happens to be one of the services, open to inflow of investments from abroad.

At this point to understand the trend of globalisation in a better way, we shall discuss briefly the provisions of GATS regarding education. They are:

- Cross border delivery of education services via internet i.e. virtual classrooms with distance education, online testing services;
- Movement of students from one country to another for higher education;
- Establishment of local branch campuses or subsidiaries by foreign universities in other countries, course offerings by domestic private colleges leading to degrees at foreign universities, twinning arrangements, franchising ;
- Temporary movement of teachers, lecturers, and education personnel to provide education services overseas.

19.4.1 Apprehensions Regarding Globalization as a Trend

Globalization as a trend in education is yet to take shape in a full fledged manner. Nevertheless with the approval of the Foreign Education Providers (FEP) Bill, by the Union Cabinet there are certain apprehensions. What are they? Let us discuss some of them.

- **Undermining Local Needs:** Education is mainly for fulfilling the local needs and addressing the local concerns. Hence there are apprehensions as to the curriculum prepared by those unaware of the local needs.
- **One-way Traffic from the Western World to the Third World Countries:** It is alleged that globalization, will lead to postcolonial imperialism of the developing world i.e. there could be colonization of education of developing countries. This is because educational services from the developed countries are expected to enjoy a steady growth in the coming years and inflow of foreign students into developing countries will not match the heavy outflow of student population to the western world. This is because many developing nations are still way behind when it comes to competing with the western countries. Hence agreements like GATS might not work in their favour. In the field of education, the major players engaged in providing cross border education, belong mainly to the western world due to their better resources and infrastructure. They being the technological haves are in a better position to offer ODL to the developing countries in the digitally divided world.

- **Cultural Homogenization:** Globalization is equated by some with westernization as western thoughts and culture through their educational services could submerge local culture. There could thus be cultural imperialism, which could make the future generations of the recipient countries westernized and ignorant of their cultural heritage. Even if there is no cultural hegemony of west, there could be homogenization of cultures with loss of local cultural richness and linguistic diversity.
- **Commercialization of Education:** It is alleged that third world countries are urged by the several developed nations to open up their field of education primarily because of the large number of aspirants for higher education that provides a huge market.
- **Commodification of Education :** Education has all along been considered to be a sacred service, to inspire learners, shape their minds and thus educate them. But there are apprehensions regarding the form in which it could be provided by entrepreneurs providing distance education. Distance education delivered sans support services and human touch could resemble prepackaged commodities delivered at home, anytime, anywhere. This would make students, consumers and teachers workers engaged in production process.

The Knowledge Commission has recommended the entry of foreign education providers. But it is being expressed that there should be a level playing ground for foreign and domestic providers of education and foreign services should be subject to regulations to safeguard quality and prevent the entry of poor quality services and fly by night operators.

19.4.2 Benefits of Globalization

Some of the very apprehensions regarding globalisation could also be construed as its advantages. Let us discuss them now.

- **Overcoming Complacency through Competition:** The educational scenario in our country needs to be revived in many areas. This process could begin when there is a stiff competition from abroad . For instance, in certain areas like the Telecom sector the government monopoly has ceased and there are many private service providers. Today obtaining a telephone connection needs only a day instead of the years of waiting period earlier. As far as monopoly and western imperialism are concerned, the counter argument could be that Indian companies taking over foreign ones is now a reality. Many companies have a strong foothold even in western countries. Premiere Indian educational institutes too may attract students from abroad thus leading to educational export. Already private entrepreneur as well as government run educational institutions of India are providing educational services abroad.
- **Wide Range of Choice:** Students and faculty while remaining in the country can be a part of an educational system of their choice. Thus the best opportunities of the world can be availed.
- **Cultural Impact:** Influence of foreign culture is as old as traders from overseas and scholars traveling on foot and horseback across borders for education. Such cultural exchange adds to the vigour and endurance of the local culture and enriches it.

As suggested by the Knowledge Commission Foreign education providers should be allowed but there may be effective monitoring of their functioning. There should be regulations regarding the curriculum and mechanisms to protect against fly by night operators .

Check Your Progress 1

- Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.
d) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) What are the benefits of public-private joint ventures?

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2) How can quality be ensured in the private sector ?

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3) Internationalism prevailed even in the ancient times. Cite an example of cultural change due to the impact of some other culture.

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19.5 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Now let us study yet another trend in education. We know that today the economic growth rate is higher and the attainment of the indices of human development is better than what we had in the last century. But when there is a comparison at the global level , India and many other developing nations lag behind on most of these indices. Hence, development has been lopsided with the benefits of development reaching only a section of the people and that too at the terrible cost of the environment. In the developing world there are many without access to potable water, electricity, educational facilities, technology to access information, space to live and other basic amenities for leading a dignified life. Although it is said that liberalization and globalization are necessary for social development but those opposing them are of the view that the benefits accrued through these events are captured only by some while those weak are left out. Besides, rapid development in different areas is taking a

heavy toll on the environment with ruthless depletion of non-renewable resources. Whether this is development at all is questionable because it is insensitive to those deprived, robs the future generations of their dues from the earth and thus jeopardizes the very continuance of life. As mentioned earlier, bringing about sustainable development is one of the millennium development goals of the UN.

Of late it is being realized that this type of development will not be sustained. What is then sustainable development? It may be construed as development, which optimizes the social and economic benefits on a continuous basis and that which has an equitable base. Today our major rivers are heavily polluted and drying up. Area under forest cover in the world is receding, the ecology is being destroyed at many places, and the waste discharged into the environment is degrading it heavily. If these activities continue then the earth will no longer sustain human life. The United Nation's Noble Prize winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says the world's have-nots would be worst hit by climate change. We now realize that the looming climate change has been the consequence of the so-called development.

Social movements like the Greenpeace movement is active at an international level and voices the concerns of the earth and its environment. In India the Chipko movement in the seventies and thereafter the Narmada Bachao Andolan are some of the social movements against the assault on the environment. However development cannot be put off nor can the concern for the environment be brushed aside. Therefore there is a need to strike a balance between these two and development that can be sustained has to be achieved. How can this be possible? As we know social development is the undisputed goal of education and is also engineered by it, hence the need for education that can guarantee sustainable development.

You may ask what the model of education for sustainable development could be. Well, there is no such fixed model and every country has to work out its own model in accordance with its needs and contexts. However, in the United Nation's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014, DESD), with UNESCO as the lead agency, the goal is to integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning. Environmental education now finds a place in the curriculum but the goal of the UN can be achieved not merely by including a separate component but through integration of content into different areas of the curriculum.

The educational trend regarding sustainable development could primarily imply that education has to reach the masses. Also, it should be relevant to the aspirations and needs of the people so that they can secure livelihood and improve their quality of life. Opportunities for lifelong education has to be provided for lasting changes and this requires increasing access to technology and developing digital literacy. Attitudinal changes in children have to be induced so that they respect nature and care for it and understand that marginality in various forms, especially in educational opportunities, needs to be minimized.

19.6 OTHER MODERN TRENDS IN EDUCATION

There are many new trends in education and it is difficult to enlist and discuss all of them. We have already discussed some of the major trends but there are many others that cannot be undermined. In this section we shall mention some of these trends so that you may later acquire more information about them.

- **Lifelong education:** We find that today education is a continuous process and most of the people in any profession or occupation are required to continue with their education through formal, non-formal and informal channels.

The rapid explosion of the knowledge base one has to cope with necessitates this. Even those not pursuing any occupation/profession may pursue educational activities at any age and stage in their life. Thus although it is need based but the basic philosophy involves an open attitude towards people and their educational needs. Life long education is facilitated by developments in Information and Communication technologies (ICT) and the scope for distance learning.

- **Open and distance learning (ODL):** Today educational opportunities are opening up and reaching millions through this mode. It is today reckoned as a force for accelerating social and economic development. It is a modern phenomenon with rapid growth. As per the Knowledge Commission in higher education about 50% of the learners are enrolled in this mode. This process is being facilitated by the new information and communication technologies. You may also know that convergence of the conventional and distance mode is an emerging trend and it will make the boundaries between the two systems porous. On campus learners may become off campus and vice versa or students could be benefiting from regular classroom teaching as well as learn at a distance.
- **Integration of ICT:** The teacher is no longer the sole source of information as technology is taking over as surrogate teacher. Gradually advanced technologies like the computer and web-based technologies are getting integrated into the educational process. These technologies are used for teaching and learning and also for educational administration such as creation of data banks, maintenance of records, communicating records, etc. ICT is today considered important for enhancing the quality of education. Hence, UNESCO initiated "ICT in Education Policy" project in 2003 to promote appropriate policy models and strategies for the integration of ICT into education in the Asia-Pacific region. This is because today communication system has undergone great changes leading to new demands on the workforce and learners should be ready to be a part of the new world order.
- **Inclusive education:** Children with special needs are often considered as liabilities who deserve sympathy rather than dignity. But such assumptions are oblivious of the immense potential that lie untapped as they are consigned to the fringes of the society. At best their needs are taken care of through certain educational institutions especially meant for them. These institutions being too few, the majority remains uneducated. Even the practice of sending young children with disabilities to special schools is criticized on the ground that children in schools that exclude those with special needs grow up with the feeling that special children are different and have to be picked out and then isolated from the mainstream. The present philosophy is that schools should resemble communities where individuals live together harmoniously. Hence, education in the beginning should be inclusive and later on may be offered in a special manner. Thus the trend of inclusive education will include many children with disabilities in schools so far excluding them to ensure social justice and equity.

Check Your Progress 2

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.

d) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

4) How can we prepare future citizens for global society?

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5) Explain the impact of media like the foreign education television channels on the local culture.

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6) Why is education at school level important for ensuring sustainable development?

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19.7 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed at length some of the major trends in education; while some of them have been discussed at length, some have been discussed briefly. Regarding privatization it can be said that :

- Private sector is leading to expansion of educational opportunities at various levels and areas.
- Private sector is definitely needed but if left unsupervised may lead to serious lapses in quality.
- The government and its agencies such as the councils for professional education, bodies regulating school and higher education have to be vigilant regarding the functioning of the private sector and also check mindless privatization

Globalisation is another major trend that has been discussed. The main points discussed are:

- Globalisation is leading to free flow of trade, finances, workforce, ideas and information.
- The provisions of GATS include education as one of the services. Privatization in education, Foreign Direct Investment, cross border supply of educational services by setting up campuses in other countries, through online education and other means and temporary exchange of faculty and student resources are some of the aspects involved.
- There are certain apprehensions regarding globalisation as for instance it would not create a level playing field and the western world with their technological superiority may dominate the third world countries, that education would be commodified and commercialized, local needs would be undermined and there would be cultural homogenization.

- The advantages are that competition with foreign education providers will lead to healthy growth of the educational sector, learners and teachers can avail the best facilities and influence of foreign cultures can invigorate the local culture.

Development has to be sustainable and education for this has to provide the knowledge and attitude necessary for:

- conservation of the ecosystem and biodiversity
- safeguarding the environment
- ensuring that development is on an equitable basis.

There are many other recent trends in education like learning through the open and distance mode, lifelong education, education imparted through ICT, inclusive education and the like.

19.8 UNIT END EXERCISES

- Find out about the number of private educational institutions offering teacher education in your state that existed before the nineties and those that have been set up since then. Compare the data. State the inferences drawn by you?
- Go through the textbooks published by the NCERT or any other reputed body for science and social science for the primary and secondary level and critically evaluate the attempts to provide education for sustainable development.
- Read about the social movement against the following:
 - Sardar Sarovar project
 - Setting up of Special Economic Zones in West Bengal and Haryana
 - Acquisition of agricultural land in Orissa by an MNC

Since liberalization, the economic growth rate has been more but poverty is still a stark reality. Which is more important, fulfilling the present social needs or curtailing needs and sacrificing development to avoid destruction of the environment, and eviction of the local people . Organize a debate with your peers on this issue.

19.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Private participation may lead to quality while public participation may provide access to funds and other resources.
- 2) Monitoring through professional councils and the other agencies of the government
- 3) The changes apparent in architecture like onion domes, church spires, etc.
- 4) Children will develop a broader mind set.
- 5) Educates about local as well as foreign cultures.
- 6) Young minds are easier to mould.

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